

Sustainability and Flourishing: What's Love Got to Do with It?

A dissertation submitted

by

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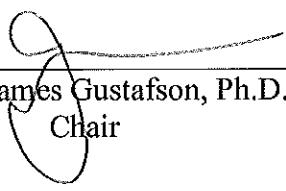
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Abstract

Flourishing is essential to the health and well-being of individuals and the natural world. Understanding what drives flourishing has implications for everything from better interpersonal relations, which we rely on to go about our lives, to better care for the world, which we need to live. A synthesis of two theories from two very different disciplinary perspectives—John R. Ehrenfeld’s “sustainability-as-flourishing” and Saint John Paul II’s Theology of the Body—reveals a wellspring that leads to flourishing. Ehrenfeld’s sustainability-as-flourishing is a systems-thinking approach to sustainability that encompasses four domains of care: human (self-care), ethical (other-care), natural (care for the world), and spiritual (care for the transcendent). The Theology of the Body is an examination of human sexuality and divine love exploring the mystery of God manifest in the physical being of humankind. The erotic union of the physical body with the divine explored in the Theology of the Body is a pathway toward flourishing that complements and enriches Ehrenfeld’s vision of sustainability. This theoretical investigation distills an essential element of love linking the two theories—investment in the well-being of an other for the other’s sake (IWB)—offering new knowledge in the form of an integrated model demonstrating IWB as a wellspring that can lead to flourishing.

Dedication

For Jack Kinkaid

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Sustainability, Thy Name is Mud	1
Sustainability, Thy True Name Is Love.....	4
My Heroes Have Always Been Old-Timers: A Sustainability Love Story	5
Flourishing and Old-Timers.....	14
Chapter 2: Literature Review—Love.....	21
The Etymology of Love	22
How We Understand the Concept of Love	25
Definitions of Love	30
The Nature of Love.....	34
Love Scales	36
Empathy	40
Love and Investment in the Well-Being of the Other (IWB)	46
Biblical Love and IWB: Sexual and Sacred	50
The Four Loves	53
Chapter 3: Research Methodology.....	59
Chapter 4: Sustainability-as-Flourishing and the Theology of the Body	68
Introduction.....	68
Sustainability-as-Flourishing	69
The Theology of the Body	81
The spousal analogy and nuptial love.....	85
The Theology of the Body and the domains of care.....	90
Chapter 5: Limitations and Implications.....	109
Limitations of the Study.....	109
Implications for Further Study.....	110
Conclusion	124
Coda	124
References	126

List of Figures

Figure 1. The Tao of Sustainability	77
Figure 2. Integrated Model: Sustainability-as-Flourishing and the Theology of the Body	104

Chapter 1: Introduction

Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish.¹

~Saint John Paul II

Sustainability [is] the possibility that humans and other life will flourish on the planet forever.²

~John R. Ehrenfeld

Sustainability, Thy Name is Mud

A brisk wind skirts coastal sands and whispers to a sparkling bay as it rises with the surge of ocean just beyond land's edge. Above the water's swell, a night sky hazes the brilliance of stars, but it cannot extinguish the glow of an oversized moon as it sways earth's waters toward the heavens. The moon is closer to the earth than it will be in years to come, and her pull measures tides in hundreds of feet. The waves' white crests reach toward moody cloud-wisps that hover and flicker periodically as lightning pierces the atmosphere above them.

Beneath the tidal surge, far below the churn, amid undying darkness, a slurry of nutrients feeds an unassuming mound of mud. Flooded with amino acids, perhaps carried by meteors formed at the galaxy's birth, this volcanic swivet is different than other deep-sea vents across the ocean floor. This particular mud vent is cooler than its thermal cousins, and its waters are alkaline, unlike the acidic depths surrounding it.

¹ (Peters, 1998, p.157)

² (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 6)

The conditions created by this mud volcano deep beneath the sea are ideal for the synthesis of amino acids, giving rise to the perfect storm fueling the building blocks of cellular life (Pons et al., 2011).

Roughly four billion years later, there will still be tides and mud and moon and storms. But breezes will carry the flight of insects and birds, and oceans will teem with smooth creatures. Along coastal sands, lovers will twine their touch as they press their steps amid the soft swell of a neap sea, a gentler descendant of the tidal majesties that shaped the shores of continents. In the shallow pools that gather near the lovers' path will swim and skim all manner of tiny mud creatures, struggling to sustain life amid the crannies and crevices of shifting seas and a changing world beyond their tidal wombs.

At the moment of origin, sustainability becomes a topmost priority for continued life (Pons et al., 2011). Indeed, sustainability is a priority for all forms of life—animal, plant, bacteria, and fungi. Without a way to sustain itself, life declines and ultimately ceases. Sustainability is necessary to maintain life, and sustainability that leads to flourishing is necessary for life to thrive.

From the biological and social sciences to the arts, countless explorations have been conducted examining how life is maintained. In organizational life, the very origin of our word *culture* points to our outlook about the sustenance of life. *Culture* means,

literally, “the action or practice of cultivating the soil” (Culture, 2011). Sustaining culture inheres not only fertile ground but practice nourishing it. In this way, our understanding of culture illuminates our understanding of the shape of sustainability: the tendency toward life and the tendency toward keeping at it.

If only it were so simple. The “shape” of sustainability is exactly that: a shape, whose understanding is wrought by the thing molding it, or the life form trying to sustain itself. The rise and fall of everything from civilizations and species to oceans and glaciers have demonstrated that when life on earth tends toward itself, those “selves” often get in each other’s way. From the mighty mammoth (Mueller, 2009) to the lowly mudbug (Brinkley, 2006), stories of stalwart species abound evincing the oft-insurmountable odds faced by life-forms struggling to survive—life-forms whose struggles’ end may have become entwined with that of another’s struggle toward success.

For instance, while the enduring plight of the mudbug—whether laid low by Mother Nature, human influence, or a combination of the two—may induce some individuals to shrug and invoke the “survival of the fittest,” it may inspire others to beseech a Beatitudinal call to mercy. Furthermore, it might be true that both divergent groups of thought would own responsibility for the decline of the mudbug, yet the latter feels allegiance to a beneficial outcome for the mudbug, whereas the former feels no such compunction as long as the outcome is beneficial in one way or another (which may

or may not spell a happy ending for the mudbug). What accounts for the difference? How is it that the cultural organization of humankind prepares us so well for understanding the shape of sustainability but leaves us so disparate in our ability to fill that shape with the same ends? Why, after roughly four billion years of life's survival on earth, are the waters still so muddy?

After meeting Saint John Paul II and John Ehrenfeld on the page and witnessing each of them in action, I am convinced that our best hope for clarity—and for sustenance, the very act of sustaining—is rooted in love.

Sustainability, Thy True Name Is Love

A careful synthesis of two bodies of work—John R. Ehrenfeld's "sustainability-as-flourishing" and Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body—reveals precisely how our best hope for sustenance lies in love. Ehrenfeld's vision of sustainability is one of flourishing. It is one of capital-*b* *Being* (essence, essential substance) versus lowercase-*b* *being* ("having-ness," objectification)—and it is reflected in language. As a systems-thinking approach to sustainability, Ehrenfeld's vision offers four domains of care: self, other, the natural world, and the transcendent or spiritual (2008, 2012a, 2012b).

Saint John Paul II (hereafter, John Paul II, except in "References")'s Theology of the Body (1997) posits that human sexuality is an invitation to the sacred, the erotic, and the nuptial meaning of the body in communion with the whole of the natural world.

This union of the physical body with the divine enriches a vision of sustainability and offers a pathway toward flourishing by clarifying the Being/being dilemma as one of subject/object in humankind's interactions with the domains of self, others, the whole of the natural world, and the transcendent. As such, the Theology of the Body contributes to a vision of sustainability and a pathway to flourishing vis-à-vis human sexuality and the sublime.

This dissertation study examines Ehrenfeld's (2008, 2012a, 2012b) sustainability-as-flourishing alongside John Paul II's (1997) Theology of the Body to examine how each informs the other. It also distills essential elements linking the two. The theoretical examination investigates human sexuality and love as they relate to sustainability and flourishing. Specifically, the examination of Ehrenfeld's theory of sustainability-as-flourishing alongside John Paul II's theory of the Theology of the Body offers an approach to sustainability rooted in love.

My Heroes Have Always Been Old-Timers: A Sustainability Love Story

*"Life takes place in language...life shows up inside stories."
~John R. Ehrenfeld*

I had not always mindfully linked sustainability and love. It wasn't until I was introduced to John Paul II's work several years ago and then Ehrenfeld's work a few

years after that that the bonded nature of the two became apparent. However, I realize this nature had always been apparent in my experiences with sustainability and love.

I grew up in a foothilled fraction of the world where seasons are still sacred as a river and roads with crooks and creeks in their names are the chosen routes. This nature-steeped place formed the landscape of my awareness and the language I use to describe it. The waters that spill over its bluffs, wind through its rivers, and pool in its lakes pulse in my veins, and the big winds of its wide-open riverbottoms are the deep breaths in my soul. Here, I learned the meaning of the word *flourish*.

And here, in this place, my siblings and I spent our scrawny, sunburned, and freehearted summer days next to a creek that filled a lake to brimming and our afternoons with marvel. Most days, we could be found clad in hand-me-down cowboy boots (to keep copperheads and cottonmouths from penetrating skin), my dad's flat-billed caps cinched to their snugest measure (to fit our tucked-up tangles and thereby keep ticks from penetrating scalps), and in our beloved Underoos (because *Super...* and *Wonder...* hold a mighty magic worn next to the skin when life is a decade new). Somewhere, there exists a photo of the five of us stair-step kids playing in the creekbed at Sharp Rock Falls in our boots, bills, and underwear. To an outsider, this photo might prove a snapshot testament of a backwoods existence devoid of enrichment or discernment. But this conclusion—while understandable given what my memory holds of how we must have looked—would nevertheless be utterly

wrong (even in the case, I must admit, of my nemesis younger brother, who turned out alright after all).

These days, I still wear boots and hats into the woods, but because my life has entered its fourth decade, I skip the superhero costume. And anyway, these days, my superheroes can't be found on Underoos. Follow me, and I'll introduce you to them.

If the weather is porch-worthy, more than most of the time that's where you'll find them, ready for a chat-up or already engaged in one. They are keepers of care and sharers of wisdom. Elder-wisdom is a feature of many cultures (Bianchi, 1994). In American rural culture, the particular elders I refer to are often called *old-timers*. They are elders who were never appointed, yet the role becomes them with the natural grace of an eagle's rise on an afternoon swell. These elders are superheroes of care and wisdom. Filled with knowledge and experience, they have birthed and buried with their bare hands, and they share their wisdom through story. One must listen for the gems, though. Maxims are not their style.

Oftentimes, they'll tell you brand-new information about people you've known all your life, especially your favorite people; indeed, they delight in telling stories about your favorite people. For instance, they'll tell you what the skies were like the day your dad came home from Vietnam, how your older cousins, just kids back then, before you were born, made him a king's crown out of cereal boxes and ditch-lilies.

And if you're listening carefully when they tell you this, you'll learn what he has never told you about what it was like being there. And coming back.

They are apt to repeat themselves, but this has a purpose. For instance, they will remind you, time and again, through snippets of stories, how this community rebuilt itself after the tornado in 1925 destroyed so many lives and homes. And then again in 1957. And again in 2008. And how it always will.

At most times of day, when you find these old-timers on their porches, they will have coffee—black, almost always black—in their cups. But if the sun is low in the west when you stop for a chat, you're apt to be offered something harder. If you're lucky, the distilled drink that you're offered won't come from a factory-sealed bottle but a re-purposed one, hand-sealed with wax that's been broken especially for this evening's occasion, ready to raise to the mighty heavens aflame with color.

So you stop. And you listen. And if you listen well, you will also learn where the copperheads always cross and the cottonmouths like to skim. That way, you'll know how to leave them kindly (and thus they'll afford you the same) as you cross bluffside and into the bottoms on your way to the warm soft of a sunny sandbar to watch eagles sail the drafts, which you should do, by-the-bye, before the majority of them head north for the summer.

Be sure to pay attention along the way, and the landfall will show you her sacred rises, where the bones of Shawnee rest and the tears of Cherokee named a trail that stretches from the sun's rise to its set (Trail of Tears [Map], 2013). At the break where the river laps rock over and again until its smooth and slippery as silk, you're bound to hear more than the slap of water against stone if you're tuned to it. If not, stand up. Press your feet into the sand at the water's edge. Tilt your head slightly back, and close your eyes.

Breathe deep the loamy soil that turns arrowheads with each season's till. Feel the warm whistle-wind above the cool whitecaps as it whips and yips like coyote harmony on the breath of night. Learn the heron's squawk and the flycatcher's scree. Memorize the kiss of the sun on your closed eyelids. Notice—without opening your eyes—that turkey vultures circle overhead. You know this because of the darkish blink-like sensation that occurs each time one passes between your closed eyes and the sun's cast. The shadowy blips are regular, so you know the carrion are circling high, waiting on something that hasn't yet breathed its last. When it does, they will come closer, their circle will start to zag as they dart downward to clean up after casualty. Thank them for this, their role. Thank also the breeze for its tickle, the insects their buzz. And even their bite.

Walk into the water. There is no need to open your eyes as you step into the cool flow. The slope is gentle, natural, and as sound as its steadily shaped years spent

astride an undertow. Stop when you feel the water at your knees. Show respect for the swift current and move no further into its flow. As your toes begin to numb and the beavers stop to wonder at your stance, realize that your footsteps are planted firmly in waters that coursed long before you and will remain long after. Bless them for that bounty. Now, open your eyes. Allow them to pool as they adjust to the world's new brightness.

When you return, the old-timers will still be on their porches where you left them. They may or may not have put on another pot of coffee, but either way, there will be dregs staining the cups still at their sides. They might be discussing the overall decline in cortege courtesy or puzzling over the way the young boys are wearing their denims *anymore* (which is their word for *nowadays*). They might be talking about the day that soft-top gave out at Number Nine, and how it only happened on account of the Sup not allowing them to reinforce the line extending out underneath the hogback ridge, because in Company life, the cost of materials too often trumps the cost of lives. Or they might just be talking about how loud those damned bullfrogs are this year, ain't they?

Either way, you know exactly what the old-timers are talking about. It's the same topic of conversation they shared when they told you about the copperheads and cottonmouths. They're talking about Being. Capital-*b* Being (Ehrenfeld, 2008).

You know these old-timers have never read Ehrenfeld's (2008) *Sustainability by Design: A Subversive Strategy for Transforming Our Consumer Culture*. You know the coffee now cold in their cups is not fair-trade. But you know also that these weathered men and women in their withering skin have experienced a life more akin to sustainability-as-flourishing than any you have known.

Retired coal miners, midwives, shoe-factory workers, and truck-farmers, their lungs heavy with dust, their fingers curled as if still grasping their tools, and their backs bent from both the heft of the harvest and the worry of its want, depending on the year. Do not consider them precious. Do not consider them charming. Consider them real. They are tangible proof of sustainability's communion with love, of the deep connection that exists between sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body. The hardships worn by their bodies are an outward mark of interior connectedness. These men and women (the same women who long ago stopped refilling coffee cups on demand, but in whose presence you'll lack for nothing)—these unlikely superheroes—are a living example of the profound union of sustainability and love.

For here is what each knows, up close: when you want to be warm, you must either cut the earth or hollow it out, and you'd better replant what you can, and keep safe from harm what you can't—or *find a better way*. When you want to eat, you must pick, dig, cut, kill, clean, and carve, and you must always make sure to regenerate, or

don't expect the skillet to sizzle. Conserve. Preserve. Serve. Yes, most of all, *serve*. And if you want to keep the rodents in check and your limbs in place, you'd best show consideration to copperheads and cottonmouths.

The connectedness of these men and women has been borne out in their bodies. When bare hands have slain, slashed, sown, born, delivered, and shared bounty, handing out when they could and holding up when they couldn't, they have had direct experience with cause and consequence. The up-close nature of this connectedness is straightforward but it is hardly simple. For these men and women know more than what it takes to keep bodies warm and cellars stocked. They know that warm bodies and stocked cellars are not just functions of mechanical need but *expressions of spiritual care*. They know that warm bodies and stocked cellars are not material matters but material of great care and matter.

These individuals are not only the *first* responders, they are the *lasting* responders. They don't just bake a lot of casseroles so you won't have to fuss about cooking right after the baby is born, they stick around through the fevers and the poxes, and eventually, they even show those babies how to cook. And after a wake, they don't stay simply to clean up the dishes; they come back the next day, and the next, and the next, all the way until you are prepared to wash that single, solitary plate by yourself and not be crushed by its implication.

And even though it's a long walk to where the old trestle meets the river, they are the ones who unfailingly save back and deliver scraps for the lone coydog who curls up there during the day, too feral for friendship yet too tame to hunt.

Were these merely functions of mechanical need, there would be no cause in holding court over coffee on a front porch where all are welcome at the stoop and more than most beyond it. Were these not also expressions of spiritual care, there would be no cause in companionship with another and in kinship with the whole of the natural world. Were bodies and cellars merely material matter as opposed to material of great care and matter, there would be no reason to stop and never say no when you are offered some shine.

These men and women are the keepers of care and the tenders of life. They are the seasons still sacred as a river, the chosen routes along crooks and creeks. They are the meaning of the word *flourish*. They are the living synthesis of sustainability and love.

Theirs is a story of sustainability and love synthesized, alive, in action. And if sustainability and love were synthesized, what life treasure might be revealed?

Ehrenfeld would place it in the context of sustainability and call it *Being*. John Paul II would place it in the context of the erotic and call it *Theology of the Body*. An odd coupling as this may seem—especially in the relating of life secrets of superhero old-timers—the scholarly works of Ehrenfeld and John Paul II, synthesized, illuminate

and enrich the meaning of the human spirit in exchange with an other and with the natural world. With the help of these unlikely bedfellows, the following story—the story of the whole of the natural world as subject, as essential matter—enriches and contributes to the dynamics of sustainability and love.

It invites leaders to experience, through the action of Being, communion, and possibility. It invites the sublime embrace. And given that invitation, who knows what “might could” happen? I’m headed back out to the front porch to find out.

Please join me. I’ll pour.

Flourishing and Old-Timers

So what can old-timers teach us about flourishing? Let us first examine what is meant by the word *flourishing*. Dictionary definitions of flourishing refer to thriving, prospering, “grow[ing] luxuriantly” (Flourish, n.d.), abounding, overflowing, and “blossom[ing]” (Flourish, 2011). Blossoming is the denotation most closely related to the word *flourishing*’s etymology, from the Old French *floriss* meaning “lengthened stem” of a flower (Flourish, 2011). Many actions take place for a flower to blossom, from sowing to pollinating to seeding, and several factors must be in alignment, from nutrients to sunshine to access to water. Blossoming is an emergent quality.

In this way, Ehrenfeld’s (2013a) definition of flourishing is akin to blossoming. As he described it, “Flourishing refers to an observable quality found in or emergent from

the system, most importantly the Earth...Flourishing must be used always as an end, a vision, and always as a noun, not some modifier” (Ehrenfeld, 2013a). Language matters greatly to Ehrenfeld, as it did for the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Ehrenfeld (2008) asserted, “Life takes place in language....what happens in life depends on the language we use and how it is understood” (p. xix), and his domains of care that lead to flourishing are closely related to how we use language to describe the world around us. Language evolved, literally, from sets of actions that humankind took part in and cared about (p. 134). These functions of care are revealed in our language.

The language used to describe the objects involved with those actions offers indications about whether we view those things as a commodity or as essential matter. For instance, a hearth and a furnace can each increase the temperature in a cold house, but “we might say the hearth provides us warmth, but the furnace only heat,” with the hearth referring additionally to a “context for family activities and...a possibility for authenticity” (p. 151). In this way, language reveals how we hold some things as object and others as subject. Ehrenfeld described how meaning is tied to our relationship with things involved in our actions: “Objects in the world are not simply something out of context with an intrinsic, essential meaning; rather, they take on their meaning within a network of relationships between the actor and the world” (p. 134). Ehrenfeld’s example of the hearth offers further explication; when the hearth provides warmth in the context of domestic events or goings-on among family or

friends, the “possibility for authenticity” emerges (p. 151), and “authenticity opens up the space of *possibility*, the cardinal feature of sustainability” (p. 119, italics mine).

Possibility, an attribute of principal importance to sustainability, can be found embedded in the grammatical structure of the dialect spoken by the old-timers mentioned above: The particular dialect spoken by these old-timers is called the South Midland Dialect (Shuy, 1998). Leapfrogged between the Ozarks and Appalachia is a foothilled fraction of the world called Little Egypt, and the vision preserved in the dialect of these old-timers illustrates Ehrenfeld’s (2008) statement that “life takes place in language” (p. xix).

For instance, the old-timers use double modals, a distinct and particular grammatical structure, to great extent (Metcalf, 2000). Instead of saying, “You should do this,” they will offer, “You *might could* do this.” *Might could* is a double modal. Moreover, the old-timers’ use of double modals is distinct among English dialects. The distinction is seen in the linguistic structure, which employs double modals to a significant degree but demonstrates an utter rejection of the use of negative modals. For example, they don’t say “hadn’t ought.” The implications of this have not yet passed beyond obscure syntactic scholarly interest in the linguistic field, but they “ought should,” for the association with flourishing is not insignificant.

Consider this: When someone tells you to do something, it is typically a command, “You need to do this.” But when someone uses a double modal, it becomes something else entirely. “You might could do this” is much more than a politer way of phrasing a command. It is a suggestion. It is a *what if?* A choice. It is possibility.

Another example of the way these old timers’ dialect embraces possibility lies in their lexical use of the adverb *anymore* as well as their lexical and grammatical use of the word *yonder*. Instead of saying *nowadays*, the South Midland Dialect employs the word *anymore* (Metcalf, 2000). *Nowadays* refers to the present, indicating a linear past and future—chronological time (Nowadays, n.d.). *Anymore* (used as a degree of time) can refer to a recent past *and* a present *and* a “from now on.” It is not beholden to linearity: past, present, and future can be encompassed by *anymore* (Anymore, 2011). Whereas *nowadays* invokes the notion of chronological time, *anymore* is more evocative of kairos time—a fluidity and boundlessness. Kairos time brings to bear the promise of fulfillment or redemption (Titus 1:1–3, New International Version). In other words, hope is inherent in kairos time.

Possibility is embedded in the multiple ways the word *yonder* can be used. *Yonder* is a South Midland word (Metcalf, 2000). It can refer to something “over here” or “over there;” it can also refer to a third, larger degree of distance beyond both “here” and “there” (Yonder, 2011). This is indicative of the South Midland Dialect—words and phrases that are not bound by lexical and grammatical restrictions. Indeed, South

Midland speakers practice verbification—where nouns become verbs (you can have an impact or you can impact, burglar and burglarize, etc.)—and nominalization—where verbs become nouns (fail and failure, move and movement, etc.) to a degree unmatched since Elizabethan times. In this way, the South Midland Dialect has a big, magnanimous capacity, a ready acceptance to adopt new words (neologisms) and to expand, especially through metaphoric extension (the dialect is rich with images). With resourceful and sometimes daring usage, it is a dialect that fits language to thought as opposed to fitting thought into the mold of conventional grammar (Bryson, 1994; Mencken, 1984; and Metcalf, 2000).

The language of these old timers is ever-willing to, in a word, *blossom*. The fact that old-timers speak a language embracing hope and emphasizing possibility is much more than a mannerly peculiarity of a dialect. It is an indication of their language landscape. It is representative of the way they interact with the world. Ehrenfeld (2012a) asserts, “Being is an action-oriented model of care. We got to be human by interacting with the world around us and creating language. Our language came out of that process.” In other words, our language reveals whether we hold the world as an object or choose to embrace it—connect with it—as subject.

Like the Theology of the Body’s imprint of the divine in humankind, the literal and figurative landscape of these old-timers’ lives has been stamped in the landscape of their language, and the connectedness of these old-timers is borne out in their bodies

and their capacity for care through action—functions of care—a pathway to the sacred and to sustainability-as-flourishing.

When discussing sustainability-as-flourishing, Ehrenfeld (2013a) acknowledged Aristotle’s word, *eudaemonia*—“happiness” and “living well” (Kraut, 2012)—as a reasonable translation for flourishing. Ehrenfeld (2013a) explained how the concept of flourishing came about in his study and exploration of sustainability:

[F]lourishing picked me. It came out of my mouth completely unexpectedly during a personal training exercise in which we were asked to tell our classmates what possibility each of us could bring to the world. When my turn came, without thinking, I turned and said to the audience, “I am the possibility that humans and other life will flourish on the planet forever.” So there it is. Still quite a mouthful and in need of continuing explanation and clarification. Sustainability became attached to this choice of flourishing later, but has remained an awkward and reluctant partner. (Ehrenfeld, 2013a)

According to Ehrenfeld (2008, 2012a), flourishing can occur through a state of capital-*b* Being when four domains of care (self, other, the natural world, the transcendent) are realized. Being, like blossoming, is emergent. Flourishing arises from Being when the domains of care are brought to life. These domains of care are realized by many of the old-timers described above. As such, they often live out this state of Being vis-à-vis a type of love that leads to flourishing.

It is a type of love that invests in the well-being of an other for the other’s sake. It is a love that cares, that serves, that provides, that sustains, that presents itself without strings: it is a life-giving love. This type of love leads to the state of capital-*b* Being

as described by Ehrenfeld's sustainability-as-flourishing theory, where the four domains of care are realized. It is a type of love described by John Paul II in the *Theology of the Body*. However, while Ehrenfeld's theory is a part of the sustainability, business, and organizational development literature, the *Theology of the Body* is written from a religious—and specifically a Roman Catholic—perspective. The *Theology of the Body* has not been examined or applied to the business and organizational development literature in this particular way. Because the *Theology of the Body* has much to contribute to sustainability-as-flourishing, as the *Theology* investigates a type of love that leads to flourishing, it deserves a closer look within the sustainability-as-flourishing context. Ehrenfeld's sustainability-as-flourishing and the love expressed in the *Theology of the Body* will be examined later in this paper. First, the paper will examine types of love that have been addressed by the business and organizational development literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review—Love

*Love, the answer to the problem of human existence.*³
~Erich Fromm

As a collection of sentient beings whose sense of sustainability is grounded in culture, humankind's approach to the study of sustainability is likewise rooted in culture.

There is little doubt that sustainability is an organizing mechanism in the lives of human beings. The act of surviving—sustaining life—is widely accepted as the primary force behind principal drives such as hunger, thirst, elimination, pain, and sex (Harlow, 1958). The ways in which we have collectively assembled enterprises for serving these primary drives is a testament to sustainability as an organizing mechanism. The differing ways we structure these enterprises reveals the varying ways we understand sustainability's end design—not only what that end may be but also what entities may or may not have a place in that design, mudbug or not. If sustainability is the primary force behind our principal drives encompassing survival, what is behind fundamental emotions such as love? How does love as a primary force fit in to the picture of sustainability?

To begin to answer these questions, we look at the meaning of love: how we define it, approach it, understand it; the very way we comprehend it in our lives, as a feeling, a

³ (Fromm, 1956, p. 7)

disposition, a state of being, an attitude, an activity, a way of life—and for some—as the very meaning of life itself.

The Etymology of Love

Sustainability is as old as survival, and the word *love* is at least as old as documented language. *Love*'s earliest known usage in English dates to well over a thousand years ago, with roots in Frisian and Saxon tongues (Love, 2011). Before it found its way into the English language by way of Old English, there were a number of cognates for love, including *lubh*, in Sanskrit (Love, 2011). *Lubh* originally connoted being “confused” and, later, to feelings of “avid desire.” *Lubh* then evolved to connote “allure” and eventually (as a noun, *lobha*) to “desire” and “greed” (Love, 2011). These later manifestations of the Sanskrit *love* are akin to recent English language connotations for the term *lust* (Lust, 2011), which deserves closer attention and distinction than it has heretofore received in discussions of love theory as it relates to leadership, culture, and sustainability.

An even older manifestation of the word *love* dates to approximately 2000 BCE, in the world's oldest documented love letter, carved in cuneiform on a clay tablet. The cuneiform script contains a ceremonial poem from a Sumerian priestess to her beloved king. The priestess writes, “Bridegroom, dear to my heart, Goodly is your beauty, honeysweet . . . You have captivated me, let me stand trembling before you; Bridegroom, I would be taken to the bedchamber” (Arsu, 2006). An expression of the

heart's tongue, this racy bit of clay sat undiscovered until the late 19th century, long after its linguistic tongue had disappeared from the map.

However, University of Cambridge scholars recently published and made available online original-language recordings of several ancient Mesopotamian tablets such as this one (Streck, 2012), giving wide voice to an antediluvian tongue for the first time in nearly two thousand years. The recordings are housed in Cambridge's St. John's College, whose legendary unfinished, blank clock-tower remains at the center of an unfounded rumor attributing the blank clock-faces to a fierce rivalry with neighboring Trinity College, under whose finished and completely-faced clock-tower, philosopher of logic and language Ludwig Wittgenstein walked, mused, and lectured many a day before resigning in 1947 to travel to Ireland and work on a manuscript.

During his time in Ireland, Wittgenstein often frequented Bewley's Café on Grafton Street in Dublin. Wittgenstein was considered a regular customer at Bewley's—a café well-known for its exceptional selection of teas and coffee—and the waitstaff would deliver lunch to the philosopher's table without any words having to be exchanged. Gratified, Wittgenstein would enjoy his omelette and cup of coffee, never deviating from his regular order (Wall, 2010, pp. 8-9).

While it is not certain whether Wittgenstein gave any thought to love while he ate, it is likely he gave thought to his cup of coffee, especially the oily film floating atop,

wafting the aroma of roasted and steamed beans into the room. Wittgenstein's musings about coffee would eventually show up in the manuscript he traveled to Ireland to write. The manuscript became a posthumously published book titled *Philosophical Investigations* (2009, originally published 1953), which is considered one of the most influential texts in 20th-century philosophy. Wittgenstein (1970) distinguished *love* as a disposition and not a sensation: "Love is not a feeling. Love is put to the test, pain not. One does not say: 'That was not true pain, or it would not have gone off so quickly'" (Wittgenstein, 1970, p. 96).

Wittgenstein was keenly interested in human beings' associations with their language and what those associations revealed about the *being* part of humanness. Wittgenstein arrived at his philosophy linguistically. He traced philosophical problems to semantics. However, he did not limit his philosophical discussions to overarching conceptual notions like *love* and *feelings*. He often expanded his discussions through more mundane conceptual notions like *aromas* and *coffee*. Remember Wittgenstein's time at Bewley's Café? It may have inspired the following passage from

Philosophical Investigations:

Describe the aroma of coffee.—Why can't it be done? Do we lack the words? And *for what* are words lacking?—But how do we get the idea that such a description must after all be possible? Have you ever felt the lack of such a description? Have you tried to describe the aroma and not succeeded? (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 159)

Wittgenstein's (1958) observations about the limitations of language vis-à-vis the smell of coffee represent a significant progression in his thinking about logic. In an earlier work, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1961 trans., 1921 original)

Wittgenstein fit language into a compact system of logic, where the world consisted of facts in both totality and combination. Wittgenstein's (1958) further work with logic suggests that one cannot answer the question *What is logic?* with language—not because language is defective, but because it has limitations.

If language has limitations, how, then, can concepts as great and multifaceted as love be understood?

How We Understand the Concept of Love

The concept of love has been debated, investigated, consecrated, bandied-about, basked-in, proselytized, soliloquized, and even trademarked. Yet a hard-and-fast meaning for *love* remains elusive. Despite the best efforts of poets, linguists, philosophers, and cognitive psychologists the world (and centuries) over, a cast-iron denotation for *love* remains lissome and elusive as twilight's edge and fluxsome as shadow's slip.

However, the concept of love is not indescribable, and how the concept of love is understood is tied to different approaches to language. If “concepts are the glue that hold our mental world together” (Murphy, 2004, p. 1), then language reflects the constructions we create with that glue. Two differing views of language offer insight

into the way love is constructed from its conceptual understanding: the classical view and the prototypical view.

In the classical view, categories are defined by essential features. For example, the category *triangle* can be defined by its essential features—*closed figure, three sides, angles totaling 180 degrees*. This classical view of language holds that terms denote “categories of objects or events, each member of which possess[es] features that [are] necessary and together sufficient to define membership in that category” (Fehr & Russell, 1991, p. 425). In the classical view, an object’s or event’s essential features are known, and this knowledge is how one makes sense of that object or event—given that one is familiar with its known features. Thus, definitions can emerge through philosophical discourse or empirical analysis (Fehr & Russell, 1991).

The classical view has also been called *essentialist*, since categories are defined by essential features, specifically those features that “stat[e] the necessary and sufficient conditions for the correct employment of a term” (Hegi & Bergner, 2010, p. 621; Ossorio, 2006). However, the “essentialist” nature of the classical approach also contributes to problems with the view. For instance, some categories may lack distinct boundaries, and it may be difficult to determine which features to include. For example, the category *bird* may or may not include the essential features *flyer, song-caller, or fish eater*. Thus, it is sometimes problematic to determine which features are “necessary and sufficient” (Hegi & Bergner, 2010).

Additionally, many categories have fuzzy boundaries. For example, whereas *banana* fits the category *fruit* as clearly as *unmarried* fits the category *bachelor*, *tomato* has fuzzy boundaries. It fits the category *fruit* and the category *vegetable*. So the classical view introduces linguistic difficulties far beyond the old “to-may-to/to-mah-to” dilemma. Matters of pronunciation are less complex to resolve than matters of semantics. Wittgenstein (1958) pointed out the complexity of the latter when he noted that many categories cannot be defined since no single feature represents *all* instances of the objects within the category.

To illustrate this point, Wittgenstein (1958) used the example of the category *game*. *Game* features might be *recreational, competitive, playful, professional, physically exerting, relaxing, addicting, executed in teams, executed individually, require equipment, require no equipment, be scored, not be scored*, and the category *game* may include combinations of these features. However, there is no single, stand-alone feature that can be said to encompass all definitions of *game*. There is no clear boundary that can be drawn.

Thus, the classical view is deficient in certain respects as an approach to language understanding. As an alternative, Wittgenstein (2009) proposed the concept of “family resemblance,” which concedes that language does not have an “*essence*, i.e. defining characteristic marks (*Merkmale*); [yet] it does not follow that it doesn’t have

a *nature*” (p. 250). For Wittgenstein (2009), this nature could be understood through the concept of family resemblances, which allow categories to articulate prototypes. In this way, categories may be defined by features that resemble or are related to other entities (Diessel, 2010a).

In contrast to the classical view, the prototypical view of language holds that categories of objects or events are gleaned less through abstract definitions and more through comparisons of the objects or events with representational categories (Rosch, 1973, 1975). Thus, the prototypical view challenges the classical view’s supposition that words are defined based on common features. In the prototypical view, words are defined “based on a best exemplar” where “some members are better examples of a certain category than others” (Diessel, 2010b, p. 6). Moreover, the prototype theory allows that word meanings can depend on culture and context, while inherent in the classical theory is the notion that word meanings are uniform.

When it comes to an understanding of the category or concept of *love*, both the classical and prototypical approaches have been applied. The current trend in psychology literature has been to approach love from the prototypical slant (Hegi & Bergner, 2010, p. 621). Recently, Aron, Fisher, and Strong (2006) posited that in general use, people understand the meaning of love via a family resemblance to other entities related to love (for example: care, passion, altruism) as opposed to a solitary,

formal definition. The authors further speculated that this accounts for the variety of “conceptual and operational definitions [for love] in the scientific literature” (p. 597).

The research of Fehr and Russell (1991) bears out the view of Aron et al. (2006), with the former researchers having conducted a series of six studies demonstrating that the prototype view offered a better concept of the term *love* to the study participants than did the classical view. Clarifying that their purpose was not to debate the merits and demerits of the classical and prototypical approaches, Fehr and Russell (1991) made it clear that their aim was solely to use empirical methods to identify the properties of emotion concepts such as *love*. In doing so, they discovered that the category has an “internal structure”—meaning that its understanding was shaped by matters of degree as opposed to an all-or-none approach embracing necessary and essential features (p. 425). Additionally, the authors found that *love* had fuzzy borders and numerous subtypes, each of which could be ranked and correlated as prototypically related to love or not.

A few years earlier, Fehr (1988) conducted a similar set of studies that revealed central and peripheral features of love and commitment. Her analysis, rooted in the prototype approach, not only revealed a multitude of dominant and marginal features for each concept, but it also demonstrated that existing theoretical approaches were lacking in their ability to capture the breadth of the terms *love* and *commitment* in how they were applied and related in everyday usage. Her work was perhaps

motivated by an earlier study with Russell (1984) in which the authors conducted a series of studies examining the concept of *emotion*. In that series of examinations, once again, the research concluded that a linguistic conceptual understanding of love was a matter of degree more than it was a matter of an “all-or-none,” or classical, approach (p. 464).

Averring that “everyone knows what an emotion is, until asked to give a definition,” Fehr and Russell’s (1984, p. 464) motivation is inspirationally akin to Wittgenstein’s (1958) contemplations about the aroma of coffee: exactly how does one go about such a description—and is such a description even possible? And if one believes that such a description or definition *is* possible, then how did that person get the idea that it must be possible?

Wittgenstein’s (1958) critical considerations about something as elusive as a description of the aroma of a cup of coffee apply just as fittingly to the indescribable definition of love. Just as we can smell the cup of coffee but are at a loss to describe it fittingly, we can feel the refulgence of love yet can be surprisingly lackluster in our attempts to define it.

Definitions of Love

Social scientists’ definitions of love have varied from the banal to the bizarre to the beatific. Some early definitions tend toward the clinically physical, as in Watson’s (1924) declaration that love is an “innate emotion elicited by cutaneous stimulation of

the erogenous zones” (as cited in Fehr, 1988, p. 557). While Watson’s definition may seem peculiarly fixated on sexual stimulation in light of the many facets of love that do not involve a sexual encounter, Watson was not alone in his conflation of love and sex. Moreover, this conflation was hardly a new idea at the time. As evinced by the Mesopotamian love lyrics previously discussed, the notion of sexual union as connubial to love has been the brass tacks of both siren- and sweet-song for centuries. And it persists today: one need only tune to any contemporary musical broadcast to hear a wide and varied assemblage of this fusive relationship.

So while Freud may have been onto something with his focus on sex as the root of emotion, that “something” wasn’t exactly novel. Just ask Sappho. Nevertheless, Freud’s (2012 trans., 1922 original) exploration of sexual union as the crux of emotion was revolutionary in its context (new psychology) and led to extensive research in psychoanalytics. By asserting that sex and love were always in each other’s pocket, Freud changed the conversation, turning it inward, toward neurology and away from static constructs of behavior, challenging traditional perceptions about consciousness—and quite literally changing people’s minds about the brain. And about sex. According to Freud, sex was love’s center, its revolving point, its “nucleus . . . with sexual union [love’s] aim” (Freud, 2012 trans., 1922 original, p. 21).

Fromm (1956), too, acknowledged the significance of sex as a contributor to the essence of love. In some ways, Fromm’s (1956) concept of love echoes

Wittgenstein's (1970) notion that love was a disposition. For Fromm (1956), who posited love as an art, love was an "*attitude, an orientation of character* which determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole" (p. 46). According to Fromm (1956), a mature understanding of the definition of love "feels the potency of producing love by loving—rather than the dependence of receiving [immature love] by being loved" (p. 40).

In other words, love is an "activity" of "*giving, not receiving*" (p. 22). This applies directly to the human sexual union in that the man gives his semen to the woman, and the woman gives herself by "open[ing] the gates to her feminine center" (p. 23). Each has given of his or her reproductive, or life-giving, capacity in sexual union. Thus, the man has given of himself to the woman and the woman, in turn, has given of herself to the man by giving to the possibility of his (their) "growing child within her" (p. 23). In this way, Fromm (1956) elevated Watson's (1924) clinically tactile definition of love to a biological beatific. He also clearly distinguished love from lust by clarifying love's role as an activity of giving.

Like Fromm and Wittgenstein before him, Rubin (1973) thought of love as an attitude, and he sought to define love by its empirical measure. He did so by cataloging individuals' feelings and attitudes through the use of "like" scales and "love" scales. Treating each as an attitude held about another individual, Rubin (1973) concluded that attitudes of like and love are different constructs. However,

each is multifaceted, and each of the two attitudes incline individuals to think, feel, and behave in particular ways toward others. By examining the distinctions individuals made between like and love on the scales he employed, Rubin (1973) deemed that love is composed of three essential features: attachment, caring, intimacy. Attachment consists of the longing to be in the presence of the other; caring refers to the willingness to sacrifice one's self for the well being of the other; and intimacy refers to arousal and the sexual union.

Fehr (1988) has discussed the broad definitions of love since Rubin, including Skolnick (1978), for whom love was an experience that included "cultural symbols" (p. 104), and Centers (1975), for whom love was a response that occurred when interaction between individuals was gratifying (Fehr, 1988, p. 557). Fehr (1988) wrote, "It is difficult to imagine what emotion would not fit some of these definitions . . . [as] they apply to virtually every concept in psychology" (p. 557). Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) agreed, but added that they felt all of the scopes should be pursued, despite their breadth: after all, "what is more important than love?" they asked (p. 402). Fehr's (1988) observation about the wide-ranging nature of definitions of love holds true outside the social sciences as well.

The arts include a myriad of conceptualizations of love, and although many of these by-and-large lack the clinical tone of Watson (1924), involving complexities such as metaphor, nuance, motif, irony, inquiry, and design, they are still expansive in scope.

And although poets and linguistic champions such as Shakespeare boast definitions of love that are hardly lackluster and often consist of numerous lines of verse, Watson's (1924) definition does contain a concise and critical component: the word *innate*.

The Nature of Love

Prior to Watson's (1924) declaration of love as innate, the field of psychology tended to treat as innate only principal drives such as hunger, thirst, elimination, pain, and sex (Harlow, 1958). Drives such as love and affection were deemed secondary to the principal, primary forces. In contrast, Watson (1924) elevated love to a primary position, asserting that it was an innate emotion. However, Watson's (1924) assertion was dismissed by his contemporaries and immediate successors who insisted that a human newborn's propensity to present love was simply a result of the infant's need to reduce one of the primary forces (e.g. hunger, thirst). Thus, love was one again relegated secondary status.

However, what these psychologists failed to account for was the infant's continued need for intimate affection even when the primary forces were met by a surrogate unassociated with love and affection (i.e. bottle-fed from a distance versus cradled next to a mother's breast while nursing), causing Harlow (1958) to declare that Watson's contemporaries "established a fundamental psychological law that prophets are without honor in their own profession" (p. 674), an allusion to Jesus.

Happily, Watson would go on to be vindicated outside of his profession, causing more distant successors within his profession to reexamine the notion of love as an innate emotion and a primary drive. It would be the work of biologists and neurologists (Bancroft, 2005; Miller, 2001; Slater 2006; Zeki, 2007) that would do justice to Watson's (1924) claim of love as inherent to the human experience. As Harlow (1958) pointed out over half a century ago, the work of developmental biologists continued to clarify the fact that a human being's "initial love responses" are made "by the infant to the mother" (p. 673), thus positing the establishment of love as an emotion from birth.

Citing a number of studies in which infant macaques and infant rhesus monkeys were subjected to surrogate cloth mothers versus surrogate wire mothers or no mothers (surrogate or biological), Harlow (1958) used the term *contact comfort* to describe the evinced love responses and their resulting impact on the animals (p. 685). Certain that these observations confirmed the existence of the nature of love from the neonatal stage, he went on to cite examples from numerous young animals—from rhinoceroses to elephants to crocodiles—who appeared to exhibit affection and intimacy through physical contact with their mother's skin. Harlow (1958) purported that "contact comfort has long served the animal kingdom as a motivating agent for affectional responses . . . [but] at the present time we have no experimental data to substantiate this position" (p. 677).

Today there is ample scholarship (DuBrey, 2006; Jain & Mills, 2009; McDonough-Means, 2004; Wardell, 2001; Wardell & Weymouth, 2004) suggesting that touch or “contact comfort” is a vital component in everything from rearing young to alleviating pain to healing illness to overcoming addiction. And Harlow (1958) insisted in his day that it was necessary to begin studies like these. He suggested that face-value observations of the results of contact comfort and touch were a breeding ground for additional research, noting that further examinations of contact comfort may offer a comfort of their own, assuring that humankind may “know that we are now in contact with the nature of love” (p. 685).

The words above were delivered by Harlow at the sixty-sixth annual Convention of the American Psychological Association in Washington, D. C., on August’s last day in 1958. He was president of that association at the time, and his exhortation that love was a nature expressed from birth was how he chose to end his address to the crowd. At about this same time, psychologists were beginning to address expressions of love through empirical measures. And the race to scale love was on.

Love Scales

Expressions of love have been documented for over 5000 years. However, measurements of love are a more recent phenomenon—at least according to the written record. In Western culture, social scientists began documenting measures for love in the 1940s (Hatfield, Bensman & Rapson, 2011, p. 144). The primary focus of research on love has been toward building theory with scale-building receiving some

focus, yet scale construction and theory development have not been tightly linked (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986). Hatfield, Bensman, and Rapson (2011) endeavored to compile information about the many differing scales of love—and specifically, passionate love—that have been developed over the past 60 years. The scholars identified several trends.

First, it was revealed that interest in passionate love had grown considerably over the decades. While as late as the 1970s, very little psychological research had been conducted about passionate love, by the turn of the 21st century, researchers across many disciplines were studying the nature of love (Hatfield et al., 2011, p. 154). It has not been determined conclusively that Harlow's (1958) exhortation was the driving force, but it may be said that his vision has begun in earnest.

Additionally, the researchers discovered that passionate love, which used to be considered a Western occurrence, was increasingly accepted as a universal phenomenon. Indeed, recent evolutionary theorists have argued that “a desire for love and sex is instilled in the architecture of the mind—so critical is it to the transmission of one's genetic heritage to the next generation” (Hatfield et al., 2011, p. 155). Not only is Watson's (1924) declaration of innate love no longer considered beyond the pale by psychologists, it is now not out-of-bounds to further suggest that love may be part of our DNA. Moreover, contemporary neuroscientists have been using more recent love scales to pinpoint the location of passionate love in the brain's

construction (Hatfield et al., 2011, p. 155). It is not surprising, then, that the research of Hatfield et al. (2011) also revealed that the definition of passionate love has grown both broader and deeper (p. 156).

The development of scales of love has led to developments in the types of love studied by researchers. Rubin (1970, 1973, 1974) contributed greatly toward scale construction as one of the first researchers to examine similarities and differences in romantic liking versus loving (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986), which led to his assertion that love is composed of attachment, caring, and intimacy. This led to the development of an analysis by Kelley (1983), who determined that Rubin's scale actually held four components of love: needing, caring, trust, and tolerance. Further research has revealed additional profiles of love, deepening the complexity of Rubin's initial scales (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986).

Around the same time Rubin was designing his scales to measure liking versus loving, Lee (1974) was working on scales that measured eight potential love styles: eros (romantic, passionate), ludus (game-playing), storge (friendship), mania (possessive, dependent), ludic eros, storgic eros, storgic ludis, and pragma (logical). This was an extension of his (Lee's) research a year earlier on the "colors of love," wherein he identified three primary and three secondary love styles: eros, ludus, storge, and mania, pragma, agape, respectively. Lee's (1973, 1974) typology was the basis for many further studies focused on love types, including Clarke and Mills'

(1979) work with communal love (agape), Berscheid and Walster's (1978) work with passionate love (eros), and Kelley's (1983) work with pragmatic love (pragma) (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986).

A few years later, Hatfield and Sprecher (1986) would develop a scale that measured passionate love by way of cognitive, physiological, and behavioral signals. Sprecher would go on to work with Metts (1989) toward developing a scale to measure the romanticization of passionate love. About this same time, Sternberg (1988) introduced the Triangular Theory of Love. He posited that there were different kinds of love that could be understood or sorted by the degree to which each kind was composed of the three fundamental elements of love: passion, intimacy, and commitment.

It has been agreed by many scholars that Sternberg's (1988) model is a "fine predictor of people's romantic attitudes" (Hatfield, 2011). Additionally, scales based on Sternberg's model have been found to have evidence of construct validity (Aron & Westbay, 1996). Yet it remains that Sternberg's (1988) work centers on a model to measure, specifically, *romantic* love. However, that does not negate its place in leadership literature. Likewise, elements of other love scales can be found in the scholarship, too.

The elements of caring (Rubin, 1973), intimacy (Rubin, 1973; Sternberg, 1988), and commitment (Sternberg, 1988) have links to leadership and sustainability. Empathy, too, is directly related to leadership, organizational culture, and sustainability vis-à-vis the investment in the well-being of the other. Empathy is defined as “the power of projecting one’s personality into (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation” (Empathy, 2011). Thus, empathy inherently involves the “other,” or, “object of contemplation.” Moreover, it speaks directly to the ability of the subject to understand, or see, the other. Empathy, as an aspect of love, has gained traction recently as a pursuit in the study of leadership. A variety of studies, from neuroscience to spirituality, have drawn upon empathy as a significant factor in love and leadership. It is also a significant factor in sustainability.

Empathy

Merriam-Webster’s definition of empathy involves a subject who acts upon his or her knowledge or awareness of an other (Empathy, n.d.). In other words, empathy recognizes an other as not simply material matter but material of great care and matter. Heaton and Travis (2014) drew upon the definition of empathy to ground it in the origin of consciousness, mapping consciousness to connectedness. Citing the work of quantum physicists such as Hagelin (1987), Heaton and Travis (2014) pointed to unified field theory in physics to assert that “consciousness is primordial” (p. 23). Drawing upon the work of Pavlovich and Krahnke (2012), whose work approaches empathy as an organizing mechanism based on unified theory in physics, Heaton and Travis (2014) discussed the self-referral characteristic of consciousness,

wherein consciousness is conscious of its conscious state. And this writer is conscious that that may seem a redundant way to end a sentence, but clarifying the self-referral state is important toward understanding Heaton and Travis's (2014) next point.

They purported that the self-referral state of consciousness, "by virtue of being conscious, is awake to itself. . . mak[ing] consciousness anywhere conscious of consciousness everywhere" (p. 24). This kind of conscious unity opens up the potential that one can feel empathy for "any and everyone else" (p. 25). The scholars reiterated that conscious unity, or "oneness" of empathy is a state acknowledged "over and over again in wisdom literatures" and sacred texts "of the East and West" (p. 26, originally in Debold, 2002, p. 2). The scholars also did not take for granted the effort it takes to achieve a glimpse of conscious unity, recognizing the Transcendental Meditation® (TM) technique as a widely accepted method for the practice of achieving a place where one's awareness exists outside of the self.

They cited the business benefits of practicing toward conscious unity, or empathetic oneness, in several studies. These included Schmidt-Wilk's (2003) observation that executives who meditated in teams "grew beyond their self-protective identification" to develop better integrative functional collaboration (Heaton & Travis, 2014, p. 20). A study by Herriott (2000) found that entrepreneurs who practiced TM developed a deep sense of connectedness that led them to adopt "more universal values: going beyond individual interests to the wider interests of employees, community, or

environment as a whole” (as cited in Heaton & Travis, 2014, p. 20; originally in Herriot, 2000, p. 172). Sawhney (2012) conducted a study of 387 TM-practicing business persons across 26 service and manufacturing companies. Those practicing TM scored higher on levels of consciousness states, lower on anxiety, and higher on both “emotional intelligence (EI) and disposition to trust (DTT)” (Heaton & Travis, 2014, p. 21).

Heaton and Travis (2014) also pointed to a study (Alexander, Walton, & Goodman, 2003) on convicted criminals whose criminal behaviors were frequently associated with low levels of empathy. The study revealed that groups of convicts who practiced TM scored one and two levels higher in their ability to receive the perspectives of others from multiple points of view. This increased ability was measured after 20 and 47 months, respectively, of TM practice (p. 21). A more longitudinal study of this same population of convicts conducted by Alexander, Rainforth, Frank, Grant, Von Stade, and Walton (2003) suggested that “reduced psychopathology and accelerated psychological development resulting from the TM program are responsible for reductions in criminal behavior” (p. 21).

In their work toward examining connections between TM and higher stages of cognitive development (including conscious unity), Heaton and Travis (2014) examined the brain wave patterns of human subjects during TM and also at rest. They found “increased frontal blood flow and higher frontal alpha coherence” during TM

(p. 19). Moreover, they discovered that after two to 12 months of TM practice, subjects had “greater frontal alpha coherence”; in other words, connections/electrical activity between brain areas increased (p. 19).

The authors concluded that practicing TM over time increases electrical activity in the frontal region of the brain during TM and at times outside of TM—during resting states, wakeful states, and dreaming states as well (Heaton & Travis, 2014, p. 22). This increased brain integration was linked by Harung, Travis, Blank, and Heaton (2009) to increased moral reasoning and ego development in a group of top performing managers (Heaton & Travis, 2014, p. 23). The researchers linked increased brain integration with increased “‘collective consciousness’—the consciousness of a family, community, city, nation, or the whole world” (p. 26). They do so by connecting scientific research on TM and brain integration with unified theory and Vedic principles centering on primordial collective consciousness to further the work by Pavlovich and Krahnke (2012) surrounding empathy as scientific organizing mechanism. They are not alone.

Kisfalvi (2014) connected the primordial nature of consciousness to the humanly innate nature of empathy. The comparison conjures to mind Watson’s (1924) declaration that love is an “innate emotion” (Fehr, 1988, p. 557). While Kisfalvi (2014) conceded that not all scientists in the field have argued that the roots of

emotion are biological, she conceived of primary emotions as “innate phylogenetic⁴ adaptive mechanisms” that “provide the underpinnings of early cognition” (p. 78) and discussed evidence that neural pathways play a role in empathy and connectedness.

Pavlovich and Krahnke (2012) agreed, arguing that “empathy enhances connectedness through the unconscious sharing of neuro-pathways that dissolves the barriers between self and other” (p. 131). They found that neural pathway sharing fosters “solution building” as individuals expand their ability to find common ground (p. 131). Additionally, the authors found, through the lens of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS), that empathy fosters connectedness by triggering feelings of harmony and joy, paving the way to “a more expansive, integrated and enlightened state underlying connectedness” by reducing the ego-self (p. 131). The authors purported that ultimately, when the division between self and other is decreased, this allows for sharing in the quantum (unified) field of coherence. The authors also posited that understanding the scientific relationship between empathy and connectedness will have profound implications for organizational scholarship in terms of how organizations manage and approach organizational constructs. Given the authors’ assertions, empathy has the potential to lead to increased sustainability in the organization and for the individuals and entities the organization has an impact on.

⁴ based on natural evolutionary relationships (*Merriam-Webster*, n.d.)

Psychologists, too, have examined the impact of empathy and connectedness on sustainability in terms of individuals. In particular, the relationship between intimacy and empathy has been explored for individuals in the treatment of drug addiction. Intimacy, and specifically its construct “into-me-see” has been developed as a psychodynamic strategic device to help cope with and overcome addiction (Khantzian & Weegmann, 2009; Perkinson, 2002). This context variable, intimacy, has been linked by Northouse (1977) to empathy. In a study examining the interpersonal context variables between leaders and followers, Northouse (1977) found that intimacy and empathic ability were related (but not as strongly related as the context variable trust and empathic ability). More recent studies in the health-care field have examined how intimacy builds trust (Kirk, 2007), which is strongly related to empathic ability (Northouse, 1977).

Empathy is not only related to intimacy, an aspect of love, it is also closely related to an additional aspect of love: investment in the well being of the other for the other’s sake, or, IWB. While empathy refers to the ability to understand or fully comprehend the other, IWB takes empathy further. In IWB, one invests in the comprehension of an other *for the sake of the other*. A review of love scales, definitions, and types illuminates this particular aspect of love as essential to our understanding of love’s nature. Whether viewed from the prototypical or classical viewpoints, IWB remains a clear and strong contender as a component so indispensable to love, that without it one may question whether love is truly present.

Love and Investment in the Well-Being of the Other (IWB)

Hegi and Bergner (2010) found that investment in the well-being of the other for the other's sake, or IWB, was essential to four main types of love: romantic, parental, compassionate, and altruistic (p. 635). Indeed, they concluded that IWB is “an important candidate for being considered [love's] most transcendent characteristic” (Hegi & Bergner, 2010, p. 635). Their study drew upon Singer's (1984) contention that IWB was love's key feature. Singer's (1984) work examined the notion of love in Western culture. It concluded that a person's investment in the well-being of an other is critical to the conception of love. In other words, the lover's feeling for the beloved is rooted in the beloved being for the lover an end and not a means. As Singer (1984) put it:

The lover takes an interest in the other as a person, and not merely as a commodity . . . [the lover] bestows importance on [the other's] needs and [the other's] desires, even when they do not further the satisfaction of his own . . . In relation to the lover, the other has become valuable for [the other's] own sake. (p. 6)

Rempel and Burris (2005) agreed with Singer's (1984) conclusion that IWB was love's critical component, positing IWB as an indispensable component of love's definition. Indeed, IWB is embedded in the authors' definition for love as “a motivational state in which the goal is to preserve and promote the well-being of the valued object” (Rempel & Burris, 2005, p. 299). While Rempel and Burris's (2005) definition referred to a “valued *object*,” objectification is not a component of their definition of love; in their definition, the “valued object” is an end, not a means. This

aligns with Singer's (1984) conclusion of love as an embodiment of one's investment in the well-being of an other, where the other is an end and not a means.

Investment in the well-being of an other emerged as a central component in Bergner and Davis's (2007) study of lay conceptions of romantic love (Hegi & Bergner, 2010). Their study (2007) revealed IWB as the chief component of romantic love, with at least three quarters of study participants subscribing to IWB as essential to romantic love. Three years later, this notion was expanded in a study by Hegi and Bergner (2010), which revealed IWB as an essential component of not only romantic love but also parental, compassionate, and altruistic love (p. 635).

The idea of investment in the well-being of the other as an essential element of love differs from other research on love that posits IWB as a *type* of love rather than an *indispensable component* of it. IWB as a type of love can be found as compassionate love (Fehr, Sprecher, & Underwood, 2009) as well as agape and altruistic love (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2006; Lee, 1973). But while IWB enjoys distinction as a type of love in some broader theories of love, it is not treated in these studies as an essential component of love.

IWB as a distinctive type of love—much less as a critical element of it—fares even less well in other prominent theoretical approaches to love, where it does not play as significant a role. In studies examining Sternberg's (1988) “triangle of love”—

intimacy, compassion, and commitment—IWB more closely resembles subcomponents of larger components constituting love (Aron et al., 2006; Sternberg, 2006). For example, caring, trust, disclosure, and understanding are subcomponents of the larger component intimacy; as a cognate to these subcomponents, IWB is subsumed into intimacy with “little visibility and little emphasis” (Hegi & Bergner, 2010, p. 624).

However, studies focused on love types and love scales have recognized IWB, sometimes referred to as caring, as a foundational component of love. For example, Hendrick & Hendrick’s (1986) study of the six love typologies advanced by Lee (1973) not only confirmed the factor loadings and content validity for each love type, it also revealed that a profile of caring pointed to a greater degree of love (pp. 392 & 401). While Lee (1973) classified this kind of love (agape) as a secondary type, and did not detect its complete manifestation in humans, the work of Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) deem it a sustaining component of love (p. 401).

So why do some studies reveal IWB to be love’s most transcendent characteristic while other studies pay it little heed? And where does the idea of IWB as an essential component of love come from? The answers to these questions are tied together. Some of the most compelling research on love has been conducted by scholars who are careful to define concisely the aspect, component, or definition of love they intend to measure or examine. When definitions and meanings of love become conflated, it

becomes more difficult to ascertain what exactly is being measured or studied. This can be exemplified in the combination of the following common statements: I love baseball, I love my dog, I love that new computer, I love my spouse, I love old movies, I love sex, I love your hair, I love my child, I love bananas. Really!?

IWB is a specific component of love. It is not the *only* component of love, but it is an *essential* component of all aspects of love. In other words, love without IWB is not love. It is something else—and that “something else” has perhaps been conflated with love (e.g., enjoyment, appreciation, desire). It can be successfully argued that enjoyment, appreciation, and desire each have a place within the construct of love, but they are not essential components of all aspects of love. So where does the idea of IWB as an essential component of love come from?

Part of the answer is hinted at in the work of Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) referenced previously: the authors call IWB a “sustaining” component of love (p. 401). A more complete picture of IWB’s essential nature as a sustaining component of love can be found in love’s Biblical roots. Understanding the nature of Biblical love and its direct links to the study of sustainability-as-flourishing offers an explanation as to how IWB emerges as love’s most transcendent characteristic while at the same time does not register as foundational in other types, scales, and definitions of love. Through an examination of Biblical love and sustainability-as-

flourishing, IWB emerges as an essential component of love and a sustaining component of flourishing.

Biblical Love and IWB: Sexual and Sacred

Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* begins with a quotation from St.

Augustine, who describes how he came to comprehend language: "When grown-ups named some object and at the same time turned towards it, I perceived this, and I grasped that the thing was signified by the sound they uttered, since they meant to point *it* out." (*Confessions*, 1.8, as cited in Wittgenstein, 1958). Wittgenstein used St.

Augustine's observations to exemplify how humans learn to use language:

These words, it seems to me, give us a particular picture of the essence of human language....In this picture of language we find the roots of the following idea: Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands. (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 2)

Considering the matter-of-fact nature of this linguistic observation, it is easy to see how the term *love* has become conflated over time to the point that it is regularly applied in everyday speech to both one's hobby and one's husband.

It wasn't always this way. One of the foundational and sacred texts surrounding love in the Judeo-Christian tradition is the Bible's Song of Songs. Long held to be an erotic tale of courtship and consummation, the Song of Songs provides precise definitions for love. The Song of Songs provides a Biblical foundation for understanding love. It chronicles two lovers and their experience with the three

foundational aspects of love: companionship, will, and physical intimacy. Inherent in each of these aspects of love is the investment in the well being of an other for that other's sake.

Companionship, or *raya* (the original Hebrew word used in the Song of Songs), refers to the love between friends or soul mates (Song of Songs 4:7, The Message Bible). Will, or *ahava*, refers to love that results in a deep and lasting commitment to another (Song of Songs 8:7, New International Version). “*Ahava* is making a decision to join your life to the life of another” (Bell, 2005, p. 11). Bell (2005) referred to *ahava* as love of the will. And finally, physical intimacy, or *dod*, refers to the physical and sexual nature of love (Song of Songs 1:2, New American Standard Bible), the longing for sexual union. The lovers in the Song of Songs demonstrate the profound and abiding love that takes place when *raya*, *ahava*, and *dod* come together (Bell, 2005). In doing so, the lovers give all of themselves to each other in a sacred and mysterious nuptial union. Love is not conflated here. Rather, it is multifaceted and complex.

The multifaceted love expressed in the Song of Songs is akin to Rubin's (1973) three essential features of love—attachment, caring, and intimacy. The Song of Song's *raya* is like Rubin's attachment: the longing to be in the presence of the other. *Ahava* is akin to Rubin's caring: the decision to join your life to the life of another involves sacrifice and will, and Rubin's caring refers directly to the willingness to sacrifice

one's self for the well being of the other. *Dod* is akin to Rubin's intimacy, which refers to arousal and the sexual union.

IWB is inherent in each of the components of love experienced by the lovers in the Song of Songs—*raya*, *ahava*, and *dod*. However, although IWB has been identified as an essential feature of love, it cannot always be detected in all components associated with love. This can be attributed to “conflation confusion,” when components of a concept (in this case, love) are confused with components that do not actually constitute that concept (love). For example, physical intimacy is often conflated with lust. In the constitution of love, the two are not the same. Physical intimacy—longing for union with another through physical contact—is a natural component of love (Harlow, 1958; Rubin, 1973; Thorn, 2007); however, lust—longing for self-gratification through physical contact—has been identified by scholars as love's inversion (West, 2003).

This conflation is present in the study of sex as well. For example, Hatfield et al. noted, “sex researchers tend to use the terms ‘passionate love’ and ‘sexual desire’ almost interchangeably [yet]. . . passionate love is defined as ‘longing for union,’ while sexual desire can be defined as a ‘longing for sexual union’” (Hatfield et al., 2011, p. 145). The conflation and distinction pointed out by Hatfield et al. are revealing, especially in American society where a Puritan heritage has led to notions that sexuality is physical and separate from a longing that may also be spiritual in

nature (West, 2003). This dualistic notion just does not pan out when conflation confusion is removed. Lust is not love's inversion because of its sexual nature. Indeed, love and sexuality are inextricably entwined. Love is expressed through sexuality. Lust is love's inversion because IWB has been removed.

The lovers in the Song of Songs demonstrate that love is both sexual and sacred. Sexual and sacred love is multifaceted and complex. Love expressed through the sexuality of our bodies exemplifies this. IWB is part of love's sacred nature and can be expressed through sexuality from the get-go: a child is nursed in a mother's womb and then at her breast. That child's conception was the result of physical contact between two reproductive systems, and—if IWB was involved in that contact—was derived of a longing both sexual *and* sacred.

The Four Loves

In *The Four Loves*, C.S. Lewis (1960) also discussed types of longing that are sexual and sacred. According to Lewis, Eros is a type of love that may entail a sexual nature, and Agape (or Charity) is the love that meets God, love of a sacred nature. The other two types of love discussed by Lewis are Affection (Storge) and Friendship (Phileo). For Lewis, these four types of love—derived and defined by the Greek words *storge*, *phileo*, *eros*, and *agape*—existed within the construct of three basic elements of love.

The three elements of love discussed by Lewis are Need-love, Gift-love, and Appreciative love. A love that seeks to invest in the well being of an other combines Gift-love and Appreciative love. The three elements are outlined as follows by Lewis:

Need-love cries to God from our poverty; Gift-love longs to serve, or even to suffer for, God; Appreciative love says: “We give thanks to thee for thy great glory.” Need-love says of a woman “I cannot live without her”; Gift-love longs to give her happiness, comfort, protection—if possible, wealth; Appreciative love gazes and holds its breath and is silent, rejoices that such a wonder should exist, even if not for him, will not be wholly dejected by losing her, would rather have it so than never to have seen her at all. (p. 33)

Appreciative love is an element of love in its purest state—like IWB, it seeks the well-being of the other—whereas Need-love derives from our need of others “physically, emotionally, intellectually; we need them if we are to know anything, even ourselves” (p. 12). Lewis (1960) took care to distinguish Need-love from what he called Need-pleasure, clarifying that a love that seeks only gratification of the self is not a Need-love but a Need-pleasure, and addressing lust as an addiction by juxtaposing Need-loves versus Need-pleasures within the context of a Christian worldview.

Need-love is one of the three elements of love—Need-love, Gift-love, and Appreciative love—whereas Need-pleasure is an element of pleasure gone bad. Lewis (1960) distinguished Pleasures of Appreciation as those elements that satisfy our senses *and* claim our appreciation (p. 29). Pleasures of Appreciation are not in and of themselves bad, but they can “go bad” vis-à-vis addiction (p. 27). Addiction,

according to Lewis, is the state of Need-pleasure. Need-pleasures occur when our senses crave satisfaction but our appreciation is either not, or is no longer, claimed. According to Lewis, any type of love that draws upon Pleasures of Appreciation has the capacity toward the addiction of Need-pleasure. Lewis (1960) identified four types of love—Affection (Storge), Friendship (Phileo), Eros, and Charity (Agape)—and discussed them within the construct of the three elements of love he identified (Need-love, Gift-love, and Appreciative love).

Affection, or Storge, is a familial type of love. It includes Gift-love and Need-love. In doing so, a paradox can develop. Lewis (1960) used the maternal instinct to exemplify: “It is easy to see how liability to this state [Gift-love] is....one that needs to give; therefore needs to be needed” (p. 76). For instance, a mother gives birth and nurses her child. This is Gift-love. However, in the act of giving birth and nursing, that same mother exhibits Need-love: as Lewis explained, “she must give birth or die. She must give suck or suffer. That way, her Affection too is a Need-love” (p. 54). Within the construct of this paradox, Lewis concluded that Affection is an emergent type of love that operates in the other three types of love as well.

Friendship (Phileo) involves profound Appreciative love. It is a brotherly love that for Lewis (1960) was “the least *natural* of loves; the least instinctive, organic, biological, gregarious, and necessary....Without Eros none of us would have been begotten and without Affection none of us would have been reared; but we can live and breed

without Friendship” (p. 88). Friendship is also distinct from the other loves in that it is chosen of free will. In this way, Lewis’s Friendship shares components of *raya* and *ahava* in the Song of Songs: Friendship refers to the companionship between friends (*raya*) and also entails the freely chosen commitment to the other (*ahava*). *Raya* and *dod* also share a kinship with Lewis’s Eros.

However, whereas *raya* is a love that longs to be in the presence of the other, Eros is a love that is decidedly romantic in nature. Lewis (1960) described it as “that state which we call ‘being in love’” (p. 131). Additionally, Lewis separated Eros (being in love) from Venus (sexual acts, sexual desire) but by no means contended the two must maintain a mutually exclusive relationship: he clarified, “Sexuality may operate without Eros or as part of Eros (p. 132). In other words, Eros and Venus can take place in the same relationship but remain separate entities. While Lewis’s Venus and the Song of Songs’ *dod* each refer to the sexual embrace, they differ from one another in that Venus refers specifically to the act of sex and *dod* refers to the longing for sexual union. In other words, with respect to the sexual embrace, Venus may or may not be invested in the act for the other’s sake; *dod* is invested in the act for the sake of union with the other and not solely for gratification of the self.

Lewis (1960) made a similar distinction with Venus and Eros: “Sexual desire, without Eros, wants *it*, the *thing in itself* [the act of sex]; Eros wants the beloved” (p. 134). Need-pleasure arises when one becomes addicted to “the *thing in itself*” (p. 134).

Lewis (1960) used the example of a man “wanting a woman” to elucidate (p. 135). He described that in truth, a lustful man most certainly does not want a woman; rather, he wants the thing that that woman can provide him. The woman in this case becomes an object for what the man desires [sex, orgasm, satisfaction]. By contrast, Eros, Lewis described, “desires the Beloved herself, not the pleasure she can give” (p. 135). When Eros and Venus are combined, the love becomes multifaceted, such as when *rava*, *ahava*, and *dod* come together for the lovers in the Song of Songs, with the potential for a profound and abiding love (Bell, 2005). Lewis (1960) also conceded Eros’s complexity, admitting that Eros can lead to evil as well as good, such as when one becomes a martyr to love, or suicide pacts are made between lovers, or covetousness erupts, or when a lover becomes an idol for the other and thereby becomes crushed by the expectations of that role.

For Lewis, the only place to escape “all the [potential] dangers and perturbations of love is Hell” (p. 169). Lewis’s fourth type of love, Agape love, or Charity, comes from Heaven. It completes Eros, Friendship (Phileo), and Affection (Storge). Charity is unconditional love. According to Lewis, it is the Gift-love that comes from God. Charity demands that we abandon our will to God. In doing so, we serve only one master (Lewis, 1960, p. 171) and do not become obsessed with or crush another with expectation. Lewis (1960) reiterates that “God is love” (p.175), and is the source of both the Gift-love and Need-love within human persons, with Gift-love imaging God. Lewis clarifies that “Divine Gift-love—Love Himself working in a man—is wholly

disinterested and desires what is simply best for the beloved” (p. 177). In this way, Lewis’s Charity (Agape) is akin to IWB, as it seeks to invest in what is best for the other. Lewis (1960) also points out that because Gift-love images God’s love for humankind, through Charity we bear the capacity to love the unlovable (p. 181). This image of God, of Heaven, is for Lewis “the thing we were made for” (p. 190). Charity (Agape) is the end toward which we dream and strive.

Another scholar for whom love is the meaning of life was John Paul II, whose Theology of the Body is an examination of human sexuality and divine love exploring the mystery of God manifest in the physical being of man. The Theology of the Body is a Biblical construct of love. Within its construct, love leads to flourishing, a concept explored at length by Ehrenfeld (2008), whose vision of sustainability is defined by flourishing.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

*The only true voyage...would be not to visit strange lands but to possess other eyes.*⁵
~Marcel Proust

How do sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body inform each other? In many ways, this dissertation question began years ago, before I ever set foot in a doctoral-level class. It began on the way to Africa, along a Spanish highway, where I found myself robbed of everything but the clothes on my back and the jalopy that was carrying me to parts unknown. I had just committed two language fumbles: The first involved running into a nearby grocery store after being burgled and announcing, in Spanish, what I thought was “Please call for help! I have been robbed!” But what I *actually* announced to the crowd inside was “Please call for help! I am robbing!” (While I remembered many things from my high-school Spanish classes, the finer points of present- and past-participle conjugation weren’t among them.) The confused looks I received from the grocery’s patrons befuddled me. *Why wasn’t anyone acting? Why were they just standing there staring at me quizzically?* Likely because people aren’t used to a thief with a conscience, much less one who cries for help.

Security showed up—clearly rattled at first but then reassured after hearing my broken-Spanish responses to their inquiries—and explained to me what I’d essentially

⁵ (Proust, 1923, p. 343)

broadcast to the grocery-store crowd. They also explained how very little the Spanish authorities care about these matters, that out-of-towners were robbed all the time in the area, and that I'd be better off looking in dumpsters for my backpack than seeking recourse with the police. For some reason, in that moment, I decided I would miss my eyeglasses most of all, and apparently I became very sentimental about them because I found myself tearing up, wishing it had been my contacts that had been tucked away in the stolen pack instead of my glasses. Later, after recovering from the strangely sudden attachment to my eyeglasses, I thanked one gentleman who'd been particularly kind during the ordeal. I hugged him and told him how kind (*amable*) he had been to me. Except I didn't. After he walked away, I realized that what I'd actually done was call him my grandmother (*abuela*). I decided to stop talking so much after that. At least for a little while.

It was nice, the silence. I thought a lot about being in a foreign country without everything (including language and eyeglasses) that I had previously thought so necessary in order to exist there. Yes, language matters, but a hug conveyed what I'd felt toward the kind man even when language failed to. And yes, my eyes would tire in my contacts, but I was beginning to see things in a way I hadn't before—in a way corrective lenses are not meant to address. About a month earlier, I had been in Rome and had had the pleasure of catching then-Pope John Paul II's weekly general audience address. In it, he spoke about *kairos* time, the time of hope and fulfillment evoked in the Trinitarian prayer, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the

Holy Spirit. *As it was, is now, and ever shall be*, world without end. Amen.” He emphasized that God’s kingdom is always “in our midst in the person of Christ” (Saint John Paul II, 2000). The gentleman who had been so kind to me was this person, the very Kingdom of God right before me. And to think, I’d seen God and called him Grandmother.

The fact that individuals can act as the presence of Christ for another was not new to me as a cradle Catholic, but what stuck out to me was the Pope’s message that “the Kingdom is the effective but mysterious action that God carries out in the universe and in the tangle of human events” (Saint John Paul II, 2000). In other words, persons can bear witness to the Kingdom in interactions with both the natural world and with others in very complex ways. The Kingdom seemed obviously manifest in the kind gentleman I’d called my grandmother, but it could also be found in the unpleasant event. In other words, the Kingdom isn’t either there or it’s not. It’s somehow there all the time, all the *kairos* time—through the good, the bad, and the ugly. This is part of the mystery.

The experience made me realize nothing had been stolen from me. I hadn’t lost a thing. Or to put it more clearly, I’d lost *only* things. What I’d never lost—what was present the whole time—was the Kingdom of God stretched before me, behind me, and beyond me in all directions for all time. This heaven was everywhere—in loving and caring interactions with others, but it was also in those who now possessed my

eyeglasses. Perhaps very little love and care had been shown in the taking of my things, but that needn't hold sway over my response to nor my feelings toward those who'd done the taking, those whose hearts and minds were not mine to know. I thanked them for what they'd allowed me to see, hoping they might see it too. There is glorious marvel in being so mystery-steeped in connection with another, including one's "enemy." (As well as one's kindly Spanish grandmother.)

A few years later, I studied more closely John Paul II's words about the kingdom of God among us, made visible through exchanges with an other, when I took a course at the Theology of the Body Institute. A few years after that, while taking a doctoral-level course in Benedictine University's Values-Driven Leadership program, I was introduced to the work of another prolific scholar, John Ehrenfeld. Upon reading it, I revisited John Paul II's work, as I saw it everywhere in Ehrenfeld. It was as though the two scholars were talking about the same thing—flourishing—but speaking from different arenas.

The more I read the two scholars' works side-by-side, the more convinced I became that each of their works could inform the other. This exploration began with a paper I wrote for the Leading Corporate Sustainability course. Afterward, I submitted and had the paper accepted for the 2012 International Wisdom at Work Conference held at the University of Arkansas's Global Campus. There, I met scholars working in spiritual leadership and servant leadership: Dr. Louis [Jody] Fry, founder of the

International Institute for Spiritual Leadership and author of *Maximizing the Triple Bottom Line through Spiritual Leadership*; James Autry, former Fortune 500 executive, poet, and author of *Love and Profit: The Art of Caring Leadership*; and Dr. Judi Neal, director of the Tyson Center for Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace and author of *Edgewalkers: People and Organizations that Take Risks, Build Bridges and Break New Ground*. Having the opportunity to speak with these individuals about their work confirmed what I'd heard over and over again from faculty and distinguished visiting scholars in the Values-Driven Leadership program: select your dissertation topic carefully—it may well be the beginning of your life's work. In other words, while completing a dissertation may seem like a capstone, it is actually a cornerstone.

How do sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body inform each other? I began to think about exploring this question in my dissertation. The theories had not been mentioned together in any literature I could find, much less synthesized. There seemed to be a silence in the literature concerning the twine of these two theories. One of the chief tasks in a theoretical dissertation is to use literature as data in order to bring new knowledge or a new dimension to the subject (Rudestam & Newton, 2007).

Ehrenfeld (2008, 2012) has called for an amplification in the study of sustainability. This dissertation intends to do that by bringing to bear a theory (the Theology of the Body) outside of the traditional sustainability literature to bring new knowledge to the

subject of flourishing. Admittedly, this dissertation has been an exercise in faith in many ways. I was warned: I recall a conversation with Dr. Jim Ludema, director of the Center for Values-Driven Leadership. After explaining to him how I felt there was a gap in the literature with respect to these two theories and that I wanted to synthesize them to look for new understanding, he replied, “That’s a theoretical dissertation.” *Great!* I thought. *Now how does one go about writing a theoretical dissertation?* He cautioned that the task was not an easy one and he had not previously granted a student permission to tackle a theoretical dissertation. I scoured dissertation how-to manuals for everything I could find on theoretical dissertations, which is actually very little. Even the most comprehensive guide devoted only a little over a page to the approach, advising that it was not a journey for the faint of heart (Rudestam & Newton, 2007, pp. 54–55). Indeed, I found this caveat in each of the places I turned to for information about theoretical dissertations.

A theoretical dissertation uses literature as its data. In this case, John Paul II’s Theology of the Body and Ehrenfeld’s sustainability-as-flourishing are the data. A theoretical dissertation gathers and analyzes this data (literature) to offer a new or “different way of understanding a phenomena that has heretofore been acknowledged” and “may even create the opening for a brand new way of thinking in [a] field” (Rudestam & Newton, 2007, p. 55). The most worthwhile theoretical studies are “those that bring together or integrate two previously distinct areas” (p. 55). I knew I would be bringing together distinct theories—one centered in the

business and organizational development literature and the other written from a religious (and specifically a Roman Catholic) perspective. I felt confident that an analysis of these two theories alongside one another would offer a “different way of understanding” the phenomena of flourishing, but I wasn’t sure exactly what the new model would look like.

In an early conversation about my dissertation study with a scholar of spiritual leadership, he challenged me with the question, “So what?” I wasn’t able to answer it—yet. But I had faith it was there and I was willing to stake this quest on a gut feeling. I wrote the question in big letters and taped it to my computer screen. Each time I read the theories and typed notes about them, I would scan those notes and ask myself, *So what, so what, so what?* As I continued to study and read Ehrenfeld and John Paul II’s theories alongside each other, annotating pages and writing notes, love—and specifically investment in the well-being of an other—emerged as a unifying theme. I conducted a literature review on love and the question came into better focus: What role does the love explored in the Theology of the Body play in sustainability and flourishing? And the *so what* began to emerge. Love as the investment in the well-being of an other underlies each of Ehrenfeld’s four domains of care, which can be mapped to the free, faithful, total, and fruitful love that comprises the Theology’s spousal analogy. By supporting these domains of care, the love explored in the Theology—love as the investment in the well-being of an other—offers a wellspring that can lead to flourishing.

Research has been conducted through reviews of the literature surrounding Ehrenfeld's sustainability-as-flourishing and John Paul II's Theology of the Body. The two theories—sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body—are the data. The research collected is in the form of a discussion and analysis of Ehrenfeld's and John Paul II's theories. This discussion includes an integration that seeks to begin to fill a conceptual gap or "silence" in the literature with respect to the twine of sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body.

Reviews of the supporting bodies of literature have also been conducted to both lay the framework for the study and to identify gaps on the literature that the research question can illuminate or fill. These supporting bodies include the linguistics and logic of love, conceptualizations of love, definitions and "types" of love in the social sciences, the nature of love, the biology and neurology of love, love scales, empathy, and types of biblical love. The theoretical work concludes with implications and recommendations for future study.

Before I began the dissertation process, Dr. Ludema warned me that theoretical dissertations are a rigorous journey. Indeed, Rudestam and Newton (2007) called the undertaking "a profound intellectual challenge" (p. 55). I have found the path to be both demanding and rewarding. It has been said that all roads lead to Rome. Little did I know when I found myself alongside one of them, stripped of my belongings, I'd

stumble across the kingdom of God—and find a dissertation question waiting for me on the other side.

Chapter 4: Sustainability-as-Flourishing and the Theology of the Body

*Flourishing is everyone's birthright.*⁶
~Martin Seligman

On my bed by night I sought him whom my soul loves.
~Song of Songs 3:1⁷

Introduction

Sustainability-as-flourishing is a theory presented by Ehrenfeld (2008) and expounded upon in his work, *Sustainability by Design: A Subversive Strategy for Transforming our Consumer Culture*. Sustainability-as-flourishing draws upon domains of care as a way toward flourishing and sustainability. Ehrenfeld's work is centered in business and organizational development literature. The Theology of the Body is a body of work by John Paul II that focuses on the union of the physical body with the divine. The Theology of the Body is written from a religious—and specifically a Roman Catholic—perspective. The divine love explored in the Theology of the Body is a pathway toward flourishing that complements and enriches Ehrenfeld's vision of sustainability. It is a type of love that leads to the state of capital-*b* Being as described in Ehrenfeld's sustainability-as-flourishing theory (2008, 2012b), when four domains of care are realized. The Theology of the Body has not been examined or applied to the business and organizational development literature in

⁶ (Seligman, 2011)

⁷ English Standard Version

this particular way. However, the Theology has much to contribute to sustainability-as-flourishing: the Theology investigates a type of love that leads to flourishing, so it deserves a closer look within the sustainability-as-flourishing context.

Sustainability-as-Flourishing

*Today, if we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.*⁸

~Mother Teresa

In organizational culture, researchers Ehrenfeld (2008; 2012) and Laszlo (2008; 2010; 2011; 2012) have been leading voices in the examination of sustainability's role in theory and in practice. The thrust of Laszlo's research has been aimed at making the business case for sustainability. Laszlo has highlighted organizational efforts that have effected environmental sustainability and human well-being while at the same time resulting in increased value or profit for the organization. Laszlo's work has helped leaders view sustainability as a competitive benefit to their organizations.

Ehrenfeld's work takes sustainability further—into the philosophical, poetic, and inspirational as well as the academic and practical spheres. Sustainability has been a major component of Ehrenfeld's work in life, and he is credited with introducing the environment and sustainability to a number of business school curriculums as a result of teachers he influenced as students (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013, p. vii). The thrust of Ehrenfeld's recent work has been focused on sustainability-as-flourishing, which has led him to consider, more recently, the phrase *attainability-of-flourishing*.

⁸ (Mother Teresa, 2008)

Sustainability-as-flourishing is a systems-thinking approach to sustainability. Ehrenfeld's vision of sustainability-as-flourishing embodies two distinct interpretations of the term *being*. Ehrenfeld posits capital-*b* *Being* as essence or essential substance. In contrast, lowercase-*b* *being* represents "having-ness" or material objectification (2008).

Both Laszlo (2012) and Ehrenfeld (2008; 2012) have called for an amplification in the study of sustainability. Each has indicated that a higher plane is necessary to advance sustainability from sustenance to burgeoning, and Ehrenfeld has introduced a working model that addresses this call. Ehrenfeld's model for sustainability (2008) initially encompassed three domains of care (self, other, the natural world), with a fourth domain (2012) recently added—the transcendent or spiritual. The fourth domain can move the other three domains from the "addiction loop" (where one is stuck in lowercase-*b* *being*) to flourishing (where one is immersed in capital-*b* *Being*).

In *Sustainability by Design*, Ehrenfeld (2008) issued a call to Being. Ehrenfeld's use of the capital b in his work is significant, as it refers to the unique essence of human existence (p. 6). In other words, when Ehrenfeld uses the term *Being*, he is recalling the quiddity of the human experience, or, the essential nature of humanness.

Alternately, when Ehrenfeld uses the lowercase-*b* to spell the term *being*, the term denotes directly its "general...everyday objective sense"—a state he refers to as "having-ness" and material consumption (p. 7). The state of having-ness is the state

that keeps one in the addiction loop and out of the “authentic mode of satisfaction,” or flourishing (p. 37). In other words, when one tries to relieve the symptoms of a need through *having* as opposed to through *Being*, one remains in a circle of addiction—needing to *have* again and again to relieve the symptom. It takes a set of actions through the domains of care for one to move out of the addiction loop and into *Being*, where flourishing takes place and sustainability can be realized.

For Ehrenfeld, sustainability is not an object. Sustainability is not the environment. For Ehrenfeld, sustainability encompasses more than the environment. It must take into account human beings as well. Hoffman put it this way, “For John [Ehrenfeld], sustainability is not about windmills, hybrid cars, and green cleaners; it is about the way we live. It is about living authentically; it is about our relationships with nature, with each other, and with ourselves” (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013, p. ix). According to the introduction to *Flourishing: A Frank Conversation about Sustainability* (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013), things like windmills, hybrid cars, and green cleaners are to Ehrenfeld “just the trappings that convince us that we are doing something when in fact we are fooling ourselves, and making things worse” (p. 1). In this way, sustainability has become “status-quo,” becoming embedded as a phrase into our activities, yet these activities—grounded in economic growth and the consumption of material goods—continue to deplete our earth and have detrimental effects on our environment (Ehrenfeld, 2013b). For Ehrenfeld, sustainability is about life, the planet (the natural world), and interrelations. He defined sustainability as “*the possibility*

that humans and other life will flourish on the planet forever” (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 6, italics are Ehrenfeld’s). In this manner, sustainability cannot exist as a modifier. In other words, the term *sustainable* as an adjective has no content without its noun. (Ehrenfeld, 2012a).

For example, sustainable development is about development, not sustainability (Ehrenfeld, 2008, pp. 5-7), whereas sustainability-as-flourishing is an emergent property of a complex system (Ehrenfeld, 2012a). It is a subject in and of itself. Its presence or absence signals the condition of the (human or natural) system (Ehrenfeld, 2008, pp. 5-7). *Sustainability*, a noun, rests on post-modernist notions; it is observable and describable, but not measurable (Ehrenfeld, 2012a). It is either there or it isn’t. It lives on connections. Again, it is an emergent property, and emergent properties are determined by the interconnectedness of systems. As such, sustainability cannot be compartmentalized (Ehrenfeld, 2008, pp. 20-21).

However, this is not the way sustainability is commonly approached by our culture. For instance, in the corporate world, making the business case for sustainability refers to sustainability’s contribution to profits (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013). However, according to Ehrenfeld, linking sustainability to the market economy reinforces “those very beliefs that caused the problem in the first place” (p. 3). He drew upon Albert Einstein’s words to clarify that applying the same kind of thinking to address problems that was applied when we created those problems won’t solve them (p. 20)

and called for a “new story to guide us” (p. 16). To Ehrenfeld, this new story is not just a new approach to sustainability. It is “an entirely different way of viewing ourselves and the world than we have had for the last three hundred years or so” (p. 21). For Ehrenfeld, addressing sustainability requires profound changes in both “the way we think and the way we organize our society....a deep shift in values on par with the Reformation....a movement to reexamine who we are, why we are here, and how we are connected to everything around us” (p. 4).

Ehrenfeld’s idea of sustainability goes beyond the Brundtland Commission’s definition. The Brundtland Commission, or World Commission on Environment and Development, was begun by the United Nations to unite countries in efforts to pursue sustainability. In 1987, the Commission issued a report titled *Our Common Future*, also known as the *Brundtland Report*. In the document, the Commission defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Ehrenfeld acknowledged the definition’s moral imperative and concern for the planet but pointed out that responses by developed countries to the report’s call have been “to try to hold on to the world as we now have it...promot[ing] an eco-efficiency-based argument,” which, while important, will not lead to sustainability (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013, p. 19). Addressing unsustainability by using the “modernistic frame of thinking and acting” that led to unsustainability to begin with may lessen unsustainability, but it will not

solve the problem of unsustainability (p. 20). Ehrenfeld asserted that what is needed is a “radically different story than the Brundtland Commission definition” (p. 19). Ehrenfeld is careful and precise in his use of language: In selecting the word *radical* to describe the new story for sustainability, Ehrenfeld (2008) has chosen a word whose etymology is related to the etymology of the word *root*, pointing to the fact that “we have become separated from our human and natural roots and need to find our way back” (p. 55). The new story that needs to take place is one that calls us to the roots of our humanity and one that does not apply the same ways of thinking (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013, p. 19).

By applying the same ways of thinking about and acting on unsustainability, organizations from businesses to governments to schools have shaped sustainability, and in many cases, sustainability has become simply a marketing pitch (pp. 2–3 & p. 15). For Ehrenfeld, addressing sustainability requires profound changes in both “the way we think and the way we organize our society; he noted the depth and significance of the shift he calls for by likening it to the types of shifts that gave rise to the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution, yet this shift would be “a movement to reexamine who we are, why we are here, and how we are connected to everything around us” (p. 4), an examination of our quiddity as humans and our interconnectedness with the world.

Very recently, since the publication of his two books about sustainability-as-flourishing (in 2008 and 2013), Ehrenfeld has begun using the phrase *attainability-of-flourishing*. In his blog, which includes extensive thoughts on sustainability, Ehrenfeld (2013b) described his rationale for the adoption of the new phrase: Because “sustainability has become the language we use to encompass everything we are doing to maintain the status quo, implicitly referring to the systems of thought and institutions that form the basis of modern life,.... I will start thinking and writing about the attainability-of-flourishing.” Personally, I hope Ehrenfeld continues to write about sustainability in terms of flourishing. In doing so up to this point, he has already had an impact on our understanding of sustainability by reminding us of the enormous role sustainability plays in what it means to be human. This is a major contribution not only to the field of sustainability but also to our understanding of the word *sustainability*. Words are defined by their recorded use in the culture that writes and speaks them. Ehrenfeld’s voice is indispensable in that record to continue to remind us of the role sustainability plays in what it means to be a part of that culture, to be a member of humanity.

However, in starting to think about “attainability-of-flourishing,” Ehrenfeld has not abandoned the notion or idea of sustainability-as-flourishing: Indeed, the vision is the same; rather, he is making a conscious effort to use language that reflects accurately his theory and ideas about flourishing. So while the vision is the same, Ehrenfeld suggests a language change in the hope of demanding different actions than those

associated with the term *sustainable* that have become culturally embedded in notions of what it means to achieve sustainability. And what does achieving sustainability mean to Ehrenfeld?

According to Ehrenfeld (2008), sustainability can only be achieved “if we pay close attention to the three critical domains that the forces of modernity have dimmed” (p. 58). These domains are outlined in Ehrenfeld’s Tao of Sustainability (Figure 1):

- Our sense of ourselves as human beings: the human domain.
- Our sense of our place in the [natural] world: the natural domain.
- Our sense of doing the right thing: the ethical domain. (pp. 58-59, brackets are Ehrenfeld’s)

Ehrenfeld (2012b) also refers to the human domain as the “self-directed domain” (self-care) and to the ethical domain as the “other-directed domain” (other-care).

Because sustainability is an emergent property, the domains cannot be compartmentalized if flourishing is to occur: “all the relationships on which it depends [must be] functioning correctly” (p. 59). Since the publication of his Tao in *Sustainability by Design*, Ehrenfeld has added a fourth domain: spirituality (“The Tao of Sustainability,” 2012b). According to Ehrenfeld, this additional, fourth, domain of care—spirituality, or care for the transcendent—is an “out-of-the-world” experience, i.e., it doesn’t come from the self, other people, or the world; additionally, it can occur within or outside of religion (Ehrenfeld, 2012a).

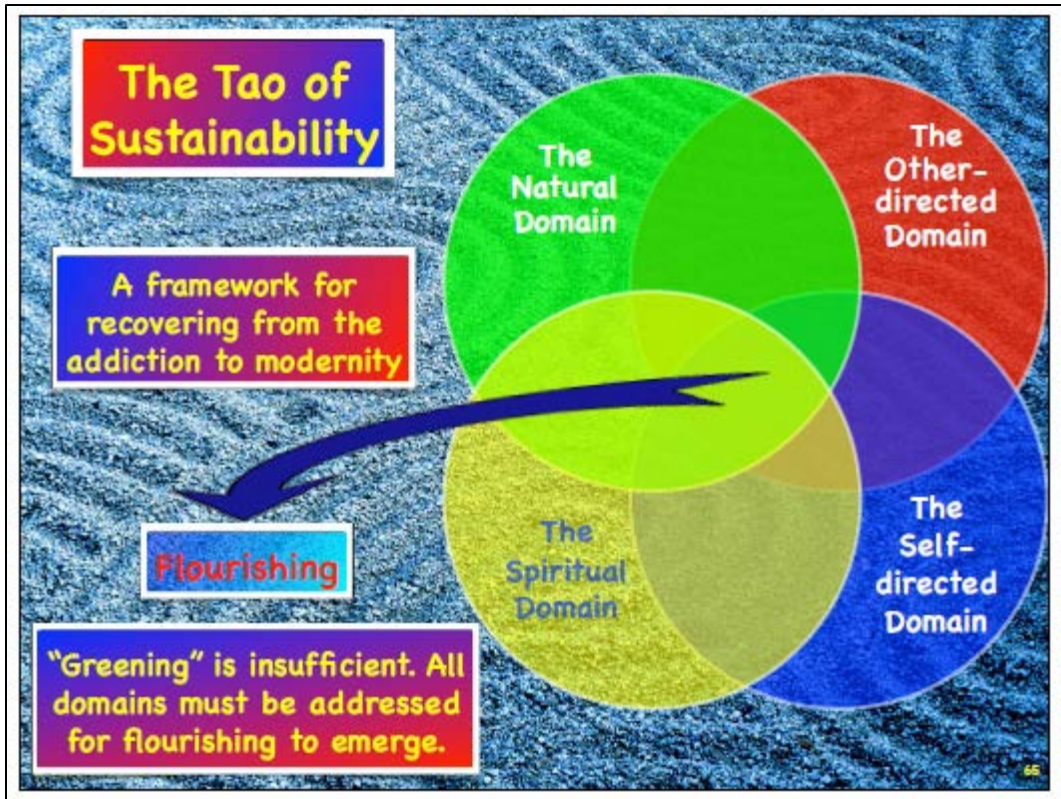


Figure 1. The Tao of Sustainability⁹

The key to Ehrenfeld’s (2008) Tao is that “any activity designed to produce sustainability” must be underlain by each of the domains (p. 58). Otherwise, the activity becomes a function of lowercase-*b* being, of having-ness, and sustainability does not emerge. When one is stuck in having-ness, or being, one objectifies other entities. In this state, even persons can become “must haves,” and the dignity of the human person is diminished. For Ehrenfeld (2012a), spirituality provides a path to capital-*B* Being—a path to sustainability, a path to flourishing. Ehrenfeld (2012a)

⁹ Ehrenfeld, J. R. (2012b). “The Tao of Sustainability,” slide from course lecture delivered 11 February 2012. Lecture conducted from The Center for Values-Driven Leadership, Benedictine University, Lisle, IL.

posits that “unsustainability stems, in large part, from the way we see everything as a mechanical machine,” which is the opposite of “systems thinking” (2008, p. 204).

Because systems thinking and spirituality are closely related, spirituality can provide a route to care in an ontological manner: “conscious care” is the key to this understanding and appreciation of the world as a whole, as a system (Ehrenfeld, 2012a). Acknowledging that spirituality is but one of the essential domains of care, Ehrenfeld (2012a) posited that its power lies in the ability to help “turn on” the others, thus moving from a state of being toward the state of Being. Ehrenfeld’s work builds upon and underscores Fromm’s (1976) assertion that “having and being are two fundamental modes of experience, the respective strengths of which determine the differences between the characters of individuals and various types of social character” (p. 14).

There is no place for “having” in Ehrenfeld’s Being, because there is no cause for possession of an other, only connection with an other. However, Ehrenfeld offers over and over again that modernity has rejected Being in favor of having, thus becoming “rich in things and poor in soul” (Ehrenfeld, 2012a). As such, humans have become rich in material matter (objects) and poor in the material that matters, essential substance (subject). This being-vs.-Being dilemma has been identified by Ehrenfeld (2008) as a fundamental element in the struggle for sustainability. Lowercase-*b* being

is cited as the cause of the growth and persistence of unsustainability, whereas capital-*b* Being leads to sustainability-as-flourishing.

Ehrenfeld has likened Being to the positive psychologist Csikszentmihalyi's (2008) work with "flow," a state of optimal experience where a person reaches a state of "wholeness, completion, or perfection" (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013, p. 18).

Csikszentmihalyi described that flow occurs when an individual is "completely involved in an activity *for its own sake*. The ego falls away" (as cited in Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013, p. 18, italics mine). According to Ehrenfeld, flow is a state of Being, of flourishing (p. 18). Like Being and flourishing, flow is an emergent state. It is not a permanent state. It emerges when the four domains of care have been tended to: care for oneself, care for others, care for the world, and care for the "out-of-the-world," or spiritual/transcendental world (p. 17). In this manner, sustainability is not a "thing" that can be *had*; rather, it is a manner of *being*, or, more accurately, *Being*.

Ehrenfeld (2008) drew on Fromm (1976) to emphasize that, like sustainability, love is an act of Being. And like sustainability, love is not something that can be had—or "gather[ed] in a bucket"—yet we often think we can acquire it through a sense of having-ness (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 44). He called this notion of having-ness "objective reality," citing positivism as one example of the materialistic way we interpret the world around us. Building on the work of Maturana (1988), Ehrenfeld (2008) pointed to this cultural tendency to hold reality in an objective way as "one of the root causes

of unsustainability” as it assumes human authority over nature, thereby assuming ourselves “outside of nature rather than as a part of the natural world” (p. 24). When we view ourselves as outside of the natural world—holding authority over nature—and not as a part of the natural world, we see nature as an object, and objectifying leads to unsustainability. Ehrenfeld (2008) asserted that the same is true for love: because it is not something that can be had or “acquired...attempts to find it as an object are not likely to work. Love is found through loving...not mere feelings that disappear in the morning after a brief encounter with another human who is hungry for love as well;” for love to flourish, commitment and hard work are required (p. 44). When an individual tries to find love through *having*, or objectification, as opposed to through *Being*, the individual remains in the addiction loop—needing to *have*, or objectify, again and again. For love to be attained, the domains of care must be active, moving the individual out of the addiction loop and into Being, where flourishing takes place and sustainability can be realized.

Another scholar who noted love’s connection to sustenance and flourishing was John Paul II, whose examination of human sexuality and divine love explores the divine mystery of God manifest in the physical being of man. John Paul II’s body of work, *Theology of the Body*, is rooted in the Catholic Intellectual tradition and operates within the construct of Biblical and Church teaching that the physical body was intended for communion with the divine. In short, the *Theology of the Body* posits

that human sexuality is an invitation to the sacred, the erotic, and the nuptial meaning of the body in communion with the whole of the natural world.

The Theology of the Body

You are a garden spring, A well of fresh water, And streams flowing... Awake, O north wind, And come, wind of the south; Make my garden breathe out fragrance; Let its spices be wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden and eat its choice fruits.

~Song of Songs 4:15–
16¹⁰

John Paul II's exploration of the union of the physical body with the divine complements and enriches Ehrenfeld's vision of sustainability. It offers a pathway toward flourishing by clarifying the being vs. Being dilemma as one of object and subject in humankind's interactions with the domains of self, others, the whole of the natural world, and the transcendent. As such, the Theology of the Body applied to sustainability-as-flourishing illuminates a vision of sustainability and a pathway to the sublime that encompasses love—both sexual and sacred—at its foundation.

The Theology of the Body is a body of work outlined in 129 general audience addresses made by the former Pope between 1979 and 1984. According to the Theology of the Body, love is necessary for flourishing. The Theology of the Body articulates, through an examination of human sexuality, the being-vs.-Being / object-vs.-subject dilemma. The Theology is centered in the Roman Catholic Intellectual tradition and centers on the divine mystery of God manifest in the physical being of

¹⁰ New American Standard Bible

man. The theology operates within the construct of Biblical and Roman Catholic Church (hereafter, Church) teaching that the physical body was intended for communion with the divine.

As a spiritual construct that happens also to stem from religious teaching, the Theology of the Body illuminates a path to sustainability-as-flourishing that encompasses love—both sexual and sacred—as its foundational element. The Theology’s central tenet—that all creation bears the imprint of the divine and that the physical body was intended for communion with the divine—offers a “systems thinking” approach that rejects the compartmentalization of methodological reductionism and relies upon humankind’s interconnectedness with the divine, veritably stamped in his or her physical being. Because it is a systems-thinking approach and pathway, the Theology of the Body offers an understanding and appreciation of life as a whole, which, according to Ehrenfeld (2008), flourishing demands. As such, it offers a significant contribution to the field of leadership, operating out of both the arenas spirituality and sustainability.

In *The Theology of the Body*, John Paul II (1997) averred the following:

The body, in fact, and it alone, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and the divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God, and thus be a sign of it. (p. 76)

In other words, imprinted in the physical body is a sign of the divine. Our human sexuality is an invitation to the sacred, the erotic, and the nuptial meaning of the body in communion with the whole of the natural world—and with the divine. Theology of the Body scholar Christopher West (2003) explained it thusly: “the human body is the original ‘sign’ of the ultimate spiritual reality” (p. 3). This is the lens John Paul II used to examine the physical body, not solely as a “biological organism, but as a *theology*” (p. 2). Through an understanding of the nuptial meaning of the body, John Paul II posited that the meaning of life (and a way toward flourishing) is revealed.

And what is the meaning of life, according to the Theology of the Body? “To love and be loved” (West, 2006a, p. 7). This kind of love is a Being kind of love. It does not seek to have. As such, the notion of free will becomes paramount: if love is not free, then it is not love. Eden’s fruit (often represented as an apple, thanks in part to the apple’s long history as a racy and tempting fruit and also to John Milton who set the idea in print) symbolizes God’s exquisite gift: the gift of free will. This “capacity to choose” (West, 2003, p. 7) allows freedom *to* love and freedom *from* love.

Applying the lens of the Theology of the Body, every exchange reflects this gift, holding the capacity to love—or not to love. Thus, relational exchanges with an other are each and all rooted in this fundamental conception: the capacity to love. They also hold the choice *not* to love.

The work of Ehrenfeld agrees. Ehrenfeld (2008) very clearly explained, “Being free means more than simply being able to make choices in the marketplace or even at the polling booth. It means that these choices must be unconstrained and domination-free” (pp. 59–60). Like the old-timers who suggest that you “might could” do something, free will must be without command. Like the freedom *to* love, free will must also encompass the freedom *from* love. For example, “might could” is domination-free. It reflects a choice, an “apple,” hope inherent, the gift of free will manifest in language. The capacity to love freely is without domination. And when the free-will choice of love is made, it leads to Being.

In the Theology of the Body, the action of Being is a spiritual call. West has explained that the spiritual call to love as God loves “is stamped in the beauty and mystery of the body in its sexual complementary” (West, 2002, p. 18). In other words, the spirit is illuminated in the physical manifestation of the body. The capacity for love is written in our bodies. It is not an entity separate from us. It is a systems approach to understanding life, flourishing, and Being. To put it terms of Fromm (1976), the Theology of the Body would say, “I am the capacity for love.”

Just as the Theology of the Body does not compartmentalize love, it does not hold that the body and spirit are dualistic entities. In fact, the Church considers this heresy. This heresy is often linked to the religion referred to as Manichaeism, after Mani, the third-century Persian mystic whose teachings separated the body/matter (as profane)

and the soul/spirit (as sacred). The Church considered Manichaeism heresy because it rejects the flesh, considering it depraved; likewise, the Theology of the Body rejects Manichaeism for its rejection of the flesh. The Church teaches that both the flesh *and* the spirit are sacred, as human beings were created “in the image of God” (Genesis 1:27, English Standard Version) and “God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31, English Standard Version). The Church instructs that “[t]he flesh is the hinge of salvation” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1994, n. 1015). John Paul II has stressed through the Theology of the Body that the body should not blur the soul; rather, it should point to it, and, like several mystics have, he has favored the spousal analogy as a metaphor for this aim.

The spousal analogy and nuptial love

According to the Theology of the Body, God’s gift and mystery can be illustrated in the spousal analogy. The Bible uses a multitude of metaphors to illustrate the relationship of humankind with God. Among these are sheep and shepherd, body and head, child and parent, branches and vine, and bride and bridegroom. The metaphor employed most often in biblical texts is that of the spouses: bride and bridegroom. This is the spousal analogy, or nuptial image.

The origin of the analogy comes from Scripture—“and the two shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24 and Matthew 19:5, English Standard Version). Adam echoes this union when he encounters Eve for the first time and exclaims, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Genesis 2:23, English Standard Version). John Paul

II (1997) clarified this “original unity” of creation by explaining that humankind is both “‘male and female’ right from the beginning” (p. 43). The creation of Adam alone does not reflect the image of God. After Adam is created by God, he experiences a sleep, or “original solitude,” that leads to the creation of Eve, giving rise to the “communion of persons” that constitutes the human being (p. 46). This integration—the *both/and* of the human person—is the “divine communion of persons” that reflects the image of God (p. 46). The Theology of the Body puts it like this:

In the mystery of creation—on the basis of the original and constituent “solitude” of his being—man was endowed with a deep unity between what is, humanly and through the body, male in him and what is, equally humanly and through the body, female in him. On all this, right from the beginning, the blessing of fertility descended. (p. 47)

With respect to the spousal analogy, the Church teaches that “every form of love will always bear this masculine and feminine character” (Pontifical Council, 1996, p. 10). Thus blessed with fertility both literally and figuratively, love among human persons bears the potential to be fruitful—to be a life-giving love. This leads to the nuptial meaning of the body.

However, the Theology of the Body is explicit that its use of the spousal analogy should not be interpreted to mean that that the Theology is intended solely for spouses. The Theology of the Body is intended to apply to *all* humans, married or not (West, 2006b). And while the spousal analogy encompasses human sexuality, the life-

giving love it entails isn't intended solely to refer to the act of sex and procreation. For example, the spousal analogy applies as much to one who has chosen a celibate life as it applies to a married couple with multiple children. The Theology teaches that marriage and celibacy "for the kingdom" complete each other (John Paul II, 1997, p. 276): when an individual chooses celibacy "for the purpose of reciprocating in a particular way the nuptial love of the Redeemer" (p. 282), it is a conjugal expression. Conjugal love in married and celibate life is "expressed through the total gift of oneself" (p. 277), and since conjugal love is "ordered by its nature toward fatherhood and motherhood," the designations *father*, *mother*, *sister*, and *brother* relate to both family life and celibate vocations (West, 2003b, p. 289). It extends beyond those vocations as well: it is how a Being kind of love considers another's total self. John Paul II (1997) pointed out that the groom in the Song of Songs calls his beloved both *sister* and *bride*. By calling her *sister*, the groom expresses both her feminine distinction and also the fact that the groom and his beloved are one—they are unified in humankind. John Paul II (1997) explained, "This is not only with regard to sex, but to the very way of 'being person,' which means both 'being subject' and 'being in relationship'" (p. 371). The fact that the groom calls his beloved *sister* illustrates how he sees her, "still in the time of girlhood" and thereby "embrac[ing] her entire 'I,' soul and body, with a disinterested tenderness" (p. 371). The groom sees her as not just *a* body but *somebody*. He sees not just the object of his desire but the total person, the total subject in all its quiddity.

When the spousal analogy as an image is used over and over again in the Bible to describe God's love for humankind, it is employed as a "portrait of sexual love as an icon" (Weigel, 1999, p. 336). That icon is intended to point us to the manner in which all of our exchanges, all of our experiences in relationship with an other, should take place. By way of the scriptural spousal analogy, both the vocation of marriage and of celibate life "flow from the true meaning of sexuality and the deepest meaning of sexual desire" (West, 2003b, p. 289). Both vocations have the capacity for nuptial love. Nuptial love is free (the human person, recognizing her or his own dignity, has free will to choose to love, domination-free); it is faithful (authentic and true to the other); it is total (complete, not divided or compartmentalized); and it is fruitful (life-giving, holding life inviolate). This combination of free, faithful, total, and fruitful love leads to Being and flourishing and is rooted in the investment in the well-being of an other for the other's sake. Investing in the well-being of an other allows for the capacity of one to become a gift for an other: freely, totally, faithfully, and fruitfully. This is the portrait of sexual love—the nuptial meaning of the body (West, 2006b).

John Paul II (1997) clarified the notion of sexual love and desire. In the context of the Theology of the Body, sexual desire is the desire to make a "sincere gift of [self]" (p. 64)—"to love as God loves....an experience permeated by grace" (West, 2002, p. 19). The desire is erotic, but it is not self-seeking (John Paul II, 1997, pp. 63-65). It is sacred. Because it is invested in the well-being of the other, it encompasses IWB. It seeks communion with another. According to the Theology of the Body, the inversion

of sexual desire is lust, which seeks self-gratification at the expense of another (West, 2006b). Lust sees an other as an object, a “goal or end” to act upon, direct toward (Object, n.d.). By contrast, love—sexual desire—seeks self-donation for the good of the other (West, 2006b). Love sees an other as “essential substance” (Subject, n.d.). This type of love is emergent. Fromm (1956) wrote about this type of love as an “*orientation of character* which determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole, not toward one ‘object’ of love” (p. 46, italics are Fromm’s). In other words, it is total, not compartmentalized. It is also domination-free, recognizing the inherent dignity of the human person; it is faithful to an other and does not hold the other as an object; and it is fruitful, holding life inviolate and not to be objectified.

Love—before its inversion, lust, emerged—is exemplified in the Bible in Genesis, where “the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed” (Genesis 2:25, English Standard Version). Here, Adam and Eve experience sexual desire as the desire to love in God’s image (West, 2003, p. 8), love in its bona fide manifestation, not inverted. John Paul II (1997) has been very clear on what this means: “The fact that ‘they were not ashamed’ means that the woman was not an ‘object’ for the man nor him for her” (p. 75).

This nakedness illustrates the nuptial meaning of the body—how humankind is to see and interact with an other in exchange and in relationship. Nakedness without shame embodies the “capacity of expressing love: that love precisely in which the person

becomes gift and, by means of this gift, fulfills the very meaning of his being and existence” (West, 2006b, p. 63). It is sexual, and it is sacred. This is the multifaceted love—the *raya*, *ahava*, and *dod*—extolled in the Song of Songs. It is also a love that invests in the well-being of the other (other-care) and recognizes the dignity of the self (self-care) as well as of the natural world (care for the world).

The Theology of the Body and the domains of care

The Theology of the Body’s portrait of sexual love as an icon is akin to Ehrenfeld’s Tao in that it indicates a multifaceted systems approach: it is about care—care for one’s self, care for other human beings, care for the natural world (creation), and care for the transcendent (the soul). In this way, the icon is an emergent property: when “all the relationships on which it depends are functioning correctly” (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 59), nuptial love is accomplished, Being is accomplished.

Ehrenfeld called the dilemma of being vs. Being “a misunderstanding of human identity” (2012a). The scholarship of John Paul II agrees, noting that the human person can exist in both a state of being and of Being, living out the object and subject dilemma in relationship with an other—whether that other is a person or the whole of creation. The Theology articulates, through an examination of human sexuality, the being-vs.-Being dilemma as a dilemma of object-and-subject (John Paul II, 1997; West, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2006b, 2008, 2009). In terms of the elements sustainability encompasses—life, planet, interrelations—the capital- / lowercase-*b* distinction Ehrenfeld makes between Being/being is a distinction between subject and

object. When humans are called to Being, they are called to become subject. In other words, humans are called to become—in both the straightforward and figurative senses of the word—the “essential substance” inherent to the human existence (Subject, n.d.).

Furthermore, through Being, humans are called not only to realize themselves as subject (self-care) but also to realize the other as subject (other-care). Realizing one’s self as subject includes “arising out of our (lost) sense of what it is to be human” (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 6). Realizing an other as subject includes “arising out of our (lost) sense of place in the natural world, and...arising out of our (lost) sense of responsibility for our actions and our relationships to others” (p. 6). To Ehrenfeld, this state of Being is flourishing.

By contrast, when humans are acting from a state of being (lowercase *b*) and not Being (capital *B*), they become object. In this manner, the human experience becomes a “goal or end” to be predicated on (Object, n.d.) as opposed to an “essential substance.” In this diminished state of being, the quiddity of the human experience turns from its essential nature of humanness toward a nature of “having-ness.” In turn, the other (other humans and the whole of the natural world) becomes object within the human state of existence as well. In this “disaffected” state of being, flourishing does not take place, and humans become stuck in the “impoverished modern form of ‘having’” (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 6).

In other words, the being/Being ↔ object/subject distinction is one of material matter and material that matters. Progressing from object to subject means progressing from an understanding of existence—an understanding of our self and those with whom we share a connection—as material matter to an understanding of our self, other humans, and the whole of the natural world as material that matters. In this way, the progression from being to Being calls us to understand the whole of life as “essential substance”: a new form of matter.

For Ehrenfeld, this new form of matter—sustainability, flourishing—is an emergent property achieved through functions of care. For John Paul II, this new form of matter—the nuptial meaning of the body—is an emergent property achieved through love. The nuptial meaning of the body can be glimpsed through bona fide sexual desire—nakedness without shame, our heart’s heritage (West, 2006b). And the investment in the well-being of an other for the other’s sake (IWB)—which is an essential (Singer, 1984; Rempel & Burris, 2005; Bergner & Davis, 2007; Hegi & Bergner, 2010) and sustaining (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986) element of love—is at its core.

Lust and the addiction loop

Nuptial love, which invests in the well-being of the other, is given freely. Lust, “having-ness,” removes this freedom of self-giving by “reduc[ing] self-control...mak[ing] impossible the interior freedom of giving” (John Paul II, 1997, p.

127). Further, the male-female communion of the body, its spiritual expression, becomes “obscured” and the “body remains as an object of lust and therefore, as a ‘field of appropriation’ of the other...not capable of promoting union as the communion of persons” (p. 127). Like nuptial love, IWB seeks to invest in an other. Lust does not. Lust seeks to invest in self.

Love and its inversion, lust, are not primarily male versus female constructs. They are human constructs when imaged through the spousal analogy. Love sees an other as subject—as fundamental and indispensable matter. Lust sees an other as object—as a matter on which to predicate. John Paul II (1997) wrote about the heart’s tussle between love and lust, calling it a “battlefield”—“the more lust dominates the heart, the less the heart experiences the nuptial meaning of the body. It becomes less sensitive to the gift of the person” (p. 126).

The inability for a person to overcome lust prevents him or her from Being by keeping the individual in the addiction loop of Ehrenfeld’s (2008) model illustrating the addiction of modern consumption (p. 37). In order to attain an “authentic mode of satisfaction,” patience, commitment, and hard work are required. Ehrenfeld employs the love/lust example to effect his point:

Love is found through loving, the set of actions that create a special kind of satisfaction in an ongoing relationship, and not mere feelings that disappear in the morning after a brief encounter with another human who is hungry for love as well. Loving takes commitment and much more; it is hard work, and the results do not often show up immediately...In most cases, the problem or the hunger persists for a

while and the results of taking the path in the lower loop [to the authentic mode] are delayed. The tendency in impatient, instant-gratification modern settings is usually to shrug one's shoulders and continue to pursue the symptom-relieving pathway, reinforcing the pattern. (p. 44)

In drug addiction, the symptom-relieving pathway is the drug. Attempts by psychoanalysts to move patients out of this addiction loop and into sustainability include a focus on intimacy (Perkinson, 2002; Khantzian & Weegmann, 2009). In the *Theology of the Body*, the symptom-relieving pathway is lust. Moving out of the addiction loop and into flourishing involves an understanding of Biblical love.

For Lewis (1960), understanding addiction required an understanding of Need-pleasure—the pleasures that occur when our senses crave satisfaction but our appreciation is either not, or is no longer, claimed. When we live from a place of Need-pleasure, we are living in the addiction loop described by Ehrenfeld. We are living in a place of lust. We crave the object of satisfaction but do not appreciate the subject that bears it. In the *Theology of the Body*, the addiction-loop lust trap is illustrated in the Fall of Adam and Eve—their choice (through the exquisite gift of free will) to partake of the forbidden fruit. Enter original sin: the phrase *sexual desire* now takes on an additional connotation, as objectification of the human person enters the picture as well. Once the fruit has been tasted, nakedness takes on shame, and with it, the potential for the objectification of another surfaces (John Paul II, 1997, pp. 123-124). Applying the *Theology of the Body* to Ehrenfeld's model, original sin keeps us in the addiction loop, and the Garden is the “authentic mode of satisfaction.”

So if patience, commitment, and hard work are required in Ehrenfeld's model in order to attain Being, the authentic mode, what is required in the Theology of the Body to attain the Garden state? Modern culture offers two answers to this question: 1) indulge or 2) repress (West, 2003, p. 9). Opportunities to indulge abound, from pornography to infidelity—"having-ness." However, as explained by Ehrenfeld, these situations continue the instant-gratification, symptom-relieving pattern that ultimately leaves one hungry again. Repression does not offer a better alternative. It, too, is harmful. While repression may seem more "holy," it is actually more destructive. In the case of lust, the choice to repress serves only to sexually repress the individual, a spiritually unhealthy state of being.

West (2009) described how this unhealthy state of sexual repression is rooted in our dialogue. Like Ehrenfeld, West posited that the being-vs.-Being / object-vs.-subject dilemma shows up in our language. Describing how, when one knocks on a door where someone on the other side may be in a state of undress, and the question is often asked, "Are you decent?"—West asserts the following about our response to that particular question:

Never, ever should we say, "Hold on, let me get a bathrobe. I'm indecent." From the authentic Catholic and Christian vision, the only proper response here—even if you are butt naked—is, "Absolutely I am decent." There is nothing, *nothing* indecent about the human body in its nakedness. In Scripture, we read that God looked at everything he made and said, "Behold! It is very good." John Paul II is very clear on this point. (West, 2009, p. 69)

Likewise, Ehrenfeld (2008) also noted that modernity's unhealthy addiction to "having-ness"/objectification is rooted in language. It shows up in reification, "turning common activities into objects" (p. 44). Ehrenfeld (2012a) asserted, "Being is an action-oriented model of care. We got to be human by interacting with the world around us and creating language. Our language came out of that process." In other words, our language reveals whether we hold the world as an object or choose to embrace it—connect with it—as subject.

Additionally, Being as an action-oriented model of care shows up in the domain of self-care in the aforementioned example given by West. Ehrenfeld (2012a) addresses the domain of self care as "authenticity, dignity, self-expression, and protection," among others. The Theology of the Body addresses these by seeking to clarify that the shame taken on by nakedness as a result of the Fall should not unnecessarily be attributed to the naked subject. The desire to cover the body can be a protective measure against being viewed as an object, since the potential for objectification lies in the intention of the viewer's heart.

So in answer to the question, "Are you decent?" one's response is not only "I am decent" but also "I am decent and clothed because how you perceive my nakedness may be indecent." We cover our bodies in a fallen world not because we are prudes but because we have an instinctual desire to protect some divine sense about

ourselves. *We inherently realize our own dignity.* Adam and Eve covered themselves when they realized their nakedness had taken on shame, and “despite their ‘shock’ at having lost their original purity, still realized they were created for their own sakes and were never meant to be used” (West, 2003b, p. 150). As in Ehrenfeld’s model, this notion of self-care is required also in the Theology of the Body to attain the Garden state. The realization of the dignity of human life in self and in an other is extended as well to the natural world. We are called to be stewards to the dignity inherent in all of creation. We reflect this calling in our actions and by our very participation in creation—in the essential substance of existence.

Ehrenfeld (2012a) clarified the essential substance of existence: “Existence is rooted as being-in-the-world...it is more than simply being located. It means caring for and concerned with the world, perhaps tending to and preserving it.” In the Theology of the Body, humans are called to preserve the world by, literally, pre-serving it, just as Christ pre-served humankind. The Theology of the Body puts forth Christ’s suffering as the ultimate gift of love. The beatific vision of this love is celebrated in the Eucharist at the Roman Catholic Mass, where the Word is made flesh in the same way that God’s mystery is revealed in human flesh. In the Eucharist, God makes a “sincere gift of self” in the person of his son, Jesus, his word made flesh. It is a celebration of God’s union with the church (the body of persons, of humankind). Using the lens of the spousal analogy, with Christ as the bridegroom and the church as bride, the Eucharist becomes a marriage of Christ and the church. It is the union of

heaven and earth. It is through both communion and Communion that one can experience God's mystery made manifest, in the form of matter. In this way, each Eucharistic celebration is a celebration of the mystery of essential substance—of Being as subject—of the one-flesh connected union with all of creation. The Theology of the Body emphasizes this one-flesh union as the communion of the physical body with the divine—humankind's union/reunion with the Garden. The Eucharistic celebration is in a very real sense a celebration of—in the words of Thomas Berry (1999)—“the universe as a communion of subjects” (pp. 16-17).

Through the celebration of this sacramental mystery, humankind is called to be subject, literally, “essential substance” to each other and the whole of creation in our exchanges (Subject, n.d.). The Theology of the Body draws upon St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians that bears out this instruction, using the spousal analogy and nuptial embrace to illustrate how to love as God loves: “Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (*Ephesians* 5:21, 24-25, New American Standard Bible).

This particular passage has been derided for its alleged suppression of women. But when the passage is visited with the lens of the Theology of the Body, it is revealed that humankind is called to be subject—essential substance—in every exchange. The spousal analogy is used to exemplify this—as it is used in Genesis when the man and

woman were not an object for one another, and in the Song of Songs when the lovers were not just *a* body to each other but *somebody*. Paul draws upon the spousal analogy in his letter to the Ephesians where Christ is the bridegroom and the church (as a body of persons, humankind) is the bride. The church is essential matter to Christ, and in Paul's letter, wives are called to "be subject *in* everything to their husbands." In other words, Paul is saying, "Hey, husbands! In everything, your wife is essential substance—just like the church is essential substance to God. And while you're at it, love your wife enormously—just like Christ's love for the church (the collective body of humankind) was so enormous that he gave up himself for it," preserving and preserving humankind.

Again, St. Paul is not speaking solely to spouses. The spiritual mystery of the person revealed in the physical manifestation of sexuality is central to understanding Church teaching that human beings are intended for the nuptial embrace—the one-flesh union with the whole of creation. So while the nuptial embrace can relate to the vocation of marriage where the physical, sexual embrace images the sacramental one-flesh union, the nuptial embrace can also relate directly to celibacy, where a life of continence is "not a rejection of sexuality, but a living out of the deepest meaning of sexuality: union with Christ and his Church" (West, 2003, p. 15). It can also relate directly to stewardship of the natural world, where the imprint of the divine is neither arbitrary nor fixed but is creative.

St. Paul is seeking to restore the original order of things—of love—before sin, clarifying also that “Christ came not to *be* served but *to serve*” (West, 2003, p. 17) through love. And according to the Theology of the Body, so too must we love. Through love, we enter into exchange not with *a* body, but with *somebody*. And through love, we enter into exchange with creation, the whole of the natural world. It is the beatific vision of the human experience.

This beatific vision can be traced to the spousal analogy. West (2003b) has called the study of Genesis a revelation of the “profound interrelationship between the male-female communion and human dominion over the earth” (p. 433). When the human person loses mastery of his or her self (as in the case of Adam and Eve at the moment of original sin), nuptial love is breached. Through the loss of self-mastery, the human person “puts his intelligence at the service of manipulation rather than love...when intelligence is no longer informed by love, it exults in what it *can* do rather than what it *should* do” (p. 432). This state of lowercase-*b* being, of “having-ness,” leads to destruction, as humankind “comes to relate to himself and to all of creation not with loving care and respect, but with a selfish will to dominate and control” (p. 432). Thus, the Theology of the Body teaches that a correct understanding of dominion over creation starts with an understanding of the spousal analogy and self-mastery within the male-female communion. In other words, the freedom of the human person “to choose the good in his sexual life will always reveal the manner in which he exercises dominion over creation” (p. 433).

The Church instructs that the use of our planet's resources—and indeed the resources of all of creation (the universe)—requires respect and must include care for the generations to come:

The seventh commandment enjoins respect for the integrity of creation. Animals, like plants and inanimate beings, are by nature destined for the common good of past, present, and future humanity. Use of the mineral, vegetable, and animal resources of the universe cannot be divorced from respect for moral imperatives. Man's dominion over inanimate and other living beings granted by the Creator is not absolute; it is limited by concern for the quality of life of his neighbor, including generations to come; it requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation. Animals are God's creatures. He surrounds them with his providential care. By their mere existence they bless him and give him glory. Thus men owe them kindness. We should recall the gentleness with which saints like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Philip Neri treated animals. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1994, ns. 2415–2416)

In other words, humankind's stewardship over the planet's natural resources—from mineral to plant to animal—includes a clear and specific moral obligation to future generations. The moral obligation is to ourselves as well, since we are created in God's image. We are called to love as God loves: creation, our neighbor, even our enemies (John Paul II, 1997, p. 524). This call to care is echoed in the Theology of the Body. John Paul II pointed out likened God's counsel to Adam and Eve that they should not eat the fruit of the tree to the fact that humankind is bound by not only the laws of biology “but also to moral ones, which cannot be violated with impunity” (p. 526). These laws include the following:

[A] specific responsibility *toward the environment in which he [mankind/humankind] lives*, toward the creation which God has put at the service of his personal dignity, of his life, not only for the present but also for future generations. It is the *ecological question*—ranging from the preservation of the natural habitats of the different species of animals and of other forms of life to “human ecology” properly speaking—which finds in the Bible clear and strong ethical direction, leading to a solution which respects the great good of life, of every life. (p. 525, italics are John Paul II’s)

John Paul II’s specific mention of “personal dignity” is akin to Ehrenfeld’s “self-care.” In other words, one must be acting from their own dignity in order to care for the life of others and for the lives of future generations (other-care), and for all the lives—“every life”—encompassed by creation (care for the world). Again, a systems approach is invoked. All the domains are active, including the transcendent, or out-of-this-world domain, by virtue of the fact that the Theology of the Body refers to a Biblical love that it takes to achieve this kind of care. That Biblical love is the “solution” John Paul II spoke of. It mirrors the unconditional love of God: for one’s self, one’s neighbor, one’s enemy, and for creation—*the great good of life—of every life*” (p. 525, italics mine).

For Ehrenfeld (2012), it took the transcendent/out-of-this-world domain to turn on or activate the other three domains (self, other, natural world) to achieve Being, a state of flourishing. For John Paul II, what turns on or activates these arenas of care is love, a love that is envisaged through the spousal analogy—a love that invests in the well-being of an other, whether that “other” is a friend, a foe, a stranger, lives yet to be born, or all the lives encompassed by the natural world. It is a type of love that sees

these “others” as subject, not object. There is no place for objectification, or “havingness,” in this type of love. The lover knows also that she or he is subject and is not to be objectified; the lover knows her or his own dignity, or self-care. It is a love that holds life inviolate. It is a love that leads to flourishing.

In this way, the Theology of the Body operates out of both the arenas spirituality and sustainability. Because it bears the potential to lead to wholeness, connectedness, flourishing, and Being, it “creates and leads us to the sacred” (Ehrenfeld, 2012a). As a pathway to the sacred, it offers a verdant spiritual route through the steps toward sustainability.

When we live the nuptial meaning of the body, we are acting out of each of the four functions of care described by Ehrenfeld. For Ehrenfeld, flourishing is an emergent property achieved through these functions of care. For John Paul II, the nuptial meaning of the body is an emergent property achieved through love. Each of Ehrenfeld’s four domains of care can be mapped to the free, faithful, total, and fruitful love that comprises the Theology’s spousal analogy or nuptial meaning of the body. Love as the investment in the well-being of an other for the sake of the other is the quiddity, or root essence, of this analogy, offering a wellspring that can lead to flourishing (Figure 2).

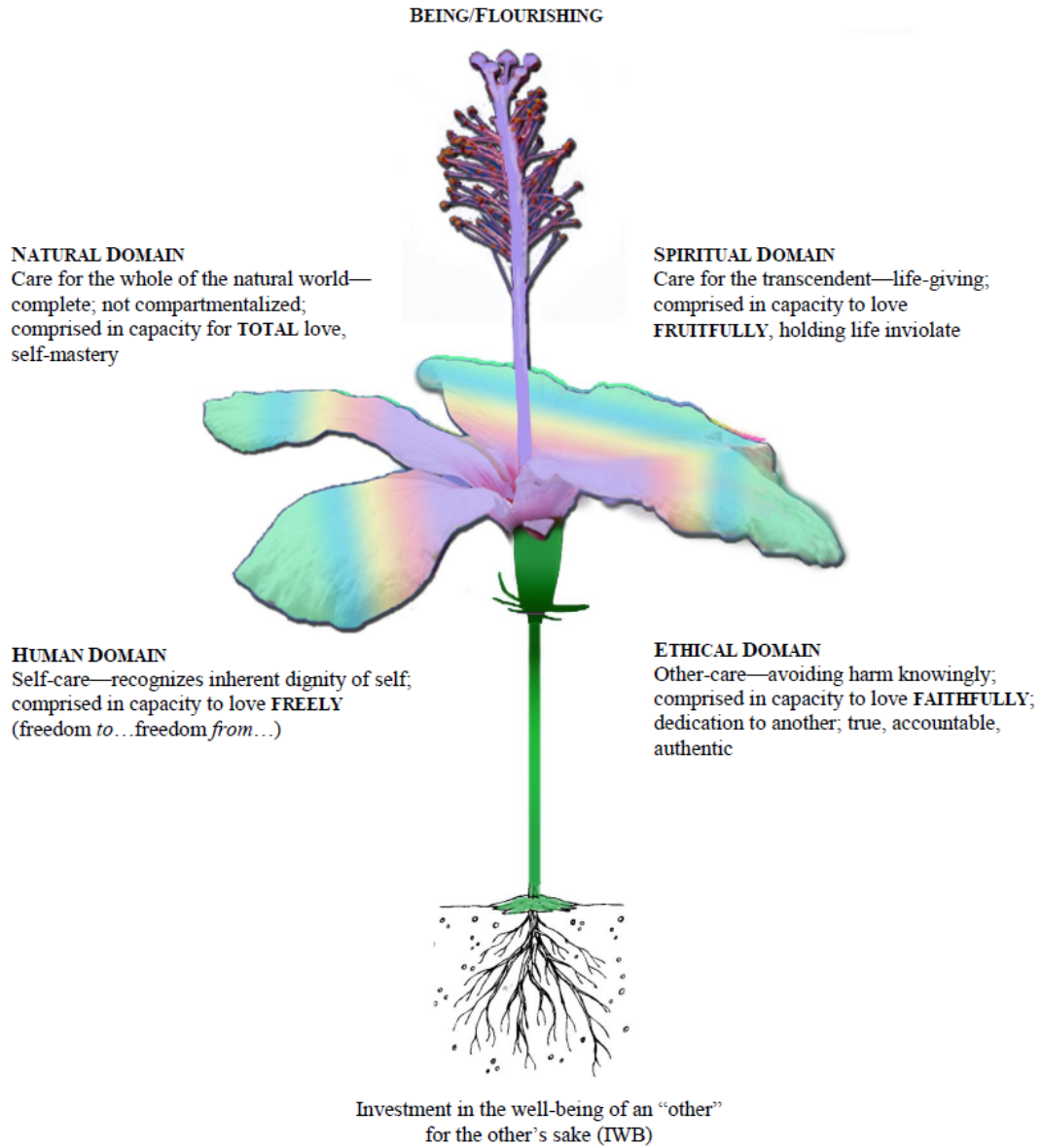


Figure 2. Integrated Model: Sustainability-as-Flourishing and the Theology of the Body

Ehrenfeld (2008) identifies three steps toward sustainability. The first step toward sustainability entails “bring[ing] destructive patterns into view” (p. 8). The Theology of the Body raises humankind’s consciousness to see the object/subject patterns in our exchanges with each other and with creation. It points clearly to the difference between 1) objectifying, “having-ness,” addiction, or lust and 2) holding an other as subject, striving toward Being, flourishing, or love. The Theology of the Body acknowledges that it is not possible for humans to achieve this state on earth one hundred percent of the time, except in communion with God beyond the earthly life, called the “eschatological communion (*communio*) of man with God” (John Paul II, 1997, p. 243). In earthly life, humankind exists in each of these two states: being and Being, object and subject. Just as humankind is both spiritual and physical, and the body is held in the same “goodness” as the spirit, humankind is capable of both objectification and holding life inviolate. By “bringing destructive patterns [objectification] into view,” the Theology of the Body offers a state to strive toward: seeing an other as essential substance.

The second step identified by Ehrenfeld (2008) entails replacing the “modernist vision...with an evocative vision of the world that can pull one and all into new possibility” (p. 8). Through the nuptial exchange and the celebration of that exchange in the Word made flesh, the Theology of the Body offers an redolent vision of the Garden and the possibility of the one-flesh union—a beatific vision of

interconnectedness and communion. Ehrenfeld is adamant that this “new possibility” (2008, p. 8) or “new story” (2013, p. 120) must be drastically different than the fundamental truths we presently accept as rational reality. He pointed out that the “long evolution of ‘truths’ upon which our culture is built are often merely the arguments made and won by the most powerful members of society” (Ehrenfeld & Hoffman, 2013, p. 36). By tracing how the erotic leads to God, eternal life, and flourishing, John Paul II’s *Theology of the Body* offers a radical way of looking at sexual love and the manifestation of God in the physical being of man.

Step three requires a culture change by way of replacing “the structures and strategies that...keep us spinning about in circles” (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 8). Ehrenfeld’s model approaches this through care in design (p. 156) and presence in design, whereby products are designed to require users to “become intimately involved in the preparation for routine use” (p. 169). *The Theology of the Body* offers a path toward this presence in design by way of object becoming subject. In other words, the participation in the sacred mystery of the body as more than a “biological organism—as a *theology*” (West, 2003, p. 2) moves our thinking from holding our bodies as an instrument for life toward holding our bodies as an end.

Ehrenfeld (2012a) explains, “to hold anything as sacred (as an end) and to hold it as an instrument (as a means) are self-contradictory.” Further, he asserts, “the most fundamental values on which sustainability is created are intrinsically sacred. *If we do*

not hold life and nature as inviolate in some way, the conditions for sustainability to emerge cannot exist” (Ehrenfeld, 2012a, italics mine). The Theology of the Body is predicated upon holding nature and life inviolate. It not only invites the spiritual dimension, it avers that this pursuit is “necessary continually to rediscover in what is ‘erotic’ the nuptial meaning” of life and that “this [continual rediscovery] is the role of the human spirit” (John Paul II. 1997, p. 171). This continual rediscovery steers us out of the addiction loop and into the “authentic mode of satisfaction” (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 44). Our exchanges with self, other, the natural world, and the transcendent move from *material matter* (addiction to having-ness, objectivity) to *material that matters* (essential substance, subject).

Through the integrated model of sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body, leadership is illuminated and enriched by the example of the human spirit in exchange with an other and with the natural world as essential substance. In this way, leaders become the living synthesis of sustainability and love, alive, in action. Like the old-timers mentioned earlier, leaders can embody the meaning of the word *flourish*. They become the keepers of care and the tenders of life. *The keepers of care and the tenders of life*. What a vision for leadership! This is the vision offered by the Theology of the Body applied to sustainability-as-flourishing.

The vision begins with IWB, an essential component of love, the crux of the Theology applied to sustainability-as-flourishing. IWB is a stepping stone toward

understanding and restoring landscapes of awareness in efforts toward Ehrenfeld's (2008) third step, that of "changing culture and its pathologies" (p. 8). It invites leaders to experience—through the action of Being—communion and possibility. It invites the sublime embrace. IWB offers leaders not only a pathway leading *to* sustainability and flourishing but also an approach to leading *through* sustainability and flourishing, operating out of the arena of love.

Chapter 5: Limitations and Implications

My beloved responded and said to me, “Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come along. For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers have already appeared in the land. The time has arrived for pruning the vines, and the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land. The fig tree has ripened its figs, and the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance. Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come along!”

Song of Songs 2:10–13¹¹

Limitations of the Study

This theoretical study, like many academic theories about leadership, bears a significant Western bias. The Theology of the Body is part of a Christian worldview, and sustainability-as-flourishing rests its assumptions on cultural belief systems associated with the West. It is questionable how this theoretical study might apply to other cultures outside of the industrialized West. In addition to using material from a Christian worldview, the study also incorporates a belief in God or at least a spiritual perspective.

Additionally, Ehrenfeld is an older, white male, and John Paul II (now deceased) was an older, white male. So the theorists behind sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body, respectively, were each older, white males when their theories were developed. It is uncertain how their perspective as older, white males applies to

¹¹ New American Standard Bible

the perspective of others, including women and minorities. The dissertation does not attempt to address this limitation.

As a theoretical dissertation, the data include other theories (the literature from those theories). As such, it is not possible for this dissertation to bear within it any statistical relevance. It is a theory-development piece, and in that respect, it is dependent on the thoughts, theorizing, and lens of its author, making it an in-depth but one-dimensional study. Moreover, while the author of this dissertation wasn't sure what new knowledge would be revealed by studying the two selected theories alongside one another, she did feel a gut sense that new knowledge was there to be gleaned, a bias.

The dissertation focuses its concentration on a single theological perspective. The depth afforded to that perspective places limitations on the study's focus in terms of multiple theologies. Likewise, it also focuses attention on the specific theory of sustainability-as-flourishing. However, it does offer a catalyst or jumping-off point for looking at additional theologies, sustainability theories, and applications to multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Implications for Further Study

Opportunities for further study are many and exciting. This study has investigated love as it relates to sustainability and flourishing by examining Ehrenfeld's sustainability-as-flourishing alongside Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body,

distilling an essential element of love linking the two theories—investment in the well-being of an other for the other’s sake (IWB)— and offering new knowledge in the form of an integrated model demonstrating IWB as a wellspring that can lead to flourishing.

As a theoretical study, the ideas herein could be furthered by the development of survey instruments and empirical evidence to test the theory. There also exist other investigations this study could apply to. For example, in “Effects of Positive Practice on Organizational Effectiveness,” Cameron et al. (2011) sought to develop empirical evidence supporting the theory that positive practices in organizations lead to increased effectiveness. After developing and employing a positive practices instrument, they found that positivity had “amplifying, buffering, and heliotropic effects...in human systems” (p. 266). Their study cites positive practice dimensions that led to these effects. Two of those dimensions, “caring and compassionate support,” (p. 271) are related to the Theology’s capacity to love faithfully and Ehrenfeld’s ethical domain. Studies that investigate a link between positive practices and the domains that lead to flourishing are suggested.

Additionally, studies that investigate sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body alongside group dynamics are suggested. In “Organizational Analysis through Group Processes,” Srivastva, Obert, and Neilsen (1977) have posited five observable stages of group development that revolve around three “basic issues”:

inclusion, influence, and intimacy (p. 98). The basic issues are rooted in the fundamentals of group communication, with each transpiring out of the other, in sequence, driven by conflict. From this material, a picture emerges of a “group life cycle” (p. 97). According to Srivastva, et al. (1977), “group members’ relations to the organizational environment of the group are initially very similar to their relationships to the group authority” (p. 99), a reflection of the first stage, where “safety v. anxiety” are at work, underpinned by the basic issue of inclusion (p. 98).

Smith and Berg (1997) have acknowledged the basic issue of inclusion versus separation as a fundamental dilemma of group life, noting the concurrent desire “to be both ‘a part’ of the group and ‘apart’ from the group” (p. 66). These two primary struggles have been identified by Bion (1959) as well: individuality versus the need to belong (as cited in Gibbard, Hartman, & Mann, 1974, p. 86). Bion’s work points out that group members are continually working through this dilemma (p. 86)—simultaneously, *both at once*. Smith and Berg (1997) have borne this out as well, noting the paradox of the fusion-abandonment dilemma: “The desire to be separate and connected, coupled with the fear that only abandonment or fusion is possible, creates a sense of existential anxiety for all of us at primitive levels of awareness” (p. 66). The authors have maintained that group members make a mistake of trying to curb this anxiety as opposed to recognizing its source; they have recommended accepting and receiving the dilemma in order to prevent it from becoming “self-defeating” toward the group dynamic (p. 67).

The pursuit of fusion-separation paradox is continuous, echoing the assertion by Gibbard, et al. (1974) that “[m]an needs to experience again and again the transition from *symbiosis* to *individuation*” (p. 90, [italics mine]). And like Gersick’s (1988) work, it invites the “bend” of time, an additional dimension, a likening to kairois time.

John Paul II’s work (1997) invites the spiritual dimension, positing that this paradoxical pursuit is “necessary continually to rediscover in what is ‘erotic’ the nuptial meaning of the body” (p. 171). His work points to the Eucharist, embodied at every Catholic Mass, as a continual rediscovery of this pursuit—symbiosis (God’s love; God’s desire to live in communion with us) and individuation (God’s gift to us of free will so that the nuptial embrace with God remains our choice to live out in our lives, or not). John Paul II has affirmed, “This [continual rediscovery] is the role of the human spirit” (p. 171). The continual rediscovery of God’s love is—in a very real and vibrant sense—the role of the human being, body and spirit, in exchange. It is the beatific vision of the human experience.

The pursuit of nakedness without shame (to love as God loves) can be both self seeking (involving individuation characteristics such as the solitude for reflection) and communion seeking (fusion). In certain contexts, especially in the fallen-world context, self seeking can involve the inversion of love, but it doesn’t have to. Self seeking also encompasses ontological questions centering on the meaning of life—

questions such as *What is the purpose of my life*, or, for believers in God, questions such as *How do I know what God wants from my life?* In a speech delivered by the Most Reverend George J. Lucas, Archbishop of Omaha, this dilemma was explained as the result of original sin: because of the Fall, there exists a spectrum on which these fundamental questions can be answered. Along that spectrum is “unsurity,” or, “authentic human doubt;” far away, on the other end, is certitude, the feeling of “I’m positive,” which may cause us to run roughshod over others with the notion that “God wants me to do this” (Lucas, 2006). Authentic self seeking involves the former, doubt. This type of doubt is a natural and continuous part of the group exchange process. It can be seen in the fusion-individuation dilemma, the concurrent desire “to be both ‘a part’ of the group and ‘apart’ from the group” (Smith & Berg, 1997, p. 66).

Just as Smith and Berg’s recommendation is to receive and accept the paradox, the Theology of the Body encourages humans to do the same with the subject-object dilemma. However, in the case of the experience of lust and the choice to either indulge or repress (see “Lust and the Addiction Loop”), there exists an additional choice: redemption. Redemption involves receiving the lust, accepting its roots, and prayerfully seeking to “untwist” that which has become twisted (love) by original sin (West, 2003a, p. 9). By openly receiving exchanges in group dynamics, neither deflecting the response of the other nor predicating upon it, individuals reflect the spiritual, mystical nuptial embrace, love in its purest essence: the love that is

exchanged when two people are in essence with—or essential substance to—each other.

The openness of this exchange is akin to Smith and Berg's (1997) recommendation not to make the mistake of curbing anxiety to the detriment of development.

Likewise, the Theology of the Body advises not to make the mistake of avoiding the developmental, redemptive nature of self-donation, which may well involve suffering.

Roman Catholic teaching puts forth Christ's suffering as the ultimate gift of love. The beatific vision of this love is celebrated in the Eucharist at Mass, where the Word is made flesh in the same way that God's mystery is revealed in human flesh. It is through both communion and Communion that we can experience God's mystery made manifest, in the form of matter. The same is true when applied to group development. An examination of suffering's role in flourishing has been started by Hall, Langer, and McMartin (2010), whose work explores positive psychology, biblical texts, and philosophical reflections to posit that suffering can play a vital role in the development of "the flourishing life" (p. 111). In organizational scholarship, additional work related to embracing the redemptive nature of suffering may be beneficial toward moving organizational life into a space where flourishing is possible.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) defines development as "[a] gradual unfolding, a bringing into fuller view; a fuller disclosure or working out of the details

of anything, as a plan, a scheme, the plot of a novel...; [e]volution or bringing out from a latent or elementary condition; the production of a natural force, energy, or *new form of matter*" (Development, 2011, [italics mine]). The Theology's Eucharistic manifestation speaks to the definition of development: the "bringing into fuller view" the nature of exchange. We are to be subject, literally, "essential substance" to each other in our exchanges (Subject, n.d.). St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians bears out this instruction, using the nuptial embrace to illustrate how to love as God loves (Eph. 5:21, 24-25).

When Nobel Prize-winning physicist Leon Lederman alongside science writer Dick Teresi (the latter of whom often gets lost in the credits for their book, *The God Particle*) went in search for the "God particle," they were invoking an age-old query about the meaning of existence: Why does matter have mass? What is the significance? In other words, why does matter *matter*? Why do we matter? In this quest, the authors have explained that one must turn to cosmological quantum theory for a framework, looking back into the universe, measuring light and radiation to "see" into history (Lederman & Teseri, 1994, pp. 382-396). A similar pursuit takes place in group development theory as well: a chronological framework is applied and group and individual behavior are measured to reveal the structural dynamics at work in the "cosmology," so-to-speak, of exchange.

In terms of looking back into the universe to see into history, physicists stress that our linear conception of time must be challenged in order to really “see” what may be occurring (Hawking, 2001, pp. 31-40). Time may have a one-way direction, but that direction isn’t necessarily a straight line. In fact, it can’t be for quantum mathematics to make sense at both micro and macro levels. Space bends, and so must time, as the two are “inexorably interconnected”; an artist’s rendering of the coupling between time and space looks akin to an M. C. Escher staircase, with the viewer unable to discern where the staircase begins and where it ends (Hawking, 2001, p. 33).

The same idea (a challenge to linearity) could and should apply to group development. Bennis and Shepard (1956) have admitted that “[t]he very word development implies not only movement through time, but also a definite order of progression” (p. 426), and Gibbard et al. (1974) have discussed the different models set forth: linear-progressive, life-cycle, and pendular—each a single-dimension conception of group chronology. But Gersick’s “Time and Transition in Work Teams” (1988) suggests a larger framework. Applying the concept of “punctuated equilibrium” to group development settings, Gersick’s (1988) work invites the “bend” of time, taking into account an additional dimension: “groups’ dynamic relations with their contexts” (p. 9). While the “punctuated equilibrium pattern” (p. 38) was not new to the theoretical realm of study, having been applied in the natural history discipline (p. 16), it was new to group development theory. In a very real sense, what Gersick (1988) was onto was quantum dynamics. Indeed, she applied the term when

describing punctuated equilibrium, calling the latter a “paradigm” in which “systems progress through...long periods of inertia, punctuated by revolutionary periods of *quantum change*” (p. 16, [italics mine]).

To quantize—at its most basic definition—means “to subdivide (as energy) into small but measurable increments” (Quantize, n.d.). By partitioning “period[s] of inertia” and “concentrated burst[s] of change” in groups, Gersick (1988) was able to evaluate energy in measurable increments of continuity and change (p.16): quantizing. A variant spelling of the word *quantize* is *quantise* (Quantize, 2011). And *quantise* is also a variant of *quaintise*, the wonder word (Quaintise, 2011). While the two words share neither etymology nor cognate (*quant*’s roots are Latin; *quaint*’s are Occitan), both words are part of the wonder by which we imagine larger constructs, expand our horizons, and re-vision the fundamental dynamics of our existence.

This wonder abides in the existential pursuits of both the sciences and theology. John Paul II—in a 1988 letter to Director of the Vatican Observatory Reverend George V. Coyne, S. J.—expressed the essential value of this abiding union:

Science develops best when its concepts and conclusions are integrated into the broader human culture and its concerns for ultimate meaning and value. Scientists cannot, therefore, hold themselves entirely aloof from the sorts of issues dealt with by philosophers and theologians. By devoting to these issues something of the energy and care they give to their research in science, they can help others realize more fully the human potentialities of their discoveries. They can also come to appreciate for themselves that these discoveries cannot be a genuine substitute for knowledge of the truly ultimate. Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science

from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish. (as cited in Peters, 1998, p. 157)

With respect to the science of group development, quantum mechanics contributes enthralling ideas; the Theology of the Body also contributes to the dynamics of exchange.

Like Gersick's (1988) experience with punctuated equilibrium, which had not yet been applied to the field of group development, the Theology of the Body has not, in my experience, been applied specifically to the discipline of group dynamics.

However, I believe it has much to contribute, especially in terms of the existential dilemmas explored by Smith and Berg (1997), whose work points out that self-affirmation through sacrifice may seem the achievement of divinity until one considers that "total self-affirmation turns out to be an act of participation in the universal, and, as such, is an affirmation of...the divine through the human" (p. 148). Further study is suggested.

Additionally, Bouwen and Fry (1996) have asserted that "[l]ife in groups is embedded in conversation. Nothing happens without language" (p. 547). Both Ehrenfeld (2008) and West (2009) have asserted that the being/Being ↔ object/subject dilemma is reflected in language. Ehrenfeld (2008) asserted, "Life takes place in language....what happens in life depends on the language we use and how it is understood" (p. xix), and his domains of care that lead to flourishing are closely related to how we use

language to describe the world around us. Language evolved, literally, from sets of actions that humankind took part in and cared about (p. 134). These functions of care are revealed in our language. The language used to describe the objects involved with those actions offers indications about whether we view those things as a commodity or as essential matter. In this way, a linguistics-focused examination of sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology as they relate to group exchange is also suggested. Especially interesting may be studies that examine how the Theology and sustainability-as-flourishing inform work that has been done on positive organizational narratives (Frederickson, 2003) and how leaders create “energy for action through conversation” (DiVirgilio & Ludema, 2009). Studies suggest that “positive psychological capital (hope, optimism, resilience) and positive emotions were an important factor in reducing dysfunctional attitudes and behaviors during organizational change” (Bartunek & Woodman 2011, p. 732). And according to Palmer & Dunford (2008), “Communication, and language more specifically, is central not just to conveying or transmitting required changes; it is the medium through which change itself occurs” (p. S26).

In “Sustainability: Organization Development’s Ultimate Frontier,” Lynch, Laszlo, and Ludema (2012) acknowledged one of the key dilemmas in organizational development and change (ODC) is the tension between an organization’s bottom line and the well-being of its employees. The authors call this “paradox” a key issue and challenge for ODC (p. 5). This paradox is akin to the object/subject and being/Being

paradoxes in the Theology of the Body and sustainability-as-flourishing. For example, “efficiency, effectiveness, and profit” (p. 5) are means (object) to keep the organization operational. These means operate out of the having mode. Employees are an end (subjects in and of themselves); care for their well-being operates out of the authentic mode of Being. An exciting study may be one that examines what the Theology of the Body and sustainability-as-flourishing can contribute toward managing this paradox.

In *Maximizing the Triple Bottom Line through Spiritual Leadership*, Fry and Nisiewicz (2013) discussed ways of knowing and being in the inner lives of leaders, building on a theory of leadership that examined several religious worldviews in addition to Christianity: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Through five levels of knowing and being, individuals cultivate “the ability to shift from the ‘having’ and ‘doing’ to ‘being’” (p. 68). The ascent from Level V—where an ego-based self is immersed in the physical, observable world—to Level I—“the most inclusive level of being” (p. 67)—is not a perfect straight line but rather “a pilgrimage” that can vary according to activity, development, and awareness (p. 63). This journey from having/doing to being is grounded in a theory that encompasses worldviews outside of Christianity and the cultural West. As such, there is great value to exploring spiritual leadership as it relates to the kind of flourishing embraced by the Theology of the Body and sustainability-as-flourishing.

Fry and Kriger (2009) have begun to develop a leadership theory that outlines five levels of being. Awareness at each level contributes to leadership, with the levels “serv[ing] as a foundation for a being-centered theory of leadership” (p. 1669). The first two levels of leadership are rooted in having and *doing*, whereas the upper three levels are rooted in *being* (p. 1687). The five levels stem from ontological understandings shared by six religious traditions: Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism (p. 1671), with the highest level, the non-dual level, as “the integration of all of the previous levels of being into an Absolute Oneness, which is beyond all distinctions” (p. 1683). This level of leadership takes IWB one step further: not only does the leader at this level invest in the other for the other’s sake, she or he “manifests unconditional regard for the other *as oneself*” (p. 1685, italics mine). In other words, the self and other have merged into a oneness of being for this leader. Fry and Kriger (2009) called for future research to establish the validity of their theory of being-centered leadership.

Likewise, a systems measurement tool for flourishing would be helpful. Comparisons may be useful, such as tools that can compare rates of flourishing. For example, the Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), with the intention being that contemporary and future societies should be protected from the deleterious effects of development. In other words, Bebbington

and Gray (2001) posit that “the concept of sustainability gives equal rights to those living and those yet to be born” (as cited in Lynch et al., 2012, p. 7). This fundamental notion is an elephant in the room when it comes to the definition of sustainability: the Brundtland Commission’s definition governs both those living and yet to be born, but this is not the case with the laws governing our society. Our laws give preferential rights to living persons over the rights of the unborn. We are not a sustainable society in our laws governing human life. Both the Theology of the Body and sustainability-as-flourishing hold nature and life inviolate. Suggestions for future study include developing a systems measurement tool for flourishing that applies the lens of the Theology of the Body and sustainability-as-flourishing and comparing rates of flourishing in societies who hold equal the rights of those living and unborn versus societies who do not.

With the development of a systems measurement tool for flourishing, this dissertation study has possible implications toward the study of leadership development in other ways as well. For example, Ehrenfeld’s distinction between lowercase-*b* being (having) and capital-*B* Being (flourishing) might be developed into a theory about lowercase-*l* leadership and capital-*L* Leadership, with the latter distinction related to the way leaders lead—either leading toward the having mode or leading toward the Being mode. Understanding what drives flourishing in the context of leadership has implications for everything from better interpersonal relations, which we rely on to go about our lives, to better care for the world, which we need to live.

Conclusion

As a theoretical dissertation, this study gathers and analyzes data from two distinct fields to offer new knowledge in the form of an integrated model that bring together Ehrenfeld’s “sustainability-as-flourishing” and John Paul II’s Theology of the Body. Ehrenfeld’s work is centered in business, sustainability, and organizational development literature. The Theology of the Body is written from a religious—and specifically a Roman Catholic—perspective. This investigation distills an essential element of love linking the two theories—investment in the well-being of an other for the other’s sake (IWB), demonstrating this in a model that integrates sustainability-as-flourishing and the Theology of the Body.

Each of Ehrenfeld’s four domains of care (human, ethical, natural, and spiritual) can be mapped to the free, faithful, total, and fruitful love that comprises the Theology of the Body’s spousal analogy or nuptial meaning of the body. Love as the investment in the well-being of an other is the quiddity, or root essence, of this analogy. Integrating Ehrenfeld’s domains of care and the love explored in the Theology—love as the investment in the well-being of an other—offers a wellspring that can lead to flourishing.

Coda

The following poems, titled “A Conceptione...” and “...Ad Floridam,” were crafted in the spirit of Being, sacredness, care, interconnectedness, and hope. The poems

were previously published in *Organizing through Empathy*¹² and are an invitation into the synthesis of sustainability and love.

A Conceptione. . .

Amid the echo of celestial silence, a ripple
of bliss whispers the language
of incandescence: you are not
alone, but among; you are not
 you, but we—ours is the wild
and gracious heart of stars,
born of dust and dust of bone,
like marrow of nebulae, you are
a primordial nursery of souls, you are
 the whole in every part.

. . . Ad Floridam

Amid the swell of celestial symphony, a measure
of sentience summons the might of a soul:
ours is the distillate hush of
discernment, coalescing
 time, culture, distance;
ours is the welkin mystery of union,
unraveling, cradling, full
of grace and shadow, where the bone
center of everything is liquescent, and we are
 in every part the whole.

¹² Tweedy, J. B. (2014). A conception. . . In K. Pavlovich & K. Krahnke (Eds.), *Organizing through empathy* (p. 71). New York, NY: Routledge.

Tweedy, J. B. (2014). . . Ad floridam. In K. Pavlovich & K. Krahnke (Eds.), *Organizing through empathy* (p. 184). New York, NY: Routledge.

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