

# InPresence 0029: Consciousness and Sociology with Jeffrey Mishlove

Video Transcript - *New Thinking Allowed* with Jeffrey Mishlove  
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Recorded on March 16, 2018

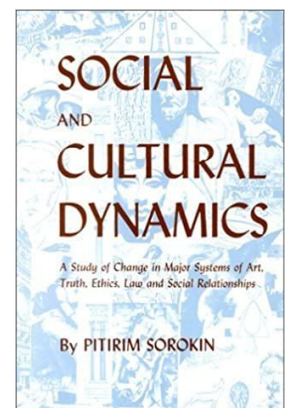
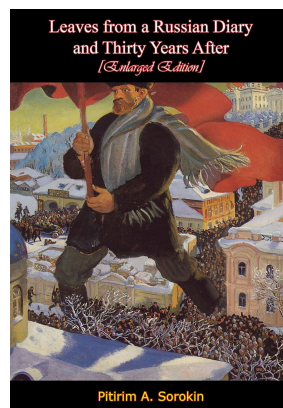
Published to YouTube on March 30, 2018

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(00:39) Hello, I'm Jeffrey Mishlove. Today, I'd like to talk about consciousness and sociology. In a way, there's a paradox involved because the standard sociological view of consciousness is not really very interior. It's actually quite exterior. The basic idea - really, it derives from Marxism - is that who we are, our identity as human beings, our depths, is really controlled by the major social institutions around us. So, the capitalist system, the patriarchal system, the commercial systems in which we live, these are our social environment and they largely determine our behavior, our consciousness of ourselves, our identity, our self-image.

(01:38) I think, actually it's quite the opposite. And I have to say this: I studied sociology during my days as a criminology student at Berkeley. And those were days in which I was actively using psychedelic drugs as a matter of fact, like many Berkeley students were and I remember having a dispute with one of my sociology professors who was arguing for this traditional definition and I said, "Do you think that these social institutions really affect who you are at a deep level when you're having a psychedelic experience?" And my professor, who also had had that experience, admitted, "No, of course not. There's something within us that isn't touched by these institutions."

(02:31) In fact, probably the greatest sociologists who ever lived, in my opinion, Pitirim Sorokin, had a very different view himself. He regarded the politics of his day - communism vs. fascism, nationalism vs. globalism - he said these are the clowns of the historical surface. They're not touching the deep issues, even from a sociological perspective. Now, Sorokin lived deeply and widely. He was a member of the Menshevik Party that took control of the government of Russia after the fall of the Tsar. For several months, he was a cabinet secretary to Kerensky, the head of the government before the Bolsheviks took over and put him in prison.

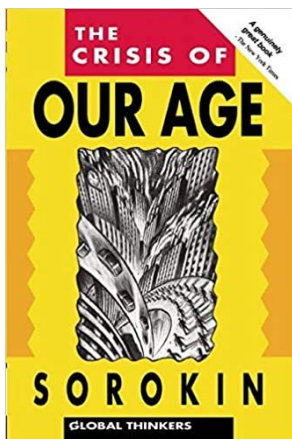
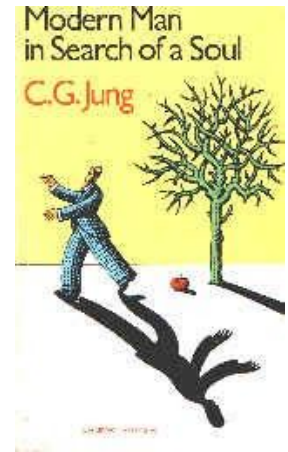


(03:23) Eventually, Lenin recognized the greatness of his intellect and released him from prison. He came to the United States. He founded the first department of sociology, as I recall it, at the University

of Minnesota, and then went on to found the Department of Social Relations at Harvard University. He had a broad, grand view of history. He had all the resources of Harvard University. He determined that history moves in cycles, that let's say in the Middle Ages, the reality was inner. Everybody thought of themselves as living in a veil of tears just waiting for death when they could become part of an eternal reality. The big economic activity of that era was building these magnificent cathedrals with their spires pointing towards the heavens, the one true reality.

(04:24) And then, subsequently, since the Renaissance for the last five hundred years or more, we've been living in a materialistic age, where we see man as the measure of all things and we value science and progress. Now we have extended our nervous systems around the planet with the internet and satellite communication and space travel and building bridges and highways and international commerce. We're quite materialistic, but we seem to have lost touch with, some would say, our own soul in the process.

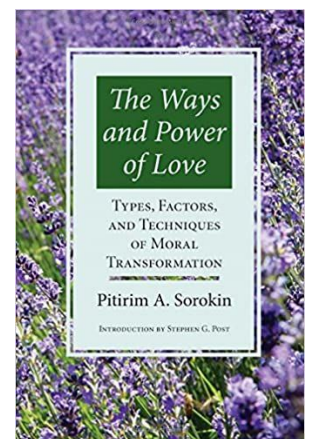
(05:05) Sorokin argued that the crisis of our age, all of the social dysfunctions that we have experienced, the lack of confidence in our social institutions, the breakdown of basic morals that holds our society together, that this is because the materialistic culture of the last 500 years is giving way. The science of parapsychology for one - it's a marginalized science. But, it shows the weaknesses of the materialistic metaphysics that is endeavoring to hold our culture together.



(05:47) So Sorokin would suggest we need the birth of a new era. One, I'll say, that parapsychology might be central in such a new era, in the sense that we will be highly technological but we will also pay attention to the things that have been suppressed, the depths of the human psyche, the feminist values. There will be a sense of equality between the inner world and the outer world, between the masculine and the feminine. Sorokin felt that the heart needs to be emphasized again.

(06:26) He wrote a great book called *The Ways and Power of Love* and he showed that throughout history, individuals who become captured by the spirit of love

do great things, unexpected things. He cites for example, the conquering emperor Ashoka of India, who conquered most of the Indian subcontinent but then was converted to Buddhism. It's one of the only examples in history of a conquering military leader telling his armies to go home now and to change their way of life, to become farmers, to become workers in building a new society.



(07:13) That's really what's called for and once again it requires balance. Sorokin points out that there were times in human history where various cultures achieved that balance and it lasted a long time. For example, the culture of ancient Egypt, which lasted for thousands of years. Sorokin describes it as one that had a healthy balance between inner and outer reality. The culture of China after the Warring States period, as well, lasted about 600 years in peace because it had a balance between inner and outer. But in western civilization, he says that balance is very, very rare and it doesn't last long. It was achieved at the height of the Athenian culture in Greece. It was achieved at the height of the Renaissance, the Italian Renaissance and the European Renaissance, but maybe only lasted a hundred years or less.

(08:20) So, the task before us now, and it's not one that can be consciously done by fiat, is to allow the evolution of a balanced culture in our era and hopefully one that will be long-lasting. We have this internet, as I say it's an extension of our nervous system, but really the intelligence of the heart is quite important. I hope you've had a chance to listen to some of the interviews about that. I'm linking to the one with Julian Gresser, where we focus on specifically what he calls "big heart intelligence". He claims, and I think it's true, that the heart needs to be the guide of the nervous system, not the servant of it.

(09:14) If we can establish a new culture, planetary culture, that is based on the wisdom and the intelligence of the heart, then I think our technology can be a tool that will benefit everybody and not cause our own destruction.

(09:36) My grandfather lived in an era where he grew up watching the horses and buggies. He grew up in Poland, was born in the late nineteenth century, I think 1895. So, horses and buggies were the main form of transportation and he lived to see a man walk on the moon. In my lifetime, I grew up in an era where we didn't have cell phones, we didn't have computers, we didn't have color TV. We had black and white TV when I was a child.

(0010:15) I've lived to see the growth of the internet, which is probably the most powerful technology that humanity has yet developed, but I see that technology as a source of great trouble. We know now from research that fake news travels further and faster on the internet than real news does. I hope you appreciate that on this program, I'm endeavoring to the very best of my ability, even though some people will say when I talk about parapsychology, that this is all phony baloney fake news. I even get occasional comments from viewers to that effect, but it's not. I'm talking about empirical observations, real science, real truth.

(11:07) We need to incorporate these findings into the mainstream of our culture and that's why I'm so motivated every day to put a new message out on the Internet, is my contribution to that happening. So I'd like to close by asking you, "What can you do, what are you doing, what will you do to help bring balance into our culture?" Thank you so much for being with me. (11:39)

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