

CONSCIOUSNESS IS A CONVERSATION: TOWARDS AN ECO-DIALOGIC THEORY OF COMMUNICATION

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Within the expanding field of environmental communication we make what we assume are well-justified assumptions about communication, and then rely on those assumptions about communication to make sense of “the environment.” In other words, environmental communication is often the study of how we talk *about* ecology. Ecology is commonly defined as the study of interactions between organisms and their environments. A relational ontology is accepted by a variety of green thought, assuming we are constituted through our ontological relationships with and within our environments. My thesis seeks to open and advance lines of analysis as to *how* communication is ecological by building a theoretical frame that articulates “the voice” as relationality (a self interacting with and therefore constituted by an environment) in action.

I define “voice” as a temporal manifestation of interaction between components of evolved, evolving, and co-evolving (including human) systems. The above has suggested that *consciousness is a conversation*. My research is an experiment in method, consisting of dialogic transcription analysis of “metalogue” which enact the phenomena of discussion and test those theoretical claims. I am focusing on connections between “the environment” and “mental” health. Knowing further how the self is relationally constituted by voices in dialogue with the more than human world enables further analysis of how humans encode and articulate our relationships to our surroundings and the implications. As an exploration, this thesis articulates those relations and provides an ecological-dialogical understanding of communication, a new vocabulary with which we can further conceptualize, speak to and edit these conversations and ask better conceptual questions in the face of a personally felt, at times overwhelming global crisis.

KEYWORDS: Ecology, Dialogue, Voice, Bateson, Dolar, Abram, Systems, Deep Ecology, Psychoanalysis, Metalogue, Addiction, Patriarchy, Capitalism, Individualism

