

FINDING/BEING THE QUESTION/ANSWER

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In teaching & writing I've made more than a hundred uses of the basic window-matrix. As I was at my daily newspaper-praying this morning, it came to mind as the best orderer of the chaos....The point of a Thinksheet is to have a point, & the point of this one is (1) that we human beings have, in the interrogative mode, four ways to go, & (2) it can be helpful, wherever our location at the moment, to observe & reflect on others who are at our & at the other three locations.

1. **FQ** is the location of most humans most of their lives; some, all. It's where Robt. Coles, Harv. child psychiatrist, was till he met Ruby, age 6, black, in 1960, after appealing to eminent blacks Ken. Clark & Thurgood Marshall for an interview. Ruby, the only child in a New Orleans school whose whites refused attendance as long

Question Answer		
Finding	FQ	FA
Being	BQ	BA

as she kept coming, was daily threatened with death by screaming whites; but she remained calm--a condition Coles unsuccessfully used all his psychoanalytic categories to explain, ie to capture for his therapeutic paradigm, to make a "case" of (as a pelican keeps throwing a fish in the air till it comes down right for swallowing--the image is mine, not Coles'). The explanation, he discovered, was in another paradigm, the Christian. Ruby's dirt-poor, illiterate parents had taught their daughter how God behaved when persecuted. Reporters saw her lips moving & said that she was talking back to the screaming mob, but she denied it to Coles, said "I was talking to God." Coles: "What were you praying?" Ruby Bridges: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Comments Cole (in his writings, lectures, & a PBS 1-hour 15Jan89 magnificent interview) "I had found my life-work." Then for seven years he & his wife lived among the poor to be with, & study, their children. Only then did the first vol. of the 5-vol. CHILDREN OF CRISIS appear....The Ruby story & sequel, ie Coles' subsequent life & ministry, shows a human being moving from FQ to FA to BQ to BA. As to BA, Walter Percy says of him (jacket of Coles' HARV. DIARY [Crossroad/88]) "he's a national treasure." He probably smiled at that & perhaps said, "Ruby is the treasure, & Jesus behind Ruby." He held up an empty receptable, his life-use question, & God plopped Ruby into it. Because he was yearning globally, he heard the call to act locally.....While the matrix here can be used from within either the individual or society, I'm not making that distinction in this Thinksheet.

2. **FA** was Coles' location before meeting Ruby. His "condition" (medical sense) was guru dependency: he was addicted to Erik Erikson through EE's developmental paradigm & pellucid writings on profound matters of the heart (eg THE YOUNG MAN LUTHER and GHANDI'S TRUTH). But in finding that answer, his mind was advanced in analysis but his heart was retarded from arriving at the right question, ie the question right for him. Let's call this condition arrested paradigmatic development. As a theist, I hold (1) that all nontheists are in that condition & (2) that, given the imperial premise of theism ("Lord of all"), all nontheists are pre-theists. But I must not wander here into wondering....Another instance of FFA (finding a false answer) is the black violence in Miami these past few nights over a hispanic-police killing of two blacks. Violence as a tool of black-against-hispanic resentment in Miami is as dysfunctional as white-against-asian resentment-driven violence in Stockton day before yesterday (Pat. Purdy killing five asian chn., & wounding thirty other pupils, in a playground which when he was in that school was all white).

3. **BQ** is the location of the USA today, the eve of Geo. Bush's inaugural. Our nation has suffered an eight-year FAA arrest, in gury-dependency on Pres. Reagan, an ACOA (adult child of an alcoholic) who supercompensated for childhood male-insecurity by steadily intending, un/consciously, to be loved. The historians will say how successful he was as president: he did succeed in his life-project of being loved, while president, by (1) ducking unpleasant issues & untoward circumstances (eg, Iran-Contra) & (2) by refusing to be ungenerous to criminal & sleazy friends--in short, by practicing positive thinking & salesman smiling (our Alfred E. Newman in the White House: "Who, ME worry?").

4. **BA** contrasts: healthy Coles, ACOA Reagan, ACOA Purdy.