

1. Birth moves us from uterine security to instant death (more probable, in many times and places, than survival through infancy) or death delayed for a few years or decades. Our brief or slightly longer trajectory of body is, literally (to use a German existentialist phrase) a "thrownness," like a ball ("ball" in various languages relating to anything thrown, and therefore even oneself--in the dance--and one's semen--in sexual intercourse, and therefore "ball" for testis, which is where this whole birth thing starts). In terms of the grid, God hurls us at birth both from A to B (into the physical and human--societal and historical--environment) and from A to C (in genetic assignment). Except for highly sophisticated theological (as Luther's pedobaptist argument for fetal faith) or philosophical-pedagogical (as new Gestalts of "the will"), what characterizes physical birth, in relation to later stages of human development, is precisely its "thrown" character.

	power- lessness	power
security	A	C
risk	B	D

2. As with our bodies, so with our psyches (imaginal life), mind (cerebrational life), spirits (decisional life): the birthing process is dangerous to old securities which the priest in us all not entirely impropoerly celebrates while the prophet in us all calls us to new birth through obedience to the Deep God, a call which is, without limit (I believe), also a call to a new security, New Zion "prepared as a bride"--what a risk!

3. This think-page is just to get you to reflecting on its topic through use of this grid. If you leave me at this point, and don't follow my particular fleeting and quick reflections, I'll not be unhappy. If you follow me, please do not overread the titles and comments below: I'm only trying to be suggestive--though of course I am serious about the consequences of the several

LIFE-STYLE\$

- AB adventurous (as the Prodigal Son)
- C cautious (as the Older Brother)
- D violent (as Alex in "A Clockwork Orange")
- BA uterine (what fictional, historical, or contemporary person do you think of?)
- C entrepreneurial
- D gang
- CA miserly
- B incarnational (from identity to identification, as Jesus in Phil.2)
- D imperial
- DA con-artist
- B gambling
- C investment

Column I is A (not a life style, but life in utero), B (the suicidal life-style or attitude), C (the olympian life-style), and D (the profligate life-style). Column II is spelled out above. Columns III and IV are suggested below.

4. For illustration of Column III, lets take ACD. Keep in mind both that every life-style in all four columns has strengths and weaknesses, and that both individual and institutional dimensions apply to almost all instances. ACD is the calculating life-style. The person/institution plans to gain power (relational or possessional) so as to be able to use it for risk, to achieve some goal(s) requiring the specific powers and the specific risks. The calculating life-style has strengths you can spell out for yourself. High motivation of this sort tends to make "overachievers" and a creative, dominant society. Weaknesses? Willy-Loman failures (meaning virtually everybody who isn't an overachiever). And hybris (as U.S. overreaching in Vietnam). And dug-in-ness: the person or institution that, like Kierkegaard's water-fowl, gets the power (professional status for the person, a thick skin of investments for the institution) and ceases to risk....Try, in Column IV, ACDB.