Alone Togeher Conference

31.03 – 1.04.2022

University of Szczecin, Poland

Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln UK

Dat Bao (Monash University, Australia) – The multiple meanings of silence in contexts: Implications for learning and communication

This discussion, which is drawn from research in the educational setting of Australia, China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, looks at a wide range of meanings unstated in words but infused through silence. Such messages, however, do not come from silence alone but are triggered by the performance of speech and other ecological factors. Empirical findings reveal that silence frequently performs the same social and educational functions as speech. The only difference is that many can clearly hear the latter but easily fail to recognise that the former even exists.

Samir Dayal, Bentley University, USA - Antigone at the Crossroads: The Ethics of Alienation

This talk will explore productive ambiguities in the category of alienation, which includes and exceeds the notion of loneliness. Whereas loneliness often indicates a feeling of painful separation of self from others, alienation may also operate as a principled and generative disaffection. Alienation may manifest as elective withdrawal from or disenchantment with the conventional, compulsory normativity regulating social relations and constituting dominant mores. Although it may also manifest as other states—such as indifference, an intermediate position—the main focus of this talk will be to discuss how alienation may afford the subject some freedom of thought and action. Through readings of Sophocles' Antigone, as well as of works by Franz Kafka, Frantz Fanon, and other selected examples, I trace an ethics of alienation that highlights both the etymological sense of subjectivity (ethos), and the sense of principled disaffection from the status quo. Antigone is the figure of a subject at an ethical crossroads, who not only dissents from the reigning social order but also brings law as such into crisis. Antigone and the other examples I consider limn the intersection where crucial concerns of psychoanalysis and philosophy converge.

Piotr Domeracki (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland) – The idea of solitude in existential philosophy. An overview of the issue

Despite the enduring popularity of existential philosophy, as well as a considerable number of critical and discussion works devoted to it, solitude, as one of the most characteristic ideas of this philosophy, has not yet received a thorough, systematic and comprehensive study. My presentation meets the need for such a study by taking the form of prolegomena. In it I intend to argue in favour of the thesis about the primacy of the idea of solitude in existential discourse. The commonly associated with it categories of individuality, authenticity, freedom, absurdity and strangeness are, in my opinion, only intermediate links leading to the perhaps not very optimistic sounding conclusion that human existence is most fully expressed in solitude and

through solitude. Based on selected authors and source texts (Unamuno, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, Tillich, Berdyaev, Mounier), the analysis will lead to the conclusion that solitude is neither incidental nor merely marginal in human life, but constitutes its centre and predicament. Regardless of whether it is experienced periodically or for a long time; whether it is perceived positively or evokes negative associations; whether it builds the strength of the individual or deprives him of vital powers – solitude forms the framework of human life. In it and through it, the essence of humanity manifests itself in all its complexity. In this context, both the positions that advocate a decisive fight against loneliness and those that see it as a unique, albeit demanding, ally of human development become equally or equivalently meaningless.

Olivia Sagan (Queen Margaret University Edinburgh, UK) – The Problem with the Problem of Loneliness

Loneliness, termed a pandemic in the 1990s (Killeen, 1998), referred by the Economist in 2018 as 'The Leprosy of the 21st Century' and described in The Lancet as a public health problem (Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2018), began to seize headlines in both academic and popular imagination at least 20 years ago - unsurprising, perhaps, on a planet with around eight billion mobile and transient individuals, circumnavigating in various degrees of uprootedness.

Derived from 'oneliness', the word loneliness only picked up currency post-1800 as industrial society began dispersing us, capitalism fragmenting us and consumerism isolating us, leaving us to bowl alone (Putnam, 2000), live alone; age alone and die alone (Nelson-Becker & Victor, 2020). Yet sweeping statements about being alone mask a more granular view of the experience, as, for example, the price that we may pay for more choice. The rise of privacy, for example, itself a product of market capitalism, is a driver of loneliness. In fact, many of the gains made in the 20th century, perhaps most notably for women, do come at a price, and one that we may be willing to pay; and this existential conundrum is one not helped by the alarmist discourse of loneliness. It is time, therefore that we look at what is omitted from the headlines.

This paper will explore the problem with the problem of loneliness, and ask to what extent the epidemic of headlines has created the very problem it reports. It will draw on data from phenomenological research into the experience of enduring loneliness to suggest we should be more circumspect in what human experience we declare to be 'loneliness'.

Henrieta Anisoara Serban (Institute of Philosophy and Psychology "Constantin Rădulescu-Motru" and Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations „Ion I.C. Brătianu" of the Romanian Academy, Romania) – Solitude as subjective horizon

Contemplative subjectivity that nourishes a specific solitude seems more of a luxury nowadays. „Horizon" is conceptually approached in this paper mainly in Husserlian terms, as a general structure of experience, but also in Lucian Blaga's terms, as a threshold of transcendence, it is also the gateway toward the mysterious metaphysical realms, with which the human being is found in a fruitful experiential dialogue, in terms of artistic creation and especially in terms of highly innovative and even antinomic cognitive creations. Certain aspects of subjectivity definitely need contemplation in solitude. This contemplative subjective horizon is paramount to ontological assessment and adjustment, to self-understanding and to the prefiguration of future projects. In turn, these are important for human ontology in terms of hope and meaning of life. The paper is also based on other Romanian and universal philosophical resources (such as Constantin Noica, Richard Rorty, Ernst Bloch and others).

Keywords: solitude, horizon, contemplative subjectivity, Edmund Husserl, Lucian Blaga.

Torgeir Fjeld (Ereignis Center for Philosophy and the Arts, Norway/Poland) – A silent trace: Introducing Wolfgang Schirmacher's philosophy of the future

Wolfgang Schirmacher's formulation of Homo Generator relies on a sense of the human subject that can be traced back to Martin Heidegger's that we are at our most authentic when we are not identical to ourselves, or, in Heidegger's terminology, our essence is determined by what is ek-static about our existence. While this approach to the subject more famously became the cornerstone of Jacques Lacan's clarification of the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud, in Schirmacher the insight from Heidegger takes a distinctly different turn: what we have is a subject split between acting and observing, and this subject, Schirmacher's Homo Generator, relies on this division in order for it to fulfil it's ethical destiny. It is in this particular sense that we find in Schirmacher's philosophy a trace of a future condition, a post-technological age, and this trace is by its very nature silent. What resounds as the founding "voice of authority" in this novel age can only be characterised as an absence, or a void: a silent clearing that precedes and conditions human openness. What typifies this "new man" is a capacity for heightened awareness, what Schirmacher refers to as "hyper-perception", an artificial, or artful, approach to living, and a distinct and profound clandestine form of ethics. This paper seeks to outline Schirmacher's philosophy of the future by reference to his shared philosophical heritage, his singular sketch of the human situated in this future, as well as the ethical character of this prospective form of life.

Jaromir Brejdak (University of Szczecin, Poland) – The social ontology or the ontology of a lonely individual? The crucial role of empathy – a philosophical approach

The philosophical approaches of the social ontology are more or less individualistically driven, considering "a brain in the vat" as a source of the community. The reduction of the social to individual minds has an impact on how we see itself. The main focus is on reflexive individuals already stripped of emotionality and doomed to loneliness.

Therefore, from the epistemological perspective, loneliness takes roots already in our heads and shows how we tend to see the world as a sum of isolated things, parts that we can hardly combine into one whole.

Are there other ways to describe the community out of the world of lonely and isolated individuals?

Helen Lees (independent scholar, UK/Italy) – The broken unscientific arm of s/Self (care) in the context of silence and solitude for schools

Silence and solitude in schools as research focus can and does fall into the discipline of education seen as a science: an aspect and function of effective learning, physical and psychological formation of self and about school cultures as social science. To truly access the best outcomes of silence and solitude in educational environments we need to be open to self-care frameworks. People sitting quietly and alone need to face their inner traumas and pain. This is so they can maximize the educationally relevant benefits of silence and solitude and not be stuck in trauma-informed thinking loops or anxieties. Thus silence and solitude in schools is science without being 100% scientific. Not in the sense of lacking something but in the sense of its science being robust just because it is open to what is "unproven" and instead personal. I have become very interested in one self care framework known as Internal Family

Systems (IFS). Unfortunately, whilst the techniques for accessing what this process and its community calls "the Self" align with silence and solitude intentions for self, IFS is troubled. It has power to develop science around uses of silence and solitude in schools but if it is to impact schools and education it needs to empower equality. Currently, it does not have that ability. I discuss this and why IFS and silence and solitude go together as well as why they both currently fail. The answer I suggest is with changes to IFS.

Eric Schoenmakers (Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands) – What students need to not feel lonely

Cognitive discrepancy theory poses that loneliness is the perceived gap between the relationships someone has and wants. In order to properly address loneliness, it is important to know what people need in relationships to not feel lonely, i.e. to know their relationship standards. In this study relationships, relationships standards and loneliness are discussed with students (aged 18-26) using in depth interviews (current N=15). Interviews were transcripted and coded. Preliminary results show that emotionally close relationships are considered to be most important for not feeling lonely. Emotional closeness is often related to duration and intensity of relationships, hence, parents and best friends are often considered more important than romantic relationships, especially when romantic relationships are relatively recent. Although frequent contact is preferred, knowing that close relationships are available when needed offers enough comfort to not feel lonely. Within relationships, shared values like mutual trust, openness and equality are important. Feeling part of groups is important for some respondents, but less important than emotionally close relationships. Furthermore, most respondents mention personal skills, e.g. reflective capacity or coping skills, as an important condition to not feeling lonely. These skills help respondents to understand what they need in relationships and to reshape their relationship network. Cognitive discrepancy theory offers a useful way of looking at the balance in relationship networks. Young adults are in the process of learning what they want and need in relationships. Experiences with loneliness help them in rethinking and changing their relationship network to better match their needs.

Elżbieta Dubas (University of Łódź, Poland) – Learning in/of solitude in the context of pedagogical monoseology

Amy Webster (Bishop Grosseteste University, UK) – Children Reading Alone and Reading Together: Literary representations and lessons from a pandemic

Children's literature is full of depictions of characters who are immersed in books, from Jo March who retreats to hidden corners of the house with her favourite novels to Matilda for whom reading offers an escape from her family. Even Alice's adventures into Wonderland begin because she is excluded from her sister's encounter with a book allowing her mind to wander and catch a glimpse of a late-running rabbit. This paper begins by exploring some of these literary representations of children reading alone and highlights how these representations can act in a self-reflexive way as the image of the literary child immersed in a book draws in the child reader outside the book. Following this exploration it focuses on children's reading experiences in the context of primary Literacy education in the United Kingdom. It considers how policy requirements can mean that these reading experiences in schools are often shared rather than solitary ones. The paper then draws on the most recent

edition of an annual, large scale study of children's reading habits (Topping, 2021) to highlight how children's increased enjoyment in reading from 2020 to 2021 can be partly attributed to them having more time to become immersed in a story during lockdown and how reading made them feel better about being isolated. The paper concludes by arguing that children need to have more opportunities in school to be alone with books, both because of the value of becoming immersed in a text and because in being alone with books children can actually feel less alone.

Julia Magdalena Karapuda (University of Szczecin, Poland) – Teachers' loneliness in the process of assessing students' behaviour

Assessment of students' behaviour is an exceptionally difficult art in a teacher's job. It requires not only knowledge, but also attentiveness in observing children on a daily basis and the systematic recording of students' behaviour in order to know whether the direction of the educational process is as intended. The onus is on teachers to be objective, consistent, fair and accountable when assessing students' behaviour, as pointed out by the participants in the research I conducted on teachers' practices of assessing students' behaviour. Female respondents also described feeling lonely in relation to giving behavioural ratings to students.

The aim of the talk is to present a cognitively interesting area for research on the situation in which Polish teachers have no one to talk to about their emotions, experiences and difficulties in assessing student behaviour at school. Teachers admit that they feel lonely when they have to make very responsible decisions whilst assessing the behaviour of their students. The issue I will address during my talk is aptly described by Aleksandra Denst-Sadura as "loneliness in a teacher's room full of people".

Julian Stern (Bishop Grosseteste University, UK) – The Art, Literature and Music of Solitude from Modernism to Postmodernism

This article presents a philosophical anthropology of solitude in recent times, drawing in particular from the art, literature and music from Modernism to Postmodernism. It is an argument about 'being at one', the solitude that can be a completion, a oneness with the world, or, in contrast, an isolation, a loneliness, away from all. Although there is a long tradition in many cultures of describing people in terms of 'separation' as well as 'togetherness', what has been less common is an understanding of how different forms of solitude are culturally specific, and change over time and between peoples. Here, some of these forms are analysed as they are reflected in, and created by, the arts of (primarily) European and North American Modernism and Postmodernism. It is part of a larger project on solitude, but one with a distinctively disturbing character, as the culmination of the optimistic age of industry and empire was followed by its collapse or disintegration.

Marino A. Balducci (University of Szczecin, Poland) – Collective Individuality: Dante's Moral Philosophical and Psychological Message in Paradise XXXI

In the Divine Comedy, the symbol of the white rose, contemplated by Dante in Paradise XXXI, represents the communion of saints, that is of those who can experience the peace of the extinction of desire in full joy. The kingdom of heaven is seen by the pilgrim poet as a beautiful flower with many petals. Its value is in the whole, the flower, but also in its individual parts, the petals. The salvation of the soul is therefore linked to altruism, to denying ourselves for our neighbors, that is, in the name of a collective good; however, the poet shows us that every human individuality is precious, and the paradisiacal abolition of egoism is not the destruction

of the uniqueness of the soul but the fulfillment of the self. Inside hell, which is described by Dante as a symbol of selfishness, Beatrice appears as a divine creature. From the lowest material depth of the universe, Christianity starts the process of man's salvation. The low is not the opposite of the high: there is also a high within that low. The individual, if purified from selfishness, becomes in the kingdom of heaven the independent and complementary mirror of a universal joy, a collective joy. Dante, deeply linked to Franciscanism, defends the Mariological concept of 'Immaculate Conception' and, in the Divine Comedy, offers us a moral philosophical message that translates the profound meaning of this same theological idea into secular terms. The solitude of the individual matter that forms the body of every man is only apparent. We are not alone. There is another invisible, silent, very pure reality that has sunk into this matter of ours and into consciousness. This reality can save us and bring every part of humanity back into joyful wholeness.

Mariusz Strzeżek (Doctoral School of Szczecin University, Poland) – Solitude and Mourning in the Late Poetry of Maria Kurecka

The subject of the paper will be a reflection on loneliness in the poetic output of Maria Kurecka (1920 - 1989). The author will pay special attention to mourning poems written after the death of her husband Witold Wirpsza. The presented works come from the archives of Książnica Pomorska in Szczecin and have never been published before. In analyzing the poetic cycle from the last period of the writer's and translator's life, the speaker will focus primarily on an attempt to situate these works against the existential concept of human solitude.

Until now, Maria Kurecka has been known mainly as a translator and author of biographical books. The paper is a contribution to the knowledge of Kurecka also as an excellent poet who poignantly expressed the experience of pain of loss and loneliness.

Narayan Prasad Chaudhari (Tribal Religion and Their Philosophy of life in Indian School Students, India) – Tribal Religion and Their Philosophy of life in Indian School Students

The Adivasi students' self-esteem is very low that is reason to they are not able to oppose directly and say 'We don't consider ourselves either Hindus or any other religion.' So, the tribal students psychological suffer for the religious panidentity in India. That is why Adivasis Are Demanding Recognition for Their Religious Identity of Tribal Religion. The tribal communities, constituting 12 crore of the country's population, were protesting about religion. Although there has been a long debate about the religion that tribal communities follow, the tribals who took part in the protest were demanding the right to choose tribal or aboriginal religion as an option in the census or any other forms. They say that in 1951, when the first census in independent India was being conducted, 'tribe' was available as the ninth option under the column for religion. It was later removed. The representatives allege that its removal has led tribes to be counted under different religions, which they say causes great harm to their communities (the wire: 2019). According to their sources the Brahminism is responsible and Speaking by the Wire, researcher and founder editor of Adivasi Resurgence, Aakash Poyam said in the census conducted by the British, tribals were classified as 'Animists'. "But when the time came for the census in 1941, anthropologist Verrier Elwin, who was the advisor to the government of India, conducted a study on Bastar's Madia tribals. He suggested that since they were closer to Shaivism, which is a part of Hinduism, they should be considered Hindus." The first organised census was held in 1871 - the first synchronized census was held in 1881, in which the 95 percent tribal people have entered their religion as Hinduism. Only two percent people from the North-East declared atribal religion because of the interpretational bias during census. In

1891 only three percent were shown as following tribal religion and rest as Hindu (Bahuguna: 2022). Therefore, the fundamental of rights to religious freedom in again it is the one challenge of article 25 in the Constitution of India.

Gillian Simpson (Bishop Grosseteste University, UK) – Poem: Letter to a Dictator (from the Silenced Innocents)

This is a poem I have written about my reaction to the Ukraine war. I hope it is enough.

Aleksander Cywiński, Kalina Kukiełko, Krzysztof Tomanek (University of Szczecin, Poland) – Between solitude and a sense of community. The project My Space by Rita Leistner

The purpose of our speech is to present the project My space. Stories from Inside the Downtown Eastside Vancouver, by a Canadian photographer Rita Leistner. The Artists, through her photographs and interviews, introduces the everyday life of a group of drug and alcohol addicted residents of Astoria and Balmoral hotels, affiliated to The Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU). Lost people, destroyed by drugs, found not only a safe place to live in the rooms of a secondary hotel but most of all a community that gave them a sense of belonging and acceptance. Our speech is based on photographs from the "My space" project along with interviews conducted with its participants. In our speech, we want to present stories about searching for one's own place and, above all, the need for contact with other people. We want to follow the statements of the project participants in the context of coping with solitude and striving to function in a sense of community. Bearing in mind the artist's intentions, we present it in the context of storytelling, which we treat as a useful tool for qualitative analysis of social phenomena, working primarily in the study of art, especially various types of artistic products, in this case, photography. We focus on the form of a story that combines threads from many dimensions of the individual and social life of an individual. We show how the photos of the room in which the protagonists of the story live can become a medium of narration connecting the present with the past and the future, and above all serve to build a social community.

Marisa Musaio (Catholic University of Sacred Heart of Milan, Italy) – From different negative loneliness to positive loneliness as a metaphor for interiority: a pedagogical proposal

Loneliness is outlined as the insidious evil of our age, a manifestation of the disintegration of ties, of the sense of crisis of the human being, of the shattering of identity until the emergence of a fragile self without a "you" to refere.

With reference to a "pedagogical hermeneutic of person" (Musaio, 2010) in relation to the so-called "age of sad passions" (Benasayag, Schmit, 2004), the contribution proposes an 'x-ray' of the main forms of negative loneliness as a transversal dimension to the different ages of life, with particular presence in adolescents (Luhmann, Hawkley, 2016), in relation to the phenomena of isolation and social confinement, but also in adults and elderly people (Fakoya, McCorry, Donnelly, 2020). Starting from these findings, it is possibile to propose a re-elaboration of solitude in its positive value as a metaphor of interiority, as keystone for overcoming uprooting, loss of ties, in view to educate to a sense of existential fraternity.

Katarzyna Wrońska (Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland) – Solitude and meeting in education: a balancing exercise in being with oneself and being with others

Being alone with oneself in the midst of the pandemic's lockdowns and the war that is taking place on our doorstep comes up with a challenge that puts our aloneness to the test today. There is no point to bristle with praise of the solitude that does exclude all others around us who suffer from loneliness, the loss of a loved one, fear for their own life and the life of their families, for a roof over their heads in the face of the armed aggression from land, sea and air.

Today we are all Ukrainians. Thus, our sense of comfort in experiencing aloneness has been shattered, as though we could still enjoy the gentle flow of our thoughts, in silence, at ease, aloof and distant from the risks menacing others in the worlds far away. Today, thoughts spring towards the others, those in peril. We cannot but be with others, when the current events require of us to cooperate, talk and hear the needs of others, and to pledge ourselves to do all we can to help them, including those most vulnerable – the children. How do they experience the impact of these events?

In response to these challenges, I will devote my presentation to the analysis of the educational dialogue. I assume that solitude and meeting are two, developmentally important, types of experiences in a child's life, and that dialogue undertaken in educational space has a key role to play in balancing them. I shall investigate therefore what distinguishes educational dialogue, what role does it play in education, what kind of demands does it place on adults, parents and educators; and, finally, whether, and if so, how does it contribute to building a balance between experiencing being with oneself and with others?

Jarosław Horowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland) – Education for Marriage as Education for Loneliness

Preparation for marriage is one of the important goals of education, as this must involve not only the acquiring of certain skills by maturing persons, but also their adoption of an attitude of responsibility towards other people so that their future spouse can become a subject of concern for them rather than a mere means to achieve any selfish ends. From this perspective, preparation for marriage must include a shaping of various virtues and an acceptance of the need to function in difficult situations. The analysis thus attempts to justify the thesis that, as part of preparing people for marriage, it is necessary to educate maturing people with regard to loneliness. The loneliness that a particular person must deal with is likely to be experienced in three forms, appropriate to three separate periods of life. The first is the loneliness of a person looking for a partner with whom to work towards their life goals; the second is the distinct form of loneliness experienced within marriage that emerge from discovering one's own essential separateness despite the existence of relationship with spouse; and the third is the loneliness of persons caring for sick spouses with whom intimate contact is lost, especially in the run-up to death.

Eva Alerby (Luleå University of Technology, Sweden) – To be, or not to be, alone – when the other is a pine tree

'I had a friend, I know it sounds weird, but there was a pine tree just outside the window of my room' A person with covid-19 in a Corona intensive care unit (CICU) at a Swedish hospital expressed these words in connection with a follow-up interview concerning her experiences during the period of illness. The person, Elisabeth, was after a first contact with the local health care centre, transported to the CICU and was immediately taken into respiratory care. After 11 days on a respirator, Elisabeth had to stay another two weeks in the hospital. During this time,

isolated and alone in the room, Elisabeth noticed the pine tree outside the window, a tree that became her friend and lifeline to the world.

In this paper, Elisabeth's narrative regarding experiences of her friendship with the pine tree will exemplify and illuminate the complexities of humans' need and desire to have a relationship with the other. The fundamental ambition is to discuss and generate insights into various understandings and beliefs regarding the relationship between a human and a tree and discuss the significance of whom or what the other might be. Furthermore, the phenomenon of loneliness and its relation to the need and desire for togetherness are outlined and explored. Elisabeth's words in her narrative will be explicated throughout the paper and will also form the foundation of the philosophical interplay as an approach to challenge and provoke diverse ways of understanding and reflecting on the other as more-than-human.

Barbara Żakowska (University of Szczecin, Poland) – The international education programs as a medium for bringing together alone cultures

One of the phenomena of the past few decades are schools and international education programs that have been appearing around the world. Although the history of international education programs is quite long, their meaning and development have never been considered as globally significant and dynamic as now. Twenty-first century with its ever changing and growing expectations and needs of divergent societies granted international schools with a new meaning. They are no longer just schools for children of the immigrants and diplomats but also the place of creation for the new educational reality and the meaning of education itself. World-wide globalization, migration and other changes that occur in today's reality have stimulated the establishment of international schools around the world, including Poland. Some of the practical reasons for creating such schools are the increasing migration rates and the urgency to organize the best possible places of education for the culturally diverse students. On the other hand, international schools also serve as intellectual centers for creating both the new aims of education and the interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning.

Taking all this into consideration, the aim of the study is to investigate the importance of international programs by emphasizing the content of the programs itself, which concentrates on educating students of XXI century, teenagers who will become adults in the multidimensional world of today. Additionally, I will focus on the international education programs in the context of bringing different cultures closer together in the aspect of communication, cooperation and compromise so the whole school community can be alone together.

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Noy Sasson and Malka Margalit (Peres Academic Center, Israel) – Predictors of loneliness during job relocation: Personal and interpersonal perspectives

The move to another country, a new culture and away from extended family and friends may result in increased loneliness and challenges to wellbeing. The goals of this study were to examine the emotional and social costs of job relocation and to identify predictors of the loneliness experience. Job relocation has been defined as the process of a simultaneous job and geographical move. Due to the globalized job market, relocation has become a part of the modern time, affecting the life not only of the persons who change the location of their working place, but also of their family who accompany them to the new country. The study consisted of 281 participants from 50 countries (mean age 37.32, SD=7.48) who answered to online questionnaires. The MANOVA comparisons between the relocated persons and spouses revealed significant differences in levels of hope and resilience, but not in their loneliness levels. The locating individuals felt more hopeful and more resilient than their spouses. Mediation analysis demonstrated that lower personal resilience predicted higher levels of loneliness. A mediation model revealed that these relations were mediated by hope, social support, and life satisfaction. These results emphasized the importance of the personal resource - hope levels (The abilities to identify meaningful goals and to plan effective pathways to reach these goals) in addition to interpersonal resources: social support. Intervention planning that will target personal and interpersonal resources such as empowering personal hopes while promoting social support may help reducing the risk of loneliness.

Olga Szynkaruk (University of Szczecin, Poland) – Alone in Life, Together in Death? Reflections on the Triple Burial of Dolní Věstonice

The following paper is an exploration of the triple burial of Dolní Věstonice, dated to around 31, 000 BP. The unusual arrangement of the three young individuals, coded DV 13, DV 14 and DV 15, as well as the seemingly indeterminable gender of the last-mentioned specimen, have launched a thousand interpretations as to the reason for such an unusual set of funerary practices.

The main focus is set on the paleosociological implications of the titular burial as related to the phenomena of loneliness, solitude and togetherness. These considerations are undertaken especially in regards to the construction of the experience of DV 15: their skeletal deformities, injuries, unusual phenotypical features and – possibly – a non-binary gender expression.

The early life of the discussed specimen is investigated here as a possible experience of aloneness. Their severe malnutrition, as well as stress patterns visible on their bones speak of negative differentiated care and hard labour early in life, undertaken without regard for their lack of traditional motor abilities. The reasons for the inclusion of symbolic togetherness in the burial rite, as well as its other aspects such as selected grave goods are constructed as a possible means of recompense offered by the society DV 15 lived in.

Conclusions drawn from comparative studies of other burials within the pavlovian culture, as well as the symbolic and funerary landscape of the Upper Palaeolithic on the whole, are presented in an effort to shed some light upon the archaeological enigma the triple burial presents.

Liad Bareket Bojmel and Lily Chernyak-Hai (Peres Academic Center, Israel) – Work Engagement during Remote Work, the Role of Loneliness and Hope

In a world where remote and hybrid work is becoming the new normal, the current study seeks to examine the relation between remote work and job engagement, and the roles loneliness

and hope may play in this setting. Participants were 347 employees from the US and UK (170 men, 177 women, 2 others) aged 21-69 (M = 38.8, SD = 9.9) who work full-time in organizations. 68% of the employees reported working remotely at least one day a week and 38% reported working remotely 5 days or more, which indicates that remote work is a highly widespread phenomenon.

The analysis identified a moderated mediation model: remote work predicted a decreased perception of job engagement, but only for employees with high levels of loneliness. Among employees with low and medium levels of loneliness, no significant relations between remote work and job engagement were found. These results come in line with recent findings from the organizational field during the COVID-19 pandemic (Oberlander & Bipp, 2021; Koekemoer et al., 2021) and challenge the widespread assumption that remote work impairs employee engagement.

Yet, among employees with high levels of loneliness, their levels of hope served as a mediator between remote work and perception of job engagement. These results have theoretical importance, as well as meaningful implications. Increasing hope may serve as an applicable intervention among remote and lonely workers. The implications of our findings are discussed and suggestion of future studies and possible interventions to increase engagement among remote and lonely employees are suggested.

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Piotr Krakowiak (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland) – Loneliness in "the silent pandemic of grief" after loss. What can we do during and after pandemic?

The conclusions from the research on bereaved people during the pandemic leave no room for illusions, because great needs for support were there mentioned next to many difficulties in accessing help. Urgent adaptation of group and individual bereavement support and information improvement are needed. There is a need to develop social and educational initiatives that will strengthen the channels of informal support in local communities, helping to ease the isolation after loss and be more effective in the bereavement process. There is a need to combine the existing social forces, and to engage others in helping lonely people after losses. How to include effectively those experienced professionals who will show ways to respond to the silent pandemic of grief after losses and in society. The loneliness may be reduced by the activities of empathetic and caring local - compassionate communities. In Poland, for years there have been such empathetic communities that are religiously motivated parishes, serving people in need. Pastoral care for people in mourning is a duty that derives from the venerable tradition of the Catholic Church, but it could be also a chance to change the image of a parish where accompanying the orphaned would became rule and not an exception in over 10,000 parishes in Poland. Throughout society, grief relief begins with awareness of the needs and education of how to help the lonely and despairing. Extending informal support and community activities will help reduce isolation during and after the Covid19 pandemic, while long-term educational and community initiatives can strengthen

Marie Stern (Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Hull, UK) – The Lonely Patient

Hospitals are busy, crowded places. Patients are usually surrounded by staff, other patients and visitors. For some of the time, the patient is truly 'the centre of attention'. However, patients tell us that they can feel isolated and lonely and this can add to their anxiety.

A life-long medical condition has resulted in me spending a great deal of time in hospitals. Now, I use this experience to work with my local hospitals to improve patient experience. I listen to patients, hearing their concerns, and then use their stories to train clinical staff and shape hospital policy.

In this presentation, I will share some ideas about what professionals can do to help patients avoid feeling lonely.

Sandra Bosacki (Brock University, Canada) – Why youth want to be alone – Initial data from longitudinal study of Canadian youth's preferences for solitude

Although solitude is important for self-growth in adolescence, little known about why youth chose to be alone, what they like to do and how they feel when they are alone. Accordingly, this study explored adolescents' preference for solitude and their reasons why.

Method

Fifty youth participated in an ongoing longitudinal study of Canadian youth's preferences for solitude. Ages ranged from 11-18 years and gender was evenly distributed. Participants responded to a 1-hour long on-line survey. Participants reported reasons for why they chose to be alone, to list their favourite solitary activities and how they felt when alone.

Results

Most children reported that they were more likely to be with others than alone 35/50, 70%). The reasons for why they chose to be alone included social ("Because my friends live far away"), physical ("because I'm tired), and emotional ("I don't feel like putting on a happy mask."). Solitary activities included passive ("I can just relax and be depressed without worrying what others are thinking, watch tv"), engaged (read, write music, run), or relax/re-energize ("I like to have alone time to just slack and do nothing). Time spent alone during typical day ranged from 1 to 6 hours, and youth reported emotions ranging from lonely and bored to calm, peaceful, and relaxed.

Discussion

Our study so far demonstrates the need to view solitude contextually. Or findings suggest that solitude provides a sacred and safe space for different activities and how adolescents spend time alone may have implications for their well-being.

Michal Einav and Malka Margalit (Peres Academic Center, Tel-Aviv University, Tel Aviv-Yaffa Academic College, Israel) – Loneliness and Self-Efficacy in Higher Education: The Mediating Role of Social Support and Hope

The subjective experience of loneliness reflects dissatisfaction from social relations, resulting in an emotional distress. However, its relation to cognitive evaluation of self-efficacy beliefs, as well as to hope may extend the awareness to the complexity of the loneliness construct. Bandura (2018) stated that "Self-efficacy plays a special role because it contributes to the operation of the other agentic elements" (p.133). The study goals were to identify the relations between self-efficacy as a belief of personal competence and loneliness as an expression of interpersonal distress, while exploring the mediating role of family and friends support, as well as the hope construct as future expectations (Snyder, 2002). We hypothesized that in addition to social support, levels of hope will predict the levels of loneliness distress. The sample consisted of 1268 students (396 males and 874 females) from 10 universities and colleges in Israel, with a wide age range 18-60 years (M=26.80, SD = 6.81). Students with disabilities were not included in this sample. The mediation analysis confirmed the hypothesis that the beliefs of competency (self-efficacy) predicted loneliness. However, hope as well as family and peer support predicted loneliness. The negative significant relation (-0.44, p<0.01) between self-efficacy and loneliness lost its significance (0.02, p=-0.79), when social support from families and peers and hope were included in the analysis as mediating variables (see figure 1). The results demonstrated the complexity of the loneliness construct, while emphasizing unique mediated roles of intrapersonal and interpersonal resources. Theoretical importance and therapeutic implications will be discussed.

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Figure 1: The mediation of social support and hope on the relations between self-efficacy and loneliness

Michał Mrozek (University of Szczecin, Poland) – The Economic Dimension of the Solitude in Consideration of COVID-19 Pandemic – Sociability, Alone Living and Economic Growth

Abstract: The aim of the paper is the assessment of the economic dimension of the solitude in consideration of COVID-19 pandemic in terms of sociability, alone living and economic growth. The following research problems were put forward: How does the diversification of the situation of economic dimension of the solitude in consideration of COVID-19 pandemic within the sociability, alone living and economic growth look?; Which of the researched areas of economic dimension of the solitude in consideration of COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the sociability, alone living and economic growth has the lowest, middle, the highest level? In the theoretical part of the paper were depicted the following issues: COVID-19 pandemic; aloneness; economic growth; sociability as an economic growth driver. In the empirical part were presented the following issues: share of people living alone and sociability index; loneliness and alone living and economic growth; sociability that drives growth, the complexity of the relationship between loneliness and growth. In the studies were carried out the documentation, statistical, comparative, dynamics analysis. The inference process took place in the deductive way.

Keywords: Economic cost of solitude, COVID-19 pandemic, Sociability, Economic Growth

Roni Laslo-Roth, Sivan George-Levi and Lital Ben Yacov (Peres Academic Center, Israel) – Support me in the good times too: Interpersonal emotion regulation, social support, and loneliness among mothers of children with ASD

Although loneliness is an experience that mothers of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) may face, it has not been widely explored. Having a supportive social environment that is also effective in emotion regulation may provide feelings of security necessary for one to feel less lonely. The present study examined loneliness levels among mothers of children with ASD (vs. without ASD) and explored interpersonal resources (interpersonal emotion regulation and social support) that might contribute to reduced loneliness. One-thousand-seven-hundred-and-eighty-three mothers of children (546 with ASD, 1,237 without) completed a series of questionnaires. Mothers of children with ASD (vs. without) reported higher levels of loneliness and low levels of interpersonal emotion regulation efficacy for positive emotions and low levels of social support. A serial mediation model indicated that interpersonal factors fully mediated the association between being a mother of a child with ASD (vs. without) and loneliness. Moreover, a moderation mediation model showed that the tendency to approach others in order to regulate positive emotions moderated the association between perceived efficacy of such regulation and mothers' loneliness. Interpersonal emotion regulation for positive emotions and social support may contribute to reduced loneliness, especially among mothers of children with ASD.

Christine Spiteri (University of Malta) – Loneliness in the Digital Age

Digital technologies have been designed to mitigate feelings of distance and satisfy our basic need for connectedness. For over a decade now, we have had instant access to valuable information, entertainment, and contact with friends and family. However, the rise in loneliness figures begs the question: How is loneliness so widespread in a world that's constantly connected? It also indicates that the quality of the interpersonal relations we foster across social media need to be urgently examined. This poster presentation will share some preliminary insights from a quantitative study investigating the relationship between social media use and feelings of loneliness among a Maltese population.