

# Quo Vadis

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## **About the Writers:**

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## **Abstract:**

Since the dawn of civilization man has been engaged in self-discovery; the Egyptian, Greek, Roman and ensuing generations, each had this pursuit at the heart of their cultures.

With this article the writers seek to introduce a potential contribution from this generation to that ancient tradition of collective self-discovery, using anecdotal evidence from observations made in the sweaty rock & roll venues of London city in the early nineties. For it was within those very venues that an essence of humanity revealed itself to the drummer of an Irish rock band - a phenomenon for which he coined the phrase *Sympathetic Intelligence*.

Here, the writers examine the mechanics of *Sympathetic Intelligence*, reveal how close a philosopher from the last century may have come to identifying its existence, frame the phenomenon in the context of the prevailing modern social dynamic, present the emerging concept as it presents on multiple levels and then propose a course for developing a more fulsome understanding and implementation of the concept at every level of society. But, fair warning - a unique distinguishing feature of this concept is that, once you have discovered it, experienced it, and then come to identify with it - you will see that its presence is not only within you - it is everywhere around you.

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## Part 1 – ORIGINS IN MUSIC

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One night David, who is a musician, went to a rock venue in London, called The Marquee. He was a frequent visitor to the venue. The club was packed with people and despite an indifferent start to the show, the band got better as the crowd got more engaged. From then on, it seemed as if every word, every guitar chord and every cymbal crash came at exactly the right time. David had never experienced this level of empathy between a band and an audience before. The band was U2, and the show still reverberates in his mind to this day! But one question remains for him - how much of this experience was U2, and how much of it was the crowd! Interestingly, this was the exact same question that consumed another musician, from another albeit, lesser known Irish band - *The Fat Lady Sings*. Every night Robert, the drummer, looked out at the audience and wondered essentially the same thing - how much of the audience's reaction was a consequence of the talent, passion or energy of his band and how much of it was derived from an inherent quality that belonged to the audience? Later on, over the course of some 30 years', Robert gave a name to the quality that both he and David had experienced as musicians and music lovers - *Sympathetic Intelligence*.

For Robert and David, experience of the phenomenon was not restricted to audience or crowd participation. Even though they didn't know it at the time, as musicians they actually relied upon *Sympathetic Intelligence* very heavily in their playing, both as live musicians and as recording musicians. As live musicians for example playing together, David would always insist on being positioned on stage with an easy line of sight to Robert, who as the drummer was naturally fixed to one spot for the duration of any performance. In the studio when recording a new track, David would quickly go over the song structure with Robert, then the two of them would record a version of the track from start to finish with David playing in the same room that Robert and the drum kit were in, even though this wasn't necessary and even created some discomfort. But, the decision to do so was deliberate and paramount to capturing a version of the song that they would be happy with. Why? There were principally two reasons. The first was pragmatic - Robert would usually not be as familiar with the track as David, who as the songwriter was

very familiar with the structure. By being in the same room, Robert was able to interpret from David's playing and his disposition, how to play the song. He could feel what emphasis was needed and where it was needed - naturally – it was spontaneous and often lent a very natural feeling to the track. Similarly, David was able to interpret from Robert's disposition, his expressions and movement how to complement Robert's playing. Interacting this way also opened up creative ideas that were born out of the common experience of playing together in real time, feeling and feeding off each other's intuitive delivery. They recorded multiple tracks this way and usually were able to record a finished version of a song within 1, 2 or 3 takes.

But the point as we shall show, is that the application of *Sympathetic Intelligence* isn't even restricted to either music or musicians. In fact, there is no social arena where *Sympathetic Intelligence* isn't present. More importantly, there may be times when simply by virtue of awareness for its presence, its role can be optimized - whether that be on a stage, in the classroom, during a visit to the doctor's office, during an engagement between police officers and citizens, or even between two great leaders sitting down to discuss the differences that separate their communities. The point is, that there is a direct relationship between the presence of *Sympathetic Intelligence* in any one moment and the enduring quality of that moment. We believe it is time we began examining our social existence through the lens of this concept and that in doing so, we may achieve a better way of living, learning, and working together.

Although *Sympathetic Intelligence* is a nascent concept today, it has in fact always been present and at the core of what it means to be human. We are not claiming that *Sympathetic Intelligence* is a recent discovery, or something new. In fact, the writers believe that the concept is really a new label or re-packaging of something that has been contemplated by thousands before. One example stands out - that of the French Philosopher *Henri Bergson*<sup>1</sup> who seemingly had an early intuition of the sort of chemistry at work between Robert and David when he wrote

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henri\\_Bergson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henri_Bergson)

*"Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness"*<sup>2</sup>  
in 1889.

Bergson's description of the role that movement plays in communicating and connecting individuals is beautifully articulated in the above cited piece where he describes the dancer and the spectator being so locked together through the movement of the dance, through the dance's synchronicity and through the capacity of the spectator, that the spectator is able to not only interpret the movements of the dancer, but to also guess at what movement is going to come next. At one point Bergson even suggests that in the event the dancer would stop, the spectator would feel so connected that they would believe they could make the movement begin again and would actually almost be tantalizingly inclined to try to will the dancer back into motion. In modern day terms, this is human-driven connectivity, as opposed to its technologically powered equivalent.

Bergson's analysis is not only beautiful it is also of special interest in the context of *Sympathetic Intelligence* because he moves from this analysis in *Time and Free Will*, to a dance of an entirely different kind in a later piece entitled *Creative Evolution*<sup>3</sup> – where the dance he is concerned with is that between two insects - the Yellow-winged SpheX and the Grasshopper. In it he explains how the SpheX very accurately stings the Grasshopper in three locations (*It will sting its prey first below the neck, then behind the prothorax, and last where the abdomen begins...*) almost as if this SpheX had some sort of anatomical map of the Grasshopper's nervous system because in fact the Grasshopper's anatomical makeup, is such that it will become immobilized through paralysis if stung at these three exact points. The SpheX's success in executing not just the one, but the three stings, will render the Grasshopper, not just a meal but a meal that because it is still alive remains fresh for the SpheX to gorge on over the course of a few days, a treat in store if you will.

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<sup>2</sup> Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, Dover Publications 2001, ISBN 0-486-41767-0.

<sup>3</sup> *Creative Evolution*, 1907 (Need citation)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative\\_Evolution\\_\(book\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_Evolution_(book))

How, Bergson wonders, is it that the SpheX knows where to sting the grasshopper? Is the SpheX, he facetiously ponders, an Entomologist? He concedes as a commonly accepted theory, albeit reluctantly, that the information comes from within - instinct he determines is most likely what delivers the knowledge to the SpheX – through hereditary transmission. In arriving at this conclusion, and looking for some justification, Bergson says; although *'instinct may not belong to intelligence, it nonetheless lies within the borders of our mind'*.

Bergson points out that the proposition that knowledge in the form of instinct through hereditary transmission is passed on from generation to generation is not beyond debate, even if we are forced to accept that conclusion because, at the end of the day survival tools are worth garnering in the species' treasure trove from generation to generation. But further he points to the fact that much of its application is imperfect for sometimes the SpheX misses, and the Grasshopper, albeit a dysfunctional form of its prior self, escapes!

Bergson then provides an alternate explanation. He proposes that perhaps it is better to look at the two insects not as entities but as actions. We would argue that the reason he suggests that we do this is because, considered as actions or movements, there is a relationship between them - a synchronicity, bound by the messaging these movements contain that is just like the dancer and the spectator. The interaction of movement creates a resonance, a harmony of movement from which one can interpret, infer, or learn from the other. In this case, sadly for the Grasshopper – the reliance by the SpheX on the understanding it gets from the Grasshopper's movements results in the increased probability of not just one, but three accurate stings.

We interpret Bergson's description of the confrontation as an interaction – one which contains actions and reactions with movements which are synchronous and lead to a sympathy between the two which provides a pathway for intelligence to learn from the moment in a way that relies on instinct. We are also forced to wonder what would happen if the grasshopper didn't move at all and gave up no resistance? Would the dog chase the cat if the cat refused to run?

Nature is so full of instances where animals and insects communicate to each other through synchronous orchestrated movement. The bee will dance in full view of the hive and the birds will congregate in a moving and orchestrated collective wave of flight before migration. All of this movement creates a Sympathy, a Communication and most importantly a Connection, and all of it is rooted in Instinct. But there is a beautiful *Dr. Dolittle*<sup>4</sup> magic and mystery to all of this - our cat will rub our leg and do a dance for us when she is hungry, and the dog will fetch his lead when he thinks it's time for a walk. We imagine they are communicating with us, and as a matter of fact, they are.

So now we suggest that the continuum of *Sympathetic Intelligence* extends from its roots in Instinct, with survival as its beginning purpose, and concludes with a connecting synchronicity for the living moment. To us we feel that Bergson has most eloquently illuminated what is the greatest dance of all – *the dance of life*. Time gives birth to movement, which can be either synchronous or asynchronous which then gives birth to a form of sympathy, from which we can interpret and behave accordingly.

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## Part 2 – BEYOND MUSIC

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### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'SYMPATHY'

Central to understanding *Sympathetic Intelligence* is understanding the role 'Sympathy' itself plays in our day to day lives. Montaigne famously said; *Each and every one of us holds within himself the complete form of the human condition*. At the heart of the theory and concept underlying Sympathetic Intelligence is this very simple fact - that each one of us is inextricably linked to our collective existence. *Sympathetic Intelligence* begins as a potential within the individual and next takes form through the individual's engagement with the world and those around them. This is because, for there to be sympathy there must be two or more *entities* involved. Emotions can be experienced exclusively by a person, but not sympathy. Sympathy is unique in this regard. People often mistakenly

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<sup>4</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor\\_Dolittle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor_Dolittle)

think of it exclusively as an emotion, but that is not correct. Indeed Sympathy, the emotion can be exhibited through an act motivated by feelings of caring, but for the act to succeed in communicating care, it must be performed *In Sympathy* with the context. Sympathy is also a relationship, as revealed in the word *sympathizers* and a condition as revealed in the engineering term *sympathetic resonance*. All of these uses, and meanings are component parts of the meaning and the use of the word *sympathy* in the concept of *Sympathetic Intelligence*. The primary meaning of the word sympathy as it is used in the concept and theory of Sympathetic Intelligence is the characteristic of being *in sympathy*. We would hold that a secondary consequence of acts that are sympathetic in this meaning, may be the creation or triggering of the emotion of sympathy within people, so that meaning of emotion is present, but secondarily.

Even though *Sympathetic Intelligence* exists largely as a potential within the individual, and even though the sense we are using the term has to do with sympathy between two or more entities, nonetheless it can be practiced or experienced by the individual alone, but only to whatever extent they are engaging with something. For example, when they are reading a book, looking at a painting, playing a musical instrument, or indeed just listening to a piece of music. In each of these instances, there is more than one entity, and the interaction contains sympathy in the sense we mean for *Sympathetic Intelligence* to be present. The book, the painting and or the music resonates with the individual to a degree and to that degree *Sympathetic Intelligence* is present and gives both measure and value to the quality of the experience. We believe for instance, that this understanding may lead to an explanation and greater appreciation for the key role the Arts play in all our societies.

## **PERSPECTIVE DEFICIT**

In 2017, the New York Times Columnist, Brett Stephens delivered a keynote at the Lowy Institute in Australia, which was later also published in the New York Times<sup>5</sup>. The title of the talk was '*The Dying Art of*

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/dying-art-disagreement>

*Disagreement'*. The general theme is that over the years, probably since the end of World War II, society has tended to move further away from engaging in debate. In the piece, Stephens laments the development of a pattern where people, not only on the web, but on college campuses and other arenas where dialogue is supposed to take place, have embraced the echo chambers of identity politics. This is indeed a loss, and we would say that he is identifying a reduction in the healthy reliance by society of our natural *Sympathetic Intelligence*.

As we have said sympathy requires more than one entity - It cannot be practiced in a vacuum. At the outset, for *Sympathetic Intelligence* to gain traction, to have purpose, there must be difference, there must be distance, there must be tension and there must even be disagreement. The strength of our species lies in diversity, not '*sameness*'. As we engage, our differences don't disappear. Instead, our mutuality and commonality appear, and their presence is what we think we should enjoy and rejoice in. That celebration is the resonance and the harmony that we find in engagement and that we enjoy, but its birthplace is our diversity. The preacher and the punk can share a seat in any house of God.

The modern origin of *Sympathetic Intelligence* lies in its "discovery" first in music. In music too as we have shown harmony is found not in '*sameness*' but in tension and difference. The distance between each note is called an interval, and it is the intervals between notes that create the opportunity for harmony, for resonance, tension, and resolution. There could be nothing more natural therefore than disagreement. By Rousseau's treatise on *The Social Contract*, we can see clearly that the fabric of society is found in the agreements that we have entered into. Agreement is born out of disagreement, it is arrived at mutually, notwithstanding any deficit in perspective between the parties.

Over the course of time, we have identified our differences, and we have resolved the tensions between them by overcoming our disagreements through dialogue and reasoned argument, replacing them with agreement and ultimately a harmony of sorts. The social contract, no



less than any constitution, is a living document. Its authenticity and its validity is found in the fact that it is constantly tested and modified to meet the latest tests that challenge it.

When we air our disagreements, we can rely on our *Sympathetic Intelligence* to arrive at a resolution. The shame of it is, that when we shout each other down, when we drown each other out, when we refuse to engage in reasoned debate, we are not engaging our *Sympathetic Intelligence*. We believe Brett Stephens is right and we also believe that his call for a re-birth of the art of disagreement can be assisted by developing a better understanding and awareness for our *Sympathetic Intelligence* - our very own human form of Superman's kryptonite, perhaps.

At the core of *Sympathetic Intelligence* is this very simple fact;- The thing that separates each of us from everyone else, and much more so than our fingerprint is what Robert calls '*Perspective Deficit*'. It is an essential facet of our existence. Well known Neuroscientist, Antonio Damasio puts it this way:- "*The conscious state of mind is experienced in the exclusive, first-person perspective of each of our organisms, never observable by anyone else. The experience is owned by each of our organisms and by no other*"<sup>6</sup>.

So, difference is built into our existence, and our consciousness through engaging with it. There is no avoiding this, we each have a view of the world that is unique, not just because of our physical perspective, i.e. the angle of our view, but because of our past experiences and even our hopes for the future. Our perspective is in fact prejudiced because of this. Damasio says *that we perceive by engagement, rather than by passive receptivity*. We feel our existence and so it should come as no surprise that we take our perspective of the world very personally. No wonder then that disagreement would be the hallmark of engagement. But we should thrive on it, not die by it. Just as music is an enthralling journey through the tensions contained in the resonance of sound waves, so too can the engagement of our diversity be rewarding and

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<sup>6</sup> 'Self Comes To Mind' at page 167

even enthralling. Our collective experience should ensure this not through sameness, but rather through proactive displays of kindness, intelligence and appreciation for the wealth of our diversity. *Sympathetic Intelligence* properly deployed goes beyond coping with difference - it is the positive embrace of it. From tension, we create appreciation, respect, and harmony. Perhaps a modern interpretation of Descartes' '*I think, therefore I am*' .....might even be '*I feel, therefore I am*'. If our perception is prejudiced by our past, and our existence created through engagement, then we must reconcile these through *Sympathetic Intelligence*. None of us are the same, we are different, and we need to rejoice in this our greatest strength. For sure, *Sympathetic Intelligence* IS our kryptonite.

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### Part 3 – SOCIO NEUROLOGY

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Musicians experience the SENSATION of *Sympathetic Intelligence* through music, but as stated earlier, *Sympathetic Intelligence* is not unique to musicians for indeed it plays a much bigger role in society and its presence is ubiquitous. What David and Robert experience as musicians we all experience in our day to day lives: the desire, the ability, the sensation and the manner with which to resonate with or feel each moment and relate to any environment and those around us and the joy that such experiences bring to our lives and the lives of others. In fact, this is JUST ONE form of *Sympathetic Intelligence* – it is an example of the **Interpersonal** form.

Robert describes *Sympathetic Intelligence* as being; **within, between** and **amongst** us. This effectively gives *Sympathetic Intelligence* a sort of 3-*dimensional* presence within society and hence our use of the term *Socio-Neurological*. In other words, *Sympathetic Intelligence* has three levels or tiers of existence: - The *Individual, Social and Community* tiers. This is a standout feature that we believe makes the concept of *Sympathetic Intelligence* unique and explains why we believe the need for research into it is compelling. Below, we will examine each of the three Tiers.

## The First Tier

Here *Sympathetic Intelligence* refers to the individual's capacity to maintain equilibrium between what is often referred to in the vernacular as their Gut, Heart and Mind. More scientifically we would say, Instinct, Emotion and Cognition. It manifests, at this level then, as a potential that means we are each ready to conduct ourselves within the moment in a manner that is sympathetic to all of the moving parts of the moment, both internal and externally. It means having the capacity to connect and create an affinity between ourselves and those others around us in context. In the end result, it means our state of flux resonates with the flux around us. Ultimately for each individual it means striving to apply our intelligence sympathetically. We can feel each moment, and to varying degrees we can feel the degree to which we are in resonance with each moment and attempt to adjust accordingly. This Tier is also referred to as the *Intrapersonal* or *Individual* tier.

Understanding the relationship between this tier and the other two tiers is very important. This is '*where the rubber hits the road*' so to speak. That is because *Sympathetic Intelligence* is driven by each individual's ***desire, need and capacity*** to engage and reconcile themselves with all of the elements in any one given moment. It is relied upon to connect the individuals to the context in any given moment, bringing a greater capacity and level of care to interpersonal engagement. We will use it to match and 'connect' to others with whom we hope to bond with.

## The Second Tier

Also referred to as the *Interpersonal* or *social* tier, this is the level that most of us will be immediately familiar with. Here, any two individuals are effectively ***sharing*** their potential and capacity for *Sympathetic Intelligence*. It is at this level that the sympathetic component actually manifests externally. Any onlooker will be able to identify the presence of *Sympathetic Intelligence* between any two people, indeed sometimes it will appear as an energy between and amongst them. The degree to which their behavior '*matches*' can be felt and will perhaps even be visible. We can divide these '*couples*' into two types - *Dyadic* and

*Nascent*. The former exhibit in the form of twins, and married couples for example who finish each other's sentences, while the latter exist in the form of developing or long-term friendships or partnerships that have the potential to become dyadic - for example, tennis partners, partners on a police force or partners as part of a team in an emergency surgery room.

On this second tier too then, *Sympathetic Intelligence* is present broadly in relationships that exist between more than two individuals. Small groups of three people and more form, but these small groups, to an ever-lessening degree as they increase in numbers exhibit a unified form of *Sympathetic Intelligence*. Nonetheless, teams, and even institutions and small communities on some level form and exhibit collective *Sympathetic Intelligence*. At this tier we come together and because we have common purpose, or our characteristics, talents and perhaps backgrounds are in sympathy, connections can be formed and nurtured. This enables us to build bonds and ultimately become connected and interconnected. We would go so far as to say that this tier is '*the glue*' or '*the fabric*' of society.

Here too we can also see the presence of '*flow state*' emerging. For example, when the football team plays with such cohesion, they are said to be in a *Group Flow State*, a characteristic that we believe results from *Sympathetic Intelligence*. This is this tier's equivalent of the Individual flow state found when a rider becomes connected to a motorcycle, and their ability to control the bike is at its highest. Indeed, the capacity for *Group Flow State* may be helpful in defining the upper limit of the second Tier of Sympathetic Intelligence.

### **The Third Tier**

Finally then, there is the **Extrapersonal, Community or Third Tier** of Sympathetic Intelligence which presents at the Institutional or Cultural level. At this level the possibility for *Sympathetic Intelligence* being present in any form of *flow state* is really unrealistic, although we might posit that national pride during a live sports event such as the Olympics and/or the World cup soccer events certainly at least resembles a form

of 'flow state'. Think too perhaps of a nation holding a moment of silence in commemoration, or as an act of respect.

On the Extrapersonal level, *Sympathetic Intelligence* exists *collectively* because society needs to organize itself functionally and the systems in place at least on some level, must be 'In Sympathy' with each other. In fact, society *relies* on people acting *in sympathy* with each other.

Here it is visible as *culture* in the form of customs and norms and *society* in the form of rules and regulations or laws. For example, each culture displays a collective presence of *Sympathetic Intelligence* that is unique to that culture and can be felt by any visiting tourist. Meanwhile societies rely on its presence through compliance and conformity with the rules and regulations needed for people to live and function together. A simple example of people behaving in sympathy with each other at this level is the fact that we all drive on one or other side of the road, depending on which direction we are going.

Any departure from that would result in chaos. We all understand the meaning of a handshake, and when its use is in sympathy, and appropriate for the circumstances we feel something, we anticipate a connected experience and have hope that something good and positive is going to manifest from the engagement that the handshake beckons.

These three levels of *Sympathetic Intelligence* are inextricably connected to each other. In sport for example we can easily see the unified operation of each of these levels - we each have individual skills that we practice, then to realize this potential we contribute to the team effort and spectators become a part of the game as a community even as the game is played on the field. This brings us full circle back to the rock concert where the individual audience members connect with the musicians and the crowd around them. It goes without saying therefore that in every type of human interaction, whether we are socializing, learning, or working, *Sympathetic Intelligence* is present and significantly contributes to the quality and strength of our entire social existence. So, as we have shown, *Sympathetic Intelligence* is a *Socio-Neurological* energy that exists within, between and amongst us.

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## Part 4 – USEFULNESS

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One question that constantly surfaces is “what use is *Sympathetic Intelligence*”? As we have already pointed out, *Sympathetic Intelligence* has always been here - we didn’t invent it, and actually it is being used daily, by each of us on multiple levels and in a multitude of ways. Once when asked this question, Robert responded: ‘*imagine a world where you were like an island, completely cut off from everyone else, that’s what our existence would be like if we didn’t have Sympathetic Intelligence*’. Indeed, it’s possible that the only thing more necessary for our existence is oxygen. So, yes - it’s useful!

But the fundamental mistake made in approaching *Sympathetic Intelligence* with the ‘*what use is it?*’ question, is that *Sympathetic Intelligence* is best NOT thought of as a skill in the first place, even if it is possible to see it that way, and even if de facto it does also manifest as an ability. It’s possible to breathe better, but we can survive perfectly fine just breathing, and no one would put breathing down on their resumé as a skillset they are proud of having.

In ‘*Myth of the Machine*’, Lewis Mumford believed that the early scholars erred in reducing man’s intelligence down to *skill sets*. We agree with Mumford and believe that in framing the merit of *Sympathetic Intelligence* on the condition of it being ‘useful’ there is a danger of repeating the error of early scholars.

We will leave for discussion to a later date the definition of intelligence, but for now suffice to say that we consider it a multi-faceted thing, the meaning of which goes well beyond linearity.

We ourselves have presented *Sympathetic Intelligence* as a ‘sense’ of sorts – but, it is not just **a feeling**, it is also the capacity **TO feel**. One can assume then from this that it can be refined, and a better ‘use’ made of it, in the same way a musician can take advantage of their ability to hear or sense pitch better than the rest of us, or a drummer or instrumentalist to engage and connect with their instruments – our capacity to feel therefore, should be capable of refinement and improvement.

Perhaps also the reason the question of *'usefulness'* surfaces so often, is because of the abundance of *'self-help'* ideas and the justifiable fatigue that now exists for them. *Sympathetic Intelligence* is no *'self-help'* concept. Clearly, we don't need any help in learning how to use it. Each individual already has it. This is about an awareness and an appreciation and potentially about refining or improving whatever *Sympathetic Intelligence* a person has. Perhaps, we could use it a little better and to greater effect? If that is the case, then how? The answer to that question, Robert answers as follows: - *'I don't know if it can be learned, because I haven't tried to teach it. However, I do believe that we can develop a better understanding and sense of it, and that when we do, we behave differently, and usually, to and with greater effect'*. Robert believes he did himself develop a keener sense of it. Furthermore, It is a matter of well-established belief, that the older we get, the wiser we become and we find support for the contention that *Sympathetic Intelligence* can be developed in this popular and well established belief.

We believe that the contemplation alone of *Sympathetic Intelligence* can bring new meaning and a better sense of purpose to our lives. It informs us that something we have taken for granted actually has a deep-rooted meaning and purpose. If we can develop an appreciation for the role it plays in our lives, then it is reasonable to suppose that we can make better use of it.

One way to *'use'* *Sympathetic Intelligence* through awareness and appreciation for its presence, may be to identify the role that *Sympathetic Intelligence* can play in specific professions, so that the individual professionals might learn something about how it manifests in the service they are delivering. Here, we are talking about not just the mechanics of interaction, but the quality of it. In the vernacular, this may be referred to for example as the doctor's *'bedside manner'*. But it is important to consider, is this latter example **intrapersonal** or **interpersonal**?

Activities such as sport, art and recreation for example take on a whole new perspective and meaning when viewed in the context of the role *Sympathetic Intelligence* plays in society. Just gathering at events where

we collectively engage for example in music, has a relevance that goes beyond the profit a promoter can make, or an artist can earn. It may explain, for instance, why the more successful on a pitch a university is, the better the success that university may have at scholastic achievement. Similarly, it may explain why one professors' students do better in one subject than another professors' students do in other subjects. In addition to the Teaching, and Healthcare fields, the field of Policing presents as a profession that could make great gains out of developing a better appreciation and awareness for the presence of *Sympathetic Intelligence* in their interactions with citizens.

Notice how in this short examination, we can see that the development of an improved 'use' of *Sympathetic Intelligence* begins with the individual, which creates the prospect of enhanced interpersonal engagement which in turn impacts the extrapersonal tier of collective interaction in a community, in the form of a hospital, a university or a policing department. While it may be possible for the individual to hone, refine and shape their individual potential for *Sympathetic Intelligence*, this short examination shows that its application goes well beyond specific benefit to the individual, and is a clear distinguishing feature separating *Sympathetic Intelligence* from the many other 'intelligences' out there.

In addition to enhancing our traditional lives and professions, we also believe there are many examples of more modern uses where a greater understanding and appreciation for *Sympathetic Intelligence* can play very positive roles. The world of social media, video games and the application of Artificial Intelligence alone merit individual attention and consideration.

These are all good reasons for developing and unlocking the powerful capacity we have in *Sympathetic Intelligence*. But there is another, and equally important reason. All of the above have cast the potential of *Sympathetic Intelligence* in a positive light. Mostly, we believe that this is why the species has been graced with the capacity for *Sympathetic Intelligence*. Sadly though, there may also be times when it's presence



could be manipulated negatively, by entities bent on achieving their own selfish and shallow agenda.

As with every talent we possess, *Sympathetic Intelligence* too can be put to both negative and destructive use. Think for a moment of propaganda. Clearly propaganda is an example of a negative and destructive use of *Sympathetic Intelligence*. We believe that a greater awareness for *Sympathetic Intelligence*, will lead to a greater **alertness** to the possibility of its abuse. This then could create a 'community shield' through which the negative voice of the propagandist could only pierce in smaller numbers.

Our mission, and the mission of the ***Center for Sympathetic Intelligence***, is to examine these two broad capabilities in equal measure, for if we can increase the positive impact of Sympathetic Intelligence, and also reduce the negative impact, who now amongst you would say the concept was of little use?

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## Part 5 - WHERE ARE WE GOING?

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As is clear from what we have said so far, we believe that *Sympathetic Intelligence* exists on an integrated line of sight from the flux of intelligent engagement within the real world all the way back through cognition and emotion to the roots of intelligence within the individual - instinct and perhaps intuition, or to use the vernacular - the 'gut'.

Although the concept is fairly easy to grasp it is also clear that it can become complex quite easily upon deeper investigation and as noted, we believe that arriving at and settling on an empirical and/or scientific definition for Sympathetic Intelligence, will probably take some time.

But, in the end we must acknowledge a simple truth - we can't prove any of it, not because it isn't provable, but to be frank - that's not within our remit. Hopefully our anecdotal descriptions, positions and our arguments will rest comfortably with all those who will read them. But what now? Should we just pat ourselves on the back and walk away?

We are musicians and perhaps also philosophers, but definitely not scientists. We are happy to benefit from the magic, the atmosphere and the vibes that music brings into our lives through the presence of Sympathetic Intelligence. But if we are right that magic and those vibes are not exclusively to be found in the rock and roll venues where Robert and David first encountered *Sympathetic Intelligence* as musicians. In fact, it is clear to us that *Sympathetic Intelligence* is ubiquitous, for as we have shown, we find its presence in all areas of our lives, and as the reader can see, its presence extends well beyond music. In fact, if the reader ever wants to test for the untouchable presence of *Sympathetic Intelligence* in any one moment, whether it be the vibe of a concert, or the quality of an atmosphere, they only need to ask themselves – ‘*can I feel an energy here?*’

In this article, we have presented *Sympathetic Intelligence* as a much overlooked, yet fundamental element at the heart of the human condition and experience - perhaps even, the very essence of what makes us all ‘Human’. We believe it is a *Socio-Neurological* phenomenon or quality that enables each of us with varying degrees of success to subconsciously engage with every social circumstance out of a desire to fit, be accepted and belong. We believe it controls how we choose to present ourselves, how we choose to engage with those around us and how we interpret the efforts of those around us to connect with us. It is visible in our demeanor and disposition. Mostly, it promotes and encourages very positive outcomes, though of course not always. Lastly, because of it, with each experience we become a part of something bigger than each of us. It is a sort of *Socio-Neurological* chain that threads its way through society connecting and interconnecting us, and the extent of those interconnections impacts each of us, deeply.

We believe it is the unsung ‘hero’ in the genetic consequence of being human, the final frontier in the human quest for excellence and our endearing reach for perfection. It is the perpetual final touch we have yet to effect, but that is always *just within reach*.

We have explained our conception and experience of *Sympathetic Intelligence* in this paper both in anecdote and in theory. We hope to

continue this fascinating journey. What we ask of you now, the reader, is to consider what you have read and assess the case for *Sympathetic Intelligence*. Do you believe that it exists and if you do, **Quo Vadis?**