

*"Learned and leisured hospitality is the only antidote to the stance of deadly cleverness that is acquired in the professional pursuit of objectively secured knowledge. I remain certain that the quest for truth cannot thrive outside the nourishment of mutual trust flowering into a commitment to friendship. Therefore, I have tried to identify the climate that fosters and the 'conditioned' air that hinders the growth of friendship."*¹

Ivan Illich at Penn State: Continuing the Conversation

November 12-14, 2004

Pennsylvania State University

This symposium honors the presence of Ivan Illich (1926-2002) at Pennsylvania State University. Illich was an extravagant thinker whose searing criticisms of modern certainties were rooted in the soil of friendship. Illich was a restless scholar whose pursuit of the historical origins of the modern condition led him to continually question, revise and deepen many of his previous ideas and formulations.

For over a decade (1986-1998), Illich thus prodded and provoked his auditors at Penn State to grapple with his incessant, wide-ranging, and disciplined studies aimed at shaking up the modern mind-set. The focus of this symposium two years after Ivan Illich's death is to explore his ideas and arguments. In trying to think after Illich we hope to pursue some of the many conversations he began by emulating his extravagance and self-criticism.

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Carl Mitcham
Rustum Roy
Samar Farage

¹ Illich, Ivan. (2002). "The Cultivation of Conspiracy," in [The Challenges of Ivan Illich](#), (Eds) Lee Hoinacki and Carl Mitcham, (New York: SUNY Press), p.235.

Preliminary Program (subject to confirmation by participants)
All talks and seminars are to be held at 112 Walker Building

12th November, 2004 (Friday: 5.30-8.15 p.m.)

Opening/Welcome Addresses: (5 minutes each) [5.30-5.45 p.m.]

1. Martin Pietrucha
2. Nancy Tuana
3. Carl Mitcham

Challenging Certainties: The Legacy of Ivan Illich [5.45 – 6.30 p.m.]

A trilogy of books, *Medical Nemesis*, *Tools for Conviviality*, and *De-schooling Society*, established Ivan Illich as a most important critic of established social verities.

Rustum Roy will open the conference seminars by relating Illich's first named work to the enormous expansion of **Whole Person Healing** in the West today. **Robert Duggan**, founder of the Traditional Acupuncture Institute, will then speak on the same theme as that of Illich's classic talk, "**To Hell With Health.**"

Dana Stuchul will lead the ensuing general discussion and debate [6.30 – 7.00 p.m.]

13th November, 2004 (Saturday: 9.00 - 5.15 p.m.)

Seminars. (each presenter: 15 minutes; discussant: 10 minutes, 35 minutes: Q/A from the floor)

a. **Science and the destruction of common sense** [9.00-10.30 a.m.]

*The use of the term 'science for people', as applied to R & D does not usually imply reproach...It simply means that the results of the research have no bearing on the immediate everyday activities of him or her who does it. R & D can be carried out on neutron bombs, muscular dystrophy, solar cells or fish ponds—always in the service of other people. Obviously, 'science by people' is not this."*²

- i. Semih Eser, Jose-Maria Sbert, Andoni Alonso
- ii. Carl Mitcham (Discussant)

b. **From services to self-management** [10.45- 12.15 p.m.]

*"Self-help is a modern term: not so long ago, it was used to suggest masturbation. Self-help divides the acting subject into two parts: one hand washes the other...Through this term, the economist's traditional distinction of all activities into either production or consumption, either productive or reproductive "relations," is projected right onto the consumer: With his right hand he is taught to produce what his left hand supposedly needs."*³

- i. Madhu Prakash, Dan Greco, David Schwartz
- ii. Silja Samerski (Discussant)

² Illich, Ivan (1981). "Research by People," in *Shadow Work*, (London: Marion Boyars), p.77-8

³ Illich, Ivan. (1982). *Gender*, (Berkeley: Heyday Books). p.57

c. Vernacular Values & the War against Subsistence [2.00-3.30 p.m.]

*"We need a simple adjective to name those acts of competence, lust, or concern that we want to defend from measurement or manipulation by Chicago Boys and Socialist commissars. The term must be broad enough to fit the preparation of food and the shaping of language, childbirth and recreation without implying either a privatized activity akin to the housework of modern women, a hobby or an irrational and primitive procedure."*⁴

- i. Laksmann Yapa, Robert Kugelmann, Gene Bazan
- ii. Sajay Samuel (Discussant)

d. The loss of the sense for Proportionality [3.45-5.15 p.m.]

*"Even Chinese planners now share with American and German technocrats the opinion that not only prosperity or justice, but the very existence of a viable economy is threatened by a value system that is out of alignment with natural balances. But even the most radical reformers overlook the fact that the concept itself of values, on which all political economy depends, is inappropriate to give substance to the notion of proportionality..."*⁵

- i. Jean Robert, Barbara Duden, Sachiko Murata
- ii. Matthias Rieger (Discussant)

Conference Keynote Address: Mayor Jerry Brown [5.30 – 6.15 p.m.]

14th November, 2004 (Sunday: 9.00-1.00 p.m.)

Seminars. (each presenter: 15 minutes; discussant: 10 minutes; 35 minutes:Q/A from the floor)

a. Modernity as the corruption of the best [9.00- 10.30 a.m.]

*"Yes, my work is an attempt to accept with great sadness the fact of Western culture. ...Through the attempt to insure, to guarantee, to regulate Revelation, the best becomes the worst."*⁶

- i. David Cayley, Lee Hoinacki, William Chittick
- ii. Kostas Hatzikiriakou (Discussant)

b. Renunciation as the foundation for philia [10.45 – 12.15 p.m.]

*" 'Austerity,' which says something about people, has also been degraded and has acquired a bitter taste, while for Aristotle and Aquinas, it marked the foundation of friendship...It is the fruit of an apprehension that things or tools could destroy rather than enhance eutrapelia (graceful playfulness) in personal relations."*⁷

- i. Aaron Falbel, Jerry Brown, Samar Farage
- ii. Peter Bohn (Discussant)

Closing Keynote Address: Valentina Borremans [12.30 – 1.00 p.m.]

⁴ Illich, Ivan. (1981). "War against Subsistence," in *Shadow Work*, (London: Marion Boyars). p.58

⁵ Illich, Ivan. (1994). *The Wisdom of Leopold Kohr*, 14th Annual Schumacher Lecture, Yale University.

⁶ Cayley, David. (1992). *Ivan Illich in Conversation*, (Toronto: Anansi Press). p.242-3.

⁷ Illich, Ivan. (1973). *Tools for Conviviality*, (London: Marion Boyars), unnumbered page in introduction.