

Ensouling our Work: Lessons from Ecopsychology, Spiritual and Indigenous Traditions

Seminar Saturday 3 June 2017

The Heritage Room, University College, University of Melbourne

Presenters: Professor David Tacey and Dr Suzanne Cremen

9.00am Registration commences

9.30am Seminar commences

9.30 – 10.45 SESSION 1 – SPIRITUALITY AND VOCATION

- Welcome, housekeeping
- Introduction: *Job, career or calling?* A brief context of the historical development of 'vocation' in spiritual and secular traditions (Suzanne)
- **Talk: The Spiritual Problem of Australia** (David – 45 mins)
How can we ensoul our work, our lives, or understand our calling, in a society that has no 'dreaming' or 'cosmology' of its own? This talk will explore Australia from a spiritual point of view, and outline ways in which soul and spirit have been acknowledged by our artists and creative writers, but disregarded by the 'official' history of our secular and materialist nation. The talk will suggest ways in which spirituality nevertheless comes up through the gaps in society.

10.45 – 11.15 Morning tea

11.15 – 12.45 SESSION 2 – INITIATION AND VOCATION

- **Talk: Varieties of Initiatory Experience** (David – 45 mins)
All traditional cultures have forms of initiation, and yet these are being eroded or lost in the modern age. This talk will discuss initiation as an archetypal process, which takes place whether or not society has made provision for rites of passage. If society does not allow for it, the psyche itself spontaneously takes over the leadership, and people find themselves in initiatory situations with or without adequate planning and preparation.

- **Commentary: Vocation as an experience of initiation** (Suzanne – 20 mins)
- Journaling, reflection and discussion (25 minutes)

12.45 – 1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 3.00 **SESSION 3 – DEEP LISTENING AND VOCATION**

- **Talk: Dadirri - The Aboriginal Gift of Contemplation** (David - 45 mins)
Aboriginal cultures were regarded as oddities or of marginal interest in colonial Australia. However, as we progress as a nation, and begin to understand that soul needs to be taken into account and nourished, the secular nation is beginning to take more interest in its indigenous cultures. In particular, a contemplative practice of deep listening, called 'dadirri' in the Northern Territory, is indicative of how we might attune our lives to deeper impulses and inward callings.
- **Commentary: Attending to calling in indigenous and mythic traditions** (Suzanne – 20 mins)
- Journaling, reflection and discussion (25 minutes)

3.00 – 3.30 Afternoon tea

3.30 – 5.00 **SESSION 4 – ECOPSYCHOLOGY AND VOCATION**

- **Talk: Ecopsychology and reanimating the world** (David- 45 mins)
Ecopsychology is a relatively new field of enquiry which explores the relationship between ecological and psychological experiences. Pioneered by Jung, Hillman and Roszak, it represents a new way of overcoming the barriers between self and world, so that the lines between them becomes permeable and open. It is significant that ecology emerges as a major field in the wider world just as 'wholeness' or the 'ecology of the soul' looms as a guiding principle in psychotherapy and counselling.
- **Commentary: Being guided by the psyche in nature** (Suzanne – 20 mins)
- Journaling, reflection and discussion (25 minutes)

5.00pm Close