

AU NATUREL

SCHATZI'S DESIGN GALLERY & DAY SPA, LLC

PERSONAL AND SALON UPDATES

Feel the love

Spring is in the air. I heard the bird's chirping outside my window about a week ago, and I had to smile. They know what time it is! It's time for major cleaning and yard work. We've already begun with some of the basics, but, this time of the year notoriously feels like I'm always

behind. And

the short month of February is really putting

the pressure on. I've barely stopped to notice that it was Black History month. I was happy to see the peeps do so well at the Oscars though! This year's showing surely made up for last year. I won't mention that little faux-pas at the end though. CRAZY!! And Chris Rock was a joy to behold on Valentine's Day! I'm cool with Chris Rock but after his show at the DPAC, I can say I'm a fan. He was genuinely and effortlessly funny. Now, I saw a brother named Ali Siddiq in January who put the "H" in hilarious. I laughed so hard I got a headache. TRULY!! I NEVER LAUGHED SO HARD IN MY LIFE!!

Chris Rock was a joy to behold on Valentine's Day!

And I think he totally made up the first 15 minutes of the show ad lib; because, my sons saw him the next night and it was a different intro completely. The brother was IN THE ZONE! Chris was IN HIS ELEMENT. When Chris came out on stage, the entire DPAC rose to their feet and

greeted him as if he was a long lost friend who had finally

come home. I was fascinated because the audience was predominantly White and their uproarious applause said loud and clear: "Brother, we love you!! Truly!" I could feel the love. I too rose to my feet. It was that kind of wave. His presence on stage set the tide in motion and we rode it throughout the night. By the time he had finished his monologue, the crowd was back on their feet in admiration and appreciation. He was most entertaining. I'm definitely looking forward to seeing Sinbad in March. These brothers are all truly blessed.

Well within the salon, life is

A BEAUTIFUL REVOLUTIONARY

Some of the readers of this post have the good fortune of knowing my brother, Siddiq Abdallah. A spoken word poet and a lover of African peoples. The first time I met Siddiq, he came to a poetry reading session that we had at the salon. He was always a graceful shade in the backdrop of my life until he wasn't. Then, I knew the spirit of a love revolutionary. He came to the fore of my life at a very important time when I was losing some faith in humanity. This brother is one of the most giving and positive people I've ever known. Even when he's spiritually stretched and challenged, he honors the journey and always expresses love for our people. This son of North Carolina soil now loves in New Mexico. From [this beautiful music video by Treyvision](#), I can see that he hasn't missed a beat. His message is and always has been: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word is love.* Speak my brother! Peace and love.

good. With the current social and political situation, there's always a lot to talk about while navigating through hairways. I confess that sometimes, the news can be downright depressing. I wonder why humanity has a

fascination with division, anger and conflict. I wonder if the beings of other exo-planets are as divided as ours. Separation from God is an illusion. Separation from each other is an illness. Let's pray that we find our

way back to love. In honor and appreciation of love and all its majesty, [this musical interlude is dedicated to human love--as imperfect as it is.](#) May it have and hold you all year round!

CORNROW, LOCK & TWIST CREATIONS

Recent Hair-inspirations by yours truly

I considered what type of hair care article to write for this issue. But, I don't feel like writing about hair this month. Instead, I decided to let my fingers do the talking. So, I have attached photos from some recent creations that I've done. I don't really consider myself a design expert, although I envisioned a style the other day that would be a geometric wonder! I'm more of a minimalist. In fact, I would say that the styles that my clients get the most compliments for are very basic, symmetrical and flattering. Those pictures are not included in this section because they're so commonplace that I don't even take pictures of them anymore. With that said, my regulars don't come to me because they want to have the banging-est hairstyle that people talk about for days. They come to me because I help their hair to become and/or stay healthy. That generally means that I don't do any styles on your hair that I consider damaging. So, really small cornrows or microbraids are a "No" for me. Flat ironing is also a "No." A stylist in our salon will flat iron when requested; but, not me. I don't have a love for the process so I don't think I should be the one engaging in that way. It's all good though. My hands are pretty full with the basics: cornrows, locks and twists.

Cornrowed Styles



Lock Design Styles



Twist & Twist Extension Styles



A BRIEF COMMENTARY ON LOVING SACRIFICIALLY

The Ever Inflowing and Outflowing Well of Grace: An Ode for Our Times

Life...God has shown me that people wear a mask. That mask reveals the face that they believe the world expects them to be...whoever they happen to be. But in truth, God is much more interested in who they really are. Love personified. And so, when this vain, superficial world elevates the mask and celebrates the comedy and tragedy of human existence, its God whose always looking for the

love story...the beauty, the innocence of a child, who laughs and hopes and dreams and believes...without pretense or jealousy or judgment or doubt. Is it because I'm a black woman that you do not believe I am a child of God--that God has kissed me with a divine kiss? IS it your own self-loathing that defames my blessing? If I were the Pope or a dignitary or a white woman, would the possibility be more

palatable to your sensibilities? Do you believe and understand the beatitudes at all... Do you understand the symbolism and power of the cross?

Some people are difficult to love. And others are downright impossible to love. And we love them anyway. I've been doing that my WHOLE LIFE!!! And I'll not stop now...as much as it hurts. That's my calling. Amen.

March 24, 2016

POETICALLY SPEAKING

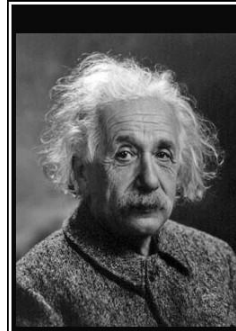
Contemplation on Degrees of Freedom under a Microscope

In my [last essay](#), I wrote about the paradox of free-will and pre-ordination. Well, I have been continuing to mull over the concept, so I decided to elaborate further. In the earlier article, my premise is that because we live within a defined framework of existence, freedom is an impossible concept for us to truly understand. As such, free will is a conditional concept. I

attempted to show how our actions "will" are driven by our need to survive and our frame of mind, which are severely colored by the social construct in which we awaken to our existence. God said bring your whole mind, body, soul, and heart to the decision-making process (Luke 10:27). When we think our way to solutions without factoring in empathy, we fall short (e.g. [Executive Order 13769](#)). When we emote our way to action without rationally considering consequences, we stumble (e.g. Nicki Minaj drawing first blood with Remy Ma! OUCH!!) We are in effect on a (w)holistic journey to discover how to be the god-(wo)men that God created us to be. It requires stretching beyond the boundaries of fear and comfort to embrace uncertainty and chaos. That is the realm in which a more godly perception of "freedom" can be more fully embraced. Because in my opinion, we as humans only have degrees of freedom. Let me explain:

When I calculate a statistical question with the aim of finding the probability of a given occurrence happening in real time, my formula includes the concept of "degrees of freedom." "Degrees of freedom" means that the more parameters that are at play in a given analysis/situation, the fewer the number of options that I have from which to choose. The higher the "degrees of freedom", the less likely one is to be able to predict a given outcome. But, "degrees of freedom" always presupposes a static framework or environment in which to calculate probability. But, life is as dynamic and metaphysical as things can get. So if the variables at play are numerous and constantly changing, one may think that we have an infinite array of options from which to choose, i.e. truly free will? But not really. Because the formula (i.e. the program in which you find your life) defines the situation and how you will interpret the given number of variables available to you. And the state of the collective mind determines how and whether you will be edified or aided towards the full range of choices available to you or whether you will be restricted in your capacity to act.

If I can revisit the cell under the microscope analogy, we see that the cell's ability to self-actualize into a liver cell inside of a living breathing organism is virtually futile. It is under a slide, under a microscope and its existence is already established as "other." It's "degree of freedom" is very narrowly defined and therefore significantly limited. But what if Someone took that cell and released it into the ocean? Afterall, the static environment in which the cell finds itself needs only One such variable as an empathic human to increase the options available to it. Isn't that what outliers are all about in statistical



I am a determinist. As such, I do not believe in free will. The Jews believe in free will. They believe that man shapes his own life. I reject that doctrine philosophically. In that respect I am not a Jew.

(Albert Einstein)

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calculations? This scenario is improbable, but not impossible. So through one act of benevolence, the cell's "degrees of freedom" have been expanded exponentially on the surface. It is free, right? Well, not exactly. The cell's ability to act towards its personal goals has increased significantly, no doubt. But, the cell is already in existence. It is already programmed into beingness. Did Michael Brown have unlimited possibilities though he was a high school graduate? In a society with a right to bear arms, did Tamir Rice have an infinite number of degrees of freedom to play with a toy gun in a public park? If Chris Rock was not discovered by Eddie Murphy (i.e. the hand of benevolence), would we realize his comedic genius today? And how many "degrees of freedom" does Barron Trump have to be or do whatever he wants? The parameters limiting his life choices are few. So because it is already coded for life, the cell's pathway is somewhat narrowly defined. If "the cell" wants to increase its "degrees of freedom" and be re-encoded inside of a living being, it must cease to exist as currently defined. How does it do that on its own? If it merges with a fish and divides to increase the likelihood that it makes its way to the fish's liver, how does it integrate? What if it's an anomaly? What if it's a cancer cell? Even if the fish were to swallow that cell, it would only be biologically decomposed with its chemical components being reconfigured into trace elements which would be beneficial to the fish. The cell would die, in its own right. It would no longer exist as a cell. So in a very narrow framework of analyzing the cell's success, we would conclude that its efforts were futile and it's goals unrealized.

Do you understand why I believe we appear to have freedom when from a God's eye perspective; we are programmed and greatly limited. By peering into a microscope, we see the world from God's perspective but to be the atom on the slide is to have only very narrow "degrees of freedom". And those degrees are dictated by benevolence, i.e. God acting on its behalf, through the actions of god-(wo)men here on Earth. Sometimes our backs are against a wall. But if we can jump and run, we might make it out on our own. If we can fight, we might level the playing field. And if someone intervenes on our behalf, we may survive and thrive. But, all of these potential options are dictated by the programming of our mind.

Consider this: I would argue that by being swallowed, the cell has not only succeeded in its goals, it has super-ceded it's goals. To understand this idea, consider the cell's trace elements--carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen. These chemical components are now fueling the very survival of the fish. They are meaningful and righteous because the fish needs these nutrients to exist. So in essence, the cell has been transformed by the renewing of its mind. It has chosen to act in a way that is not self-surviving but self-sacrificing. Its essence has become the fish. In truth, it has surpassed its original goal. Rather than to self-actualize, it has whole-actualized, mind, body, soul, heart--it is now one with the fish. Is this what it means to "die to our self and be a living sacrifice to test and approve what God's will is" (i.e. unity, integration, oneness)?

I say that I am not a capitalist because I do not embrace the concept of pure self-interest and/or scarcity. For me, these concepts are inherently separatist and divisive. [Is there truly a scarcity of money and resources on the Earth?](#) How can you die to self and be self-interested? If I believe that Gaia--this green, liquid water planet, that encapsulates us in a cocoon of love uniquely designed to nurture life despite the potential ravages of disaster which loom all around us, is a place of scarcity, then I do not believe that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." If I believe in a scarcity model, I believe that someone else altogether governs, rules and owns this planet. And I will never believe that. This WORLD ORDER is governed by someone else. Not the Earth and not god-(wo)men! We have been sleeping for a long time. Is it any wonder that God appears to us to be sleeping? But, looks can be deceiving. God is not asleep. The social conditions of our time are compelling us to wake up and die to self--to be the living sacrifice wholly pleasing

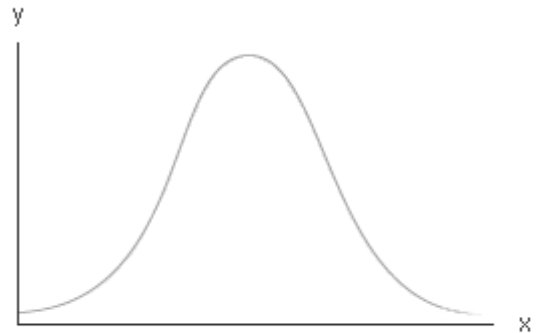
to God. It is time to expand our outlook and increase the "degrees of freedom" which frame human existence. It's time to sing a new song.

Now, I am aware that I have placed this rather simple analogy within a matrix framed by human experience; so, that the reader can relate to what I am saying. So perhaps, my whole premise is flawed because my framework of seeing and analyzing is as limited as the "degrees of freedom" in which my own existence is fashioned. So naturally, my writing will be as restrained. Well, this is true. But, it is not for me to be other than what I am. And what I am is someone who believes that science and spirit are one and the same. Science cannot answer the original cause question because it is bound by what it can see, count or measure. Therefore, it is only descriptive...even in the very depths of analysis. Love is not easily measured or counted; but, it can be seen and it is real. And so, science is confounded by its limited frame of being. But, God is good and merciful.

Strangely, there is an X factor which is rather fascinating when analyzing my cell narrative in the context of free will vs. pre-ordination. My argument is that "free" will is really "degrees of freedom". But interestingly enough, Newtonian principles of physics tend to fall apart under a microscope! At the sub-atomic level, "the center cannot hold."¹ Here, quantum physics rule and "degrees of freedom" appear to grow considerably. As one physicist wrote:

"We must be clear that when it comes to atoms, language can only be used as in poetry."—Niels Bohr

God is the original poet! So, this line of reasoning begs the question: What if to find God, we had to go infinitely small (sub-atomic) rather than infinitely large (cosmic)? When I consider it more fully however, I believe in truth, you find God by going infinitely small AND infinitely large and at every point in between. Is the bell curve not the epitome of "the alpha and the omega" imagery--an abstract concept placed on a linear plane? I would surmise that it is but the curve of God's upper lip. That's as far as our feeble minds can take us. Selah!!



Bell-Shaped Curve

¹"The Second Coming" poem by W.B. Yeats.

Embrace the beauty of you.

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