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TOWARDS A SENSITIVE DIALOGUE MODEL FOR POLARIZED SCENARIOS

by

MARIA NARDI

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SYNTHESIS*
MASTER OF ARTS
CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

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Advisor: Peter J. Taylor

Abstract: This synthesis is about exploring, developing, adapting and experimenting with rules and resources that support better dialogue processes to improve and support the quality of interpersonal encounters. People are born with a predisposition for dividing the social world into the us versus them, a tendency to form coalitions. Social psychology confirms this predisposition of human and other animals to categorize themselves and others into groups from a very early age. Spelke and Kinzler (2007). As Linker (2015) argues, there are far too many structural pressures working against the opportunities for us to talk together. History, language, media, and political and educational institutions, each in various ways constrain and oversimplify our social experiences. The idea is to make our social lives “civil,” according to the concept of civility by Rutch (2011) as cited in (Jaen et al, 2014) “self control, compassion, tolerance, justice, and the recognition of others.” Cooperative reasoning is the first tool that this synthesis will target to be implemented in order to set the circumstances that may lead towards opportunities in which people will feel comfortable sharing and expressing beliefs and experiences as either narratives or counter narratives trusting they would be respectfully and critically heard.

* The Synthesis can take a variety of forms, from a position paper to curriculum or professional development workshop to an original contribution in the creative arts or writing. The expectation is that students use their Synthesis to show how they have integrated knowledge, tools, experience, and support gained in the program so as to prepare themselves to be constructive, reflective agents of change in work, education, social movements, science, creative arts, or other endeavors.