

Insight and Beyond

Class 26, Part One: April 14th 2010

***Insight*, Chapter 18: “The Possibility of Ethics”**

Chapter 18, § 2: “*The Structure of Knowing and Doing*”

Chapter 19: “General Transcendent Knowledge”

Class 26, April 14, 2010

Chapter 18: “The Possibility of Ethics”

Chapter 18: “Knowing and Doing”

Chapter 19: “General Transcendent Knowledge”

Summary of Material

Review of previous class: the centrality of the exigence for the consistency between knowing and doing, and the question of the kind of knowledge with which doing must be consistent.

The question of knowing of value and obligation.

Method of Ethics in *Insight*.

Analogous to the method of metaphysics, the method of ethics was supposed to be derived from the expansion of consciousness into the compound structure of knowing and doing.

This would involve a heuristic anticipation of all ethical positions, and of the structure of the good, parallel to the way he proceeded in the case of the method of metaphysics.

One would expect, therefore, that the method of ethics should begin with an explication of the compound structure of knowing and doing.

But Lonergan does not do this.

The Structure of Knowing and Doing:

Lonergan gives something like the structure of knowing and doing in §2, rather than at the beginning of Chapter 18.

Lowest (0th) Level: The Canon of Statistical Residues (Chapter 3) characterizes the preconscious, natural, environmental setting of our ethical activity as known by natural science.

Our experiencing is not completely determined by external natural events; because of statistical residues, there is a degree of autonomy already at the level of patterning of experiences (i.e., utilizing the non-systematic potencies of brain activity).

First Conscious Level: “Underlying sensitive flow” —
our sensations as patterned, setting the conditions
for our questions and answers.

Second Level: Practical insights into possible courses
of action.

Third Level: Practical reflection questions about
motives, consequences, obligation regarding the
intelligible courses of actions from practical
insights.

Fourth Act (but in *Insight* not a 4th level) has to do
(implicitly) with questions for decision and acts of
deciding.

Genuineness (authenticity) in knowing was a matter of asking and
answering all the further pertinent questions.

So also, authenticity in ethical matters would seem to be asking and
answering all the further pertinent questions in this expanded
structure, and the ways this implies a method of ethics.

But Lonergan does not proceed in this fashion.

This is because Lonergan considers the acts in this structure, not for
their implications for a heuristic structure of ethics, but for their
significance for the question of freedom.

The significance for freedom of the canon of statistical residues lies in the way it disposes of the most obvious objection to the possibility of freedom — i.e., that scientific determinism undermines human freedom and ethics. Lonergan's response to Kant's problem.

Survey of how the Newtonian tradition led to the extra-scientific opinion of determinism.

Lonergan hints, however, that there are *real* impediments to human freedom, not the illusory impediments attributed to the scientific laws of nature.

Student question regarding the levels of consciousness in the structure of knowing and doing:

- In *Insight*, Lonergan speaks of “the expansion of consciousness” to include doing along with knowing.
- He does not however speak in *Insight* of an additional level of consciousness that comes into play with the expansion to include doing.
- §2 is more or less a recapitulation of the three levels of acts of consciousness treated earlier in *Insight*.
- Clarification that the fourth level that appears in the preceding diagram reflects Lonergan's post-*Insight* thinking, and is not the position of *Insight* itself.

The significance for freedom of the “underlying sensitive flow”:

Although the natural world conditions our exercise of freedom, we exercise a degree of autonomy relative to nature when we pattern our experiences.

Once developed, mere sensitive routines are set outside the realm of genuine freedom and ethics.

Examples of cerebral palsy and addiction as affecting sensitive flows, are therefore not immediately matters of freedom or ethics.

Practical insights and their relation to human freedom: students propose the significance has to do with properly assessing the situation, and with possible courses of action.

Properly understanding the situation includes understanding the situation as part of the unfolding of the emergent probability of proportionate being.

Student question about a dramatic, urgent event (e.g., child in peril) — if could slow the process down, would we still see that process of deliberation, rather than an “almost instinctive,” unconscious reaction.

— “Almost instinctive” suggests that the presence of something like the structure of practical reflection is operative.

— But the broader context is something Lonergan discusses in §1.2 of this chapter.

- Willingness often presupposes a high degree of training, practice, and learning, prior to the emergency to which one responds.
- So the structure is operative, but not in the present moment of the emergency; it is present in the past as preparation.
- Relationship to Aristotle's account of virtues.

Lonergan's concern is to reveal that freedom in the proper sense does not reside in practical insights.

Practical insights do not automatically determine what one will do.

The relevance of practical reflection to freedom:

What is practical reflection?

It involves asking further pertinent questions, arriving at a virtually unconditioned, meaning that the practical insight about which one reflects is correct.

How can a practical insight be correct if the course of action is not yet realized?

- Discussion; answer not clear from the text.
- The text does not really help us explore what we are doing when we are reflecting practically as it does in the areas of cognitional reflecting.

- Lonergan seems to be hurrying to the discussion of essential and effective freedom.
- Lonergan does say there is an internal term wherein one grasps as virtually unconditioned the certitude that the possible course of action is indeed possible, or agreeable, useful, obligatory.
- But ultimately the reflecting is practical — it is for the sake of doing, the external term.

Student question about “how we make being” when we make a decision.

- The dynamism of finality is constitutive of the reality of the universe, of proportionate being.
- Human beings make being by setting the conditions for the emergence of something.

Further questions as to whether one’s decision itself is also an addition to being — It is.

- In a general metaphysical sense, our decisions, and the way they set conditions for emergences (“the making of being”) is the same as everything else that sets conditions for emergences.

— It is different because our setting of conditions rests upon practical insights and practical reflections, unlike every other entity in the universe.

Inventory of some of the further questions that take place in practical reflection.

Lonergan never explicitly says that the criterion of reaching the internal term, the correctness of the practical insight, is the absence of further pertinent questions, but the passages in *Insight* certainly point to that conclusion.

Invitation to the viewer to reflect on the activities that follow when one asks, “*Should* I do it?” (question guiding practical reflection) vs. “*Will* I do it?” (question for decision).

To be a moral knower is to be someone who heeds the call to pursue all further pertinent questions that are prompted by “Should I do it?”

The expansion from rational consciousness to rational self-consciousness — giving ourselves reasons for that we do. Lonergan’s nod to Kant, though profoundly reconstructed.

Difference in the rationality involved in rational self-consciousness vs. rational consciousness — rationality in the latter sense is the non-interference with ongoing inquiry.

Whereas the rationality of the doer is positive consistency between knowing and doing.

The unique, radical contingency of human acts of decision.

The contingency of the act of will, of human decisions, is the imposition of further intelligible order upon merely coincidental manifolds at lower levels.

The radical form of contingency is that which comes to be *only* through human deciding.

The fact that people don't do what they know they are supposed to do, is evidence.

Human radical contingency of the will is *sui generis* — there isn't anything else like human deciding anywhere else in the universe.

Student question about passage stating a radical difference between the contingency of willing (deciding) vs. all the other forms of contingency in the universe.

— Radical difference in things that emerge because of human decisions.

— The natural contingent events fall short of being genuinely free.

- Contrast with the affirmation of freedom at every level in Whitehead's thought.
- In natural, non-volitional contingency, which depends on the non-systematic character of the universe, once the conditions are given, the event must occur — contingent necessity.
- But in human freedom, even though the conditions are given, the act of decision does not have to happen.
- The non-systematic processes in nature have contingency, but it is not the special contingency that characterizes human freedom.

End of Part One of Outline.

Insight and Beyond

Class 26, Part One:

April 14th 2010

Chapter 18: “The Possibility of Ethics”

Chapter 18: “Knowing and Doing”

Review of previous class: the centrality of the exigence for the consistency between knowing and doing, and the question of the kind of knowledge with which doing must be consistent.

The question of knowing of value and obligation.

Today we will conclude our discussion of chapter eighteen on “**The Possibility of Ethics**” (CWL 3, pp. 618-656) and then make the transition to talking about chapter nineteen, what Lonergan calls “**General Transcendent Knowledge**” (CWL 3, pp. 657-708).

Last week we saw that the centerpiece of chapter eighteen is this comment by Lonergan that there is an exigence, what he calls a demand, a need, for consistency between knowing and doing. I presented in some sense, the dilemma that is posed by: What does that mean? What kind of consistency is involved?

Chapter 18

The Possibility of Ethics

“[A human being] is not only a knower but also a doer; the same intelligent and rational consciousness grounds the doing as well as the knowing; and from that identity of consciousness there springs inevitably an exigence for self-consistency in knowing and doing.” (CWL 3, p. 622).

And as you saw, *one of Lonergan’s remarks is that a kind of knowing includes a knowing of obligation*. So we have this — If the, as he calls it, *the expansion of consciousness* that takes place when he takes up chapter eighteen (CWL 3, “**The Possibility of Ethics**”, pp. 618-656), the expansion of consciousness that he is concerned with when we get to chapter eighteen: the expansion from the experiential level of consciousness to the intelligent level of consciousness, to the reasonable and reflective level of consciousness, *the further expansion has to do with the expansion between knowing and doing*. But it is framed in such a way as it seems as though instilled within the horizon of knowing what is. And yet he uses the phrase ‘obligation’ and ‘obligatoriness’ which are not judgment, which don’t have to do with judgments of fact.

Consistency between Knowing and Doing

**With what sort of knowing must doing
be consistent?**

So what sort of knowing does our doing have to be consistent with? And we saw the dilemma posed by that. *There isn't anything in Lonergan's cognitional structure that has to do with knowing about what, knowing about obligation!*

Method of Ethics

“as a metaphysics is derived from the known structure of one's knowing,

“so an ethics results from knowledge of the compound structure of one's knowing and doing;

“and as the metaphysics, so too the ethics prolongs the initial self-criticism into an explanation of the origin of all ethical positions and into a criterion for passing judgment on each of them.” (CWL 3, p. 23; see also p. 618).

It's possible that what Lonergan had in mind is the expansion of consciousness that comes about when we recognize our place in the universe, when we recognize our place in the finality, the dynamic, of proportionate being, that we play a role in proportionate being, that proportionate being is characterized by finality, that finality becomes conscious in us as human beings, and that indeed the final stage, so to speak, for finality is the expansion of consciousness from knowing to the consistency of knowing with doing!

That said, we still have the experience in our ethical deliberations of being faced with *questions of ought and of value*; and there isn't anything in Lonergan that gives us a sense of how he is going to bridge this gap between knowing and doing — excuse me, *between knowing a fact and knowing of obligation, knowing a fact and knowing a value!*

We'll take some time today to trace out how he works out what he calls “the notion of value” in the context of *Insight*. You get a different notion of value in his post-*Insight* writings. And I'll conclude our discussion with just a reference to that, and if we have time during the remainder of the semester, we'll come back and look at some of what he did, particularly in *Method in Theology*, identifying a distinctive notion of value. At the moment, we're just going to try to stay within the context and horizon of *Insight*, noting this difficult problem of *exactly what kind of knowing he is arguing to be consistent with, and the difficulty that is posed when there is a knowing of obligation involved.*

Method of Ethics in *Insight*.

Analogous to the method of metaphysics, the method of ethics was supposed to be derived from the expansion of consciousness into the compound structure of knowing and doing.

This would involve a heuristic anticipation of all ethical positions, and of the structure of the good, parallel to the way he proceeded in the case of the method of metaphysics.

One would expect, therefore, that the method of ethics should begin with an explication of the compound structure of knowing and doing.

But Lonergan does not do this.

Structure of Knowing and Doing

Method of Ethics

“as a metaphysics is derived from the known structure of one’s knowing,

“so an ethics results from knowledge of the compound structure of one’s knowing and doing;

“and as the metaphysics, so too the ethics prolongs the initial self-criticism into an explanation of the origin of all ethical positions and into a criterion for passing judgment on each of them.” (CWL 3, p. 23; see also p. 618).

So at the very beginning of *Insight*, and then a little more tersely at the beginning of chapter eighteen Lonergan talks about the Method of Ethics. He turns a couple of very trenchant remarks at various places in chapter eighteen about what he thinks is the benefits of the Method of Ethics. But he describes the Method of Ethics in an analogy and in parallel to the Method of Metaphysics. So just —

— **“as a metaphysics is derived from the known structure of one’s knowing, so an ethics results from knowledge of the compound structure of one’s knowing and doing; and as the metaphysics, so too the ethics prolongs the initial self-criticism into an**

explanation of the origin of all ethical positions and into a criterion for passing judgment on each of them.” (CWL 3, p. 23; see also p. 618).

This is a kind of a terse reference back to chapter eighteen, the universal viewpoint, as giving us a context of expanding metaphysics into an interpretive mode of looking at claims that people make about matters of fact, about being, about what is and is not real; and whether distinctions are real, whether relations are real, and all those sorts of things. So Lonergan is saying that *this parallel expansion or prolongation of consciousness into the realm of the self-consistency of knowing and doing is going to ground a parallel method of ethics.*

Now the order of chapter eighteen is that first, there is treated the notion of the good, and then the notion of freedom, and then the problem of liberation. You expect — I would expect — that if the method of ethics is going to be a parallel about the development of some kind of a structure, some kind of heuristic anticipation of all ethical positions, that what he would first do is to spell out the structure of knowing and doing. But *in fact he doesn't do that!*

He starts off with the notion of the good. In fact, you could make the argument that he perhaps should first have spelled out this structure of knowing and doing, and then use that to give an account of the good. That, after all, is basically what he did to give an account of being, although the chapter, “**The Notion of Being**”, which is chapter twelve, and the elaboration of the “**Integral Heuristic Structure of Proportionate Being**”, the implementation of which he calls ‘Metaphysics’, is not done until chapter fourteen. Still by chapter twelve, we’ve been walked through the exercises of appropriating the tripartite structure of human knowing. And we don’t take up the question of being until that has been sufficiently developed. You would be led to expect that if he was going to treat the question of the good, which includes the question of value, that he would do something similar. But he doesn’t!

The Structure of Knowing and Doing:

Lonergan gives something like the structure of knowing and doing in §2, rather than at the beginning of Chapter 18.

Lowest (0th) Level: The Canon of Statistical Residues (Chapter 3) characterizes the

preconscious, natural, environmental setting of our ethical activity as known by natural science.

Our experiencing is not completely determined by external natural events; because of statistical residues, there is a degree of autonomy already at the level of patterning of experiences (i.e., utilizing the non-systematic potencies of brain activity).

First Conscious Level: “Underlying sensitive flow” — our sensations as patterned, setting the conditions for our questions and answers.

Second Level: Practical insights into possible courses of action.

Third Level: Practical reflection questions about motives, consequences, obligation regarding the intelligible courses of actions from practical insights.

Fourth Act: (but in *Insight* not a 4th level) has to do (implicitly) with questions for decision and acts of deciding.

So I’m going to go a little bit out of order here, because the place where he actually does elaborate the structure of knowing and doing is section two of chapter eighteen, which is called “**The Notion of Freedom**”. So let’s take a look briefly at the structure of knowing and doing, and talk about that some. Then see what he is trying to do with the structure of knowing and doing in section two; and then go back and look at what he does in section one about “**The Notion of**

Will". Okay? So I'm taking it a little bit out of order, partly because he has set forward his claim that he is going to develop a method of ethics based on this structure of knowing and doing. I think that spending some time reflecting on this will be helpful in ways that hopefully reflecting upon appropriating the structure of knowing has been helpful for you all.

Structure of Knowing and Doing

Statistical residues

Okay. So the structure of knowing and doing. This goes in the order in which he presents these sections. So the first section, and you could say the lowest level of knowing and doing, is what he calls "**Statistical Residues**". Statistical Residues — I mentioned this last week: we struggled through that way back in chapter three — *Statistical Residues, remember, is the claim that in the empirical world, in the world of proportionate being, there at least is room for, and very likely are, classes of occurrences which cannot be brought together in any single systematic fashion. So the Canon of Statistical Residues says, natural science, in the sense of classical heuristic method, leaves room for statistical residues. There is no argument on the basis of natural laws or natural correlations, as Lonergan likes to call them, there is no argument on the basis of that alone that there are not statistical residues.* Okay. Would somebody remind us what statistical residues are? ... 'Residue' means left-over. 'Statistical' of course means left over for statistics. What sort of phenomenon or issue is what's left over for statistical analysis? ... Yeah, Tim?

Tim: Coincidental aggregate?

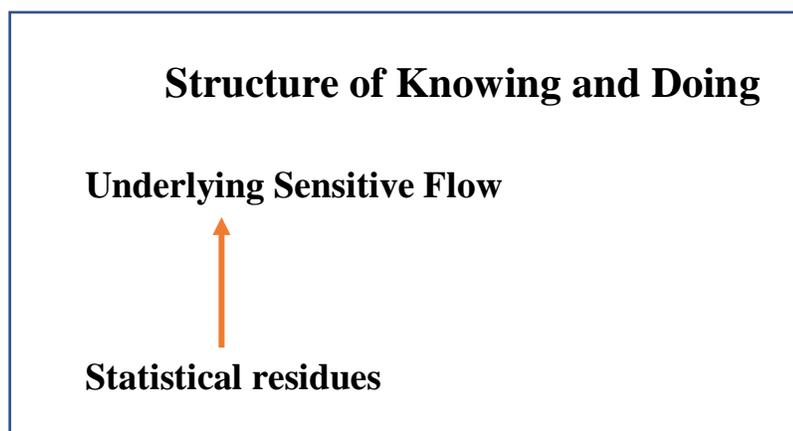
Pat: Yeh! So coincidental aggregates. '*Coincidental*' means *coinciding in place and times but there for no unified reason.* So when we say things are coincidences — You meet somebody on a bus; you went to the bus for one set of reasons, they went to the bus for the other set of reasons; you happen to be on the bus at the same time, the same bus at the same time, but there is not one unified systematic reason for your **both** being there. Now, what does statistical residues have to do with ethics? ... Or, let me put it a different way: what does statistical residues have to do with the structure of knowing and doing? ... Matt?

Matt: Is it — are they kind of intelligibility, I mean, potency or in potential, so that you are anticipating that certain relations in space and time happen to be that haven't yet come to —

Pat: — Okay. That's a good way of putting it.

So certain coincidences in space and time are the bottom-line stuff of what ethical performance is all about! We as embodied human beings do our knowing and our doing in some places and some times and our experiences are about, or are derived from, the set of events and the set of things that happen to be where we are when we are there! So yeah — underlying — What he calls the statistical residues forms a portion of the environment within which we are going to do our knowing and doing.

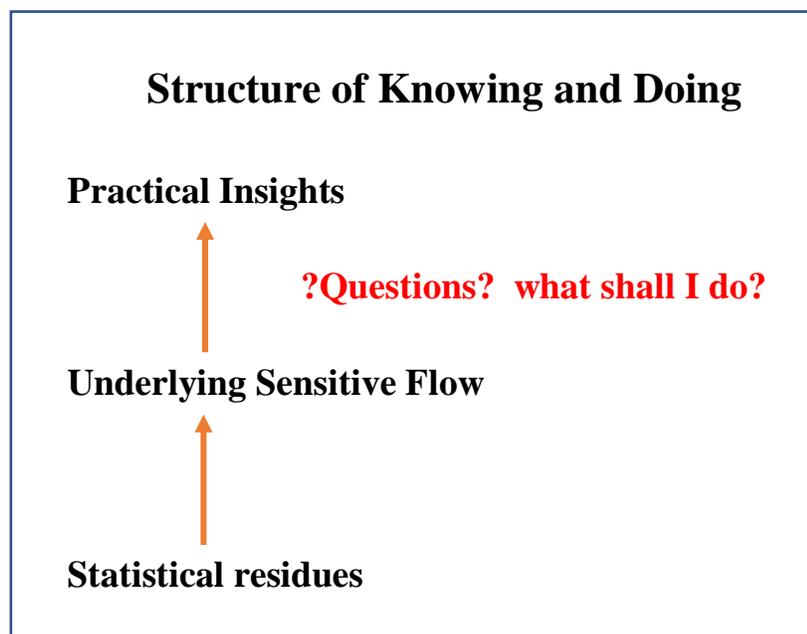
We're going to go back over each of these part by part; and I'll draw attention to what he thinks is the most significant aspect of statistical residues. But it is just that you — *The first approximation is just that the world in which we operate has non-systematic merely coincidental dimensions to it; and that is the basic level of our structure of knowing and doing.* It's the pre-conscious, it's the natural, it's the pre-human dimension that is nevertheless something from which we don't abstract when we think about our knowing and doing.



Then there is what he calls the “**Underlying Sensitive Flow**”; ‘underlying’ in the sense of its preceding the other levels which he’s going to talk about. *But it’s a sensitive flow, it’s a*

sensitive — it's just our sensations! Our sensations are connected to the moral, in not systematic ways, the moral with its statistical residues. *So you could say that the zeroth level, or the unconscious level, of the structure of knowing and doing is this, the statistical residues.*

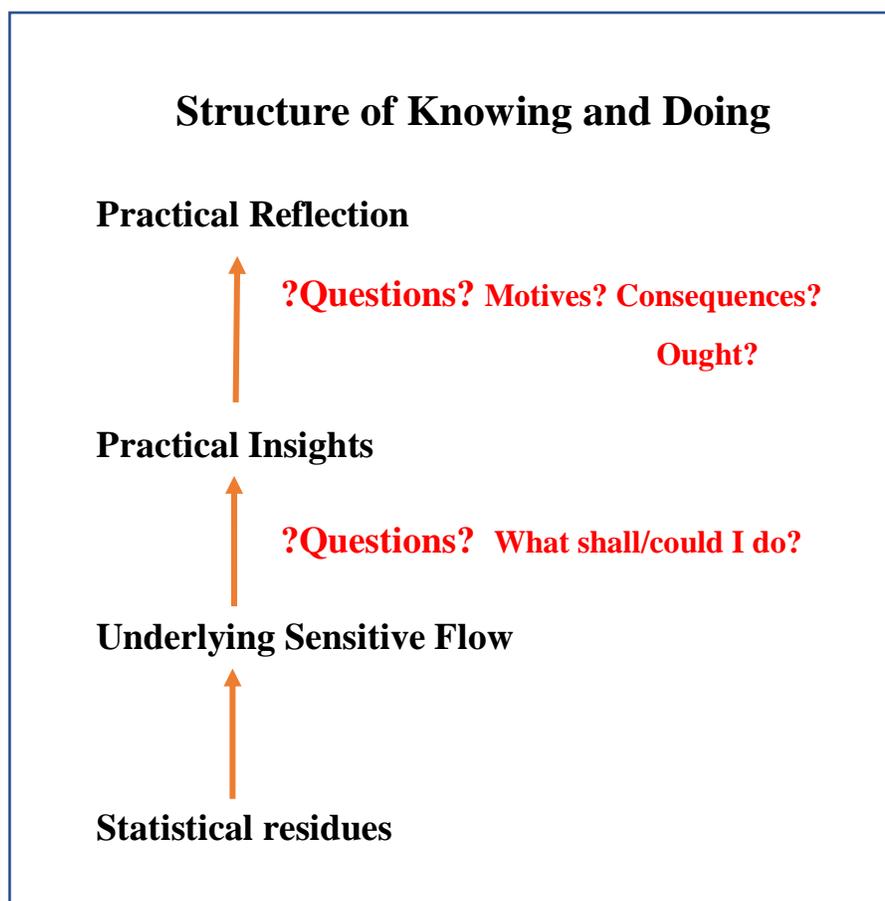
And then the first level is the level of experiencing. Although he calls it *the underlying sensitive flow*, it's not dramatically different in any way from what we've characterized in previous classes and in prior chapters of the book *as the level of experiencing*. And with regard to our level of experiencing, *questions arise*, in particular focusing on the *What shall I do?* And the emphasis is on the *What*.



This is really not that new. Most of what Lonergan talks about in chapter six and in chapter seven when he's talking about common sense are questions that are seeking insights into what he calls "**possible courses of action**", insights into things that we could do.

*'What could I do?' might be the better way of putting it, instead
of 'What should I do?' What could I do?*

And with regard to answers, insights, into 'What could I do?' there is what he calls **Practical Reflection**. *And among the things that he mentions as questions for Practical Reflection are questions having to do with motives, questions to do with consequences; but also questions having to do with obligation.*



And then last is our questions that lead to **Decision**, *our deliberation*. *Lonergan doesn't identify as a distinct kind of question, 'Shall I do it?'* But you could infer that from what he says. I think it's significant that he doesn't actually say this explicitly; but he kind of infers it. *So roughly speaking that is the structure of knowing and doing.* Let's stop and pause with this for a moment.

Genuineness (authenticity) in knowing was a matter of asking and answering all the further pertinent questions.

So also, authenticity in ethical matters would seem to be asking and answering all the further pertinent questions in this expanded structure, and the ways this implies a method of ethics.

But Lonergan does not proceed in this fashion.
This is because Lonergan considers the acts in this structure, not for their implications for a heuristic structure of ethics, but for their significance for the question of freedom.

If we remember what we've learned about the structure of knowing, and genuineness in relationship to the structure of knowing, the being an authentic knower and doer means asking and answering all the questions that arise on the various levels of the structure of knowing and doing. And we might have expected that Lonergan would lay this out and then talk about a way in which this implies a Method of Ethics. But he doesn't do that! His objective in section two, is different than laying out the structure of knowing and doing for the sake of working out a heuristic structure for ethics. He's got a different objective, and the different objective is the objective of freedom. That's the title of the section, "The Notion of Freedom". So he looks at each of these, not for their implications for a structure of Ethics; but rather their implications for the question of freedom.

The significance for freedom of the canon of statistical residues lies in the way it disposes of the most obvious objection to the possibility of freedom — i.e., that scientific determinism undermines human freedom and ethics. Lonergan's response to Kant's problem. Survey of how the Newtonian tradition led to the extra-scientific opinion of determinism. Lonergan hints, however, that there are *real* impediments to human freedom, not the illusory impediments attributed to the scientific laws of nature.

Significance of Statistical Residues

“Accordingly, the significance of the canon of statistical residues is not that it implies the freedom of our choices. Its significance lies in the fact that it makes possible an account of the autonomy of the successive departments of science, that this autonomy excludes a determinism of the higher by the lower, and that the canon of statistical residues itself excludes a deductive determinism in either the lower or the higher. Undoubtedly, these exclusions make it far easier to dispose of arguments against the possibility of freedom, and they narrow down the field in which impediments to freedom can be found.” (CWL 3, pp. 631-632).

So the significance of statistical residues, as he says, is that it makes

“it far easier to dispose of arguments against the possibility of freedom, and they narrow down the field in which impediments to freedom can be found.” (CWL 3, pp. 631-632).

So let's look at the full statement here, and see what the nature of the argument is. *It's very terse. It is his way of responding to the Kantian argument!* Let's see what kind of sense we can make of it.

“Accordingly, the significance of the canon of statistical residues is *not* that it implies the freedom of our choices.”

(CWL 3, p. 631, emphasis added).

So that’s very important! He is going to locate the full meaning of freedom and the whole significance of freedom in his analysis of choice, or decision. And that’s what freedom really means! So the canon of statistical residue does not imply freedom.

It’s a little bit like something that I’ve run across, and I think some of you perhaps have run across, or will run across: when people want to make an argument for freedom, they will say: “Well, quantum mechanics proves that there is freedom, or the Indeterminacy Principle of Heisenberg — the fact that natural events are not determined means that there is human freedom.” *It actually doesn’t mean that! And this is part of what Lonergan is pointing out here. What it does is to provide the condition of the possibility of true freedom, real freedom, by removing the most obvious objection to it, namely, the objection that natural science explains everything.* That, as I stand here lecturing to you, and you sit there thinking about what I have to say, and taking notes, and so on; and you leave the classroom and you go your various ways, and you meet up with friends, and do various activities; *that none of that is of your own free choice!* All of that is dictated by the laws of physics and the laws of chemistry and the laws of biology that are determining each and every movement of each and every molecule in your bodies; that there really isn’t any free choice; that everything that happens is completely determined by the laws of nature, as understood by scientific method. One of the reasons why Lonergan’s analysis of scientific method way back in those early chapters of *Insight* is so important is because *he is showing how that is **not** an implication of natural science.*

What is the implication here of statistical residues, for which he makes the argument back in chapter three, is that it makes possible the “**an account of the autonomy of the successive departments of science**”; note that: successive levels of the sciences; and “**that this autonomy excludes a determinism of the higher by the lower.**” *He sketches out, as you know, a level that has to do with physics, a level that has to do with chemistry, a level that has to do with biology, a level that has to do with the sensitive psychology that is appropriate to animals, pre-intelligent animals; and then a level that has to do with human intelligence as such. So something like five levels!* There could be more, but *he is quite emphatic that there are certainly not less!* That each

of those levels of science, or what he calls ‘explanatory’ generic, the genera of sciences, is defined precisely by its set of understandings and its set of insights into intelligibilities, that make regular and recurring what can only be a huge set of highly improbable accidental recurrences, were there not for the higher science!

So physics doesn’t determine chemistry; there is an autonomy of chemistry as a science, but there is also an autonomy of chemical recurrences that is not determined strictly and solely by physical events and physical laws. And so on up the line! *That is why it eliminates the most obvious argument against freedom. Although he doesn’t say it here, the implication is that human freedom has to do with a distinct originating ordering or making intelligible of what would otherwise be a merely statistical residue, that say the sensitive or, it turns out, even the intelligent or the reflective level. So there is something very distinctive that makes regular, that makes intelligible, what would otherwise be simply some kind of set of accidental events.*

Okay. Let’s stop and see if people have questions about that. ... So this is his argument against the dilemma that Kant confronted. Kant was very, very, concerned that not only *human freedom* but especially *human dignity*, was being undermined by the advances of modern science, particularly of Newtonian science.

Maybe a little background: *Newtonian science was more than Newton.* Newton in his *Principia* of three volumes laid out the principles of mathematical physics, but then applied them very specifically to the solar system. *It was his objective to show — to give an explanation, to give an account, of the regularities of our solar system.* Among other things, he was able to show that, on the basis of his relatively few principles, that what were known as the three Keplerian laws of planetary orbits were derived. In other words, they weren’t independent laws: Kepler called them laws. The people after Kepler called them anything but laws. For Newton, these were laws that were derived from more basic laws, his laws of motion and his law of gravity. But things didn’t stop there. Following Newton, brilliant people at the beginning of the rise of modern science and the Enlightenment, extended the Newtonian model to all kinds of things. Things such as an analysis and an explanation of what happens when things are rotating, and so rotational physics; and what happens when things are vibrating, not only waves, but other kinds of vibrations. And what was called the Newtonian spirit was a carrying forth of the basic approach to doing science, as well as the basic principles of Newton, in application, after application, after application. It

went on for something like sixty or seventy years: this tremendous expansion and application of Newtonian principles, and the methods he used, to make sense of all sorts of things besides the solar system.

It's that context that Kant was worrying about. There was this tremendously successful growth, exponential growth, of understanding and knowledge and prediction, that comes out of the Newtonian spirit; such that people in Kant's time were already saying that from now we would be able to bring **under scientific knowledge** everything that there is to be, but the human. So, not only does this undermine human freedom, but *human beings as distinctive kinds of value agents, of distinctive kinds of value beings, are being threatened by being reduced to nothing more than matter and motion, according to Newtonian laws*. So that's Kant's preoccupation; and he has his way of coming to propose a solution to that dilemma.

Lonergan's got a different approach to it, which is to go back and to look at, in fact Newtonian science, but not just Newtonian science, but all sciences like Newtonian science that ambition or anticipate classical correlations; and then to show that *there is no reason, within those approaches, within those kinds of sciences, that you can dispense with statistical residues*. So Lonergan's response to the problem of the dehumanization in the face of the advance of modern science is to say: *It's not modern science that is the problem. It's extra-scientific opinion that natural science is intrinsically deterministic; that's the problem!!*

So although this section is very short, *it's extremely important*. It's short because the hard work was done earlier in the book. It's arguably unnecessarily short; the point could have been made at greater length, and its implications could have been made at greater length. But Lonergan is on the move! He has an interest in getting not to just removing the account of human freedom, but giving a *positive* account¹ of human freedom; and then in his hints here at the bottom, worrying about what the real impediments to human freedom are; not the natural world; *the real impediments*, which he already takes up of course in section three on "The Problem of Liberation" (CWL 3, pp. 643-656).

¹ Pat's precise word at this point is unclear to the transcriber, and 'account' is merely his conjecture.

Underlying Sensitive Flow

“If it happens that we discover the existence of free acts of will, at least it will not happen that we discover all the acts of all men to be free. For from the outset we are excluding from consideration any act that occurs through mere sensitive routine and that can be accounted for without appealing to the introduction of some higher integration by intelligence.” (CWL 3, p. 632).

Student question regarding the levels of consciousness in the structure of knowing and doing:

- In *Insight*, Lonergan speaks of “the expansion of consciousness” to include doing along with knowing.
- He does not however speak in *Insight* of an additional level of consciousness that comes into play with the expansion to include doing.
- §2 is more or less a recapitulation of the three levels of acts of consciousness treated earlier in *Insight*.
- Clarification that the fourth level that appears in the preceding diagram reflects Lonergan’s

post-*Insight* thinking, and is not the position
of *Insight* itself.

The underlying sensitive flow, when — Yeah, Matt?

Matt: Can I just enter a quick question? This structure of knowing and doing, is there a parallel structure to the tripartite knowledge, or is it all sort of fitting within the fourth level of rational self-consciousness?

Pat: Okay. Good question! It is — How do I want to say this? — *His phrase is it's an expansion. There is an expansion of the levels or the spheres of consciousness. There is an expansion of consciousness, as he says. This is all still the tripart structure of knowing, but now expanded to include the phenomenon of doing.* Most of what he's talking about here in the sub-sections on “The Underlying Sensitive Flow”, “The Practical Insight”, “Practical Reflection”, is more or less a repetition of what we've seen, particularly in the chapters on Common Sense, and in the chapter on “**Reflective Understanding**”, particularly where he talks about reflective understanding as it pertains to common sense and scientific knowledge.

So I think Lonergan was still thinking of three related but fairly distinct levels of consciousness. But there is something interesting about the metaphor of *expansion*. Using the metaphor of *levels*, it's like going up steps, or going up a ladder. *Expansion* is more like a whole that's growing, and as it grows — So if you have the metaphor of levels, you're on the first level and then you go to the second level; you're on the second level, and then you go to the third level, and you're not on the second level or the first level any more. *But if you have this other metaphor of expansion, as your consciousness expands through what you might call spheres instead of levels, the other spheres are still contained within!* So in some sense, the expansion is inclusion of all the other levels. He doesn't really say that in any great and clear sense in *Insight*. After his *Insight* writings, he'll talk about — he'll use the word ‘*sublation*’, and then he is always quick to say:

“I don't mean that in a Hegelian sense; I
mean it in the sense of Karl Rahner.”

And if you know Hegel and Karl Rahner that makes sense to you; if not, you'll have to go look it up to figure out what he means. *But it's something like this, it's something like this expansion.* But here he is not really saying anything about this vault happening on the fourth level. *It's*

happening in the consciousness of a person whose consciousness is expanding. Okay. And there isn't a fourth level here! The level of doing, although in a previous slide, I sketched it in the manner of a fourth level, I made a comment about the fact that Lonergan doesn't really quite have a distinct level of questioning there. I put that structure forward in a way that is more compatible with his work after *Insight*, than is found in the book *Insight*. So don't think of this as Lonergan saying that all these activities are taking place on the fourth level in *Insight*. *At the very best, the best you can make of it, is that there is this metaphor of an expansion.* Okay? Okay! Any other questions?

The significance for freedom of the “underlying sensitive flow”:

Although the natural world conditions our exercise of freedom, we exercise a degree of autonomy relative to nature when we pattern our experiences.

Once developed, mere sensitive routines are set outside the realm of genuine freedom and ethics.

Examples of cerebral palsy and addiction as affecting sensitive flows, are therefore not immediately matters of freedom or ethics.

Underlying Sensitive Flow

“If it happens that we discover the existence of free acts of will, at least it will not happen that we discover all the acts of all men to be free. For from the outset we are excluding from consideration any act that occurs through mere sensitive routine and that can be accounted for without appealing to the introduction of some higher integration by intelligence.” (CWL 3, p. 632).

Okay. Underlying Sensitive Flow. So underlying sensitive flow is our experiencing! While the world *de facto* and physically and chemically and biologically conditions the environment within which we do our experiencing, *nevertheless, it's how we select from above the stimuli and their impacts on our biological and neurological systems that really is the beginning of the structure of knowing and doing for us!*

So, think of yourself — This is an example that comes from Ken Melchin's book, *Living with Other People*. — Think of yourself: finally school is over, exams are over, your papers are all handed in, and you go off on a little vacation, you go to the beach. And all of a sudden you hear a cry. So the hearing of the cry is part of your underlying sensitive flow. You may be so zoned out that you don't even hear it; that's possible. But once it enters into your consciousness, that's the beginning of you moving into the structure of knowing and doing!

Lonergan wants to make something a little different of this, however.

“If it happens that we discover the existence of free acts of will, at least it will not happen that we discover all the acts of all [human beings] to be free. For from the outset we are excluding from consideration any act that occurs through mere sensitive routine and that can be accounted for without appealing to the introduction of some higher integration by intelligence.” (CWL 3, p. 632).

So on the one hand, our ethical performance, or the structure of our ethical intentionality has, as its necessary component, our experiencing. But what Lonergan is interested in doing in this section is not finally that dimension of our experiencing, but to keep putting aside the things that don't **count** as profoundly ethical, as profoundly free. So anything that's a routine. My wife says that I go on autopilot. We will be driving around, and she says: “Where are you going?” So I'm either on autopilot to come here to Boston College; or on autopilot to go to the stop that's at the Grocery Store. So that's “**sensitive routine**”. Was that an ethical decision on my part? What Lonergan is getting at here is that once you develop the sensitive routines, those in and of themselves, are not part of the core meaning of freedom and ethics; that those are to be excluded.

More, although he doesn't say this in this context, things that have to do with people's psycho-pharmacological make-ups. The most obvious example: a person has certain kinds of problems with muscular control; they are walking along, and their muscles react in a certain way. They are not — something is braking; that's not a free choice. It's something that was done by the person, but it was not done as a free choice of the person. You can move along — People that form addictions — A little later on in the book, Lonergan mentions the struggle of a person to give up smoking. Once the addiction has become part of the neuro-physical-pharmacological make-up of the person, that's got a certain kind of dominance over the underlying sensitive flow. You can make the argument that when the person didn't yet have that addiction, they shouldn't have done it; but once it's there, it isn't entirely a matter of freedom; it isn't a free act; that they are having the pains and needs that a person who has an addiction has.

So, the underlying sensitive flow, from one point of view, has to do with the structure of our knowing and doing; but Lonergan is concerned to say, let's leave the aspects of people's doing that result completely from neural and pharmacological conditioning, let's leave that aside, because that's really not what ethics is all about, that's not what true freedom is all about.

**Practical insights and their relation to human freedom:
students propose the significance has to do with properly
assessing the situation, and with possible courses of
action.**

**Properly understanding the situation includes
understanding the situation as part of the unfolding of the
emergent probability of proportionate being.**

Practical Insight

“However, while the speculative or factual insight is followed by the question whether the unity exists or whether the correlation governs events, the practical insight is followed by the question whether the unity is going to be made to exist or whether the correlation is going to be made to govern events.

In other words, while speculative and factual insights are concerned to lead to knowledge of being, practical insights are concerned to lead to the making of being.” (CWL 3, p. 633).

Practical Insight. So you're on the beach, you hear the cry, what happens? Imaginatively put yourself in that situation! You're on the beach; you're reclining. What happens? ... Samantha?

Samantha: You look around to see where it's coming from.

Pat: Okay. You look around to see where it's coming from. Okay. *So you modify your underlying sensitive flow!* What else? ... Elizabeth?

Elizabeth: You wonder why the person is crying — if they want your engagement — if they need help?

Pat: Okay. *So you wonder why!* Okay. What else? ... James?

James: *You can prepare yourself for some sort of action;* if someone is hurting, you sort of try to find somebody who can help.

Pat: Okay. Good! So one of the things that Elizabeth — So we can check on three levels here: Samantha said that *we expand our experiencing*. Elizabeth said we *try to understand the sound*. So we ask: Why is the person crying? What is their cry about? So we are trying to get some insights. *These are insights into facts!* So one of the things that we do in ethical performance is to start to *try to understand the situation; just try to get insights into the situation*. James was adding a further thing that we now not only try to get insights into the situation, but *insights into what we could do. What is a possible course of action?* Now one of the things that I would agree with, and am very proud of you about, is that nobody said the first thing I would do is jump into the water, and save the person! There are all these funny stories about people giving somebody mouth to mouth resuscitation and they are not actually suffering from any stopping of the breathing, or anything like that!

Part of ethical intentionality is knowing what is going on!! And that is the part that Samantha and Elizabeth were bringing out. Look before you leap!! “Look before you leap” means: *understand what’s going on in the situation!!* Look in order to get the phantasms so that we can have the insights; and that is part of what ethical intentionality — Something Lonergan refers to later on in his remarks about “The Problem of Liberation” (broadly *CWL* 3, pp. 643-656, or more particularly, pp. 653-656), that

you as a person, in order to act responsibly, you have to understand, you have to understand what’s going on! Not only do you have to understand in the commonsense mode that we are putting ourselves imaginatively in here, but, from Lonergan’s point of view, you have to understand where you are in being; you have to understand yourself as a player in the universe of being. He doesn’t say it in this context, but by the time we get to “The Problem of Liberation”, that turns out to be the problem! It turns out to be the problem of whether or not the person has an open-ended horizon of understanding, or a restricted horizon of understanding, that’s going to be part of the equipment that a person brings to their ethical responses. Okay.

So among the practical insights are just practical understanding of the situation, drawing upon the inventory that we have accumulated over a vast N number of years of our lives, and then adding the few more insights into the concrete situation we are in; understanding what is going on. And then the further insights about what could I possibly do!

Student question about a dramatic, urgent event (e.g., child in peril) — if could slow the process down, would we still see that process of deliberation, rather than an “almost instinctive,” unconscious reaction.

— “Almost instinctive” suggests that the presence of something like the structure of practical reflection is operative.

— But the broader context is something Lonergan discusses in §1.2 of this chapter.

— Willingness often presupposes a high degree of training, practice and learning prior to the emergency to which one responds.

— So the structure is operative, but not in the present moment of the emergency; it is present in the past as preparation.

— Relationship to Aristotle’s account of virtues.

Pat: Did somebody have a question there? ... Tim?

Tim: In contrast to kind of the beach example; what about other examples when there is an immediate kind of dramatic event. So for example, a bystander who sees a child playing on the street and a car that’s about to hit the child; and they respond almost instinctively. And if they are kind of interviewed right afterwards, and they might say: “I don’t know what happened! I don’t even remember me being out there on the street.” That almost happened, let’s say,

instinctively. Would Lonergan say, if you slowed the film down, and watched frame by frame, you would find that moment of deliberation; but it just happened so quickly that you don't advert to it until afterwards? Or are there instances where, for example, when a secret service agent, you know, jumps in front of the President and takes the bullet; where you do kind of a leap over the steps?

Pat: Ahm, that's a really good question! It puts us back in a different part of chapter eighteen: *it has to do with willingness*. I noticed that you said "almost instinctive".

Tim: Yeah.

[Class amusement]

Pat: So I can press you on the 'almost'. But I think it reflects, in your own way of posing the question, some kind of a notion, or some kind of an awareness, that it isn't just pure instinct of the sort that we would attribute to animals. *That there is something else going on there. The something else going on there is actually more like willingness than an exercise of the structure.*

Maybe a way to get at this is to ask about — Let's take your two instances: the person who runs into the street to either grab or push the child out of the way, or the secret service agent who takes the bullet. It's a little easier to see in the secret service agent who takes the bullet. They don't assign you to the President unless you've been well trained. And the training is a training both of a new set of habitual insights, a new set of practical insights. So secret service agents are looking for things, as Samantha was saying, and they are understanding things. And it turns out that they are also making judgments in ways that you and I don't, because we haven't had that kind of training. *So they are much more acutely attentive, and they have a set of insights and a set of judgments.* But most importantly in this case, they have also developed *what Lonergan calls 'willingness', a habitual pattern of acting that's in place.* If they had to stop and think about whether or not to take the bullet, that would be too late. I give that kind of story or joke about the former Boston College quarter-back who did that sort of thing. Good athletes have what you might call an athletic willingness that's been developed: They don't have to go through asking and answering all the further pertinent questions in that moment, because they've done this in previous moments.

That's what practice is about. What athletes do when they practice is they are told — they are given an instruction, which means they have to understand the instructions — about how to position their bodies, what to look for, when to move in a certain way, under certain circumstances. *The practicing of it is developing, first of all the muscle coordination, the muscle willingness! So the structure is there but it's not there at the moment. A lot of the structure is taking place beforehand, to help a person develop these habitual willingnesses. This is roughly speaking what Lonergan is going to transpose of the classical notion of virtue, habitual behaving, habitual feeling, which has been formed by lots and lots of prior questions and insights, and actions that make doing that kind of thing come spontaneously.*

The straight-forward comment that Aristotle makes at the beginning of Book Two of the *Nicomachean Ethics* that the difference between intellectual virtue and moral virtue is *intellectual virtues are learned by teaching, and moral virtues are learned by practice, by actually doing them.* It turns out he kind of sold intellectual virtues a little bit short there, because there is a lot of practice, and indeed practice of exactly the acting and repeating kind that is involved in any kind of learning. But given what he's doing in chapter two, it's a helpful distinction to make. Okay? Does that make sense?

Tim: Yeah.

Pat: So, the structure is in place, but you only get to the point when you're doing these kinds of things if the structure has preceded and given you a kind of willingness where you don't need to be persuaded, you don't need to think out the options; you've already been developed. There's the big emphasis that he has back in chapter fifteen on human development. *What's not mentioned there explicitly, and is implicit here, is the development of willingness, on the basis of the development of sensitivity, intelligence, and reasonableness.* Okay. Good! Good question! ... Any other question? ...

Lonergan's concern is to reveal that freedom in the proper sense does not reside in practical insights.

Practical insights do not automatically determine what one will do.

Practical Insight

“However, while the speculative or factual insight is followed by the question whether the unity exists or whether the correlation governs events, the practical insight is followed by the question whether the unity is going to be made to exist or whether the correlation is going to be made to govern events.

In other words, while speculative and factual insights are concerned to lead to knowledge of being, practical insights are concerned to lead to the making of being.” (CWL 3, p. 633).

Okay. So Practical Insight. The thing that Lonergan wants to make as his point here in this section, however, is again: wherein does freedom reside? And just as he was removing the absolute determinism of the natural world over human action, and was setting aside the extent to which some of our sensations, our sensitive apparatus, has routines that are not subject to any governance by insight or reflection or decision, *so also what he is doing here is to make the point that just because you have an insight, that doesn't determine what you are going to do!*

So from one point of view, it's important in thinking about the structure of knowing and doing and its implications for the structure of ethical intentionality and a method of ethics, it's important to explore what goes on in the phenomena having to do with practical insight. *But Lonergan in this section is really just concerned to say that that's not where real freedom resides. There's a certain kind of autonomy of intelligence relative to the underlying sensitive flow; the underlying sensitive flow does not dictate or determine our insights, though it does set the*

conditions for our insights, just as the field of statistical residues and the world set the conditions for our sensitive flow; nevertheless, having the insights, and the kind of autonomy that they actually do have, is not the full meaning of human freedom! And what reveals this is that we don't have insights and immediately knee-jerk act upon our courses of action, or at least not most of us most of the time.

“The practical insight is followed by the question whether the unity is going to be made to exist or whether the correlation is going to be made to govern events.” (CWL 3, p. 633, emphases added).

The correlation made to govern events is — think, for example, of an agreement you reach with a friend to meet at a certain time, and to do a certain activity. Until you had that insight, that wasn't even a possibility; but once you had the insight, it doesn't mean that that regular recurrence that together you had thought out as a pattern of behaving — It doesn't mean it's going to happen, because *you've got further questions about whether you're going to make it a reality.*

So factual insights are concerned with what is, but practical insights are concerned with the making! And making is not necessary just because we think of it. It is a component in our doing; and it's an indispensable component in our doing; but it isn't the whole of our freedom. So the whole of our freedom isn't just a thought. There's more to it than that!

Practical Reflection

“But when practical insight is correct, then reflective understanding cannot grasp a relevant virtually unconditioned ...” (CWL 3, p. 633).

“Further questions can be raised ...” (CWL 3, p. 633).

The relevance of practical reflection to freedom:

What is practical reflection?

It involves asking further pertinent questions, arriving at a virtually unconditioned, meaning that the practical insight about which one reflects is correct.

How can a practical insight be correct if the course of action is not yet realized?

- Discussion; answer not clear from the text.
- The text does not really help us explore what we are doing when we are reflecting practically as it does in the areas of cognitional reflecting.
- Lonergan seems to be hurrying to the discussion of essential and effective freedom.
- Lonergan does say there is an internal term wherein one grasps as virtually unconditioned the certitude that the possible course of action is indeed possible, or agreeable, useful, obligatory.
- But ultimately the reflecting is practical — it is for the sake of doing, the external term.

Now, what goes on in practical reflection? This is the area that — It's actually a fairly long subsection in Section 2. Still there is something that is kind of left a little bit hanging that I will try to explain.

“But when practical insight is correct, then reflective understanding cannot grasp a relevant virtually unconditioned ...” (CWL 3, p. 633).

So let me just read the whole passage there; this is on page 633:

“There follows another important corollary. When speculative or factual insight is correct, reflective understanding can grasp a relevant virtually unconditioned.”

So we talked about that last semester.

“But when practical insight is correct, then reflective understanding *cannot* grasp a relevant virtually unconditioned; for if it could, the content of the insight already would be a fact; and if it were already a fact, then it would not be a possible course of action which, as yet, is not a fact but just a possibility.” (CWL 3, p. 633, emphasis added).

So the point he is outlining here is that when you have an insight, if it's a practical insight and if it is correct, *you can't grasp a virtually unconditioned of the sort that we are used to talking about, because by definition practical insight is about a possible course of action; it's not yet actual.* And so there are further pertinent questions, among which is *“Will I do it?”*

There is a puzzle here, however. *What does it mean for a practical insight to be correct? What does it mean to say that a practical insight is correct, a practical insight being a possible course of action? What would it mean for it to be correct? ... Matt?*

Matt: There is like an element of trial and error involved, that you wouldn't know that it were correct until you had at least to some degree done that?

Pat: Fair enough. And that's certainly a possible interpretation of what he means here. The difficulty is that the trial and error part is actually the doing of it. And so Lonergan is back to the point where it is still just a possible course of action before you engage in the trial and error. So if 'correct' means that it has passed through trial and error, then there is a problem of

what would it mean for it to be correct before he did the trial and error, which is the context that he is situating. Okay. ... Greg?

Greg: When I read it, I thought that by ‘practical’ he meant it is one of potentially a number of courses of action given the situation in front of us; and that further insight is precisely whether or not it’s the best course of action that ought to be done.

Pat: Okay. But notice that he doesn’t say “the best course of action”; he says “the practical insight”. *The content of practical insight is an intelligible possibility that one could do.* Okay. When he says it is a *correct intelligible possibility* he doesn’t say it is the *best* intelligible possibility. So the difference — because correctness, from the context that we’ve been studying before, has to do somehow with ‘isness’! And ‘best’ has to do somehow with ‘value’.

Greg: Right. And that’s why I’m saying it is incomplete. The further —

Pat: Yes. That’s what makes it merely possible. That’s the point he is getting at. *What does it mean for a practical insight to be correct? Presumably a practical insight would be correct when your insight about what has been done is correct.* So we’re still kind of trying to figure out what he means. Samantha?

Samantha: ... Would it just be correct if your insight is about when your judgment of the situation, and trying to understand what is occurring, that those insights are correct, so then you can formulate a correct practical insight, but even if it’s not the best one, if you judge the situation correctly and formulate a practical insight, that would be correct? Then you can —

Pat: *Okay. That’s possibly what he means; that your practical insight is correct, because it has taken into account the concrete possibilities as they really are! That’s possibly right!* And you could have many different practical insights that are correct in that sense. *So that may in fact be what he means. But it is kind of a strange way to park: to say on the one hand, it’s a correct insight, and yet you can’t grasp the virtually unconditioned because it hasn’t yet been realized.* So it’s a sort of an odd sentence. It’s one of several odd sentences here. And *I’ve always thought that Lonergan was still trying to figure some of this out at the time he was writing the book Insight.* ... Matt?

Matt: Because I noticed when I was reading this text that, well, in the other positions he was kind of talking specifically about that, the questions preceded, what happened

inside the underlying sensitive flow, and he has been very clear about that; whereas in this section he almost like he jumps to the next question.

Pat: Right!

Matt: He talks all about, you know, what the next governing question that happens from it. So instead — I guess like if you had to speak out critically, the only like: Can I fly if I jump off this building? Or something like that. The practical insight would be like: “I couldn’t do that”!

Pat: And, you know, that’s a very likely construal. It’s the sort of thing that’s like a command ... Right. ... Jonathan?

Jonathan: And I mean there is also sort of — I don’t want to jump in too far. But, the sort of construal of that as a practical insight; so insight can start with making what’s possible; and then he talks about those things that have been sort of the necessity implied by the ‘ought’. So that there is a sort of correctness within a sort of a necessity. ‘Correspondence’ is sort of a sticky word to use. But there would be a kind of correspondence to that strange sort of necessity called the “I ought” and the making.

Pat: And that’s possible. Although the ‘oughtness’ comes up in the next section when he talks about reflection. He hasn’t been talking about it in this section. That’s another possibility: “It’s correct that I ought to do this.” ... Stephanie?

Stephanie: I was just wondering how an existential or an effective freedom might or might not effect the virtually — or its becoming a virtually unconditioned?

Pat: I sort of have a sense of where you might be going with that. Can you say a little bit more?

Stephanie: So you go through a process and reflection and deliberation, and you decide either, you know, despite the fact that this is an insight that is correct, I will do it or I won’t do it, and that will be, I guess in some way, controlled by your effective freedom versus your essential freedom. So if you say, I know that this is correct, but I’m not going to do it because I don’t have an effective freedom to follow it right now. Does that make it a virtually unconditioned, that final judging of whether or not I’m going to do it, or is it just determining, you know, that after deliberation and reflection that this is the right path whether or not I take it?

Pat: Ahm, I'm not sure it's that, because he's talking about practical insight as that which precedes practical reflection and is, as such, just possible. So, I'm not sure if that invocation of effective freedom makes —

Stephanie: — Any difference!

Pat: — Yeah, anything different here.

Stephanie: So at what point — So it becomes a virtually unconditioned after you have reflected on it?

Pat: Ah, well, the first thing he says here is that you would be able to grasp a virtually unconditioned if the act had already been done, and were completed, and someone could say “I understand what you did and why you could do it!” That would be a virtually unconditioned. But since I only get that — assuming its entertaining it, it's just a possibility; it's not a virtually unconditioned.

But you know, there are some difficulties with the way this section is written. Somebody I think said, he's looking ahead — You're saying he's looking at — maybe he's looking at whatever he could do. I think that's true! I think that in some sense it is true that he's moving through these sections, rather than dwelling with them — as he has done in earlier parts of the book — to kind of help us to really explore what we're doing here, having practical insights, what's going on in the underlying sensitive flow when we are immersed in projects, where what we are going to do is at stake. Instead of doing that, he is going to be moving very quickly through these — He's trying to get somewhere else! And where he is trying to get in his treatment here is to the act of decision.

Stephanie: So there's no virtually unconditioned before you come to decision?

Pat: Well, you see, it sounds like he said that there, doesn't it? Okay. And then notice what he says a couple of pages later. I think I've got this up on a slide. I'll jump ahead to it now. This is on the bottom of page 634:

“Thirdly, the reflection has no internal term, no capacity of its own to come to an end.” (CWL 3, p. 634).

Practical Reflection

“Thirdly, the reflection has no internal term, no capacity of its own to come to an end. For it is a knowing that leads to doing.

Insofar as it is a knowing, it can reach in internal term, for one can grasp the virtually unconditioned and thereby attain certitude on the possibility of a proposed course of action, on its agreeableness, on its utility, on its obligatoriness.

But insofar as this knowing is practical, insofar as its concern is with something to be done and with the reasons for doing it, the reflection has not an internal but an external term; for the reflection is just knowing, but the term is an ulterior deciding and doing.” (CWL 3, pp. 634-635).

And coming off a passage that we just read on the previous page, we'll say: Okay, sure! It's because the action hasn't been completed, and we can't reach a virtually unconditioned, which would be an internal term: the judgment that it has happened.

“For it is a knowing that leads to doing. Insofar as it is a knowing, it can reach in internal term, for one can grasp the virtually unconditioned and thereby attain certitude on the possibility of a proposed course of action.” CWL 3, pp. 634-635).

That seems to be what he means by a correct — seems to me — to be what he means by a correct practical insight. That I know it's possible to do this. That's the best construction I can put on this. That there is an internal term that I know it is possible to do this.

“... for one can grasp the virtually unconditioned and thereby attain certitude on the possibility of a proposed course of action” (CWL 3, pp. 634-635).

But notice that he is also going to say other things. I can grasp the virtually unconditioned **“on its agreeableness:”** I know that it's going to be agreeable if I do it, or disagreeable; **“on its utility:”** I know that by undertaking this action, it's going to lead me into getting a raise in my salary, or I know that it's going to help me to get a job, or I know it's going to help me persuade my friends to go swimming, or something like this. So I know that my course of action is going to — I can be certain that it is going to lead to that kind of result. *One can reach an internal term, and grasp a virtually unconditioned and attain certitude “on its obligatoriness.”* We saw that passage last week. So there's the funny thing. We can get an internal term, we can reach a virtually unconditioned about all these things, including obligatoriness. But it doesn't have in internal term. Okay.

Now that actually makes more sense than it seems at first. Practical reflection doesn't have an internal term in any of these judgments because it is *practical* reflection; it's not just *cognitive* reflection. It's reflection that is headed towards doing; I'm doing my reflecting for the sake of doing. And all the virtually unconditions that I reach along the way are not yet the doing! And so my practical reflection hasn't reached an internal term, even though there is a — or excuse me, *it hasn't reached its true term, even though I can reach an internal term. The term that I reach is the external term of what I do, and what results from what I do.*

Now again we've got this problem of internal/external. It's a bad metaphor! It's the already out there now of actuality versus the already in here now of knowledge, all of which one would expect a thoroughgoing Lonerganian to not be saying any more when we get to this chapter.

So, practical reflection as practical, as tending towards actions, ought to be about finally reaching an action about the doing. And towards the end here he is going to say: practical reflection can go on indefinitely, you can keep rehearsing and rehearsing, and thinking of alternative strategies, and further consequences; and you can get into the butterfly effect, and say I was going to do this and I might cause a hurricane in south-east Asia in twenty-five years from now! You can really become endlessly reflecting, and never get through to doing. So that's what he means by not having — that practical reflection doesn't have an internal term as practical reflection, although it does as knowing.

Pat: Jonathan?

Jonathan: So I just want to repeat some of this back to you to make sure I'm getting some more of a — there's a lot of plates flying.

Pat: Yes.

Jonathan: *So the correctness of a practical insight is the — to use a sort of tricky word — a practicability of the conceived course of action.*

Pat: *That seems to be what he is saying, I would think.*

Jonathan: And then that is a kind of ground for what he then lays out as an expanding set of concerns about that course of action as practicable; so it is either agreeable, or it has utility, or there is sort of — or all the way through the level of moral obligation; that there is sort of an expanding set of concerns that you can bring to bear on that practicability.

Pat: Right! That is what he seems to be saying! Okay. *So it seems as though correct practical insight means: it is possible to actually do this; unlike: I think I'll flex my arms and fly around the campus.*

Jonathan: Sure. So in the same way that correct insight, correct sort of speculative insight, is of being or matters of fact, then correct practical insight would then be the sort of the commensurability of the course of action in the realm of being, in the same — in a sort of an analogous way. The conceiving of my knowing is sort of — is of being in that sense, in that “to be enacted” sense. ... Sorry, that's a little convoluted.

Pat: Ah, I'm not sure I quite follow that. But I think what makes it correct in the sense is: you could put it into being.

Jonathan: Right. That's what I meant.

Pat: You could put it into being; it could emerge. I think that's right! ...

Student question about "how we make being" when we make a decision.

- The dynamism of finality is constitutive of the reality of the universe, of proportionate being.
- Human beings make being by setting the conditions for the emergence of something.

Further questions as to whether one's decision itself is also an addition to being — It is.

- In a general metaphysical sense, our decisions, and the way they set conditions for emergences ("the making of being") is the same as everything else that sets conditions for emergences.
- It is different because our setting of conditions rests upon practical insights and practical reflections, unlike every other entity in the universe.

Pat: But I want to draw attention to these other things: a virtually unconditioned about its agreeableness, about its utility, and its obligatoriness. How do we reach a virtually unconditioned about its agreeableness? ... Greg? What were you going to say?

Greg: I was just wondering how we make being; how we make being?

Pat: That's a really good question. It's a really good question.

Greg: I just thought there was a lot of presuppositional questions that I found later had been answered somewhere in the last six hundred and thirty pages, and that I maybe missed. I mean, is there an absolute number to being? Are we re-arranging being? When we make decisions, like what's the ontological status of a decision versus a thing? I mean it kind of threw me for a little when I saw it.

Pat: Yeah. Well, it is tricky because he hasn't talked about a decision; and so there is some anticipation of things that he hasn't talked about yet.

Two comments: One is remember that *proportionate being is intrinsically dynamic. To be proportionate being is to be intrinsically incompleteness in the dynamism of completing. And that's before there are any human beings anywhere in the universe.* Proportionate being — The big strong claim is that *finality is constitutive of the very reality of the universe. It's not a projection. It's not an idealism. It is real!* And part of the discussion at the beginning of chapter sixteen about distinctions and relations and so on, is to get on the table that realities don't have to be just be lines.² They don't have to just be imagined. So *finality is constitutive of the universe. So it's constitutive of being; the kind of intelligibility that is intelligible dynamism is constitutive of proportionate being.*

Human beings come along and they have something very distinctive which we haven't talked about yet, namely, they do what? I think the simplest way to conceive of this is that *human beings set the conditions for the emergence of.* So whenever we are making being, we are setting the conditions for the emergence of something. So in the morning I get up and I do something. I turn on the switch on the oven, and I fill up the tea-kettle and I put it on the burner. I didn't make the stove; somebody else by their ingenuity thought about how to design an electric stove, and put into motion with their hands and their vocal chords and their writing to design and produce the electric stove. So there is a whole series of conditions that are being put into place, and I put the last ones into place, so that tea may emerge. *I make being by setting conditions for emergence. Over and over and over again that's what we are doing when we are doing.*

Greg: But is your choice itself somehow an addition to being, or that which results from it?

² The final word in this sentence is uncertain to the transcriber, and what is offered is merely his conjecture.

Pat: It is! It is! And of course, we didn't talk about choice yet, right? Or Lonergan hasn't got around to it yet. But he makes these comments about practical insights for the sake of making, and not just what already is. But he hasn't told us the last piece of the puzzle. *So yeah, our decisions are being!* "Did you make that decision?" is not a question of value, it's not a question of ethics, it's not even a question for a practical insight. *It's a question of fact!* And if you unconditionally affirm that Greg made that decision, or when I made a decision to make tea this morning, then that is in fact a knowing of a fact; it is — So our decision that we know that fact is part of being. Okay? ... Stephanie?

Stephanie: So, when you precis that with something that is up to me, you read by that "setting up conditions". How is that any different from a comment by —

Pat: It isn't.

Stephanie: Okay. Sorry.

Pat: It isn't! It isn't with one exception; well, actually with several exceptions.

Stephanie: That if we are conscious of what we are doing, I understand that that is different. But how much of a role does that play in the fact that things are setting conditions all the time, whether or not I'm conscious of that?

Pat: Yeah. In the general metaphysical sense, it is not different. Comets set conditions; rainstorms set conditions; clouds set conditions; flowering plants set conditions; worms in your garden set conditions. All the — So sure! *In a generic metaphysical sense, the making of being by proportionate being is through the setting of conditions for the emergence of schemes of other things.* What is distinctive about human beings is that sometimes they do it the way animals do it — That's what that business back a couple of slides ago about the underlying sensitive flow is about — Sometimes people set the conditions for the making, for the emergence of other events and things, just the same way as other natural, particularly of the other biological entity, does. *But there is a distinctive kind of human making that has to pass through decision. And if it passes through decision, it has to have passed through practical reflection and practical insight.* So generically, it is not different, but specifically it is. Specifically, human making is different. The making of human beings doing specifically human making, that is different! And it's different by practical insight, practical reflection, and decision. Okay ... Shubhi?

Shubhi: Is it — I can't remember — is it in *Method of Theology*, you know, that he said that the judgment of value is similar in structure but different in content to the judgment of fact?

Pat: Yes. It's in *Method in Theology* that he says that. He doesn't say it here.

Shubhi: Okay.

Pat: Yeah. How he comes to values is a different route in *Method* than in *Insight*.

Shubhi: Okay. I've got one more question?

Pat: Sure!

Shubhi: When we were saying before about underlying sensitive flow, and that, for example, we would say someone who is smoking may have the desire, and they do smoke, but that's not necessarily a free act. But is the decision to have had the first cigarette a free act?

Pat: Yes. Depending on — If there wasn't the addiction prior to that. But yeah.

Shubhi: Okay. But put into place in the first place was a basic proposition.

Pat: Right.

**Inventory of some of the further questions that take place
in practical reflection.**

**Lonergan never explicitly says that the criterion of
reaching the internal term, the correctness of the practical
insight, is the absence of further pertinent questions, but
the passages in *Insight* certainly point to that conclusion.**

Invitation to the viewer to reflect on the activities that follow when one asks, “*Should I do it?*” (question guiding practical reflection) vs. “*Will I do it?*” (question for decision).

To be a moral knower is to be someone who heeds the call to pursue all further pertinent questions that are prompted by “*Should I do it?*”

All right. Let’s see if we can just walk our way through the last couple of parts of the structure of knowing and doing, and then we’ll move ahead.

So we’ve got this business about there not being a virtually unconditioned, and then Lonergan says that one reason we know that it is not a virtually unconditioned is because we ask further questions.

“Further questions can be raised, and commonly their number varies with our familiarity with the situation in hand, with the seriousness of the consequences ...” (CWL 3, p. 633).

And so on.

“Again, further questions may regard motives for the course of action. Would its execution be agreeable? Are there other features to compensate for its disagreeableness? What is its utility? How desirable are the goals to which it is useful?” (CWL 3, p. 634).

This goes on for about twelve lines, where he is enumerating the questions. Lonergan never quite says — Excuse me, Lonergan not only doesn’t quite say — *He never says that the criterion for reaching what he calls the “internal term” about the correctness of the insight with regard to its possibility, its agreeableness, its utility, or its obligatoriness, he never quite says that it’s their being known from the pertinent questions; but nevertheless, it looks like that is what he is saying. And I think that is the criterion for obligatoriness. Should I do this? Ought I do this? is asking,*

in the first instance for a judgment, Yes, I ought to do it, that he calls the internal term, the grasping of a virtually unconditioned about 'oughtness'. How do we reach the internal term of knowing what we ought to do, which is different from doing it? It seems that he is suggesting here, without actually saying it, that it's the same criterion that we had for judgments of fact: that there is no further pertinent questions about whether I ought to do it!!

I personally wish that he had spelled it out more, and investigated the ups and downs of the various problems associated with it. But, at the very least, for our own, for your own, self-appropriation, I invite you to think about what you do when you deliberate about the question "Should I do it?"; which is different than "Will I do it?" When you ask "Should I do it?", you are asking an ought question. And is it the case that you come to a judgment about what you should do — which is different from the situations that Tim asked about people acting spontaneously in emergency situations? *When you are doing that deliberating, which often can lead to oughtness³, when you're doing that deliberating, is it not a matter of something very parallel to reaching an infallible insight that is — or excuse me, an invulnerable insight — that is not subject to any further pertinent questions having to do with its oughtness?* I say that really for you to think about. *I tend to think that that is the case! I think that there are some more complications in it, but practical reflection, it seems to me, tends towards its internal term of a judgment of oughtness, in a process that is very much like the way in which we reach judgments about the correctness of insights.*

We can't reach it the way we reach judgments about concrete matters of fact. We can't draw upon sensible data, because there aren't any sensible data on what we ought to do. *But there are a range of further pertinent questions about what we ought to do. And being a moral knower is being a person who is attentive and responsible to that call of our questions with regard to what we ought to do.*

³ The word, 'oughtness' at this point is a conjecture by the transcriber, who is unable to discern Pat's actual term with any confidence.

Practical Reflection

“Thirdly, the reflection has no internal term, no capacity of its own to come to an end. For it is a knowing that leads to doing.

Insofar as it is a knowing, it can reach in internal term, for one can grasp the virtually unconditioned and thereby attain certitude on the possibility of a proposed course of action, on its agreeableness, on its utility, on its obligatoriness.

But insofar as this knowing is practical, insofar as its concern is with something to be done and with the reasons for doing it, the reflection has not an internal but an external term; for the reflection is just knowing, but the term is an ulterior deciding and doing.” (CWL 3, pp. 634-635).

I said, this was going to come up on a later slide, and there it is. So we'll just move on.

Rational Self-Consciousness

“I become rationally self-conscious inasmuch as I am concerned with reason for my own acts.” (CWL 3, p. 634).

The expansion from rational consciousness to rational self-consciousness — giving ourselves reasons for that we do. Lonergan’s nod to Kant, though profoundly reconstructed.

The phrase “**Rational Self-Consciousness**”: So Lonergan talks about the expansion from rational consciousness to rational self-consciousness; a nice little phrase here that helps us to see what he is getting at. Rational self-consciousness is something: *We become rationally self-conscious inasmuch as we are concerned with giving ourselves reasons for our own acts.* And we do that in practical reflection in the ways that we just talked about.

That is Lonergan’s reconstruction of Kant; in that practical reason for Kant, the sense of duty, is what makes it be an especially noble as well as an autonomously free dimension of human existence, is that I give myself to the reason about my action; I impose upon that; my freedom is that I am the self-register, I am giving myself the action. So this is Lonergan’s reconstruction, I think, of the Kant approach to practical reason. *Rational self-consciousness means that I am giving myself reasons for what I am going to do.*

Difference in the rationality involved in rational self-consciousness vs. rational consciousness — rationality in the latter sense is the non-interference with ongoing inquiry.

Whereas the rationality of the doer is positive consistency between knowing and doing.

The unique, radial contingency of human acts of decision.

The contingency of the act of will, of human decisions, is the imposition of further intelligible order upon merely coincidental manifolds at lower levels.

The radical form of contingency is that which comes to be *only* through human deciding.

The fact that people don't do what they know they are supposed to do, is evidence.

Decision

“For the decision itself is an act of willing.

It possesses the internal alternatives of either consenting or refusing.

It may also possess external alternatives, when different course of action are considered simultaneously, and then consent to one and refusal of the others constitute a choice.” (CWL 3, p. 636).

And then finally, **decision**. *First of all, it's the same as the act of willing*. So in an earlier section, he makes this distinction between will and willingness and willing. Here, he makes the identification that by *willing* back then, I mean what I mean by *decision* now. *It has the fundamental structure of an opposition: just as judgments can be yes or no, decisions can be either consenting or refusing*. So you can only do one or the other, you can't have a **conjunction of the two**.⁴ And implicitly when you assent to one or consent to one, where doing one eliminates the other, then the decision, consent to one is tantamount to a decision to refuse another. There are several examples, of course, having to do with the use of your time and your resources. If you are going to spend the weekend visiting a friend, and you make that decision and consent to it, then

⁴ This four word phrase is entirely the conjecture of the transcriber, who is unable to discern the instructor's term or terms at this point.

you are not going to spend the weekend visiting your family; that follows necessarily because you can't do both. Okay?

Decision

“But the rational subject as carrying out an obligation is not just a knower but also a doer, and his rationality consists not merely in excluding interference with cognitional process but also in extending the rationality of his knowing into the field of doing.” (CWL 3, p. 638).

“I become rationally self-conscious inasmuch as I am concerned with reasons for my own acts.” (CWL 3, p. 634).

And here's where the rational dimension comes in, in carrying out an obligation. Rationality is different; so he has this way of characterizing rationality when it comes to judgments of fact of the moral; the curiousness is that the non-interference. But remember back at the beginning of chapter twelve on the **“The Notion of Being”**, he says: *“How do I know my unrestricted desire to know? By giving it free reign!”* So giving it free reign is a positive way of saying, not interfering with it. So our rationality as knowers is the rationality of allowing our inquiry to be our guide!

But that's not enough for the rationality of a doer. *The rationality of a doer is not just letting your unrestricted desire have its free reign, but actually acting in accord with what you know: presumably what you know would be the obligatory thing to do!* And this is again another way of putting it: **“I become rationally self-conscious inasmuch as I am concerned with reasons for my own acts.”** (CWL 3, p. 634).

Decision

“It follows that there is a radical difference between the contingency of the act of willing and the general contingency of existence and occurrence in the rest of the domain of proportionate being.” (CWL 3, p. 641).

And here, I think, is the really crucial place that Lonergan has been driving at all through this whole section, the unique and distinctive and radical contingency of deciding. So let me just read the longer section on this:

“It follows that there is a radical difference between the contingency of the act of willing and the general contingency of existence and occurrence in the rest of the domain of proportionate being. The latter contingency falls short of strict intelligible necessity, not because it is free, but because it is involved in the nonsystematic character of material multiplicity, continuity, and frequency. But the contingency of the act of will, so far from resulting from the nonsystematic, arises in the imposition of further intelligible order upon otherwise merely coincidental manifolds.” (CWL 3, pp. 641-642).

Or as he already put it in terms as I said before: by the doing something to make possible the emergence of something, of a scheme of recurrence or something intelligible.

“Nonetheless, that imposition of intelligible order is contingent. (CWL 3, p. 642).

It is contingent on deciding. It's not contingent upon anything else.

Human radical contingency of the will is *sui generis* — there isn't anything else like human deciding anywhere else in the universe.

The intelligible order that will come to be by deciding only comes to be by deciding. There is nothing that necessitates our decision! So that's what he means by the radical form of contingency. It's the radical freedom! And what he's been doing up to here all along is to say that although all these elements and components and theories are part and parcel of the structure of our knowing and doing, ultimately none of them necessitates our decision. And he cites, as evidence in favor of his claim, the fact that people very regularly don't do what they know they should do. And if there were some kind of necessity from knowing what we're supposed to do, we wouldn't have this capacity of going against what we were going to do. So the decision, the choice, the act of willing is sui generis. There isn't anything else like it in the Universe.

Greg asked earlier: “*Is it in being?*” *The answer is Yes.* But it's unique within being, because almost everything else within the Universe once the conditions are set, it will emerge. But when the conditions are set for a rational extension of our knowing into our doing, when those conditions are set, it doesn't necessarily emerge. It's got radical contingent! *There is nothing more free in the Universe than our free acts of deciding!*

So we are part beginners, the grounding of the metaphysics and the morals, by saying that there is nothing that is good in itself except the good will! *You could say that Lonergan would say that there is nothing so radically free except the act of deciding.*

Decision

“It follows that there is a radical difference between the contingency of the act of willing and the general contingency of existence and occurrence in the rest of the domain of proportionate being.” (CWL 3, p. 641).

Okay. Questions about that? ... This is where he's at! This is essential freedom. *Essential freedom is deciding!* And he's done this thing of giving us sort of a brief survey of the structure of knowing and doing, primarily for the sake of showing the radical contingency of deciding over everything else; including our thinking! ...

Student question about passage stating a radical difference between the contingency of willing (deciding) vs. all the other forms of contingency in the universe.

- Radical difference in things that emerge because of human decisions.
- The natural contingent events fall short of being genuinely free.
- Contrast with the affirmation of freedom at every level in Whitehead's thought.

- In natural, non-volitional contingency, which depends on the non-systematic character of the universe, once the conditions are given, the event must occur — contingent necessity.
- But in human freedom, even though the conditions are given, the act of decision does not have to happen.
- The non-systematic processes in nature have contingency, but it is not the special contingency that characterizes human freedom.

Pat: Matt?

Matt: There was a part in the sentence that you read that was confusing, and I'm wondering if it relates to another part that I was a little confused about. And the sentence was that:

“The latter contingency falls short of strict intelligible necessity, not because it is free, but because it is involved in the nonsystematic character of material multiplicity, continuity, and frequency. But the contingency of the act of will, so far from resulting from the nonsystematic, arises in the imposition of further intelligible order ...” (CWL 3, pp. 641-642).

Et cetera. And I'm wondering how that relates to — on p. 639 at the top — actually beginning at the bottom of p. 638, where he says:

“For actuality as act is existence or occurrence, and actuality as of the actuated supposes at least existence

and also at times occurrence. [And this is the part:] **But there is no systematic deduction of existence or occurrence. The most that understanding can do is set up ideal frequencies from which actual frequencies of existence and occurrence do not diverge systematically.**" (CWL 3, pp. 638-639).

I remember there was a lot of science stuff at the beginning of that, all the way back, and I remember there was the one image you had once where you had the curve, and — that you had — they had the striking classical correlation of the curve that when it came down to real statistical occurrences, it didn't diverge non-systematically from that.

Pat: Right.

Matt: And I'm wondering about — I guess I was confused about the relation between systematic and the nonsystematic, in that you had classical correlations, but even classical correlation, sub-Newtonians vectors, Galilean, Galileo's — all that stuff. If those things are still just classical and that the actual events are nonsystematic — non-systematically diverge from those classical correlations, and if that sort of — that sort of interaction between the classical and the statistical is also sort of the grounding of where — of how the will is still sort of radically — where the decision is radically contingent on — radically free to make the imposition of order upon the nonsystematic manifolds that appears to us.

Pat: Okay. Right.

Decision

"It follows that there is a radical difference between the contingency of the act of willing and the general contingency of existence and occurrence in the rest of the domain of proportionate being." (CWL 3, p. 641).

Let's look back on page 641. It's a complicated sentence, or couple of sentences. And the first one is the beginning of a paragraph:

“It follows that there is a radical difference between the contingency of the act of willing and the general contingency of existence and occurrence in the rest of the domain of proportionate being.” (CWL 3, p. 641).

So two things there: going back to a question that Greg raised earlier, *the act of willing is part and parcel of the realm of proportionate being*; and *he is making here a separation of the acts, the activities, the occurrences, the realities that emerge because of acts of willing, of deciding, and all of the other emergences and occurrences in the rest of proportionate being.*

“The latter —”

Okay. This is the next sentence. **“The latter”** *refers back to the rest of proportionate being, that is not constituted by human deciding.*

Matt: Okay.

Pat: **“The latter contingency —”**

The contingency of just ordinary natural non-humanly originated events.

“The latter contingency falls short of strict intelligible necessity, —”

Now, you see, what he is trying to get at here is: what separates the radical contingency of deciding from the not-so-radical but pretty strange contingency of everything else.

“The latter contingency —”

The ordinary contingency, the natural, non-human —

“The latter contingency falls short, not because it is free ”

There is a way in which you can read Whitehead's metaphysics as **holding** that every photon, every molecule, every cell decides whether or not it's going to accept its invitation to be

itself, or will prehend and actualize, compress into that, or not. So there's a funny kind of freedom of will of every —what Whitehead calls “actual occasion” — of every entity in the whole of the universe. And then he has to give an account of what he thinks is distinctive about human freedom.

Lonergan is saying, it isn't because photons decide whether or not they are going to go left or right when they go through this slide; what makes for them to be contingent is the nonsystematic-ness of the conditions under which the classical correlations in fact operate. That's what makes them contingent! But what makes human willing contingent is that the conditions, whether they are random, or continuous, or discrete, or material, they ultimately don't determine it. Willing determines itself, in a way that the material things don't. Once the conditions are given, however nonsystematic they are, things emerge, things occur; but they don't occur with any absolute systematic necessity. So they've got contingency, but they don't have the special contingency that the act of willing itself has. So that what that sentence — That's what those sentences are saying. Okay?

Matt: Okay.

Pat: Does that make sense?

Matt: Yeah. It does. This goes back to the statistical residue.

Pat: It does! Right, right! And why the statistical residue thing is [significant](#)⁵ is because it means that natural science doesn't obliterate human freedom, but it also doesn't constitute human freedom.

Matt: Okay.

Pat: All right! Let's take a break!

End of Part One

⁵ This word is the transcriber's conjecture, since he is unable to discern the instructor's term here.