

ENDORSEMENTS FOR THE SECRETS OF CULTURE

Paul Schafer's lifelong campaign to establish culture in all its manifestations as the key to a "more equitable, sustainable, and harmonious world" has made his voice one of the most recognizable in the growing international chorus demanding enlightened social change. This deeply personal book interweaves the threads of his principal argument into the story of how he came to believe, with a fierce and total conviction, that living the compassionate cultural life "in the whole, the good, and the beautiful" is essential to both the fulfillment of the human individual and the preservation and enhancement of the world in which we all live.

Max Wyman, author of *The Defiant Imagination: Why Culture Matters*

The Secrets of Culture is a vivid account of Paul Schafer's unrelenting journey and unyielding efforts over the course of his life to search for, discover, clarify, and realize the truth about CULTURE. His objective is to restore culture to its rightful place in human society so that people and countries in all parts of the world can enjoy its benefits. I believe this is what it means to expose the many different secrets of culture and utilize them fully.

The book is definitely a profound theoretical work with serious academic implications and analysis. The talented author evolves a unique methodology through his many different personal and professional experiences with culture over the last five decades, and mingles these experiences with many interesting stories, happenings, exchanges, and scholarly debates. In so doing, he presents the truth about culture in an easy, accessible, and convincing manner.

Gao Xian, Professor, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Paul Schafer has devoted much of his life to forming and articulating his belief that instead of a marginal role, culture should have a central role in global development and human affairs.

In his latest book *The Secrets of Culture*, he takes us on a deeply personal journey of discovery that has led him to develop his strongly persuasive arguments about the importance of seeing culture as not only the arts (as the word culture is often interpreted) but in a much more holistic way. His views were shaped by the fact that at an early age he developed an abiding passion for the arts while subsequently pursuing a professional career as an economist.

As a teacher of economics, Schafer gradually began to see the shortcomings of the “economic age” as first described by Adam Smith, which has been the dominant force in the development of the world for several centuries. While fully acknowledging the enormous benefits to humankind through the development of products and services, Schafer became disillusioned with the focus on materialism as the sole measurement of growth and progress. This propelled him towards the creation of powerful arguments on behalf of the qualitative side of life. His early work attracted the interest of UNESCO and he undertook a number of missions for this organization to different parts of the world.

After teaching economics at two Canadian universities, Schafer changed careers. He worked for the Ontario Arts Council and subsequently launched pioneering programs in Arts Administration at York University and the University of Toronto. The slowly emerging profession of managing the arts proved to be an insightful bridge as it combines the dual roles played by arts administrators in advancing the art form, while at the same time effectively managing the challenging the economic side of arts organizations.

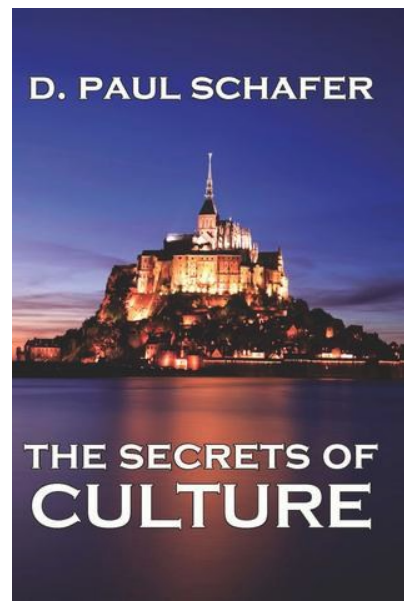
In 1998, interest in his groundbreaking book *Culture: Beacon for the Future* encouraged him to devote his full attention to defining culture as a total way of life. In subsequent publications, he has further refined his arguments and has not shied away from drawing attention to issues that have a negative impact on humans around the globe, especially the degradation of the natural environment.

Through all of his writing, Schafer has continued to stress the vital importance of international cultural relations. One senses that he is both baffled and dismayed that the present Canadian Government has failed to grasp that sharing our unique Canadian cultural contributions and achievements and interacting in a positive way with other cultures and countries not only leads to better understanding but greater opportunities for trade.

In so many ways, the positive messages in Paul Schafer’s *The Secrets of Culture* lead the reader to think about a different and better future if it was based on the creation of a “cultural age.”

John Hobday, C. M. Former Director, Canada Council for the Arts, Present Vice-Chair, Canadian Network of Arts and Learning

History and biography are important but often overlooked sources of cultural understanding. What about autobiography, *consciously* written as an



exploration of both culture and cultural processes in one's life and work? Voilà, Paul Schafer has done it! Most timely, when intercultural research and practice, impacted by linguistics and neuropsychology, are shifting toward a more holistic view of human nature and society, the story, our story, and our stories have become front stage.

For Schafer, as for many of us, the "economic age" that we have been living in for over two centuries has been at once brilliant and destructive, but few have addressed it in cultural terms with any sense of alternative direction. Thus we try to improve our world by patching up the current economic models rather than seeing that a transition to a different bottom-line as possible. Marco Polo could explore distant realms and bring back evidence. How can we do it since time travel has not yet been invented? Perhaps it can be found in bits of our own stories. Like many human endeavors, economics is both a product and a shaper of culture processed within our own experience.

Schafer, originally a student of and then professor of economics, is eminently qualified to speak about the nature of the economic age as an insider who "found his way out," as he experienced life not fitting the all-inclusive frame which economics tends to impose on its narrative of the world. Re-educating himself, he "followed his bliss" with a massive investment of effort to study the literature of culture in a wide variety of human sciences, studies, and sources which he recounts in detail - studies and sources which give substance and credibility to his continued efforts and publications in the promotion of the cultural cause.

Reading about many of Schafer's experiences, we may at first be tempted at points to simply identify what he means by culture with aesthetics. This is easy to do because we are accustomed to thinking about the arts as a sort of specialized, hoity-toity area that has little to do with everyday survival. On the other hand, what we are really concerned with when we speak of culture is the range of human experience and behaviour that involves discovery, creativity, and exploration, as well as finesse in any occupation. This along with the pleasure of what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls "flow," the supreme delight of holistic performance, whatever that performance may be about.

There is also the bliss of sharing. As Schafer points out, "There is an incredible amount to learn from other cultures that is relevant to how we can solve the problems we are confronted with, and in doing so, enrich our own lives." What we tend to call "the arts" are the most potent manifestation of this richness, or as Schafer puts it, the "gateways" to cultures.

Solidly following on his assertion of the importance of a "coming age of culture" requires treating a country's economy as an extension of its culture, not vice versa.

Culture, as he sees it, “constitutes the quintessential essence of all development—the substance which determines both the shape and the structure of society.” It emerges in the *culturescape* that is expressed when a group or community expresses its full identity story to itself and others. Can this view of a cultural age be powerful enough to question the taken-for-granted assumption of the absolute economic interpretation of history, the “reality” that we have imagined and have been living in? Can we be led to a broader perspective in which economy is an important but not exclusive product of culture? It is easy to be cynical.

Canada can be taken as an illustrative case of the challenge of and work needed in creating awareness of the role of culture. Much of Schafer’s work, discussed here, was done in and about his native country and its struggle to understand its own cultural diversity as well as find cohesiveness in the national frame.

The deliberate destruction of culture and cultures, human and natural, is in full swing in the world today. Monuments are being slaughtered along with populations and environments, perhaps screaming testimony to the hegemony of culture and the suffering caused by the narrowness of economically motored exploitation. Globalization—is it the ultimate triumph of the economic age over culture? Greed is a form of fear and creates the famine that is feared. It threatens the survival for which we birth human culture in the first place.

If culture is “the element in which we live” it means that we need to construct the *cultural personality*. What would this look like? Harmonious, holistic, cultivation and mastery of all faculties of the human endowment, consciously seeing, sensing, responding. Schafer hints at its shape as he names names, people in the past and present who seem to express this purposeful wholeness, big people who saw the big picture. Project the cultural personality out to the community and then to the state and we begin to see the depth of the transition demanded if we are to go forward with culture rather than cash as our beacon. A dream? A fantasy? A challenge? All of these and more, the ongoing construction of ourselves and of our world of and by culture. Living in the “whole, the good, and the beautiful.” Schafer’s thesis leaves us with the question, a quotation, which I paraphrase, “Can we collaborate to change the weather for the better and not just pass out rubber boots and raincoats?”

Schafer had provided us with a gourmet travelogue of and arguments for life and culture as he has seen it, attempted to live it, contributed to it, and argued for it. All this by a boy who failed English composition in high school!

Dr. George Simons, Founder and President, Diversophy at diversophy.com

As one ages, it becomes plain that only a few books are truly “life changing.” *The Secrets of Culture* is one of these books.

The book shifts one’s values, behaviour, and ways of seeing and understanding the world. It demands a veritable realization that everything in a lifetime of experience should be re-examined and re-assessed.

Paul Schafer has been a major force on the global and Canadian cultural scene for decades. His preparation in the arts in his childhood placed him in an ideal position to understand why culture is so essential to people and countries in all parts of the world and the world as a whole, as well as how it transformed his own life and soul.

We travel with Schafer as he leaves economics and march with him as he seeks an articulation of culture that will convince his readers - especially those involved in the arts - that they have a responsibility to move beyond the notion that culture is entertainment and address the full potential of culture as it relates to the very survival of the human species.

Schafer reveals his belief that we live in a dangerous world inhabited by millions of people of different faiths and beliefs who have access to enormous weaponry in a planetary environment that is in such disarray and disruption that it could ultimately destroy life on earth as we know it.

In contrast to this, Schafer presents a future conceived and delivered in cultural terms - a cultural age - that gives hope for a level of mutual understanding and peace-filled initiatives that will transform the world and lead to new levels of spirituality, sustainability, and creativity.

Walter Pitman, former MP, MPP, and President of Ryerson University

In *The Secrets of Culture*, Paul Schafer argues strongly that we must shift from an economic age to a cultural age. All of his research and writings are inculcated with his belief that the future age should be a cultural age, as powerfully analyzed and stated in this book’s final chapters on Entering a Cultural Age, Flourishing of a Cultural Age, and Living a Cultural Life.

His view that culture is, by definition, holistic - and that this is one of culture's most valuable assets - permeates every page of *The Secrets of Culture*. According to Schafer, placing culture at the center of global development and human affairs does not mean that the strengths of the economic age would disappear; on the contrary, a cultural age would incorporate these strengths in a broader and deeper

way of looking at life, living, reality, the human condition, and world system. The book is a vivid, dynamic journey into the realm of culture as the key to the future.

Biserka Cvjetičanin, Director, Culturelink, Institute for Development and International Relations, Zagreb, Croatia.

In his wholehearted and unique way, Paul Schafer moves us steadily towards a cultural age and living a cultural life in *The Secrets of Culture*. Not only does this book eclipse the current economic age, but also it draws its inspiration from Schafer's own amazing life story as a person who has threaded art, anthropology, and economics together with his own personal and professional experiences with culture in a distinctive and original way. There is no other work I have come across that accomplishes this much-needed task, especially in our day and age when conventional approaches to economics, whether capitalist or socialist, have passed the "sell by" date. Schafer's book is absolutely not to be missed.

Professor Ronnie Lessem, Co-Founder Trans4m Centre for Integral Development, Geneva, Switzerland

The Secrets of Culture is a very personal insight into the life and work of the author as he shares his journey and his quest to look for and "unlock all of culture's secrets and ensure that culture plays a central rather than marginal role in the world." A must read for anyone concerned with current economic models of governance, people who care about what is happening to our planet, and those who want arguments to advocate for the arts and culture.

D. Paul Schafer was originally trained as an economist who became concerned that the economic age was too preoccupied with the production, distribution, and consumption of good and services, thereby culminating in a limited source for life satisfaction based solely on power, money, and materialism. This present book follows the line of thinking from his previous books which together underline the authors' belief that we need to move from the present economic age into a cultural age for the survival of our planet and the well-being of the citizens that live on it. He shares the concerns of many who see production and consumption exhausting our planet and forcing an unequal distribution of wealth. He fears that we are reverting back to the old two-tier class system with the extremely wealthy getting wealthier and the poor getting ever poorer. His book is timely as many people are now waking up to the environmental crisis unfolding and questioning the economic model that has led to this crisis. This book makes convincing arguments based on the fact that culture is rooted in nature, not materialism, and therefore a holistic cultural approach could benefit the environment.

The book follows the path of D. Paul Schafer's own life and discoveries, his experiences with the World Culture Project, and his observations of work done for and by UNESCO. By observing and recording his own life's journey we get a fully visual and emotional overview of questions he himself has had to grapple with over the years. He studied economics and understands the benefits of economic models and therefore gives a very balanced argument for why the economic model today is failing to meet all our needs. This insight is deeply enriching as too often we hear that economic models are all bad when in fact we are all prone to accept and live within the structure that has been created by the economic age.

Fortunately for us, D. Paul Schafer was exposed to the arts at an early age and therefore has had a critical approach to economic models since his childhood. He also realised early in his life that the "arts epitomize culture and provide a gateway to the cultural world and the understanding of culture." His approach is much more holistic, recognising that culture and cultures are made up of many factors. He envisages a world where "development" would no longer be understood only in economic terms but from a cultural perspective – including knowledge, beliefs, morals, law, customs, and, in fact, whole ways of life. He understands that happiness can be sought through intellect and imagination and therefore his book advocates bringing the arts back into educational life, arguing "What education in physical fitness does for the development of the body, education in the arts does for the development of the senses."

I fully appreciate Schafer's concept of "the human family" and his emphasis on asserting the importance of people over things. It never ceases to amaze me that products and services of multi-national corporations can cross borders but human beings cannot. That many humans are trapped into a country of poverty with no opportunity to leave unless they risk their lives horrifies me.

Thank you to D. Paul Schafer, who I admire and appreciate, for providing the arguments that we urgently need to move to a more cultural and human approach to life with the potential for "cooperation, collaboration and exchange among all the diverse people and countries of the world." I hope I live to see the cultural age fully realised.

Dr. Diane Dodd, Director, International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts, and Tourism, Barcelona, Spain

D. Paul Schafer presents us with a deeply personal and extensively researched perspective on culture and what a cultural age would look, feel, smell, taste, and

sound like. In doing so, he challenges us to liberate our sensibilities and embrace the change that is necessary – change that we know is destined, yet, for the most part, we struggle with this from the comfort and security of the known.

The inclusive nature of how Schafer presents culture resonates as much with our future entry into a cultural age as it does with our past and the synergies and insights that Indigenous peoples share in how they live and breath in unison with the natural environment and maintain a spirituality that defines and enriches themselves, their families, and indeed our planet.

In embracing the differences Schafer proposes, we connect with an essential humanity that gives courage and determination to our struggle to create a legacy for generations to come - a better world and a better way of living. Schafer introduces and presents a scope of experiences, ideas, options, and opportunities that, if considered in totality and acted upon, can and indeed will impact on the sustainability and well-being of all people and our mother the earth.

Schafer has a masterful depth to his experiences and knowledge as a former economist, educator, social commentator, cultural raconteur, and visionary. *The Secrets of Culture* maps a journey - a very personal journey that we all can share.

Tony Duke, International Cultural Advocate and Advisor

Paul Schafer’s book *The Secrets of Culture* articulates his belief that “we need to pass out of the present economic age and into a future cultural age,” and that “in order to do this, it is necessary to unlock and capitalize on all the diverse and dynamic secrets of culture.” As an economist turned cultural theorist, Schafer details the limitations of economics and how culture can help meet the totality of humanity’s needs. Insightful, thoughtful, and enjoyable to read, *The Secrets of Culture* is a special book that will change the way people think.

Grant Hall, Founder of League Cultural Diplomacy, author of wherewordsfailblog.com

Paul Schafer brings characteristic passion and thoughtfulness to his latest book, *The Secrets of Culture*. Shining a powerful light on how humanity has largely marginalized the arts, heritage, and culture, Schafer contends that we should use a holistic concept of culture - a “culturescape” - to bring about fundamental changes capable of meeting the evolving needs of people and the planet alike.

Douglas Worts, Culture and Sustainability Specialist

What appears to be an autobiography of Paul Schafer at first glance turns out to be a **comprehensive** merging of economic and cultural value systems towards an integrative plan for a future civilization. For Schafer, the process of cultural evolution is necessary in order to improve human welfare, environmental well-being, and global harmony. Searching for the essence of economics and society ends up in an attempt to understand the secrets of culture as the context for life.

For Schafer, culture is, by definition, holistic. It is rooted in nature and therefore should be in the mainstream of global development and at the center of human life. Culture and nature are both highly interdependent systems, which, through their evolution, are powerful instruments leading the civilizational processes and change. Schafer thinks that economics and economies should be properly positioned in an all-encompassing cultural context in order to usher in a cultural age. Humanity should “capitalize fully on culture’s profuse and profound secrets” as they are the real key to creating “a more equitable, sustainable, and harmonious world.” The creation of wealth should be driven by culture and not by economics, economies, and economic growth as has happened in the past and is still happening today.

Culture evolves in a natural system and hence the interactions between nature and culture are strongly interdependent. Cultural diversity can be considered as an expression of geography, topography, and demography, as well as the evolution of nature and landscapes, such as, for example, separation and isolation, or exposure to climatic conditions or natural hazards. During his trips to Europe, the “Mecca of arts and culture,” as well as to places and cultures in other parts of the world, Schafer learned that culture is inevitably and intimately linked to landscapes and nature, and that economic diversity is rooted in natural and cultural systems, dynamics, and diversity as well. Since the economic age is not capable of carrying humanity forward into the next great epoch of human history, it is necessary for socio-economic systems to be properly situated in an all-inclusive cultural context. The life process of Paul Schafer is strongly connected to the period when UNESCO re-defined its culture program and created the Convention on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972. This period was also the beginning of defining the cultural policy programs of many states, combining all facets of culture and its development. Schafer has contributed considerably to the discussions at national and international levels, pointing out that cultural policy is “nothing more or less than a plan for civilization.”

His credo of culture being the essence of life and an expression of lifestyles, and therefore of central importance to human well-being and happiness, was for a long time not understood by politicians and economists. It was a period when governments used economic arguments to convince citizens that spending

taxpayers' money on the arts and culture was justified and produced lucrative financial results. However, the progress of a single individual is often much faster and not paralleled by institutional progress. Many cultural institutions and national policies still do not reflect the holistic understanding of culture and have not yet made the transition to the new paradigm provided by "Culture".

This book "*The Secrets of Culture*" means not just about reading the life story of an individual or about the history and theory of culture. On the contrary, it is an opportunity to undertake an in-depth study to the entire culture of life. Culture is "source" and the outcome of human creativity simultaneously. When Paul Schafer writes metaphorically that culture in the holistic sense is like a tree "with roots, trunk, branches, leaves, and fruit," he is not only describing an "organic whole," he is also describing the dynamic of that life, the endless interactions that go on between a tree, its environment, and its surrounding landscape. In Schafer's understanding, the holistic character of culture includes three fundamental dimensions: worldview; values; and people. The tree of culture metaphor not only includes the inside of the tree itself, but also includes perceptions and developments outside the tree as a system. It symbolizes and epitomizes the law of nature of perpetual growth and continuous change.

The book also describes the process of re-defining culture during the UN Decade for Cultural Development from 1988 – 1997, as well as Schafer's commitment to fostering the role of culture as a "dynamic and organic whole" in the World Culture Project, and his recent attempt to propose a new global paradigm through the "Age of Culture" he espouses.

Paul Schafer's description of the history and future of culture seem so transparent, clear, logical, and all inclusive to the reader that it is necessary to raise the following questions: Why is reality and today's world so far from such a change in the paradigm provided by culture? Why is humanity so far from accepting and living culture as the mainstream of civilization? The author's impatience regarding the gap between knowing, understanding, and realizing the concept of culture as a "total way of life" is understandable, and he never tires of saying that the Age of Culture should be the next great epoch in human history because it will open up new developmental opportunities for our present cultures and civilization. Even though Paul Schafer mentions that he is beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel, his optimism that culture is the "new beacon for the future" deserves more efforts all over the world, so economics and cultures can work together towards the next great epoch in human civilization. Paul Schafer has written in his book *The Secrets of Culture* thousands of facts and arguments in favor of the new understanding and living of "Culture." I could not contradict one of his points. I also could not agree more with all Paul Schafer says: The Age of

Culture should be seen as a chance and not as a duty. Culture should play a central rather than marginal role in the world.

Dr. Engelbert Ruoss, Founder and Head of Global Regions Initiative, Treviso, Italy

Two things stand out to me about D. Paul Schafer's latest book *The Secrets of Culture*. The first is that the reader gets a front row seat right along side Schafer, on a personal, lifelong journey of discovery about the beauty and meaning of art and culture. Expect a deep dive into every imaginable human creative expression. The second is anyone reading this book gains immeasurably from the depth of knowledge and awareness that Schafer gained from this journey, which are manifested into immensely useful and practical applications.

Schafer is a sage. As in previous books, his clarion call for a cultural age is strongly pronounced. He writes: "As long as culture is held captive in the web of other disciplines and activities, its full potential to come to grips with the world's most demanding and debilitating problems and create the conditions for a better world will not be realized. The world desperately needs a new organizing principle and culture is the ideal vehicle to provide it." We can't hear it enough how critical it is to consider culture, as Schafer clearly argues, "as an end in itself rather than a means to other ends." Thanks, Paul, for another outstanding book.

Sheila Jans, Principal and Founder, CultureWorth