

Michael F. Britton for Lifetime Achievement Award

Michael was born two weeks after the end of World War II, in a small city in rural upstate New York . His parents were Irish-American, both grew up with trauma in the Great Depression, and spent decades struggling to make it into the lower middle class.

Michael spent six of his teen years in a Catholic seminary, left, got a bachelor's degree in sociology and worked in his father's small printing business for a few years. He went on to get a master's degree in dance/movement therapy and then a doctoral degree in counseling psychology at Rutgers.

For his dissertation he did research on the kinds of parenting that helps children grow up to do well in love.

“Many of us grew up in homes where there was little by way of reliable, genuine loving, making it hard to know what we're looking for in potential spouses, hard to know how to be a loving partner and hard to be a good parent... It is important to have people to learn from who encourage maturing in the ability to love and to take in love from others. That's what this research was about.”

During the Cold War, he did interview research with retired U.S. military commanders who had dealt with nuclear weapons, exploring their experience of the moral responsibilities involved.

“Had there been a nuclear war, would those who dropped the bombs have been heroes for having fulfilled their duties, or war criminals for destroying much of the world? Which view would have been right? Reality was so much more morally complex, more unsettling in its nature, than a simple reading of good guys and bad guys. This remains largely ignored in the wake of the Cold War.”

He wrote the chapter on weapons of mass destruction in *Peace, Conflict and Violence: Peace Psychology in the 21st Century*. In it he drew on Judith Herman's trauma-recovery model to chart stages of recovery from global warring to creating a happier shared existence for real.

Michael has also done exploratory research on the collision of traditional, modern and post-modern architectures as reflective of our feeling toward the times we live in, the times we have left behind, and the times ahead we hope to create.

Since 9/11 he has been doing research on neuroscience, psychology and the challenges of making global life better.

He is a Member of the HumanDHS Board of Directors and the HumanDHS Global Core Team, and has been giving the Donald Klein Memorial Lecture for the past ... years. In that role we've gotten to see his artistic side alongside the thinker.