

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Robert C. Fulford was born on September 12, 1905, in Cincinnati, Ohio, to a middle class family with a father who worked as an attorney and a mother who worked as a school teacher. Young Robert was a “sickly child,” so as he got older the family moved out to the country to improve his health, relocating to a farm in Mt. Washington, Ohio, near Cincinnati. Robert quickly learned the discipline of farm life, doing early morning chores, caring for cows, horses, pigs, and chickens. This discipline would serve him well the rest of his life. His health improved.¹

In college Robert started to follow in his father’s footsteps, studying law at Ohio Northern University in Cincinnati. He changed directions and after studying many subjects, including Ancient Greek, graduated with a liberal arts degree.²

Fulford developed an interest in Eclectic Medicine early on as his family physician was a graduate of the Eclectic Medical College of Cincinnati. Eclectic medicine involved herbal medicine, physical treatments, and diverse natural remedies. Fulford spent time with his family physician making house calls and observing him in practice. In 1929, Fulford applied to the Eclectic Medical College of Cincinnati. However, at that time the United States economy had a severe downturn and the bank in which he had all of his college savings went under, leaving him with no means to pay for his education. During the Great Depression that followed Fulford worked for Union Carbide to help support his family. He continued to work for that company until a work accident severed the tendons of his

* Chapter 25 in the author’s forthcoming book titled *Swedenborg and Osteopathy: The Influence of Emanuel Swedenborg on the Genesis and Development of Osteopathy, Specifically Andrew Taylor Still and William Garner Sutherland*, to be published by the Swedenborg Scientific Association.

¹ Harold D. Goodman, “Robert C. Fulford, DO: A Personal Appreciation.” In *Are We On the Path?: The Collected Works of Robert C. Fulford*, edited by Theresa A. Cisler, DO, ii-xxxvii (Indianapolis, Indiana: The Cranial Academy, 2003), v, vi.

² *Ibid.*, xi-xii.

left wrist. In 1936 when, he returned to work after his recovery, he was told that he had lost his job due to his absence.³

Fulford decided the time was right for him to go into medicine. The old Eclectic Medical College of Cincinnati was not faring well since it had been under attack by organized allopathic medicine for some time. Fulford decided to apply to the nearby University of Louisville School of Medicine, which accepted him. However, at the last minute they tried to divert him to dental school rather than the medical school. Fulford walked away, never to return to allopathic medicine.⁴

After some deep thinking and soul-searching, Fulford reconnected with an old friend of his who had become a successful osteopathic physician practicing near the family farm in Mt. Washington. Fulford decided to follow the same path and enrolled in the Kansas City College of Osteopathy and Surgery in 1937 at the age of thirty-two.⁵

Fulford enjoyed learning medicine from a genuinely osteopathic perspective during his time at the Kansas City school. It was also during this time, in 1939, that he first met William Garner Sutherland and became intrigued with the cranial concept.⁶

NEW THOUGHT

During his time as an osteopathic student in Kansas City, the always curious Fulford started attending services at the Unity School of Christianity in the nearby suburb of Lee's Summit where Unity had its headquarters. The Unity School of Christianity was a major source of New Thought activity in the Midwest. Fulford, along with several friends, often attended services there. Fulford would continue his interest in New Thought throughout his life. He and his wife regularly attended meetings at the New Thought Temple for many years while he worked and lived in Cincinnati. Even in the last year of his life he kept an issue of a New Thought journal

³ *Ibid.*, vii–ix

⁴ Robert C. Fulford, *Dr. Fulford's Touch of Life: The Healing Power of the Natural Life Force* (New York: Pocket Books, 1996), 16; Goodman, ix.

⁵ Fulford, 15; Goodman, xi–xii.

⁶ Goodman, xii.

dedicated to New Thought Spirituality and healing on his bedside table. This is not to say that Fulford was exclusively New Thought. He had eclectic interests and studied ideas spanning many centuries and areas across the globe. However, the ideas he would incorporate into his paradigms did not contradict his New Thought ideas. Like A.T. Still and William G. Sutherland, Fulford taught many of his metaphysical ideas, but he kept his own religious beliefs close to his chest. At least one of his biographers noted that New Thought was a major influence on Fulford throughout his life.⁷

As mentioned in the chapter on New Thought, the Unity School of Christianity was one of the most successful New Thought outgrowths of Emma Curtis Hopkins's teaching. She was in turn was influenced by Warren Felt Evans whose New Thought teaching contained many Swedenborgian ideas. Unity taught a metaphysical approach to religion with an emphasis on teaching students to develop an inward focus of prayer. Prayer was a means to connect with the spiritual flowing in of love and life force from God. Unity taught that the next step after prayer was to remove one's undesirable aspects and affirm positive elements, aligning one's self with Truth. New Thought taught that ideas are things with real effects both on the mind and in the body and that by changing thinking for the better, one improves one's self spiritually, psychically, and physically.⁸

There are significant similarities between Swedenborg's view of health and his descriptions of regeneration and those of New Thought. Swedenborg recognized spiritual reality, which includes one's thoughts and affections, as being causal, flowing into the corresponding natural level of reality. He described the process of spiritual growth that is vital to our spiritual progression, with intention being of greater importance than any act alone in affecting one's spiritual state. He also described how disease can arise from spiritual as well as physical causes. Disharmony between the spirit and the body interferes with the healthy influx of the

⁷ Goodman, xii-xiii, xvii-xvix, xxxvi.

⁸ Catherine Albanese, *A Republic of Mind & Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 328, 329, 430-433, 440, 441.

soul and its life force into the body, causing many an illness, although this was by no means the exclusive source of disease.⁹

New Thought taught that thoughts are forces and generate a vibratory field of energy that can be strengthened to affect conditions around them. Thoughts were appreciated as real things that had power and effects in this world.¹⁰

Swedenborg described spheres around each person originating from their spiritual self. He described these spheres as permeating the nervous system and natural body, carrying aspects of each individual's thoughts and feelings, and serving as an expression of the entire person.¹¹

ENERGETIC MEDICINE

It is no surprise that while still in osteopathic medical school, exposed to New Thought ideas, the eclectic Fulford would develop another unusual interest – the work of Dr. Harold Saxton Burr. Burr, who was a former professor of neuroanatomy at the Yale University School of Medicine and editor of the *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine*, pursued research into an energy field surrounding living organisms. Burr studied electromagnetic fields around living things, especially the human body. He discovered not only the existence of this field, but also changes in it that occurred before disease processes manifested clinically. Dr. Burr described this electromagnetic life field as an organizing field for the body, guiding and maintaining it from conception until death.¹²

In the early 1940s Fulford had the opportunity to meet and get to know one of Burr's assistants, Dr. Leonard Ravitz. Fulford was able to investigate Burr's measuring devices himself and was very impressed with the existence of a life field that could be measured. This had a major impact upon Fulford's thinking. He would pursue the study of this life

⁹ Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia* (Elliott), § 5713; Swedenborg, *The Fibre*, 373–375, 377; Swedenborg, *Economy of the Animal Kingdom*, § 216.

¹⁰ Robert Fuller, *Spiritual, But Not Religious; Understanding Unchurched America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 50.

¹¹ Swedenborg, *Spiritual Experiences*, §§ 4600, 4608.

¹² Fulford, 23–25, 27.

field for the rest of his life, incorporating it into his philosophy and therapeutic approach.¹³

CRANIAL OSTEOPATHY

Also in the early 1940s Fulford began his formal studies with Dr. Sutherland. He took his first formal cranial course around 1945–1946. This was the early course with the first week of anatomy taught by Dr. Kimberly and the second week of cranial osteopathy philosophy, diagnosis, and treatment taught by Dr. Sutherland and his assistants. Dr. Beryl Arbuckle was likely one of the assistants at that time. This would have been one or two years after the first cranial course in Des Moines, 1944, when Sutherland made three of his references to Swedenborg, with Arbuckle table- training.¹⁴

Fulford was very impressed with Sutherland and the cranial concept. Several ideas that he took away from that first formal course were that the body was supported and maintained by a vital energy, the importance of breath, and Dr. Sutherland's statement that one should stay close to the Maker. Fulford studied with Sutherland until about 1949–1950; he then decided to study with Beryl Arbuckle.¹⁵

By this time Arbuckle was no longer assisting Sutherland with teaching. She had drifted in her own direction, focusing on certain aspects of anatomy that she felt were not being recognized as they should be, specifically dural stress bands and buttresses. Arbuckle had done extensive dissections and research of her own and felt that certain aspects of fascial structure of the dural membranes were being overlooked by Sutherland and his students. She did admire Swedenborg as someone who appreciated these dural fascial bands and cited references from both his books *The Brain* and *The Cerebrum*, which contained detailed descriptions of such dural structures. Arbuckle still praised Sutherland for his work and publically recognized him as the founder of the cranial concept.¹⁶

¹³ Fulford, 26-27.

¹⁴ Goodman, vii–ix.

¹⁵ Fulford, *Are We On the Path?: The Collected Works of Robert C. Fulford, DO*, 93.

¹⁶ Goodman, xiv-xv; Swedenborg, *Brain*, Vol. 1, §251; Beryl Arbuckle, *The Selected Writings of Beryl E. Arbuckle, D.O., F.A.C.O.P.* Revised edition. Reprinted 2002. (Indianapolis, Indiana: American Academy of Osteopathy, 1994), 18, 22, 38, 41, 42.

Fulford studied with Arbuckle for several years and gained a greater appreciation for fascia, especially the stress bands of the dura, as well as a greater understanding of the cranial concept. During that time he had left the Cranial Academy, but he did return after two or three years and went on to play an important role in cranial osteopathy as an enthusiastic supporter, teacher, and leader, even serving as President of the Cranial Academy in 1974–1975. He retained tremendous respect for Sutherland and Arbuckle throughout his life.¹⁷

LATER YEARS

To make a long and interesting story short, Fulford went on to absorb ideas from a variety of sources and develop his own unique approach in osteopathy, successfully treating patients with a wide variety of problems, some resistant to all other treatment. Fulford worked first in a more primary-care setting during the 1940s and then as an osteopathic manipulative specialist for many decades thereafter.

During the 1950s and 1960s Fulford continued to explore the concept of energy medicine, integrating it into osteopathy, and developing his own ideas and applications in regard to the life field. He was an explorer, always interested in learning more truth wherever he could find it. However, he did use the work of A. T. Still as a compass to help guide him on his journey. He particularly respected Still's *Philosophy and Mechanical Principles*.¹⁸

Fulford refined his ideas of the life field and incorporated them into his treatment paradigm, often focusing on long fascial restrictions, accessing these restrictions with hands-on osteopathic techniques, including cranial osteopathy, as well as new approaches he modified with the use of a percussor (this involved a padded head driven by a cable attached to a motor, generating a percussive wave that can be focused across structures of the body to facilitate fascial releases). He also recognized the breath as

¹⁷ Zachary Comeaux, *Robert Fulford, D.O. and the Philosopher Physician* (Seattle: Eastland Press, 2002), 164; Goodman, xv-xvi; Fulford, *Are We On the Path?*, 92.

¹⁸ Goodman, xx-xxi.

being closely related to the life field, and this too was a focus of his treatment.

Sutherland had many influences, all reinforcing his energetic osteopathic paradigms. For example, in the 1970s he pursued his explorations of osteopathy on the level of vibration. He was later excited to learn of the work of Michael Talbot and his concept of the universe as a whole, and with each individual functioning as a hologram. Talbot's book, *The Holographic Universe* discussed ideas that resonated with Fulford. Fulford held Talbot and his ideas in high esteem.¹⁹

Talbot described the brain as a hologram, all parts contributing to the overall function as a single unity in a far more profound way than simply as the parts of a machine forming an entity. He saw each part as containing aspects of the entirety. Talbot applied this to the individual and then to the universe at large. He used this holographic model to describe underlying connections within the individual and between the individual and the universe to explain phenomena of the psyche and quantum physics that current science could not explain. Talbot read and studied broadly and deeply. It is no surprise that he came across Swedenborg and was struck by his ideas, especially the concept of every individual as a microcosm of the greater macrocosm of the universe, both at a physical and spiritual level. He described Swedenborg as a visionary genius whose work included holographic paradigms connecting all levels of reality.

This then is the holographic paradigm, that both the brain and reality are holographic, and although many of the implications of this new way of looking at nature may seem new and astonishing, it is a tribute to Swedenborg's visionary genius that they were already part of his body of ideas.²⁰

Talbot saw Swedenborg's concept of correspondence between spiritual and natural levels of reality as another example of the holographic universe. He described Swedenborg as someone who had become "privy

¹⁹ Goodman, xxiv.

²⁰ Michael Talbot, "Swedenborg and the Holographic Paradigm." In *Emanuel Swedenborg: A Continuing Vision*, edited by Robin Larsen, 443–448 (New York: Swedenborg Foundation, 1988), 446.

to a holographical level of reality, a spiritual dimension that science is only now beginning to rediscover.” Talbot particularly appreciated Swedenborg’s descriptions of heaven corresponding with the Grand Human form, down to exquisite anatomical detail so that “every human being is a heaven in miniature.”²¹

Talbot also commented on Swedenborg’s descriptions of seeing spheres around individuals as a “wave-substance” that manifested a person’s thoughts and affections. He recognized Swedenborg’s descriptions as seeing the human energy field long before science ever verified any such thing. He was drawn to Swedenborg’s descriptions of the near death experience and his paradigm of a spiritual reality that is more fundamental than the natural, and connected with it in a correspondential fashion, with the former flowing into the latter.²²

In the early 1970s Fulford developed health problems that started to limit his practice. He was told by his personal physician that he needed to retire. So, in his late sixties Fulford closed his practice in Cincinnati and moved to Tucson, Arizona. However, he could not say no to someone who asked for his help. Soon he was treating patients again, word of his great success as a healer spread, and he again had a busy practice.²³

While in Tucson, Fulford was visited by a local physician interested in integrative and holistic medicine, Andrew Weil, M.D. Dr. Weil was very impressed with Dr. Fulford and his ability to help people with his energetic hands-on osteopathic approach. He spent many hours with Fulford and went on to make a video of Dr. Fulford, “Robert Fulford—An Osteopathic Alternative,” and to write a chapter on Fulford in his popular book, *Spontaneous Healing*. He later encouraged Fulford to write a small book for the public about his views of health and healing which led to Fulford’s book, *Dr. Fulford’s Touch of Life: The Healing Power of the Natural Life Force*. Weil found Fulford’s life and work to be a great inspiration.²⁴

²¹ Ibid., 448; Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, § 203.

²² Michael Talbot, *The Holographic Universe* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 183, 257–259; Swedenborg, *Arcana Caelestia* (Elliott), § 6200.

²³ Goodman, xxvi–xxvii; Andrew Weil, “Introduction” from Fulford, *Dr. Fulford’s Touch of Life: The Healing Power of the Natural Life Force*. vii–ix (New York: Pocket Books, 1996), vii–ix

²⁴ Goodman, xxvi–xxvii; Weil, “Introduction,” *Dr. Fulford’s Touch of Life*, vii–ix.

Around 1987 Fulford returned to Ohio to live in a retirement community. While he attempted to retire, again, there were many friends and acquaintances who still sought him out, and he was soon treating patients again, this time in his back sitting room overlooking a cornfield. Fulford continued to teach individuals and classes. He taught a series of courses through the American Academy of Osteopathy, and even in the last year of his life continued to give presentations nationally. He was also active with the Sutherland Cranial Teaching Foundation and the Cranial Academy. His last presentation to the profession was at the Cranial Academy Convention in Chicago in 1997. Dr. Fulford continued to see patients, read, and explore new ideas until his death at the age of ninety-one on June 27, 1997.²⁵

REVIEW OF SOME OF FULFORD'S IDEAS

Fulford's ideas are broad, deep, complex and far beyond the scope of this study. The purpose of this brief review of some his ideas is to give a general impression of his overall approach and show some specific ideas similar to those of Swedenborg. Clearly, Fulford was not Swedenborgian. It is not known if he read Swedenborg directly. However, he was exposed to some of Swedenborg's ideas through the New Thought movement as well as Sutherland, Arbuckle, and later Talbot.

Sutherland was certainly an eclectic genius who was able to synthesize ideas from across a diverse spectrum. His ideas did have some interesting overlap with some of Swedenborg's ideas and show how Swedenborg's paradigms resonate with osteopathy of the twentieth century.

Just as Still described body, mind, and spirit, Fulford taught that every person consists of a spiritual being, a mental being, and a material body. Fulford challenged modern medicine in general and osteopathy in particular to recognize humankind as a whole once more, with each of us as a being of spirit, mind, and body, without abandoning science. He saw matter as the physical carrier for psychic or spiritual substances and

²⁵ Comeaux, 34.

influences. He stated that while science can measure matter and physical phenomena, there will always be aspects of humanity that science can never be able to explain, such as morality, love, the spirit, and the soul. Yet, these are worthy of study and should be included in our paradigms for health and healing.²⁶

Swedenborg described the soul flowing into the mind and through the mind into the body, the three forming a single entity, the spirit made manifest in the flesh, a life united throughout. He described mind, body, and spirit as a single triunity.²⁷

Following in Still's footsteps, Fulford recognized that the universe is guided by specific laws and that osteopathic philosophy reflects these universal laws. He also recognized that the universe is bound together as if it were a single entity with various parts as interdependent as the body's own functions, all of which continuously affect one another. Each human is a part of this and is a microcosm of the greater universe.²⁸

Swedenborg recognized the universe as following an inherent order, guided by universal laws, infilled with the intelligence of the Creator. He described the individual human form as a microcosm reflecting the organization of the greater universe, the macrocosm, particularly when seen from a perspective of function.²⁹

Fulford recognized the reality of thought, stating,

Every one of us is clothed in our thoughts, and the quality and texture of our energies are woven by the thought patterns we conceive. Thoughts are, indeed, things.³⁰

Fulford appreciated that some patients' problems arise from their own thoughts. Old patterns of dysfunctional thoughts can maintain physical

²⁶ Fulford, *Fulford's Touch of Life*, 4–6; Fulford, Percussion Vibrator Course. Class notes by the author, American Academy of Osteopathy. Indianapolis, Indiana. October 22, 1994.

²⁷ Swedenborg, *Universal Human and Soul-Body Interaction*, §§ 8, 12; Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, § 8.

²⁸ Fulford, *Fulford's Touch of Life*, 19–22.

²⁹ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, §§ 59, 61, 65, 320; Swedenborg, *The Soul's Domain*, Vol. 1, §§ 47, 312.

³⁰ Fulford, *Fulford's Touch of Life*, 48.

dysfunction and illness. A patient who changes old harmful patterns of thought is well on the way to better health. Yet, the practitioner's thoughts, focus, and intention are just as important as the patient's own spiritual and psychological state. Fulford taught that *attention* and *intention* are vital for any healing interaction between osteopathic physician and patient. A genuine caring, loving attitude by a physician is very important in a doctor-patient relationship and is part of the healing process. Osteopathic manipulative treatment can be an extension of one's intent to treat, particularly when using a device such as the percussion vibrator. Energy follows thought. However, osteopathic manipulative treatment is much more than just good intentions; it involves a deep understanding and appreciation for the structure and function of the body.³¹

An extension of Fulford's concept of the importance of thought and the interconnection between mind, body and spirit is the idea of the life field. Fulford described the body as being surrounded by a life field that permeates the physical body and extends beyond it by many inches. He explained that this life field conveys vitality to the body, sustaining, and empowering the physical. It is an extension of the intrinsic life force within the body, flowing in from the spirit, influenced by the mind. This life force originates from the spiritual which in turn originates from the universal life force, which is God. Fulford believed that God exists within us all, embodied in this vital life energy. This is why the body should truly be treated as a temple. Blockage of these streams of vital energy leads to dysfunction and illness.³²

Swedenborg taught that the spiritual is primary and the natural is secondary. He described the spirit flowing both directly into the body as a vital fluidic force carried by the animatory activity of the brain as well as through the breath, and also flowing into the body indirectly through the mind. In his later works he emphasized the close-knit correspondence between the mind and body - thought and the understanding corresponding with the activity of the lungs and love and the will corresponding with the activity of the heart. Swedenborg described the causes of disease as

³¹ Fulford, *Fulford's Touch of Life*, 43, 71, 85, 86; Goodman, xix; Fulford, Percussion Vibrator Course, class notes; Fulford, Advanced Percussion Vibrator Course, class notes.

³² Fulford, *Fulford's Touch of Life*, 22, 23, 25, 30, 34; Comeaux, 159.

falling into two general categories, internal and external. The internal causes were of the mind and spirit, while external causes were caused by outside influences affecting the flow of vital forces and fluids, especially as they streamed out from the brain as spirituous essence and were carried by the blood. Blockage of the flow of vital forces and fluids leads to disease. So too can disharmony between the levels of spirit, mind, and body. Swedenborg also described the activity of the mind and spirit as flowing out around the body as a “wave-substance,” a sphere that manifested the thoughts and affections of each individual.³³

Fulford stressed the importance of healthy breathing. He saw breath as much more than simply mechanical ventilation. He recognized breath as the means by which each individual is connected to the universe and the foundation of consciousness. He noted that breathing is the only vital function that we can consciously and directly influence. It serves as a mediator between mind and body. To Fulford, breathing represented the best way to regulate and maximize the flow of vital life force in the body. He saw this as both an opportunity and a responsibility.³⁴

Fulford described four aspects of each breath: the physical breath, the breath form, the life breath, and the light breath. The physical breath is self evident, the mechanical ventilation of the lungs. The “breath form” helps to maintain the structure and function of the body, especially when done correctly using the diaphragm properly. Posture, ribs, and diaphragm all play important roles in this breath. Fulford identified the “life breath” as giving life to the body. It starts with the first breath as a newborn infant and is built up by healthy breathing over a life time. It can be seen by the vitality of person, especially in the eyes. The “light breath” is a breath that Fulford explained feeds the soul. This involves taking in the life energy of the universe, spiritual energy that can enter an individual with each breath. Healthy breathing involves an appropriate balance between all of these breath types and is an important part of one’s overall state of well-being.

³³ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, §§ 4, 52, 69, 70; Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, §§103, 104§112, 167–170; Swedenborg, *The Fibre*, §§ 373–375, 377; Swedenborg, *Arcana Caelestia* (Elliott), §§ 1954, 6200; Talbot, *The Holographic Universe*, 183.

³⁴ Fulford, *Fulford’s Touch of Life*, 39; Fulford, Advanced Percussion Vibrator Course, class notes.

Fulford addressed the structures of the body related to breathing as part of his osteopathic treatment of patients. He also taught his patients different breathing exercises according to his findings. Fulford wrote, "As a person breathes, so is that person."³⁵

Swedenborg did not write about four different breaths, but he did write about two—external and internal, the breath of the body and the breath of the spirit. He described the external breath in detail, how it unites the entire body in motion. Swedenborg described how the respiratory motion of the lungs is transmitted to the pleura, the peritoneum, the chest cavity and all associated bones including the sternum, ribs, vertebrae, associated ligaments, and the diaphragm. He goes on to describe how respiratory motion penetrates right into the viscera, through fascial connections to the coverings and septae of individual organs, as well as the vascular and gastrointestinal systems. Swedenborg described breathing as a whole body phenomenon.³⁶

Swedenborg also described the lungs and breathing as corresponding with the part of the mind he termed "the understanding" (also translated as "discernment"). He saw the lungs as corresponding with thinking. He described breathing as acting in unison with thoughts. This association is always present, although breathing can be automatic and unconscious or it can be consciously changed. He recognized breathing as the foundation for human thinking and awareness. One cannot be conscious without breathing.³⁷

Internal breathing is described by Swedenborg as the breath of the spirit. This breathing is subtle and not easily sensed. It flows into the obvious breathing of the body just as cause flows into effect, or as a thought flows into the lungs and through the lungs into speech. This is the human spirit breathing within the body. It is intimately tied in with the brain and nerve fibers. Spiritual breathing and physical breathing can be coordinated or independent. As people progress along the pathway of regeneration, travelling further along the journey of spiritual growth, their

³⁵ Fulford, *Fulford's Touch of Life*, 39-41; Fulford, Advanced Percussion Vibrator Course, class notes.

³⁶ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, §§ 403, 408, 412.

³⁷ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, §§ 407, 408, 413, 415.

spiritual and physical breathing become coordinated and harmonious. This allows their understanding, their discernment, to be elevated above the earthly, sensory thinking of the body, with thinking and breathing responsive to each other, and the understanding becoming more open to spiritual light, which is truth.³⁸

While Swedenborg's and Sutherland's views of breath are not the same, it is interesting to see the value each places on breathing and their similar appreciation for breathing as the foundation for consciousness and as integrally related to our thoughts. Fulford's physical breath and the breath form are physically based, much as Swedenborg's descriptions of the external breath, the breath of the body. Fulford's light breath and life breath are something more than simply physical just as Swedenborg's internal breathing, or breath of the spirit, is also something discretely different and more interior than the breath of the body. Both appreciated breathing as a body-wide event, important for connecting motion throughout the body as well as closely tied in with thoughts, a mediator between mind and body.

SUMMARY

While Sutherland was clearly not Swedenborgian, synthesizing ideas from a wide range of sources, he was exposed to Swedenborgian ideas through several known sources and perhaps others not so evident. It is interesting that while Fulford expanded the conventional osteopathic paradigms of his day, he did so in many ways consistent with Swedenborg's ideas. Fulford's appreciation of body, mind, and spirit (also shared by Still and Sutherland), his understanding of the universe and the individual being guided by certain laws, with an inherent order that mirrored the macrocosm of the greater whole in the microcosm of the individual, the importance of thoughts and vital energy flowing into and around the body as a life force and field, the profound role that breathing plays in connecting the spiritual and natural aspect of each individual – all of these demonstrate remarkable similarities with the ideas of Swedenborg.

³⁸ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, §§ 391, 412, 413, 417.

It is reasonable to state that Swedenborg has had an influence on osteopathy through Still, Sutherland, and possibly Fulford. It is also important to reiterate that Swedenborg never developed any therapeutic paradigms or methods. That was the genius of Still, of Sutherland, and of Fulford, with Sutherland and Fulford building on and expanding the osteopathic philosophy and practice started by Still.