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# A Bricolage of Critical Hermeneutics, Abductive Reasoning, and Action Research for Advancing Humanistic Values through Organization Development Practice

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**A Bricolage of Critical Hermeneutics, Abductive Reasoning, and Action Research  
For Advancing Humanistic Values through Organization Development Practice**

by

Daniel J. Shuster

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of the  
School of Education in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Doctor of Education degree.

University of St. Thomas  
Saint Paul, Minnesota  
June 2012

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For Advancing Humanistic Values through Organization Development Practice**

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University of St. Thomas

We certify that we have read this doctoral dissertation written by Daniel J. Shuster and approved it as adequate in scope and quality. We have found it complete and satisfactory in all respects, and that any and all revisions required by the final examining committee have been made.

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*June 18, 2012*

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## Dedication

I dedicate this work to my wife, Cynthia L. Hummel, and to our son, Thomas A. Shuster who have inspired and sustained me for precious decades of life; and to the memories of my mother, Ruth Hinman Shuster, and my grandmother, Clara Mead Hinman, who always believed in me and loved me unconditionally throughout the difficult and all too brief time we shared life together.

## Abstract

This is an emergent and auto-ethnographic study to find ways for the practice of organization development (OD) to recover and sustain humanism in the workplace. It begins with a literature review hermeneutically exploring the history and relevance of three modes of inquiry—hermeneutics, abductive reasoning, and action research—paratactically, which is to say, separately without overlap or reference to each other—to future OD practice. These three modes were selected from an extended literature search for non-reductive modes of inquiry that could address the range of human interests and workplace *dis-ease* as I understand them. I combined my strong background reading on hermeneutics with the abductive reasoning of C. S. Peirce as two of the modes for review and also reflexively as part of my own methodology. The third mode, action research, is borrowed from the work of Kurt Lewin and his tradition in OD, known for its humanistic and democratic aims. Also included in the literature review is a report on some of the more salient challenges and opportunities currently confronting the practice of organization development (OD) to provide a context for practical expression of my emerging discoveries. Following the literature review, I hermeneutically surfaced submerged, tacit (hidden-from-consciousness) generative connections from the confluence (flowing together) of the three modes, as they abductively emerged from within my expanding hermeneutic experience (known as a horizon) with the literature review. I then interpret the tacit relevance of that confluence through my life experience, for illuminating those OD challenges and opportunities. Finally this study integrates a sequence of critical hermeneutic and abductive processes in a participatory action research (PAR) pathway leading to plateaus of discovery and renewal through facilitation by humanistically oriented OD praxis. I conclude with five abduced interventions hypothetically drawn from personal case studies. My audience are OD practitioners inclined to develop wholistic humanism in the workplace through facilitative immersion with small groups and micro-cultures. Here they may find enlarged conceptual frames to reconceptualize OD, engage clients in transformative dialogue, and create actionable knowledge in their practice.

**Key words:**

a priori experiential horizon, abductive reasoning, action inquiry, action learning, action research, action science, actionable knowledge, agency, alienation, ampliative inference, assumptive world, attunement of workgroups, belief, *bricolage*, categorical, category notes, centrally controlled cooperation, certainty, change management, choice, circularity and suppressed nucleation, co-generative learning, cognitive dissonance, collaboration, colonization, communitarian, communities of practice, concatenation, constructionism, constructivism, Consulcub, corporate tyranny, covert processes, critical hermeneutics, *Dasein*, defeasible hypotheses, democracy, depth hermeneutics, diagnostic OD, dialogic OD, dialogical-dialectical mediation, dialogue, difference and distance, digestible consequences, dignity, directive change management, diversity, dogma, domination, doubt, emancipation, emergent approach (power and politics), emergent research, empiricism, *end to itself* sphere and *means to an end* sphere, epistemologies, *erklären* (to explain), evaluation, evidence-based research, exegetical tradition, existentialism, explicative-nomothetic, explicit and implicit culture, facilitation, fascism, focal attention, foreknowledge, foundational critical thinking skills, foundational language skills, Fourth Generation evaluation, freedom, free-market, fusion of horizons, Gadamer, general semantics, grounded theory, hegemony, Heidegger, hermeneutic circle/spiral, hermeneutic phenomenology, hermeneutics, hermeneutics of suspicion, hermetic drift, holons, horizon, hubris, human finitude, humanism, idiographic-nomothetic duality, inadequate social institutions, individualism, inductive probability, inference to best explanation, innate human drives, integrative, interpretive-idiographic, interpretivism, intersubjectivity, intertextuality, knowledge management, Lewin, liberty, linguisticity, lived experience (*Erlebnis*), logical empiricism, long-term sustainability, material-instrumental dimension, mergers and acquisitions, methodological pathway, *modus ponens*, *modus tollens*, *Naturwissenschaften*, neopragmatism, new social order, noetic, normative behavior, objectivism, ontological, ontological facticity, ontological finitude, oppression, organization development (OD), overt and covert culture, participatory action research, Peirce, philosophical hermeneutics, polymodal inquiry, positivism, post-modern, post-positivism, pragmatism, pragmatism, prejudice, presuppositions, private narrative and public narrative, private spheres and public spheres, propositional and tacit knowledge, psychoanalysis, punctuated equilibrium, qualitative and quantitative research, radical hermeneutics, rapid iterations, ratiocination, reductionism, reflection, researchers-as-*bricoleurs*, retroduction, rhetoric, rhizomatics, segregation, semiotic, *Geisteswissenschaften*, socio-economic approach to management (SEAM), socio-technical systems, syllogistic logic, time-binding, totalitarianism, value-based perspectives, *verstehen*, *Weltanschauung*, Wittgenstein, *Zusammenhang*

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1–Preliminary Material</b> .....	1
Overview of the Study.....	3
Background Statement.....	8
Problem Statement.....	9
Purpose Statement.....	16
Significance Statement.....	19
Research Question .....	21
Bounding, Limitations, Delimitations and Reflexivity.....	21
<b>Chapter 2–Literature Review</b> .....	30
Hermeneutics .....	31
Literature Selection.....	31
Historical Roots. ....	31
The hermeneutic circle.....	41
Fusion of horizons.....	45
Critical hermeneutics. ....	49
Pragmatic Critical Hermeneutics. ....	51
Situating Critical Hermeneutics.....	52
Abductive Reasoning.....	56
Action Research.....	63
Organization Development Issues .....	68
The Present Moment and Identity of OD.....	69
OD Ethics and the Public Sphere.....	71
Widespread Aporetic Leadership.....	73



Flexible Corporate Practice.....	74
Problems with the Binary Nature of Culture. ....	77
Problems of Class in Organizations.....	77
Ideological Camps on Change Management. ....	79
Moving from Diagnostic to Dialogic OD. ....	80
<b>Chapter 3–Methodology</b> .....	<b>85</b>
Personal Protocol. ....	93
Methods.....	96
<b>Chapter 4–Rhizomes</b> .....	<b>98</b>
A Look Back at the OD Literature Review. ....	98
Having and Being.....	101
Language: Spoken, Written, Read, and Lived.....	105
Participatory Inquiry and Decision Making.....	112
Knowledge, Doubt, and Belief.....	113
Perspective and Perception.....	114
Energetics and Power.....	117
Learning and Power.....	123
Power and Dialogue.....	127
Power and Knowing.....	128
Complex Adaptive Systems and Power Equity.....	131
Intertextuality and Hypertextuality.....	134
Analogy and Meaning.....	138
<b>Chapter 5–Plateaus</b> .....	<b>149</b>
Personal Professional Experience Cases.....	149

Case A: Experience with a New Industrial Organization Design.....	149
Case B: Experience with an Existing Industrial Organization Re-Design. ...	158
Case C: Experience with a Nonprofit Organization Renewal. ....	173
Abduced Implementation Approaches.....	182
Stage 1 PAR Intervention Pathway.....	182
Stage 2 PAR Intervention Pathway.....	185
Sample Abduction 1.....	186
Sample Abduction 2.....	187
Sample Abduction 3.....	191
Sample Abduction 4.....	192
Sample Abduction 5.....	194
Conclusion .....	195
<b>References</b> .....	<b>199</b>
<b>Appendix A</b> .....	<b>223</b>
<b>Appendix B</b> .....	<b>224</b>
<b>Appendix C</b> .....	<b>225</b>
<b>Appendix D</b> .....	<b>226</b>
<b>Appendix E</b> .....	<b>229</b>
<b>Appendix F</b> .....	<b>231</b>
<b>Appendix G</b> .....	<b>232</b>

**Tables**

Table 1. <i>Comparison of Change Management and Organization Development</i> .....	79
Table 2. <i>Overall Structure of Research</i> .....	85
Table 3. <i>Dialogic Tensions</i> .....	127
Table 4. <i>Three Significations of Structure</i> .....	130

## Figures

<i>Figure 1.</i> Occupy Wall Street Protest Sign.....	11
<i>Figure 2.</i> Methodological Pathway.....	96
<i>Figure 3.</i> Inherent Power Equity Group.....	119
<i>Figure 4.</i> Healthy & Toxic Egregors.....	120
<i>Figure 5.</i> Outside-the-Box Analogy Progression.....	142
<i>Figure 6.</i> Analogy Progression.....	143
<i>Figure 7.</i> TMP.....	171
<i>Figure 8.</i> Directors' Priorities.....	177
<i>Figure 9.</i> Combined Priorities.....	178
<i>Figure 10.</i> Leadership Capacity Index.....	179
<i>Figure 11.</i> Stage 1 PAR Pathway.....	184
<i>Figure 12.</i> Stage 2 PAR Pathway.....	185

*... it would be well for us to be mindful of one actuality: although the wound in the head of Zeus healed, it was once a wound. Every "novel" thought will tear open wounds. When recalling mythical man and his achievements, we must not forget the infinite pain and agony, even though, as the "infinite" may suggest, they may be only irrational grief or anguish in the soul. Everyone who is intent upon surviving—not only earth but also life—with worth and dignity, and living rather than passively accepting life, must sooner or later pass through the agonies of emergent consciousness. (Gebser, 1985, p. 73)*

## **Chapter 1—Preliminary Material**

The core reason for pursuing a doctorate in OD at my advanced age is because I believe our society has reached a critical tipping point of unprecedented fragmentation and imminent danger on many fronts; and I don't wish to leave my son and his generation without learning and leadership tools, and a critical sense of direction and opportunity. We have entered an era of punctuated equilibria in our cultures, economies, ecology, and geotectonic structure so interconnected and complex that they are unmanageable in any business-as-usual or political manner; and I see emergent hegemonies of new world order looming on the horizon, heralding a potentially perilous, dystopic future. Throughout this research and all my adult learning I've sought wisdom, wherever I can find and understand it, to be relevant and useful in dialogues that bring people together for new kinds of ongoing conversation and mutuality that can create democratic communities of economic and ecological sustainability for survival of humanism in a dark age of tyranny.

In his book, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Jürgen Habermas discerned three fundamental human *interests* to be minded and balanced for sustaining human wholeness—the *technical*, the *practical-communicative*, and the *emancipative*. My dissertation work initially began as a hermeneutic *bricolage* showing how critical hermeneutics itself might be practically used to collaboratively advance humanism in contemporary organizations. After

reading about Habermas's *three human interests*, I discovered that each one could require its own form of inquiry, and this surprising insight led to an ironic abduction—that abductive reasoning itself complements critical hermeneutics *and* participatory action research; and that *those three forms of human inquiry*, for me, address Habermas's three human interests in non-reductive, non-positivistic terms.

Consistent with these two trichotomies of *human interest* and *human inquiry*—on a more operative level—is Vaill's triad of essential factors to facilitate organizational revitalization to:

- take a process view of [of the organization's] phenomena rather than...[of] static principles;
- conduct [group activities] in such a way that members...have intensive, conscious learning experiences about process; *and*
- conduct [group sessions] in such a way that a culture of confidence, mutual support, and enjoyment evolves. (Vaill, 2005, p. 153)

Next I realized that each form of inquiry should initially have its own exposition in Chapter 2—Literature Review, plus a description of contemporary OD issues, before I would reflect on their confluence and practical utility to OD practitioners. The review process took two years of reading and writing before I advanced to surfacing tacit insights in Chapter 4 by reflecting on the complete literature review alongside secondary sources, and my own life experience, to evoke insights, and the surprises and discomforts necessary for abductions.

Finally, in Chapter 5, by separately reflecting on the rhizomes that emerged in Chapter 4, along with my professional experience, in similar abductive fashion (which I call *diffractive* reflection) I was able to hypothesize a practical and flexible, generative pathway through which OD facilitators can lead clients. Then again, through diffractive reflection of the pathway with my own experience, I was able to hypothesize five sample interventions.

This study is an example of an OD professional using self-as-instrument in deep and reflective ways to abduce an interventional pathway toward humanism that can be tested and tuned in the field. People like Amory Lovins, Lester Brown, and Erich Fromm have been telling us for decades how to care for the earth and each other in great detail. It's not getting through and it's getting late. OD practitioners around the world can take up this task by getting people to work together on a more granular, reflective, and intersubjective level right in the workplace. If Rifkin's (2011) *Third Industrial Revolution* were to manifest—driven by *lateral power* superseding hierarchies—OD practitioners can and should prepare to facilitate such revolutions using this process.

Harrison Owen has said he doesn't know how his Open Space Technology works—it just does—it emerged from his years of trial, error, and reflection. As with large group interventions like Open Space Technology, Future Search, and Appreciative Inquiry, the pathway described in this study concludes with a pragmatic, participatory action research sequence for OD practitioners to experiment with on a small-group level, using their own experiential horizons with each particular client and circumstance. This process is compatible within large-group interventions. What is new here is that this study has abductively emerged from hermeneutic reflection on three forms of inquiry, and it reveals the steps taken.

### **Overview of the Study**

In 2008 during the course of my doctoral studies at the University of St. Thomas, the late Dr. Sharon Gibson reviewed my masters thesis (Shuster, 2006) to help me determine the type of research best suited for my doctoral dissertation given my interests in organization development (OD) theory and participatory action research (PAR). The paper, *The Confluence of Intersubjectivity and Dialogue in Postmodern Workgroups* (Shuster, 2006)

was introductory and preparatory for this study to the extent that I was experimenting with: a hermeneutic *bricolage* methodology, a context of OD related concerns, and a focus on intersubjective *fields* and dialogic *containers*. Dr. Gibson's recommendation was to consider the *integrative literature review*<sup>1</sup> (Torraco, 2005). Torraco describes the integrative literature review simply as “a distinctive form of research that generates new knowledge about the topic[s] reviewed” (p. 1), and this study certainly meets that criteria. As the resource list (Appendix G) for the hermeneutics section illustrates, I consulted a very wide range of sources for all four of the separate topics in the literature review chapter. These sources ranged from an abundant number of journal articles published over the past century up until 2012; and a substantial number of published books, some from my original library, and others which had to be acquired through the online, used book market. On occasion I directly contacted authors for papers (i.e. John Shotter), books (i.e. Andre Wierciński), and advice (i.e. Marvin Weisbord & Sandra Janoff) not elsewhere available. Direct and personal communications with a number of my professors at the University of St. Thomas (i.e., Stephen Brookfield, John Conbere, and Alla Heorhiadi) were extremely helpful. I also read a number of dissertations found online or accessed through the inter-library loan system at St. Thomas. Initially my categorical focus was solely on hermeneutics as a form of inquiry to be applied in the context of OD practice as a means of sustaining humanism in organizations. However, after substantial reading and cross referencing, I gained a sense that hermeneutics alone was not enough to support OD practice in regaining and sustaining humanism, however I discovered that abductive reasoning and forms of action inquiry can complement, support, and extend hermeneutics.

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<sup>1</sup> integrative literature review: a form of research that reviews, critiques, and synthesizes representative literature on a topic in an integrated way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated (Torraco, 2005)



Chapter 2—Literature Review, focuses on the history and development of each of three modes of inquiry—critical hermeneutics, abductive reasoning, and action research—as listed in the title. Chapter 3—Methodology describes: my hermeneutic methodology for interpreting the history and relevance of each mode to humanistic OD praxis in Chapter 2—Literature Review; the emergent, critical, *bricolage*<sup>2</sup> used to interpret the tacit and radical relation of the three modes of inquiry in Chapter 4—Rhizomes; and the abductive inference used to generate interventional methods in Chapter 5—Plateaus where I offer hypothetical approaches to participatory action research that intersubjectively engage OD practitioners and groups with critical hermeneutics and abductive reasoning for making headway in a whitewater milieu while sustaining Lewin's principles of humanism and democratic participation that were at the core of his action research (Burnes, 2009). Lewin believed that democracy must be learned, and can be learned through action research. He viewed action research “as the experimental use of social sciences to advance the democratic process” (Marrow, 1969, p. 128). I am attempting to use two of the three modes of inquiry myself methodologically in my research for this paper—hermeneutics and abduction. I use my particular hermeneutic skills in Chapters 2 and 4 and, with *abductive reasoning*,<sup>3</sup> I generate a participatory action research pathway in Chapter 5, followed by examples of its application. A brief description of the three forms of inquiry—critical hermeneutics, abductive reasoning,

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<sup>2</sup> *bricolage*: [improvisational] construction (as of...a structure of ideas)...using whatever comes to hand (Merriam-Webster)

<sup>3</sup> *abductive reasoning*: Abduction [abductive reasoning] is a method of logical inference introduced by Charles Sanders Peirce which comes prior to induction and deduction ... Abductive reasoning starts when an inquirer considers a set of seemingly unrelated facts, armed with an intuition that they are somehow connected. The term *abduction* is commonly presumed to mean the same thing as hypothesis; however, an abduction is actually the process of inference that produces a hypothesis as its end result. (Wikipedia, 2/16/10) Charmaz (2006) describes abduction as a kind of reasoning that begins by examining data, ... entertains all possible explanations for the observed data, and then forms hypotheses to confirm or disconfirm until the researcher arrives at the most plausible interpretation of the observed data. (p. 186)

and action research—follows below; to be further expanded in their respective sections of the literature review.

Critical hermeneutics is an attitude toward understanding one's own ontological standing with that of the other, and of one's culture in terms of equality and relative agency. That understanding is reconstituted with every new interpretation of the objects that appear and reappear as phenomena in our lifeworld. Every text reread, every phone message replayed, every artwork reinterpreted, and every behavior reconsidered shape a new horizon that travels before us like a shadow, changing with our accumulating prejudices and presuppositions. Each new apprehension is a part to be contrasted with the whole sum of our increasing worldview that reveals ever-changing, situational realities of our existential being and emancipation. Prominent examples of this appear in the political sphere daily, such as the contingency of one's freedom to participate in fair elections in America following the "Citizens United" Supreme Court ruling, or access to representation and fair trial following the suspension of *habeas corpus*, for citizens accused of complicity in terrorist acts, enacted by G. W. Bush. Stephen Brookfield (2012) has identified this circular hermeneutic of apprehension with Mezirow's idea of transformative learning. Heidegger, I think would agree, as we will discuss below, that integration of new learning with one's pre-suppositions leads directly to one's ontological transformation.

Abductive reasoning, as *inference to best explanation* (Harman, 1965), is a complementary analog to interpretation, and a form of inquiry that also has the power of discovery when used in C. S. Peirce's triadic, syllogistic logic (abduction-induction-deduction) to evoke (abduce), and discern among, hypotheses for advancing understanding of objective phenomena across time-bound situations. A simple example of abductive inference

would be my surprise to see my patio all wet with puddles in the morning. I would abductively infer that it had rained during the night. Although there could be dozens of other explanations for a wet patio, the one I select is, as Peirce would suggest, the most economical one. A person could *inductively* validate my *abductive* conclusion by revealing the statistical probability of all the possible explanations (i.e. broken plumbing, sprinkler malfunction, mischief, etc.) in economic terms. *Deductive* inference would only apply to this case if there was only one explanation for a wet patio that says if the patio is wet, then it has rained; in which case one would say I simply *deduced* (*not abducted*) that it had rained. A deduction is naturally validated by an inductive probability inference approaching 100-percent.

Action research is an emergent and collaborative mode of inquiry that engages everyone in a group or organization—as a community of practice—in finding the cause and solution to organizational problems they experience together, and sharing in the decisions of how to take corrective action. It is a three-stage reflective process of *planning*, *action*, and *results* (with feedback loops to each) that directly corresponds to Lewin's (1947) three-stage theory of change: *unfreezing*, *changing*, and *refreezing*. Participatory action research, or PAR, emphasizes the critical, social, and democratic nature of broad participation in action research by those who are to be effected by the outcomes of the decisions and subsequent actions taken. PAR grew out of Lewin's action research in several versions around the world—the most prominent being the work of Freire (2000/1970) who worked to help poor and undereducated workers in Brazil and Chile overcome intensive oppression, through education taken into their own hands in small learning circles. This movement led to successful liberation and self-determination for thousands. PAR will be essential to recovering authentic humanism in the postmodern workplace at the micro-cultural level.

## Background Statement

*“Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world.”*  
—Arthur Schopenhauer, *Studies in Pessimism*

The research and subsequent practice of contemporary organization development can practically benefit in some measure from greater use of interpretive, qualitative inquiry in balance with positivistic-objective inquiry, more so at this time than any other in recent western history, because that balance has become so skewed toward the positivist paradigms. A good perspective to support this claim comes from the two latest editions of the *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Inquiry*: “In North America, qualitative research operates in a complex historical field that crosscuts at least eight historical moments. These moments *overlap and simultaneously operate* in the present” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). The authors list them as:

- 1) the traditional (1900-1950) positivist foundational paradigm,
- 2) the modernist or golden age (1950-1970) post-positivist arguments,
- 3) blurred genres (1970-1986) new interpretive qualitative perspectives,
- 4) the crisis of representation (1986-1990) how to locate self in reflexive text,
- 5) the postmodern, a period of experimental and new ethnographies (1990-1995),
- 6) post-experimental inquiry (1995-2000),
- 7) the methodologically contested present (2000-2010), and
- 8) the fractured future (2005-) which is now. (p. 3, enumeration mine)

The current, eighth moment “confronts the methodological backlash associated with the [positivist] evidence-based [conservative] social movement” (p. 3) that gave us no-child-left-behind political policy and other such unified methodological commensurations that have colonized and divided populations for centuries. “The eighth moment asks that the social sciences and the humanities become sites for critical conversations about democracy, race, gender, class, nation-states, globalization, freedom, and community” (p. 3).

Following the literature review chapter, this study auto-ethnographically and emergently surfaces how *textual* and *critical* hermeneutics integrate with abductive

inference, when applied to participatory action research, can pragmatically rebalance the quantitative and the qualitative sides of social science needed by OD practitioners in the field as one way to move the workplace toward humanism during this eighth, interregnum moment. Whereas the divergent literature review in Chapter 2 itself is intentionally not integrative, this overall study emergently becomes an integrative literature review. The convergence of reflection that follows in Chapters 4 and 5 are generative abductions from my hermeneutic interpretations of the primary texts reviewed in Chapter 2. I present intellectual *bricolage* from my academic experience in Chapter 4, and practical *bricolage* from my professional experience in Chapter 5. These demonstrations using polymodal inquiry are intended to alert my reader to a larger frame of possible idioms and tropes through which she can reconceptualize OD to shape a new humanistic approach unique to the topology of her life experience and practice. The approach I demonstrate is focused on participatory action research within the micro-cultures of small groups using emergent tools from my life and research that can arouse intrinsic human desire to learn and be free from its somnolence. One may use this work as a reflection point from which to take action tailored to the particular circumstances of each group encountered.

### **Problem Statement**

The Lewinian ethos of organization development (OD) has traditionally been to promote democracy, equality, and participative management in the course of helping organizations create progressive change and to negotiate internally or externally imposed change successfully. OD originally developed through the methodologies of action research (Lewin, 1948) and socio-technical systems (Trist, Emory, & Murray, 1997), drawing from psychology, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, ethnography, and critical theory.

This focus and these values, have been abandoned substantially by many organizations in the wake of globalism and the growth of large international enterprises. The drive for competitive survival and marketplace dominance, performance, and growth often sidelines concern for the wholeness and well-being of all but the highest echelons of capital management. This drive is also conspicuously concurrent with a 25-year flight from the democratic participation theory of Lewin.

Over the last 25 years, much of the debate on organizational change has been dominated by the issue of power and politics. This has led to a decline in interest in Kurt Lewin's planned approach to change, with its ethical basis and stress on democratic participation. Its place has been taken by the emergent approach, which focuses on use of power and politics to bring about change. The emergent approach was consistent with the free-market, winner-takes all spirit of the last 25 years. (Burnes, 2009, abstract)

Perhaps the most obvious and pernicious indication of this drive is the accelerating personal economic capture of capital by those *highest echelons* of management. The Economic Policy Institute (Mishel, 2006) reported that in 1965 the average ratio of income of US CEOs in major companies to workers was 24, and by 2005, that ratio had surged to 262 (\$11 million vs. \$42 thousand per annum). The Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance and Financial Regulation reported (Pedrotty, 2011) that in 1980 “the top executives of the largest US companies made 42 times the pay of factory workers” and “in 2010 the gap between CEO pay at S&P 500 companies and the U. S. worker had soared to 343.” The Center for Labor Market Studies reported (Herbert, 2007) that the CEO of Goldman Sacks received a 2006 annual bonus of \$53.4 million; and that Bear Stearns, Goldman Sachs, Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch and Morgan Stanley were “expected to award an estimated \$36 billion to \$44 billion worth of bonuses...to the top 1,000 or so highest-paid managers” for that same year. Rothberg (2011) reported:

Of the 100 highest-paid US CEOs in 2010, twenty-five took home more in compensation than their company paid in 2010 federal income taxes. As a new report by the Institute for Policy Studies reveals, these twenty-five CEOs averaged \$16.7 million, well above the previous year's \$10.8 million average for S&P 500 CEOs. (Editor's notes)

Forbes.com reported that John Hammergren, CEO of McKesson, the largest distributor of both pharmaceuticals and health care I.T. systems would receive \$131 million total personal compensation in 2011 (Helman, 2011).



Figure 1. Photo by Mary Altaffer • Associated Press • Star Tribune • October 30, 2011

As these gaps increase, a new set of values travels—via the dominant narratives and practices of hegemony—all the way down the supply chain to alienate employees from the craft of their work and from each other as stakeholders (Sennett, 1998, 2006; Sennett & Cobb, 1993; Denzin & Giardina, 2006). Much of this trend stems from the unbridled growth of large corporations through a recent flood of mergers and acquisitions that have regularly and deliberately been allowed to skirt the Robinson-Patman, Glass-Steagall, and Sherman Antitrust Acts. Gerald Celente, director of the Trends Research Institute, said “the merger of state and corporate powers...it’s fascism” (Gorenstein, 2010, interview). US Senator Bernie Sanders (2011) has stated that the world’s 50 largest corporations own 50-percent of all American assets; and that those large corporations now control Congress *more* than Congress controls them. Noam Chomsky (2011) stated that the federal debt resulting from two needless wars “is being cynically exploited by the far right, with the collusion of the

Democrat establishment, to undermine what remains of social programs, public education, unions, and, in general, remaining barriers to corporate tyranny” (n. p.). It should be noted that there are a several exceptional corporations (e.g., Tennant, Alcoa, Citigroup, Dow Chemical, Honda, HP, GE, IKEA, and Unilever) increasingly concerned about “environmental impact, broader stakeholder satisfaction, and community investment [and] becoming more integrated with perennial concerns about profit” (Bradbury, Robson & Waage, 2005, p. 19).

Business management consultants often combine some of the methods of OD with *expert* consulting methods aimed at delivering *directive* (non-participative) change management (CM) ‘solutions’ that expediently serve the bottom-line of executives and minimize participation in the middle and bottom of organizations—effectively dissipating the identity and founding ethos of OD by competing for market share of clients (Marshak, 2005) in a market economy. The struggle to compete for external consulting work during recent recessions has led some (undetermined number of) business and organization consultants to use the OD imprimatur for this type of directive change management—thereby further obscuring OD tradition. Internal OD consultants are also likely more constrained to the directive approach by the leverage of their full employment terms and their position in the chain of command (i.e., under the thumb of an HR VP or CFO vs. a seat at the C-suite table). This corporate expedience to bypass the ethical and participative side of organizational change is the moral hazard<sup>4</sup> for executives under pressure to satisfice<sup>5</sup> and report monthly and quarterly good news to shareholders. They waste limited time and resources, at the expense of longer term sustainability and resilience, controlling the stock price and capturing

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<sup>4</sup> moral hazard: lack of incentive to guard against risk when protected against it [wordnetweb.princeton.edu/](http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/)

<sup>5</sup> satisfice: getting by with minimal requirements; a compromise of sacrifice for reduced satisfaction



immediate bonuses and recognition. This behavioral cycle inhibits focus on long-term sustainability for all stakeholders; weakens national competitiveness; produces volatility in the markets; and displaces workers seasonally and geographically.

Vaill (1998) described the economic-focused organizational model as the *material-instrumental* (M-I). Although the economic dimension is critical to the survival of any organizational enterprise, Vaill warns that there are four other dimensions in all organizations that are all too often not acknowledged and cultivated. Together with the *economic* dimension, he offers a manifold of five values that he named the “Five-Way Bottom line” (p. 198) which include “the *technical*, the *communal*, the *adaptive*, and *transcendent*” (p. 199).

The economic dimension is the least addressed in American OD practice whereas in France, a widely used form of OD that integrates the socio-technical aspects of Lewin and Trist's OD with the economic and business process concerns of management named the Socio-Economic Approach to Management (SEAM), supports corporate initiative in this direction (Savall, 2003a, 2003b; Buono & Savall, 2007). Conbere and Heorhiadi (2011) report that the Socio-Economic Institute of Firms and Organizations Research (ISEOR) has maintained a SEAM case study database since 1973 that has provided repeated effectiveness of SEAM interventions which focus on the intersection of “dysfunctions, hidden costs, structures, [and] behaviors” (p. 9).

SEAM offers a methodical, tested way to assess the hidden costs in an organization. Identifying such costs is not a practice one often finds in other management consulting, although there is the OD consultants' intuitive belief that the hidden costs are very real. Without the SEAM measurement, however, the hidden costs remain hidden, and can be easily shrugged off by managers as soft. (p. 6)

Beyond the deep economic engagement of the SEAM movement, another salient aspect of SEAM is its humanism. “SEAM rejects the idea that employees are human capital, a term

that degrades employees into non-human commodities. Once an employee is a commodity, there is no moral issue in firing the employee” (pp. 6-7). Not experimenting with, and adopting SEAM traditions may be a lost opportunity to American OD practitioners and their client organizations unaware or suspicious of this rich European tradition. In a time when “most of the current management training focuses mostly on profit and bottom-line, and not on people” (p. 9), SEAM offers strong historical standing on the balance of economic and humanistic needs for healthy organizations. SEAM interventions are not generally practiced in the US and this author finds a dearth of academic publication examining or critiquing them in English beyond a few books by Savall, Buono, and Boje, and a dedicated 2003 issue of *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 16(1). See Appendix E for a few others.

Because it is my opinion that demands of wealthy shareholders have driven our capitalism into a cancerous stage that exploits workers, I attempt to find hypothetical action research propositions that fit into Vaill's five dimensions of organization. If the stranglehold that the non-Lewinian M-I model has on Western culture is to be supplanted with a less oppressive model, a new, pragmatic, participatory platform—generative of ideas and inspiration—needs to *be prepared* for moments of action when opportunities arise.

As important as quantitative empirical research has been to the OD field specifically, quantitative outcomes are immediately applicable to computer algorithms designed for expert systems that can undermine the ethical balance of OD. That is a problem because numbers can be manipulated by those with privileged access to them to obscure and misdirect. “There is [an ongoing] dispute between qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. It is international, acrimonious, and there are elements of state-sponsored support...for a return to...neopositivist quantitative inquiry and further colonization of private and professional

spaces [citing Said, 1983]” (Stronach, 2006, p. 758). In *Qualitative Inquiry and the Conservative Challenge* (Denzin & Giardina, 2006), 22 authors and researchers critique the US governmental assault on qualitative research by the neoconservative hegemony, and rally against its political appropriation of evidence-based, causal epistemologies to enforce a “methodological fundamentalism” (p. xvii) such as applied with No Child Left Behind. This restrictive mandate enforced through Federal research grants has powerful downstream effect on organizations and universities, and thereby on OD practitioners. When epistemologies such as critical theory, ethnography, discourse theory, feminism, queer theory, hermeneutics, etc. are politically blocked and only the univocal, experimental, quantitative, reductive, commensurating, causal, objective, research projects get funded, the progress of organization development becomes increasingly restricted to surveys and evidence-based statistical tabulation which is the *lingua franca* of neoconservative research repression. This balance in OD can be thought of as that of “*Gemeinschaft*” vs. “*Gesellschaft*” (Tönnies,<sup>6</sup> 1957)—terms that represent *community* vs. *society* as well as attitudes of *personal or familial relationship* vs. *commercial relationship* respectively. The problem appears to be a need to regain the balance of ethical and business outcomes by advancing and shifting more emphasis toward qualitative and critical research to generate new insights in the human, social sciences for application in OD practice.

I do not believe the OD profession should go head-to-head with the burgeoning CM industry with positivist or post-positivist epistemologies; nor completely abandon the commensurable methods of social science where they are appropriately applied; however the OD field can only recreate and extend itself with new findings from the social sciences and

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<sup>6</sup> Ferdinand Tönnies (1855-1936): German sociologist

critical theory as the historical pendulum swings toward society's growing need for abductive thinking (Martin, 2007, 2009) and right-brained operations (Pink, 2005).

### **Purpose Statement**

The core purpose of this integrated literature review is to *hermeneutically* examine a wide range of texts within three general categories of human inquiry: hermeneutics, abduction, and action research; to discern if, how, and by what variations they may find relevance to, and hypothetical application within, the context of humanistic OD practice; and to subsequently *abduce* possible new ways to think, communicate, and act *participatively* in organizations by way of collaborative discovery. After the experience of this examination and substantial internal reflection I became convinced a plausible form of polymodal inquiry had been revealed for working around deeply embedded human and cultural processes that resist necessary change. My purpose is predicated on two convictions, the first of which is that a ground-level commitment to *humanism* as a doctrine of governance in organizations is the only mainstay against historical periodic moments of fascism and totalitarianism. The word humanism is derived from the Latin *humanitas* (Cherry, 2009). The online *Merriam Webster Dictionary* defines humanism as “a doctrine, attitude, or way of life centered on human interests or values; *especially*: a philosophy that usually rejects supernaturalism and stresses an individual's dignity and worth and capacity for self-realization through reason.” *Webster's Third International Dictionary* (1961) defines humanism as “devotion to human welfare” (p. 1100). What humanists who believe in God have in common with those who do not “is a focus on the concerns of this world, a belief in the ‘dignity of man [sic],’ and a commitment to developing human potential” (Cherry, 2009, p. 34). As did Teilhard de Chardin (1999), I believe that the human race is transcending to a more complex, evolved

and enlightened ontology; but we must survive and overcome crises—such as the contemporary one that threatens the dignity, emancipation, and welfare of all but the economic elite—through mindfulness, civility, grace, commitment, and determination. My reader is alerted that there is in the literature a multitude of conflicting definitions for *humanism* throughout history since the Renaissance (Davies, 2008; Huxley, 1962). As Lewis Carroll whose real name was Charles Dodgson (1946) said through his character Humpty Dumpty, “The question is which is to be master—that’s all” (n.p.); which is an oppressive perspective of many who eschew or dismiss humanism. For our purposes I stand by its simple description above.

Secondly, it is my conviction that there are times in the context of all organizational processes where any number of different epistemologies and forms of inquiry are circumstantially valid and complementary for given situations-at-hand. Their purpose is not to find universal truths or absolute certainty, but to discover plausible, possible, however defeasible hypotheses and to construct order and justification for participatory action that is economically viable, sustainable, and practical, while advancing humanism in organizations and ultimately in society. As Parker Palmer (1987) said “there are promising movements towards community in the world of intellect today. They are found in the emergence of new epistemologies” (p. 24). These epistemologies may combine empiricism, positivism, pragmatism, thick-description interpretivism, grounded theory, hermeneutics, discourse analysis, narrative ethnography, psychoanalysis, constructivism, feminism and critical theories variously applied to grasp belief and reduce doubt for the taking of action in various contexts. Mixed epistemologies, like mixed methods, used by researchers-as-*bricoleurs* are producing research in a collage of paradigms and methodologies. Two of the most promising

epistemologies arising are complexity and chaos theories (Stacey, 1982, 1995, 2003; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984; Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997, 1998; Pascale, 2000) and systems theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1968; Churchman, 1979; Ciborra, 2002; Tsoukas & Mylonopoulos, 2004; Meadows, 2009). Combining these theories with critical and dialogical action research forms (Flood & Romm, 1997; McIntyre-Mills, 2006, 2007; Van Gigch & McIntyre-Mills, 2006) can produce new plateaus from which to find meaningful action ↔ reflection cycles.

Kurt Lewin (1951) said “There is nothing more practical than a good theory” and that doesn’t necessarily mean one must remain bounded by any one theory. I find no meta-theory to refute that different phenomenal categories (e.g., subjective, intersubjective, objective) and their concomitant circumstances in one’s life-world can be understood through multiple, theoretical lenses. Brookfield (2012) suggests “that all practice is theoretically informed, even though we may be unaware of exactly how.” Lindeman (1926), quoting Anatole France, wrote, “Each of us must be allowed to possess two or three philosophies at the same time,’ for the purpose, I presume, of saving our thought from the deadly formality of consistency” (p. xiii). I think it takes a certain dogmatic squinting of the eyes to maintain stable images of incongruity and lasting mutual exclusivity between epistemologies when used in their proper domains. The problem is that there is a deeper, polyvocal, hermeneutic, dialogic, rhizomatic structure to these silos of certitude beneath our feet that cannot be entirely surfaced by the finitude of our solitary giants from Plato and Aristotle, Hegel and Kant, Husserl and Heidegger, and so many others connecting or erasing the epistemological dots. The problem is that there are not enough OD researchers and practitioners pulling up these roots and grafting them into multicultural, emancipative milieus of praxis. When Lindeman (1926) said, “The purpose of adult education is to give meaning to the categories of experiences, not

to classifications of knowledge” (p. 195), he may have left us a clue on how to turn away from a *sustainability* of insuring certainty of someone else’s particular revenue stream and consequent joy and freedom at the expense of our own joy and freedom, toward a sustainability of learning to find joy and freedom in innovating and producing ever-new, non-colonizing streams of sustenance for the benefit of all. The problem is not capitalism per se—it is a transmogrified capitalism, brutally and metastatically destroying lives for the uncountable gain and absurd pleasure of a very few non-humanists who have climbed corrupted social, academic, military, and economic ladders and staked out all they can for themselves—like a California land rush<sup>7</sup>—with a narcissistic presumption of meritorious entitlement. This historical thrust (of transmogrified capitalism) is lubricated with the individualism, subjective hatred of the Other on the political right, subjective fear of the Other on the political left, and the ignorance of a populace lacking education in true democracy and its requisite responsibility to work perpetually for liberty through critical reflection; all which portend the devolution of democracy to populism (Lukacs, 2005).

### **Significance Statement**

Using hermeneutics, abductive reasoning, and action research to arrive at new understanding and knowledge for the practice of organization development can renew and sustain that field of practice in serving and creating healthy, agile, sustainable, resilient, and adaptable organizations. Implicit in that description is a necessary level of freedom and full participation of all stakeholders of such organizations. Stepping away from the gravitation of the Enlightenment's scientific rationality with critical hermeneutics is one such venue I have explored to arrive at that outcome. I also review the pragmatism and semiotics of C. S.

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<sup>7</sup> Read about the ultimate insiders’ club, “a new world order”, and the Trilateral Commission in: Goldwater, B. M. (1979). *No apologies: The personal and political memoirs of United States Senator Barry M. Goldwater*. New York: Wm. Morrow.

Peirce and use his abductive ratiocination<sup>8</sup> to provide a means for working with objective data to complement the interpretive aspects of this emerging model. Peirce's model of pragmatism, which he renamed *pragmaticism* at the beginning of the twentieth-century, is a unique form of empirical reasoning that is not reductionist nor metaphysically foundational in the classic sense. It provides one with the opportunity to solve empirical problems using the scientific method but without the limitations of positivism. Many problems do not lend themselves to interpretive solutions, however pragmaticism and hermeneutics share certain maieutic<sup>9</sup> root capacity I discuss in Chapter 4—Rhizomes. This form of pragmatism which Peirce distinguishes as *pragmati(ci)sm* is fundamental to Peirce's abductive reasoning and is different from the pragmatism of James and Dewey which is not considered here. Peirce is distinctive from James in his emphasis on "the communal character of human practices," and from Dewey in his "more acute sensitivity to the deeply traditional roots of...our most innovative practices" (Colapietro, Midtgarden, & Strand, 2005, p. 170).

Human agency and emancipation are at risk globally in the twenty-first-century as multinational corporations compete for diminishing resources with which to produce more wealth for a narrowing population from the labor of the masses. The means and methods to broader participation in the creation of human-centered enterprise must be continuously discovered, implemented, and improved to stem the brute force of corporatism and its fascist shadow. Pressing ecological problems (Meadows, Randers, & Meadows, 2004; Flannery,

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<sup>8</sup> *ratiocination* or *reasoning* produces *inferences* or *reasonings*, which are expressed by *argumentations*, as, "I think, therefore I must exist," "Enoch, being a man, must have died; and since the Bible says he did not die, not everything in the Bible can be true." (CP 4.38-39)

<sup>9</sup> maieutics: a procedure of pedagogy based on the idea that the truth is latent in the mind of every human being due to his innate reason but has to be "given birth" by answering questions (or problems) intelligently proposed ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maieutic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maieutic)). maieutic: of or relating to the aspect of the Socratic method that induces a respondent to formulate latent concepts through a dialectic or logical sequence of questions. ([thefreedictionary.com](http://thefreedictionary.com))



2009; Brown, 2011; Rifkin, 2011) may provide OD practitioners with opportunities to engage with various types and sizes of organizations amenable to facilitation of new ways of learning and problem solving that lead to higher levels of sustainability, agility, and resilience without sacrificing social justice and human development. Such organizations can be developed and case-studied as models for a humane future.

### **Research Question**

*How can critical hermeneutics and abductive reasoning converge in action research to support practices that strengthen the efficacy of OD practitioners to increase the sustainability, agility, and resilience of human-centered organizations? (In a hermeneutic integrated literature review, the research question is determined after the literature review.)*

### **Bounding, Limitations, Delimitations and Reflexivity**

A primary and significant limitation to anyone's research is the constraint of foreign language and culture skills. I am constrained to sources written in English only. My modest and unpracticed German language skills are insufficient to reading the original “Continental” versions of Dilthey, Heidegger, Gadamer, and Habermas, and others so essential to the field of understanding—many of whose texts have not to date been translated. I have therefore depended both on English translations *and* interpretations of-and-by thought leaders writing in German. The familiarity I do have with German makes me sensitive to the ineffable quality of many words and phrases that is lost in restriction to any one language. Although I have studied Latin, I am unfamiliar with Greek which compromises my ability to interpret textual passages wherein Heidegger and Gadamer predicated much of their thinking directly on Plato and Aristotle.

This study is initially bounded to understanding 1) hermeneutics, 2) abductive reasoning, and 3) action inquiry sequentially, divergently through their respective intertextualities (see Appendix B), and paratactically<sup>10</sup> within Chapter 2–Literature Review; then focusing on their linkages, complementarities, and integration convergently in Chapter 4–Rhizomes; and only thereafter applying those syntheses in the context of a select number of contemporary OD interventions in Chapter 5–Plateaus. Background perspectives on those OD problems are initially presented in the Literature Review under the subtitle Organization Development Issues. Certain taxonomies and theoretical perspectives are not engaged because of the structural complexities they present to the scope of this paper. I have also intentionally limited coverage of most texts particular to the early regional and scriptural hermeneutics to what is needed to indicate the early roots of hermeneutics; and I put more emphasis on modern and postmodern views of hermeneutics from which I both use, and propose. I continually monitor my attendance to scope and depth, and keep a balance between them.

A potential limitation I wish to discuss is the off-chance that this paper might be perceived as an emergent *philosophical* dissertation “which tend to be rare in the social and behavioral sciences... The causes may be partly the unique kind of mind required to handle such material combined with a paucity of interested faculty” (Krathwohl & Smith, 2005, p. 137). This is an emergent study. It is not a philosophical treatise because I am not defending metaphysical postulation as my purpose; nor am I developing meta-theoretical, ontological, epistemological or axiological theory. I was on the lookout for emergent modes of critical inquiry, particularly from within contemporary hermeneutic theory during the course of my

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<sup>10</sup> paratactic: independent and nonimbricated; partitioned; non-integrated

reading, however this is first and foremost an *integrative* literature review, and that “integration” is expressed in Chapter 4—Rhizomes.

Although one could say that a limitation of textual hermeneutics might be the limitation of how much text one can read and interpret within the finitude of one’s life, this would be a specious claim for at least two sound reasons. First, reflection on all action, including the act of reading, should be a collective effort by capable women and men of every generation, region, race, and culture. Everyone to some capacity provides *time-binding*<sup>11</sup> (Korzybski, 1995/1933) and diachronic<sup>12</sup> synthesis of knowledge for our successors to share and carry forward into the ongoing flow of their reality—this is at the heart of humanism. “Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime” (Niebuhr, 1952). It behooves those of us who can, to leave behind a cogent written record of our explorations, conversations, interpretations and synthesis of what seems important to our lived experience, without the burden of any sense of constraint. Second, the horizons of our interpretations of all we read continuously fuse into ever-growing and changing horizons and change the tacit memes in our discourse that survive us.

Delimitations include exclusion of any over-stretched tropes (with one intentional exception in Chapter 4—Rhizomes), rhetorical devices, connections, or ideas; controlling hermetic drift— “the uncontrolled ability to shift from meaning to meaning, from similarity to similarity, from one connection to another” (Eco, 1990, 1995); confirmation bias—“a tendency to favor information that confirms one’s preconceptions or hypotheses regardless of its truth value” (Wikipedia, 8/8/11); and curtailing any tangential material that does not directly bear on my central focus. While I have a substantial library and access to

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<sup>11</sup> time-binding: the effect that man differs from the animals in the capacity of each human generation to begin where the former generation left off (Korzybski, 1995/1933, p. 539).

<sup>12</sup> diachronic: relating to phenomena change extending through time.

many books and papers through various libraries and agencies, my awareness of what is published in social science remains incomplete; however I am not aware of any studies that duplicate or overlap my stated purpose. More specifically, I have reviewed a number of dissertations and books that use hermeneutic methodology and abductive reasoning, none of which focus on advancement of humanistic organization development practice outside a broader exception to the works of Robert Marshak, Peter Vaill, and Douglas McGregor. On the other hand, action research is richly situated in organization development—and it is through action research I introduce linkage of hermeneutics and abduction to OD. Throughout the course of my reading I have not yet had exposure to a number of thinkers who have been substantially drawn upon by my secondary sources—including Hilary Putnam (1926-), Donald Davidson (1917-2003), and Talcott Parsons (1902-1979).

A significant delimitation I have chosen, is to work from a preponderant perspective that carefully distinguishes epistemology from hermeneutics paradigmatically *without* polarizing them as mutually exclusive. I borrow this concept from Habermas (1971, 1973) and Rorty (1980). I acknowledge that both Crotty (1998) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005) offer taxonomies that subordinate or equate the term hermeneutics to epistemology and I do not dispute their premises here; in fact there is a special case for the term hermeneutics within epistemology known as *epistemological hermeneutics* wherein “the interpreter, a knowing and objective subject, investigates the text as a [passive] object” (Herder, 1999, p. 53). “It assumes that meaning is a determinate, object-like entity waiting to be discovered in a text...” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 121).

Use of the term hermeneutics is delimited in this study to a way of ontological understanding that precedes epistemology, and to that way of understanding that remains

wherever epistemology fails to produce actionable knowledge (Radnitzky, 1970; Rorty, 1982). “I do not [however] believe that epistemology is a bloodless abstraction; the way we know has powerful implications for the way we live...every mode of knowing contains its own moral trajectory, its own ethical direction and outcomes” (Palmer, 1987, p. 2) and I am guided by those contingencies.

Appendix A lists a number of seemingly antonymic terms encountered in my selected texts that have been used to discern epistemology from hermeneutics in this context; however I do not find the paradigms of epistemology and hermeneutics antonymous (as in direct opposition or polarity). Whereas there are dialectic tensions between the numerous terms used with each, there is also a complementarity between the paradigms, and *equal validity* (Boghossian, 2006) is ascribed to both in their *respectively appropriate applications*. The pragmatic empiricism of C. S. Peirce as detailed in the *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, Vol. 1-8 (1958/1960)* and a wide number of secondary texts is very much such an appropriate application to cut across these dichotomies. Peirce distinguishes his *pragmaticism* as a *prope-positivist* science of inquiry that bypasses the linear, reductionist, absolutist, and dualistic nature of Comte’s<sup>13</sup> doctrine of positivism, while effectively dealing with problems of a scientific nature as well as of everyday social life.

It’s useful to add what comes to mind in the way of prejudices, presuppositions, and propensities. I have long been disposed to the idea that epistemologies are not as important to the conduct of a wholesome life as some may believe. They are however tools of a sort, and I think it’s good to have a whole box of them if one is interested in finding meaning in life’s phenomena—as I am. I know a number of delightful souls who have no epistemologies to

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<sup>13</sup> [Auguste Comte \(1798–1857\) French philosopher, founded the discipline of sociology and doctrine of positivism \(wikipedia.org June 28, 2011\).](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auguste_Comte)

work with, who get by with something they call common sense; and others with a handful of aphorisms, fables, or scripture. I think that some of the most profoundly dangerous people in society are those who try to work through all the problems they perceive with either a singular epistemology, a dogmatic religion, or a rigid ideology because their Manichean absolutism has created mutual exclusion, fragmentation, and insurmountable clashes of cultures. Another prejudice I have is a conviction that the boundaries between the disciplines (e.g., anthropology, psychology, sociology, philosophy, theology, etc.) are arbitrary and, at some point, restricting. My past experiences in OD and group dynamics certainly has bearing on my current work. I would also say that my ten years of being a pastoral care coordinator have provided a great number of insights that inform this paper just as they inform my daily life. The following brief case study describes one of my most grounding and formative experiences leading to my interest in organization development.

**Early group experiment with participative leadership.**

As a young man I had occasion to play two-hand touch football with a group of about twenty men my age who met in a park to play on Saturdays. I quickly noticed that two self-appointed “leaders” were always the ones talking loudest, choosing sides, calling plays, assigning positions, and always quarterbacking all plays for their respective teams. One of them owned the professional grade ball we used. Most men quietly played their assigned roles, and some would petition the bosses to receive the ball. It seemed to me that the quarterbacks and their most frequent receivers (who appeared to be people they knew well) were having all the fun and the rest of us were doing the grunt work of blocking, centering and running interference. I was not having any fun except for the camaraderie I shared with one friend in the group. I also noticed that I had never once been offered, or tested for, any

role except blocking, which was making my forearms bruised and sore. Another observation I made was that the teams were chosen-up anew every week by the two leaders. The loud-take-charge-quarterback-choosers always selected their buddy-receivers first, followed by *nameless* large guys like me to block, and lastly smaller men they didn't know. I did not see this aggressive assumption of control as true leadership, and I felt *used* by a small clique of football enthusiasts who had no intention of getting to know anyone new, and were using those of us they didn't know as bit players in their own scripted drama.

After two weeks of this I decided to quit playing if I couldn't find a way to make these games more participative, equitable and fun for everyone. I went to the park early and approached the two key honchos and proposed that I experiment with a new method—one of my selecting, organizing and leading one of the teams. They agreed because they were caught off guard and couldn't think of an objection. I also suggested choosing-up sides on the basis of when players arrived at the park. The selecting began immediately and I sequentially delegated the choice to each player as they were selected for my team. During the game I called all huddles and sequentially gave each except myself the opportunity to call plays.

Once we began playing, some, including one of the honchos I had selected onto my team, took key roles (on their turn to call the next play) for themselves and their friends as before; a few men abdicated their choice back to the honcho on my team as they had been conditioned to; however many assigned the throwing, running and catching to others. I never called a play and, with sore forearms, continued to block while simply inviting a different person to call each play, and asking each their name when I did, until I could remember and say them. The game was a blast. On one occasion I was asked to quarterback, and I threw a touchdown pass. The plays were more innovative and unpredictable, and the spirits were

much higher. Several of the men thanked me for reorganizing the game. I didn't go back to the park after that game and my friend reported that things reverted back the following week to control by the original *authoritative* group who felt they had the most ball-handling skill.

This was a cameo, micro-cultural experience that awoke me to how different people can behave in organizational settings. Whereas some will seek to control the circumstances of others to serve their own hedonistic desires, others will behave like automatons merely to *belong* until invited to participate on a deeper, emancipated, operational level—and some of those offered liberatory opportunity will yet continue their deference to self-proclaimed authorities. Here is a mystery to be examined by OD practitioners at the intersubjective level before macro-cultural and organizational analysis can be considered. The first fact that stuck me was that the only players in these pick-up games who called each other by name were the ones who controlled the game; and this alone helped them solidify their control—by leaving the *others* nameless. That is why I asked each player in my huddles their name; showed each they mattered to me by remembering and using their name; asked each one in turn what they thought the entire team should try at each respective moment; and humbly demonstrated that I was only there to serve them. I also deliberately recruited one of the *honchos* to my team to broaden their horizon as well as to familiarize them with names and ideas of other's. One should imagine how this story might have developed if I had continued my role as a facilitator and servant leader in the future of those Saturday pick-up games.

I invite OD practitioners to consider that such future games would have been played with a differing mix of players on each team—one led by one of the two honchos and the other organized and facilitated by me. After using the same process and engaging both honchos on my team at different times, eventually everyone would come to know each



other's names and hear their own name spoken repeatedly. Given that the teams would be constituted differently every week would remove the problems of team identity and balance competition with cooperation and collaboration—given that eventually everyone would know all the cool plays already tried. This might encourage continual in-the-moment innovation and growth. The teammate ↔ opponent relational iterations might create rich conversations leading to a network of interpersonal relationships and friendships. I might have invited everyone along with spouses and friends to various post-game venues and engaged conversations with non-football idioms. My audience—the OD practitioner inclined to develop wholistic humanism in the workplace—is urged to write their own ongoing narrative fiction around this very real OD experience, using ideas that emerge in the course of reading this dissertation.

## Chapter 2–Literature Review

The apparent paradox in a hermeneutic, integrated literature review study is that the central research work begins within the literature review chapter itself. Somewhat like grounded theory, it is an emergent process, the outcomes of which cannot be telegraphed ahead of time. It's important to be clear that whereas hermeneutics is one of the four topical categories of literature being studied for this paper, hermeneutics is *also* the mode of inquiry *being used to understand* the source readings in the literature review chapter.

The Methodology chapter will expand on the hermeneutic approach taken in the research for this paper, however, briefly stated: (1) the primary background readings for hermeneutics, abduction, and action research were chosen and thoroughly studied for almost a year; (2) secondary and tertiary critical and interpretive work regarding the primary material was studied, catalogued, and annotated for over a year; and (3) by the beginning of 2011, the manuscript writing began to emerge from how the literature had ontologically changed me and my horizontal view on the emerging issues that face OD consulting and humanism in contemporary western organizations.

Accordingly<sup>14</sup> the following literature review will focus on four areas separately: the three modes of inquiry—critical hermeneutics, abductive reasoning, and action inquiry; followed by the ground context for application—contemporary challenges of organization development practice. Each of these four areas are named in the title of this study. The confluence and complementarity of the three modes of inquiry will be covered in Chapter 4—Rhizomes, and their relevance and potential to OD practice will be expanded in Chapter 5—Plateaus. Ample background on the history and development of the three modes of inquiry is presented here as interpreted and understood through my substantial readings of each because

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<sup>14</sup> accordingly: in a way that is appropriate to the particular circumstances (Merriam-Webster).

these three paradigms are not commonly familiar nor associated. Using the *hermeneutic circularity of horizons* (explained below) recursively<sup>15</sup> gave me richer insight with each new text encountered and allowed me to reconcile variations of terms and perspective.

## **Hermeneutics**

### **Literature Selection.**

Preparation for the literature review on hermeneutics required reading from a vast number of texts to gain a sense of three things in sequence. The first thing I was seeking was a core consensus among scholars of the history and development of hermeneutics in general. Secondly, I sought outlying, critical perspectives that took me beyond the core. Finally, I looked for aporias between scholars particularly regarding critical hermeneutics. A complete list of sources I consulted to understand hermeneutic forms is in Appendix G. I traced multiple references to my foundational texts by Heidegger and Gadamer, and also examined those bibliographies to get a sense of the various schools of thought on hermeneutics. Then I studied the texts of authors who seemed to provide me a sense of direction toward my purpose, while verifying their citations of the foundational texts, and interpreting the corresponding context with each. The two foundational reference texts for hermeneutics study below are Heidegger's (1962/1927) *Being and Time* (traditionally cited as BT, space, page number), and Gadamer's (1975/1960) *Truth and Method* (traditionally cited as TM, space, page number).

### **Historical Roots.**

The Oxford English Dictionary CD (2002, n.p.) cites Waterland's 1737 second edition of *Eucharist* as the earliest known English use of the word hermeneuticks: "Taking such liberties with sacred Writ, as are by no means allowable by any known rules of just and

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<sup>15</sup> recursive: using a rule or procedure that can be applied repeatedly ([dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com)).

sober hermeneuticks” (n.p.). Grondin (1995) reported that the term *hermeneutica* was first created by German theologian Johann Dannhauer in the seventeenth-century. He also reports that Wilhelm Dilthey credited hermeneutics to the exegesis of Luther's *sola scriptura* in the works of Melanchton in 1519, and Illyricus in 1567 (pp. 19-20). Many articles about hermeneutics lead off associating the term with the god Hermes. Ferraris (1996) pointed to the word *hermenéia* as the root source in English known as hermeneutics. This places the concept in Ancient Greek society.

*Hermenéia*, word and concept, is the basis for all words derived from the same root, and for everything they ‘sound’: *hermenéus*, *hermeneutés*, *hermeneutiké*. This root might well be the same as that of the Latin *sermo*. On the other hand, it has no linguistic or semantic relation (except for a similarity in sound) to the god Hermes. (Grondin, 1995, p. 1, citing Karl Kerényi)

Aristotle wrote *Peri Hermeneias* that translates to “On Interpretation” in which he used “the syntax of language as the basis for revealing the nature of things” (Herder, 1999, p. 45). In contrast to Ferraris' statement position on “the god Hermes,” Krajewski (1992) earlier had made a cogent case for an etymological linkage. Citing Heidegger, Krajewski stated that the noun *hermeneus* refers to the god Hermes.

In the *Cratylus*, Socrates points out that Hermes could be called interpreter or messenger, but also thief, liar, or contriver. Socrates says that words—Hermes' invention—have the power to reveal, but also to conceal and to withhold. Speech can signify almost anything and turn things this way or that. Indeed, we can never get a grasp on words, hold them still, fix them (as if there were something wrong with them). Words' meanings always change, because contexts are always changing. (p. 8)

Bleicher (1980) loosely defined hermeneutics “as the theory or philosophy of the interpretation of meaning” (p. 1) in which he characterized three conflicting strands: “hermeneutical theory, hermeneutic philosophy, and critical hermeneutics” (p. 1).

*Hermeneutical theory* began with Schleiermacher's<sup>16</sup> (1798/1838) general theory of interpretation as a method suitable for all social sciences. Although hermeneutics began with “ancient Greeks studying literature and ... biblical exegesis” (Crotty, 1998, p. 89), modern hermeneutics began with Friedrich Schleiermacher and advanced with Wilhelm Dilthey who both embraced empathy and the *hermeneutic circle* as essential tools. Betti<sup>17</sup> later sought to establish theory that brought meaning as expressed by others into one’s own assumptive world. His theory, combined with the prior theory of hermeneutics written by Schleiermacher (1798/1838), established the linguisticity<sup>18</sup> of understanding; meaning it is only with and through linguistic expression that we can understand anything. Schleiermacher and Dilthey are usually credited with elevating hermeneutics from an assortment of methods (theological, philological, juridical, etc.) to a level of methodology with *universal* canons (Bleicher, 1980). Both philosophers used *verstehen* (understanding) as the way to interpret the thinking, and experience of the original author of a text as theoretical truth.

Dilthey<sup>19</sup> reconciled his concept of *historical consciousness* with theoretical truth by suggesting that all inquiry relies on objectifying thoughts, both in natural science (*Naturwissenschaften*) and social science (*Geisteswissenschaften*). He sought to bring rigor and universality to the methodology of hermeneutics as seen in science, as he had seen in Husserl’s 1900-1901 (two-volume) *Logical Investigations*. It is Dilthey’s centering on the historicity of hermeneutics and his effort to apply positivistic, scientific rigor to that approach that is the hallmark of his influence on hermeneutic theory (Bleicher, 1980). The concept of historicity dates back to Vico's recognition of historical development in his *New Science*

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<sup>16</sup> F. D. E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) German theologian and hermeneutic theorist

<sup>17</sup> Emilio Betti (1890-1968) Italian philosopher and hermeneutic theorist

<sup>18</sup> linguisticity: the language constitution of reality

<sup>19</sup> Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) German historian and hermeneutic theorist

(2002/1725) which explained, “(1) how it was that correct understanding could take place across time and space, and (2) whether different positions within the stream of history made for differences in knowledge about earlier periods and events” (Bleicher, 1980, p. 17).

*Hermeneutic philosophy* (or philosophical hermeneutics) rejects Dilthey's scientific objectivism and refutes the idea that an objective interpreter stands on neutral ground. Moreover, it suggests that the interpreter stands within a tradition with the text, and brings unique pre-understanding and fore-knowledge to their engagement with the text that are reflective of the interpreter's *Dasein* or *thrownness in the world* (Heidegger, 1962/1927). Hermeneutic philosophy originated with Heidegger and Gadamer who replaced the psychologistic and romantic *hermeneutical method* of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and Betti with *philosophical hermeneutics*—a more foundational, ontological hermeneutics that puts the interpreter in a dialogical-dialectical mediation with the text to enlarge the assumptive world of the interpreter.

Like its etymology, the universality of hermeneutics seems to be in dispute among authors. Ferraris (1996) is unusual in not crediting Schleiermacher directly—as many have—for combining regional hermeneutic techniques to create a *universal* methodology. Oddly he does not mention Schleiermacher in this context, but rather cites Dilthey as defining the history of this transition to the philosophical universality of his day “as a development from limited and auxiliary functions” (pp. 2-3) of scripture, jurisprudence, and philology. A clue to the distinction between what Dilthey and what Schleiermacher are said to have done may be found in Ormiston and Schrift (1990): “Schleiermacher is credited with taking the first steps toward establishing a *general* hermeneutic methodology” (p. 11), which means we must be on the lookout for different characterizations of *philosophical vis-à-vis general*

hermeneutics. Ferraris supports his argument that in different historical periods, hermeneutics was much more broadly applied than in a narrow, regional sense, citing the Homeric poems as serving a normative societal role in Alexandrian Greece.

Dilthey defined the history of hermeneutics as a development from limited and auxiliary foundations (in theology, in law, in literature) to a properly philosophical universality. However it must not be forgotten that at different moments throughout its history—which is more scattered and discontinuous than might appear at first—hermeneutics has made a claim to universality. The “regional” contexts of hermeneutics were never narrowly sectional. This is not simply due to the all-too-general argument of the universality of language as *logos*. The Homeric poems, studied by Alexandrian philology, had a normative function for the *paideia*<sup>20</sup> and for Greek society. (Ferraris, 1996, pp. 2-3)

Howard (1982) put “the origins of philosophical hermeneutics in the nineteenth-century” (p. xvi). He stated that the migration of hermeneutics from its regional roots was “propelled noticeably by three forces: the influence of Kant [and] the role of Dilthey [in the nineteenth-century] and the challenge of logical positivism” (p. 3) and phenomenology in the twentieth-century.

Schleiermacher had a holographic concept of the text that indicated the whole is present in each part of a work's composition. He used as his metaphor the idea of shattered mercury whose parts resume the spherical shape of the whole (Howard, 1982). “The actual practice of hermeneutics becomes a part-whole-part movement, ... a dialectical process, which begins where it will end... It describes the... 'hermeneutic circle'” (p. 10). As Wilber (2000) described it, “holons—all the way up, [and] all the way down” (p. 28). The idea of *holons* as a coherent way of organizing knowledge and nature all together comes from Koestler (1968, 1978) who developed the two-faced *Janus* concept of holons looking in one direction at the wholeness—simultaneously while looking in the opposite direction at the parts or elements—of all phenomena. Koestler's work was a precursor to complex systems and systems

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<sup>20</sup> *paideia*: instruction on how to live a successful life according to the values of Greek society

dynamics. He claimed to adapt the term *holon* from the concept of holism in Smuts' 1926 *Holism and Evolution* (Wikipedia 3/7/11).

“After Schleiermacher, hermeneutics became epistemological and theoretical and no longer merely a methodological and practical endeavor” (Howard, 1982, p. 11).

Schleiermacher, and his contemporary J. G. Droyson<sup>21</sup> for whom consciousness and interpretation were purely organons of historical thought, both “restricted application of hermeneutics ... to philological or historical texts” (Coltman, 1998, p. 34). Droyson is remembered for his articles arguing for a “sharp distinction between the methods of the natural and historical sciences” and his terminology “*erklären* ('to explain') was isolated as the epistemological goal of the former; [and] *verstehen* ('to understand') was that of the latter” (Howard, 1982, p. 14).

Dilthey took the next crucial step in the evolution of hermeneutics and is remembered for his “distinction between the fields of natural and human sciences; ...his thesis of experience and life as the unifying elements within the field of the human sciences; and...his logic for the interpretation of life as objectified in historical documents” (Howard, 1982, p. 14). What can be seen as foundational to the later ontological development of philosophical hermeneutics was Dilthey's intuited *Zusammenhang* or connectedness of the psychic structures of the subject to the predicate object of interpretation in the fully *lived* experience he called *Erlebnis*<sup>22</sup> marked by “an immediately apprehended note of purpose, intention, meaning—significance in the strong psychic sense of the term” (p. 16). In contrast, Dilthey saw in the natural sciences “an ordering of nature... achieved only through a succession of conclusions by means of [the] linking of hypotheses” (p. 16). Dilthey's “sense of *Erlebnis* as

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<sup>21</sup> J. G. Droyson (1808-1884): German historian

<sup>22</sup> *Erlebnis*: lived experience



a purposeful and value-filled moment of life, ... was mainly noetic<sup>23</sup> and epistemological” (p. 17). He was clearly trying to apply the rigors of scientific epistemology to hermeneutics. His eventual eclipse was to miss out on the developments occurring in the philosophical theory of language and its intermediation on sense-making and interpretation.

One can appreciate the different perspectives that Schleiermacher and Dilthey would have from their point in history, respective to ours, on the development of their methodologies. Ferraris (1996) described the universality of existential, *contemporary* (philosophical) hermeneutics as developed by Heidegger and his student Gadamer in the twentieth-century. Ignoring the exegetical traditions, in *Zein und Zeit* (Being and Time) Heidegger brought the ontology of being as individuals and as a society into the fore of interpretation, and described the “notion that in interpreting are at stake the historical and existential decisions of subjects and communities, which was already part of the traditional concerns of hermeneutics and was implied in its practical role” (p. 3). Gadamer’s work in *Truth and Method* clarified that “philosophical hermeneutics does not mean interpretation of philosophical texts but the establishing of interpretation as a fundamental problem of philosophy” (p. 3).

Whereas Bleicher (1980) traced a graduated *evolution* of hermeneutics from early regional practices, Ferraris (1996) described it as a *paradigmatic shift*, a punctuated equilibrium<sup>24</sup> as it were, “from the exegetical tradition of theology, law, and philology” (p. 3) to the foundations of contemporary hermeneutics, around Heidegger’s (1962, 1999)

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<sup>23</sup> noetic: intellectual; of or associated with or requiring the use of the mind; "intellectual problems"; "the triumph of the rational over the animal side of man" ([wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn](http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn))

<sup>24</sup> punctuated equilibrium in social theory: a method of understanding change in complex social systems, particularly how policy change and the development of conflicts seem to progress in extended periods of stasis, punctuated by sudden shifts in radical change (Wikipedia, April 25, 2011)

introduction of one's own, and one's community's ontological *facticity*<sup>25</sup> (*Faktizität*) or *thrownness* (*Geworfenheit*) into time. Gadamer (1975) carried this notion into a new conception of the *hermeneutic circle* and thereby founded what we now variously call *philosophical* or *contemporary* hermeneutics.

Crotty (1998) identified Max Weber as one of the earliest thinkers to identify the distinctions and value of *Verstehen* and *Erklären* respectively as the interpretive-idiographic<sup>26</sup> and explicative-nomothetic<sup>27</sup> approaches to knowing. Weber thought both approaches had utility in the natural sciences, whereas Dilthey thought the interpretive approach was the sole province of the social sciences. Wilhelm Windelband and Heinrich Rickert, who first identified the idiographic-nomothetic duality, thought the only difference in natural reality and social reality is the purposes one has when studying each, and that natural science required a generalized approach and social science a more focused approach. Weber did not agree with different approaches and kept empiricism lodged within both, despite seeing it “as an iron cage” (Rabinow & Sullivan, 1979, p. 1). Contemporary interpretivism has since followed Dilthey's distinctions.

Reading Palmer's (1969) *Hermeneutics* gives one a deeper understanding of Dilthey's use of the hermeneutic circle to generate meaning as a dialectic cycling between grasping the whole and its parts through a process of interpreting which confronts the interpreter through his/her own horizon of temporality and history. Dilthey remained fixed on objectified meanings and it's not clear how such objects are dismissed when they lose their currency. He also remained fixed on the partition of positivism and interpretivism between the natural and social sciences. It was simply the methodological *rigor* he borrowed from positivism.

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<sup>25</sup> facticity: denoting “the ultimate non-reducible reality of individual existence” (Thanassas, 2004, p. 49)

<sup>26</sup> idiographic: involving the study of individuals

<sup>27</sup> nomothetic: involving the search for abstract universal principles

Martin Heidegger brought a phenomenological element to hermeneutics and turned its purpose toward one's essence of Being in the world. "Heidegger's hermeneutics refers 'to his phenomenological explication of human existing itself'" (Crotty citing Palmer, 1998, p. 97). Heidegger's student, Hans-Georg Gadamer, is known for rejecting the role of empathy in hermeneutics entirely. This element is puzzling because the active directedness known as *intentionality* is so integral to the phenomenological aspect of the study which calls for empathy (Stein, 1989/1938). Gadamer also took hermeneutics out of Dilthey's narrow duality and applied it to interpretation of all life activity in the name of human experience. Gadamer (1975) demonstrates his adoption of Heidegger's reformation of hermeneutic understanding:

Heidegger's temporal analytics of human existence (Dasein) [in *Being and Time*] has, I think shown convincingly that understanding is not just one of the various possible behaviors of the subject, but the mode of being of There-being itself (p. xviii).

Another point Gadamer held strongly to that varied from Dilthey was insistence that "reality happens precisely *within* language" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 35), which is to say all meaning is linguistically based. Gadamer also advances Heidegger's addition of prejudice as enrichment to hermeneutic interpretation, and finds Schleiermacher's faith in method untenable because of its lacking of it (Gadamer, 1975). Finally, Gadamer's hermeneutics were historical which means one has an *historically effected* consciousness that allows one to "link with the tradition of the past and interpret what has been handed on" (Crotty, 1998, p. 100). This fits with Korzybski's description of "time-binding" and diachronic synthesis of knowledge originally published in 1933.

Gadamer saw all forms of prejudice—both unjustified and justified—as constitutive of the human condition. Because the "justified (or *enabling*) prejudices...are productive of

knowledge” (Bernstein, 1986, p. 90), their discernment cannot be made with monological or univocal acts, but rather through “dialogical encounter with what is handed down to us” that we uncover those hidden parts of our ontological finitude. As with psychoanalysis, this uncovering frees us to be more productive in our understanding, interpretation, and application of new knowledge. Using Heidegger's hermeneutic circle we challenge our fore-structures (fore-having, fore-sight, fore-conceptions) iteratively with those objects we seek to understand. This is a never ending process because our fore-structures change continually with our accumulation of experience over time, and because there are always new interpretations coming to our attention within the categories of our focus. “Gadamer's real achievement is the demonstration that hermeneutic understanding is linked with transcendental necessity to the articulation of an action oriented self-understanding” (Habermas, 1986, p. 262).

Howard (1982) wrote that the hermeneutics presented in Gadamer's *Truth and Method* was distinctly different from any before. It was an existential hermeneutics because “existentialism has always insisted that the value system of the individual contributed something to, and was therefore partly responsible for, the shape that reality was thought to have” (p. xii). In Gadamer I see the influence of Heidegger's ontology and preceding that, Husserl's phenomenological insight that “meanings are structures which a person lives *before* [emphasis mine] he [sic] thinks about them” (p. xii). This has led to distinctions between Gadamer's *philosophical hermeneutics* (Gadamer, 1975; Ricœur, 1974) in the social sciences, and to Heidegger's *hermeneutic phenomenology* in the natural sciences (Kockelmans, 1993, 2002).

Dilthey's *Erlebnis* may have been a taking-off point for Heidegger's argument that human existence, which he called *Dasein*, "is already a projection of a world of structure that constitutes its possibilities in life" (Howard, 1982, p. 124) whether they are pursued or not—that meaning is waiting to be discovered through the temporal flow of human existence. "A temporal ontological ground appears as a kind of a horizon against which the correspondence of sentences with reality can assume a justified shape" (p. 125) and "the flow of existence...is a disclosure of meanings... the fundamental deciphering or hermeneutical agency which then itself requires elucidation" (p. 126). Heidegger describes the human condition of *thrownness* as finding ourselves in situations "of particularized and ongoing traditions, customs, and prejudices" (p. 131) that prevent our self-determination of starting points. These situational obstacles "can never be completely illuminated" (p. 131) within the finitude of our individual lives for complete autonomy. Because human existence is temporally finite and only humans can uncover the preexisting fore-structures of that existence, for Heidegger, being *is* time. It is on this dramatic new ontological perspective of uncovering our own prejudices and fore-structures that Gadamer in *Truth and Method* builds a hermeneutics that is philosophical in depth.

### **The hermeneutic circle.**

The hermeneutic circle has always been an essential element of hermeneutic interpretation—fundamental to the vaguest understanding of hermeneutics—and remains so throughout the philosophical changes that hermeneutics has undergone. It was initially used by Ast and Schleiermacher (Bleicher, 1980) as a technique for interpreting text by iteratively contrasting the parts of the text under study with one's sense of its whole to discern the author's meaning. There was no consideration of the changes new levels of insight and

understanding made within the interpreter, for the most part up until Heidegger introduced his ontological view of hermeneutics. Bleicher (1980) shows how interpretation changes and enlarges the interpreter:

The aim of understanding a text...can...no longer be the objective re-cognition of the author's intended meaning, but the emergence of practically relevant knowledge in which the subject himself is changed by being made aware of new possibilities of existence and his [sic] responsibility for his own future. (p. 3)

What Heidegger has revealed then, is that the significance of one's interpretation of a text is directly manifest in the enlarged grasp of one's *suchness*, one's *Dasein*, one's existential self within one's *Weltanschauung* (apprehension of one's personal world in that given moment). This new sense of self then reveals an ascending horizon of *practically relevant* opportunities and responsibilities bounded by one's encultured values, prejudice, and foreknowledge. The dialectic circularity Heidegger saw was between the prejudicial foreknowledge with which one engages a new text or other such experience, and with the new sense of being-in-the-world that follows. The *new* sense of being then becomes the advancing prejudicial foreknowledge that engages with the next text to further enlarge one's assumptive world and one's present place in it along a continuum called lifetime.

To provide an understanding of the evolution of the hermeneutic circle, we begin with the Romantic hermeneuts. Schleiermacher cites Friedrich Ast "for asserting the basic principles of the hermeneutic circle" (Ormiston & Schrift, 1990, pp. 11-12). In his book *Basic Elements of Grammar, Hermeneutics, and Criticism*, written in 1808, Ast described his hermeneutic for interpreting ancient texts known as his *threefold conception of understanding* as:

- historical understanding of the content of their works;
- grammatical understanding of their language and style; and

- spiritual understanding of the total *Geist* of the individual and their age. (Ormiston & Schrift, 1990, p. 11)

This led to Ast's distinction of "three corresponding forms of explication (*Erklärung*):"

- the hermeneutics of the letter [grammatical and historical];
  - the hermeneutics of meaning [author's intention at the time]; and
  - the hermeneutics of the [textual] spirit [or central idea conveyed].
- (Ormiston & Schrift, 1990, p. 12)

It is interesting to note that Ast used the word *Erklärung*, which in German means explication or explanation. At a later time Dilthey and many others have assigned the word *Verstehen*, which means understanding, to hermeneutics, and *Erklärung*, or explanation, to scientific epistemology. Dilthey's corresponding distinction of social sciences and natural sciences was *Geisteswissenschaften* and *Naturwissenschaften* (German nouns are always capitalized) respectively.

There appears a dialectic between the category of positivists, post-positivists, and logical empiricists on one hand, and that of hermeneutics and various qualitative researchers on the other, to each ground the identity of their own theories in relation to the other category. Appendix A lists a number of dialectical attributions encountered in the texts read for this study that illustrate the respective polarities encountered between epistemology and hermeneutics—not to be confused with "the dialogical-dialectical mediation of subject and object" (Bleicher, 1980, p. 3). This has led to different taxonomies among a number of authors in the field of research.

In contrast to "empathetic identification of the problem as it must have appeared to the subject, and a reliving of the deliberation that must then have ensued" (Blackburn, 2008, n.p., under the entry for R. G. Collingwood). Radnitzky (1970) renewed Dilthey's term *Geisteswissenschaften* to simply ask of the text what meaning it has to offer in the moment

and circumstance of the interpreter. He contrasted this perspective with the earlier hermeneutics where “*verstehen*’ is conceived psychologically as empathizing (*Einfühlen*) [and] reliving (*Nacherleben*) on the one hand, and natural phenomena, which are only explainable, on the other” (Vol. 2, pp. 20-21).

Radnitzky (1970) suggested that the importance of texts is directly related to how relevant they are “for the practices of life, on the ground that the heart of the human sciences is *co-understanding and possibly also consent about the possibilities and norms of being-in-the-world*” and opportunity to interweave “the hermeneutic and the emancipatory interest” (p. 22). Radnitzky also retained Heidegger’s concept of foreknowledge (*Vorverständnis*) as a prerequisite to interpretation and a pole in the iterative *tacking* process known as the hermeneutic circle, and reminded us how neglected the “hermeneutic circle or spiral” is (Radnitzky, 1970, p. 23).

If we are trying to understand ourselves, our community, or the whole world, we use hermeneutic inquiry. “*Hermeneutics culminates in the Verstehen [understanding] of the most deep-lying 'final aims', of the great Weltanschauungen<sup>28</sup> and works of art, and of cultures and epochs as wholes*” (Radnitzky, 1970, Vol. 2, p. 28). Gadamer eschewed the psychologistic hermeneutics of the nineteenth-century for a *Verstehen* based on both a projective anticipation and a mediation “in which (quasi-aprioristic) *constructive or creative steps (Denkschritte)* and (quasi-empirical) *checking or error-eliminating turns mutually complement and correct each other*” (Radnitzky, 1970, Vol. 2, p. 29).

In response to Martin Luther's foundational doctrine of *sola scriptura*, the Council of Trent invoked by Pope Paul III predicated their directive that the Church must interpret all scripture for the laity on the emergence of “a new...hermeneutical awareness of textuality...

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<sup>28</sup> [Weltanschauungen: world views](#)



[as] an awareness that the meaning of a particular text... was not determinate in and of itself but a function of the shelf of books which served as the theoretical context for its interpretation” (Heelan, 1994, p. 364). Here the hermeneutic circularity was polarized between the understanding of a text vis-à-vis the published canon.

A similar schism arose in Europe thereafter in natural science around the question of *if sola Natura* “as the rule for science... could only be interpreted with the aid of other books that set the standards and methods of interpretation” (Heelan, 1994, p. 365). I take this new awareness of intertextuality to be a key historical inflection point<sup>29</sup> leading up to modern hermeneutics as it unfolded in nineteenth- and twentieth-century German philosophy. Mueller-Vollmer (1986) accepted this intertextuality when he advises the reader of Heidegger's *Being and Time* “reading [it] within the context of other hermeneutic texts may shed some new light on Heidegger's argument as it arises out of the hermeneutic tradition which he intends to overcome and surpass” (editor note, p. 215).

### **Fusion of horizons.**

Gadamer refined the process of philosophical hermeneutics as a *fusion of horizons* of the subject (interpreter) and the text. He uses the metaphor *horizon* to help envision the temporal merging of two unique topologies—that of the subject and that of the text to produce a *Weltanschauung* or topological view of the world at each moment of consciousness in the flow of time. The *horizon* is an unreal phenomena that merges the interiority of the self with its interpreted exteriority in a topological metaphor. The dialectic movement between one's preexisting horizon and a newly presented horizon (as provided by reflection on a text, or dialogue with an Other) generates the latter of the two primary type

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<sup>29</sup> inflection point: An event that changes the way we think and act. –A. Grove, Founder of Intel. ([http://www.learnaboutwallstreet.com/financial\\_terms\\_i.html](http://www.learnaboutwallstreet.com/financial_terms_i.html))

hermeneutic circles discussed above, and leads to their fusion in an enlarged sense of self. Application of the hermeneutic circle for Gadamer consists of the oscillation between the horizon of one's own fore-knowledge and the horizon of the text (or other phenomena we wish to understand) as both evolve through time and circumstance of our being. This new use of the term hermeneutic circle, in my view, does not negate the part-to-whole circle of Ast, Schleiermacher, and Dilthey, but extends it to a more existential use of the circle/spiral metaphor derived from Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology. The two types of hermeneutic circle may also be complementary in research that looks at the historicity and circumstances of the author for information that changes the horizontal profile of the text.

The Greek verb for *delimit* is the source of the word *horizon* (Van Peursen, 1977). "The horizon is the line which marks the extremity of the visual field" (p. 182). This line and its topological variegations, as it visually conforms to deformations and contours of real objects in a 360-degree panoramic present to all sighted humans, is itself not a real object in our external world. As one moves toward an horizon, it recedes from our view while revealing new aspects of objects as we pass them or they pass us; and yet at every advance in one direction or another, our visual world is at each moment delimited anew as a result of our own actions and those of others—intentional or not.

The horizon of our life can never be totalized or fully apprehended with our mind because it is continuously changing in our field of perception; but we can gain perspective on the objects that form its contours as we find ourselves *thrown* into their midst, to interpret or understand them in at least three general ways—going from the phenomenological to the hermeneutic. First is to initiate physical action; make corporeal motion toward and around the objects of interest, concern, or attraction to us. As we do so, both greater detail and more

aspects come into view—as when one might approach a sculpture and then walk around it for fuller apprehension of its givenness, of its dimensions and details previously hidden from view. When we do this we bring with us all our previous knowledge, metaphors, and prejudice (what Heidegger named fore-knowledge) that tradition has given us about sculpture (and other symbols as well) to our interpretation of this particular sculpture, from our angle and proximity to it, at this particular time in our life experience, in this particular light, with our particular disposition of the moment, with the drugs we are on, or with the tinted glasses we may be wearing, etc. The horizon of our pre-understanding and the horizon of all the aspects of this particular sculpture meld into a greater understanding of sculpture and perhaps other correlating aspects our subjective world.

A second—and not mutually exclusive—way to understanding takes us beyond the visual/motor realm with another form of action: discourse with others to compare their perspectives on objects in their horizon at this or that particular time in their life experience and disposition with our own at a common point in time for an enlarged understanding. This is where we form a fusion of horizons through shared reflection on objects or phenomena—be they sculptures, ideas, or qualia<sup>30</sup>—that enlarge our worldviews mutually. Fully participative dialogue with authentic listening, questioning, and disclosure of one another's prejudices forms a fecund, intersubjective container wherein dyads and groups will fuse horizons to create new “facticity” (Heidegger, 1999) in our own being, and new platforms of group identity for joint action.

A third form of understanding formed by the fusion of horizons is the philosophical hermeneutic interpretation of text. Unlike the ephemeral immediacy of dialogue and discourse, the text is fixed and more contemplable. The text becomes *the other* as we try to

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<sup>30</sup> qualia: the sensuous experience of the life-world; physical sensation.

understand the 'horizon' it presents in relation to the horizon of our own being, and how the fusion of the two changes who we are through a dialectical iteration<sup>31</sup> of horizons.

There is a wide range of means to understanding, explaining, interpreting, knowing, and sense-making, and some are methodological and reproductive of the author/artist/builder's original intent; however the above examples are ontological and come out of the twentieth-century German tradition of Husserl, Heidegger, and Gadamer.

Gadamer explains that when we put ourselves in the place of the Other, we attain “a higher universality that overcomes, not only our own particularity, but that of the other” (1975, p. 272). The “Other” can be a person, an object or performance of art, a text, or any phenomenon. In being authentically open to every other we encounter, experience, or engage with, we participate in a mutuality that enlarges both poles ontologically. This is a natural fusion of the horizons of the self and of the other that occurs continuously to create time albeit so often unconsciously. The horizon of the self is simply the topology of all our life-world experience along with our continual re-interpretation of it (derived through our ever-growing and changing prejudices and expectations of meaning). This personal horizon of “accumulated self” (Emerson, 1997) is the only authentic foundation we have from which to engage with the other dialogically. Our development as individuals and our evolution as a species of life proceeds, through time and continuous horizontal fusion, to create identity, history, and tradition. The opportunity for intersubjective and communal engagement with the other on ever more conscious horizons holds promise for evolutionary leaps, through

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<sup>31</sup> iteration: the act of repeating a process usually with the aim of approaching a desired goal or target or result. Each repetition of the process is also called an "iteration," and the results of one iteration are used as the starting point for the next iteration. (Wikipedia 2/22/11)

social construction if, when, and where there is Lewinian *unfreezing* of local culture, coincident with shared, unconstrained vision, reflection, and levels of understanding.

The concept of the 'horizon' suggests itself because it expresses the wide, superior vision that the person who is seeking to understand must have. To acquire a horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand—not in order to look away from it, but to see it better within a larger whole and in truer proportion. (Gadamer, 1975, p. 272)

Gadamer states, "...the horizon of the present is being continually formed, in that we have continually to test all our prejudices. ... part of this testing is the encounter with the past and the understanding of the tradition from which we come" (1975, p. 273). To form the horizon of the present requires a "distinguishing" fusion with the past. This makes consciousness of tradition and historicity essential to formation of understanding in the human sciences for Gadamer. "The projecting of the historical horizon...is only a phase in the process of understanding...[and] is overtaken by our own present horizon of understanding" (p. 273) Gadamer in fact names "the task of effective-historical consciousness...the central problem of hermeneutics" (p. 274).

### **Critical hermeneutics.**

Critical hermeneutics is an attitude toward understanding one's ontological standing with the other and one's culture, using a frame of consciousness that questions the equity of that standing. That understanding is reconstituted with every new interpretation of the objects that appear and reappear as phenomena in our lifeworld. Every text reread, every phone message replayed, every artwork reinterpreted, and every behavior reconsidered shapes a new horizon that travels before us like a shadow, changing with our accumulating prejudices and presuppositions (Skórzewski, Wierciński & Fiala, 2009). Each new apprehension is a part to be contrasted with the whole sum of our increasing *Weltanschauung* (or internalized

view of the real world) in a non-vicious<sup>32</sup> hermeneutic circle that reveals ever-changing, situational realities of being (Heidegger, 1962). The adjective ‘critical’ when used with hermeneutics indicates either a presumption or judgment of liberty vis-à-vis oppression, segregation, or alienation of marginalized individuals or groups by non-humanistic hegemonies of power and hierarchical domination.

I historically situate critical hermeneutics within the frame provided by McLean (2003) in his *Hermeneutics for a Global Age*. McLean described the first millennium as a period “in which human attention was (justly) focused upon God,” and the second millennium “as shifting its attention to human beings” (p. 8). He described the first 500 years of the second millennium as a time of “reintegration of Aristotelian reason” (p. 8) via Aquinas and others. This 1500 year “contemplation of the magnificence and munificence of...God” (p. 9) was dismissed by Bacon, Locke, and Descartes during the Enlightenment, and “reduced to control over nature in the utilitarian service of humankind” (p. 9). “...as the goals of human life were reduced to the material order, the service of mankind really became the service of machines in the exploitation of physical nature. This was the real enslavement of human freedom” (p. 9). McLean is hopeful for a humanistic turning as the new millennium gets underway. He writes of the twentieth-century as a paroxysmal crescendo of “poverty..., exploitation..., two World Wars, pogroms and holocausts, genocide and ethnic cleansing, emerging intolerance, family collapse, and anomie” (p. 10) as the final throes of an overwrought period of frantic effort to realize the empiricist dream of scientific certainty and control, extended by the *greedy hubris* of those holding onto power. Globalization now, is the consequence of this final tantrum and as McLean describes it as turning from the

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<sup>32</sup> In contrast to non-vicious circularity is vicious circularity as in “statements such as ‘No one can understand this statement,’ ‘I do not exist,’ and ‘Any statement, including this one, can mean anything the hearer wants it to’...because they are self-stultifying—if...taken seriously...cannot be taken seriously.” (Gill, 2000, p. 7)

“brutal” objectivism predicted by Vico (2002/1725) toward “subjectivism” in the public sphere—

a dramatic inversion: where before all began from above and flowed downward—whether in structures of political power or of abstract reasoning—at the turn of this new millennium attention focuses rather on the emerging upward of the creative freedom of people in, and as, civil society as a new and responsible partner with government and business in the continuing effort toward the realization of the common good” (McLean, 2003, pp. 12-13).

With that perspective in mind, I interpret this moment in history with Lewin’s three-stage theory of change as the first—*unfreezing*—stage not to be squandered with the rhetoric of vested power until the new *refreezing* stage sets in. A world operating on subjective paradigms would be as out of balance as the one we have suffered with objective paradigms, so it is my sense that we should seize this interstice to *quickly* sort out the best applications for each and cobble them together for a new pragmatic and *intersubjective* foundation for organization development. To the conscious OD practitioner I emphasize urgency of time because it requires broad, organized participation to maintain human freedom (as existential self-realization) to supplant the univocality of institutionalized power across time.

### **Pragmatic Critical Hermeneutics.**

I turn to Bernstein’s (2010) ample work in contemporary pragmatism to philosophically situate a critical hermeneutic that can work around the subjectivism and cultural oppression of the past century toward an emancipating view of possibility. Concomitant with the objective reductionism of the past century was the development of classical pragmatism by Americans William James, John Dewey, G. H. Mead, and Josiah Royce; however C. S. Peirce, the original founder of pragmatism was largely ignored and misunderstood until mid-twentieth-century. Pragmatism was, for a time, eclipsed by the academic thrust of logical empiricism and Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*, followed later by the

attention drawn to the Continental schools of philosophy and works such as Heidegger's *Being and Time* (BT) and then by the "linguistic turn" with Wittgenstein's later work—*Philosophical Investigations* (PI). Ironically, a fresh retrospective, intertextual reading of *Being and Time* and of *Philosophical Investigations* reveals significant alignment with classical pragmatism; although neither of these two European philosophers is known to have addressed pragmatism *per se* nor its founders. Bernstein (2010) credited the more recent works of Richard Rorty, Hilary Putnam, and Axel Honneth in America, along with the work of Karl-Otto Apel, Jürgen Habermas and Hans Joas in Germany for a resurgence of pragmatism in social thought that he describes as "a sea-change." Rorty, in turn, "has argued that...W. V. O. Quine, Wilfrid Sellars, and [particularly] Donald Davidson can and *should* be read as refining basic pragmatic themes anticipated by the classical pragmatic thinkers" (p. 13). The thrust of this *neopragmatism* was generated by shared distrust of logical empiricism, reductionism, givenness, metaphysical epistemology, universal theories, and the general constitution of Cartesianism.

There are a number of types and categories of hermeneutics historically produced by authors, critics, and philosophers with different purposes and viewpoints. Critical hermeneutics is only one such case. It is variously called a *hermeneutics of suspicion* by Ricœur, or *depth hermeneutics* by Habermas and sometimes refuted as such by others.

### **Situating Critical Hermeneutics.**

A brief overview of how hermeneutics has been sliced and diced to situate critical hermeneutics *per se* will supplement the general history we have provided above.



Gallagher (1992), who studied the hermeneutics of education, parsed contemporary hermeneutics into four consecutive schools that are somewhat defined and bounded by three aporias among these primary authors.

*Aporia I: Reproduction* [Betti v. Gadamer] (p. 12).

*Aporia II: Authority and Emancipation* [Gadamer v. Habermas] (p. 15).

*Aporia III: Conversation* [Derrida v. Gadamer] (p. 19).

The first school of contemporary hermeneutics is that of *conservative hermeneutics* as developed by Schleiermacher, Betti, and Dilthey which is concerned with revealing the original meaning of a text and the intentions of its author. This school uses a simple hermeneutic circle of part-to-whole-to-part of each document read to reconcile parts of the text with its whole.

The second school of contemporary hermeneutics is Gadamer's *moderate hermeneutics* which is not concerned with the author's meaning as much as the meaning generated by the fusion of the *horizon* of the text with Heidegger's *facticity* of the interpreter's pre-given, and prejudiced, experiential horizon of being-in-the-world. In this case, the hermeneutic *spiral* goes from one horizon back to the other as each is changing and as understanding increases. Another way to see this is as contrasting one's pre-given topology of the world with the ever-changing topology of the world as perceived in the present flow of time and space. Madison (1989) noted that one of Gadamer's major motivations in developing a philosophical hermeneutics (out of Heidegger's phenomenological hermeneutics of ontology) was "to overcome or displace the age of epistemology," and set himself apart from Dilthey, Betti, and Hirsch's "modern, epistemological, foundationalist project" (p. 108). This established Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics in the postmodern, anti-foundationalist camp.

The third school of contemporary hermeneutics, called *radical hermeneutics*, is a hermeneutics of suspicion of all language and tradition. Its leading proponents are Foucault and Derrida who use deconstruction to expose the Nietzschean abyss behind all language and tradition. It calls for the strength and authenticity of an *Übermensch* to dwell in the consciousness of radical hermeneutics and live in the “flux” of “comfortless” finitude (Caputo, 1987, 2000), and dissipative reality.

The fourth school of contemporary hermeneutics, *critical hermeneutics* as conceived by Habermas, Apel, Thompson (1981), and Kögler (1996), “is employed as a means of penetrating false consciousness, discovering the ideological nature of our belief systems, promoting distortion-free communication, and thereby accomplishing a liberating consensus” (Gallagher, 1992, p. 11). Using a psychoanalytic approach, Habermas appends a process of critical reflection to Gadamer's moderate hermeneutics that Gadamer took exception with. Habermas' “depth hermeneutics” takes into account “extralinguistic social processes of domination, organized force, modes of production, [and] scientific-technical progress...” (p. 17). Habermas argued that Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics turns a blind eye to the effects of power on interpretation because it remains entirely within the frame of language. Gadamer countered that such ideological critique cannot stand on neutral ground, and produces nothing but more ideology; and his solution is to continue the *dialogue of horizons* to reveal hidden ideology linguistically (Gallagher, 1992).

Many now reject the view that knowledge of the social sciences should be “empirically grounded, universally binding, [and] value-free” (Thompson, 1981, p. 1) as is that of the natural sciences. Methods that have been applied in the effort to analyze social sciences with these criteria have been tried by authors such as Popper, Hempel and Nagel in

the mid-twentieth-century. According to Thompson this positivistic approach to social science inquiry was disputed and abandoned for a linguistic approach that began with Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and work of his followers. This linguistic turn began with a narrow focus that has remained tied to philosophy.

Two schools of thought tradition have since taken social science inquiry to a wider ground and a formidable standing. The first is hermeneutic phenomenology for which Heidegger combined traditional interpretation with Husserl's phenomenology. Gadamer developed this synthesis by combining this new approach with a linguistic ontology he also gleaned from Heidegger to develop contemporary philosophical hermeneutics. On the heels of Gadamer's *Truth and Method* Ricœur contrasted Gadamer's work from the influences of Freud and Saussure. The second school of thought tradition tied to the linguistic turn in social science is that of critical social theory. “Anchored in the writings of Kant, Hegel and Marx, this tradition was fostered by Horkeimer, Adorno and others who sought to construct a theory of society which preserved a moment of critique” (Thompson, 1981, p. 2). As stated above, Jürgen Habermas (1971, 1973, 1981a, 1981b, 1986, 2000) has advanced this work with steady development of a *depth hermeneutics* modeled on psychoanalysis, while his contemporary, Paul Ricœur (1976, 1981, 1991, 1996), developed a *hermeneutics of suspicion*—both reflecting on the *word games* of Wittgenstein (2001/1953), and deserving reflection of the aporias in their respective understanding of a critical hermeneutics in the context of language and action.

Bernstein (1986) provided the insight that ‘understanding’ (*subtilitas intelligendi*), ‘interpretation’ (*subtilitas explicandi*), and ‘application’ (*subtilitas applicandi*)...in the view of Gadamer “are all moments of the single process of understanding” (p. 87). The integral

part which application plays in hermeneutics provides the way out of many of the dichotomies and dualities in Appendix A coming out of the metaphysics tradition and away from either-or dilemmas of critical reflection and a number of epistemologies, “to show how a position of culturally situated, yet theoretically informed, critique is possible” (Kögler, 1996, p. xiii). This is to say that Habermas’ *depth hermeneutics*, and Ricœur’s *hermeneutics of suspicion*, and Thompson’s<sup>33</sup> *critical hermeneutics* may possibly have a place in the *ineluctable situatedness* of praxis in any cultural context that may also have other methodologies for action in play that are not used for understanding within the *critical* domain. Thus I see the opportunity to juxtapose a critical hermeneutics with action inquiry and abductive reasoning within situational containments of OD practice, and to look for hypothetical outcomes that lead to a rebalancing of social justice and participation in the workplace.

### **Abductive Reasoning**

Abductive reasoning, abductive cognition, or simply abduction, as *inference to the best explanation* (Harman, 1965), is a complementary analog to interpretation, and a form of inquiry that also has the power of discovery when used in C. S. Peirce’s triadic logic (abduction-induction-deduction) to evoke (abduce), and discern among, hypotheses for advancing understanding of material phenomena within time-bound situations. Some of the most common examples of abductive reasoning are found in criminal investigation. A detective may have a strong hunch that a particular person is the perpetrator of a crime. The officer assembles emerging points of evidence that infer her suspect is the most plausible perpetrator; and she at some point proceeds to test this abduction through deductive logic.

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<sup>33</sup> Thompson (1981) is the earliest use of the term *critical hermeneutics* I found in my review of the literature. It has since been used by a number of authors including Kögler (1996). I use the term as a catch-all to describe a number of critical reflection methods available.

The medical field has long relied on abductive reasoning in the diagnosis of disease. One can see the performance of continual abductive reasoning iterated with deductive testing and supported with inductive analysis played out in the television series *House*. The lead doctor may abduce one or more causal hypotheses of an interesting case based on the unusual or surprising symptoms using his experience and instincts; an assisting doctor may inductively suggest the statistical probability of each hypothesis; and the lead doctor will then abductively choose a treatment to deductively test what he thinks is the most likely of the hypothetical explanations for the presenting symptoms. This illustrates the two sides of abduction—the formation of non-a-priori hypotheses and the selection of the one that infers the best explanation of the facts.

Most work interpreting C. S. Peirce cites three primary sources of text. First and foremost are the *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce* (CP) published originally in six volumes by Harvard University Press in 1932, and republished by Harvard with two additional volumes in 1958. Each volume is divided into numbered paragraphs which are traditionally cited in place of page numbers after CP, a space, the volume number and a period. The standard parenthetical citations appear as the following: (CP 4.196). Where I cite authors citing CP volumes with Roman numerals (as appear on the covers of the volumes), I have converted them to Arabic to conform with APA standards and for uniformity.

The second primary Peirce source authors use are his unpublished manuscripts (MS) that were not all included in *Collected Papers* and are archived at Harvard University with limited access to the originals and microfilm. These handwritten and fragmented sources are cited with MS, followed by a space, the archivist's manuscript number, a colon, and page

number or range as the following: (MS 637:5-7). In this category of handwritten archives also are Peirce's letters cited with L, followed by a space, and a page number as: (L 24).

The third and more recent primary Peirce source that is currently being used is the *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition* (CE); a series of volumes that began in 1982 and is still in development after seven volumes. Citations read CE, space, volume number, colon, page number. All Peirce quotations cited in secondary texts have been verified where possible in the CP or CE series.

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) was a great American polymath who discovered and developed a distinct form of logical inference he named *abduction*. His work in science, logic, and semiotics was so advanced that he did not achieve recognition during his lifetime except from a close circle of colleagues and friends. Peirce, a friend of William James (1842-1910) and a teacher of John Dewey (1859-1952) spent 60 years of his life relentlessly developing and refining this concept of *abduction*, variously calling it *hypothesis* and *retroduction*. Without a reading of his substantial *Collected Papers* and perhaps study of many of his manuscripts that did not appear there, it is difficult for contemporary scholars to trace his development except through secondary and tertiary works on pragmatism for which he is acknowledged as its founder, and on semiotics, to which he contributed greatly. Peirce's later pragmatism developed independently of the pragmatist school that grew out of his early work, and he found it necessary to rename his particular philosophy *pragmaticism* later in his career to avoid confusion with the directions taken by James and Dewey.

Peirce drew his initial ideas for syllogistic logic from Aristotle. In *Prior Analytics, II*, 25, he interpreted Aristotle's use of the word for *apagogue*, in contrast to *epagogue* (his word for induction), as equivalent to *abduction* (Anderson, 1986, pp. 145-146). Although many

positions changed in his disposition on the relationship of abduction, deduction, and induction, it can be seen also that Peirce was making steady progress toward a rational and pragmatic theory of abductive inference that stands equal, and integral, with deductive and inductive inference in a new syllogistic logic that evolved into a non-syllogistic process of discovery. Fann (1970) and Anderson (1986) noted Peirce was calling it the “method of methods” as early as 1878—long before he had completely distinguished abduction and induction as distinct forms of ampliative<sup>34</sup> inference after the turn of the century (Fann, 1970, p. 150). These distinctions were developed gradually throughout Peirce's entire career. One of Peirce's early insights found in (CP 2.651) stated “the essence of an induction is that it infers *from one set of facts to another set of similar facts*, whereas hypothesis (abduction) infers *from facts of one kind to facts of another*.” In 1902, Peirce fully let go of the syllogistic framework he had worked from and concluded that inductive probability confers no direct validity on abduction (Anderson, 1986) thereby completing their full distinction. By 1905 Peirce was also saying “Retroduction [abduction] and Induction face opposite ways” (CP 2.755).

Karl Popper (1959) perfectly captured the spirit seen in Peirce's model of inquiry with a memorable analogy insofar as Peirce is not satisfied with hypotheses until “they are firm enough to” sustain belief and relieve doubt, whereupon they yet remain defeasible knowledge—plausible, yet eternally fallible to new information.

The empirical basis of objective science has...nothing 'absolute' about it. Science does not rest upon rock-bottom. The bold structure of its theories rises, as it were, above a swamp. It is like a building erected on piles. The piles are driven down from above into the swamp, but not down into any natural or 'given' base; and when we cease our attempts to drive our piles into a deeper layer, it is not because we have reached firm ground. We simply stop when we are *satisfied* that they are firm enough

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<sup>34</sup> ampliative: a term used mainly in logic, meaning "extending" or "adding to that which is already known." [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ampliative\(2/21/2011\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ampliative(2/21/2011))

to carry the structure, at least *for the time being*. (Popper, 1959, p. 111, emphasis mine)

Popper's principle of falsifiability and Peirce's fallibilism and defeasibility are essentially all the same concept and support arguments for pragmatism.

In a similar vein, Rorty (1980), an anti-foundationalist and pragmatist who is more aligned with Dewey than Peirce, described epistemology as “desire for a theory of knowledge [being] a desire for constraint—a desire to find foundations to which one might cling, frameworks beyond which one must not stray, objects which impose themselves, representations which cannot be gainsaid” (p. 315). He further argued that hermeneutics picks up where epistemology leaves off, which would indicate that they are not polar opposites.

Kapitan (1997) succinctly captured Peirce's development of abductive reasoning in three stages. In 1878 Peirce offered his first syllogistic model of reasoning from rule and result to case:

All <i>A</i> s which are <i>B</i> are <i>C</i> . (Rule)	
This <i>A</i> is <i>C</i> . (Result)	
Therefore, the <i>A</i> is <i>B</i> (Case) (Kapitan, 1997, p. 480, citing CP 2.623)	

Peirce refined the model to allow for the novelty of hypotheses in explaining *surprising* results in the course of developing explanation:

The surprising fact, <i>C</i> is observed:	
But if <i>H</i> were true, <i>C</i> would be a matter of course, hence,	
There is reason to suspect that <i>H</i> is true.	
(Kapitan, 1997, p. 480, citing CP 2.102; MS 441.30, 475.13)	

Peirce determined there is a second task of abduction—to provide a way to evaluate and distinguish among plausible hypotheses based on economy:

Some surprising fact <i>C</i> is observed.	
If <i>H</i> were true, then <i>C</i> would be a matter of course.	



*H* is more economical than its envisioned competitors, hence  


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*H* is more plausible than its distinguished competitors.  
 (Kapitan, 1997, p. 481, citing CP 8.223; 6.469, 480-488; 2.662)

Peirce had initially derived this logic sequence from the following set of syllogisms:

[*Deduction*]:

Rule—All the beans from this bag are white.

Case—These beans are from this bag.

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Result—These beans are white.

[*Induction*]:

Case—These beans are from this bag.

Result—These beans are white.

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Rule—All the beans from this bag are white.

[*Hypothesis*]:

Rule—All the beans from this bag are white.

Result—These beans are white.

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Case—These beans are from this bag. (CP 2.623)

Peirce eventually moved away from seeing these three modes of inference solely in syllogistic terms only and began seeing them as a lived process (Anderson, 1986; Fann, 1970), and in 1902 he completely separated induction from abduction with the statement:

As long as I held that opinion [emphasizing the syllogistic form of abduction], my conceptions of Abduction necessarily confused two kinds of reasoning. When, after repeated attempts, I finally succeeded in clearing the matter up, the fact shone out that probability proper [induction] had nothing to do with the validity of Abduction, unless in a doubly indirect manner (CP 2.102).

This took Peirce's thinking of abduction from an *evidencing process* to a stage of inquiry leading to hypotheses (Anderson, 1986). Whereas induction provides *probable* knowledge, abduction provides *possible* knowledge, while deduction only determines the limits of a given case. Appendix C illustrates the final structure of Peirce's fully developed trichotomy of inferential reasoning.

As early as 1954, Polya suggested that a reverse *modus ponens*<sup>35</sup> inference is a correct form for plausible reasoning (abduction) contrasted this with a deductive *modus tollens*<sup>36</sup> argument:

<i>Demonstrative</i>	<i>Heuristic</i>	
<i>A implies B</i>	<i>A implies B</i>	
<i>B is false</i>	<i>B is true</i>	
<i>A is false</i>	<i>A is more credible</i>	(Polya, 1954, pp. 18-19)

This illustrates the mathematical perspective that abduction is both plausible and defeasible.

The tie-in of logic with pragmatism is stated by Peirce as an identity: “If you carefully consider the question of pragmatism you will see that it is nothing else than the question of the logic of abduction” (CP 4.196). Peircean logic of abduction has lately become extremely useful in the fields of artificial intelligence and computer logic (Aliseda, 2006; Josephson & Josephson, 1994; Magnani, 2000; Peng & Reggia, 1990).

For Peirce, three aspects determine whether a hypothesis is promising: it must be explanatory, testable, and economic. A hypothesis is an explanation if it accounts for the facts. Its status is that of a suggestion until it is verified, which explains the need for the testability criterion. Finally, the motivation for the economic criterion is twofold: a response to the practical problem of having innumerable explanatory hypotheses to test, as well as the need for a criterion to select the best explanation amongst the testable ones. (Aliseda, 2005, p. 363)

It is abduction, according to Peirce, that is the *first* of three stages of logical inquiry. “Abduction is the process of forming an explanatory hypothesis. It is the only logical operation that introduces any new idea...” (CP 5.171). From abduced suggestions (hypotheses), deduction can draw a prediction that can be tested by induction. Deduction proves that something *must* be; Induction shows that something *actually* is operative;

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<sup>35</sup> *modus ponens*: The rule of logic stating that if a conditional statement (“if p then q”) is accepted, and the antecedent (p) holds, then the consequent (q) may be inferred (Google Dictionary)

<sup>36</sup> *modus tollens*: The rule of logic stating that if a conditional statement (“if p then q”) is accepted, and the consequent does not hold (not-q), then the negation of the antecedent (not-p) can be inferred (Google Dictionary)

Abduction merely suggests that something “*may be*” (CP 5.171), or is possible. “Abductive suggestions come to us in a flash” (CP 5.181). They often appear with moments of surprise arising from new information or data. They resolve doubt or irritation and produce belief for a particular given situation.

### **Action Research**

I have selected action research as the third categorical mode of inquiry to complement the interpretive (hermeneutic) and creative (abductive) modes with its *participative* and *action* orientation. No one mode alone can easily situate a new plane of actionable hypotheses for OD practitioners without some form of action research such as: participatory action research (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Hawkins, 2008; McIntyre, 2007; Shotter, 2003), action learning (Desmond, 2011; Dotlich & Noel, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Marquardt, 1997, 2004; Pedler, 1997), action inquiry (Chandler & Torbert, 2003; Torbert & Associates, 2004; Reason, 1995; Shane, Wyatt & Cavalier, 2005; Shotter, n.d.), or action science (Argyris & Schön, D. A., 1989; Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith, 1985).

Action research (Lewin, 1948), is a democratic and participative mode of inquiry that engages everyone within a particular local practice context—as a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991)—in making decisions, and in finding solutions to any problem they face. It is a three stage reflective process of *planning*, *action*, and *results* (with feedback loops to each) that directly corresponds to Lewin’s three stage theory of change: *unfreezing*, *changing*, and *refreezing*. The term *participatory action research* (PAR), as defined by McIntyre-Mills (2007), suggests a more refined version with specified scope:

Participatory action research (PAR) involves working with participants from the conceptualization to the implementation and evaluation stage of development research. It involves a) learning by doing and b) the ongoing feedback of ideas amongst the participants. The process of revising both ideas and practice on the basis

of participation is ongoing and integral to PAR. It is a *process that involves all stakeholders as participants at all stages of the research*. It is not a straight-line approach to research and implementation; instead it is a *spiral approach*. (p. 393)

Argyris and Schön (1989) emphasize the role of the practitioner as co-researcher:

[PAR] is a form of action research that involves practitioners as both subjects and co-researchers. It is based on the Lewinian proposition that causal inferences about the behavior of human beings are more likely to be valid and enactable when the human beings in question participate in building and testing them. Hence it aims at creating an environment in which participants give and get valid information, make free and informed choices (including the choice to participate), and generate internal commitment to the results of their inquiry. (p. 613)

As with my alert to the many forms of *humanism* in OD practice, *action research* too must be qualified because it has undergone modifications that undermine the critical-edge it began with in Lewin and Freire. Notably in education the “telling of unwelcome truths against schooling in the interests of education” (Kemmis, 2006, p. 459) has muted considerably in recent decades with diminished courage to speak truth to power. In deference to the ideology of social control, American educators have substantially failed to use critical pedagogy to make schooling in the U.S. more educational. Foucault (1983) lectured that the word *parrhesia* from Euripides and ancient Greek letters described the courageous telling of unwelcome truths for the good of the polis, “and the *parrhesiastes* is the one who uses parrhesia, i.e., is the one who speaks the truth” (lecture 1). Participative action research is all the more critically-edged and shunned in the public sphere; hence the betrayal of our intellectual tradition and the disposability of our youth as substantially documented by Giroux (1980a, 1980b, 2003a, 2003b) for lack of courage to work from a critical pedagogy. To be clear, the participatory action research I am focusing on allows the telling of unwelcome truths and honors and protects the authentic *parrhesiastes* in the way a psychoanalyst honors and protects the developing narrative of the analysand.

When we seek new platforms of actionable hypotheses for OD practitioners, we find a wide number of organizational research methodologies in use which support or imitate forms of action research. One such case is the action inquiry of Chandler and Torbert (2003) who outlined a three dimensional matrix, using the dimensions of time, voice, and practice, with three aspects to each dimension, to form a cubic container of “27 possible [action] research and practice disciplines” (p. 135). This extensive container of typologies delimits the most essential boundaries of action research while providing both the loci of, and vacuities in, its historical practice. It provides the OD practitioner/facilitator and her clients a common topology on which to orient *where we are, where we were, where we do not want to go, and where we do want to go* in the manner of Blake and Mouton's (1983) three-dimensional Consulcube (*5 client types x 5 intervention types x 4 focal issues*) and (1985) two-dimensional Managerial Grid (*concern for production* scaled against *concern for people*). Chandler and Torbert took their 27-flavor typology of action research beyond the orientation function to a higher level as they suggest an “interweaving” (beginning in the title) and permutation of the aspects of each dimension, which are *past, present, future* (time), and *subjective, multiple, generalized* (research voices), and *first, second, third* (person practice) to provide hypothetical repositioning options, or a *where we might want to go* for gestation<sup>37</sup> of timely action. In 2008, Torbert and Taylor added a fourth dimension of *single, double, and triple feedback/learning loops* to this model—expanding it to 81 types of action research. These, and many other such deconstructions are important resources that provide the OD practitioner with a rich, somewhat uncharted substrate from which to situate or initiate participatory action research. It provides a map and a common taxonomy for the

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<sup>37</sup> gestation: the conception and development of an idea or plan ([wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn](http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn))

client to locate organizational dysfunctions and opportunities for collective reflection. It's a platform to work from.

Mackewn (2008) proposed an action inquiry model called *facilitation as action research in the moment* with four dimensions that help the practitioner select among a variety of facilitation polarities to use from moment to moment in the participative group facilitation process, and at the different (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977) stages of group development. These dimensions are:

- the *purpose* of the group, organization or community;
- the *conceptualization* of how facilitators make meaning of their art and of the community or group phenomena which they are facilitating;
- the *wider field* in which we are operating; [and]
- the *choreography of energy*. (Mackewn, 2008, p. 618)

This model was selected because it is a reflexive model that draws the client group's attention to its own actions along the continuum of its development, apart from the organizational issues such as those identified by Chandler and Torbert (2003) and Torbert and Associates (2004).

A third useful form of participatory action research is the latest form of program and process evaluation. I include the evaluation methodology of Guba and Lincoln because of its time-tested stature in qualitative research and its complementarity with the models of Torbert, Chandler, and Taylor, and with Mackewn. Guba and Lincoln (1989) developed *fourth generation evaluation* in their book of the same title, based on the work (*responsive evaluation*) of Robert Stake, and their own previous (1985) work on *naturalistic evaluation*. It is instructive to note how evaluation has evolved to become participative and democratic by seeing how the authors have contrasted the four generations of evaluation:

- First Generation—*measurement* (pre-WWI),
- Second Generation—*description* (pre-WWII),

- Third Generation—*judgment* (post-Sputnik), and
- Fourth Generation—*negotiation*.

The authors attributed three major flaws or defects to the first three generations: a tendency towards managerialism, a failure to accommodate value-pluralism, and overcommitment to the scientific paradigm of inquiry.

Guba and Lincoln (1981, crediting John Julian) provide an insight to the two mutually exclusive “domains of knowledge as they relate to types of interviews”—the *propositional* and the *tacit*. The authors present a Venn diagram with eight types of interviews that when combined can elicit a sense of “life as it is lived [in a local and immediate context]” (p. 159) from the two domains. The interview types address four contingencies:

- Can form question.
- Cannot form question.
- Do know what you don't know.
- Don't know what you don't know. (p. 158)

This aspect of the model anticipates the structure of the Johari window—a device used with a variety of interventions in organization development. It seems plausible that more dimensions of natural inquiry (later called fourth generation evaluation) can be abduced along these lines to provide a more granular and “valid” understanding of the collective stream of consciousness always unfolding before us.

Dividing all knowledge between the *propositional* and the *tacit*, and collectively and collaboratively extracting or constructing meaning from both sides of that divide to provide explanation *and* understanding, is a clear departure from the reductive, scientific paradigms of empiricism, positivism, commensurability, generalization, rules, proofs, certainty, objectivity, neutrality, etc. Action research methodologies provide a framework for insuring a normative, democratic and emancipative turn in group and organizational conduct and

intentionality. Facilitators with the practiced skills of multiple interview types, dialogue types, leadership, followership, and large-group intervention can adapt and combine a number of evaluation methods to construct action inquiry opportunities. This is not an exhaustive list of action models to select from, rather these three distinct models demonstrate the wealth of approaches that elucidate the astonishing number of facets to organizations upon which to collectively reflect on and take meaningful action.

### **Organization Development Issues**

An overview of the more pressing historical issues facing the practice of OD is crucial to contextualize the implementation of a polymodal inquiry constructed from critical hermeneutic forms, abductive reasoning forms, and participatory action research forms. For over 20 years, thought leaders have struggled to redefine OD in the face of rapid technological change and global realignment of business. Trying to find ways of adapting to such unprecedented change as we see today requires tools that will work in any number of possible futures. In this section I look at the core values of OD and ask who we are and what we must emergently become to be viable leaders for democracy and dignity in the workplace. I also examine the most salient aporias between the business culture and the academic side of OD, and point out some very possible directions for movement together. Addressing these primary aporias with critical hermeneutics and abductive cognition through interventions built around participatory action research on a case by case basis will require a preliminary understanding of these larger cultural dynamics. This section then prepares me for reflection on the confluence and integration of polymodal inquiry for organizational interventions expressed as rhizomes in Chapter 4 and specific praxis expressed as plateaus in Chapter 5.



### **The Present Moment and Identity of OD.**

In a verbal presentation to the Minnesota OD Network, D. W. Jamieson's (Shuster, 2010) response to OD's ongoing struggle for identity was to advise its practitioners to step away from that endless debate and into decisive action because “the world, organizations and people need help, change and effectiveness to tackle ever larger issues and opportunities.” He implored us to “make some decisions, stand up, belong to something that counts and focus on making a difference” because “who you are and what you do will carry more weight than what you call it!” He hoped that “some will continue the dialogue, research and inquiry of the field to clarify, evaluate and deepen understanding,” but for most of us he suggests putting this debate in the background, and he urges us to “define [our own] field, pull a chair up to the table, believe in something, advocate for something that makes a difference, and stop complaining, debating and operating marginally or tentatively.” He seemed to be saying there will always be polarities in client organizations to focus on and deal with, and any struggles within the OD field itself will only distract us from effective use of our time and talents in helping our organizations and society. More specifically, Jamieson advised OD practitioners:

Put a stake in the ground; develop knowledge and skills for masterful practice; apply [them] throughout society, across human levels and within all types of organizations; teach/share with leaders, managers and organization members for sustainability; [and] write, talk, [and] share within the [OD] field and among colleagues to advance the theory and practice. (Shuster, 2010, quoting Jamieson, in a draft review, approved by Jamieson and submitted to MNODN)

Jamieson didn't ask his audience to move forward without a working understanding of what OD generally is, but rather listed a number of core values and perspectives that can point us in the same direction and carry us forward meaningfully. He simply answered the question of what is OD by saying it is:

a *mindset* (way of seeing the organization world); a set of *value-based perspectives*; a *philosophy* of organizing, managing and changing; an *integration* across disciplines, of theories, concepts and methods, for understanding and changing human systems; [and] a *field* of study and practice. (Jamieson, 2010 quoted in Shuster, 2010)

Working from a description of OD that he and Chris Worley wrote in 2008, Jamieson offered this adopted version:

*...a process of planned and emergent intervention(s) utilizing behavioral and organization science principles to change a system and improve its effectiveness, conducted in accordance with values of humanism, participation, choice and development, so that the organization and its members learn and develop.*  
(Jamieson, 2010 quoted in Shuster, 2010)

In the spirit of Jamieson's description as reported by Shuster (2010), I would agree that OD is a *mindset*, a *humanistic value-based perspective*, and a *practice of particular values* over processes. It is also “a participative change process where participation and collective reflection” are primary, and a “co-generative learning process where problem-owners and outside facilitators share the reflection and learning opportunities” (Levin, 2004, p. 83). This paper takes into account the following positions: (1) ongoing discussion of the *relevance* of OD has not been productive; (2) tools and processes used by many in organizational consultation are equifinal; and (3) OD is historically the home of *humanism, participation, choice, and development*. Helping an *organization and its members learn and develop* through practice with these values has a huge history of *rightness* to it—rightness in the Peircean sense of appropriateness and fitness in the logical interpretation of signs that distinguishes *rightness* from *wrongness* in reasoning. These terms have an ethical tone because “Peirce considered logic to be a branch of ethics” (Mangion, 2011, p. 36). Practitioners who take this direction, in this author's view, are doing the *right* thing no matter what they choose to call their practice; although they might be doing it in an organization that cannot respond to this rightness of reason. I first encountered the term *rightness* reading

Freundlieb (1996) discussing connections to Peirce's doctrine of signs and Habermas who "in recent years has consistently postulated the existence of ... three validity claims with respect to serious statements: truth, truthfulness, and appropriateness or rightness in terms of social norms" (p. 420). Rightness can be a solution or intervention abduced by a subject exposed to believable experiences that each point toward it and subsequently succeed through action.

### **OD Ethics and the Public Sphere.**

The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present.  
 The occasion is piled high with difficulty and we must rise with the occasion.  
 As our case is new so we must think anew and act anew.  
 We must disenthrall ourselves and then we shall save our country.  
 —Abraham Lincoln addressing Congress in 1862

Organizations and language are the very armature of civilization. When Lincoln said "we must disenthrall," he was in a sense saying what Kurt Lewin meant by *unfreezing*, and by what Argyris meant by *unlearning*. Lincoln was struggling to sustain the Union (an organization) and the humanistic emancipation of those who would follow (all its stakeholders); and he largely succeeded (with exception of his handling of Native American issues). We can try to do no less as OD practitioners, on a case by case basis, on behalf of those practitioners who will follow us and those not yet present to resist powerful forces that will compromise their freedom before they are even born. Because we ourselves carry the memes of destruction and oppression within our institutions, languages and actions, we must disenthrall ourselves of our unexamined habits, prejudices, presuppositions, and addictions to re-dispose ourselves to collaboratively emancipate the future.

Given the centrality of Heidegger's ontological turn in hermeneutics to Gadamer's work, it is important to reflect on Heidegger's association with the oppressive Nazi Party

because of its ironic paradox with the emancipative interests of contemporary hermeneutics. Arnett (2005) suggested that Heidegger failed to distinguish between the public and the private *spheres* when he allowed his ontological hermeneutics of facticity to flow with the *Zeitgeist* of the Third Reich to no productive end. In sharp contrast, Arnett pointed to Heidegger's German contemporary, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who, during the same period and in the same country, used “philosophical hermeneutics in everyday life” (p. 137), and who dialectically challenged the Nazi, *public* narrative with his Christocentric, *private* narrative—which led to his execution despite his aristocratic standing in German society. Bonhoeffer used hermeneutic principles of *difference* and *distance* to create meaning.

Difference and distance permit the communicator to learn from what is and to keep in place an interpretive center from which one meets reality—for Bonhoeffer this interpretive base is *Christ the Center*. One learns from difference and one brings a unique standpoint to the encounter. Differentiation requires a dual action of learning from the Other and engaging one's own standpoint. This dialectical encounter of learning and position permitted Bonhoeffer to negotiate uncertainty without turning his faith into a rigid ideology or following the historical moment in a relativistic direction. The necessity of differentiation and distance allowed Bonhoeffer to understand the interrelated but different nature of public and private discourse. (Arnett, 2005, p. 139)

Hanna Arendt (1968), who studied under Heidegger until 1933, saw the danger of the *public sphere*, which she called *society*, subsuming and corroding the *private sphere* of life, and suffocating intimacy, creativity, and private narrative—as seen in the totalitarian regimes of Hitler's Third Reich, Stalin's Soviet Union, and Mussolini's fascist reign in Italy. These may be warnings to suggest that OD research and practice should remain close to the local circumstances and the private narratives of participant clients, and apart from the normalizing means of statistically crafted universals that support hegemony. (This is a dimension I doubt internal review boards look at.) Arendt is quite specific on how this comes about—explaining that statistics can be misapplied to represent rare deeds and events as mere deviations and

fluctuation, whereas “the meaningfulness of everyday relationships is disclosed...in rare deeds just as the significance of a historical period shows itself only in the few events that illuminate it” (Arendt, 1968, p. 42). Statistically, as numbers of a population increase, the fluctuation of rare deeds is leveled out with normative behavior and “deeds will have less and less chance to stem the tide of [normative] behavior, and events will more and more lose their significance...their capacity to illuminate historical time” (p. 43) and move a people.

Reflecting critically on Arendt, one can ask how much of the focal dissipation we see in the OD field may stem from the leveling effect on behavior from the *new social order* being created by the hegemony of large global firms and the puppet governments they control. This could dramatically change the foundations on which OD research and practice would proceed if it is to succeed with its emancipatory and participative ethic. Looking more granularly and critically at the corporations that effectively govern today's *society* is the work of Sennett (Sennett, 1998, 2006; Sennett & Cobb, 1993) on divisions of class and the corrosion of organizational character.

### **Widespread Aporetic Leadership.**

Given the common propensity of managers to overestimate their leadership ability (Alicke & Govorun, 2005; Ames & Kammrath, 2004; Burson, Larrick & Klayman, 2006; Colvin, Block & Funder, 1995) it is reasonable to surmise that a great number of individuals clearly do so with great hubris and are blinded by narcissism to the knowledge of exactly how much risk they put their organization at, if only through lost opportunity. Entire organizations or groups can be held hostage to the metaphors of simpletons who—through nepotism, cronyism, or sycophant fawning—arrogate titular positions beyond their ken. There is also the intoxication of power that blocks access to good advice as described by See,

Morrison, Rothman, and Soll (2011). They are inclined to communicate in ways that make their lack of competency covert (Marshak, 2006; Argyris, 1990). In the course of these fake-it-in-hopes-you-make-it maneuverings, the longer frame focus becomes lost in the struggle to resolve immediate and short term concerns and hide embarrassments while sustaining the titular ruse of legitimate authority. Those who are aware of this spectacle, but must contend with it and engage in theater to keep their jobs, are divided in their attention to the long-term survival of the enterprise and the political, day-to-day survival of their jobs and thereby their own welfare and survival. “Social psychology names attentiveness bred in this way *cognitive dissonance*—conflicting frames of meaning” (Sennett, 1998, p. 90, citing Bateson, 1972, and of course, Festinger, 1959).

#### **Flexible Corporate Practice.**

Sennett (1998) stated that the new order in capitalistic societies emphasizes *flexible corporate practice*—a practice of rapidly changing skill requirements that holds no value for time-vested skills and experience. This phenomenon breeds job apprehension and diluted self-worth that attenuates thoughtful risk-taking and overt communication, and leads affected individuals to lock their *focal attention* (p. 91) to the immediate needs of their own survival. It is difficult to imagine generative conversation between the aforementioned, conceited manager who is operating beyond their ken, and the worker or manager whose tenured experience, skills, and entire self-worth are constantly being signified as obsolete with covert behaviors. Such was the case of a man who was a rising star in a sales company and heir apparent to the executive suite until he suddenly became tetraplegic. His performance continued to excel, however the promotion that was supposed to be his was given to an ethically challenged young dolt who became the man’s supervisor. The supervisor did not

have any of man's skills, nor any managerial skills, and routinely spoke *down* to the man and evaluated his performance as 'meets expectations' after 20 years of 'exceeds expectations' ratings. Subtle signals such as whispering and snickering during the man's presentations were meant to discourage him from staying with the company. When he did leave, they tried to deny him long-term disability.

Sustained focal attention on the immediate circumstances of contingent work and risk is corrosive to the character (commitment and loyalty) and disables employees' ability to think and act in larger *spheres* and time-frames than the immediate task situations. Employees are often cut off from their own life narrative and sense of unique identity at work. They have nowhere to put their heart and soul; nowhere to deeply engage their life experience. The work becomes so granular, over-specialized and rote that it stultifies. Their lives don't add up because their work is not a means to create and express themselves holistically. Marx called this the commodification of labour. Sennett's description of such flexible organizational dynamics appears to be an effort to indicate a downward spiral that such organizations are unknowingly on because time awareness has been lost with the abandonment of long-term thinking and planning for sustainability and resilience.

Argyris (2006) de-emphasized Sennett's term *character* and described the *corrosion* as a failure to move from his Theory I to Theory II theory-in-use with double-loop thinking. Argyris saw these flexible programs—which leave people in cognitive dissonance and constant suspension of who they are in relation to the organization and its future—as manipulative in an unconscious way. He described the executives who are trying to design a new flexible capitalism as “skillfully incompetent—producing programs that [are]

counterproductive to their intentions—and skillfully unaware of their incompetence” (p. 21).

Argyris cited this case clarifying the covert nature of a process thought to be “participative.”

An executive described as an exemplar change leader tells the story that she brought her people together to find ways to cut costs. The group is broken into smaller work groups. Hours later they return. The results to her mind are outstanding. Indeed 'they knocked my socks off' [she said]. If we analyze what she said before the breakup into small groups, we find the following. First, she described the situation as serious. Second, she warned that people could lose jobs. Third, she was sure that they could come up with solutions that were acceptable to top management. (p. 22)

Argyris called this *centrally controlled cooperation* and agreed that it is manipulative, however he suggested that because managers don't realize what they are doing, employees can recognize how they are being gamed and should speak out in a face-saving way to correct it. If executives and managers are espousing long-term commitment while their theory-in-use is short-term, the long-term commitments lose all credibility. This awareness will remain covert, under the table, and *undiscussable* because most management cannot explain it overtly without losing power.

Argyris (1970) is no stranger to corporate hegemony. His *Intervention Theory and Method: A Behavioral Science View* begins with excerpts from Gardner's (1968) remarkably prescient article that takes a retrospective narrative on the twentieth-century from the twenty-third-century based on historical cycles of tyranny and renewal. It described our current predicament as a decline into barbarism and authoritarianism lasting two centuries until people “were again allowed to study history” (p. 26) and asked why we couldn't see where things were going when the signs were all around us. It could have added that timely action was stalled by those privileged in the money stream asking for more positivist, evidence-based studies, statistics, and references from the past while sucking money from the



corporate teats day and night as their multinationals inequitably transfer wealth 24/7 around the world.

### **Problems with the Binary Nature of Culture.**

Hall (1980) explained that theories borrowed from anthropology and psychoanalysis describe the bi-polar nature of culture as *overt* and *covert* (citing Linton) and *explicit* and *implicit* (citing Kluckhohn). He suggested that this polarity may be too strong for Americans to think of culture in other terms, such as his tripartite theory of formal, informal, and technical dimensions of culture. It is difficult to predict the significance of examining the new flexible capitalism by using such different conceptual tools, but Sennett's and Argyris' respective positions remain to be tested with new perspective. Both authors bring important insights to the critical problem of commitment and loyalty being undermined by covert cultural processes. The best recruiting, on-boarding, feedback and support are a waste of money if there is opacity in the communication processes that require trust. Through these authors' lenses we can gain insights to how our multicultural, polyglot organizations have fragmented individuals to such an extent that they don't know exactly where they stand in any shifting situation—your job title can change with the buttons you are told to push.

### **Problems of Class in Organizations.**

Sennett and Cobb (1993) described *class* as a system that “limits the freedom of the powerful in dealing with other people, because [they] are constricted within the circle of action that maintains their power; [and] constricts the weak more obviously in that they must obey commands” (p. 28). The authors questioned the *dignity* that members of organizations see in themselves and each other when freedom is checked by class, and pointed to cases where there is erosion of self-confidence among those reared in a class that limits their

*freedom* to make choices—even after they have moved up from that class. They indicate that the injuries of living within the less agentic classes remain as deep scars and persistently interfere with the victims' workaday life with others. An invidious sense of inadequacy—“an unspoken distrust of themselves below the surface” (p. 182)—is covered with dialogical maneuvers to keep it covert, which prevents legitimate risk taking and authentic dialogue.

An organizational environment where people work together to achieve stated goals is encumbered with both the class backgrounds and the covertly employer-ascribed classes to which members belong. When they communicate about the organization and its processes, each member has their mask on that protects their dignity and the discrepancy of freedom among them as circumscribed by the organization's culture. This *spectacle* (Debord, 1991, 1994) covertly distorts the *attunement* (Scheff, 2006) of workgroups and the quality of their communication. Sennett and Cobb (1993) revealed ongoing methods that maintain the class structure in organizations as markets and technology change the nature of classes. “Commodity fetishism” and “reification”<sup>38</sup> and “instrumental reason” (Žižek, 2000) each play a role in rigidifying these class structures.

Any given workgroup or team has covert processes among their number stemming from the change dynamics of the actions in which they are engaged. The covert processes described leading to cognitive dissonance, diminished focal attention, single-loop thinking,

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<sup>38</sup> Excellent papers describing the Marxist concept of reification as commodification of human relations: Lukács, G. (1967/1923). Reification and the consciousness of the proletariat. In *History and class consciousness* (pp. 83-222). London: Merlin. Available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/hcc05.htm>  
 Honneth, A. (2006). Reification: A recognition-theoretical view. Delivered at *The Tanner Lectures, University of California, Berkeley, March 14-16, 2005* (pp. 89-135). Available at [http://www.tannerlectures.utah.edu/lectures/documents/Honneth\\_2006.pdf](http://www.tannerlectures.utah.edu/lectures/documents/Honneth_2006.pdf)  
 Jütten, T. (2010). What is reification? A critique of Axel Honneth. *Inquiry*, 53(3), 235-256. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00201741003784606>

fragmentation, limitation of freedom and loss of dignity fall under three of the five Marshak (2006) dimensions of change: psychodynamics, mindsets, and emotions. They are deeply embedded cultural processes that are counterproductive to a healthy society and workplace.

### **Ideological Camps on Change Management.**

Regarding the aforementioned trend of *OD* being eclipsed in the consulting marketplace by *management* consulting firms promoting *change management* (CM) solutions, Marshak (2009) described the underlying ideological differences between OD and CM. Both address the same issues, but with differing emphasis on language and values.

What is figure for one is ground for the other, and vice versa. The language and values, and therefore normative orientation, of OD are very much based in the language and values of humanism and social psychology. The language, values and normative orientation of change management are very much based in the language and values of economics and business. (Marshak, 2009, p. 31)

I would add that today's language and values of economics and business remain rooted in the numeracy of the Enlightenment's *positivism*, and the acquisitive nature of twentieth-century *objectivism* (Binswanger, 1986; Bernstein, 1983; Hirsch, 1976), and *Taylorism* (Taylor, 2006/1911; Lawrence & Nohria, 2002 ).

The following table illustrates the difference in language and disparity in values that Marshak found between these two change approaches.

Table 1.

#### *Comparison of Change Management and Organization Development*

Change approach	Emphasis on	Methods	Dominant Values	Management of change as
Change management	Outcomes	Elite processes	Economic	Engineering and directing
Organization development	Processes	Participatory processes	Humanistic	Facilitation and coaching

Note: Reproduced with permission, Marshak, 2009, p. 31

### **Moving from Diagnostic to Dialogic OD.**

Bushe and Marshak (2009) have embraced an emergent shift in OD from the diagnostic model of intervention to a Lewinian dialogic model. “In dialogic OD, change comes from changes in meaning making and new, associated decisions and actions people can and will take as a result of those changes in meaning” (p. 356). The shift is generally from biological paradigms to meaning-making, from prescription to inquiry, from problem-centric to opportunity-centric approaches, and moving from a behavioral focus to “changing the frameworks that guide what people think and say... by focusing on the symbols, images, and narratives used to make meaning” (p. 355). The authors claim diagnostic data is becoming more difficult to capture in our fast paced change environment; the problem-centric nature of diagnosis produces change resistance; and “the dialogic forms of OD, explicitly or implicitly assume that the social systems, social learning, and social processes responsible for organizational performance do not have [the] kind of tangible reality” (p. 354) that produce diagnoses. Additionally, Bushe and Marshak distinguish the diagnostic with the dialogic as a shift from direct behavioral change to a focus “on changing the frameworks that guide what people think and say... by focusing on the symbols, images, and narratives used to make meaning” (pp. 354-355). The diagnostic process remains useful to some smaller groups however the dialogical process is critically essential here as well.

All this provides ideal conditions for participatory action research and shared meaning making. Diagnosis is placed at a more appropriate and granular level by consensus, and *through* dialogue and discourse. Outsiders do not come in and point fingers, and upper management supports and participates rather than summarily quashes change initiative. OD

facilitators (ideally) come in by invitation by, or with approval of, those who will make the decisions and be affected by them.

This interventional bifurcation harkens back to the work of Porras and Robertson (1987) which presented a dual typology of organization development theory: *implementation theory* (drawing from Bennis' (1966) theory of *changing*) and *change process theory* (drawing from Bennis' theory of *change*). Whereas *implementation theory* is concerned with diagnostics and interventions, *change process theory* “attempts to explain the dynamics through which the organization changes in response to any intervention activity” (p. 1). The authors stated then that although both theory types needed substantial improvement, “change process theory is in such a fragmented state [that] all facets of it require theoretical advancement” (pp. 1-2). More specifically Porras and Robertson (1987) defined change process theory as specifying:

- the variables that are manipulable in the change effort,
  - the intended outcomes of the change attempt,
  - the causal relationships between manipulable, mediator, and target variables,
  - and the effects of relevant moderator variables.
- (p. 30)

The authors charted the seven change process theories they could find “in an extensive search of literature” that met these criteria for change process theory and distinguished them categorically: “target level, target variables, manipulable variables, mediator variables, and moderator variables” (Porras & Robertson, 1987, p. 30). Those seven theorists are here listed with distinguishing *target levels* and target variables:

- Cartwright (1951) | *individual* | behavior, attitudes, beliefs and values;
- Dalton (1970) | *individual* | behavior and attitudes, reinforced and internalized;
- Goodman & Dean (1982) | *organizational* | institutionalization of behavior;
- House (1967) | *organizational* | performance;
- Lawler (1982) | *organizational* | operating effectiveness;
- Miles et al (1969) | *organizational* | organizational health;

- Nadler (1977) | *individual* | behavior. (pp. 32-38)

The target variables across this survey of change process theory in 1987 were “generally of two types, either individual behavior or organizational performance or effectiveness.” The authors concede that “individual psychological growth or self-actualization [was] not considered at all” (p. 47). This would indicate that as OD was entering the 1990s, the side of OD theory that was needed to provide support for humanistic development was not keeping up with the initiatives of Lewin, Maslow and McGregor. The fact that implementation theory has been so out of balance with change process theory has led to commercialization of solutions imposed on individuals and organizations alike.

The question of how and when organizational consulting diverged—from the vision of Lewin, Maslow, and McGregor, supported by the models and methods of Schein, Argyris, Schön and others—into so many directions has since been further studied by Werr and Greiner (2007). The need for enterprise management to gain credibility in the 1960s came at a time when there was a chasm between academic research and management research. Academics had the theories, and businesses had the real-time data, but the two camps were not working together collaboratively because of professional jealousy. To raise its prestige and legitimation, management research adopted a “scientific” approach to accumulating vast data into databases and holding it closely to create privileged experts in management and management consulting in an effort to raise the image of management to the level of the natural sciences. From this data, management derived statistical generalizations to be applied in a variety of contexts without a great deal of validation. Much of this work was founded on Taylor's (1960/1911) *Principles of Scientific Management* (Werr & Greiner, 2007) and aimed at producing action that increased self-justifying acquisition of wealth.

In [management] consulting firms, two types of knowledge are emphasized (citing Greiner & Poulfelt, 2005):

- functional knowledge about topics and issues (e.g., strategic planning and compensation systems), and
- specific industry knowledge (e.g., financial services and biotechnology).

While functional knowledge overlaps with traditional academic disciplines, specific industry knowledge is to a large extent lacking in academic research. (Werr & Greiner, 2007, p. 99)

As much good process information (such as the McKinsey nine-box and 7S models, TQM, Six-Sigma, etc.) came out of the direction management research took during this historical period of space-race and cold-war technology, the hegemony of organizations over workers was little affected by democratic human engagement and emancipation. The hard won “knowledge” was “power,” “competitive,” and “trusted” only in the hands of management.

Similarly, the academic social science community adhered to the empirical orthodoxy of its disciplines to compete for the prestige of “real science.” Werr and Greiner (2007) found that that “well over 90–percent” of the leading organization journal articles of that time “are concerned with establishing basic causality behind certain phenomena,” and “very few [of those] studies investigate whether a certain method or intervention used by management is effective or not...” (p. 97). This alienation from academic rigor let management off the accountability hook to negotiate its privileges through the withholding of knowledge which led to the skewing of income and rigidification of hierarchy in a self-reinforcing cycle of money and knowledge in the control of fewer and fewer.

Vaill (2005) used the T-group as an exemplar of a new paradigm that broke new ground in OD research and practice from 1965 to 1975 and from this he identified three *essential* factors to achieve vitality and impact in a field:

- take a process view of its phenomena rather than one of static principles;
- conduct itself in such a way that members, especially new members, can have intensive, conscious learning experiences about process; and

- conduct itself in such a way that a culture of confidence, mutual support, and enjoyment evolves. (Vaill, 2005, p. 153)

The growing number of business process problems now far exceeds the social and group process problems that OD was founded on, requiring many OD people to become subject experts attending to any number of OD fragments. Vaill was suggesting that the natural evolutionary phase of OD development has passed, and that the OD field must now be led to its next incorporation to address gaps in *expertise* and *cultural sensitivity*. At this point the field is so balkanized it does not have a coherent self-identity. Vaill attributed the confusion to detachment of “(1) process consciousness, (2) experiential learning, and (3) a robust culture” (p. 157). Looking forward he cites four promising, positive ideas:

- organizational learning,
- future search conferences,
- appreciative inquiry, and
- open space technology. (p. 157)

These ideas have since been adopted by OD schools and the ODN community and there is softening of boundaries between them that suggests a higher order to come.

This chapter has reviewed background literature independently on the three forms of human inquiry as described in Chapter 1. This chapter also included a section describing some of the more salient issues facing the field of organization development to provide a ground and context for applying my hermeneutic assessment of each form of inquiry with abductive reasoning of their confluence in Chapter 4—Rhizomes, and within participatory action frames in Chapter 5—Plateaus. The following chapter describes in detail my methodology.



### Chapter 3–Methodology

*We do not receive wisdom, we must discover it for ourselves, after a journey through the wilderness, which no one else can make for us, which no one can spare us, for our wisdom is the point of view from which we come at last to regard the world. The lives that you admire, the attitudes that seem noble to you, have not been shaped by a paterfamilias or a schoolmaster, they have sprung from very different beginnings, having been influenced by evil or commonplace that prevailed round them. They represent a struggle and a victory. (Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*)*

The methodology of this research is a hermeneutic, three-legged literature review (see Table 1) that will subsequently generate plausible hypotheses by way of abductive reasoning—to advance classic Lewinian democratic and emancipatory values of OD—using the coterminous<sup>39</sup> support of critical interpretive arts and action research forms.

I surface my tacit understanding of principle texts from each of the supporting forms of inquiry in Chapter 4–Rhizomes, and integrate my insights with OD challenges—such as raised by Bradford and Burke's (2005) *Reinventing Organization Development*, and the collected works of Robert Marshak (2009)—to generate testable, hypothetical OD interventions in Chapter 5–Plateaus.

Table 2.

#### *Overall Structure of the Integrated Literature Review*

<u>Organization Development Practice</u> ↓ (hypotheses-generative plateaus) ↓		
↑ <u>Critical Hermeneutics</u> ↑ Dialogue Intertextuality General Semantics	↑ <u>Abductive Reasoning</u> ↑ Semiotics Pragmaticism Tacit Knowledge	↑ <u>Action Research</u> ↑ PAR Evaluation Action Inquiry

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) “defined a paradigm as a basic set of beliefs that guide action. Paradigms deal with first principles or ultimates. They are human constructions [defining] the worldview of the researcher-as-*bricoleur*” (p. 99) that encompass ontology,

<sup>39</sup> coextensive: being of equal extent or scope ([wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn](http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn))

epistemology, and methodology. It is within this framework that my methodology falls into hermeneutics as well as dialogic, dialectical critical theory, and a nominalistic<sup>40</sup> ontology, because I intend to interpret the material with consideration of critical theory. My emancipating eye and openness to using these blended paradigms of constructivism<sup>41</sup> and critical theory qualify this work as a *bricolage* (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) in the sense of using whatever means are at hand as originally conveyed by Lévi-Strauss (1966) in *The Savage Mind*, and artfully illustrated by Harper (1987) in *Working Knowledge*. Ciborra (2002) described bricolage in this fashion:

*Bricolage* (from the late Latin *bricola* catapult) means tinkering through the combination of resources at hand. These resources become the tools and they define *in situ* the heuristic to solve the problem. 'Let the world help you': *bricolage* is about leveraging the world as defined by the situation. With *bricolage*, the practices and situations disclose new uses and applications of the technology and the things. (pp. 48-49)

Denzin and Lincoln continue to clarify the important role of the bricoleur in qualitative research in successive editions of the *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*; and consider the multiple methodologies of qualitative research as a bricolage per se, and “a pieced-together, close-knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation” (1994, p. 2), and also (citing Weinstein & Weinstein, 1991, p. 161) “an emergent construction” (1994, p. 2) crafted from a heterogeneous stock of resources. “The bricoleur is adept at performing...diverse tasks ranging from...interpreting personal and historical documents, to intensive self-reflection and introspection” (p. 2), and “understands that research is an interactive process shaped by his or her personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting” (p. 3). The bricolage is

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<sup>40</sup> nominalism: the doctrine that universals do not exist except as categorical names

<sup>41</sup> constructivism: I use this term interchangeably with the term constructionism as so many of my sources do, although it is noted that constructivism is more accurately specific to psychological reification

“a complex, dense, reflexive, collage-like creation that represents the researcher’s images, understandings, and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis” (p. 3).

Using myself as instrument, I am conducting this research on organization development theory with a hermeneutic theory of interpretation, a critical hermeneutic methodology, and simple hermeneutic methods—each unique to my style of cognition. The heart of this methodology is the hermeneutic *circle* or *spiral*. The methodology is to read a wide variety of original, secondary, and tertiary texts that may give historical and critical perspectives to the prospects of advancing organization development practice through hermeneutic research. In almost all cases, I read the selected texts twice. The first time I read each text, I flag the salient passages and then set the text aside. As I continue this process with dozens of texts, I find myself drawn back by a developing narrative, to selective second readings, and into a hermeneutic spiral as gestalts of category and understanding appear with the reading of select, successive new passages. I note these gestalts and tend back to each one in *categorical notes*—a system I developed to organize and concentrate salient quotes and impressions into closely associated categorical sources with transcription, dictation, and reflection. (A sample category notes document can be viewed in Appendix D, however I have removed all the excerpts to protect the rights of the authors, so what is left is a bibliography for a particular category.) I proof-read the transcriptions for accuracy. I annotate each transcription initially to orient it to others and to code it for mobility. Then I develop my own understanding of the passages through a dialectic tension between the text and my own presuppositions and foreknowledge (what Heidegger described as *vorhanden*, meaning preexisting), and I come to insights and conclusions that I annotate within the interstice of each reference. In this frame I reflexively alternate between induction and deduction

iteratively, with frequent excursions in *abduction*<sup>42</sup> (Martin, 2007, 2009, citing Peirce), in tandem with my reciprocations within the hermeneutic *cycles* of my continually increasing presuppositions, foreknowledge, and apprehension of new text. I save quotes I wish to use for illustration and clarification, and delete material I no longer need in each focal area to convey my interpretation and understanding. I highlight material I have copied into the body of this research text for repetitive reflection.

Almost all my research has been sourced directly from used books I have acquired from online markets for this study (my wife calls the UPS truck my book-mobile) and from journal articles largely retrieved through the University of St. Thomas library online databases and interlibrary service with the remarkable assistance of their talented librarians. In the case of several thousand journal articles immediately available from the databases that met my search criteria, I opened each one to read the abstract, and saved the ones that seemed to offer me a new *horizon* related to my topic. Many such findings were cross-disciplinary. Subsequently I would proceed to read the saved articles and dictate excerpts and notes into categorized documents—with voice-to-text software—beneath their full reference citation. I used a similar method with books, first flagging saliences and pregnancies as I read through, and then going back and dictating the flagged excerpts. Along with abstracts, bibliographies or reference lists are the core of my literature searching. I was occasionally aided by notable book reviews. Several sources—Argyris, Goffman, Hall, Koestler, Polanyi, Shotter, Teilhard de Chardin, and Vico come to mind—are from books I had already read in the past. I can honestly say I am in some way influenced by all the material I have read beyond that cited, however so subtlety and perhaps subjectively as to be unidentifiable,

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<sup>42</sup> abduction: a term coined by C. S. Peirce (1839-1914) to suggest instinctual attunement to unstable inference generative of explanatory hypotheses

which is also the case of all my daily interactions. As Heraclitus said, “You cannot step twice into the same river,” this research process has made me feel I am not the same person from day to day.

Initial literature selection was made by identifying a mode of inquiry that I thought had not been used before to address the quandaries of OD practice. Having had previous exposure to hermeneutic methods (Shuster, 2006), I spent over two years reading books and articles whose titles suggested application of hermeneutics and abduction to group and organizational issues. This gave me a sense of orientation to the literature. By examining the references of each book and paper, I began converging toward certain authors who appeared to be a part of the overall canon on hermeneutics (and abductive reasoning, and action research)—such as Heidegger, Gadamer, and Ricœur—and whose work appeared in a wide variety of journals, original books, and edited collections. I did not concern myself with the pedigree of any one particular journal or publisher. My reader will likely recognize many of the authors I cite as outstanding in their respective fields. As I migrated toward those foundational authors, and those they cited, I gained a perspective on the value of newer contributions to the topic(s), as well as the new perspectives the newer material itself offered. An example would be the applications of nineteenth-century Peircean abduction to artificial intelligence and machine language. Without an extended description of C. S. Peirce’s triadic ontology, I will simply state that I observed what the foundational authors in my study wrote as Peircean *Firstness*; what secondary and tertiary authors wrote about the original text as Peircean *Secondness*; and what I wrote about the combined texts as Peircean *Thirdness*. This is why I checked all quotes by secondary and tertiary authors in the foundational texts for original context and intent (i.e. *The Collected Papers of Charles S. Peirce, Being and Time*,

*Truth and Method*, etc.). I have deep gratitude for all the people sourced below. Most of them have faced this rigor out of agape (few get rich writing social science) so I dearly hope I have properly cited their work. This study will be electronically held by the University of St. Thomas, and I authorize its School of Education, Department of Organization Development and Learning to amend any citations brought to their attention in writing by an offended author or publisher.

I found Wikipedia to be an excellent orienting technology for providing initial direction on topics. However I seldom cite it directly, unless I have verified its material with other sources, and yet feel the Wikipedia author words or frames it best. (Disclosure: I am a financial supporter of Wikipedia and strongly endorse its development as a democratic tool. I plan to qualify and volunteer as an editor/author for Wikipedia in the near future. I am fully aware that radical ideologues hire teams of foolish young people to propagandize historical articles, and I laud Wikipedia's good editors' hard work to prevent this by strictly vetting new authors.)

In the course of reviewing the history of different hermeneutics, I discovered Kögler's dialogical, critical hermeneutics, Kristeva's (1980) intertextuality, Korzybski's time-binding, and other rich hermeneutic granulations that led me to begin an emergent exploration for tie-ins with intra-group problem solving in organizations. I came to realize that social and technical issues have become intertwined in so many cases that I needed a polymodal inquiry to work with across different paradigms. From the core of the OD literature and my own doctoral academic work I saw a natural fit and complementarity between Gadamer's and Ricœur's hermeneutics and Lewin's action research with the theory work of Argyris, Torbert, and others who followed. I was however irritated by the feeling

that something was missing in the areas of creativity and scientific discovery when I stumbled across the works of Roger Martin (2007, 2009) who pointed to the *abductive reasoning* of C. S. Peirce as the source of his own *design thinking*. After I began reading the collected works of Peirce, a great sense of synchronicity came to bear on me as the bibliographies from all three forms of inquiry assured me of fit, wholeness, and economy.

I often experience a phenomenological apprehension—*epoché* as Husserl would say—where my insights resonate with immanent phenomena I personally experienced directly or metaphorically and that give a sense of immediate clarity and understanding of the text. This motivates one to continue reading what are often difficult texts. I also use the hermeneutic circle to iteratively go from these inflection points to the larger picture that expands with my foreknowledge each time I study another text. This process also leads to rearrangement of material continually until the expanding gestalt gives a sense of something integral, resilient and actionable. It can be a messy business; but by bracketing unreflective judgments, staying close to the text, and writing out the revelations (as in Chapter 4), I can rely on my abductive intuition to forge what feels like authentic meaning from the experience to establish fallible hypotheses for further discourse.

This particular hermeneutic study does not go deep on the historicity of the written texts and I do not consciously attempt to participate in a direct dialogue with each text as many have (Radnitzky, 1970). The process is remarkably similar in the sense that, where I think what I have read does not agree with my fore-knowledge or the expressions of those I am drawn to, I am inclined to flag or note the passage and come back to it at a later time with questions in mind from a new and broader perspective. I do however consider a number of intertextualities such as the order of the original publications and the corresponding

influences the authors may have had on each other through *time-binding* and *intertextuality*. Essentially, this process takes account of the historical situatedness of each author, with consideration of their intellectual roots, who they debated, advanced, and collaborated with, and what they read and drew upon at each stage of their respective career. Then as I read secondary texts referring to and drawing on the primary ones, I try to be cognizant of syntheses that each author produces through the texts listed in their bibliography. Appendix B lists a number of other intertextual frames to be recognized in each text. I make these observations as a means of preparing my mind to recognize untaken turns in the road. Elkad-Lehman and Greensfeld (2011) have aptly stated, “According to Peirce we try to invest meaning in every stimulus we receive from our surroundings; we “construct” the significance of situations according to their context, previous knowledge at our disposal, or elements from our personal and cultural world” (p. 260). These are the intertextual elements of our ever changing horizon that effect the hermeneutic outcome of our every reading, as well as shape ours’ and an original authors’ texts. We no more know of the myriad textual interpretations any author brings to her text at the moment of its writing, than we know of the myriad textual interpretations we bring to its first reading, or second reading, and so on. Our moment to moment interpretations are informed by what Bakhtin (1981) called *heteroglossia*—the diverging voices of the entire history of the world. Coming to understand this “mind-blowing” phenomenon about everything I might think and write in this study gave me pause to look for a meaningful starting point and deep elemental theme to carry my emergence. This reflection led me to a notion of *untaken turns in the road*.

In 1992 I had asked a very talented research chemist how he devised a succession of seemingly distinct and different formulas that always led the market, while his competitors'



products always seemed to be derivative embellishments of their own, or imitations of his formulas. He explained that while his competitors spent their time analyzing his work, he was going back to earlier research of his predecessors to see the avenues taken and thereby deduce those that were bypassed—*untaken turns in the road* as it were. Armed with new knowledge, years of experience and technology subsequent to those times, he explored those untaken roads for the first time, and allowed his instincts to guide him. Going back to the roots of hermeneutics and Peirce’s pragmatism and semiotics has given me similar turning points to roads not taken with which to combine with modern methods of action research and OD facilitation practice. This seeking and exploring of previously unattended avenues is fundamental to the structure of my research approach.

#### **Personal Protocol.**

The hermeneutic aspect of my methodology loosely follows the general structure of Herder's (1999) Hermeneutic Field Inquiry Process which calls for formulation of a *personal protocol*—“not a methodology, but a research process and orientation that directs and shapes the inquiry” (p. 96). My protocol is to list all sources I have read alphabetically into *categories* to which I find myself naturally disposed in the course of researching this paper. These categories number almost 30 and are at the time of this writing: abduction, action research, bricolage, bridges, change management, collaboration, complexity, constructivism, emergent research, general semantics, gestalt, glossary, hermeneutics, intertextuality, learning, meaning, metaphors, OD, organizational learning, political hermeneutics, pragmatism, relational-cultural, rhetoric, rhizomes, semiotics, social construction, social theory, tacit knowledge, and time & reflexivity. This taxonomy was initially created out of a previous one which has evolved over the years as a 95-folder categorical database for

thousands of acquired books and electronic journal articles. This previous taxonomy has gone through countless, iterative changes and continues to, as I read new sources that challenge or deconstruct my categorizations.

To illustrate, from my original database filing category of “learning” I extracted select sources into the taxonomy for this paper under both “learning” and “organizational learning” whereas I had little use of categories such as axiology, cognitive dissonance, or symbolic interaction for this study. In other cases, files were merged as I saw commonalities between categories I originally thought were bounded from each other; so the list grows with new categories as they appear to me, and simultaneously retracts as old categories merge. An illustration might be combining folders for metaphors and analogies into one called tropes in which I might add file material on metonymy or synecdoche. Grounded theory methodology *fractures* different data and recombines it in similar fashion to form new theories. New sources open up completely new categories for both of my taxonomies as in the cases of “bricolage” and “rhizome.” This process allowed me an opportunity to reframe topical areas and concatenate them in newly discovered or previously nonexistent ways. Additionally, I effectively have all my sources on hand for revisitation and verification.

I strive to avoid oppressive terminology in the naming of my categories. My process is semiotic in that categories are signs that allow me to make sense of the world. It is because the stasis of categories can ossify one’s thinking that I know I am learning when I am reframing previous ones and creating new ones, while avoiding others—stereotype, for example, is a form of categorization I would avoid in my taxonomy unless it was to become a topical focal point itself. Concomitantly I acknowledge that it has become increasingly challenging to rationalize source material into neat, succinct categories as new *bridging* and

trans-disciplinary concepts, interpretations, and deconstructions shake-up banalized definitional foundations and boundaries. Such is the dilemma of postmodern time so fleeting of universal meaning and certainty (Wittgenstein, 1974; Prigogine, 1996).

After many references in my categorical notes, I inserted salient excerpts as well as annotations of my own that reflected my understanding of the text at the time of reading it, or it in the context of other readings that had changed my fore-knowledge. I allowed my sense of categories to change as iterative readings and insights increased which led to both expansion and consolidation of categories as I advanced in my research. Herder's suggested outline for participatory action research with groups and organizations helped me to conceptualize my methodology for this paper; but goes beyond my scope to include stages of participative inquiry for groups that I foresee as launching points for abductive reasoning and critical hermeneutics in various proportion.

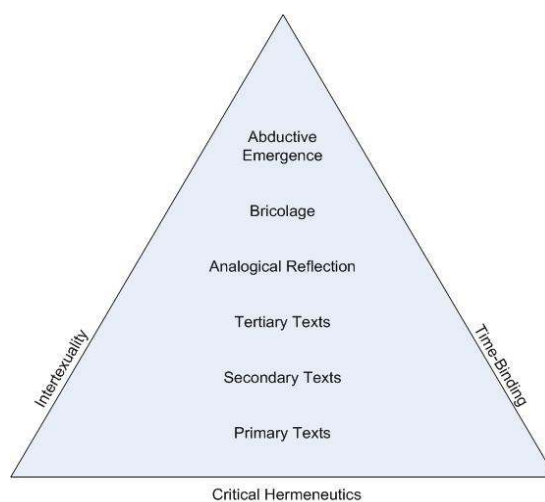
Herder (1999) said “the following suggestions represent a composite of several years of experience and many projects that may serve as the beginning outline for thinking about participatory research in this tradition” (p. 96).

- *Make a commitment to field inquiry in [an] hermeneutic tradition.*
- *Choose a topic or research focus carefully.*
- *Carry out a review of literature and develop a theoretical framework.*
- *Develop initial categories.*
- *Propose initial questions and conversation guidelines.*
- *Pilot the questions and guidelines. (pp. 96-99)*

Herder's protocol divides research schema between the epistemological and the ontological-hermeneutic as I do. My initial thoughts going into this research are that a group of action research participants can focus on a particular text and an initial written interpretation by the OD researcher-practitioner-facilitator, with each participant responding with their own interpretation in written real time blogs, as it relates to a common

organizational issue. In the manner of dialogue, the OD facilitator can steer submissions into a hermeneutic-spiral—the third-dimension arising from the prejudice, experience, and related readings of all participants. By identifying the categorical elements that surface, the researcher provides a gestalt that is common to all participants. The written record provides the opportunity to reassess time-bound decisions made for one set of circumstances for review and application to new contexts at a later time.

Finally, I loosely represent my methodological pathway in Figure 2 showing recursive processes in their approximate directional sequencing.



*Figure 2. Methodological Pathway*

### **Methods.**

The methods I used are to dictate the select passages verbatim from my second readings into Microsoft® OneNote® 2003 using Dragon NaturallySpeaking® 10 (DNS-10) speech-to-text transcription software. (On occasion, where I cannot directly copy-paste long selections, I use OmniPage® optical character recognition software to convert excerpts from PDF journal articles into Microsoft® Word® 2003.) The DNS-10 is perpetually trainable and the more I use it with the vernacular of my sources, the more reliable it becomes. I review the

transcriptions for grammar, punctuation, and accuracy and make corrections manually. The OneNote<sup>®</sup> is a note-taking software that allows separation of document sections into leaved tabs as spreadsheet programs do. The software also automatically inserts accurate source citations of material copied and pasted from the internet. Subsections are copied into Microsoft Word and sequenced in logical order.

## Chapter 4–Rhizomes

“Those who go beneath the surface do so at their own peril.”  
Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

This chapter re-conceptualizes the theoretical foundation of organization development through my emerging findings. It explores entangled relationships between, critical hermeneutics, abductive reasoning, and action research as they have idiomatically emerged for me while researching and writing the literature review. These frames now appear vitally related as *rhizomes* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000)—a hidden vegetal root system metaphor—that surfaced through *maieutic* (relating to or resembling the Socratic method of eliciting new ideas from another) interrogation of, and internal dialogue with, the texts in the literature review, other texts, and pre-understandings from my life experience. Significant contextual fore-grounding from other sources is necessary to surface and situate illustrations of these deep tacit connections that support the direction for OD that Bushe and Marshak would have us take—away from the ubiquitous diagnostic interventional model, and toward a dialogic one (Bushe & Marshak, 2009; Marshak, 2005, 2006, 2009). This requires dialogue skills which are inextricably connected through hermeneutics, discourse, communication skill, and multicultural group dynamics, and for reflection on the use, and potential of, language as a bridge for increasing diversity in group dynamics within the limits of productivity actions.

### **A Look Back at the OD Literature Review.**

The purpose of the section on organization development in Chapter 2 was to outline enough fundamental OD issues extant in the contemporary moment of organizations to provide a context through which one can apply the polymodal inquiry of critical hermeneutics, abductive reasoning, and participatory action research to surface tacit human capacities that can lead to effective, democratic, and emancipative interventions that lead to

productive but just and humanistic organizations that honor the dignity of all its members. It is not a comprehensive study of organization behavior, but rather a review of some of the more salient challenges conscientious organization development practitioners face.

The present circumstances of organization development indicate the need for realignment, with a general sense of purpose and direction out of the polyvocal confusion of the white-water milieu of global continuous change facing U. S. organizations today. The call to action by D. W. Jamieson captured the urgency for OD practitioners to coalesce around a humanistic value-based perspective. Given that the memes of oppression and organizational dysfunction are sown into our everyday language and normative actions, I would remind practitioners that the skills to help unfreeze cultural norms (Lewin), unlearn defensive routines (Argyris), and interpret covert behavior (Marshak) remain paramount in most OD interventions aimed in the direction OD must take to keep its core values tracking toward humanism in today's organizations. This calls for each practitioner to assume faithful responsibility for keeping to an interpretive center that is clear on the difference between public and private discourse; and is resolute on taking action through deep reflection on the latter. That center must be cultivated hermeneutically by iterating one's personal horizon between the respective horizons of those two discourses. The OD practitioner is advised to facilitate dialogues about local circumstances and private narratives that will encourage shared, reflective learning among groups of individuals who seek: the opportunity to get or regain some say and control over their work, authentic meaning, value, and significance in their work, and wholesome connections between their work and their authentic inner selves.

Hanna Arendt's (1968) work provided pause to consider the effect of the unprecedented number of workers now engaged globally in capitalist enterprise—inversely

and vastly in- proportionate to any lasting effect of individual heroic deeds—which anchors normative behavior and outmoded power structures; and which can lead to focal dissipation, cognitive dissonance, and corrosion of organizational character. I then reflect on the pandemic of incompetent, narcissistic, self-serving management that stands as an obstacle to badly needed organizational learning and development in so many instances. On the other hand, sustained focal attention demanded on contingent work activities is debilitating to individuals and prevents critical reflection on the very circumstances that enslave them. The focal length of management has been contracting for decades and the subsequent focal length of worker's tasks and projects has diminished in the new flexible capitalism. Computerized monitoring lines up and times tasks that are meaningless to those performing them without pride. This form of manipulative *centrally controlled cooperation* (Argyris, 2006) is reaching a tipping point from which can evolve higher levels of hegemony and tyranny in an unconscious effort to bring dysfunctional systems under control without embarrassing the *skillfully incompetent* (Argyris, 1993) managers who caused it. The OD facilitator must tread carefully to find footholds among these organizational pitfalls. One can only hope they can trade some face-saving for cooperation in adopting a new, more democratic paradigm. The timing for these efforts is now as a new generation of managers is replacing the large cohort of baby boomers.

In pointing out Hall's (1980) description of organizational culture as bipolar (overt v. covert and explicit v. implicit), and his suggestion that such polarity may be too strong for Americans to grasp, I am proposing that OD practitioners, each in their own way, can find emergent, polymodal forms of inquiry useful in helping clients to break those polarities down to understandable and acceptable means of collectively generating critical solutions around



them. It is no small task to work around deeply embedded, oppressive cultural processes of commodity fetishism, reification, and instrumental reason.

Citing Marshak's (2009) work on two extremely important bifurcations, metaphorically speaking, I am setting out one channel buoy to prevent principled OD interventions from running aground on the shoals of directive change management, and another to mark the repositioning of diagnostic methodology. Top down directive change management has no place for participatory, polyvocal inquiry nor the conscientious OD practitioner. There is a distinct and fundamental, ideological difference between 'change management consulting' and 'OD change management interventions' and it is ill-advised to associate the former with OD in any way. To advise management with instrumental means of forced organizational behavioral change is to betray the ethos of the OD profession. This is a definitive line that must be held for humanistic and democratic organization development to advance. Marshak and Bushe's bifurcation of diagnostic v. dialogic interventions marks a timely shift within OD practice that practitioners should adjust to, and which is more consistent with critical participatory action and polyvocal inquiry. The role of diagnosis has not gone away, but has shifted into the hands of those participating in the inquiry, action, reflection and results. All the touch points in this section point to where to situate a conscientious OD practice for the whitewater ahead. I now express concepts that seem radical and somehow foundational to a new direction available to OD practitioners.

### **Having and Being**

A critical understanding which OD facilitators may wish to consider is each organization's deepest underlying motivations and use of power. To neglect these can thwart the best of interventions or lock them into the material-instrumental level, devoid of critical

reflection. This understanding has come to me in two stages: first, through the work of Eric Fromm, and later, through the work of Lawrence and Nohria (2002). Both sources appear complementary in my experience.

Until 2002, one of the more fundamental, psychological frameworks for human nature used to understand individual and organizational motivations and use of power was the *having-or-being* dichotomy of Fromm (1976).

Because the society we live in is devoted to acquiring property and making a profit, we rarely see any evidence of the being mode of existence and most people see the having mode as the most natural mode of existence, even the only acceptable way of life. All of which makes it especially difficult for people to comprehend the nature of the being mode, and even to understand that having is only one possible orientation. Nevertheless, these two concepts are rooted in human experience. (p. 27)

Fromm went on to say, “Neither one should be, or can be, examined in an abstract purely cerebral way” (p. 27); although Marcel (1949) had attempted so by philosophically developing an essential understanding of *having* as a way of setting apart the idea of *being*.

Everything really comes down to the distinction between what we have and what we are. But it is extraordinarily hard to express this in conceptual terms, though it must be possible to do so. [...] I can only *have*...something whose existence is ...independent of me. [...] I only have what I can in some manner...dispose of ...in so far as I can be considered as a force, a being endowed with powers. We can only transmit what we have. (p. 155)

Fromm (1976) provided “simple examples of how having and being are demonstrated in everyday life” (p. 27) under the subtitles:

- Learning,
- Remembering,
- Conversing,
- Reading,
- Exercising Authority,
- Having Knowledge and Knowing,
- Faith (p. 39), [and]
- Loving. (pp. 27-42)

to show how the two modes are manifested in the *different aspects* of peoples' lives. Students can *have* the lecture notes and things they need to memorize for an upcoming test; or they can be engaged with the material, their previous beliefs, the teacher, and other students *to be* transformed and educated through reflection. One can remember datum through simple logic or repetitive association as *having* captured it; or one can remember through *free association* to say she is *being* productive. Those afflicted with narcissism or with a proclivity of *having* enter conversations with a rehearsed list of the positions, titles, qualities, people they know, and experiences they *have* to recite; whereas those who wish to have a productive conversation bring who they *are* along with ideas and questions about them.

A man may *have* titular authority and not *be* an authority in any particular field of productive inquiry. One woman may withhold knowledge in the form of information she *has* from another who knows how to use that information *to be* helpful. German archbishops may *have had* faith in the canons of their churches at the same time Bonhoeffer was challenging the Nazi public narrative with his Christocentric faith *to become* a martyr. As for love, Fromm (1976) wrote that the idea of *having* it is a deceptive cover for need, possessiveness, safety, dependence, fear, or control, whereas “*loving* is a productive activity” and state of *being*. I can only imagine *having* and *being* converging in the case of purely mutual love.

Lawrence and Nohria (2002) developed a neo-Darwinian, four-factor theoretical framework of human nature that illuminates the most prevalent, innate human drives—to *acquire*, to *bond*, to *learn*, and to *defend*—which, when satisfied in balance, combine for inclusive fitness to modern life. The authors determined that modern corporations are motivated primarily by the acquisition and defense drives which create the imbalanced, non-humanistic framework that Pirson and Lawrence (2009) call *economism* which

views the human being as a fixed entity, predetermined by its utility...economic man (*homo economicus*) is utterly self-serving and only interested in maximizing his immediate utility...only engaging in transactional, short-term encounters...His engagements are interest based and other people are a *means to an end*. He...is mainly motivated by the lower levels of the Maslow hierarchy of needs...His actions are not evaluated for universal applicability, and hence he is amoral. (p. 554)

Lawrence and Nohria (2002) saw “institutions as being the product of social contracts among their individual members. These social contracts are ways in which [members] try to coordinate their actions with others to [mutually] meet their four drives” (p. 265).

Unfortunately, power interests thwart this and organization development consultants may have less opportunity to negotiate such a balance of drives for themselves or for the managers they are hired to work with. Looming in the background of Lawrence and Nohria’s theory of human drives in our American culture stands our cultural proclivity for extreme individualism (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Putnam, 2000) which makes communality and concern for the commons scarce; and coordinated, collective solutions difficult to achieve sustainably.

I would argue that Lawrence and Nohria’s drives—to *acquire* and to *defend*—correspond to Fromm’s *having* mode, and the drives—to *bond* and to *learn*—correspond to Fromm’s *being* mode, to give us a more differentiated model to work with. Paradoxically, Fromm (1976) said individuals who are intrinsically being-oriented may “make acts of selfishness the rule in industrial societies” (p. 98) out of “need for union. A society whose principles are acquisition, profit, and property produces a social character oriented around having, and once the dominant pattern is established, *nobody wants to be an outsider*” (p. 99). Being “as all others are and as they expect him to be...the person who gives up his individual self and becomes an automaton...need not feel alone and anxious any more. But the price he pays...is the loss of his self” (Fromm, 1941, p. 186). This supports Fromm’s

thesis that environmental factors determine which of the two modes become dominant or repressed among the vast majority of people; and his conclusion that the expression of either mode in any one individual is contextual. An OD practitioner who uses *herself*-as-instrument needs to know who that self is in each context.

### **Language: Spoken, Written, Read, and Lived**

Without verbal language, as we know it, we would not conceive of anything beyond our limbic needs for survival. (I add *verbal* to distinguish utterance—of thousands of words from hundreds of languages, arrayed into sentences—with the tongue and lips apart from the grunts and body language thought to be used by Neanderthals to sustain primitive clans.) Although hermeneutic and abductive inquiries and realizations can arise from any medium—art, music, dance, collections of signs, algorithms, dreams, stories, or behaviors—I focus here on the features of interpretable English language which can socially produce meaning.

Talk is ephemeral—“practically all spoken language disappears as soon as it is uttered” (Teubert, 2010, p. 18)—but it is also very useful for shared verbal exchange about things that appear to have a moment of *truthiness* or immediate explanatory utility. Moreover, I recognize that face-to-face, intersubjective discourse has an invaluable role in conveying ineffable concepts, expressing ineffable qualia, describing ineffable phenomena (Shuster, 2006), and revealing the tacit and unconscious knowledge and fears we all harbor. On the other hand, written or otherwise recorded signs provide a *fixity* (Villaverde, 2003) that assures those sharing reflection that they are at least in enough agreement on the signs themselves to allow conversations to ‘go on’ (Wittgenstein, 2001) regarding each conversant’s respective, semantic revelations as to the utterances they share regarding those signs. Direct intersubjective exchange can generate mutuality through which parties move

forward together in their assumptive world views (Shuster, 2006). This is a hermeneutic fusion of horizons and a net gain for both parties. Textual consolidation of their alignment and concurrence fixes such discourse for interpretation and continuation by others to follow. Discoveries made during these exchanges may address discomforts or uncertainties of belief that lead to abductive cognitions for those participating or those examining the written record, and those abductions most plausible become defeasible hypotheses upon which to act.

Written signs together with written interpretations of those signs leave *maps* for others from which to redraw newer perspectives—they show others where they may need, or need not, want, or want not to follow on the map of previous interpretation, discourse, or experience as it were, more so perhaps for mundane matters than rapid change response. Extending the map metaphor further, and looking back, I can find alternate historic routes taken, dead-end routes abandoned, and turns not yet explored, or those not originally recognized using: (1) the subsequent time-bound knowledge of more recent mapping that we in the present moment have access to, (2) the more recent or improved technology we now have, and (3) our perspective on the shifts in cultural frames (Goffman, 1974; Tannen, 1993; Schein, 2010) that have occurred since the original mapping. The limiting factor is that most of us can only do this in our one culture and within the finitude of our lives. To clarify this point, I draw from Polanyi's (1952) essay describing the contrast in cultural linguistic frames of the African Azande vis-à-vis the European, and in those of North America vis-à-vis Russia, in the work of Evans-Pritchard.<sup>43</sup> In both cases, differences in cultural frames create aporias or blind spots in understanding that Polanyi attributes to the principles of circularity<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (1937). *Witchcraft, oracles and magic among the Azande*. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP.

<sup>44</sup> Circularity protects an existing system of beliefs against doubts arising from any adverse piece of evidence. (Polanyi, 1952)

and suppressed nucleation.<sup>45</sup> Polanyi illustrated such a cultural blind spot by citing an “instance of...a Soviet cipher clerk of the Soviet Embassy in Canada [who] tried *in vain*, for two days in...1945, to attract someone's attention to...[a] Soviet Atomic Espionage [document] which he was showing [around] in Ottawa at the risk of his life” (p. 232, n. 7). In another example from this rich collection of dysfunctional cultural frames, Polanyi told the story of Svante August Arrhenius (1859-1927), whose professor dismissed his doctoral theory paper on electrolyte conductivity (for which Arrhenius later received the 1903 Nobel Prize) based on the notion “that there were so many theories formed and these were almost certain to be wrong, for after a short time they [all] disappear and therefore by reasoning on *statistical lines* he concluded that Arrhenius's theory would not exist long either” (p. 7).

Polanyi (1952) captured

the kind of contemptuous indifference with which we normally regard things of which we have no conception. 'We feel neither curiosity nor wonder' writes William James, 'concerning things so far beyond us that we have no concepts to refer them to or standards by which to measure them.' The Fuegians in Darwin's voyage, he recalls, wondered at the small boats, but paid no attention to the big ship lying at anchor in front of them. (p. 6, citing James' *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, p. 110)

The lexical circularity of every language—tribal, national, ideological, or scientific—culturally delimits perceptions to words defined by other words in the same language, thereby often blinding one to serious reifications from another language—each “held implicitly by reliance on [their respective, linguistically mediated,] conceptual framework by which all experience is interpreted” (Polanyi, 1952, p. 1). Diversity and inclusion of additional languages with their cultural tropes expands conceptual frameworks to achieve deeper insights or epiphanies to opportunity or danger. Where we choose to colonialize populations with *universal* languages (English, positivism, conservatism, neo-liberalism,

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<sup>45</sup> Suppressed nucleation prevents the germination of any alternative concept on the basis of any single new piece of evidence (Polanyi, 1952). An extreme example might be denial of global warming.

Marxism, etc.), we in effect choose to limit the conceptual framework of those populations to the circular, tail-chasing problematics and externalities of a particular univocal language and worldview; while at the same time squandering or destroying the cultural/lexical wealth of those indigenous populations that could otherwise move us to higher ground. Alternatively, we can choose to engage in dialogue with other cultures to exchange frames for mutual benefit.<sup>46</sup> Until this dialogue is engaged there is little opportunity for critical hermeneutic interpretations or collaborative abductive solutions to problems between the two cultures. This is a significant obstacle for the practitioner who cannot build cultural bridges for mutual understanding.

Humans use language to make meaning of our lives, our associations and interactions with each other, and our social institutions. Putney and Putney (1964) described “the relation between individual problems and social problems [in America as] one of mutual causation: inadequate social institutions shape a neurotic people, and neurotic people erect and defend inadequate social institutions” (p. 186). A question facing the ethical OD practitioner at this complex time when all the easy interventions have been tried, is *Where to begin—with the neurotic people, or the inadequate social institutions who shaped them—and where are the cultural blind spots?* As a case in point, the unfortunate state of American public education has severely lowered our norms for reading and writing our *own* language within our own social institutions. Writing for the *New York Times*, E. D. Hirsch, Jr. (2011, online reprint) reported “language competence of our high schoolers dropped sharply in the 1970s and has never recovered” and that “reading and writing scores on the SAT have once again declined” (n.p.). Hirsch claimed “most credible analyses have shown that the chief causes were... vast

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<sup>46</sup> A significant number of writings of the world’s greatest minds over the past century have yet to be translated into other languages.



curricular changes, especially in the critical early grades” (n.p.) and what was once “a content-rich elementary school experience evolved into a content-light, skills-based, test-centered approach” (n.p.). Those children who fall behind cognitively at this early stage of development rarely catch up, and fail to be part of the conversations so critical for *learning how to learn* in secondary school. Consequently, many in this lost generation of students either aren’t going to college or are going to colleges scaled to such students lacking foundational language and critical thinking skills, and become *disposable* (Giroux, 2009).

Undergraduate universities haven’t been doing so well lately either. Researchers Arum and Roksa (2011) reported their latest research in the New York Times.

Over four years we followed the progress of several thousand students in more than two dozen diverse 4-year colleges and universities. We found that large numbers of the students were making their way through college with minimal exposure to rigorous coursework, only a modest investment of effort and little or no meaningful improvement in skills like writing and reasoning.

In a typical semester, for instance, 32-percent of the students did not take a single course with more than 40 pages of reading per week, and 50-percent did not take any course requiring more than 20 pages of writing over the semester. The average student spent only about 12 to 13 hours per week studying—about half the time a full-time college student in 1960 spent studying, according to the labor economists Philip S. Babcock and Mindy S. Marks.

Not surprisingly, a large number of the students showed no significant progress on tests of critical thinking, complex reasoning and writing that were administered when they began college and then again at the ends of their sophomore and senior years. If the test that we used, the Collegiate Learning Assessment, were scaled on a traditional 0-to-100 point range, 45-percent of the students would not have demonstrated gains of even one point over the first two years of college, and 36-percent would not have shown such gains over four years of college. (Arum & Roksa, 2011, n. p.)

Those who do get into the jobs present a formidable challenge to management and OD practitioners because of lowered communication norms. They otherwise run the risk of a lifetime of boredom, frustration, and counterproductive behavior (Hirsch, 2011). Lindeman

(1987/1944) stated the problem succinctly in tough language that may not be acceptable today because so many would be offended:

Adult education begins where academic education leaves off. If academic learning does not motivate its participants for adult education, then academic education must be regarded as partial and incomplete. The purpose of adult education is to prevent intellectual stasis; the arrested development of individuals who have been partially educated cannot be prevented otherwise (p. 101).

The organizational workplace however can in some cases be supportive of growth, emancipation, and dignity. Therein lies an opportunity for OD practitioners to help dialogically enskill emancipating language among the advantaged and disadvantaged workers alike by engaging them together in shared iterations of reading, writing, and discourse carefully facilitated around the purpose of each particular group or organization, but aimed at raising their latent personal power (Bradshaw & Boonstra, 2004). These brief readings and written reflections can be augmented with Brookfield's (1987) facilitated *learning conversations* for developing critical thinking skills. Cycles of reading, writing reflections, and participation in facilitated learning conversations each involve "risk, surprise, spontaneity, ...disagreement, diversity, and challenge" (p. 238)—fertile ground for critical hermeneutics and creative abductions. Another activity is to follow an extended two-person argument with a large-group analysis in the form of a facilitated learning conversation. Such groups learn most effectively if held under 15 members. By changing the idioms by which groups communicate, and by surfacing and honoring the tacit beliefs of each member, new structural frames and process changes are supported and stabilized by the group's inertia and increasing coherence. The arrogance of expert consulting has no place in this endeavor. Argyris, Putnam, and McLain Smith (1985) suggested making these idioms *normative* within communities of inquiry to create these same structural frames that produce disconfirmable

knowledge claims that can “speak to the forming of purposes...[and provide] the means to achieve them” (p. 234). In every particular context then, among each community of inquiry, within each and any community of practice, such knowledge claims should be subject to criticism within each community’s evolving value norms. Defensive routines, dispositional attributions, and claims of causal responsibility on Argyris’s *ladder of inference* make this a very difficult process that requires facilitation by practitioners highly skilled in action research and reflection who can generate an interest in learning that can override these obstacles. The authors use methods such as: selecting transcript passages or written case studies for group reflection; and keeping diaries with notes of what was heard in one column across from notes of what was thought on another.

Lewin said that “to understand the world is to try to change it” (Argyris, Putnam, & McLain Smith, 1985, p. xii) and Gandhi said, “*Be* the change you wish to see in the world.” These endeavors call for the OD facilitator to *be* a fully present (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2004; Scharmer, 2007) servant leader (Greenleaf, 2002). Only from this level of consciousness can one fully engage polymodal forms of inquiry and fully participative action research with one’s clients.

In her essay *Writing as a Form of Reflection*, Hammarén (2006) described writing and reading aloud in groups as democratic, creative, and transforming—generative of “stronger and deeper identity” (p. 22). She found that “the relationship between reading and writing must evolve as the formula for individual work” (p. 28). Citing research on skill out of Sweden “that suggests that experience-based knowledge is the product of both experience and reflection” (p. 27), Hammarén believes that “writing may be a method for both reflection, and for making experience-based [tacit] knowledge accessible” (p. 27).

## Participatory Inquiry and Decision Making

Challenges appear from every direction when new words are introduced amidst corporate power narratives. When one speaks of *participation*, as in participatory action inquiry, one must know with conviction whether the idea behind use of the term participative (in all its forms) is meant “as a *means* to an end, or [as] an *end* in itself” (Brown, 1997, p. 195) because the former is democratic and emancipating, and the latter is oppressive and manipulative. This means the practitioner must discern if they are engaging a group “participatively” as a democratic *end-to-itself* directly and immediately, or if by the more instrumental *means-to-an-end*, which usually involves managers (external to the group) authorizing, overseeing, validating, empowering, and controlling *problem-defined* output for their own short-term needs (i.e., next bonus, promotion, election) with no real intention of ceding any power (Brown, 1997a). When Brown looked at the “purpose, structure, process, and facilitation” (p. 212) of participative intervention as built into a number of methodologies, she found that the “*means to an end*” sphere was little more than a covert, short-term program to boost efficiency and effectiveness which can just as easily come out of the continuous and emancipating *enskillings* of participants engaged in the “*end to itself*” sphere. Brookfield (2012) has noted a parallel between Brown’s two spheres and the having-versus-being distinction of Fromm discussed above. Both the “means to an end” and “having” behavioral spheres seem instrumental, ego-bound, and static; whereas the “end to itself” and “being” spheres strike me as ethical, emancipating, and life affirming spheres of humanism whose coalescence holds promise. This dual use of the word *participative* is but a singular example of the deceptive power narrative that a free-agent OD consultant / facilitator must navigate if the expenditure of her work-life is to be anchored in double- and

triple-loop learning and critical systems thinking. Conveying this sensibility to client groups engaged in the “*end to itself*” sphere is the pivotal critical consciousness called *conscientization* by Freire (2000/1970) that opens their eyes to the larger, underlying sphere of hegemony constricting their lives and sets the stage for continuous, ongoing cycles of PAR (participatory action research). If one succeeds in this midwifery with some promising inertia it is normal to clutch awkwardly for the next gear as it were. This is where Vaill’s (2005) three *essential* factors to achieve vitality and impact can become very useful:

- take a process view of [of the group’s] phenomena rather than...static principles;
- conduct [the group activities] in such a way that members, especially new members, can have intensive, conscious learning experiences about process; and
- conduct [group sessions] in such a way that a culture of confidence, mutual support, and enjoyment evolves. (p. 153)

### **Knowledge, Doubt, and Belief**

This section eases my reader over to non-positivistic language centering around knowledge, doubt, and belief to appreciate a useful distinction between the causal understanding of physical and social phenomena and process. It provides a practical, mixed epistemology for working with both physical and social problems without positivism.

Polanyi (1952) proposed using “the word ‘belief’ in place of the word ‘knowledge’, with the intention of keeping always open in our minds a broad and patent access to the personal origins of our convictions” (p. 2). Polanyi’s *belief* ties in with Peirce’s view of *doubt* as a discomforting driver to establish believable hypotheses through abductive inference/cognition (somewhat consistent with Karl Popper’s later falsifiability principle). Peirce considered belief to be a habit of action and the opposite of doubt (Buchler, 1939), and preceded Polanyi with the exchange of the word knowledge for belief. As important as it is to not force all social science through a positivist lens, it is equally important to recognize that

core natural sciences developed through disciplined positivism have legitimate standing and application in a vast number of human affairs. In the business of getting on together to meet objectives and produce outcomes that serve the purpose of any organization or its subgroups, people need to determine and work with causal explanations of physical processes as well as intersubjective understanding of human processes. The underlying paradigms of each one are all too often mismatched to the other; appearing interlaced, the first transgressing its appropriate bounds with the latter. On one plane, we see causal explanations of physical realm as instrumental and intersubjective understanding in the social realm as ethical. I find it helpful, however, to avoid a dualistic frame of totality around these two paradigms, and suggest that there is a fecund gray (or 'grey' in the UK) area that needs to be explored further such as we find mapped in the trichotomies of C. S. Peirce. Inside this gray zone, one can undertake problems normally approached directly with positivism using Peircean abductive reasoning to first produce a selection of (plausible) hypothetical solutions, and then discern the most likely one among them, for further scrutiny with positivist methodologies thereafter if needed. Working through this stage with clients, OD practitioners can help them broaden design and innovation capacity to develop sustainability of learning and change adaptation.

### **Perspective and Perception**

This section provides an insight to how I surface the rhizomes that lie under my feet as it were, standing on two years of focus on three forms of inquiry, and the present state of organization development with fifteen years of its practice. It suggests for me that the seasoned mind/body can step away from its normative experience for an intense, prolonged, hermeneutic focus on new or unusual concatenations of original and secondary literature on

thought and action, and through which, diffractively generate parallax suppositions (new horizontal orientations) from which abductive cognitions arise.

In *Rationality and Freedom* Sen (2003) stated:

What we can observe depends on our position vis-à-vis the objects of observation. What we decide to believe is influenced by what we observe. How we decide to act relates to our beliefs. Positionally dependent observations, beliefs, and actions are central to our knowledge and practical reason. The nature of objectivity in epistemology, decision theory, and ethics has to take adequate note of the parametric dependence of observation and inference on the position of the observer. (p. 463)

This excerpt appears to me as a key-and lock fit with my own a priori understanding of hermeneutic horizon that says each individual has a unique view of *the* horizon because (1) no two have the same a priori experiential horizon, and (2) no two inhabit the same parametric position (spatial orientation) in a shared moment of time facing their present horizontal objects because of their different cognitive, social, geophysical, and temporal circumstances (to say the least). One's a priori experiential horizon is only accessible to others through dialogical exchange and hermeneutic reflection or psychoanalysis, whereas a presenting horizon may lend itself to a more positivistic scientific triangulation (e.g., a statistical survey on current perspective of a group who have something in common) of collaborators with each other in a common moment to reveal more dimensionality to an historical horizon—perhaps one that points to a trend or one that constitutes the *Zeitgeist* of their realm.

To further enrich our understanding of human horizon, and to find more vivid terms for a practitioner to use in describing it to clients, we can consider historically recurring themes. Maleuvre (2011) describes the horizon as the *infinite longing* of humans, using the perspectives of 23 historical and fictional moments from the Western tradition ranging from 2500 BCE to 1969 CE. Maleuvre's horizon begins with:

an image of human finitude—our limitedness in time, space, and comprehension. The horizon isn't an objective boundary; it isn't really the place where earth and sky weld shut. It marks not the factual edge of the world, but the shifting line where perception trails off. (p. xiii)

In each of his narratives, Maleuvre concretely situates an individual in a particular circumstance of an historical or fictional moment to “tell us in their own voice *what it [was] like* to behold their horizons” (p. xiv). In explaining his limitation to horizontal narratives from the Western tradition, he says, “The downfall of focus is limitation, just as the risk of ecumenism is dilution. Between these pitfalls, I offer here an ongoing horizon of research, not a canon, which I trust others will be inspired to enlarge” (p. xv). This reminds us that there is a world of horizons to discover and honor through diversity, many of which may fit our purpose in the course of emancipative action research. Maleuvre's characterization of horizon as human longing and dissatisfaction serves as a call or beckoning toward a *transcendence* that was borne “from a religious longing that chooses not to avail itself of the available answers—that by which the satisfied longing settles into dogma” (p. 4). This notion, for me, parallels with the restrictive horizons seen in hierarchical command-and-control organizations enforced by compliance policy, and in some prisons where sun-rises, sun-sets, and horizons of any kind are withheld from prisoners by oppressive compliance rules (see Foucault, 1977).

This then is a linkage of horizon and emancipation—as where one's horizons are attenuated by hegemony, often unconsciously, and certainly where one's ability to think, speak, read, and write clearly and critically is limited. Horizons have a transcendent aspect that provides creative tension that can be harnessed by those who share a commitment to emancipation. Within others, the transcendent, evolutionary impulse to evolve and create appears to lie latent in the shadow of their physical longing to acquire and control that leads



them away from humanistic concerns. Tacit yearning to create can be surfaced and satisfied through hermeneutic, abductive, and action cycles spiraling within communities of practice (COP). The OD practitioner grasps opportunities to facilitate and help develop such COP where she finds them. The only requisites for synchronicity are to be prepared and selective.

### **Energetics and Power**

Another perspective on power (good and bad) in organizations as well as groups can be viewed through the phenomena of subtle energy fields. Hermeneutically fields are useful tropes for interpreting the critical disposition of persons, groups, and organizations and the dynamics between them including entrainment of behavior. As I discuss below there are organizational pitfalls and abductive opportunities the conscious practitioner can guide her clients from and to on a personal, dyadic, and organizational level.

Lewin (1951) worked with social *fields* as have others including Ushenko (1958) and Yinger (1965). Shuster (2006) discussed two primary fields present within workgroups—the intersubjective field and the dialogical container. R. M. Kenny (2008) brought together the more recent work in fields of consciousness and collaborative creativity. Kenny investigated how “trust and openness [can] build collective resonance, flow, and creativity” (p. 590). Connecting work on fields by Ken Wilber and Rupert Sheldrake, Kenny cogently argued that the “creativity of the group increases as [its] members develop” (p. 590) individually, and suggested that “our hearts and minds interact in subtle yet powerful ways...to support the emergence of *collaborative* creativity” (p. 590) through reflective practice.

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studies which became accessible after the fall of the Soviet Union, with her experience consulting and teaching international organization development and learning. Her working energetics theory is that the ultimate foundation of human reality consists only of *energy* which is organized into field patterns, some of which we know as *information* manifest in differential forms. *Humans* are highly evolved, shelled, *holonic* (Koestler, 1968) energy fields, and organizations are also energy fields. As such, human energy fields interact with those of other humans with whom we communicate (share information with) and, also with the energy fields of organizations we serve (exchange energy).

These works on fields rhizomatically (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000) connect to the Power Equity Group (PEG) theory of Carol Pierce (2011a) that challenges our perception of group entitativity<sup>47</sup> by holding the ontological presence of a *power equity group* independent of its *members*. The bounded, interstitial space, as visually represented in Figure 3, between members of a group focused on a common problem or effort contains a stable energy field that persists apart from the individuals on what appear to me as three levels of nascence, the first of which (Pierce named the *inherent* group) appears as a possible *attractor* for the other two (Pierce named the *here and now* group and the *historical* group). The *inherent* group is the ideal actualized group manifesting true power equity in its energy signature, which is to say that it is relatively resistant to outer domination forces, which may not be the case with the immanent *here and now* group that is intentionally eliminating domination forces and hierarchical authority to whatever extent its members can as they go through the Tuckman and Jensen (1977) storming and norming stages of group development. The extent to which

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<sup>47</sup> “The term *entitativity* was first introduced by Campbell to refer to ‘the degree of having the nature of an entity, of having real existence’ (Campbell, 1958, p. 17)” (Castano, Yzercyt & Bourguignon, 2003). I directly associate this term for *essence of identity* with Duns Scotus’ and C. S. Peirce’s *haecceity*, Heidegger’s *facticity* and *Dasein*, and Husserl’s *givenness*.

such a group in this process succeeds in restoring its inherence over time, is imprinted on the *historical* group as an energetic record of what works and how, and doesn't work and why—which essentially defines shared experiential learning and knowledge. Three salient features of the inherent PEG model that attract my attention are (1) the concept that the autonomous group, apart from its members, is formed by stabilizing subtle-energy patterns, and (2) that the group is fundamentally defined by its level of purity from authority and domination, and (3) that Pierce includes the use of emotions in finding boundaries. This is “an *end* in itself” participation model. Figure 3 graphically depicts the isometric integrity of an inherent group as maintained by its members and stabilized by the interstitial energy pattern between them.

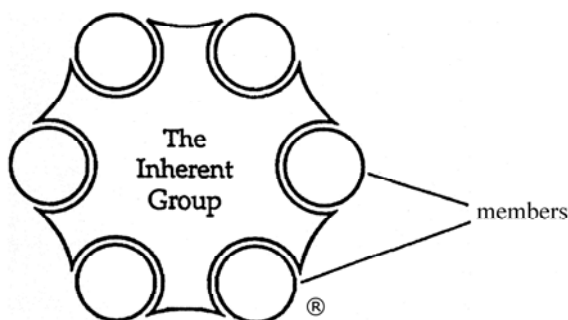
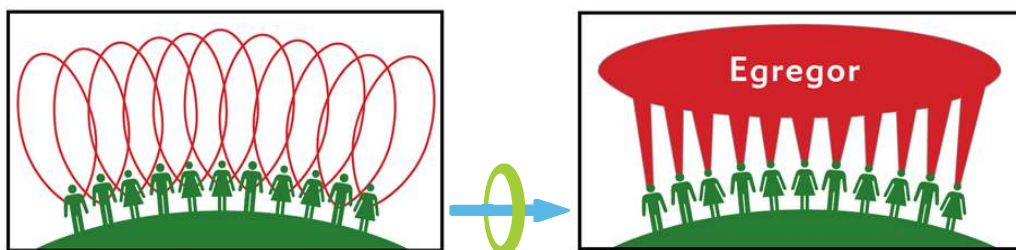


Figure 3. Inherent PEG: Reproduced with permission from C. Pierce (2011b, p.31).

“Power equity assumes: mutual empowerment with everyone present, responsible, and valued for their diversity and resources; and equal opportunity for access to, and recess from, *the group*” (Pierce, 2011a, p. 16). The values embraced by power equity group (PEG) members are “inclusion, justice, equity, and the resources and diversity each member brings” (p. 16). I perceive that adherence to these values results in, what Heorhiadi calls, an *egregor*<sup>48</sup> which is an autonomous and persistent energy pattern found among groups,

<sup>48</sup> Egregore (egregor) is a term from Old English fading from general use in modern English. An egregor is the sum of the thoughts invested by members of a group into their common goal. This produces a thought form on ethereal, astral and mental planes of existence, and this thought form becomes an persistent entity.

organizations, tribes, and even nations that stabilizes (freezes) culture—eventually in its highest entropy level through the private interests of its power contingencies. As pivotal, intentional values of the kind honored by PEG practitioners and humanists lose their homogeneity across a culture, *egregor* energy patterns become toxic and will manifest hegemonic memes of domination and oppression that endanger the dignity, emancipation, agency, and character of individuals who overtly, or more often unconsciously, entrain with the egregor and subordinate themselves to its frequency and wavelength which attenuates one's own energy and thereby subverts one's wholeness and agency to fragmentation and disempowerment. Figure 4 below illustrates the entropic tendency of energy and information over time to reinforce patterns of behavioral stasis; as a group of individuals who begin with creative freedom through energetic entrainment morphs into a moribund group of people mutually seeking certainty, safety, constancy, predictability, security, power over each other, and refuge from embarrassment, challenge, and change. This propensity for rigidity increases directly with time and the size of the group.



People's [energy] vibrations resonate and create a common energy field. People [become] connected to the egregor via channels of energy-informational exchange. The stronger (wider) the channel is, the less the person is independent from the egregor and the lesser is the person's free will. (Copied with permission of A. Heorhiadi, Lecture Series 3, 2009)

Egregors often start out very much like the energy fields created by power equity groups, high-performance teams, or other groups with the best of intentions and talent. Over

time as a group or organization succeeds in its extrinsic goals, it is common to see individuals building energy around their personal positions in the group that warps the equity. Absent of shared values and a group ethos to pull such individuals back into equity alignment, an egregor appears to outlive its usefulness alongside the new energy pattern skewed around those with access to a greater share of the power, leading to reification and a supporting dominant narrative of their choosing.

The conscious maintenance of a power equity group appears to me as a *discipline* in the sense as Reason (1995) describes:

The notion of discipline...is a practice that develops mind, body and spirit; it draws attention to intuitive or spiritual questions of purpose and meaning; to intellectual questions of understanding; and to practice questions of behavior; and it places these in the context of the practitioner's physical and social environment. Further, a discipline is necessarily self-transcending: while the initiate may productively 'follow the rules', the mature practitioner uses the rules in order to develop a quality of attention and behavior which, while born out of and nurtured by the practice and its rules, moves beyond them.

While a discipline can be an individual matter it is also the shared practice of a community. Most of us need the support of a community in order to follow a discipline, to receive the wisdom of those more experienced than ourselves and the support of peers. (p. 40)

Disciplined reflexive inquiry within a community with shared values liberates the members and the group, however, "the shadow of community lies in the possibility that the community norms will insist on a rigid conformity to both rules and world-view, so that the practice degenerates into a tyranny rather than a means of inquiry" (Reason, 1995, p. 41). This is the delicate balance Pierce must maintain with PEG theory which she has founded on Tavistock theory (Pierce, 2011b) and the studies on work groups of Wilfred Bion (1959). Bion described his idea of the seemingly autonomous *group consciousness* particular to work groups (apart from other *assumptive groups*) as "individuals meeting together in an agreed upon work task [finding] themselves caught up in 'emotional drives of obscure origins'

which sometimes hinder and occasionally further' the progress of this work task" (Colman, 1975, p. 35 quoting Bion). He theorized that pre-oedipal assumptions of dependency, pairing, and fight-flight are unconsciously shared by group members as repressive, Kleinian defensive operations used to cope with the anxieties of group process. Bion thought that these shared, tacit assumptions were what created the sense of common group consciousness (Colman, 1975). Pierce (2011a) advanced this concept by suggesting that work groups fence-out hierarchical leadership and dominating behavior while doing the hard work of surfacing the tacit assumptions and naming the anxieties within here-and-now groups.

Pierce is prescient in her inclusion of the emotional elements in the development of PEGs. Illeris's (2011) second of three (content, incentive, interaction) dimensions of learning emphasizes the crucial role positive emotions play in motivating individuals to learn through the provision of meaning and expectation, leading to better work and further learning. I do not find PEG theory integrated with Illeris's other learning dimensions or with the workspace, however I do see potential for that.

Although Pierce mentions the complementarity of the large-group interventional methods of Bunker and Alban (1997) and Owen (2008), PEGs also resonate with the concept of communities-of-practice, as bounded containers for action inquiry and Bohmian dialogue, and as fields of abductive discovery and critical hermeneutic interpretation. I do not see a practical connection of PEG theory working directly with appreciative inquiry. There are however strong ties on a number of levels to Weisbord and Janoff's Future Search technology (2000), and to Owen's Open Space technology (2008)—both recommended by Vaill as positive interventions. Dannemiller's (2000) whole scale change technology may also fit with PEG theory.

## Learning and Power

Learning is so fundamental to organizations on a number of levels yet the perceptive OD practitioner will find many contradictions to that statement in a great number of organizations. Mapping out where learning is authentically encouraged and covertly discouraged can go a long way to finding a starting point for facilitated learning and critical thinking with a new client organization. Some firms will reimburse a portion of tuition for employees attending part-time college for certain approved academic programs. Such a firm's culture may disallow on-the-job discussions of its operations, governance, and management. Some firms have very active training programs for specific work tasks and may or may not offer training on diversity, health or money management. Some companies have active management training and others save all management positions for a network of cronies by not offering management training. If OD practitioners can help everyone find meaning in their work lives, perhaps learning in its many forms will become central to all enterprise. This section points out more of the dynamics to be faced.

The Equity Power Group model, if hypothetically extended as a diverse, reflective, community-of-practice working with a particular set of processes, may be an ideal opportunity for critical reflection and self-directed learning. Merriam, Cafferella, and Baumgartner (2006) describe the following goals of self-directed learning as:

- 1) to *enhance* [emphasis mine] the ability of adult learners to be [continually] self-directed in their learning [meaning the only way to learn it is to practice it],
- 2) to foster transformational learning as central to self-directed learning, and
- 3) to promote emancipatory learning and social action as an integral part of self-directed learning. (p. 107, bullet format mine)

The first goal, “grounded primarily in humanistic philosophy” (p. 109) and stemming from the work of Knowles (1980) and Tough (1979) has not been well supported by primary

and secondary schools in the sense of developing life-long learners, and as I have discussed above, I have my doubts about undergraduate education as well. However, the centripetal force of an engaged work group focused on a common goal and using shared processes may be an ideal opportunity for OD practitioners to help cultivate and optimize adult learning in a self-directed way on a personal level by way of group interaction stimuli.

Regarding the centrality of transformational learning to self-directed learning in the second goal, Merriam, Cafferella, and Baumgartner (2006) quote Mezirow:

there is probably no such thing as a self-directed learner, except in the sense that there is a learner who can participate fully and freely in the dialogue through which we test our interests and perspectives against those of others and accordingly modify them and our learning goals. (p. 108, citing Mezirow, 1985, p. 27)

It is interesting that Illeris (2011) is as dubious about the notion of the *learning organisation* with the same qualification that the individual learner is immersed in a rich milieu of dialogue and related activity in which to test her unique perspectives. The ideas of participation and dialogue as well as critical reflection are certainly germane to such a hypothetical group as we have described. The key to self-directedness is, as Merriam, Cafferella, and Baumgartner again quote Mezirow, “becoming critically aware of what has been taken for granted about one’s learning” (p. 108, citing Mezirow, 1985, p. 17). And, “the most complete form of self-directed learning occurs when process and reflection are married in the adult’s pursuit of meaning” (p. 108, quoting Brookfield, 1986, p. 38). We find support for the idea that *process* is a powerful driver of learning, as many who have been out of work for extended periods reflect; which is to say, that organizational processes are a significant source of adult learning for those who have access to them through jobs or some other form of engagement with organizations. Collaborative experience and reflection are other drivers of adult learning.



The third goal stated by Merriam, Cafferella, and Baumgartner (2006) substantially challenges and broadens the first and second. "...authors who support the goal of emancipatory learning and social action want included not only the examination by learners of the sociopolitical assumptions under which they learn and function but also the incorporation of collective action as an outcome" (p. 108). This goal level is very difficult to achieve within most hierarchical corporations because those examinations are very threatening to all but the most enlightened executives. As Brookfield has been quoted, "any authentic exercise of self-directedness requires that certain political conditions be in place (Merriam, Cafferella, & Baumgartner, 2006, p. 109, citing Brookfield, 1993, p. 227).

Two of the defensive measures taken by command-and-control management to thwart collective or self-directed emancipatory actions is to divide functions and to control access to information. Other measures are to demand work overload, and to require instrumental training that serves the managers' needs and has little utility beyond the jobs. These forces of domination and control in the workplace have the same roots as those that have always opposed organized labor. The OD practitioner is unlikely to find opportunities to bring dialogue and reflection directly in at this level, however this as a goal is a powerful attractor to keep self-directed learning going in the right direction.

I see metaphors here that may be useful toward collectively reaching for this goal. When Heidegger and Gadamer produced their new hermeneutic circle of interpreting everything from the fusion of one's pre-existing horizon of prejudicial foreknowledge with the horizon of new experience to produce a new enlarged horizon of being, they were in effect describing the continuous process of life-long learning. Also, whereas Korzybski saw his time-binding as bridging knowledge across the gap between people and generations, I can

see the ongoing fusion of horizons as a form of micro-time-binding within individuals' finitude occurring alongside the time-binding between them and their predecessors. This makes a strong case for rich, ongoing dialogue and discourse intentionally engaged collectively to overcome the instrumental barriers of hegemonic forces in a particular setting with a particular group at a particular time. This could explain why management has so often been implicitly inclined to separate workers, isolate their focal areas, and consume their time with minutiae. If OD facilitators could persuade interdependent work group members of the value of mutually supporting and accelerating each other's life-long learning process directly through facilitated abstraction of the work processes they share, the group's energy might emancipate the lives of each and all within the context of a restructured group mission, or if not, new ones outside the organization. The norm with many jobs in the present economy is all too often that workdays are filled with long hours of routine, mundane activity and useless chit chat about sports or the news. There is a persistent perception that what knowledge one has gives one personal power and job protection, and hence the propensity to hoard information. There are on occasion, moral-hazard instances where one person does in fact take advantage of knowledge they have gleaned from another to one-up them, thereby perpetuating suspicion and fear of betrayal. Keeping this fear alive, and co-workers competing against each other, may be one of the reified instruments of power. Typical unions are fine in protecting one group of workers against another, and from the excesses of management, however in this postmodern age those workers may be paying a steep price for such a *political* solution with a negotiated servitude to both. Union rules usually disallow special recognition, treatment, or remuneration of its individual members, and they disallow members opportunity to do anything outside of their specific job description, ironically just

like management. OD may have an opportunity to create solidarity at a more granular and ad hoc situational level, in a way that helps workers at all levels to thrive in wholeness. Unions may be too large or rigid to get out of the way of innovation. Union members, clinging to their safety net, may find themselves left ‘down on the farm’ with little support for upward mobility or learning more than what is prescribed for their job description and pay grade. Management has adapted to unions where they have to, and unions have a double edge for workers. If learning is emancipating, and if collective action toward collaborative and critical learning can be built into OD interventions, perhaps a movement can get underway beginning with small efforts and loud results.

### **Power and Dialogue**

A rhizome to Brown’s (1997) “as a *means* to an end, [versus] an *end* in itself” dichotomy appears in Hammond, Anderson, and Cissna’s (2003) division of dialogue and power. The authors “examined different types of dialogue by describing five [permanent and] identifiable yet overlapping dialogic tensions within which power relationships surface and are sometimes submerged” (p. 136). Table 3 charts out the five contextual tensions.

Table 3.

#### *Dialogic Tensions*

Context	Tension
Identity	Self v. Other
Outcome	Process v. Content
Meaning	Coherence v. Incoherence
Voice	Monovocality v. Mutuality
Dialogic Field	<i>Convergent v. Emergent Outcomes</i>

Note: Extracted from Hammond, Anderson, and Cissna, 2003, pp. 136-141

The most salient of these tensions with regard to power is that between *convergent* and *emergent* dialogue and the forms of power that align with either side of this dichotomy in much the same way Lewin’s force fields describe field tension. Hammond, Anderson, and

Cissna (2003) suggested “differences and argument—elements of power—are essential aspects of conversations that matter” (p. 126, citing Mailloux, 1989, who grounds this position in the later work of Foucault). “Because dialogue is nonlinear, emergence and surprise are constant factors contributing to change and [abductive] creativity” (p. 141). It is common for groups in dialogue to expect consensual convergence on problems and their solutions, however a trained facilitator can spot emergence and surprise and not let them be lost on members whose focal gaze is on the convergence alone. Emergence and surprise are the abductive font of creativity and innovations that can literally dismiss the problem a group is working on. This can happen because the perceived problem was articulated at the edge of chaos which can act as a great divider of what matters and what doesn’t in a given situation. What is essential is that all utterances are authentic and open to authentic feedback. Intense argumentation of the data is healthy in this regard, but not if it is tainted with face-saving defensive routines, or with epistemic violence—the leveraging of privileged access to information—as described in the following section. An OD facilitator can help keep egos out of the room, and can help orchestrate healthy cycles of convergence and emergence with an “*end in itself*” group but would find it difficult to gain that trust with “a *means to an end*” group which tend to be *ad hoc* and ‘under the gun’ for solutions. Another group that may be difficult for OD practitioners to directly help are lower-status workers who with their own active and passive consent are exploited for their labor by dominating employers in what Dick and Nadin (2011) call symbolic violence.

### **Power and Knowing**

The perception that others have more knowledge than oneself assigns power to those others, who will all too often foist that power onto people who don’t believe they have that

knowledge (which is ironically, often very mundane). This phenomena spirals in many organizations where people in privileged positions withhold as much information as they can to exalt their position and control others through selective release of knowledge. When this store of knowledge about how, what, why, and where is used to directly intimidate or humiliate another, we are witnessing violence. Here we alert the conscious, humanistic practitioner of a pervasive “hermeneutic gap” to be addressed.

A trove of recent feminist research (see Appendix F) has followed the idea of epistemic injustice as developed by Fricker (1998, 2003, 2006, 2007), who structured her ideas around Craig (1990) and drew substantially from Hookway (2001) and MacIntyre (2007). Fricker (2007) described epistemic injustice as “wrong done to someone specifically in their capacity as a knower” (p. 1) and divides it into two forms—*testimonial* injustice and *hermeneutic* injustice. A case of testimonial injustice might be if someone discounts what you say because of the way you are groomed, or what your skin color is, whereas a case of hermeneutic injustice might be if hearers won’t include your comments in a discussion because they aren’t familiar with your cultural background, or as when police in the 1950s might not believe and protect a child claiming to have been beaten by the parent who has explained it away as discipline of an errant child. Fricker quotes Hartsock (1998): “The dominated live in a world *structured* by others for [the others’] purposes—purposes that at the very least are not our own and that are in various degrees inimical to our development and even existence” (p. 241). Fricker takes the word *structured* to have three concurrent significations in Hartsock’s statement which I have charted below from her text.

Table 4.

*Three Significations of Structure*

significance	description
material	social institutions and practices favor the powerful
ontological	the powerful somehow constitute the social world
epistemological	the powerful have unfair advantage in structuring collective social understandings

Note: Adapted from Fricker, 2007, p. 147

Fricker charged that “epistemology as it has been traditionally pursued has been impoverished by the lack of any theoretical framework conducive to revealing the ethical and political aspects of our epistemic conduct” (p. 2); and she is surprised that the field of “ethics has not traditionally taken our epistemic conduct into its remit” (p. 2). Under testimonial injustice she links *identity prejudice*, as against persons of a particular social type, with the *credibility* they are denied, to define the central case of testimonial injustice as *identity-prejudicial credibility deficit*—Fricker’s suggested remedy for which is to develop *virtuous hearers* capable of *testimonial sensitivity* (p. 3). She conceded that until the underlying organizational and cultural power structures are changed, this approach is an uphill but essential battle to wage in practice. A humanistic OD practitioner wages such battles.

A “collective hermeneutical gap” in a given culture (p. 7) causes suffering to speakers for whom there are no hearers in the case of epistemic injustice and no one party may be responsible—given a lacking of cultural context for their uttered claim, proposition, or grievance—thus leaving them marginalized and *silenced*. Discerning this isn’t always too easy; epistemic injustice can be very subtle to detect. One’s utterance may only be followed by silent stares, moments of awkward, *non sequitur* silence, followed by resumption of the previous line of conversation from other hearers in a group; or hearers may intentionally distort one’s utterance by superficially pretending it fits or supports their narrative as a means to move away from a contribution that doesn’t meet expectations of what is *germane*

prefaced with phrases as “In other words...” Not allowing some people’s contributions to carry forward for consideration with those of others in a group discussion is vicious neglect. These can be very painful experiences that lead one to withdraw from a group that is epistemologically bounded in scope. Because we understand ourselves through our relationships, one is justified in such withdrawal to avoid injury and preserve one’s sense of self; however I add that the prospect and promise of a group are diminished by the withdrawal of members who aren’t immediately understood in our sound-bite culture. I see this as an abandonment of learning opportunity. Those marginalized may be simply less assertive or unsure how to participate in a new culture. Failure to dialogue, explore, and reflect what others think and mean is common, as is the competitive drive to simply sound smarter than each other in hierarchical venues. The history of race psychology is also rife with epistemic violence (Teo, 2011) that continues on today thanks to positivism. The humanistic OD facilitator may be able to capture these teachable moments and may wish to adopt the language of *descriptive psychology* (Ossorio, 2006) to respond constructively to this violence.

### **Complex Adaptive Systems and Power Equity**

Complex adaptive systems (CAS) have become a valuable way of understanding organization dynamics and managing adaptation to external system changes. Whether or not organizations are recognized as such by management, organizations are complex adaptive systems nested within the CAS of their environment (Pascale, 2000). CAS are dynamic relational networks that adapt to their own experience much as viruses do. Here we discuss how it can work for our conscientious practitioner to open doors for her introduction of a participatory action research intervention loaded with abductive and hermeneutic tools.

Many hierarchically structured organizations mistakenly seek equilibrium within their operations as a strategy to survive and sustain profits and growth in turbulent, complex environments. Continuous change in the external environment forces some command-and-control executives and managers to protect their positions and privileges over others' in the pecking order when they cannot personally lead adaptation to the environmental changes confronting the organization. Paradoxically, such organizations often create this rock-and-a-hard-place in their approach to strategy in one of two common and traditional ways (Stacey, 1995), either with the *strategic choice* approach, or the *ecological* approach; both which “assume the same about system dynamics: negative feedback processes driving successful systems...toward predictable equilibrium states of adaptation to the environment” (p. 477).

Stacey (1995) contrasted the perspective these two approaches with that of the CAS approach to strategy by comparing them against three closely interrelated criteria:

- 1) ...*systemic properties*...
- 2) ...*intention vs. emergence*...
- 3) ...*free choice vs. determinism and constraint*...(p. 478)

Strategic choice approach “organizations use negative feedback processes of formulating plans/policies and then implementing them using monitoring forms of control” (p. 478). With the ecological approach, “populations of organizations...adapt and the negative feedback process of competitive selection ensures that this happens: a particular environmental state is compatible with a limited number...of the organizational population and deviations...are weeded out through competitive failure” (p. 478). Both systems, the *strategic choice* approach, and the *ecological* approach, are deterministic and operate on the paradigm that the environment is knowable, and that the organization can keep its equilibrium throughout environmental changes through control of people's behavior by labeling and grading



performance negatively. The alternate perspective—CAS—is radically different because it “demonstrates that for a system to be innovative, creative, and changeable it must be driven *far from equilibrium* where it can make use of disorder, irregularity, and difference as essential elements in the process of change” (p. 490). With this and several other alternate perspectives using complexity theory, decision makers can decide when to use traditional strategies, as with repetitive and predictable operations isolated from the whitewater environmental milieu, at the risk of oppressing those who operate their processes; or when to allow bounded chaos to produce the free, collaborative dialogue that generates tomorrow’s solutions to tomorrow’s problems.

As early as 1965, Emery and Trist were looking at the causal texture<sup>49</sup> of organizational environments and named four conceptual levels in order of increasing complexity: (1) *Placid, random*; (2) *Placid, clustered*; (3) *Disturbed-reactive*; and (4) *Turbulent* (Vaill’s whitewater environment); and studied the adaptive and maladaptive responses at each level. Babüroğlu (1997) extrapolated their work, using Trist’s application of Angyal’s (1967) systems thinking to “maladaptive responses to turbulence” (p. 210), to arrive at a fifth level he named *vortical* to indicate the edge of chaos, a place of dynamical opportunity.

If an OD practitioner is expending her energy in organizations committed to strategic control and certainty, she may wish to reflect on the lost opportunity cost of rearranging superficial details on unsustainable platforms as with deck furniture on the Titanic. There is a growing body of work available from which to learn group tactics for operating on the edge of disorder to find new order on its Janus-like face. I see a linkage between complex adaptive

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<sup>49</sup> Causal texture is a term Emery and Trist borrowed from: Tolman, E. C., & Brunswik, E. (1935). The organism and the causal texture of the environment. *Psychological Review*, 42(1), 43-77. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0062156>.

systems, accelerated learning, and access to the tacit dimension that is very emancipating. The adoption of a complex adaptive systems approach opens up space for critical systems work, abductive designs, and participatory action research. The generative emergence of new patterns requires hermeneutic sensibility to recognize and interpret.

### **Intertextuality and Hypertextuality**

Both of these forms of textuality have received little attention in OD research. I consider them each a part of the hermeneutic domain, and each to offer fresh new insights and opportunities for OD facilitation.

Teubert (2010) stated that “discourse...is the only reality to which we have direct, unmediated access. It is the entirety of spoken, signed or written utterances which have at least one addressee” (p. 18). Julia Kristeva coined the word *intertextuality* to mean that all texts are built on other texts through the common medium of language. The term has come to mean many other things which have diluted the original intent (Irwin, 2004), although I’m inclined to agree with Barthes that to some extent, “texts derive their meanings, not from some author creating *de novo* and *ex nihilo*, but only through their relations to other texts” (p. 230). Kristeva sees all texts “as always in a [continual] state of production rather than being products to be quickly consumed” (Allen, 2000, p. 34) which suggests to me that one’s textual utterances are not only extracted from previous utterances, but are on a continuum with future texts as part of an ongoing meta-narrative. My use of the term intertextual is retrospective and limited to pointing out the fact that extant secondary and tertiary texts are structured on various interpretations of common previous ones; although each may take different new directions in their expression based on the influence of other texts on each originary one; and that in this sense, individual texts can serve as hermeneutic horizons to

their successors. I see this as a method for tracing genealogy of the ideas and the time-binding of texts. Bibliographies, reference citations and reference lists help map the genealogies. One author, John Deely (2001) presorted his reference list in chronological order of each authors' life span, followed by the sequential publication dates of each author's work for this purpose. The sequencing of ideas and concepts that arise within a group is important to insure that all participants, engaged in participatory action research and hermeneutic understanding, see where their contributions fit into the flow. This is why I suggest that all participating clients journal, log, blog, or otherwise document synopses of their reflections and proposals in chronological format to be merged with those of others in their group possibly using a relational database. Subsequent after-action review can find unexplored branching in the flow of ideas. Real-time voice-to-text records backed up with videotape can show where voices and ideas got cut off because of weak facilitation, or where rich concepts 'flew over the heads' of the group.

Hypertext, a very advanced form of intertextuality enabled by computer software technology and the internet, is a form of writing that is non-sequential and multi-branching to allow the reader to make choices of which successive text (or audio/visual hypermedia) to read, consult, or respond to. Landow (2006), quoted Roland Barthes (in S/Z):

an ideal textuality that precisely matches...*computer hypertext*—text composed of blocks of words [such as my transcriptions in Category Notes, see Appendix D] linked electronically by multiple paths, chains, or trails in an open-ended, perpetually unfinished textuality described by the terms *link*, *node*, *network*, *web*, and *path*. [Barthes said] “In this ideal text, the networks are many and interact, without any one of them being able to surpass the rest; this text is a galaxy of signifiers...; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively be declared to be the main one; the codes it mobilizes extend *as far as the eye can reach*, they are indeterminable...; the systems of meaning can take over this absolutely plural text, but their number is never closed, based as it is on the infinity of language. (p. 2)

This foregoing excerpt is just such a lexia that could have easily appeared with the click of a link embedded in any number of texts, which themselves could be accessed in kind as part of any semiotic or categorical thread. The stability of such links, storage server capacity, and internet bandwidth—the current limitations for hypertext as the new textuality—are works in progress. Whereas few may have the time to read the entire eight volumes of the *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, flagging or transcribing analects *meaningful* to the reader, salient passages are commonly found through categorical searches with data mining search engines. Until and unless all original texts are digitized for open mining, public results will be second order lexia quoted and contextually valued in the same way by others.

At this point most online journal articles are only accessible in quantity by economic elites or those associated with universities. What the practitioner can do is help clients mine their own life experience and their shared work experiences through participatory action research. She can facilitate their learning to capture their knowledge in hypertextual lexia to form an open ended (database, intranet, or website) library for each team or community of practice. She can offer and solicit new metaphors and analogies to work from and carry on a written dialogue with such groups with themed blogs that may at some point connect to enlarge the group narrative in a natural and democratic way. The facilitator can help frame problems and provide metatextual commentary and questions to evoke deeper reflection as further ways to drive action research. This process is remarkably well demonstrated in Bateson's (1972) *Metalogues* (pp. 3-58). Bateson defined a metalogue as a conversation about a problematic subject in which the participants discuss both the problem and the structure of the conversation simultaneously. These narratives can gradually build an integrative framework for organizational learning and knowledge management (Vera &

Crossan, 2003) on a local level that self-empowers a particular team or community of practice. As Bartel and Garud (2003) stated, “narratives are important vehicles for creating and disseminating knowledge” (p. 324). They propose a process they label *adaptive abduction* which “leverages the temporal and contextual structure that orders the persons, objects, and events in a narrative, allowing a person to confirm, amend, or construct some set of inferences about past events and their own current situations” (p. 324). Disciplined blogging within a group should afford asynchronous “flexibility across time and space, enabling different people in different situations to use the same narrative for their own purposes” (p. 324). One caution is that “narrative knowledge includes tacit understandings that are sometimes obscured in generalizations” (p. 325). Wisdom (1965) quoted William James having said, “The theorizing mind tends always to the oversimplification of its materials” (p. 90); and claims Wittgenstein spoke, “of the craving for generality, the contemptuous attitude towards the particular case” (p. 91). Hayek (1945) “pointed out that circumstances of time and place may be highly significant for a given situation and that generalizations, by their nature, cannot take direct account of such details” (as quoted by Bartel & Garud, 2005, p. 325). Too frequent and facile use of generalization also traps participants who know each other into a “deadly inertia” of *awareness* (Wisdom, 1965, p. 57) and familiarity of the other, homeostatically inhibiting desire to change, learn, grow, and try new behaviors through fear of dismissive ridicule, epistemic violence, or separation. This would argue for all blog entries to be dated and for thick description that hermeneutically interprets one’s direct experience without generalizing or abstracting, except in documents that are expressly recognized for that purpose.

There appears to me the opportunity through hypertext to create a whole and polyphonic literary form with the shared consciousness of all participants of a shared endeavor who engage in lively discourse and reflection around lexias of each personal experience. Landow (2006) wrote, “read-write hypertext exemplified by blogs...does not permit a tyrannical, univocal voice. ... the voice is always that distilled from the combined experience of the momentary focus, the lexia one presently reads, and the continually forming narrative of one’s reading path.” Deleuze and Guattari’s (2000) notion “of the arch-rhizome is the concept of a social order defined by active traversal or encounter rather than objectification” (Moulthrop, 1994, p. 301). Rhizomatic non-structures like hypertext oppose arborescent forms like hierarchies and genealogies and are more conducive to the expression and practice of critical theory (Landow, 2006), because, in my view the arborescent forms of critical textuality are more vulnerable to ideological twisting, and since power structures, reifications, commodifications and the such operate submerged from view, why shouldn’t critical theory one-up them with rhizomes coming at them every which way to expose them to scrutiny? This is why I am inclined to suggest hypertext as an efficient mode of conscientization if effectively used to give emancipating voice, free of epistemic injustice, to those who are courageous enough to build autonomy into their lives through the collective action of PAR. The humanist OD practitioner can find much to do in orienting clients to this view and facilitating the action.

### **Analogy and Meaning**

Meaning does not exist without language, and language as a medium is substantially constructed around analogical forms—one thing defined by somehow being similar to another. Artful use of the tropes of language such as analogy can provide the critical

practitioner with expressions that enrich and deepen meaning in the work life of her clients and raise their critical consciousness enough to reveal the hidden structure of oppression they are exposed to, and to disclose the opportunities for from-and-to freedom, with more substantial foregrounding for interpretation.

Beuchot (2002) provided a sound consideration of analogical and iconic hermeneutics. His premise is that hermeneutics has become appreciated for its polysemy (multiple meanings) and plurivocality (multiple voices) "in reaction to the univocist [singular voiced] currents of modernity" (p. 176). There is a risk of overcompensating with the irrational chaos of equivocism (multiple interpretations) that leads to "ambiguity, relativism and nihilism [extreme skepticism]" (p. 178). "Polysemy or plurivocality has two forms: equivocality or analogy. More often than not, in reaction to the univocist currents of modernity, post modernity has leaned excessively toward equivocality" (p. 176) which tends to become "too subjective or relativist" (p. 177). Beuchot offered a middle ground of analogical hermeneutics: where "skepticism and rationalism [vs.] relativism and nihilism have been taken to the extreme" (p. 177), leaving us simultaneously swinging on the historical pendulum between rationalism and irrationalism; and between univocist hermeneutics that offer one unique interpretation, and equivocist cacophony that offers infinite, non-intermediated interpretations. This means that there are very few options for representation of one's interpretations that will widely stand over time against charges of either subjectivism, relativism, or skepticism other than interpretations founded on analogy and its associated tropes. This form of hermeneutic may be more resilient to the historical tides of biased meaning making (i.e. racism and sexism) and may best serve multicultural groups and organizations trying to work from the same page on critical issues.

Now that the positivist, neo-positivist, and structuralist searches for “exact and rigorous knowledge of reality, expressed perfectly in language” (Beuchot, 2002, p. 177) have been abandoned—but are still fresh in our mind—we may have an ideal opportunity to test out analogical hermeneutics in our practices before the cacophony of populist equivocism dilutes all focus. Bychkov (2002) said (citing Gadamer, 1975, p. 267) “in any process of understanding or interpretation, as Gadamer stresses, after Heidegger, certain fore-structures of understanding are always present. Certain meanings are constantly being projected and *put to the test* in the text as it is being read and understood...” (p. 390). Analogies are excellent frameworks on which to put our fore-structures for dialogic analysis and testing. Analogy includes other tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, anomaly, paradox and irony (Oswick, Keenoy & Grant, 2002) that can be artfully used in organization theory. Beuchot (2002) citing Rorty, advises keeping a balance between metaphor and metonymy in hermeneutics to prevent slipping out of interpretation into useless allegory. Marshak (2003) extended “the use of tropes beyond theory generation to include their impact on day-to-day organizational behavior” (p. 9) on an unconscious level. He offered a dialogical intervention method that helps surface *unconscious symbolic processes* by listening for the explicit and comforting “tropes of similarity—metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche—[to] provide clues to...the underlying conceptual framing of [a] situation; [and reframing the situation to create awareness and doubt with] the discomforting tropes of dissimilarity—anomaly, irony, and paradox—...to invite consideration of new realities” (p. 10). OD practitioners can find many opportunities to raise awareness with this method combined with polymodal inquiry.

Note: Here I am drawing on sources that speak to me about the strength of analogical hermeneutics and the use of tropes on OD. Each of the four sources used in the previous paragraph provide an additional, compelling facet to my following argument for using graphical or mechanical analogs to evoke meaning and generate abductions



as suggested below. I am not making a statement that these authors have some stature. Their work is the work I found categorically through cross references and had access to, and it held meaning that compelled me, and I gave them full credit for it. Beuchot for example has the most cogent exposition on analogical hermeneutics I have found to date. Dedre Gentner (who I cite below) may be a more prominent researcher on analogical reasoning in someone's mind but Beuchot had what I could use here and I haven't seen any disputation of it. I am also influenced by Steinhart and Kittay (1994), Campbell (1990), and Maurin (2002).

A popular analogical training device for illustrating how to extend or transcend the boundaries of one's assumptive limitations in problem solving is to draw a number of equidistant circles arranged in equal rows and columns, and to simply ask the client or student to connect all the circles with a minimal number of contiguous straight lines and without retracement—and with no further instructions. The solution to a nine-circle model is shown in its four mirror images (up-down and left-right) in Figure 5, where after crossing a 3-circle diagonal, the line turns across a 3-circle column (or row, depending on which of the four orientations this solution is viewed from), and extends beyond the margin of the *assumed* concrete framework of circles twice, to most efficiently capture with conservation of energy, all the circles with four straight contiguous lines. Many people trying this puzzle are misguided by some implicit assumption they are not to extend their lines outside of a non-specified ambit—tangent to the group of circles or connecting the centers of the outer eight—and consequently fail to connect the circles for a “thinking outside the box” experience. Those who succeed might also ask what cultural assumptions bound their lives. An OD practitioner can only use analogies her clients can follow and match idioms to their learning styles. Each person learns best through a different order of modality and style (Kolb, 1984), however most people can begin with a thinking framework matched to a visual mode.

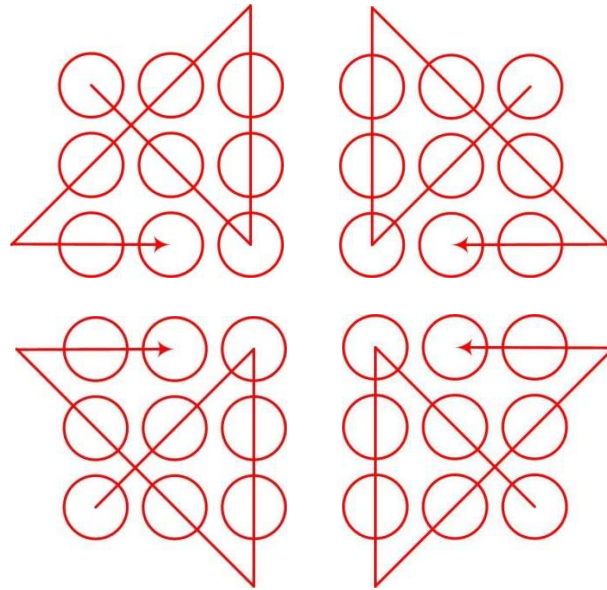


Figure 5. Outside-the-Box Analogy

This geometrical device may be analogically useful at a higher cognitive level to hermeneutically or abductively grasp ineffable concepts and awaken tacit knowledge. The two outlying apex shown in each mirrored image in Figure 5 are not arbitrary—each is determined by extending an *explorational* line until it intersects in space with a point of *perspective* that allows an alignment with the next strongest (2-circle in this case) and most efficient alignment of circles. The angle of the two apex are a direct function of the number and homogenous size of the circles. I find this abstract, conceptual *analogy* suggestive of how Polanyi (1962, 1969, 1983) used postmodern deconstruction to reconstruct the redeemable, non-reductive, non-foundational elements of modernism—if one can envision these external vertices as intersections of vectorial thrust energized by the concrete elements held in cohesive, interstitial alignment by their intersubjective field, and perhaps in tension with external forces.

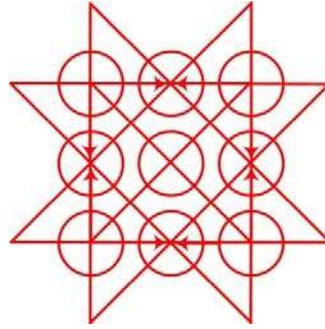


Figure 6. Analogy Progression © 2005 Shuster Consulting

As any one of the four patterns in Figure 5 is rotated 90–degrees three times to superimpose the original vectorial pattern on each, we get eight vertices external to the two dimensional concretion as shown in Figure 6, (eight when you superimpose the mirror image of the vectorial pattern left-to-right, and twice that again when both left-to-right vectorial patterns are flipped top-to-bottom and then superimposed). If the geometric structure were three-dimensional with 27 spheres—assuming each sphere has some unique character such as axial spin angle or speed, density, mass, hollowness, volume, texture, chemical composition, magnetic strength, impedance, intentionality, disposition, experience, agency, character, etc. vis-à-vis its relative position on intersecting vectorial patterns—we would have 144 external vertices extending at right angles to the planes of the cubical concretion pattern. We would also have another 96 external vertices formed diagonally, to form a fuzzy field of energy exchange with a 240-apex signature unique to the energetic character and axial disposition and kinetic energy of the *spheres*—perhaps analogically representing individuals in a power equity group, community of practice, or academic department. Configurations of such *concretions* as power equity groups, communities of practice, or perhaps academic departments may be shaped by a Lewinian (1951) tension field between the internal energy force binding the group and external forces bearing on the group.

This might raise the question of how individuals within such groups are paradigmatically constrained by the energetic configuration of their cohort—a possible direct relation of cultural form and function—perhaps emanating from Chandler and Torbert’s (2003) 27-flavor cubical typology.

Applying Heorhiadi’s theory of energy and information, one can view the concept of *concretion* as the relative densities of energy into informational patterns of meaning, in the manner that Heisenberg—with his uncertainty principle—saw energy itself as *particles* and as *waves* depending on when, how, why and from where he was observing/intending them. Analogical models can be and are constructed to create new perspectives on reality. For example, quantum switching models are being used (Tuszynski, 2006) to study cognition, learning, and memory activation in the sub-neural, axonal micro-channel structures of the brain for understanding nonlocal awareness. In contrast, Spinoza is known to have used a geometrical method in his *Ethics*.

In describing geometrical constructions as a form of manipulative abduction, Magnani (2009) states that geometric reasoning:

...consists in constructing a diagram according to a general precept, in observing certain relations between parts of that diagram not explicitly required by the precept, showing that these relations will hold for all such diagrams, and in formulating this conclusion in general terms. (p. 116, quoting Peirce, CP 1.54)

Quoting from Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* Magnani adds that in geometrical construction:

I must not restrict my attention to what I am actually thinking in my concept of a triangle (this is nothing more than the mere definition); I must pass beyond it to properties which are not contained in this concept, but yet belong to it (p. 116, citing Kant, 1929, *Critique of Reason*, A718-B476)

Magnani (2009) defined manipulative abduction as a “model-based abduction that exploits external models endowed with delegated (and often implicit) cognitive roles and attributes”

(p. 116). He said the model must be external and the organizing unknown a priori; and it must advance one beyond the given concept. In the geometrical construction we have given above, the Kantian *going beyond* could be seen if we were to suggest that the vectorial patterns may be the highest order of intersubjectivity among a group of 27 subjects. Magnani argued “that abduction has to be observed in the whole distributed interplay between internal and external representations (p. 417). I also see this as an interplay of hermeneutic horizons.

The Kuhnian paradigm revolution exposed a moraine of anomalous scree at the base of most scientific theories that I see as a fertile source of new hypotheses. Using mirror diagrams (as we have above) and non-Euclidean geometry as enhanced by Lobachevsky,<sup>50</sup> Magnani (2009), demonstrated cognitive abduction of hypotheses from empirical anomalies, and abductively determines the most likely one to explain them. These geometrical constructions are interior/exterior representations or spatial transformations that effectively act as *epistemic mediators* (p. 123) with great utility for creative, actionable insight and innovation; and for surfacing tacit knowledge. Here one may find “a *nexus* of qualities and relations, a centre for causal operations, both active and passive” (Campbell, 1990, p. 18).

Polanyi was originally a chemist familiar with the energetic properties of atoms and molecules and how their alignment can be controlled by the tensional fields of internal (covalent and ionic) energy forces of chemical structures like salts, polymers, and external force factors (such as catalysts, temperature, and pH) that modify reactions to shape useful configurations of plastic. Gill (2000) described Polanyi’s “structure of the cognitive process [as] both *vectorial* and *meditational* in character” (p. 34) and said that a “dimensional model of experience and reality is best equipped to shed light on the nature of meaning at all levels”

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<sup>50</sup> Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky (1792-1856): Russian mathematician who devised a non-Euclidian geometry by creating a work-around to Euclid’s Fifth Postulate

(p. 34). In the analogy we present here, the vectorial perspectives could be interpreted as the deconstructivist points of view—helping us identify the efficiencies, and thereby the inefficiencies, in the concretions of modernity. Also, given that “we *discern* the richer holistic reality as mediated in and through its individual parts” (p. 34), the interstitial energy of the concretions can be seen as the mediational perspective that leads to facilitated action. To only attend to the vectorial perspective would be to ‘throw the baby out with the bathwater’, as it were, by remaining in a negative postmodern space that condemns all the fruits of modernism yet offers no alternatives.

To tweak this analogy a bit further, one might otherwise see the external vertices as cybernetic inflection points, or mirror reflections from an Other or points of energy exchange with the external environment, or Vonnegut’s (1998/1963) *karass*<sup>51</sup> supporting a cat’s cradle network. Given that hermeneutics is now understood by many as analogical (Gentner & Colhoun, 2010; Gentner & Christie, 2010), I see that developing new analogical patterns in the course of dialogical OD practice can be an effective adjunct to abductive cognition which has its own way of empirical discovery—also without the trappings of reductionism, foundationalism, universal truth, etc. Gentner and Colhoun (2010) said, “A good analogy ... reveals common structure between two situations and suggests further inferences (p. 35).

All the same, the deconstructivist view plays a much needed and powerful heuristic role in the reconstruction of what is worth salvaging and reordering from modernity—in effect, going back and looking at the roads unexplored in our hubris and hurry to gorge on all the low hanging fruit produced by our blindness to the externalities of *cheap* fossil fuel, unjust foreign labor, unregulated environmental standards of foreign production, and an

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<sup>51</sup> *karass*: term coined by Kurt Vonnegut in his anthropology masters thesis at the University of Chicago and his subsequent novel *Cat’s Cradle* to represent invisible fingers or forces supporting a cat’s cradle configuration

unreflective, *reeducated* populace of consumers happily participating in their own repression. A re-looping, a folding back with wisdom and sustainable, durable tools to dialogically and experientially excavate and *bricoleur* overlooked ideas from the garbage heap of the industrial orgy—and reframe them with new analogical heuristics—seems in order for those of us who would presume to advise and “develop” organizations. I do not know who else is in a position to offer new, humane directions at such critical and teachable moments of opportunity that may arise from the forthcoming crises. Again, the only question is which, and how many of us can and will step away from the ‘cultural cool aid’ of our cohorts, and step up to humanity’s existential crisis with radical new tropes. Karl Marx (1843) said, “To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But, for man, the root is man himself” (n.p.). As such we need to look to ourselves both subjectively and intersubjectively to hermeneutically recognize new tropes as they appear amid the fusion of our horizons.

This chapter explored a wide variety of conceptual models that surfaced to my consciousness during the writing of, and after re-reading the literature reviews in Chapter 2. The process I used is described in Chapter 3—Methodology and illustrated in Figure 2 on page 99. Together, these models helped me to reflect on and reinterpret my own professional, organizational experience, and to abductively discover the two-stage OD pathway described in the forthcoming chapter. As previously described, this movement from Chapter 2 to Chapter 4 to Chapter 5 is a sequential and emergent hermeneutic research process.

I imagine that at some point in the future that technology can trace the keystrokes, revisions, deletions, and reading sequence that could reveal the iterative process of this kind of research. The reader can never know at what point a passage or insight occurred to an author. Examples are, the preceding paragraph that was added as a modification request by

my dissertation committee after I submitted the final draft, and this paragraph reflecting on it. Whole sections also got moved out of the sequence of their original writing, and modified to make the text more approachable. Others were removed entirely because they turned out to be distracting stepping stones or non sequitur to an emerging critical path. Like so many other aspects of this process of ever-merging new horizons, the growth of this text itself is rhizomatic, and meta-reflection such as this is but one way to surface and reveal this process.



## **Chapter 5–Plateaus**

### **Personal Professional Experience Cases**

This chapter re-conceptualizes the practice of organization development as was described in the literature review. Using the emergent mental models in Chapter 4, alongside my own experiential horizon, a practical and highly probable process emerges in this chapter to demonstrate the confluence of all three forms of inquiry from Chapter 2 into facilitated action research frames to be tested and tailored in the field to suit the needs of OD practitioners, their clients, and the contingencies of their circumstance together.

I begin this chapter with three mini-case studies (A, B, & C) describing different types of OD intervention from my professional experience. The reader may find them of heuristic value in understanding my reflexivity in this emergent work. C. S. Peirce was consistent in saying that discontent and frustration, when combined with surprising new information or insights, sets the stage for abductive discovery. I had written these cases prior to beginning the literature review to relive these moments; to feel the disappointment and frustration they each evoked on so many occasions; and to think ‘If I only knew then what I know now.’ This moment was a springboard for me to read more hermeneutically and engage abductive reasoning more effectively in this study, while drawing on my experience and other reading.

#### **Case A: Experience with a New Industrial Organization Design.**

My professional experience in OD began in 1982 in the course of designing a pair of interim organizations to cultivate a large utility enterprise over ten years. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) delegated to states, counties, and metropolitan authorities the responsibility to stop sewer discharge of toxic, aqueous bound chemicals to public waterways

and publicly owned water treatment works (POTWs). This created a crisis for my client manufacturing operations I was then selling chemicals to, and an opportunity to creatively satisfy my desire to serve the environment with responsible cradle-to-grave stewardship of the products I was selling and training the use of. As is so often the case, crises produce opportunities, and in this case I found many layers of opportunity. In particular I saw the chance of a lifetime to align highly competitive client companies behind a cause that—although was self-serving—was highly leveraged for the good of the environment and community.

The Clean Water Act, enacted in 1982 but not enforced until 1984, gave me a window of opportunity to help the discharging companies find an economically viable means of compliance that would satisfy the new legal requirement. I had been reading about the use of ion exchange resins to purify water (such as Culligan uses in homes) and it occurred to me that such technology could be applied to removal of hazardous metals from etching and plating large-volume rinse water effluents. This would also allow for the re-use of the water and, if the metals were segregated in sufficient volume, they could be reclaimed back to the market place through the scale economies only a centralized utility operation could provide. I reasoned that a private for-profit utility company could provide this service at a fraction of the cost that each client operation would otherwise pay to construct, staff, and maintain their own end-of-pipe system, only to create potentially hazardous sludge to be sent to landfills that can leach into the groundwater years later to come back and haunt the individuals and companies—whose names were on the manifest—by way of the joint, strict, and several liability clause in the Federal hazardous waste disposal law.

I took this idea to the leadership of our local industry group for which I was serving as president. Synchronously, many of the member companies were in discussion with the regional sewer authority to ask for public bond sale moneys for low interest loans to pay for individual end-of-pipe waste treatment systems at each company. The sewer authority could not help because they were only an enforcement agency for the local metropolitan area. They did point the group to an EPA study that had explored, but not operationalized, the very centralized ion exchange process as I envisioned. A speaker was brought in and the idea seemed futile because the sewer authority and its oversight agency already owned and operated the primary POTW (Publicly Owned Treatment Works) serving our area, and they didn't see the political climate correct to expand those operations with an unproven technology.

At that point I approached the key parties with my plan and suggested a public-private sector task force to study the concept as a private utility cooperative. I formed an ad hoc industry association to participate in the study. I passed the hat among my customers and raised \$32,000, which we presented to the metropolitan oversight agency with the challenge to match funding and engage with the project. With their backing we raised matching grant money from the state waste management board and the region's largest county board. I was named Chair of the new task force; and technical, financial and political feasibility studies were launched under the direct orders of the chair of the metropolitan oversight agency who had been the former director of the state pollution control agency, and who later became a state supreme court justice. Very early on in this process Gary Dodge, an enormously talented municipal energy planning director joined forces with me because of his passion for the idea, to prepare action plans for its outcome. He had been working on a project to remove

cadmium from sewage for a co-composting project, to supply horticultural and specialty plant companies with topsoil and fertilizer, that turned out to be politically too ahead of its time. Jumping in to help on this project with a larger industry base would achieve the same end for him.

The three studies showed the project to be feasible, so we formed the corporate structure of ACME, a development company with myself as CEO and Gary as our CFO. In northern tier states there has been a practice of producer groups taking collective action through producer cooperatives. Examples are dairy farmers owning a milk and cheese plant, corn and wheat farmers owning a grain elevator, small cities and townships owning a telephone exchange, with other examples of competing entities acting together in their own best interest, usually where, by not overcoming their usual resistance, they cannot save money or cannot create value-added, next-step processing by their own small size. Thus, although we created ACME as a stock corporation, its structure was like a producer coop.

We sold stock and put-or-pay contracts to the future users of the facility—my customers. We sought a large, deep pocket corporation to joint venture the design, construction and operation of the \$11 million facility. We negotiated with prospective partners and finally forged a joint venture partnership agreement with ABC, a large Fortune 500 company in the waste processing industry. There was concern among the state hazardous waste commission and sewage discharge regulating agencies, who were giving our customers good faith compliance for their commitment to our development, because ABC was a hazardous landfill company with Superfund sites in remediation. The concern was that the recycling aspects of the operation would be abandoned when ABC took over the operation and that it would become a feeder plant for their landfills. I negotiated with the sewer

authority to allow credit against the fines they were about to charge the non-compliant dischargers waiting for the facility to be built, for money sent to ACME to revise the engineering plans and make the plant dedicated to recovery. They accepted. We raised \$1.25 million, re-engineered the plant to the sewer authority's satisfaction, paid cash for eight acres of land and the Federal Permit to operate. ABC abruptly pulled out of the joint venture when they saw that the sewer authority would require maximized recovery and minimized waste going to landfills. They had been insincere about their motives and we had exposed that.

**Sidebar:** A story I often tell shows how unabashed business greed can spontaneously appear and how these types of events can provide opportunity for reflection and positive action. In a negotiation for equity share of the joint venture enterprise with ABC, a multi-billion dollar corporation, I was negotiating with the vice-president who had already secured controlling interest of 60% the week before. He had come back to say they needed to move up to 80% equity to stay in the joint venture partnership because there would be some \$400,000 upcoming engineering expenses that we would not be able to share on the 60/40 basis. I asked him if that was the *only* reason, and if we could manage to carry our end, if he still needed more equity. He said it was the *only* reason and expressed confident doubt that we could come up with the \$240,000. We agreed to meet the following week to settle the matter. I landed a \$1.25 million grant agreement for compliance fine monies from the sewer authority that week and entered the next meeting with the exciting news that we would pay the *entire* \$400,000 engineering cost and that the split could stay the same. He stated that they still needed 80% to stay. Shocked, I said "You said the *only* reason you needed another 20% was to cover our share of the engineering cost. We are not only covering

our share, *we're now picking up your share too!* This is *good for you!* We're supposed to be partners, working together. Why have you changed your story?" His unabashed response: "Because it's *too* good for you." That one comment led me to lay groundwork for dissolution of that joint venture because it wasn't founded on sustainable shared values that would uplift and nourish the people who would be working on, and served by this project. Somehow this episode brought my skill at working in such milieu of duplicity to a new level—I can accept it as a given without being polarized to paranoid distrust or gullibility.

With our newly strengthened position, we negotiated a new joint venture with DEF, a Fortune 100 manufacturing corporation who built the plant and operated it successfully for eight years, after which DEF sold their position to GHI a water purification conglomerate who forced ACME to sell our position. Our stockholders received their initial investment back four-fold. I also had the opportunity to intern a Masters in Environmental Science candidate from the state university, as my paid assistant. This is the first central treatment and recovery facility built in this country and it is being modeled around the world. It is essentially as I envisioned it in 1982. The entire region's metal finishing industry is in compliance and no longer discharges heavy metals into the major rivers and land-filled hazardous waste has been minimized.

I could never have done this massive project without the efforts and support of my friend and mentor, Gary Dodge, along with the trust and support of my customer-stockholders, who were and remain ironically vigorous competitors in their respective markets. Bringing them together to join forces for a common cause is said to have been our artful doing through persistence and patient, reframing communicative action. Working with

visionary people in the public sector was an opportunity of a lifetime to work in flow with great souls who step up to good calling. I learned a great deal about business, politics, negotiation and environmental science in those ten years. The establishment of this facility required lobbying the state legislature for an amendment—to the act that legislates the control of hazardous waste—to recognize the legal existence of a utility that had never existed before in thought or language. The locating of a hazardous waste facility in an inner ring city of a metropolitan area required enormous effort at city hall where getting a liquor permit is a Kafkaesque adventure. Finally it was the fire captain who was their hazardous materials officer, who knew enough chemistry and water-soil permeation, who was convinced that we were not a hazard. He advised the mayor, who was chair of the city council, that we would be an acceptable risk and an asset to the community. And, it was she who stood up and decided that this treatment plant would be good for the electronic and metal finishing industry in the metropolitan area, and that their city should take on the risky business of locating a plant and facing down NIMBY (nice idea but *Not In My Back Yard*) attitudes; because some city had to help us obtain Federal permits.

Endless nights studying pro formas and budgets, writing speeches, and trying to not be outsmarted by adversaries with computers sharpened the wits and fanned the flame. Most of all, what I learned is that if one's vision is pure and articulated and timely, there are people waiting to help you bring it to fruition. Consistent communications were the key.

ACME—our development company—existed for a total of ten years during which time I remained in my job selling chemical technology. My sales actually thrived from the loyalty of the customers who knew what was happening on their behalf. Several served on the ACME board I chaired. I conducted all of my ACME specific business on off hours

including breakfast, lunch, evenings and weekends. I met daily with my assistant to whom I assigned all activities I could not get to. He also did the same for our CFO, Gary Dodge. I would testify at legislative committee meetings or speak to agencies or trade groups over lunch or in the evenings and Gary would cover other times when I was working. The networking was substantial and we felt welcome wherever we went. What we were doing had the aura of motherhood and apple pie; however we did have our adversaries with vested interests to protect. The whole project was proclaimed to be dead a dozen times in the local press by various self-proclaimed authorities who usually knew little of what was really going on. With each setback we took bold action and resurrected the public viability of the project with innovations and political moves. Our perseverance paid off; we wore out our opposition or found ways to bring them on board. This was OD practice simultaneously on community, organizational, and joint venture levels, while keeping three dozen small competitors cooperating on a shared purpose by way of a shared vision.

Building a public-private enterprise to attenuate environmental damage to a major river, and helping to reduce the need for additional hazardous waste land-fills within the state, took sustained transformational leadership to reconcile competitive companies across seven metropolitan counties to come to the table with multi-level government agencies to create an entirely new approach together. We learned that all the credit had to be given away for every incremental gain while we would be required to be accountable for every setback. To this day, Gary's and my name are barely a footnote in the history of the country's first such utility operation for which new laws had to be written to be acknowledged. Each successive new corporate owner of the facility touts it as their own innovation and each of my founding industrial groups and member companies that use the facility's services claim



all the credit for its creation as theirs. It has become evident to me that to accomplish such great transformations without personal capital, one must:

- align one's spirit selflessly with a just cause;
- allow others to emerge as co-owners;
- step forward with a clearly articulated vision that has meaning to many;
- generously give away all of the credit for every incremental gain; and
- bring potential enemies on board early with a stake.

These type experiences have taught me that one should only undertake the heavy mantle of authentic public leadership where the cause is existentially or spiritually significant because the cost can be personally disabling and monetary rewards can be scant outside of a structure where one can leverage significant capital equity in the outcome. Like Thomas Edison who learned a thousand ways not to make a light bulb (a thing never conceived of before) before learning one way to make one, we also saw each resistance as a learning.

Looking back on this experience post chapters 2 and 4, I realize that the pressures, discomforts, and surprises we endured provoked abductive discovery of all the on-the-fly innovations that allowed us to recover from setback after setback. Together in dialogue, Gary and I would use graphical representations on non-linear relationships in the public sphere. In our own way we were struggling with egregors that had strange vectorial forces. Through the flow within our intersubjective field and dialogical container we were connecting ideas from divergent domains prescient of hypertext. Much of our success was produced by clear, consistent communication and alignment with the aspirations of small groups and micro-cultures among the communities we needed on board. Throughout the 10-year process of development we maintained Brown's "end *in* itself" focus, whereas our industrial clients

could only see our efforts from the “end to itself” perspective. That tells me that great interventions need *embedded* facilitators with the tenacity to hold to an ethically larger narrative frame as Bonhoeffer did. What *knowledge* we produced paled in comparison to the *belief* we produced with our integrity to the constructed realities of each stakeholder group, as Peirce and Polanyi would attest. A rare and wonderful public-private sector partnership formed in two instances to produce enormous gains in this project. It did not emanate between any companies and agencies because they are each hidebound by their egregors, and legislatively defined as antagonists. The public-private cooperation and collaboration we experienced was with Gary and myself and staff members of the public commissions and agencies headed by elected and politically appointed people. Our vision gave governmental staff members an opportunity to transcend day-to-day bureaucracy and be an essential part of something of great value to the community. Our small groups essentially flew under the radar of the industrial and governmental egregors and worked from a shared narrative that artfully sidestepped parochial interests and sabotage from either side. Together we intuited Stacey’s strategic-ecological dichotomy and attended to both sides as the complex forces beyond our control played out. Our efforts allowed the industry clients to minimize the costs and risks of pollution control through the scale economies of their cooperation and the subsequent minimization of waste itself.

#### **Case B: Experience with an Existing Industrial Organization Re-Design.**

The next large OD project I undertook ran 18 months from mid-1995 when I was contracted by my employer, JKL to develop a sales and service process model to manage our smaller accounts for the FDC division. The project was offered to me because of my independent study in organizational learning and development, my success co-developing the

\$11 million ACME operation and my track record for clear written communication within the company. My sponsor was a corporate director, and the work was done under a contract separate from my sales and marketing work. The name of the process I was designing became known as the TMP process and I was given full control of its organization design and development planning.

As I unfolded the structure of TMP in thirty semimonthly reports, it became apparent that it could have positive implications for other divisions, key accounts and the company's Eurasian markets. The focus and sequence of the reports were strongly influenced by the input of supporters and detractors. The implementation of the project eventually failed to get funded because, in my view, it wasn't a comfortable fit in our existing command-and-control culture. The project re-emerged in a limited scope in 1997, and I was re-contracted for six months, to modify the renamed design; when middle management recognized the need to hand off servicing of small accounts. The project was to be renewed under another director's control and all credit was to go to him. This essay shares the elements of the model and my insights to the process known as customer relationship management (CRM).

A 1995 internal company memorandum revealed that 80-percent of the company's customers were producing only 15-percent of the revenue. It stated that we would be forced to avoid calling on, and servicing, all small accounts that averaged under \$3,000 sales per year, which was below the cost of goods sold. The director of our division concluded that we would need to:

- develop an alternative service delivery system for these small accounts to stem the lost opportunity costs, and to increase their level of business with us; or

- alternatively raise small lot prices to make the existing business profitable at the increased risk of its loss—effectively abandoning most small accounts.

I decided to provide a customer interaction process that was interpersonal, intelligent and flexible; which could enhance our ability to communicate with all our customers and with each other. To accelerate buy-in from the different functional silos in our organization, I would offer the process on a voluntary basis, like a commuter lane, with the opportunity of faster access to resources for those who participated. I also indicated we should achieve further commitment to the process through participative customization in response to suggestions, and personalized training. The process was to be primarily driven by a small help-desk team of specialists—using a common technical database and networked CRM software—with responsibility for small and mid-size accounts.

It was important for me to create a clear personal vision of TMP around which others could nucleate. I needed to resonate with the longing many of our people felt, while not alienating the incumbent governance whose backing this initiative would need.

I stated TMP to be opportunities for JKL:

- to create future, not react to it;
- to model a healthy shared vision;
- to be way of working together collaboratively outside of old mental models;
- to grow a learning culture;
- to get closer to our customers;
- to extend the customer base; and reach out to end users;
- and to have fun.

The primary goal of my work was to produce growth through reduced costs and increased sales, to customers who purchased less than \$50,000 per year, by achieving seven objectives:

- define a ranking system to identify five types of customers;
- implement an effective customer support and information system to coordinate and expedite consultation and transaction;
- develop an explicit-knowledge reference database;
- initially create network access to critical company documents and e-mail;
- develop and document value-added services to offer key customers;
- create standards and protocols for design implementation;
- and provide training and equipment to motivated leaders who would choose to share the vision and commit to—not comply with—the program and to teamwork.

The development of this program was a project to be managed collaboratively as such with project management software and benchmark reports. Every TMP design report that I sent out was copied to a selection of fifteen managers who would potentially be involved or affected by the project. With each report I sent e-mail asking for advice, questions and suggestions. At least half of the recipients never responded directly, a quarter had specific complaints and little support to offer, and a quarter were wildly enthusiastic and offered ideas, enhancements and encouragement. I received several back-channel comments that led me to believe that many of the non-participants were worried about how the process would eventually affect the power they then held within their functional platforms.

Customer ranking would allow us to direct the amount and kind of service appropriate to the level of captured or potential business each particular customer offered.

My suggested series created these following distinctions.

- A accounts represented greater than \$50,000 of captured annual sales.
- B accounts represented greater than \$50,000 of potential annual sales.
- C accounts represented less than \$50,000 of either but had the potential.
- D accounts represented less than \$50,000 of captured and potential sales.
- E accounts were end users, OEMs, customers of customers, leads, etc.

Regional sales managers were very reluctant to hand over any but the smallest accounts to the new process because of the loss of sales commissions to them and their sales people. I spent a lot of time assuaging them with the benefits of freeing their time to focus on large key and target (A/B) accounts. Arguments continued over the \$50,000 demarcation so I did a study using company computer data to show that the number of accounts worth over \$50,000 was more than our field sales force could handle. Some of my strongest supporters were field sales engineers who knew that having a technical help-desk team behind them with a computer knowledge base would actually increase their ability to grow sales revenue.

The thirty TMP development reports were not necessarily numbered and released in the order in which they were written. I found it more politically expedient to accelerate my study of certain topics, which were not on my critical path, to head off opposition or speculation. It was amazing how many petty and irrelevant questions were raised as if they were deal killers—I responded to them all with a tone of great import. One topic that was raised early on was the nature of the new positions to be created on the help desk teams.

The TMP team was to be staffed by individuals with a core set of skills that would qualify each to work at least at an entry level of performance standards, and various additional unique skills that would enhance the overall process. The likely title of this position was Customer Service Representative (CSR) and their fundamental responsibilities were to manage primary telecommunications and transactions with B, C, D, and E accounts and to build and update digital files on each. As the program would unfold, each CSR would establish a positive and active presence in the perspective of each account and would find opportunities to offer product solutions, cogent advice and on-line customer support through a wide range of transactions.

Each CSR would perform at a different skill level for four reasons:

- new CSR would come from various backgrounds with unique mixes of skill;
- only individuals with high level motivation to grow themselves and the program would have been invited to join TMP, learning and training was to be continuous and skills would have increased;
- an important requirement for promotion within the program was to show a strong record of training others, with skill levels following a natural continuum;
- and because technological change would affect each level differently at any time.

Each team member was to be ranked according to their proficiency on a continuum of skills. The continuum was to recognize progress in learning, development, and contribution to the program. Each grade level (G1 through G10) represented an increasing group of applied skills that could be achieved through self-directed learning and group study, practice, and training. No one would be expected to remain at the same grade level for more than one year until they reached the G10 level; so the skills of each level could serve as annual

personal performance objectives. Performance feedback reviews—which would be conducted by the team itself—would occur at least once per year. All CSR except G1 would be required to coach and mentor at least one CSR at the G level below them. A G10 CSR would be considered highly qualified for many other positions within the company, including marketing, field sales or service, or eligible for team coach or team system administrator training. Requisite finance and management skills could qualify them, for management positions outside of TMP, or to leave the company for other prospects.

A multitude of skills, which could only grow in a diversified team learning environment, would provide continuous opportunity to call and receive calls from the market to discuss our products. All communications were to be customer focused and product centered. They would create corollary opportunities to learn more about each account and maintain historical continuity on each. I considered computer, keyboard, writing and phone skills imperative and, together with the skills in the G1 proficiency level, to form the core skills necessary to participate in TMP. Teamwork skills were to be required in the advanced levels of proficiency and be highly developed as each CSR progressed along the continuum to build and protect *a culture of interdependence and learning* among TMP participants and with customers. Through inside development and selective hiring, eventually we would get a self-teaching team of highly proficient people operating best practices, and a talent pool that prepared our next generation of sales, service, operations and management.

The team members were to be compensated on two levels; a salary, and equal share (weighted against hours of duty) of a team sales commission. The G1 CSR would get a salary of \$25,000 per year, and each grade level up would add \$2,000 per year to that, such that a G10 CSR would get a \$45,000 base salary. I reasoned that there would be no envy or concern



for other's compensation if *everyone sought to raise one another's competence so that team performance would increase the commission for all.*

The team was to be self-directed and have the authority to plan, implement and control all their work processes. They would have the responsibility for scheduling, quality and costs of their activity. After staffing, the team would be given time to solidify a shared vision, a mission statement and a team covenant congruent with the values of the members, the goals of the company and the needs of our customers. I thought it essential that the core team operate in one geographical location, physically separate from other division functions, where the synergy of daily interaction could accelerate and bind a resonant culture.

I took the ideas of having the team self-teach, and the continuum of skills, from the martial art and Olympic sport of Judo. I spent nine years watching and helping my son master the discipline. The two principles of Judo are (1) mutual benefit and welfare, and (2) maximum efficiency with minimum effort. A critical component of all promotions in the sport is *how much teaching to the lower level players was performed.* Each colored belt promotion also represents *facile demonstration of a new set of skills combined with all the skills recognized in previous tests.* A third concept I drew from Judo is what Peter Senge and others call the *community of practice.* The interrelationship of community and disciplined practice is the very heart of what motivated me to implement my creation of TMP. The lost opportunity to implement TMP and to observe, cultivate and participate in an intentional community of practice grieves me.

I formed most of my ideas for the team being self-directed after I attended a seminar on self-directed work teams. There I learned the stages of self-directed team maturity development, the reasons for team failure and success, and the primary motivators for team

members. I was challenged to explain how the TMP process could be measured for success. In order to provide metrics and build to scale, I needed a starting point; an understanding of what size market TMP would serve and how much revenue we would start with. The original memorandum, stating that 80-percent of customers produced 15-percent of sales, each averaging \$3,000 sales per year, had no supporting documentation. I worked with our information services department to gather sales data for an entire year and sliced up the sales by ship-to codes. This data showed 79-percent of customers produced 9-percent of sales, each averaging \$2,000 sales per year. This was close enough not to embarrass anyone, and gave me an opportunity to look at other views of the same data. I discovered that only 8-percent of our customers: spent over \$50,000 per year; accounted for 73-percent of all sales, and numbered 241. This was more than enough for our field sales force of forty to handle effectively. I also noted that many small revenue contributors might be undiscovered B (target) accounts that could be qualified by TMP and assigned to field sales where warranted.

I now had information to justify my recommendation that TMP should handle all accounts generating less than \$50,000 per year. This group would number 3,000 accounts (mostly C/D) spending \$14.5 million per year. That level of sales could afford a 10-percent cost of sales to fund TMP. If half of that amount went into team commissions, I reasoned I could get the most talented people on the planet to join the team and grow those sales 15-percent per year. As accounts would grow to exceed \$50,000 sales per year, they would be handed over to the field sales force. If the field sales got overburdened, we could recruit G10 CSRs to join field sales. By marking our place in that current revenue flow, I explained that TMP could measure its progress by tracking the sales growth and graduation to A/B status of individual accounts.

Around the time I released this information, I started to observe unusual behavior among some of the managers. It seemed that my analysis was more penetrating than that usually done by others. There was more silent distancing from my work by some, while others continued to encourage me. The encouragers would remark that this process was what our company badly needed. My concern was that it didn't have buy-in, or even acknowledgement above the level of the sponsor who was a director. Three vice-presidents were invited to a roll-out presentation and didn't show up. I had read that change agents need the full support and participation of an organization's top officers to effectively implement new programs.

The foundation data study did not answer two important questions for me. What is the universe of customers and where is the growth potential? Having been a sales engineer for over seventeen years at that point, I knew the answers for my territory, and I knew that our marketing and management had never asked me for them. As part of my work designing TMP I used the clout of my sponsor to conduct a divisional census. I asked all division sales engineers to list all possible accounts in each respective territory regardless of whether we did business with them. Corresponding to each account I requested actual previous year produced product sales alongside of the estimated total revenue potential of the account (as if we had captured all available business in that year). The quotient of the sales over potential was my expression of account penetration and the difference indicated the opportunity dollars at each account.

These worksheets were data sorted in ascending order of account ranking and then each ranking was sorted in descending order of sales potential to produce a strategic tool for prioritizing resources in each territory. Many sales engineers expressed enthusiasm for this

approach and indicated willingness to update the worksheet, year to year, to measure changes.

These crucial measures of TMP required a very unconventional source of information for *implementation* and *evaluation feedback* that depended on explicit trust for both *internal* and *external validity*. Sales engineers from around the country were asked to divulge *account ranking and penetration* to me in terms of sales potential for not only existing accounts, but for target accounts. The company's predatory management culture discounted potential sales with "stretch goals" and inflated commission requirements thus encouraging sales engineers to hide the existence, location, and size of accounts they were developing to increase their income—which is what sales engineers are supposed to do. To overcome the obstacle of mistrust, I was able to get a letter from my sponsor telling each engineer that I was working outside-the-box and participatively with them in a black-ops in which I was not required to report back to the director or their respective sales managers on an individual-territorial level, but rather only on regional aggregate measures and that they were free to engage with me with guaranteed confidentiality. I reinforced that guarantee with a written promise to only share data and information to the extent they, the individual engineers, would allow. From that point forward, the desire to explore a more humane and liberating understanding of 40 sales territories took off in a participative frenzy. Quarterly updates to rank and penetration reports were gladly shared with me and discussed among the engineers who felt they had some say in this action research. All questions were answered and most engineers reported new efficiencies of their finite time and corresponding sales increases in a shrinking market. The monthly "snapshot" implementation feedback was easy to get and the annual evaluation feedback appeared like a "dashboard" incorporating features of longitudinal measurement,

comparative units, and statistical analysis that were epiphanic. I spent a month tabulating the data from all of the sales engineers and found an amazing convergence—the total aggregate penetration of A and B accounts for each of the five regions was exactly 25-percent. While the individual five to eight territories within each region varied widely, together, every region showed an anchoring at the same level. The total penetration of C and D accounts closely clustered in the vicinity of 5-percent for all five regions. The simple asynchronous communication of email and the creative use of Microsoft Excel and Access databases enabled this exhilarating shared Freirean experiment to transpire for over a year before those in power realized that they couldn't take credit for the growth because they couldn't understand or explain it in terms other than mine. Everyone seemed amazed at this coincidence but no one could explain what specific things anchored us at this level of market share, or what constrained us from moving beyond it. I was trying to answer that with TMP when as with Socrates' elenctic, the hemlock was dispensed. A contributing factor was that TMP had and needed no managers—only engaged self-directed teams.

The essential technology for a help-desk call-room is the software for customer relationship management (CRM). At the time this project began, telemarketing and help-desk software was emerging. I made a detailed study of all the available programs and ran sample programs from each on my computer. As impressive as many of the programs were, there was very little fitness-to-need among them for our industry. The one system that stood out was called Clientele. I purchased a single user version and flew to their headquarters in Portland, Oregon to study the program as a user and system administrator for one week. The structure of Clientele as a customer relationship management tool nested related files for conversations and transactions with individuals, their work groups, and their organizations. I

was very excited to demonstrate this system because it reminded me of the Buckminster Fuller quote: “If you want to teach people a new way of thinking, don’t bother trying to teach them. Instead, give them a tool, the use of which will lead to new ways of thinking.”

By writing all call and conversation notes and copying correspondence to the shared customer files, dedicated call reports would become unnecessary and the customer interactions with everyone in the company would have been integrated into a permanent, living file. Unresolved issues could be left open for input and advice from anyone on the network or specific calls could be “escalated” to specific people or groups for review and comment. Eventually all transactions, correspondence, technical service reports, and field call reports could be filed for each customer.

The TMP project gave me the opportunity for sustained research and focus on dozens of other topics to create an integrative system. No topics interested me more at that time than knowledge management and organizational learning. Through my independent study of these topics I realized that building a knowledge base like the one I was proposing for TMP would be a perpetual process. It would gradually turn individual employee knowledge (human capital) into a company-wide shared asset (structural intellectual capital in the form of digital assets). Once actionable proprietary knowledge about our products and processes was captured and codified, it could be infinitely reharvested and enhanced by all employees and even by customers. That access could be via the internet or a private intranet server. Specifically I hoped the knowledge base would achieve the following objectives.

- Gather information about the products and processes of our competitors and identify how ours differ.

- Unearth best practices and innovative information from our sales, service and research people and from our customers.
- Create and gather knowledge that serves our customers' needs and provides value to their operations and a means of exchange for our front line.
- Track frequency-of-use of solutions and identify the more commonly used ones to upgrade standard technical literature and marketing communications and to inform marketing research of industry trends.

If structured correctly and sponsored by upper management, the knowledge base could have turned those once comfortable as guru-repositories-of-secrets into sharers-of-knowledge with authorship recognition. It might have taken them and everyone else from “Where do I find, or who has, the information?” to “How do I exploit the information and how can I challenge, improve or add to it with my own experience?”

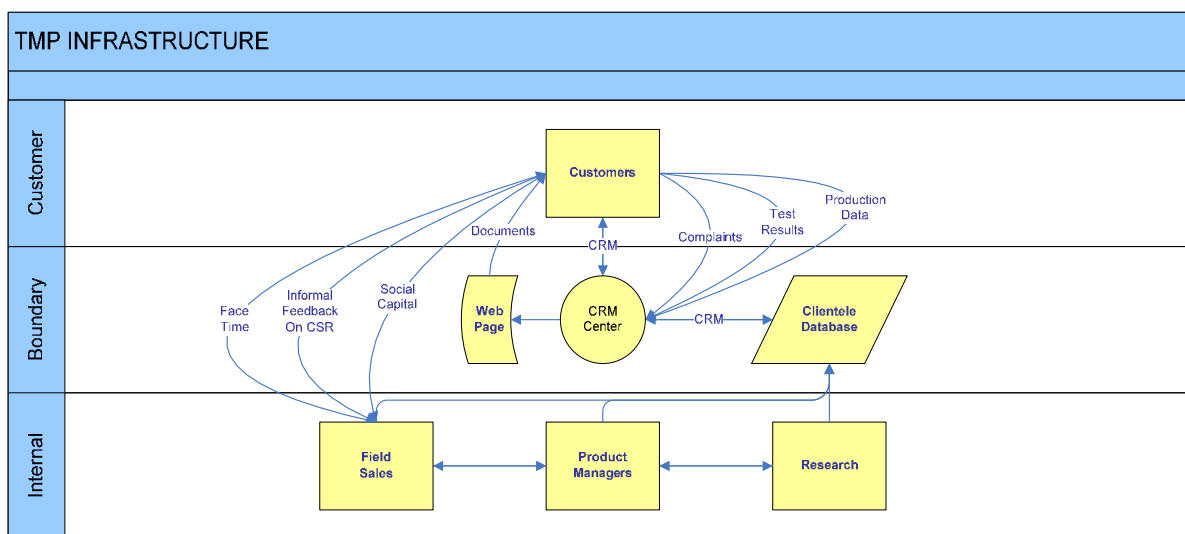


Figure 7. TMP Infrastructure

All the struggles I encountered doing this project somehow contributed to the formation of a clear and refreshing vision of a core process that was embraced by many people and threatened others. Both of those reactions told me I was close to something very

powerful. I had an image of a group of sophisticated and enlightened souls who want to do something good really well. I always wanted to be prepared to join such a group when that opportunity comes. Those who shared the TMP vision knew we had our hands on a concept that would give us sustainable competitive advantage but it failed to manifest because its emancipatory power threatened the hegemony of our command-and-control executives.

This case demonstrates how regular textual unfolding of a narrative effectively kept a project alive for 18 months and drew in a wide number of people who wanted to become a part of a new story that promised relief from oppressive practice, and opportunity for agency in how their work would be valued. Many organizations are run by executives that really believe their companies can only survive or thrive in the way they run them with fear and intimidation and carrot-and-stick drivers. In this project, it was only on the micro-level of personal relationships and trust that thrust the initiative so forward with inertia that it took shear force of executive command without explanation to stop it.

Another aspect to this case is the discovery and innovative grounding in financial data that had been previously hidden in official reports. This may remind my reader of the SEAM process, which is an essential component of all OD interventions. In this case the data further embarrassed the hierarchy as much as it astonished and reversed the position some of the previous naysayers, and encouraged those who were on board with the intervention. One is reminded that economics is a social science deeply embedded in human and social behavior.

The hard OD lesson from this project is that the director who turned me loose on this project was not the CEO, and was summarily fired by the CEO. An epilogue to this effort was that one of the CEO's middle management goons pestered me for months after my sponsor's departure to release the sales penetration data freely given me by the field sales



engineers under the promise of confidentiality. I destroyed the data and kept the promise. One can only imagine the hardship and retribution a betrayal could cause; such as history is rife with, between regimes and after coups. My work here was ahead of its time and place. As Lewin and others have said, there needs to be a climate of desire for change throughout an organization before any real change to occur. This is not the last time I was brought in on the wrong level of subsidiarity. Hierarchies are very resistant to participatory interventions.

### **Case C: Experience with a Nonprofit Organization Renewal.**

An intervention I conducted was at MNO which employs hundreds of employees with physical and mental disabilities. It was a Quadrant IV non-profit as described by Collins (2005), which is to say it did not rely on donations—only its own business revenue. In the course of the initial interview I sensed systemic dysfunction. I realized that I could be most effective as an unpaid external consultant so I *contracted* to donate consultation ten hours minimum per week as the company's first volunteer. I intuited that this could also position me better to work directly with the CEO and the board in the future. The VPHR said he was pleased to contract me to develop a robust succession plan and whatever would be needed to get there. He stated that he was familiar with my skills and ability to be direct and had high expectations my honest feedback would help him handle his difficult boss.

The *entry process* consisted of several extensive interviews with the VPHR with intensive listening to what he had as main drivers for asking for help, and had to say about why he remained committed to improving the work conditions of the directors and managers under the pall of autocratic management. The VPHR sought my advice on how to help the company's nine operation directors who were gripped with fear of the CEO who overstepped her VPs to micromanage the directors with endless tasks that had little to do with their job

responsibilities. The *presenting problem* was that the VPHR was overwhelmed with stress complaints from operation directors throughout the company who said they had no effective relationship with their (VP) bosses because the CEO kept hounding them for deliverables for her agenda to impress the board. The VPHR also had problems with the CEO who had recently hired a new director—without consulting him or the department VP—to directly report to her. The CEO had also recently held an offsite meeting with select VPs to discuss demoting a director, without inviting, consulting, or advising the VPHR. The VPHR was also deeply concerned about the CEO's private conversations with him that revealed a dismissive attitude toward gay, lesbian, and older employees, as well as the employees with disabilities for whom the company mission statement was focused. The CEO was also pressuring the VPHR to fire his own two HR directors—one of who was within a year of retirement—who were performing very well and meeting all their assigned targets.

The VPHR generated a list of organizational issues he needed help with. I requested this to see what interrelationship there was between the disparate issues. Topping the list was the aforementioned need for a just and objective succession plan to replace the replacement form which he was told by the CEO to distribute to VPs, directors, and managers, along with instructions to designate who they thought was qualified to succeed them (but not why). The VPHR had been getting all the blame in kill-the-messenger style for the shoddy succession method. Through ongoing inquiry I concluded that any succession plan would fail to satisfy all directors at this point of agitation with this and other issues. The existing replacement form left the door open to cultivation of nepotism and concealed back-room political trading. I also concluded that a valid succession plan could not be generated in the absence of a leadership development plan through which candidates should be vetted. Additionally it

occurred to me that the CEO might not accept a more deliberative, objective succession plan founded on demonstrated leadership if proposed by any one party.

I proposed to the VPHR that I could be more effective if we designated the nine directors as my *client* so they would feel they weren't following his marching orders; and that the directors take control of the intervention. He agreed and we drafted a letter introducing me as a process consultant and inviting them to an offsite day-long meeting that I would facilitate to discuss succession planning and leadership development. Before sending the letter, I interviewed the CEO and received approval to work with the directors on these matters. She acted welcoming and enthusiastic but presented views of the company's health that did not square with the substantive details revealed to me by the VPHR. I noted a wider gap in her *espoused values* vs. *her values in action* (Argyris, 1985) than that of the VPHR. Nothing in my interview with her resonated with the mission statement mounted on the wall in the lobby that read, "We exist to serve disabled individuals reach their full potential by providing meaningful employment and developmental opportunities within a successful business enterprise..."

I began the offsite meeting with introductions because many of the directors had never met. I pointed out that there was no one in the room except directors and that the VPHR who sponsored me had relinquished any requirement for me to report specific findings to him. The letter said that he was providing my facilitative coaching services to the directors as long as they wanted them, and hoped their succession and development initiatives—which would have his full support—would be presented to the executive committee by the directors themselves (per my advice). Ground rules including confidentiality led to a meaningful, shared, and deep check-in of who we are, where we come

from, where we want to go together, and what stands in our way. During that process I found the consensus of the group was coincident with the information from the VPHR regarding their struggle working under the CEO. One of the top performing directors was particularly outspoken about the dysfunctional atmosphere and no one disagreed with him. He left the company shortly after our work together got underway and he confirmed with the group that the oppressive micromanagement of the CEO and undermining of his boss's subsidiarity were the reason. Everyone agreed this was a terrible loss of talent to the company.

I led the group through a World Café and use of several instruments that shocked their sensibility of how much power they held for positive change through their solidarity. Guided exercises that drew their focus from mission to leadership development to succession plan to replacement chart helped them want to take control of creating alignment among those elements. They agreed to meet once per week to continue to work on collaboration and change initiatives and in the spirit of *here's what I need, and how can I help each of you*.

In a second offsite I provided a Profiles International (PI) list of 18 leadership attributes and put them into a forced field selection of "the 6 most important, and the 6 least important." When the results were compiled, I pointed out that the majority of responses almost ignored those attributes needed to serve the elements of their mission statement. They were shocked and upset to discover this until I pointed out how I had set them up with framing the exercise as relating to themselves. They agreed with me that they had selected attributes they needed and didn't need, to cope, survive, and personally succeed within the current culture that they were all unhappy with. This was an epiphany to the whole group that led to new ideas which energized them to change their circumstances together. Then I had them redo the exercise, not with the ideas of what they thought would make things more

tolerable for everyone within the existing culture, but explicitly with the question of which behaviors would realign the organization with the mission statement they so loved and espoused when they first joined the organization.

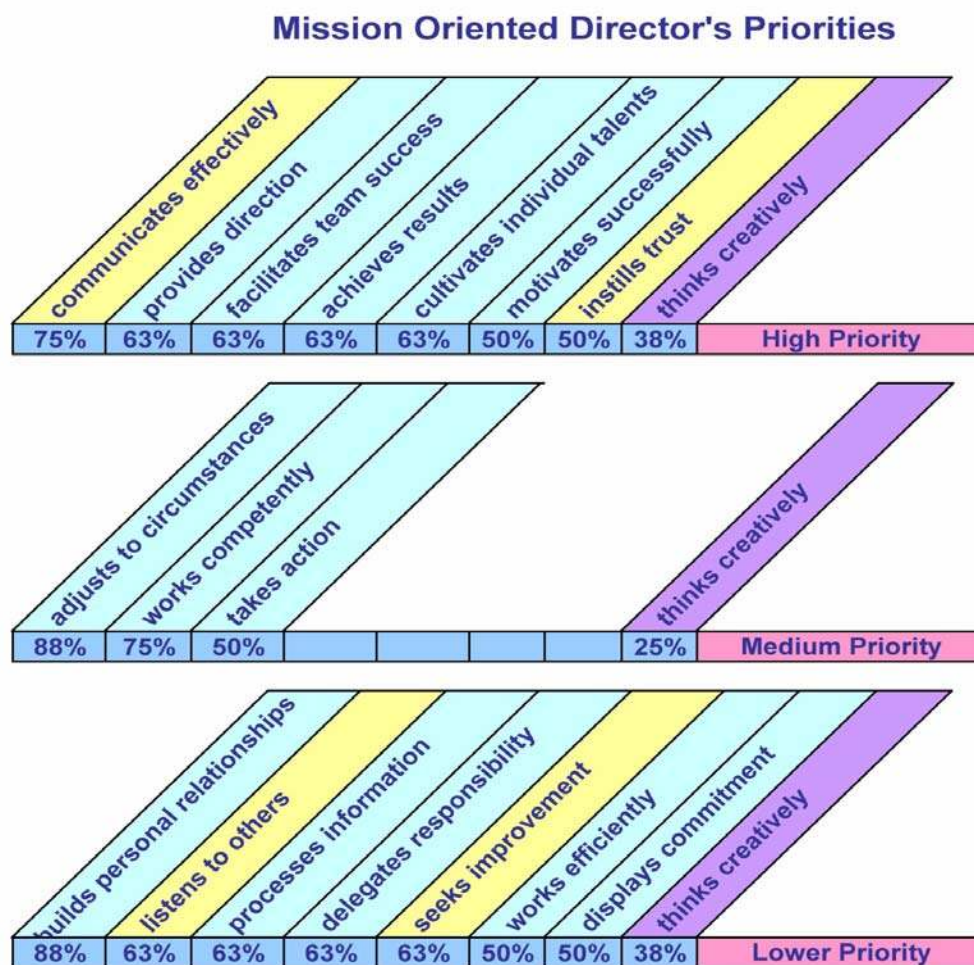


Figure 8. Directors' Priorities

After we compiled the intentional high and low priority attributes and the default middle priority attributes, we reflected on them and then they decided anything in the high priority group with 50-percent agreement or more was significant and should be supported with training. First, they wanted to see what the effect of combining these scores with the selections of the executive team would look like so they sent a group letter to the executive

team asking them to do the exercise and having me, as a neutral party, summarize the scores without sharing them individually. The executive team reluctantly agreed. The combined selections were somewhat different.

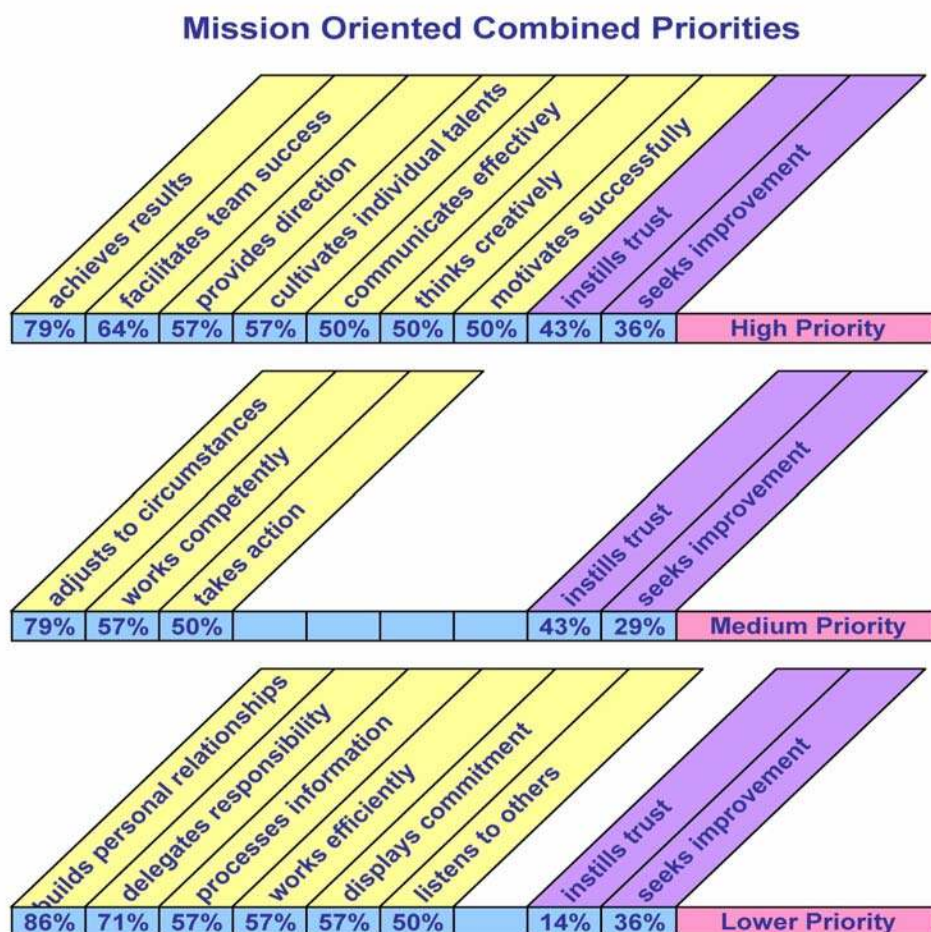


Figure 9. Combined Priorities

I gave the high priority selections three priority points, the low priority selections one priority point, and the default selections two priority points. These points were assigned to their respective attributes in the PI list—to create the Leadership Capacity Index<sup>®</sup> (LCI)—to provide a spread to assessment scores that favors the priority scale of desired group capacity. This score demonstrated relative contribution to the alignment of the culture to the mission.

The directors' group raw score averages (norm) for each attribute were also determined to contrast with each individual's raw scores to provide a sense of contribution levels for each attribute and in total. They had chosen 180° assessments—self and boss reports—over 360° which was unfortunate and revealed the lack of trust in the culture. When the report came back from PI graphing only the scores of the bosses, everyone was dismayed. I however wasn't interested in the PI report. I averaged the self report scores with the boss report scores to create raw scores for the LCI, which demonstrated that wider input makes each director less vulnerable to situational opinion.

priority	norm	Profile International® attributes	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	index
		• Communication •						
1	3.79	Listens to Others	3.70					3.70
1	4.17	Processes Information	4.00					4.00
3	3.94	Communicates Effectively	3.90					11.70
		• Leadership •						
3	4.77	Instills Trust	4.63					13.88
3	3.81	Provides Direction	4.00					12.00
1	3.69	Delegates Responsibility	3.63					3.63
		• Adaptability •						
2	3.98	Adjusts to Circumstances	4.25					8.50
3	3.69	Thinks Creatively	4.13					12.38
		• Relationships •						
1	4.19	Builds Personal Relationships	4.00					4.00
3	3.96	Facilitates Team Success	3.92					11.75
		• Task Management •						
1	3.75	Works Efficiently	4.38					4.38
2	3.98	Works Competently	4.00					8.00
		• Production •						
2	4.27	Takes Action	4.63					9.25
3	4.08	Achieves Results	3.84					11.51
		• Development of Others •						
3	4.15	Cultivates Individual Talents	3.88					11.63
3	4.17	Motivates Successfully	3.84					11.51
		• Personal Development •						
1	4.21	Displays Commitment	3.83					3.83
2	4.11	Seeks Improvement	4.17					8.33
	72.71	< total score gap >	72.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	153.94
	4.04	< skill average gap >	4.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

Figure 10. Leadership Capacity Index®

At his point in the intervention, the group began to coalesce and collaborate with excitement. Their confidence and autonomy was evident in the presentation of the results of their work together to the executive group wherein they proposed expansion of the action

learning model to their direct report levels of managers and supervisors, and a budget estimate for PI training. The feedback from the executive meeting was “Wonderful! When can we get started and how soon will we see results?” These disingenuous comments of encouragement from the CEO—and parroted by the cowed VPs—in the meeting were followed by: cancellation of the training and development budget a week later; firing of the VPHR; firing of the younger of two HR directors; demotion of the older HR director on the condition he move up his retirement date; and firing of two other directors and VPs.

The four types of conversations for intentional change (Ford & Ford, 1995): *initiative*, *understanding*, *performance*, and *closure* represent meaningful stages in this change initiative. When seen from the authors’ perspective, that change is a manifestation of communication, this initiative launched out of the *understanding conversation* too quickly into the *performance conversation* that then went sour. This intervention embarrassed and threatened the CEO. My *success* got my sponsor fired—a hard lesson for both of us. The remaining directors however continued to meet weekly with the format I suggested. They looked at their direct reports with new eyes and weighed their succession potential with new tools despite the lack of development money. I was asked back by the new HR department to coach a Federal grant project (FGP) team that was struggling, and the team also asked me to chair its community business advisory committee. There also began an excited expectancy and hope with the FGB team within the same company culture and climate of fear. A layoff within one week was said to be 30-percent gays and lesbians that included a key member of the FGP team. The severely disabled employees were being cloistered off into a remote location out of sight of visitors. A fired VP filed a discrimination complaint with the state attorney general. This pattern began the death of MNO and no one had the courage to tell the



emperor he had no clothes because they saw what happens to those people who get too close to doing so. I finally decided to meet with the Board Chair and Vice-chair in private and gave them evidence that the Board was being duped by the CEO. I told them that they must forget about saving face and fire the CEO immediately if there was to be any chance of saving the company from going under in public disgrace. They verified my data, fired the CEO, asked me to join the board and eventually to chair its HR committee. After a three year struggle to help the board turn the business around, I began to see some of the same cronied dysfunctions of the old culture arise, and I resigned to preserve my integrity.

This case again demonstrates how threatening autonomy and empowerment can be to a hierarchical CEO. My work with the nine directors produced a tight knit group of managers who realized they were the heart of the operation and began for the first time to collaborate and consider each other's needs and strengths. That solidarity and the common knowledge that the CEO was adrift emboldened them to work as a team. As the hierarchy collapsed, the CEO fired some the most capable managers including the VP who sponsored me, and leaving behind some marginal ones, before getting fired himself. The one director who reported directly to the CEO was thought to have violated the trust of the group. Another fearful director was known to have shared the groups' off-site discussions with the CEO in hopes of securing his job. He didn't realize that the CEO had been pressuring the VPHR for months to dismiss him. The gambit didn't work and he was one of the first directors to get the ax.

It is dangerous to intervene in organizations with toxic culture because those who have the courage to stick their necks out are punished. Even with a decapitation of the head of the hierarchy and routing of dozens of managers, the toxic memes remain like spores and

the egregor restores itself like the bitten tail of a gecko. Full and facilitated participatory action research on all levels is the only sustainable solution for detoxifying such a culture.

### **Abduced Implementation Approaches**

This section describes implementation of a proposed hermeneutico-abductive, participative action research pathway with which OD facilitators/practitioners can guide client groups in a direction of humanistic sustainability. This polymodal form of inquiry emerges from the previous section wherein I concatenated a number of root themes from the respective original three forms of inquiry in the literature review. I outline here a two-stage pathway that proposes a general sequenced pathway for practitioner engagement with communities of practice (CoPs) and client groups. I conclude with five illustrative, hypothetical interventions as abduced through my methodology—each an improvisation of the two-stage intervention for a sample scenario to show the flexibility of the pathway. None is a detailed step-by-step, prescribed recipe because there is no way such granularity can predict exact outcome with the permutations of people, facilitators, and organizational cultures that may adapt the pathway to their own unique circumstance.

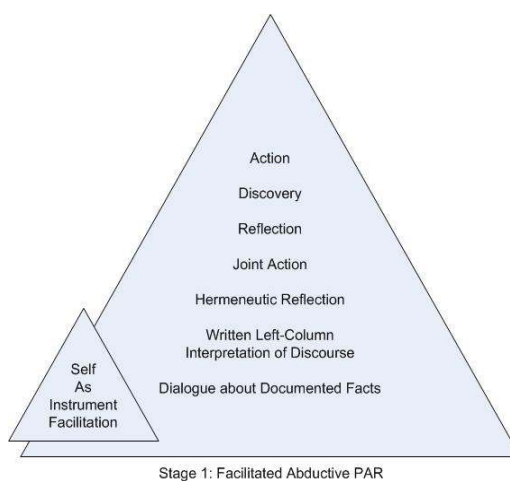
#### **Stage 1 PAR Intervention Pathway.**

I propose that shared, believable hypotheses for action can follow from an iterative, two-stage methodological pathway as illustrated below. Figure 12 begins the process with a dialogue preferably facilitated face-to-face in real time, preferably off-site, by the OD practitioner to focus on the issues to be addressed, along with a brief shared text that is germane to the issue and may offer challenging, new, unfamiliar ideas to the mix. There are times where synchronous or asynchronous online communications are suitable or preferred, such as with distribution of documents, however authentic human dialogue requires regular,

periodic, face-to-face meetings especially in the early stages of group formation. The initial facilitated dialogue is followed by a written auto-ethnography from each participant incorporating Argyrisian *left-hand column* notes taken previously during the facilitated dialogue to record their discomforts with the dialogue and to say what each couldn't say, and why in the plenary group (Argyris, 1993). The facilitator will collate and distribute the notes and allow as much time as is needed for everyone's voice to be heard and responded to in this step of Stage 1. The facilitator will diplomatically point out obstacles (i.e. epistemic violence or one-downing comments) by steering the focus of conversation on them with probing questions of how everyone *feels* when confronting or overhearing them. She may also offer *what-if* scenarios to recontextualize obstructive behaviors in a less threatening narrative. In a similar fashion the facilitator will ask questions that probe at the power narratives of the group's organization and how they help or hinder to establish a baseline for future change evaluation. If the group is divided on their answers to those questions, a productive conversation or argument may ensue in which the facilitator remains impartial. The facilitator will query everyone on their hermeneutic understanding of the notes that most changed their perspective on the process and demonstrate how the group is evolving by showing the (hermeneutic) circularity between earlier statements and newer insights and behaviors.

The group can perform a cycle of small actions, followed by dialogic reflection on one another's written reflections facilitated by the OD practitioner until abductive insights begin appearing out of the discomforts produced by the process metalogues and the colliding horizons. Out of the group reflection on the outcome of each joint action, abductive insights are captured by the facilitator, listed, and presented to the group to abductively select the

most likely of the hypothetical ideas to be tested in the next action. As the operation directors in the MNO case study had “an epiphany...that led to new ideas which energized them to change their circumstances together,” and as Peirce revealed, moments of surprise in the data adjacent to moments of discomfort in the process leads to abductive insights of a plausible nature. Abductive reasoning through shared, hermeneutic reflection can surface the most economic and critically just among those suppositional insights to take collective action on. This demonstrates how a conscientious OD practitioner can artfully shift frames—strategically amid moments of discomfort, irritation, or frustration—to evoke surprise and subsequent, abductive cognitions among clients. Iterations of this process in Stage 1 PAR (Figure 11 below) allow the participants to have more trust and gut confidence in their abductive cognitions.



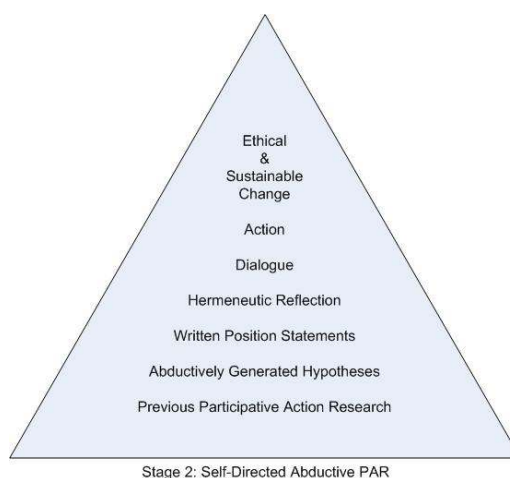
*Figure 11. Stage 1 PAR*

The OD facilitator provides all the initial parameters and focus of action in Stage 1 until the group develops into a reflexive and self-directed, participatory action research group, oriented to the Stage 1 PAR pathway, more confident and capable of expanded interpretation and innovation, and ready to escalate to the Stage 2 PAR pathway. The OD facilitator’s only roles in Stage 2 PAR is to observe and take notes as an outside ‘pair of

eyes' for occasional after-action reviews, and to take the role of group coach whose only job is to remind the group of decisions and commitments they have already made and redirect conversations around them. Gradually the practitioner recedes from both roles until needed to facilitate a new transition or for rapid onboarding of new members to the group.

### **Stage 2 PAR Intervention Pathway.**

Figure 12 below illustrates the proposed pathway to be taken by a self-directed learning group or CoP that has previously worked through the Stage 1 pathway with OD facilitation to discover the generative, circular process of action and hermeneutic reflection. Members themselves will prepare documentation that will delimit the problems or issues they bring to the group's attention, as well as materials and resources that will provide a multi-media substrate for expanding the group's knowledge and enhancing dialogic reflection. At this second stage the actions are bolder and the iterations of dialogue and action are faster because the group's performance process architecture is supported with shared, critical learning and growing horizons of confidence, mutual trust, and knowledge that always reaches beyond the focal area of the contracted task.



*Figure 12. Stage 2 PAR*

Whereas a Stage 1 PAR group is likely to produce double-loop learning affirmation (as in the case of confirming they are doing things right *and* doing the right things), a mature Stage 2 PAR group (Figure 13) can produce reflexive triple-loop learning affirmation (as when the group senses their place in a larger ethical sphere). This general pathway can be followed in step with a range of models from the OD literature and is compatible with the Natural Step Framework and large group interventions such as Open Space Technology, Appreciative Inquiry and Future Search Conferences.

### **Sample Abduction 1.**

An OD facilitator may extend the typologies of Chandler and Torbert (2003) and Torbert and Taylor (2008) with the Consulcube and Managerial Grids of Blake and Mouton (1983, 1985) and or many other published deconstructions of organization into identifiable parameters (e.g., Bridges, 2000, who uses the Myers Briggs Type Indicator to describe corporations and their subsidiary groups) to offer a spreadsheet model of their constituent parameters that finely characterize and situate most possible organization profiles that may fit her particular client. This can be used to help a client group of any size and mix of membership to self-construct, through consensus, its own profile both *as-it-is* and *as-it-should-be*, amid the permutation of parameters described by the model. Each parameter's salience can be surveyed on a Likert scale for both the *as-it-is* and *as-it-should-be* sides of the profile. This two-sided profile can be used as a "believable" starting point from which the facilitator can engage the client group in participatory action research to negotiate their way from the *what-is* side of the profile to the *what-should-be* side on a parameter by parameter digestible level. As a Stage 1 PAR gets underway the facilitator plays a strong role in guiding all conversations democratically within a critical hermeneutic frame, and she is vigilant to

capture and list individual abductions for reflection, selection, and action. An OD facilitator should be seen as a valuable resource and someone who, although perhaps not expert at the particular details of the client group's work, is someone with strong awareness of the larger frames that bound the group who can describe the possible consequences of decisions made by the group; and work back from there to assure all decisions are well examined democratically among those who would live with their consequences. Such mastery can come from experience working with group dynamics in the manner described herein, and initially with coaching support.

If the board of directors in Case C would have engaged an OD facilitator to reshape a new management structure using these practices, instead of simply replacing one CEO for another, it is likely that enterprise would have become more sustainable and innovative.

### **Sample Abduction 2.**

Groups can move toward collectively desired change determined in such a manner as described in Sample Abduction 1, through facilitated, hermeneutic reflection enhanced with human process text excerpts, selected by the OD practitioner in Stage 1 PAR or by members in Stage 2 PAR, to expand the group's extrinsic knowledge and help surface tacit knowledge. Surfaced tacit knowledge from some members creates a new horizon for others as well as generative moments of abductive surprise. Supplemental material also makes the group process more *divergent* and fertile for iterative *re-convergent* stages of the cycle. Participants can do as they wish with the material. The conscious OD facilitator helps to keep the process as democratic as possible, and points out where there is shortcoming to invite dialogue.

The OD facilitator can select, prepare, and distribute text excerpts she feels fit the situation and would help all members understand questions she may ask, perhaps two or

three double-spaced typewritten pages each. She would distribute them singly a day or two before group dialogues and reflections, to triangulate critical thinking and humanistic business practice with existing processes of the group. It's important she present a text that is simple to understand, quick to read, and is shared with all members of an action research group as a conversation starter and reference point to broaden the vocabulary and consciousness of the group. There is no need for extended textual analysis, and the group can discuss it as long as they wish and time allows. These handouts, along with everyone's written reflection become a part of the written record of the group's progress that the facilitator can review for signs of growth and shared learning. The facilitator may, for example, orient a conversation around selected passages from Von Kimakowitz, Pirson, Spitzeck, Dierksmeier, and Amann's (2011) *Humanistic Management in Practice*, or from Eric Fromm's (1941) *Escape from Freedom* that she believes fit the client group's predicament, to introduce the language of critical theory into the mix, and to awaken consciousness of the power systems behind the existing culture. At another time she might select a few passages from Buono and Savall's (2007) *Socio-Economic Intervention in Organizations* or from Meadows' (2009) *Thinking in Systems* to reveal the wisdom of including socio-technical factors in business process decisions. A group struggling with dysfunctional or authoritarian leadership issues might find value in Greenleaf's (2002) *Servant Leadership* essay pamphlet to begin a conversation about different kinds of leadership being appropriate for different situations and organizational stages. The facilitator will sense when a group matures and falls into flow, and she could provide selections from Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) *Flow* to put a name to that feeling which goes to valuing it and seeking to perpetuate it.



As with the overall Stage 1 & 2 PAR pathway outlined above, this supplementary abduction of supporting facilitated participatory action research with broader textual information to enrich dialogue and expand existential horizons cannot offer a paint-by-numbers prescription of specifics because every facilitator and every client group has different capacities, needs and dispositions. As an illustration only—in this case a series of quotes from Fromm (1941)— is the following possible text selection for reflection:

...different kinds of work require an entirely different personality traits and make for different kinds of relatedness to others (p. 18).

...man, the more he gains freedom in the sense of emerging from the original oneness with man and nature and the more he becomes an “individual,” has no choice but to unite himself with the world in the spontaneity of love and productive work or else to seek a kind of security by such ties with the world as destroys his freedom and the integrity of his individual self (pp. 22-23).

...in our effort to escape from aloneness and powerlessness, we are ready to get rid of our individual self either by submission to new forms of authority or by a compulsive conforming to accepted patterns (p. 135).

...masochistic and sadistic strivings tend to help the individual to escape his [sic] unbearable feeling of aloneness and powerlessness. [...] Frequently this feeling is not conscious; often it is covered by compensatory feelings of eminence and perfection. However if one only penetrates deeply enough into the unconscious dynamics of such a person, one finds these feelings without fail (p. 151).

...the individual overcomes the feeling of insignificance in comparison with the overwhelming power of the world outside of himself either by renouncing his individual integrity, or by destroying others so that the world ceases to be threatening.

Other mechanisms of escape are the withdrawal from the world so completely that it loses its threat... and the inflation of oneself psychologically to such an extent that the world outside becomes small in comparison.

[One] particular mechanism is the solution that the majority of normal individuals find in modern society. To put it briefly, the individual ceases to be himself; he adopts entirely the kind of personality offered to him by cultural patterns; and he therefore becomes exactly as all others are and as they expect him to be. The discrepancy between “I” and the world disappears and with it the conscious fear of aloneness and powerlessness (pp. 185-186).

...loss of identity...makes it...more imperative to conform; it means that one can be sure of oneself only if one lives up to the expectations of others. [...]

By conforming with the expectations of others, by not being different, ...doubts about one's own identity are silenced and a certain security is gained. However, the price paid is high. Giving up spontaneity and individuality results in a thwarting of life (pp. 254-255).

Democracy is a system that creates the economic, political, and cultural conditions for the full development of the individual (p. 274).

The fact that ideas have an emotional matrix is of the utmost importance because it is the key to understanding of the spirit of a culture. Different societies or classes within a society have a specific social character, and on its basis different ideas develop and become powerful (p. 279).

The victory over all kinds of authoritarian systems will be possible only if democracy does not retreat but takes the offensive and proceeds to realize what has been its aim in the minds of those who fought for freedom throughout the last centuries (p. 276).

A client might, as I do, look at this last quote and be reminded that freedom is not only fought for and preserved with blood and murder on the battlefield, but also, and perhaps more so, through vigilance and critical thinking day to day to identify authoritarian systems and oppressive power machinations all around us including the work place; and to name them; and to change them with dialogue and life-long self-directed learning. My own father's four-year sacrifice to defeat the Nazis in Germany placed a value and drew a line on democratic emancipation that I must hold. Such a perspective, shared in OD practice, could conceivably inspire people to awaken from their *automaton* slumber; bring love and joyful collaboration to the work place; and raise conscious children.

Another way to integrate such readings as these with ongoing conversations could be to arrange a World Café with each quote or excerpt on a separate flip chart on a separate café table along with a challenge question for all or for each written below the selection. The facilitator would break the large group into smaller discussion groups and rotate the groups around to all the tables in 10 to 15 minute intervals. Each small group could leave notes highlighting their conversation on the flip chart for the following small group to see and

interpret hermeneutically by asking, “How are we changed?” or “How is our circumstance in the world changed?”

Had the company in Case B been exposed to the right blend of such annotations attached to the bi-monthly reports, the executive management may have had more context with which to respond other than blind, fearful resistance. Also, as enthusiastic as the field sales engineers were, opportunities to discuss the significance of the supplementary material would have increased their articulation of support to their respective superiors.

### **Sample Abduction 3.**

After an extended discussion about the metaphorical idea of *horizons* as changing, growing, fusing, and being linked to human longing and dissatisfaction, an OD facilitator can provide a textual list such as Vaill’s (1998) “Five-Way Bottom line” of organization values:

- *material-instrumental*
- *technical*
- *communal*
- *adaptive*
- *transcendent* (p. 198-199, bullet format mine).

The facilitator would provide some description around each value that would link it to the particular processes of that group and organization. Then she could ask her clients to individually reflect on the balance of these values and rank them with percentages totaling 100 as each sees them practiced in the group and in the larger organization. This work can be done entirely online. After the percentages are aggregated, each individual can describe in some detail, their score selections along with their personal horizon and their perception of that of the group’s with an online, interactive, private blog. The facilitator would participate actively in the blog to capture and consolidate the *zeitgeist* or the general direction of the interactive conversation; harkening the group back to abandoned or dismissed contributions;

and asking provocative questions that keep the conversation tied the backbone of Vaill's five values. Allowing at least one night to transpire, the group would be assembled, preferably face-to-face in person, and be asked to surface a number of hypothetical actions within the group that might restore balance among these values. The facilitator lists the abductions as they appear and words them to the liking of the group. Then she introduces any new information that may be available and reads off all discomforts and irritations she may have picked up in the blog. After a period of silent reflection, the group is asked to collectively rank the abductions they have surfaced in order of economy and plausibility for action. The top candidate is then qualified for action and subsequent reflection. Facilitator feedback and group-led adjustments on each action taken can be discussed face-to-face or online on a regular basis. Stage 1 PAR pathway facilitation would be necessary with this hypothetical proposal.

My board of directors in Case A would have been far more proactive, productive, and innovative in the course of our development of the recycling utility if I had challenged them to rank and comment on such *lists* of values or priorities prior to each board meeting. The conversation could have carried over into the meetings after having the time to digest and interpret how others were framing the issues. This was certainly true in Case C where the directors of the nonprofit ranked leadership qualities, at first in the frame of their own survival in the dysfunctional culture, and then in the frame of the mission statement. Each ranking in that case was followed with fecund dialogue and desire for positive action.

#### **Sample Abduction 4.**

Just as in the preceding hypothesis, an OD facilitator can provide a textual list such as from Lawrence and Nohria (2002) that includes their four primary drives of organizations:

- *to acquire*
- *to defend*
- *to learn*
- *to bond*

which if not kept in balance can lead to or explain dysfunction, fragmenting, alienating, and de-humanizing conditions. Again, the facilitator briefly introduces this list and gives descriptions for each item that are germane to the particular organization and circumstances of the client group she is working with. Each member of the group is asked to apportion 100 percentage points across the four drivers as they perceive them to be operative in their group and in the larger organization. The facilitator aggregates the scoring and distributes it as feedback to the group for further discussion of where and what they are and where and what they want to be, or what underlying balance of drivers confront the changes they think and feel are needed. This allows the members of the group to work from a more divergent perspective on the organization with which to proceed with *convergent* thinking about their personal and group agency in the organization, the cultural effects of the organization on their personal lives, and their prospects for development as a community of practice that can make a difference. Stage 1 PAR pathway is necessary with this hypothetical proposal. If the facilitator sends this material electronically, she can embed any number of hypertext lexia that might clarify and expand the discussion blog. An example of such lexia might be the link to a synopsis of Lawrence and Nohria's book <<http://www.altfeldinc.com/pdfs/driven.pdf>> describing the four human drives.

Had the TMP process been established in Case B, this kind of facilitated introspection would have been normative and ongoing to keep the CSR team looking at itself from different perspectives. After Stage 1 PAR established the pattern, the CSR members

themselves would be motivated to offer fresh perspectives from which to value their collaborative work.

### **Sample Abduction 5.**

A skilled OD facilitator may capture and list the metaphors and analogies normally used by her client group in the sequence they were used, and annotate their context in the manner of Schein's (1999) process consultation. She can annotate and distribute the list to open a conversation about how those tropes helped and hindered progress in understanding one another, and, perhaps using a white board, graphically demonstrate where each one ceased to fit the situation, to consider if other metaphors and analogies may have better served their need then or going forward. That list may indicate mixed metaphors that confuse some members, giving the facilitator an opportunity to ask the group to think of new and more apt or extending analogies to represent new information into meaningful patterns.

Marshak's (2003) dialogical intervention method can be useful here to surface "unconscious symbolic processes" (p. 10) by confronting the group's "comforting tropes of similarity" (p. 10) with "discomforting tropes of dissimilarity" (p. 10) to expand the group's collective horizon. Cultural bias and discrimination are sometimes expressed in the choice of metaphors in the workplace and this kind of dialogic reflection can remedy such insensitivity. As the facilitator makes it common practice to name the metaphors and analogies as they appear, group members can become more comfortable in being challenged with ironic comments that give pause for reflection. Sports and military analogies with their combative themes are less likely to carry memes of humanism, and their occurrence could provide opportunities to respond with anomaly, irony, or paradox to transition the norm to analogies of family and community life.

Notwithstanding that Cases A and B are somewhat dated and shaped by the times and mores of their day, were Cases A, B, and C to occur in the present day, all would benefit from this type of facilitated intervention. Most groups and organizations are totally unaware of the shifting tropes buried in the language that shapes, frames, and reifies their entitativity. This is pregnant new ground for the OD practitioner to explore and use that may have revolutionary consequences.

### **Conclusion**

In 1975 I heard R. Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983) say, “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete” (Wesleyan University guest lecture). To introduce and co-develop a new model, an OD facilitator must understand herself, her clients, and their relationship, and we could call this *single-loop* learning. Presenting a credible typology to the client or clients and facilitating their use of it to get a believable handle on an ongoing situation can anchor facilitated discourse, rhetoric, dialogue, and reflection that displaces doubt and produces new beliefs; and we could call this *double-loop* learning. Rapid iterations of action and feedback based on the new beliefs can generatively produce agency and actionable knowledge that can adaptively bridge the organization sustainably through future changes in the groups themselves and the external environment to become agile and resilient; and we could call this *triple-loop* learning. At a minimum however, OD facilitators should verify they have taken the clients through and beyond the single-loop learning process of asking ‘[Are we] doing *things right?*’ and the double-loop learning process of asking ‘[Are we] doing the *right things?*’ to the triple-loop learning process of asking ‘[Are we] balancing *right with might?*’ (Flood & Romm, 1997) with abductive, hermeneutical-dialogical, participatory action

research. (Flood and Romm named the single-loop *design management*, the second-loop *debate management*, and the third-loop *might-right management* in the context of critical systems theory.) The overall objective of this type intervention is to gather local knowledge and co-create local meaning that carries the organization forward with and by self-actualized and emancipated people in a lifeworld that makes just sense to them and their stakeholders.

Conscientious OD practitioners will develop their own skill sets as well as continually expanded horizons of their place in the world, each time they travel the participatory action research pathway described and illustrated in this chapter. If a client group and its organization are traveling along such a facilitated, life-affirming and critical pathway, the practitioner as well as the individuals will grow and develop their assumptive worlds through mutuality; and the lives they touch can flourish with humanism.

As alluded to earlier, the tools and two-stage process described in this study can gradually shift the way OD is legitimately approached by breaking down organizational needs for change and development into its constituent process groups and working with each independently toward sustainable, self-determined, internal alignment. The practitioner communicates to each sub-group (or nexus in a network) the direction the other groups are taking on common issues. In the second stage of this process, each group can work toward convergence with the other groups as that input evolves and is framed by a coordinating practitioner. An organization with more than a handful of process groups may need more than one practitioner to cover all the groups. That would call for coordination work between them which becomes a group unto itself, best facilitated by the coordinating practitioner.



The foregoing has been a pragmatic proposal to lower dependence on static and universal theories and dualities<sup>52</sup> of Cartesianism. It comes from Heidegger's *vorhanden*, Polanyi's tacit dimension, Wittgenstein's *knowing how to go on*, Husserl's and Gadamer's moving, growing horizon, Korzybski's time-binding of knowledge, and Kristeva's intertextuality; with hopes it can help us evolve humanistically. And when the *sea change* (begun by Charles Sanders Peirce, at the beginning of the twentieth-century after 50 years of relentless, independent thinking) gains momentum in the twenty-first, we can look behind us to see Wilber's holons "all the way down" and perhaps then, together, we will grasp Teilhard de Chardin's noosphere with quadruple-loop learning that sets everyone free of seductive old metaphors. Perhaps this is Lewin's *unfrozen* moment of opportunity to be seized for a new sensibility of communal lifeworld; or perhaps this is the moment we OD practitioners should be arm-and-arm *unfreezing* a grim 60-year old totalitarian nightmare that never really went away, but only submerged as a repressed strange attractor or egregor:

The subterranean stream of Western history has finally come to the surface and usurped the dignity of our tradition. This is the reality in which we live. And this is why all efforts to escape from the grimness of the present into nostalgia for a still intact past, or to the anticipated oblivion of a better future, are vain.  
(Arendt, 1951, p. ix)

Whether we eventually create a better future or not, we know we must strive to survive with some modicum of dignity and hope, the crushing demands of the 7-billion and increasing number of people on the earth manifesting the 'tragedy of the commons.' The insidious and colonizing notion of manifest destiny has run its course, and yet so many continue to think of *development* as more production and consumption. Individual OD practitioners, like everyone else, are either part of the problem or part of the solution; but are in a special and highly leveraged position to take thoughtful, effective action to *develop* people, processes,

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<sup>52</sup> Cartesian dualities: mind-body, researcher-subject, truth-prejudice, etc.

and systems to sustain life and dignity first, and then *markets* for those systems. It takes courage and deep, shared reflection to discern on which side of that balance, and with whom, we stand; but as Dr. Jamieson (2010) instructed the Minnesota Organization Development Network, do “stand up, belong to something that counts and focus on making a difference” because “who you are and what you do will carry more weight than what you call it.”

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## Appendix A

Epistemology	Hermeneutics
causal	interpretive
empiricist	hermeneutic-dialectic
learning facts	acquiring values
deductive	inductive
objective	subjective
nature	spirit
truth	prejudice and illusion
analytical, logical and empirical	critical, emotional and empirical
prediction and control	fusion of horizons
theoretical truth	historical consciousness
scientism	historicism
<i>Naturwissenschaften</i>	<i>Geisteswissenschaften</i>
{natural science}	{social science}
<i>erklären</i>	<i>verstehen</i>
{to explain}	{to understand}
<i>Verständigung</i>	<i>Verständnis</i>
{agreement}	{understanding}
rational	non-rational
cognitive	non-cognitive
science	edification
hard, reliable extensibility	soft, mushy extensibility
objectivizing	reflecting
inquiry	conversation
<i>être-en-soi</i>	<i>être-pour-soi</i>
{being-in-itself}	{being-for-itself}
described objects	describing subjects
mainstream philosophers	peripheral philosophers
left brain cognition	right brain cognition
etic	emic
solve	dissolve
systematic	edifying
quantitative	qualitative
normal discourse	abnormal discourse
commensurability	incommensurability
<i>techné</i>	<i>phronesis</i>
{technical expertise}	{ethical, authentic understanding}
foundational philosophy	non-foundational philosophy

## Appendix B

### Intertextualities of Textual Hermeneutics

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all publishers  
all edition revisions  
author's previous works  
context of author's later works  
all language translations and translators  
historical era of text vis-à-vis that of interpreter  
education, experiences, influences, worldview of authors  
all pre-understanding, foreknowledge, and prejudice of interpreter  
allusions to and differences from the content or structure of other texts  
reference level, influences and sequence of secondary and tertiary critics  
demographic, environmental, physical and political circumstances of authors  
demographic, environmental, physical and political circumstances of interpreter

## Appendix C

**Inference**—{
   
     *explicative (analytic or deductive)*
  
     *ampliative (synthetic)*—{
   
         **inductive (probable)**
  
         **abductive (possible)**—{
   
             *intuitive insight (hypothesis invention)*
  
             *rational inference (hypothesis selection)*

Peirce's logical classification of inferences [extended] (Fann, 1970; Aliseda, n. d.)

## Appendix D

### Category Analects & Notes

2011.09.25

**TO:** Category analects & notes

**FR:** Daniel J. Shuster • shuster@scc.net

**RE:** Bricolage (excerpts removed for legality)

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Cleaver, F. (2002). Reinventing institutions: Bricolage and the social embeddedness of natural resource management. *European Journal of Development Research*, 14(2), 11-30. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/714000425>

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