



Organization Development and Change

R. Wayne Boss, Editor

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CALL FOR PAPERS

George Roth
2004 Program Chair

This note outlines the requirements for successfully submitting papers and symposia to the ODC Division for the 2004 Academy of Management National Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana on August 1 to 6, 2004. The deadline for submissions is Monday, January 5, 2004 at 5 p.m. EST (*note time!*).

This year's conference theme – "Creating Actionable Knowledge" – is near and dear to the heart of the values that distinguish the Organizational Change and Development Division within the Academy of Management. I would summarize this theme as the imperative that our "science" be relevant, responsible and make valuable contributions to society and its institutions. Many of us are part of the ODC Division because we care about practice and want our research to have a positive impact, supporting people and creating better business processes and organizations. For the essay by Tom Cummings on this theme please go to <http://meetings.aomonline.org/2004/theme.htm>. This essay includes thoughts on different ways that papers and symposia address the various aspects of the creating actionable knowledge theme. Anyone with thoughts on proposals for All-Academy sessions addressing this theme should communicate them to the All-Academy Program Chair Larry Greiner (lgreiner@marshall.usc.edu) no later than November 14, 2003.

The venue – what could be a more interesting location than downtown historic New Orleans? What makes this meeting unique is that our sessions will be hosted in two adjoining hotels – no big, impersonal and unfriendly convention hall to deal with this year! These hotels are just blocks from the famous French Quarter and Mississippi River waterfront. The local events committee is sure to plan interesting activities that take advantage of our exciting venue.

Submission Process

Given the conference theme I'm sure that everyone will submit early and submit often! Please be sure to (*See Roth, page 2*)

CALL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP (PDW) PROPOSALS

Ram Tenkasi
ODC Division PDW Chair

"Creating Actionable Knowledge," the theme for the 2004 AOM conference, is at the heart of what the Organization Development and Change Division stands for. So please utilize this opportunity to submit creative and challenging PDWs that expand our knowledge of how best to create actionable knowledge. PDWs are a platform for colleagues to share knowledge and expertise and foster the development of workshop participants. Coordinated by the Academy's many divisions, interest groups, and theme committees, PDW sessions are different from regular academy sessions in that they can have a longer time frame and use a more interactive/participative format.

Note that PDW space can be limited, so PDW proposals that are co-sponsored by several divisions or interest groups are encouraged as we can share room allocations. If you are interested in submitting a proposal for a PDW session to be sponsored by the ODC division please use the linked submission form.

(*See Tenkasi, page 3*)

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follow *all* submission guidelines of the Academy (see All Academy Newsletter that you get by mail or the Academy Website – <http://meetings.aonline.org/2004/guidelines.htm>).

There are two stages to the submission process:

1) Go to the Academy Website <http://aonline.org/> submissions to submit your title page information, abstract and all author and co-author information for your paper or symposium submission. Upon completing this information you will receive an electronic SUBMISSION NUMBER. This number is critical, as it needs to appear on *all* of your submissions and correspondence. It also identifies and tracks your paper for the blind review process.

2) One of the authors must send an electronic version of the paper or symposium to me, the ODC program chair, at odc@mit.edu by January 5, 2004. These documents must be prepared for blind review. This requires that there be no author information appears in document itself or file “properties” information. Also, the SUBMISSION NUMBER acquired from the Academy’s web site needs to be part of the file name of the document you send me and appropriately indicated in the document itself. No other identifying information, such as title page with author information, should be in your submission.

Your submission will be acknowledged electronically upon receipt. For more information on the requirements for preparing your submission, I strongly encourage you to consult the Academy website for specifics (please see “Electronic Format Guidelines” – <http://meetings.aonline.org/2004/guidelines.htm>).

Division Awards

Five externally-sponsored recognition awards (see ODC web site – <http://www.aom.pace.edu/odc> – for details) will be given for the best paper in the following categories: competitive paper; action research paper; linking theory-to-practice paper; interactive paper and student paper. Papers authored by students and/or about action research should be clearly identified as such at the time of submission (please note that it is a student paper in the email that accompanies the submission).

I look forward to receiving your submission and seeing you in New Orleans in August! If you have any questions, please contact me at odc@mit.edu.

(From Tenkasi, page 1)

The deadline for submissions is November 10, 2003. An electronic submission is strongly preferred.

To download the submission form visit: <http://www.aom.pace.edu/odc/pdw2004form.doc>.

You may also download a .pdf version by following the link at this site: <http://meetings.aomonline.org/2004>.

Please direct any questions or submissions to: Ram Tenkasi, ODC Division PDW Chair, PhD Program in Organization Development and Change, 114 B, Scholl Center, Benedictine University, Lisle, IL 60532. Email: rtenkasi@ben.edu or tenkasi@msn.com; Tel: 630-829-6212; Fax: 630-829-6211.

PLANNING ON SPONTANEITY: LESSONS FROM JAZZ FOR A DEMOCRATIC THEORY OF CHANGE

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2003 Competitive Paper Award

The intensifying demand for collaboration and innovation has implications for how we conceive of organizational change. Traditional models of strategizing that depict change as formal, goal-oriented, rational might not sustain the kind of innovation and democratic participation required. Current theories of change, derived from Newtonian physics, assume time is linear and absolute, compare static states, assume that new states are effects of pre-planned actions. They assume that the past plays a role in determining the shape of the present. This view privileges outcomes over processes; structures over action, changes over changing. We revisit theories of organizational change from the perspective of *distencio anami* and *duree* and suggest alternatives to theorizing the change process.

Time as Heterogenous: Augustine's *Distencio Anami* and Bergson's *Duree*

We explore two philosophers who challenge linear notions of time. St. Augustine (397/1993) proposed that the question of the length of time invites measurement and comparison, but that this creates an illusion. For Augustine there are three aspects of present time

(that Ricoeur renamed the threefold present) – the present of the past (remembrance), the present of the present (attention), and the present of the future (expectation). Augustine associated the threefold present with our capacity to experience *distencio anami* – a state of consciousness that expands beyond ordinary awareness, a stretching of the soul to embrace the threefold present.

Henri Bergson resonated with Augustine's reflections on time. The notion of time as momentary, segmented units is a reflection of the Newtonian categories that we have inherited and cannot grasp the dynamism of lived experience. For Bergson time is a cumulative flow in which the past, present, and future remain vital and indivisible in a constantly transforming flux. Bergson admits, that because we are pragmatic actors who need to coordinate with others, we tend to segment our experience into discrete units, but only as a matter of convenience. These conceptual categories, he warns, can obstruct the experience of *duree*. To grasp *duree* we must break free from learned habits of spatial categories and nurture our intuitive capacity to access a profound unfolding. Whereas mechanistic perspectives depict a "world that dies and is reborn at every instant" (Bergson, 1911, p 23), when we intuitively grasp *duree*, what is revealed is the becoming of life, the global, undivided, progressive creation that resembles "a gradually expanding rubber balloon assuming at each moment unexpected forms" (1941, p 95).

One implication of Augustine and Bergson's views of time is the need to abandon future prediction based on past events; what we take to be "the past" is itself subject to change. This suggests that at any moment we can expect the unexpected, a new *gestalt* can transform the past to create something heretofore unprecedented.

Exploring *Distencio* and *Duree*: Jazz Musicians Improvising

One situation where people view time as dynamic or as "the continuous elaboration of the absolutely new" (Bergson, 1911, p 11) is jazz improvisation. Jazz involves both approaches to time outlined above: on the one hand, time is highly structured and partitioned; on the other, following the temporal coordinates and rhythmic structures does not guarantee good jazz.

Jazz musicians orient themselves to linear temporal order when they divide their music is divided into beat, tempo, meter, and rhythm. What this scheme does not

capture, however, is how tensions and movement are transformed into a transcendent feel that they refer to as “achieving a groove.” Groove occurs when the rhythm section “locks in” together, when members have a mutual orientation to the beat. Once a group shares this rhythmic momentum, it takes on a life of its own separate from the individual members. Jazz musicians describe groove in ways that seem to depart from a linear view of time, tempo, or beat. These moments are described in terms of ecstasis, a “standing outside of” conventional categories of experience that recalls for us Bergson’s *duree*.

Jazz improvisation resonates with Augustine’s *distencio* and Bergson’s *duree* in which time is a heterogeneous unfolding of changes in which past, present and future are intermingled. Melodies evoke previously heard excerpts; improvisers connect utterances to stock phrases, well-known standards, familiar repertoires. But each enactment also shapes the future. At any moment a player can take the music in a new direction, defy expectations, and/or trigger others to re-interpret what they have just heard.

Implications for Theorizing and Managing Organizational Change

Most of our assumptions in change theories reflect Newtonian views of time. *Life cycle models* assume that change goes through progressive, irreversible sequences; from such a mindset, leaders of change might be prone to notice prefigured sequences, anticipate inevitabilities, organize for compliance. *Evolutionary theories*, including punctuated equilibrium models, emphasize the inevitable scarcity in the environment, rational diagnosis and strategic response. *Dialectic models* heighten awareness of past conflicts and oppositions as engines of change. *Teleological models* emphasize rational planning toward envisioned end states. Bergson would claim that this retrospective sense making is the product of the intellect and its habitual propensity to impose order, to divide up what is indivisible. What gets lost in these theories and prescriptive models is the human capacity to intuitively grasp emergent whole processes, the very process of becoming, the gradual expansion that can “assume at each moment unexpected forms” (Bergson 1941: 95).

This suggests that many of our change stories and theories of change are poor guides to managing change or even to understanding it. What tends to get overlooked by change theorists are notions of *duree*, *distencio*, and groove: coordination can be achieved not through

orientation to fixed time, but through a dynamic synchronicity, a mindset of surrender and wonderment that encourages constantly anticipating one another’s contributions, attuning and adjusting as participants interact. What makes this temporal orientation work as a form of coordination is the commitment to stay engaged, a listening to the potential in unexpected trajectories, an intuitive grasping of *duree*. This alternative model of coordination has more to do with an experience of interpersonal attunement, anticipation of the unexpected, an assumption that one will discover solutions as needed. This theory of change would be less a series of lists than descriptions of spontaneous interactivity as experienced by participants, a view of change from inside its processes.

We believe that as we consider *distencio* and *duree*, we will adopt a holistic view of time: a respect for emergent processes, trust in the possibility of intuitive glimpses that embrace past, present, and future. Such views have emotional and aesthetic as well as intellectual content, perhaps expressed in poetic or artistic forms, and encourage researchers to notice groups spontaneously coordinating, striking grooves extemporaneously, beginning down one path and then suddenly re-adjusting as cues are reinterpreted. The mindset of improvisation embraces openness and revels in a sense of wonder that welcomes a future beyond cognitive reach, a willingness to do what jazz musicians do—throw themselves into situations in which they are over their heads for the sheer joy of enlivened discovery and creation. In such a mindset, planning itself changes shape, appearing not as a means to control outcomes, but as an invitation to imagine and try out possibilities. Our jazz examples suggest that to approach organizational life from a perspective of *duree* amounts to abandonment, a surrender to emergence, and requires that participants trust their ability to coordinate action without conventionally imposed boundaries, a stretching of the soul of management.

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**MORAL PURPOSE AND
ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE:
SANDLER O'NEILL & PARTNERS, L.P.
IN THE AFTERMATH OF
SEPTEMBER 11, 2001**

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2003 Best Practice Paper Award

On September 11th, 2001 Sandler O'Neill & Partners, an investment bank on the 104th floor of the World Trade Center, lost thirty-nine percent of its people, including two-thirds of its management committee, and nearly all of its physical assets and corporate records.

Yet despite of the devastating losses, Sandler O'Neill has managed not only to survive, but to thrive: No deals or clients were lost; the firm was profitable two months after the attack; and by May 2002, profitability and revenue superseded to pre-9/11 levels and were trending sharply upward. By September 2002, the firm had strengthened core areas and built a new business in capital markets, underwriting an annualized \$23 billion in initial public offerings. Moreover all this was achieved as the firm was providing generous care, salary, bonus and benefits to the families of the deceased.

Overview of Findings

Using ethnographic techniques, interviews, observation and document review, our team of five investigators endeavored to explain this remarkable performance.

Several situational factors contributed to resilience of firms hit in the 9/11 attacks including an extraordinarily supportive environment. Likewise, Sandler generally managed the crisis well. But aspects of the situation can only augur the possibility of recovery; and crisis management can only mitigate losses. Sandler O'Neill's phenomenal post 9/11 success was attributable to other factors, most importantly the invocation of a moral purpose which directly motivated stakeholders and indirectly enabled the firm to obtain help and to seize opportunities created through loss.

The Source of Sandler's Resilience: Moral Purpose

Prior to 9/11, employees thought of the firm as an instrument "for feeding the mouths of families." After

9/11, it became a moral enterprise as well: to honor the dead, care for both the family members of the deceased as well as the living, and deny the terrorists a victory: "I feel more motivated and more determined. We have more responsibility to ... [rebuild the firm] for those who are gone....we are at war. It is important to keep our economy going."

One employee, who had quit before 9/11 to start a non-financial business in his home, came back: "I never really wanted to come back to the Street after I left, but ... from a moral standpoint, it is absolutely the right thing to do."

When Sandler O'Neill's salespeople sold stocks and bonds, they were selling for their dead colleagues both emotionally and literally. Commissions generated through sales and trades on the accounts of a deceased employee went to that employee's estate. In addition, the firm paid salaries until the end of the year and bonuses that met or exceeded any prior bonus; extended medical insurance for five years and for children until the age of 18; created a foundation pay for their college education; established a resource center to help with financial and legal needs, and provided continuing counseling services. They held a memorial service for the victims and their families at Carnegie Hall and created a memorial in the new office.

Customers and even competitors responded to this sense of moral purpose. Immediately after 9/11, it seemed doubtful to analysts and the media that a relationship-based firm in a relationship-based industry could survive the death of so many relationship managers. In fact, *all* clients remained with the firm. Maintaining a relationship with the firm enabled clients, suppliers and other stakeholders to honor their relationship to those who died and to work through their own feelings regarding this national tragedy. Six months after the attack, Dunne noted that, early on: "I thought that clients would find it a bit presumptuous on my part if I interjected myself into those relationships. I was 100 percent wrong. Not only did they want it, they expected it. Now I am furiously ... contacting the key people that our key people talked to."

Attracting Help

Organizations are often incapable of seeking and using help, even in catastrophes. Directors may worry that publicity could stimulate lawsuits and expose their weakness, leading potentially to further losses of key personnel and business. In the first months after the

attack, other firms provided little access to the public, and none have recovered so completely and dramatically. The CEO of Cantor Fitzgerald committed several missteps in the initial treatment of the families of dead employees. He lacked the openness that would have enabled him to test ideas and possible policies with friends and advisors.

Sandler O'Neill's sense of moral purpose enabled the firm to attract expertise and commitment from the outside. Relatives answered phones, laid cable and set up computers; ex-employees worked the phones; and once trading began the following Monday, volunteers traded for the firm and for the deceased without taking salary and commissions. Top lawyers and consultants volunteered their time.

The crisis generated publicity and celebrity (including profiles on CNBC and CBS' *60 Minutes* and a cover story in *Fortune*). Public approval of Sandler O'Neill's management, Dunne's charisma, and the effectiveness with which Sandler managed public relations led to invitations for new deals. Management fully accepted the generosity of others, allowing the firm to enter deals that were made available and made business sense. One partner told us, "XX gave us a deal. It was great. They practically filled out the paperwork for us."

Tragedy's Upside: Opportunity (for individuals)

The loss of friends and colleagues was personally devastating, yet loss created opportunities. One respondent put it: "For every destruction there is construction." Even though reconstructing the firm was physically burdensome and psychologically difficult, many stepped forward to fill voids because the situation presented an opportunity to advance. As one person explained, "I took on coverage of better accounts. This is not the way you want to get them, but"

At the firm-level, some larger banks saw Sandler O'Neill as a symbol and "invited [them] to the table" to participate on large underwriting deals: "Opportunity? A ton right afterwards. Competitors included us in underwriting. Companies that we would never speak with, such as X; there was an open forum... Some of these relationships will be enduring."

Structural Opportunities

The tragedy also created "structural" opportunities. An IT professional said that in a sad way the disaster was an opportunity to improve the computer systems,

"Opportunities start from an empty space." One executive came over from a much larger firm because, "*I thought the opportunity to rebuild the equities business was unique in such a small, well-regarded firm.*"

Death generally created slots for strategic, high-quality new hires. And because the firm received such good publicity for the moral stance it took in relationship to its families, it had its pick of candidates at all levels. Young people from top universities, who might normally have gone to larger firms, applied for jobs at Sandler O'Neill.

The firm hired Wall Street talent from prestige firms who, by virtue of their skills and relationships, brought new kinds of business. Dunne commented, "Some new senior hires have helped a great deal: I miss X so much, but hiring Y has been a godsend for me. And it's also helped everybody else behave better."

Loss often presents opportunity, but "taking advantage" of such opportunity is generally eschewed as dancing on their grave of dead colleagues. In this case, however, by helping the firm survive, pursuing opportunities meant providing resources to help the family members of co-workers who died. Under these conditions, ambition becomes a gift.

The combination of moral work and the pull of opportunity released extraordinary physical and psychological resources. Work typically involves a tradeoff between normal business activities, which we undertake for material advancement, and volunteer work, which we undertake for a moral payoff, but in an organization that permits advancement *through* moral work, people feel exceptionally energetic and psychologically available.

Implications

Among the implications of this research is how we think about risk management and crisis preparation. Since 9/11, organizations have invested substantial resources in these areas. Most effort has been technologically focused, but Sandler O'Neill's remarkable recovery is attributable entirely to human factors: relationships, the management of emotions, and, above all, invoking a moral purpose that motivated extraordinary effort.

Happy Holidays!

SEATTLE'S EXPERIENCED MUSIC PROJECT: ON COLOR LANGUAGE AND THE FRAMING OF ORGANIZATIONAL REALITY

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Leslie Harrington
LH. Color

2003 Best Visual Paper

The rhetoric of change now used by many companies often falls on deaf ears and resisting hearts. Coupled with frequent restructuring, this language confuses organizational citizens and alienates rather than recruit their hearts and minds (Beer and Nohria, 2000). While most transformation efforts attempt to increase organizations' agility and responsiveness, rarely do they focus on facilitating people's ability to cope with uncertainty embedded in change (Kotter, 2000). Framing *new realities* of competition and employment in ways appealing to involved constituencies becomes a critical managerial challenge. This challenge also stems from the *type* of reality change architects attempt to shift, reality that is collective, task-oriented and explicit by character but as such, it is ignoring individuals' inner reality that is primarily emotional (Nussbaum, 2001) and is significantly impacted by organizational changes (Jick, 1996).

To the question of how reality is shaped various professions and disciplines respond differently and yet they all hold in common the importance of *language*, a set of accepted codes and rules with which ideas and abstractions are being articulated and realized. Musicians use the language of notes to describe sound, psychologists turn to symbols and archetypes to articulate emotions, philosophers employ verbal expressions to construct logic, and managers use the language of resources to realize goals and convey desired meanings to communities inside and outside the firm.

As demonstrated, language is not confined to its verbal facet and its use encompasses emotional expression, social interaction, recording of facts, *shaping reality*, providing an instrument of thought, and expressing of identity. For those in the business of "shaping reality," outer-manifested and inner-experienced, *appropriate use of the appropriate language* is of considerable importance (Handy, 1997:7), but how to think of appropriateness in this context? And is it possible that complex messages need to be delivered using multiple-language?

On Architecture, Multi-Language and Reality Framing?

For decades architects have perfected the language of *form and function* to realize built realities. But some recent developments have challenged the exclusive status of *form and function* language. Frank O. Gehry's work represents an interesting and successful attempt to reach a cross-language expression of architectural art. In works from the early '80s Gehry demonstrates his mastery of the traditional architectural language of form-function (e.g. 1984 California Aerospace Museum). His seminal work in Bilbao however revolutionizes the architectural language forever where "form-function" is "talked" in a new dialect, the dialect of "materials." The overlaying of these two languages allows Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao to establish new presence, new meaning of what buildings are about, and above all, new theory of embeddedness of architecture in nature and the relationship between design and context (Lechner, 1999).

Commissioned to design Paul Allen's Experienced Music Project building in Seattle, Gehry, now more attentive to the affects of multi-language as means of reality framing, is introducing yet a third language-intersection, that of function-form-materials, and COLOR. As the EMP architecture was inspired by the sexy curves and colors of Hendrix' electric guitars (Brady, 1998) this theme is captured by purple haze and red exteriors. Overlaying the additional Color language, Gehry is able to frame the meaning of the EMP in the utmost richest way, making the architecture expression truer to the ideas it represents.

Gehry's use of color to connote meanings of the music world, presupposes the existence of a *color language*, one that associates colors and meanings in a systematic way. But can the same rationale that guides Gehry be leveraged within the context of organization so that change efforts be 'talked' in language that inspires people rather than be threatening and alienating?

Color Language and Organizations

We presuppose that transitions from one reality to another elicit a rich gamut of cognitions, emotions and reactions. We further suggest that change efforts usually employ resource restructuring language aimed at shifting strategies and structures, a language incapable of aligning individuals' emotions and cognitions with the desired organizational configuration. But what is this "emotional language" that can

effectively address individuals' reactions to the uncertainties of change? Such language most likely is non-confrontational and facilitative. It is geared at framing conditions that will allow for desired emotions and behaviors to emerge. It might be archetypal in the Jungian sense as it attempts to evoke associations and mental schemata that are assumed to exist, and engage them in the re-framing of experiences as positive (Riley, 1995). *We theorize that Color Language has the power and capability to act as such facilitative instrument of reality creation.*

Following color psychologists' claims that people are responding to colors as meaning cues often times in a universal fashion (Birren, 1950), and that color is most commonly associated with affective rather than intellectual stimuli, we propose that people's notions of their work life and changes in organizational reality would be referred to or talked about using different color schemes. We further assume that if such an implicit language is tapped it would have tremendous impact on our conceptualization of organizational realities as well as implications to the way we influence human emotions in times of organizational transition.

Methodology

This study was motivated by the proposition that different color schemes will be associated with the "old" and "new" management paradigms described by Ancona et al (1998). The empirical part of this work considered associations managers make between colors and managerial constructs. Six constructs were selected to represent these two paradigms including: Management / Efficiency / Obedience – for the "old" paradigm, and Leadership / Innovation / Trust – for the "new" paradigm.

A sample of managers (n = 82) from various industries with average managerial experience of 8.2 years was selected. Subjects were presented with a short questionnaire and asked to refer to attached color chart in answering the questions to ensure collective standard color reference point. A multiple comparison χ^2 test was employed to analyze data.

Findings

Significant color-construct matching was found for all six constructs. A further pair-wise comparison of color per construct was then conducted to define the source of difference of colors per construct revealed earlier.

This analysis yielded the following results:

- Management – Blue
- Trust – Green and Blue
- Leadership – Red
- Efficiency – Green
- Innovation – Yellow
- Obedience – Black

Intersecting the Languages of Change Management and Color

The challenge of the change manager, the architect of social realities (Senge, 1990) is to frame a new reality in ways that are not only accepted, but also desired by and meaningful to people. As this "framing" involves the simultaneous shifting of cognitions, emotions and actions, the use of multi-language expressions might be needed in order to appeal to all three. Our findings suggest that color language can couple managerial change language as the "Blues of management" give place to the "Reds of leadership" and "Yellows of innovation." To better understand the impact of the *color language* we should re-state a key purpose of language as means to frame reality through its "referential," "propositional" or "ideational" role of communication (Crystal, 1997). As such, language *creates* and *controls* the way reality is shaped, experienced and enacted. Thus, color language too is participating in this delicate framing of meanings, just as our data shows.

The question that arises is: Would people in organizations show greater self-management, efficacy and creativity, if exposed continuously to red and yellow colors? Establishing the existence of color language in organizations our research program continues to explore the opportunity to couple color and change languages to successfully interlace organizational-strategic with the individual-emotional reality framing efforts a la Gehry!

References can be obtained from Anat Lechner, Stern School of Business, New York University, 44 W. 4th Street, Tisch 7-17, New York, NY 10012.

Season's Greetings!

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FEEDBACK TO THE EDITOR

We welcome your feedback and would appreciate your comments below. Selected comments on articles in the OD Newsletter may be published in the next issue, so please indicate if you prefer your comments to be withheld. After completing your comments, please detach this page and return it to the editor. *(Please Print All Comments.)*

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2. Is there any important information about you or a colleague that you would like to have appear in the next issue?

PUBLICATIONS

3. Please list below any recent or forthcoming publications by you or a colleague. (Indicate full citation.)
