



Organization Development and Change

R. Wayne Boss, Editor

Summer 2008

Published by the ODC Division

CALL FOR PAPERS

Ann E. Feyerherm
Program Chair
Pepperdine University

We offer a big “thank you” to all the members that submitted papers, symposia and did the reviewing over the past few months. Through your efforts, we promise to have a fascinating and provocative program since many of you took to heart the theme “The Questions We Ask.” All of the paper sessions, meetings and many of the symposia and PDWs will be held at the Anaheim Marriott during the course of the meetings (August 8-13). I have listed below a sampling of the program.

ODC Distinguished Speakers and Theme Sessions

We are fortunate to have two long time ODC scholars serve as our Distinguished Speakers. On Monday morning, Dr. William Torbert will present “The Questions We (Ought to) Ask” as the Distinguished Theme Speaker. The session promises to be one that will inspire, provoke reflection and allows us to honor the work of Bill. He has served as ODC Chair and is moving to Professor Emeritus of Leadership at The Carroll School of Management at Boston College this year. His focus on “action inquiry” is about discovering actions, in the moment, that have the interplay of self, others, organizational strategies and global vision which lead to transformation. Bill’s work can be accessed through his webpage: <http://www2.bc.edu/~torbert/>. We are in for a treat.

On Tuesday afternoon, Dr. Warren Bennis will present “The Questions We Don’t Ask” as the ODC Distinguished Speaker. Warren is a Distinguished Professor of Business Administration at USC’s Marshall School of Business. He is regarded as one of the world’s experts on leadership and is a prolific author. For those who have been interviewed by Warren, or heard him speak, there is always a new insight that emerges. This session will be no exception to that pattern.

We also will have a panel of practitioners, scholars and educators that will provide an interactive setting

(See Feyerherm, page 3)

THE EMOTIONS OF CHANGE

Michael R. Manning
Division Chair
New Mexico State University

It has been a tradition in the ODC Division for the outgoing Division Chair to have an opportunity to make a statement in the Division Newsletter. I am pleased to do so, as I have also been pleased to serve the division on its executive team over the last five years.

What I would like to offer are my impressions of what I see as an exciting new direction for research on change – a repositioning and a reemphasis of the central role emotions play in managing planned change. Evidence is clearly mounting from the fields of cognitive and social psychology that individual change is more emotional than rational. In addition, further research suggests that a powerful coalition of emotions via contagious processes exists, and in fact, may be a primary explanation for how groups overcome obstacles and behave in unified ways, even though individuals may be unaware of these powerful emotional effects. All of this suggests that emotion may be the key catalyst/input in successful change and that a coalesced emotional tone via social contagion processes can directly affect group and organizational behavior.

(See Manning, page 7)

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ODC DIVISION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2007-2008

Michael Manning, Division Chairperson
New Mexico State University
Phone: 505/646-2532 Fax: 505/646-1372
Email: mmanning@nmsu.edu

Frank Barrett, Division Chair Elect
Naval Postgraduate School
Phone: 831/656-2328 Fax: 831/656-3407
Email: fbarrett@nps.edu

Ann Feyerherm, Program Chair
Pepperdine University
Phone: 310/568-5544 Fax: 310/568-2312
Email: ann.feyerherm@pepperdine.edu

Ron Fry, PDW Chair
Case Western Reserve University
Phone: 216/368-2060 Fax: 216/368-6228
Email: rxf5@case.edu

Inger G. Stensaker, Division Representative
Norwegian School of Economics and Business
Phone: +47-55959669 Fax: +47-55959870
Email: inger.stensaker@nhh.no

Karen Jansen, Representative-at-Large
University of Virginia
Phone: 434/243-2309 Fax: 434/924-7074
Email: kjansen@virginia.edu

Ryan Quinn, Representative-at-Large
University of Virginia
Phone: 434/924-7735 Fax: 434/555-1212
Email: quinnr@darden.virginia.edu

Quy Nguyen Huy, International Representative-at-Large
INSEAD
Phone: +33 1 60 72 44 98 Fax: +33 1 60 74 55 57
Email: quy.huy@insead.edu

Tim Goodly, Executive Scholar-Practitioner
CNN Worldwide
Phone: 404/827-3800
Email: tim.goodly@turner.com

Jude Olson, Executive Scholar-Practitioner
Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company
Phone: 817/777-6700 Fax: 817/777-0949
Email: jude.g.olson@lmco.com

Andre Avramchuk, Student Representative
Fielding Graduate University
Phone: 626/381-6956
Email: arttooz@aol.com

Eric A. Goodman, Web Page Master
Westwood College
Phone: 303/691-5714 Fax: 303/691-5701
Email: egoodman@westwood.edu

Gavin Schwarz, Secretary/Treasurer
University of New South Wales
Phone: +61 2 9385 7278 Fax: +61 2 9662 8531
Email: g.schwarz@unsw.edu.au

R. Wayne Boss, Newsletter Editor
University of Colorado
Phone: 303/492-8488 Fax: 303/494-1771
Email: wayne.boss@colorado.edu

2008 ODC DIVISION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS: CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Ronald Fry
Case Western Reserve University

“The Questions We Ask” is the theme for the 2008 AOM Conference in Anaheim. Please use this opportunity to submit creative and challenging PDWs that explore how our field of ODC connects with this theme: how our questions impact development and change in human systems; the relationship between inquiry and change; the kinds of questions that matter most; the yet unasked questions we should be asking; etc.

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 and participative format. PDW sessions will be held prior to the AOM program from noon August 3 through the afternoon of August 5, 2008.

Note that PDW space is limited, so PDW proposals that would be of interest to several divisions or interest groups are encouraged, although a PDW can only be submitted to one Division. (Any co-sponsors will be determined after submission.) If you are interested in submitting a proposal for a PDW session to be sponsored by the ODC Division please use the form found at <http://meetings.aomonline.org/2008>.

Also please note that the new “rule of 3” applies to PDW submissions; no one can be part of more than 3 PDW submissions (this is in addition to the other rule of 3 for the Academy proceedings).

Proposals must include:

1. The Workshop Title
2. Full description of the workshop and activities
3. Time requirements of the workshop
4. Submitter (contact person) and Presenter(s) information, including name, affiliation, address, phone, fax, and e-mail for each person.
5. Division/Interest group sponsor being solicited and why

6. Suggested division or interest group co-sponsors

7. How you intend to create healthy audience interaction and participation

Please label the PDW file and subject line on your email in the following format: submitter name PDW ODC2008 to ensure your submission is properly directed. For example, FryPDWODC2008. **November 13** is the deadline although early submissions are welcome.

Send submissions and any questions you may have to Ronald.Fry@case.edu.

2008 ODC DOCTORAL CONSORTIUM

Frank Barrett
Naval Postgraduate School

Karen Jansen
University of Virginia

If you are studying change and are actively working on a dissertation, then submit an application to the all new 2008 ODC Doctoral Consortium! The ODC division welcomes doctoral students from all disciplines who are studying issues associated with change.

We have designed an innovative approach to the traditional consortium experience this year. The consortium includes a working paper workshop, where experienced change scholars such as Dick Woodman and Quy Huy will share their “work in progress” and work with you to make your research more rigorous, relevant, and publishable. There will be plenty of opportunities to make some great connections with leading and emerging change scholars.

The ideal candidate for this consortium will have finished his/her coursework and be engaged in preparing a dissertation proposal. Because space is limited, only one student per program is allowed to participate, but additional students from a given program may be considered on a space available basis after the nomination deadline.

To apply, please send an email with the following three documents attached to Karen Jansen (kjansen@virginia.edu) by May 15, 2008:

- A recommendation letter from your dean, department chair, or major advisor that verifies your (a) status/progress and (b) year in your school's doctoral program.
- A one-page bio summarizing the nominee's contact information, research and teaching interests, and publications. This one-page bio will be distributed among consortium participants
- A 3-5 page (typed and double-spaced) summary of the dissertation project, including the research question, rationale, hypotheses/propositions, proposed methods and results (if applicable).

(From Feyerherm, page 1)

on Tuesday morning to explore questions that we should be asking, are afraid to ask or would like to deepen. The panelists will provoke our thinking and then it will be the participants in the room who carry the questions further, and then reflected upon by our panelists. We are trying to inject the interaction that often comes with PDWs into the program itself.

Symposia

The ODC division is sponsor of one All Academy Symposium and six Showcase Symposia. In addition, there are 21 more symposia. ODC is lead or sole sponsor on four of those 21.

All Academy Symposium:

- “Inner and Outer Sustainability” Marriott Grand Ballroom E – Monday 10:40

Showcase Symposia:

- “Consultant’s Responsibility” Anaheim Convention Center 204 - Monday 8:30
- “Looking through the Lens of Positive Identity” Marriott Grand Ballroom F – Monday 8:30
- “The Shifting Landscape of Executive Education” Hilton Pacifica Pavilion B – Monday 12:20
- “Virtuousness in Organizations” Marriott Grand Ballroom F – Monday 2:30
- “Identity and Social Change” Anaheim Convention Center 204A – Tuesday 10:30

- “Organization-Level Trust” Hilton Pacific Pavilion B – Tuesday 10:30

ODC Sole or Lead Sponsored Symposia:

- “Emerging Consulting and Action Research Models: Paradigms, Skills and Applications” Marriot Platinum 2 – Monday 10:40
- “Distributed, Shared or Collective Leadership: A New Leadership Model for the Collaborative Era” Marriott Platinum 2 – Monday 2:30
- “Kurt Lewin: His Approach, His Legacy, Our Questions” Marriott Platinum 2 – Tuesday 10:30
- “Natives Questioning Western Narrative Ways” Marriott Platinum 2 – Wednesday 10:40

Paper Sessions and ODC Awards

Out of the 119 papers that were submitted, 85 were accepted. As in the past, there are three formats for paper delivery – visual paper sessions which involve posters displaying the work; interactive paper sessions that often cut across the divisions and paper presentation sessions for our division.

This year’s award winning papers were:

Best Overall Paper: Karen Jansen and Michael Judd, “Change-based Momentum and Trajectories: The Dynamics of Change Perceptions.”

Best Student Paper: Dave Bouckenoghe and Geert Devos, “Psychological change climate as a crucial catalyst of readiness for change.”

Rupert F. Chisholm Best Theory to Practice Paper: Marie Di Virgilio and James Ludema, “How Can I Help You Succeed?: Leading Change by Asking Questions that Generate Energy for Action.”

Best Interactive Paper: Richard D. Cotton and William B. Stevenson, “Perfect Storm: A Cross-Level Study of Transformational Leadership During Scandal-Exacerbated Decline.”

There was no award this year for best Action Research Paper, and we encourage submissions that adhere to that methodology (see the Summer 2006 *ODC Newsletter*, page 17, article by Hilary Bradbury).

ODC Sessions

There are some sessions which we encourage all members to attend – and all of those are at the Anaheim Marriott.

- Welcome Breakfast: Monday, August 11 8:00 am – Platinum 2
- Theme Distinguished Speaker: Monday, August 11 8:30 am – Platinum 2
- Interactive Theme Panel: Tuesday, August 12 8:30 am – Elite 3
- Distinguished Speaker: Tuesday, August 12 4:10 pm – Platinum 2
- Business Meeting: Tuesday, August 12 5:30 pm – Elite 3
- Social: Tuesday, August 12 6:30 pm – Platinum 2

Thank You!

This program would not be possible without help from a lot of people. I was assisted by Lori Simms, my graduate assistant at Pepperdine University. The ODC board members, current and past, were of immense help in assisting with thinking through issues and doing extra reviews. I am also grateful to a few people who helped the ODC Board members in additional reviewing for different categories of best papers – Ian Palmer, Henrik Bresnan, Jim Ludema, and Arran Caza.

Finally, a big thanks goes to those 26 people who volunteered to be chairs and discussants for the sessions AND to those who devoted time to reviews. There were 341 reviewers who did 598 reviews of papers and symposia. It is obvious that this program is a product of all of us. Thank you so much for being a part of the creation of the program. Now – come and enjoy the fruits of your labor!

Reviewers:

Bjørn Willy Aamo, Bodo Graduate School of Business; Gregory A. Aarons, U. of California, San Diego; Mona Al-Amin, Temple U.; Ronald Alexandrowich, York U.; Jeffrey Alstete, Iona College; Brad Altemeyer, South Texas College; John Matthew Amis, U. of Memphis; Greg Atchison, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical U.; Andre Avramchuk, Kaiser Permanente; Amine Ayad, Colorado Technical U.; Susan Faye Baechler, U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Aviation; Diane Bandow, Troy U.; Heather Christine Banham, Okanagan College; Frank J. Barrett, Naval Postgraduate School; Jean M. Bartunek, Boston College; Min Basadur, McMaster U.; Maria Graca Batista, Universidade dos Acores; Sandra Beach, Queensland U. of Technology; Karen Becker,

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(From Manning, page 1)

I have come to this view after years of performing large group interventions (Manning & Binzagr, 1986;

Manning & DelaCerde, 2006; Manning and DelaCerde, 2003) as well as conducting empirical investigations on organizational stress (Fusilier & Manning, 2005; Jackson & Manning, 1997; Manning & Fusilier, 1999; Manning, Ismael & Sherwood, 1981; Manning, Jackson & Fusilier, 1996a; Manning, Jackson & Fusilier, 1996b; Manning & Osland, 1990; Manning, Osland & Osland, 1989; Manning, Williams & Wolfe, 1988; Motowidlo, Packard & Manning, 1986) – often not knowing how these two research streams might be related. My recent focus on the emotions of change is in collaboration with my colleague David Tobey. We are just beginning to frame our agenda for research (Tobey & Manning, 2008) that is guided by a number of basic questions and assumptions. These questions and assumptions are what I would like to share.

Emotional Coalescence as the Key to Successful Change

Most recent change research has focused almost exclusively on the cognitive aspects of change. Some of my own research with colleagues has followed in this tradition (Weber & Manning, 2001). Even so, the change literature has identified emotions as important, although usually as a reaction to change with communication and sensemaking processes proposed as antecedents (for example, see Liu & Perrewe, 2005). One clear exception to this is the classic study by Pasmore and Friedlander (1982). Consistent with our view that emotions can overtake a group in a contagious way, Pasmore and Friedlander documented how an organizational episode of illness, injury, and extreme medical costs was corrected via a participative action research intervention that shifted the groups emotions from despair to action, thereby reducing costly incidences of work-related injury to almost nil. Pasmore and Friedlander explain their findings as a result of stress and mass psychogenic contagious reactions. The participative intervention shifted emotions away from the psychogenic reactions that produced injury and low motivation to an emotional coalescence that involved problem solving and active attempts to improve the work situation.

History is replete with unexplained cases of collective behavior that overtakes a community or even a society in an emotionally contagious way resulting in profound social implications (MacKay, 1841/1980; Colligan & Smith, 1977). Emotions, and the unconscious coalescence of collective emotions, appear to be the stimulating factor that, almost in an epidemic fashion, creates a contagious condition for groups to act in

unified ways. Some basic research exists in social psychology documenting emotional contagion processes in groups (Hatfield et al., 1994) as well as some beginning research by organizational scholars (Barsade, 2002; Huy, 1999). Coupled with the advances in neuropsychology and brain research, it is now possible to build a case for an emotionally based view of change that rests on the unconscious coalescence of emotions that overtake groups and focus their behavior (Tobey and Manning, 2008). Our intrigue is to begin to understand how we might harness these mass psychogenic processes in order to more efficiently create large-scale planned organizational change that is lasting and sustainable.

Some Beginning Questions, Propositions, and Assumptions

Our most basic beginning proposition is that emotions are the primary stimuli making change possible in groups and organizations. We focus on emotions as the input to change.

In a curious way, we believe there is already support for this position among OD practitioners. Two diametrically opposed prescriptive frameworks for change use emotive state as a key stimulus in creating planned change. The first approach, often called the burning platform approach to change (Conner, 1993), uses the analogy of the organization as a burning oil platform, which if immediate action is not taken will perish in smoke. Consultants using this approach create the emotion of fear and the need to take quick decisive action in order for the organization to survive. A burning platform intervention mobilizes negative emotions and uses this emotive state to convince and catalyze action.

An alternative approach, referred to as the common ground framework, focuses on positive outcomes that can result from sustained dialogue fostering a common ground understanding that mobilizes capabilities to creatively address the issues of the organization (Weisbord, 1992). Often using a large group conference method, this planned change intervention stimulates an emotional bond among participants representing system stakeholders in order to take action based on their common understandings. Again, like the burning platform framework, this approach uses emotions as a catalyst for change, mobilizing emotion to achieve creative action.

A second proposition is that rapid, massive, and long-lasting shifts in organizational behavior occur via

processes of emotional contagion. Neuroscience studies of contagion effects have isolated the brain mechanisms that underlie the social facilitation of behavior – the so-called mirror neurons (Jaffe, 2007). Tognoli, Lagarde, DeGuzman & Kelso (2007) provide research evidence that mirror neurons become activated by an arousal state and lead to physiological synchronization across dyads and teams. During conditions of emotional contagion team members increasingly exhibit similar physiological symptoms such as posture, breathing rate, vocal rhythms and inflections, etc. Hatfield et al. (1994) provide a series of laboratory studies built upon the supposition that mood is translated to others via processes of emotional mimicry/synchrony. They provide compelling evidence of the existence of emotional contagion from a variety of disciplines (social and developmental psychology, history, cross-cultural psychology, experimental psychology, and psychophysiology). In addition their program of research indicates that we have abilities to infect others with emotion, and that individuals have varying predispositions to the degree they are susceptible or resist emotional contagion. It is not a large leap to hypothesize that these contagion effects also likely align a group's reaction to and support for organizational change.

A third proposition is that positive emotional contagion will result in more sustainable and creative changes. This proposition has support from the work of Fredrickson (1998, 2001, and 2003) and Fredrickson and Branigan (2005) who propose a broaden-and-build theory that hypothesizes that positive emotions expand the scope of attention and thought-action repertoires. In contrast, negative emotions restrict ones search and focus attention on detail and specifics, thereby limiting creative options. In addition, Losada and Heaphy (2004) demonstrate that the ratio of positivity to negativity in team interactions is related to team performance. High performance teams have more positive ratios. We hypothesize that sustainable organizational change is more likely to result from positive emotions.

Critical Questions

Repositioning the central role of emotion in organizational change coupled with the implicit assumption that emotions must be managed or better yet mobilized to create sustainable change, raises many more questions than we currently can answer. How might emotions help us understand why change does or does not last? What makes the same change strategy successful in

some settings and not others? How does group change evolve from individual emotion — given that the former is an aggregation in some form of the latter? If change is contagious, are the two change paradigms, burning platform or the development of common ground, complementary or competing approaches to organizational change? Under which conditions might one approach be preferred over the other? How might positive emotion and negative emotion create similar and differential outcomes in planned change? Are both types of emotion needed, or might we gain greater leverage focusing on positive emotions? How does network centrality and the emotions these individuals possess influence emotional contagion processes? From a methodological perspective, how might we begin to research and understand the relationship between individual emotions, emotional contagion, and effective planned change? How might we measure meso levels of emotion in groups and organizations? We currently are developing a conceptual model to address many of these questions that also provides a framework for research and practice (Tobey & Manning, 2008).

Thanks

I would like to thank many members of the ODC Division for their support over the last five years. In particular, I owe a debt of gratitude to my special friends Ram Tenkasi and Frank Barrett, with whom I have had the privilege to work together on the Executive Committee. They have made these board duties a great deal of fun and any work much less onerous. In addition I am indebted to Chris Worley, Gretchen Spreitzer, George Roth, Ann Feyerherm, Ron Fry, Inger Stensaker, Karen Jansen, Linda Sharkey, Jude Olsen, Andre Avramchuk, and Jose DelaCerde, with whom I have had the honor to work closely. Additionally, Wayne Boss has for many years brilliantly performed his role as Editor of the Division Newsletter. His service to the Division is without equal. Eric Goodman has ably managed the ODC Website, and Gavin Schwarz has worked hard in his role as Division Treasurer and Historian. All deserve an applause for their generous efforts. It has been a great five years, and the Division is strong and in good hands with the continuing board leadership.

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BUSINESS AS AN AGENT OF WORLD BENEFIT

David Cooperrider
2007 Distinguished Speaker

It was perhaps 20 years ago, yet I remember my first meeting with Willis Harman in vivid color. Fresh out of my doctoral dissertation research on the idea of *Appreciative Inquiry*, I was taking the next big step, working on an interdisciplinary understanding of the relationship between images of the future and human action in the present, especially the relationship between *positive* action in human systems.

Meeting Willis Harman in his office in 1987 was like opening the doors in the mind. We all have those precious moments — a seemingly chance encounter with people who can only be described as guiding lights — and only much later do you realize the enormity of the person's impact and gift not only to you, but to humankind and the life of our planet as a whole.

Of course, this is not the place to go into a full display of Willis Harman's future-oriented analysis and forecasts. But a simple re-reading of volumes such as *Global Mind Change* and *Creative Work: The Constructive Role of Business in Transforming Society* reveals how stunning these books are for their prescient accuracy. Harman predicted the epic shift in consciousness now underway, and how someday the idea of mind-as-causal would transform the human sciences and our understanding of ourselves as active, deeply connected participants in the creation of reality.

However, beyond awakening us to the powers of “global mind shift” and the possibilities inherent in a new era of conscious co-evolution, Willis Harman had huge concerns when examining the negative patterns — the ever-multiplying signs suggesting that the modern world was at the end of its tether — of irreversible, manmade climate change; extinction at an horrific rate; deforestation and desertification; growing scarcity of fresh water; accumulations of toxic chemicals; chronic poverty and hunger in large portions of the world; the seeming inevitability of growing terrorism; the instability of the debt-ridden world economy; and the ever-present threat of nuclear accident or unimaginable war.

His analysis of the future, 20 years ago, was uncanny. And for Harman there was no question that every epochal shift holds explosive potential for great turbulence, chaos, and dangerously out-of-control systemic failure. So his real concern was the question of *how*. As an honest and disciplined future-oriented thinker, he knew that there could be no accurate forecast of future outcomes, but rather that one could, in a sense, begin to place bets as to where we might put our precious collective attention and energy if our aims were to single out sources of opportunity to make the transition moment as “salubrious” or healthy as possible.

After systematic observation and analysis as well as intuitive reading of all the signs, Willis Harman came to a major conclusion — reluctantly. He surprised himself and others with what he was about to declare. His conclusions would be challenged. Some people,

even friends, would be taken aback. But then he said it: “We need to spread as widely as possible the image of business as one of the great creative forces on the planet.” Rather than choosing a conservative skepticism with regard to the massive array of planetary challenges, Willis Harman decided to make a choice, as he put it, “to explore the optimistic hypothesis” that business — with the most adaptable organizational forms ever invented and with its agility, its innovative capacity, its potential for dignified and meaningful work, its reach and connective technologies, and its penchant for pragmatic entrepreneurship and continuous learning — could contribute to the well-being of many. “It is rapidly becoming clear what is not working; we have yet to form a vision of the global society that does work.”

This visioning — creating the new images of business and society for the 21st century — could become, as Harman once again prophesied, “a task of historic proportion.”

I had no idea how that first meeting with Willis Harman over 20 years ago would change my career. I came away from the meeting inspired and convinced that the best way to be involved with the profound global complexities of our day is to respond positively to the challenge: to create a better world than this planet has ever known.

With the Compass Set: A Call to Worldwide Dialogue and Deeper Inquiry.

Suddenly corporate sustainability is creating more buzz and debate than almost anything we have ever seen in the business world. Conferences, UN summits, new books, management schools, and the media — including major journals and magazines devoted to everything from economics to spirituality — are delving into the heart of the debate. The recent headline in one such magazine framed it in the form of a common question: “Will Big Business Destroy — or Save — the World?”

The questions we ask often set the stage for what we find, and what we find creates the context for our dialogues. Unfortunately, all too often the voices in the argument line up predictably on both sides of the question listed above, and the clashes seem endlessly to continue in a repetitive fashion. Especially perplexing is the ethnocentric multiplicity in views concerning business-in-society (imagine Osama Bin Laden and George Bush debating the question), as expressed across cultures and civilizations.

In many ways, the intensifying fire and ethnocentric heat in the debate around business-in-society was vividly symbolized not so much by the words business-and-society, but the equivalent words “world” and “trade.” Was it an accident that the 9-11 targets of terror were called *The “World” and “Trade” Towers*? The relationship between business in society — including business’s search for mutually beneficial advances that address the world’s most pressing global needs — has become, as Willis Harman predicted, one of the defining issues of the 21st century in which the future of business is literally a front-and-center matter of world affairs.

As important as the question “Will Big Business Destroy — or Save — the World?” appears to be, there is perhaps another more important question or larger framing to consider. For something as vitally important to us as the accelerated articulation of our highest visions of business and society for the 21st century as a whole human family (including our differences), how might we create not a polarizing ethnocentric debate, but a world-centric dialogue? How might we — in the service of accelerating our capacity to learn as a whole, interconnected, and coherent system — meet one another across civilizations, cultures, belief systems, nations, traditions, and worldviews not with frozen positions and answers, but with creative questions, a deep and sincere spirit of inquiry, and an openness to discovery, surprise, new knowledge, and sense of awe?

The posing of the central question for such an inquiry, it can be proposed, should not fuel hostility, polarizing debate, and a recycling of exhausted belief systems. Is it possible to envision a new kind of world-elevating public dialogue? Can we imagine an apt metaphor for an appreciative approach to global inquiry and accelerated world learning? Is global learning, in metaphorical terms, best seen as single-loop learning much like a *machine* or a thermostat that automatically adjusts itself to a proscribed status quo state? Is worldwide learning, perhaps in a more powerful way, to be accelerated through images of a *global brain*, where intuitive leaps and reflexive double-loop *learning about learning* are possible? How about images of the *web of life* or the metaphor of a universe that is a deeply connected *whispering pond* — an image that suggests, as Ervin Laszlo so scientifically and poetically describes it, that our every positive or negative thought, utterance, and relationship resonates widely, instantly, and eternally? We know that our metaphors matter.

However, whatever our generative images might be, the question remains: how might they inspire new ways to close the global societal learning gap — that is, the distance between the growing complexity of our own making and the lagging connection of our capacities to innovate, anticipate, and collectively synchronize in health-giving, life-giving ways?

Anticipatory Learning and Appreciative Inquiry at the United Nations

On June 24th, 2004 Case Western Reserve University announced the opening of its new Center for Business as an Agent of World Benefit, housed in an astonishing Frank Gehry building. The initiative’s first major project was to help design a multi-stake-holder learning process with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and 500 CEOs, civil society executives and citizens, and nation-state leaders including presidents and intergovernmental leaders. The Leaders Summit, as it was called, was the largest of its kind ever held at the UN. It was catalyzed by growing recognition that the world will not be able to realize its Millennium Development Goals — for example, eradicating extreme poverty by 2015 and creating green sustainable societies and economies — without tremendous innovation and a viral-like spread of new models, stories, or cultural codes/memes of enlightened business.

The session was inspired by the Secretary General’s desire to create a new pattern of learning through dialogue, and the approach of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) was selected. More will be said on this, but for now it is good simply to highlight that AI is a positive, dialogic process that is based upon a celebration of the Other, involving systematic inquiry that seeks to discover sources of strength, wisdom, and vision not simply in the self but in the Other, including the *positive core* of capacity latent in a universe of strengths that are inherent in the integral whole. AI searches for everything that “gives life” to living systems — groups, organizations, cultures, etc. — when they are most alive, effective, creative, and healthy in their interconnected ecology of relationships. In the language of today’s positive psychology movement and the new science of human strengths, it means adopting a positive or life-centric bias — seeking fresh understanding of dynamics described by words such as *excellence, thriving, abundance, resilience, or exceptional and life-giving*.

The Secretary General’s own words — words that have now catalyzed over 3,000 corporations to sign on

to the mission of the UN strengths-based Appreciative Inquiry approach when he opened the meeting this way:

Let us choose to unite the strengths of markets with the power of universal ideals. Let us choose to reconcile the creative forces of private entrepreneurship with the needs of the disadvantaged and the requirements of future generations.

Following the Summit, Kofi Annan wrote about the need to renounce our monological habits (e.g., talking heads and predetermined outcomes) and to embrace new inquiry-based and strength-based forms of whole-system joint creation. After the historic meeting concluded, he wrote to the Case Western Reserve university team:

I would like to commend you more particularly for your methodology of Appreciative Inquiry and to thank you for introducing it to the United Nations. Without this, it would have been very difficult, even impossible to constructively engage....

In essence, the core question of the meeting was not “Will Big Business Destroy — or Save — the World?” Instead the Summit focused on a cross-cultural search for the best in the Other in relation to breakthroughs, innovations, next practices, new solutions and higher visions of *business as an agent of world benefit*: “Where are the pioneers and surprising new leaders in your organization and culture? Can we locate the ‘golden innovations’ — stories of courage, strength, and elevated practice that are emerging and working successfully that, if further developed and applied, could vitally transform the world toward human, economic, and ecological well-being? What are your society’s best, most compelling visions of the relationship of business and sustainable society for the future we want? Can we articulate both the common ground and the higher ground, and at the same time come together to learn about and honor our special differences?”

Within minutes after Kofi Annan’s welcome, diverse pairs — for example, Lord Brown, CEO of BP, in conversation with Thulani Gcabashe, Chief Executive of South Africa’s ESKOM were invited to “mutual interviews” searching for everything of value worth valuing, using questions that helped establish center-to-center union to the best in the Other’s experience, organization, and culture. The room of 500 people was

instantly energized. Thousands of stories were being told, and like a special kind of time-lapse photography which can show us life bursting out and blooming right in front of our eyes, it was clear that a resonating tipping-point might well be underway. Stories were surfacing, one after the other, of architects designing green factories and buildings in ways that give back more clean energy to the world than they use. Bottom-of-the-pyramid strategies demonstrated how business can eradicate poverty through profitability. There were powerful stories of business as a force for peace and reconciliation in high conflict zones. Discussions proceeded on how to globally scale-up micro-enterprise innovations. Twenty of the world’s largest financial houses — holders of pension funds, mutual funds, stock exchanges such as Goldman Sachs, and Brazil’s stock exchange Bovespa — came together to issue an impressive financial report documenting the importance of managing the triple bottom line. Entitled “Who Cares, Wins,” it was loudly applauded by NGOs, governmental leaders, and business executives alike.

The power of this narrative-rich, large-group community of inquiry was said by many to be consciousness-shifting, perhaps in much the way astronauts experienced a shift when they stepped out into space and could see the majestically spinning globe we live on. Appreciative Inquiry is like this. It can take us, collectively, to the edge of the unknown and beyond. Inquiry is all about openness, curiosity, creative questioning, and its spirit involves what Whitehead once called “the adventure of ideas.” And it’s not about putting a superficial sense of hope on a trouble time. Indeed, hearing the stories from other cultures of the “impossible becoming possible” creates its own dislodgement of treasured certainties. Co-inquiry in the presence of such massive diversity almost always discloses views not quite like our own. So when we enter Appreciative Inquiry’s theatre, we are often — almost always — surprised with the ending. But then we are gifted not with solid certainty, but with something even better: the vertigo of new vision.

The power of the emerging innovations and next practices defied simple categorization into such familiar domains as business ethics, corporate philanthropy, or other non-strategic corporate social responsibility initiatives. Each positive innovation and breakthrough pointed to a pattern for the future erases the false dichotomy embedded in “the great trade-off illusion”: the belief that good business must sacrifice outstanding performance if it chooses to address society’s well

being. It became clear that what the world is searching for is an understanding of that mutual sweet spot, whereby from a business perspective every global issue can be seen as a business opportunity, where doing good and doing well are so naturally intertwined that there is no longer any talk of things such as corporate responsibility as if it were an appendage. And this is where, right in front of our eyes, the cross-cultural nature of the inquiry begins to create a new world-centric mosaic. A leader from Brazil said that we need a new language. “The word *responsibility* for the whole” is paternalistic and misleading, he remarked. “In our Brazilian view it is not so much *responsibility* for the whole but *intimacy* with the whole; this sense of intimacy changes everything.” Another leader added to this mosaic: “Every culture in history has established markets and businesses intended to make exchanges of mutual benefit, and so in Sweden we have a wonderful word for business. The Swedish word for business — ‘Narigsliv’ — translates literally as ‘*the nourishment of life*.’”

Indra’s Net

In the heaven of India there is said to be a network of pearls so arranged that if you look at one you see all the others reflected in it. In the same way, each object in the world is not merely itself but involves every other object, and in fact is in every other object.

— Hindu Sutra

We live in Worlds Our Inquiries Create: Why Not an Indra’s Net for Business as an Agent of World Benefit?

One of the most exciting visions shared at a subsequent follow-up event with 1000 people—The Global Forum on Business as an Agent of World Benefit—was an idea for a Nobel-like Prize to catalyze a *World Inquiry*. Each year there would be an ongoing and vast global search for those business and society breakthroughs that are generating the largest positive impacts during this, the great transition moment which Willis Harman said would certainly take us into “rough and uncharted waters.” The search, in the spirit of building a more secure scaffolding between epic eras, would be to lift up millions of stories that elevate-and-extend from the most positive ethnocentric contributions, to the new world-centric forms of awakening, to the gifts of the whole. The inquiry’s focus would be a search for *extraordinary business and society innovations that help to revolutionize the way the*

world eradicates poverty, restores the biosphere, and creates global understanding and peace. And speaking directly to the language of business, the aim of the world inquiry would be to demonstrate the integral hypothesis that the universe is connected, correlated, and coherent; therefore every global issue of our day is truly a business opportunity that provides new sources of top-line innovation as well as new magnitudes of purpose, meaning, and value. Sustainable value creation is not just good for the world; it also represents the business opportunity of the 21st century.

The architecture of this World Inquiry, under the leadership of Ron Fry and Nadya Zhexembayeva, has just been through its prototyping and pilot testing phases, completed from the search mechanisms to the digital stories which can be shared instantly everywhere with the click of a button (www.worldinquiry.org). Catalyzed by Case Western Reserve University’s Weatherhead School of Management and a growing open-source network of partners worldwide, the World Inquiry offers new ways for people to share stories of exceptional business and social practices; connect and conference with one another; experience each other’s talents; and articulate anew—from the local to the global—a 21st century vision of business as an agent of world benefit. In a simple process, people download powerful Appreciative Inquiry questions, adapt and co-create new ones, and interview for astonishing innovations. The method’s objective is to tap the positive potential of Appreciative Inquiry as a way of mobilizing millions and millions of face-to-face conversations with business leaders, visionaries, students, scholars, social entrepreneurs, thought leaders, and wisdom companions including children, wise elders and spiritual teachers; and to link these to the original potential of the internet as a medium that inspires world-centric creativity, connection and coherence, and worldwide education as a whole.

Suddenly the image we have been asking for—for the world inquiry into business as an agent of world benefit—is right here. The metaphor for the kind of global learning we need flashes across the mind’s eye: it is the image of Indra’s Net. It’s about the ancient Buddhist story of the universe that describes the cosmic web of inter-relatedness extending infinitely in all directions. Every tiny intersection of the vast intertwining net is set with a glistening jewel, in which all parts of the whole are brilliantly reflected. And in our image, it also involves a “learning” dynamic, spontaneous and instantly local and whole, compelling

each jewel to transform in and through a reverberating amplification of “strengths upon strengths” of all the other jewels...supraliminally (faster than the speed of light) there is a remarkable mirroring and merging, a connected and coherent whole, sparkling and glistening — and it encircles our blue planet with the purest appreciative intelligence we are capable of extending.

It is an image of a World Inquiry that is coming alive right now.

BOOKS BY ODC DIVISION MEMBERS

2004-2007

David S. Boss
Babson College

Matthew L. Sanders
Utah State University

In an effort to continue measuring the research productivity of ODC members, we have compiled the following list of books from January 2004 to December 2007. This list represents an exhaustive search of the Business Source Complete and PsychINFO databases using the name of each ODC member as the criterion for an author search. This list is presented in alphabetical order with one entry for each book.

We recognize that despite our best efforts, this list is certainly not comprehensive. While there are many reasons for this, there is one worth mentioning. Some common author names made searches more difficult, and at times it proved impossible to determine for certain which books belonged to ODC members. In all cases, we erred on the side of caution. If you know of any books that have been omitted from this list, we request that you send those citations to the editor (wayne.boss@colorado.edu), and he will include them in the next issue of the *ODC Newsletter*.

Adams, John; Khan, Hafiz T. A.; Raeside, Robert; & White, David. (2007). *Research methods for graduate business and social science students*. New Delhi, India: Response Books/Sage Publications.

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Please address all correspondence to:

R. Wayne Boss
Academy of Management ODC Newsletter
Leeds School of Business
Campus Box 419
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado 80309
(303) 492-8488
Email: *wayne.boss@colorado.edu*

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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 return them to the editor at *wayne.boss@colorado.edu*.

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1. Do you have any comments that you would like to share with the Editor (comments on articles from the last issue, comments on this issue, suggestions, etc.)?

NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

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.)
