

FUTURES

BULLETIN



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Learning from the Litany of Death:

Using Deep Futures to move from Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* to Participative Governance

On numerous occasions over the past decade a perplexing situation has presented itself to those interested in public policy, administration and governance in general: that is well-intentioned public attempts to address serious social dilemmas on occasion end up worsening the dilemma. In other words, what is achieved is the reverse of the original intention. The Australian Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (ADIC) is one such instance. Others include ongoing police corruption in spite of integrity squads and continuing corporate failures in spite of large public watchdogs.¹ Through the decade of the implementation of the Commission's recommendations, we have experienced what may be termed 'results inversion' - a phenomenon whereby what is produced is the reverse of the original intention.

Post-Royal Commission, some statistics appear to have improved. Over the past three years, in the State of Queensland, Australia, no Indigenous prisoners have died in gaol. However, rates of incarceration (broadly defined to include detention centres and the like) have remained high, and a number Indigenous people have taken their own lives in youth and other detention centres. Further, some male prisoners now located in prisons nearer their homelands and separat-

ed into their home geographic community within the prison choose not to return to their communities at weekends as they know what will happen in terms of violence and alcohol.

The issue has moved to the home communities of the prisoners. Here levels of violence continue to be significant, with the associated problems of alcoholism, domestic violence and, tragically, suicide.

By Paul Wildman

This paper argues that if the Terms of Reference of the Royal Commission had incorporated this broader view of custody, which would have included host and prison communities, then the present claims that 'deaths in custody have been reduced' would be seen as highly inaccurate. An examination using this broader interpretation of custody would reveal that deaths overall in goals and communities have actually increased.

The Structure Thieves

This perspective asserts that within the conventional approach to jurisprudence, conflicts ought to be viewed equally as the property of the victim and the perpetrator, not as simply the sole property of lawyers and state. These latter groups function in a sense as 'structural thieves'—preventing ownership by those directly involved through the tendency toward over-professionalisation,

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- Bishop responds to Slaughter
- Futures Education reviews
- Ideologies of Futurists (Part 2)

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EDITORIAL

CHRISTOPHER B. JONES

It has been a busy first year in the Houston Secretariat office: establishing the office itself, getting supplies, equipment, and accounts set up; establishing procedures and training volunteers and interns; cleaning up and updating the membership database; following the QuarkXpress and Futures Bulletin learning curves; and, struggling to do this within a cumbersome bureaucratic university environment. We also devoted some time and energy on updating and transferring the website (now at wfsf.org). Then the Kure 18th World Conference planning and organization has absorbed much of our energies over the last few months.

I wanted to thank the many folks who have helped make this happen: Wayne Pethrick, Susanne Clark, Dina Supple, Glenn Hough, Alexandra Montgomery, Anne Boysen, Keith Poster, Jeremy Mancuso, and Gatha Whitney. Countless others have contributed materials and effort – for example in quarterly mailings. Thank you all.

It is an exciting time for the WFSF and futures studies/research as a field. There are pressures to professionalize and diversify, to unify and diverge, to be both aca-

demic and applied, to be normative and to be more objective, and to try and change the world—or at least our small parts of it. The debates will rage on about the hegemon and its arrogance, about American (that is USA-American) FS cultural hegemony, and about a myriad of issues and challenges ahead. Meantime, the pace of life seems to accelerate for many of us. More and more to do and less and less time to reflect on these swirling eddies of patterns amidst the chaos... I hope that this journal is one place where you can take a few moments to consider some of these questions and act on them with more reflection and wisdom.

One of the peak developments in international futures studies this year has been the emergence of a new kind of deep-structure analysis—causal layered analysis—addressed in Dr. Paul Wildman's lead article. You will also see this is a topical point in the continuing discussion in Part 2 of our series on futurists' ideologies. Peter Bishop's reply to Rick Slaughter will no doubt resonate with many North American readers (and others). We'd like to hear from some of the rest of you, too.

LEARNING FROM THE LITANY

continued from page one

producing in the long run what has been called 'victors justice'. Such victors justice is invariably after the crime, even crimes, against humanity have been committed and then involve tortuous costly and lengthy trails by the jurisprudential elite 'victor' usually of another member of the power elite about case by case instances of murder. This cavalcade of horrors has sickened many of us with the inability of conventional jurisprudence to act pre-emptively with the oppressed.

Almost all individuals and communities have become affected by crime.

As a society, a broader 'victims justice' approach to jurisprudence is required and is outlined in Table 2, below. Such an approach maintains that we need to recreate social and legal conditions, which promote the ownership of crime and conflict. Increasingly, crime has become particularised, segmentalised and colonised by a small body (made up, ironically of a growing number of individuals) of experts.

Often, victims and perpetrators alike are not even required to be present at legal proceedings. When they are present, they are coerced by professionals into giv-

ing evidence rather than telling their story. At a recent conference relating to reparations for Aboriginal Stolen Generations (Moving Forward, August 2001), delegates canvassed the option of having the use of lawyers restricted if not eliminated in any future reparations tribunal hearings. They cited the failure of court cases to date and the emotional distress adversarial litigation caused, and emphasised that the 'bigger story' including that of the victim, needed to be told.² Current legal proceedings tend to treat the victim as of little interest and the offender as an object.

As Christie argues, this present or 'archaic' paradigm of criminology loses sight of the conflict, as issues become embedded in personal defects, social handicaps and expropriated through professional protocols.³ The new criminology also loses sight of the victim as crime is focused on the perpetrator, through, for example, 'the three-hits-and-your-out' approach. Crime is thereby reduced to a matter of technical and structural relations requiring minimal understanding of the perpetrator or of the impact on the victim and community or vice versa. Such conflict however, when owned by those directly concerned, for example through mediation, can come to possess significant potential for citizen participation and a sense of collective ethics.

Christie argues for an approach relying on generalised experts in the broader community with a solid base outside the crime control system. These people could facilitate social participation and help both victim and perpetrators own, learn from and participate in conflict resolution and anticipate ways of 'rehabilitation' that do not manifest such conflict. Such an approach could have benefited the Royal Commission and ultimately blended with reconciliation deliberation and strategies coming later in the 1990s.⁴

The Politics of Implementation

Causal Layered Analysis is based on the view that the way one frames a problem eg. the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody problematic, and views its causes ultimately changes the resultant policy recommendations from the inquiry. In this instance the Royal Commission was seen to be about inefficient and insufficient custodial supervision. This then led to the solution whereby over 90% of the Royal Commission's 339 recommendations related directly to 'managing or controlling' the predetermined issue of custodial supervision.

Causal Layered Analysis, on the other hand, as a deep futures methodology, points to different policy outcomes via four different layers. For instance:

- ♦ The first layer is called litany, such policy analysis focuses on instrumental and immediate causes as evidenced in standard media reporting on events;
- ♦ While policy papers, funding etc. often ostensibly about underlying causes and funding, emerge at the second socio-economic layer;
- ♦ Developing interfaces between fundamental differences emerge at the third, worldview layer in ways of thinking or understanding, such as in Indigenous/non Indigenous ways of thinking;
- ♦ Finally, in the fourth layer, wisdom or meaning is derived from these fundamental differences and is often expressed through social myths, which are transmitted over time and space in the form of stories, songs and Dreamtime folklore.^{5, 6}

Policy analysis also have promotes citizen participation and deliberation. Acknowledging and recognising mistakes directly enables the development and trial of policies for their correction. This alternative also promotes the notion that citizenship includes learning to take responsibility for one's actions individually and collec-

tively, particularly in the context of social reciprocity.⁷ Consequently, without adequate consideration for the politics of implementation and the over-reliance on ex-cathedra instructions like edicts and changing procedures, the Commission itself ran the risk of becoming its own 'structure thief'.

Explaining Results Inversion

Let us concentrate briefly on the concept of results inversion by considering some examples. Such inversions tend to become blind spots in conventional inquiries. Examples include:

Emperor has no clothes: Most readers will recall the story of the Emperor in grand procession—dressed in nothing but underclothes (as he had been hoodwinked by the smart tailors). His coterie experienced a state of politically correct 'collective blindness'. It fell to a child, an outsider, intuitively and empirically smart yet ration-



ally and politically naive, to point out that the Emperor was naked - an instance of results inversion; namely, actually achieving the reverse of what one ostensibly set out to achieve. We see this in the warnings by the little people about the forthcoming crashes in World.com, Enron in Australia in HIH Insurance, Ansett Airways and so many others where the prescient 'whistleblowers' were not heard.

Not seeing the 'Big Picture': Most governance tends to concentrate on implementing the analysis/recommendations/policy decisions/compliance that flow from parliament, with minimal synthesis and trialing prior to implementation. This process often inadvertently gets caught up in detail and fails to develop deeper understandings of what is going wrong which effective co-ordinated responses require. Many, if not most, public sector/governance organisations remain chronically dysfunctional when it comes to synthesising innovative

responses within the broader 'Big Picture'/social context, so necessary for effective co-ordinated responses. As such, partial views of, and responses to, such Big Picture challenges tend to undermine what others, represented by different pieces of the big picture, are seeking to achieve. We so often in Governance and Public Administration take a small picture linear view more suited to stable contexts; whether this be large infrastructure projects such as dams that then cause siltation and become ineffective in a decade or the very topic of this article Indigenous Deaths In Custody. Nowadays however with turbulent environments and ongoing system instability we need to take a system dynamic that includes bigger picture patterns and understandings deriving from chaos theory.⁸

Forgetting the tough nuts: Today homelessness, unemployment, child abuse and crime are trenchantly embedded in our social fabric, yet many of our responses



es are effectively little more than rhetoric, adding yet more procedures and laws. Indeed, as the current crop of court actions by disaffected members of the public who as youth were institutionalised in religious or state children's homes indicates, the State and its agencies have been shown to be instigators of child abuse. It is as if we accept a form of collective structure theft when it comes to acknowledging our publicly produced parade of horribilia.

Playing it by the book: All the standard rules were followed—few challenged the conduct of the Royal Commission, the way they were established or their underlying assumptions. Indeed, these Commissions were, by and large, praised. Similarly the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody was conducted 'by the book'.

Don't worry it's someone else's problem: How many times have you heard the saying 'they should do something about it!'. As indicated above our jurisprudential system tends to be a structure thief, and through the agency of professionals, reduces and often removes our ownership and ability to understand of many issues.

Yet as we will see below, each response had the seeds of its own failure embedded in its design and structure. In other words, they revealed their own 'results inversion'.

The Existing Method of Public Inquiry

The following Table (1) outlines the conventional approach to establishing a public inquiry. What characterises conventional approaches, in line with the steps outlined in Table 1, is that: (a) the inquiry is generally undertaken quickly eg. several months, (b) it is isolated

from the day to day context in which the problem first arose, (c) prescriptive bureaucratic 'black letter law' type recommendations are issued (usually without trial in the day to day context) that validate only one option for action and, (d) there is little or no exploration of alternatives via trials, microworlds and pilots eg. see steps A3 and A4 below. Further if 'results inversion' occurs - steps B2 and B3 Post Inquiry, that is achievement of the inverse of the desired outcome, few take notice because now it has become a press 'passé' issue and the structure to allow

ownership at cause has been stolen from the generation of victims experiencing the major system failure.

Maintaining a Holistic Perspective: A Proposed Approach to Major Systems Failure Events

In conventional inquiries, the whole historic paraphernalia of such inquiries is endorsed without questioning the memes that produce them. Design assumptions in an inquiry include its design; its terms of reference, rules of evidence and so on; the integrity of those undertaking the inquiry; the inquiry itself; its prescriptions; and the veracity of the inquiry's sponsors. Consequently politics of implementation are often not incorporated into the inquiry process proper.

Such regulations and procedures are often intended to control people, yet Deming shows us that only 20 per cent of failures in systems come from front line people, 80 per cent arise from management and structural

Table 1: Design of the Existing Reactive Model of Public Inquiry

<p>Provoking Issue - Aboriginal Deaths in Custody - major public system challenge</p> <p>A Inquiry Proper</p> <p>A1. Establish the Public Inquiry & its terms of reference</p> <p>A2. Identification and presentation of facts and figures</p> <p>A3. Derivation of the key cause leading to a diagnosis</p> <p>A4. Prescription—Recommendations from inquiry/judiciary</p>
<p>This is followed – B Post Inquiry - by:</p> <p>B1. Implementation by bureaucracy/public administration</p> <p>B2. Bureaucratic reification via. forward Public Administrative Planning - from the recommendations (at present) towards the diagnosed preferable future embedded in the inquiries recommendations</p> <p>B3. Further reliance on the validity/correctness of this diagnostic and prescription</p> <p>Exit State: System improvement or further system failure ie additional Aboriginal Deaths in Custody</p> <p>Source: Paul Wildman, Mar 2002; 9</p>

Table 2: Designing a Participatory Model for Public Inquiry

<p>Inquiry Proper Design: Phases A - C - inc.</p> <p>[A] Preparatory work [Step 1 Table 1]</p> <p>(Ongoing) Issue Development - the issue, system and inquiry design using a technique for getting to layers of causation through strategic questioning - broader than in Table 1 5, 8</p> <p>[B] Inquiry [Steps 2-4 Table 1]</p> <p>Participation in developing the Terms of Reference and the actual operations of the inquiry inc. Dialogue, Diagnostic, Cross terrain exploration and experimentation, action research, simulation, pilots leading to Prescription & Decision-Making</p> <p>[C] Implementation and system learning towards pre-emptive, protective and ethical/ethics defence system - not included in the conventional inquiry</p> <p>Source: P. Wildman¹⁰</p>
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causes. Simply put, systems of governance and public administration seem to lack (1) good design; (2) a commitment to quality even in terms of efficaciousness in use; (3) any progressive improvement system; and (4) an acceptance of Deming's 80/20 rule.

A model to address such 'results inversion' is outlined in Table 2. The model incorporates the four steps, which are proposed for an inquiry into major system failures in an existing system governance context. Section B, and section C are the most crucial and are lacking in formal inquiries of the conventional type (outlined in Table 1 above). The following inquiry method (Table 2) illustrates one way of seeking to address the critical 'stress failure points' identified in this article such as structure theft, lack of public deliberation, need for trialing or piloting various alternatives and policy mix options. Such an approach then incor-

porates both the politics of implementation and the need for continuous improvement.

Such an inquiry will take 12-18 months to undertake and can become part of a citizen learning process.

Using CLA to Move from Results Inversion to inquiries to Effective Governance

In formulating the 'terms of reference' for an inquiry, Causal Layered Analysis draws on how activity can most effectively be directed. This should be designed prior to major system failure and before an inquiry has to be mounted ex post into a specific failure. For example in the following tables (Tables 3 and 4) Causal Layered Analysis is used to illustrate this by showing how a particular 'type' of inquiry may be designed beforehand to engage the specific layers of causation. Proposals for War Crimes Tribunals and World Courts

Table 3: Comparison of desired and actual distributions of effort, according to the four layers of Causal Layered Analysis, for various inquiries*

Causal Layered Analysis	Aboriginal Deaths in Custody--Actual Inquiry	Aboriginal Deaths in Custody--Preferred
I - Litany	60	10
II - Socio-economic	29	40
III - Paradigm	10	40
IV - Story	01	10
	100	100

Source: Wildman, Feb 2002; 10, 11 * Personal estimates

Table 4: Comparison of desired and actual distributions of effort, according to the four layers of Causal Layered Analysis, for War Crimes Tribunals **

CLA Layer	War Crimes Tribunal (WCT) Actual 2	Preferred WCT
I - Litany	80	20
II - Socio - Economic	10	25
III - Paradigm	05	50
IV - Story	00	05
	100	100

Source: Wildman Feb 2002; 2

have increased especially since September 11th, the need for them of course predates this terrorist event however it does have the effect of focusing our minds on the reality that it is not multilateral 'rule of law' that governs our responses to such major system failures as the attacks on the World Trade Centres but as Inayatullah says unilateral 'power and strategy' i.e. Nation State politics.¹² Notwithstanding the improvement such global accountability would bring unless such court inquiries focused on the right hand column of Table 4 in their design they run the risk achieving the same 'reverse' outcome as the Australian Aboriginal Deaths In Custody Royal Commission has achieved.

Concluding Comments

This article has sought to identify and explore aspects of an all too common modern phenomenon, that is, governance and public administration systems, which result in the reverse of original objectives. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody provides a disturbing insight into such reversals and even more disturbing, a look into the dark side of current governance and public administration cultures. In response to this perceived problematic, a strategy in the form of a four-step process for effective governance was outlined in order to reconfigure the public inquiry process to address structure theft and help prevent results inversion.

The four categories of the Deep Futures methodology Causal Layered Analysis were used to determine the actual and proposed efforts. In this way, design energy can help ensure that inquiry effort is directed to the most appropriate layers/areas of concern. More to the point, if such methodologies can be embedded into the administrative process itself, we can start to move from an ex post inquiry to participative governance that can help us anticipate, identify and address imminent system failures.

For instance to introduce a serious futures governance dimension an Aboriginal Council of Elders (which in Australia would be male and female) could start at CLA Level Four and work up with the conventional inquiry system implementing (and contesting) the results from Level 2 up i.e. resourcing and applying. Further War Crimes Tribunals and Crimes Against Humanity hearings viz. Table 4, could likewise run a parallel process whereby conventional inquiries would start at Level 1 and work towards Level 3 while at the same time a 'deep peace' approach would start at Level 4 and work up.

Reconciliation calls for us to learn and at the very least enact this lesson from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

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Thoughts from an American futurist... A Response to Richard Slaughter's "The Role of Critique in Futures Work"

(*Futures Bulletin*, August 2002)

The expressed purpose of Professor Slaughter's article is "standards and quality control." These are noble, indeed necessary, goals in the emerging profession we call futures studies.

Unfortunately, I believe that Professor Slaughter overstates his case and, in the process, condemns most of a nation's futurists to the nether world of "diversion and entertainment." He says, "Futures work that avoids this engagement [with Critical Futures methods] is largely without value. It misses the 'main game' and is not to be taken seriously." Such is his critique of "the dominant American empirical tradition." He later describes this tradition as "superficial, 'pop', mundane and stereotypical."

Even American futurists might agree with the spirit of Professor Slaughter's critique, though I disagree vehemently with its depth and scope. Uncovering and challenging assumptions about the future is the heart of our craft and, therefore, perhaps the most important skill that we practice. I would not go as far as Professor Slaughter does, however, in claiming that discovering individual and cultural assumptions is more important than documenting the state of the world through empirical research.

Western empiricism is rooted in 16th century Europe when intellectuals first took observational data seriously, overcoming myth, superstition, and philosophical speculation. That was a good thing, in my

opinion--checking inner beliefs with empirical data. As with many good things, however, empiricism and positivism were taken to an extreme in the hope that we could rid knowledge of all bias, prejudice and subjective error. The empirical approach

reached its apex among

By Peter Bishop

European Positivists at the turn of the last century. Since then, the hope for complete objectivity has vanished due to many 20th century developments like quantum mechanics, Freudian psychology, existentialism and post-modernism. I think we can all agree that overcoming subjective error is a good thing though we now know that observations are a joint product of externally derived sensations and culturally derived assumptions and that, therefore, we cannot separate observers from their observations.

But let's not go to the other extreme. In reminding us of the importance of the inner world, Professor Slaughter makes the same error that the Positivists made, except in the opposite direction.

Professor Slaughter overstates his case and, in the process, condemns most of a nation's futurists to the nether world of "diversion and entertainment."

Statements like...

- ♦ "[The] inner precedes [the] outer..."
- ♦ "We can know nothing much about, do nothing much in, the outer world without the prior achievement of a highly organised inner world."
- ♦ "These [outer worlds] overlook the inner

worlds of human knowledge and ingenuity from which they spring and out of which they are largely constituted."

♦ "The latter [outer] looks pretty thin without the former [inner]."

Without critiquing each of these in turn, collectively they represent a one-sided view of the relationship of the inner and outer worlds. One could just as easily say that believing too strongly in one's subjective world is equally erroneous and potentially even more dangerous. Weren't many of the horrors of human civilization perpetrated by "true believers," people who had lost all "objectivity" in the pursuit of their inner truth? Just as the inner balances the outer, so the outer needs to balance the inner.

Thus we come to the other major point of Professor Slaughter's critique of "the American empirical tradition." Slaughter places the locus and the blame for unbounded empiricism in America, forgetting of course that empiricism is the product of a rich tradition: Greek, Arabic and European before coming to America. I will admit that America places greater stock in empirical data than most other cultures do. In my graduate school days in sociology, we called it "dustbowl empiricism" compared to the more historical and philosophical traditions of Europe. In fact, that is one reason that I am not a mainstream sociologist and that I find futures studies a more balanced discipline within which to understand the structure and dynamics of society.

But to lump all American futurists together with "superficial 'pop' concerns," to have our work treated as "diversion and entertainment" is to belie the very tradition that Professor Slaughter advocates, namely that one should not stereotype. True, he

exempts a chosen few from this critique, but if he is not anti-American, as he claims, why are all his critiques of American products or of the Millennium Project, a U.N. product headed by two Americans? Is there to be no critique of Islamic fundamentalists, Hutu warriors, Chinese Communists, or does critique only apply to the current hegemon. Why is Sardar and White's book *Why Do People Hate America* so courageous when everyone, even American futurists and increasingly the American public, know that U.S. policy is self-interested, unilateralist and ultimately destructive of both natural and cultural resources around the world. They didn't have to "carefully peel away the layers of self-understanding (and self-deception) upon which the US is founded" to know that. You can find that in most American publications today.

But, of course, I would not know those layers because I am an American futurist.

Weren't many of the horrors of human civilization perpetrated by "true believers," people who had lost all "objectivity" in the pursuit of their inner truth? Just as the inner balances the outer, so the outer needs to balance the inner.

I therefore must be unaware of my own "hidden realities and commitments." I am presumably not "fully conscious of my immersion in, and debt to, particular cultural resources." Guilty as charged. But is that a purely American trait or is that part of the human condition. Blessed as we are with the incredible power to know, we suspect knowledge at the same time because we do not know how much of what we know is colored by what we do not? Professor Slaughter implies that he and his colleagues have transcended this problem, that they have come to a plane of understanding in which they can "peel away the layers" for others because they have already peeled away the layers for

themselves. But untested, secret, subjective knowledge is just as dangerous, if not more so, than the dangers of empiricism.

So let us return to the quest for balance. True, empirical knowledge exists within a cultural context that is usually unknown and unnoticed. At the same time, subjective knowledge is distorted by inner needs and that same cultural context. Either without the other is a perversion, and a dangerous one, because it gives those with power the right to assume a superior position. I hope that Professor Slaughter and other critical futurists do not believe that, but his article comes dangerously close by assigning primacy to the

"inner over the outer" and by implication to those who know the inner rather than the outer. While none of us have much power in the world at large, we do have an enormous influence over the foundation of our emerging field. One-sided statements create camps, each claiming a unique access to the truth. Let's instead strive for balance which, as much as I understand it, is the core of Wilbur's distinctions between the inner and the outer, the subjective and objective. Let's not therefore assign primacy to either one over the other.

Peter Bishop, Chair
Studies of the Future
University of Houston-Clear Lake

Rejoinder: A Response to Peter Bishop

I want to sincerely thank my colleague Peter Bishop for responding to the piece on critique. We both want to see FS develop. We also agree that I was addressing a real issue. Peter asks why I critique American work. That's easy. It was a formative tradition. But it is now holding the field back. In brief, futurism, American-style, has been superceded. With a handful of honourable exceptions Futures Education failed to 'take' in schools; equally, advanced Futures enquiry remains absent from most universities. Fragments of FS methodology (especially scenarios) have been co-opted by Hollywood, commerce and a few government instrumentalities. But where in the US of A can one find high quality Futures work in the public interest? With, again, some notable exceptions, old-style futurism helped to get things started but then failed to provide leadership just as it failed to understand the grounding and validation of

its own purposes. The upshot? Not that those working in other traditions should be privileged or claim special powers. Rather, we urgently need to move on.

Are the inner worlds of people and cultures really 'prior to' their more accessible exteriors? No and yes. No, because an all-quadrant, all-level (AQAL) approach means exactly that – in a holarchical view no domain is privileged. Yes, because the outer world simply cannot be comprehended without the shared inner capacities and structures that enable it. Lewis Mumford knew that forty years ago. Willis Harman also knew it. Duane Elgin, Warren Ziegler and others know it now. But they are rarities. The great fallacy of American futurism has been to imagine that you can say anything of value without acknowledging the mutual interdependence of 'inner' and 'outer' perspectives.

I take issue with Peter on one key point. It's dead wrong to see 'inner' knowledge as 'untested, secret, subjective'. Now there's a stereotype I'd like to nail. Integral Futures work is

By Richard A. Slaughter

testable, open and, yes, aspects of it are 'inter-objective' too. Read Wilber. Understand his work in depth. Then take a fresh look at 'inner/outer'.

The article was about critique. But I also want to honour and support the multitudinous attempts at Futures work, applied foresight, that are occurring in many places. A new generation has arisen both within the US and elsewhere. We owe it them to move on.

When we point a finger at the world there are three fingers pointing back at each of us. That's a very big clue.

Publications Received

BOOKS

Tzikas, Stephen. *Greece: The Next 300 Years*. Cosmos Publishing, 2001.

Temple, Nick, Stephanie Wienrich & Retta Bowen, eds. *Future Perfect: A Compendium of the World's Greatest Ideas*. The Institute for Social Inventions. 1sr/SEP/2002

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SERIALS AND SPECIAL ISSUES

UNESCO: United Nations Year for Cultural Heritage Information Kit. 2002.

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Disarmament – Rethinking the Price Tag: A Methodological Inquiry into the Costs and Benefits of Arms Control. Susan Willett, 2002/5.

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OFFERING AND PROGRAMS

Universal Forum of Cultures: Barcelona 2004, Proposed Programme.

NEWSLETTERS

New Zealand Futures Trust: Future Times. Journal 2002, Volume 3.

Information Newsletter. The Geneva Association, Risk & Insurance Economics. International Assocaition for the Study of Insurance Economics. Geneva Association. The Four Pillars, Research on Social Security, Insurance, Retirement. August, 2002.

Missing Members

In the course of human events, some of our members have fallen through the cracks and have become lost to us. If you have any current information about these members, please forward it to the WFSF secretariat at: secretariat@wfsf.org

Caroline Janet Smith, Australia

Miki Ichiyanagi, USA

Brenda Hall-Taylor, Australia

John Engel, Australia

Mark Erik Duneman, Australia

Tessaleno Campos Devezas, Portugal

Marcus Bussey, Australia

Aqueil Ahmad, USA

Book Review

Lessons for the Future: The Missing Dimension

Alexandra Montgomery

Is Futures Studies an art or a science, a profession or a philosophy, a worldview or an academic discipline? A lot of time has been spent discussing and debating what futures studies is. Rather than tackle that issue straight on, David Hicks prefers to investigate the use of Futures Studies in education throughout his new book *Lessons for the Future: The Missing Dimension in Education*. Hicks makes a compelling case for the need for Futures Studies in schools, supported by an even deeper contention that futures-oriented thinking is vital to making meaning of life.

Relaying a great deal of research, his own and that of others, is the impetus of Hicks' work. Research on the implementation of futures thinking in education is thoroughly cited, along with the author's suggestions for further inquiry. Among the research Hicks himself conducted are a mini-ethnography of undergrads studying global problems, a participatory residential focus group grappling with personal and cultural conceptions of the millennium, a survey of youth attitudes toward global and local futures, and data from visioning exercises facilitated among social and environmental educators. For the most part, Hicks' professional interests lean toward the normative side of futures studies. *Lessons for the Future* documents the deeply personal and valuable process of exploring preferred futures, identifying sources of hope, and confronting fears about the future.

Interestingly, Hicks is able to provide more than adequate support of Boulding's concept of the "baseline preferred future". Despite age, geography and other differing variables among the groups he has worked with, investigations into desired futures produce a significant degree of common results. Hicks makes no claim to having final say on what people want, and points out the self-selecting bias inherent to doing futures research with voluntary, socially conscious groups (ie, the teachers and activists he frequently works with). He does, however, demonstrate that the image of the 'good society' exists in our collective

imagination and is expressed with remarkable consistency across groups.

But before the world can be a better place, more people (especially youth) need an introduction to futures studies. Hicks emphasizes the importance of integrating futures thinking at the elementary school level. He tells us how easily young children take to the imaginative exercises of thinking about the future; and how precise and real their fears can be about what is to come. Speaking specifically on uses of futures studies in geography lessons, Hicks asks teachers to decide between yesterday (twentieth century) and today (twenty-first century) in discussing global socio-political issues. Should lesson plans reflect "the agenda that the teachers themselves grew up with" or the "agenda that our students will have to live with"? It is easy to see which benefits them more.

Of course, as in many futures books, the *global problematique* is highlighted in Hicks' *Lessons*. His professional background in geography and personal convictions about environmentalism explain the preoccupation with ecological futures. Most important, however, is Hicks' principle that problems—environmental or otherwise—should not be taught without exploring possible solutions. Futures studies in education means more than analyzing the important, sometimes life-threatening issues; it means experimenting with the belief that something can be done, that problems can be solved.

Hicks's quantitative research among students shows that at some point in the teenage years, people become disenchanted with the future and pessimism about social problems soar. On the other hand, the data from teenagers tend to reveal a relatively stable degree of optimism about personal futures. Is this because, as Hicks states, "skepticism and despair among the young are sometimes belittled by adults"? Or, as his title suggests, is there simply a missing element in education? Our culture may be so convoluted that by the age of fourteen one's thinking about the future is simply ego-centric, a byproduct of our 'survival of the fittest' paradigm.

Hicks calls upon a number of research techniques to extract data from the sessions and projects he has run. Not only is this book a valuable source of information about the role of futures studies in education, it is a starter field guide on how to go about doing such research. Hicks proposes that the current “state of flux” surrounding qualitative research is a perfect context in which valid futures research may be produced. The rich and inspiring outputs of these studies confirm Hicks’ assertion that “a participatory process can enhance the quality of the data gathered and...can be a major source of hope in its own right.”

David Hicks’ work furthers futures thinking and research by creating practical applications of it in curriculum as well as uses in conjunction with accepted research techniques. Hicks invokes ethnographic fieldwork, emotional therapy, journaling, and most important to academic Futures Studies, revisionist (or constructive) postmodernism. Hicks agrees with many other contemporary futures practitioners who believe a relationship between Futures Studies tools and post

modern theory can improve our command of both types of thinking. What undergraduate hasn’t read postmodern theory (or Futures Studies, for that matter) then thought, ‘this is interesting, but what can you do with it?’ Futures methodologies can be called upon to realize desirable futures (such as sustainable lifestyles) out of deconstructed modernist legacies.

The overriding message of *Lessons for the Future* is the importance of futures thinking in order to make our lives more substantial. The best chapter is the first; Hicks’ “autobiography” is a testimony to the value of self-revelation in social research. The reader is treated to a slide show of imagery, flashes from a personal history. Hicks’ chronicles his own search for meaning, sorting out the most influential moments of his life, weaving the personal and professional together to show that there are signposts on the way to one’s own future, should one care to look. And there should be some recognition of such signposts on the way to our shared future, as well. One lesson to be learned is that the future is not as elusive as we think. It’s inside of us.

Book Review

Education for the Twenty-First Century

Anne Boysen

In his book *Education for the Twenty-First Century* (2002 Caddo Gap Press) William H. Boyer addresses the importance of challenging an unsustainable ideology propagating from social institutions he thinks are obsolete and pathological. With their current designs, institutions such as the school system are considered to be not only unfit to solve problems threatening survival in the future, but also causing and perpetuating these problems in the first place. According to the author the current educational system in the USA is more centered on teaching the skills of succeeding in the current system than on challenging their fundamental values or even existence. Democratic participation would entail that more emphasis be put on the latter. Students must be encouraged to redesign current institutions and can only do this if they are exposed to alternative sets of values and priorities.

Early in the book we are introduced to the phrase “worth and dignity of the human person” – a guiding principle the author uses throughout the book to assess to which extent institutions are ethical or not. (Note that value and dignity is limited to human persons – not human non-persons or non-human persons.) Claiming that scientific objectivity is frequently translated to neutrality, the author contends that current education tends to remain ethically indifferent. Under the veneer of scientific objectivity the scholar follows a research scheme that is concerned only by discovering truth irrespective of its social relevance. This dilemma inspires the author to use the principle of “defensible partiality” which is a deliberate form of ethically informed bias through which social priorities can be selected. By discarding the notion of neutrality, the author justifies a form of systematic selectivity, which leads him to propose a new scheme of social macro-priorities. These future priorities are contrasted with

what he assumes are the current priorities of existing institutions, within which he believes ethical considerations are absent or inferior. The proposed new priorities should penetrate every social institution; inform new ethical codes for society in general and curricula for education in particular.

The author does not only provide us with new social priorities, but also prescribes the means of their application. One of his suggestions is that social sciences adopt the medical schools' "humanistic bias" and promote knowledge that serves humanity instead of prolonging the "endless debate whether there is some philosophical basis whether life is good or bad before they get on with the work of curing the sick and helping people prolong their lives (p.157)". In other words, these ethical codes should form the a priori boundaries for research and education, which in effect directs academic attention to its application and not evaluation of its validity.

Teaching students how to not only adapt to, but also change institutions might be the most important leverage with respect to future planning. Generations of future leaders spend their time in school today. It is important that children learn about the world not only through their parents' eyes, but that they are also allowed to develop their own worldviews, visions and solutions to how the world may become better.

In this process recognizing social and environmental problems is probably the first step. In order to articulate future goals, we have to discover which current practices might threaten the sustainability of a future society. The author has obviously devoted much attention to these threats over the last few decades. He points to social and environmental phenomena that most people would agree represent challenges that have to be overcome. But instead of addressing these problems open-mindedly, he seems to be more preoccupied with confining future choices by condemning the "pathological" present and by claiming the rights of powerful but ambiguous phrases such as "justice" and "equality". This unfortunately curbs the prospect for a balanced debate, which could distinguish good from bad practices in the present, as well as good and bad aspects of the same concern. This approach seems to overlook crucial questions such as: "What are the problems that exist today *in spite of* and not *because of* current practices?" The ironic consequence is that by focusing most of the attention on disapproving present

ideologies he locks himself into the same "obsolete" controversy – representing the opposition at the other side of a one-dimensional dispute rather than looking beyond the present political turf and into the future. His prescriptions thus seem to be the mere negations of existing ideologies, or more precisely, of his assumptions about existing ideologies.

Already in the first chapter "Boyer's Conception of Reconstruction" we are introduced to the author's standard for ethical values, which is simply the reversed order of the priorities he presumes underpin Western developed nations today. In Boyer's view, a range of present institutions unite around a homogenous set of priorities that places economy first, social needs second and ecology last. By listing and reordering these priorities, he seems to make the assumptions that society is a function of a three-layered ordinal scale of conflicting values. The reader is thus led to believe that these values are inconsistent and that they can only be pursued according to a universal scale of priorities. When economy and human needs are seen as separate priorities, economic systems must be inherently deprived of human content. So when for example the market fails to distribute wealth equally (which might just as well occur when the market forces are repressed), one should conclude that market economics per se is illegitimate. When the assumption of a hierarchy of inconsistent values frames the debate there is very little incentive to test positive correlations between each concern. Consequently, the author's own priority list, which ranks ecology first, human needs second and economy last, seems to be informed by the very same dichotomies he presumes are pivotal in the world of outdated institutions. The only difference is the order.

If these priorities constitute the ultimate criteria for ethics, they must necessarily shape the boundaries for ethical future planning. One would thus assume that a first priority is an end in itself and not just a means to fulfill a priority that ranks lower. However in Boyer's scheme ecology ranks first "for the biological life-support system is a pre-requisite to everything else" (p.14). The highest priority thus is nothing more than a means to serve other ends, which is everything else (and ranks lower on his scale). This dilemma might arise from the attempt of fitting future concerns into an inappropriate scale, because elsewhere he seems to argue that all of the listed priorities are interrelated.

Addressing a number of complex problems relating to poverty, military armament, social oppression and substance abuse, the author seems to infer straightforward causal relationships without referring to sources that would support his hypotheses. Since virtually all maladies are presumed to be the effect of current systems, his argumentation appears to bring about some semantic contradictions. Besides motivating escapisms in the form of violence, rape and drug use, liberal capitalism is at fault for being ethnocentric as well as producing extreme individualism—behaviors that are usually seen as the darker sides of two intrinsically different principles, one rejecting the other one emphasizing commonalities within distinctive groups. The environment suffers as a consequence of the anthropocentric notion of human supremacy that tends to compartmentalize nature into race and species. “Justice” and “fairness” is nevertheless linked to the human *race* and species *centered* interest. (Italics added.) Again we are reminded that the concept of “value” is limited to whatever has the capacity of fulfill human desires or needs.

Where causal relationships cannot be found, he introduces the concept “negative causation” – an imagined causal relationship based on variables that cannot be supported by available data. Since for example war is absent between two states subordinate to the federal laws of the USA, but there are wars between sovereign states in the international anarchy, the absence of international law must be the cause of war in the world. His reasoning is that the existence of peace proves that war is not innate in human nature *and* that the existence of laws prevents war. One might wonder why he fails to mention the frequency of peace between sovereign states and civil wars within nation states, and how this may shed doubt on his non-empirical basis for assuming causation. The idea behind negative causation might of course be useful for developing hypotheses and for visioning. The absence of future data compels futurists to rely on this kind of reasoning to envision alternative futures, but as a statistical concept it seems like an oxymoron because statistic depends on (positive) data.

In Boyer’s preferred future academics conduct their research based on theories of social relevance. Academics today are considered to be oblivious to social relevance when they aspire towards value neutrality. Thus research is performed with less concern for society’s true needs, and may easily become com-

modities in the marketplace responding only to the highest bidder. Research that benefit society is then accidental, and not a result of deliberate planning. The author believes that to encourage social relevance research should be guided by the principle of “the worth and dignity of the human person”. His analogy is medical schools that are concerned with the application of medical treatment rather than dwelling on its underlying philosophy. What then is the author’s view on scientific innovations that are benefiting us today precisely because researchers disregarded the social codes of their own contemporary? Using the author’s own medical analogy, we know for example now that women’s anatomy is qualitatively different to that of men because somebody showed some interest in the “endless philosophical debate” which in the past where dominated by men who mainly thought the female body was just an (inferior) replicate of the male. Medical breakthroughs might thus have had more in common with pursuing knowledge as an end in itself because standards defining “worth and dignity” as well as social relevance at the time favored only half of humanity.

Is the medical field free of “endless philosophical debates”? Why then do we find some of the most intense social controversies in the world of medicine, such as the right to assisted suicide; the rights of a fetus versus the right of a pregnant woman; the life of the guinea pig owned by a laboratory versus the life of guinea pig owned as a pet? One might also inquire whether the medical field is a good example of a field with a more “human bias” than others for why are so many pharmaceutical companies more concerned with patent rights than saving lives? Why do HMOs have a stranglehold on doctors and patients? The list goes on... Socially relevant research might be desirable, but social relevance is itself a concept without universal meaning, and could curtail important discoveries which utility is appreciated only in retrospect.

By highlighting the need for formal and informal education in future related topics, Boyer points to one of the most important areas for the field. Shifting educational principles from obedience to participation would teach students not only how to do things right, but to do the right things. Facing the many complex and interrelated challenges threatening the future, these

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Uncut, Unedited and Not-Yet-Rated: Discussions of Futures Ideologies (Part 2)

by Richard "Kaipo" Lum, et al.

The following is the second in a three-part series based on selections from an online discussion elist that was initiated by Richard "Kaipo" Lum subsequent to an informal meeting of [mostly] North American futurists at what was called the Applied Futures Summit. The series is mostly "uncut, unedited and not-yet-rated" but otherwise Ready for Prime Time.

From: Richard "Kaipo" Lum
Subject: Report out on Applied Futures Summit
Date: Mon, 12 Apr 2002

Christian,

If I were to take a stab at summarizing the issues we've been discussing, I'd say there are at least 3 different, but related issues/questions, and I'd try saying:

1. What is the perceived difference (if any) between "applied" futures and other futures work (and what, specifically, is that "other")?
2. How do you define Normative futures work?
3. What do you see as the value and utility of futures work that is either more visionary in nature or specifically addresses deeper layers of trends and meaning? (and I'm pretty sure I'm not doing justice to this last issue)

And there is also the open issue that I think everyone is interested in discussing, the issue of how do you challenge a client to be more critical of the possible futures ahead and to envision more critical and inclusive preferred futures.

Anyway, that would be my offering for summing up the discussion threads we've been weaving together.

What do others think?

From: Christian Crews
Date: Fri, 12 Apr 2002

My view of effective future studies as taught to me by Wendy [Schultz], based on a systemic view of the field :

identify change—>critique change—>imagine alternative
futures—>envision preferred—>plan and implement
^—————v

(that is supposed to be an arrow linking the last one back to the first one in a system)

So a complete futures engagement with a client, community, government, etc, should encompass both imagine alternatives and envisioning preferred. While some of us may specialize in one area of this system, we do have a responsibility to our clients to frame that work within a larger context.

BTW - Wendy's got a whole list of tools that are used under each section and a visual schema that locates those tools over a contextual map - she calls it the futures fan. Very cool stuff - poor image jpegs are attached.

From: Christopher Jones
Date: Sat, 13 Apr 2002

Aloha All,

This has been a riveting discussion. It should be pointed out that the discussion about "normative futures" arose in

the meeting after the question of establishing/linking to the Association of Professional Futurists was put out on the table. To be sure, the stage was set by Andy's introduction of the Slaughter deep analysis of scanning (a la Wilber) and my attempt to introduce CLA. So, in a sense the conversation (here) has been confused because we have been discussing the possible dichotomies/spectra of futures work within an already broadened context (if that makes any sense).

Tom was my lightning rod for a sense of growing frustration with the shallow level of discourse in Seattle which I believe was attempting to "colonize" the meeting. The discussion of APF was particularly off-putting because I think that either intentionally or unconsciously (or both) it seemed to be directed toward establishing a legitimacy and hegemony (comments about APF certification of legitimate futurists) for APF over "applied" futures. I interjected my concern about the WFSF in relation to that development. Amara's? (and Bishop's) distinction was quoted about a presumed difference between applied and normative futures at that point.

Thinking about it after the meeting, I think that that was an attempt to legitimize APF and undermine the WFSF. I believe that the applied/normative distinction is an utterly false dichotomy. It assumes that applied work is somehow "neutral" and value-free. This is where Sohail's comments are apropos. Of course here in the US we have the luxury of assuming that our applied work is value-free, but is in fact just as normative as "visionary" futures. It just so happens that our embedded worldview coincides with the dominant structures (i.e., liberal democracy, capitalism, patriarchy) that have produced many of the tools of the "futures tool kit." No doubt it would do us well to use "exploratory" and "normative" (i.e., counter-culture, non-Western) tools more as or hegemony dissipates!?!?

The irony is that the WFSF has grown up over the last three decades and welcomes the deep and the shallow, the applied and the theoretical, the academic and the

non... It is democratic, but the WFS isn't and the APF appears not to be.

In any case, applied work can be at the service of ANY ideology or preferred future. Any "normative" futurist (I guess I am one) can do applied futures (I don't shove my philosophy down client's throats).

I think there is a very interesting political economy argument that has emerged here, too. Of course the APF will be born and will grow and will help many young futurists make a lot of money. But let us not fall victim to false arguments about us vs them, about normative vs applied, about good vs bad futures. APF will fill the vacuum that the WFS has failed to fill, and those North Americans who lack nourishment there will look elsewhere, perhaps to WFSF (if Rick and I do our jobs right), for food for thought and action.

From: Sohail Inayatullah

Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002

Yes, I would tend to agree here. There is a personal spin on all this. Indeed, Chris sent me the email in which he explained CLA at the seattle meeting. What I liked most about it, as that no one had every explained or used CLA like that before - clearly the Jones spin on it ie is using the pillars of poststructuralism (distancing, alternative pasts and futures, genealogy, etc) as the method itself. I look forward to trying that variant of CLA itself.

While it is partly true that clients only hear what they want to hear, I find many counter examples of that (perhaps then reconfirming the Bezold hypothesis that clients get people to that the need including those that disturb their routines). But partly - and this is open for more testing, verification - is that within the cla approach, the client's worldview is put on the board, but only as one of many worldviews. Their is comfort within the challenge. The key then is to articulate other worldviews and ensure that the client's understands these as possible drivers creating alternative futures. The second part of it is that

whatever the agreed upon product is at the end of the day, project, that has to happen, irrespective of the methodology and person. And the product could be to be challenged, to be different. However, more often than not the product is one of the levels, ie some clients want a new marketing strategy (government, ngo or business) and thus a new myth or metaphor, some a new tangible product and thus litany, and some want to see the world differently. Others really want a map of the future. Many desire a plan for monday morning. While I am to ensure that happens via visioning and backcasting, more important is that the planning approach is sensitive to changing conditions, ie anticipatory action learning.

I certainly don't think of the world/future within normative versus empirical and other similar divisions - they key appears to be integration and entering the levels where one is most comfortable (but ensuring that there is verticality and not post-relativism, ie power, definitional, military, economic, etc does exist). At least, that is how I try and resolve the dilemma between fact and value, empirical and ideational, etc, ie a both-and but depending on layer - empirical, systemic, worldview or myth, or whatever layer one wishes.

Lastly, where I have had the hardest time with CLA, indeed, the only place that was challenging (in the negative sense of the word) for me is in traditional Academia - not in postgrad seminars nor with posts, but with tough empiricists, who reject the notion of wv.

From: Sohail Inayatullah

Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002

Chris, Just beautifully put. WFSF is lucky to have you as SG.

My point is that yes there is a normative dimension but it is in the context of empirical and situated within a political-economy of worldviews (and Chris suggests below). There is as well an applied, which too is situated. Certainly an "ought" statement is different from a clear

cut trend line prediction, ie muslims will be in the majority in the US army by 2050 if current trends continue. However, all facts, for me, are situating within layers of system, wv, etc. And, within the applied, the futurist raises certain forecasts for certain purposes with a value-oriented universe. For example, I bring up this issue to challenge views that US foreign policy will not change over the next few generations. The best tactic - and the taiwanese know this well, for the palestinians, for example, is to stay put, suffer another 50 years, and watch the world change. the taiwanese know they are in a race between China's claim on world hegemony and the rise of the new technologies, globalization, global governance, etc, which will make nation-oriented power and analysis, if not moot, certainly far less, defining.

Given the analysis above, is a fact statement like "muslims in the usa army" really empirical or applied or sliding ever so slowly into normative. The forecast above is an obvious example. But my sense is that all forecasts exists in political worlds (in terms of defining reality).

Clients in corporations (and gov and ngo) now understand this, especially marketing departments, since they understand that their sales are largely dependent on their capacity to define value, especially as traditional and modernity worlds become increasingly porous.

And, again, language is crucial here. In one meeting with a Minister of Innovation, who was pushing bio-tech, I reminded him that there is 30-40 years of evidence correlating meditation with health, IQ, grades, social capital, so why aren't they pushing that in all schools in the state. Certainly there is some evidence for biotech - and more daily . as well, but one is for more normative, biotech, and the latter, meditation, far more scientific. So what then is the evidence base behind policy decisions?

This, I see as the utility and beauty of the futures discourse, challenging at many levels, and thus allowing new policy to emerge.

From: Andy Hines
Subject: RE: tipping point
Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002

May I suggest that Chris's email has us on a tipping point (thanks for your honesty, Chris), where we are either going to hang in there and work through some tough issues, or get frustrated, give up, and go back to where we were before this conversation started. I'll address two main points: APF as colonizer and normative/exploratory/client-based.

(1) APF as colonizer: I am all too familiar with the charge of being a "colonizer," actually "hijacker" has more recently been in vogue. (I hope we can have a sense of humor here). I think APF (assn of professional futurists) ought to be looked at very critically. I have been involved early on, left in protest once, and am back again, albeit with reservations. For example, we've asked, do we really need a formal association? Should we just self-organize like we did in Seattle? Alas, this leads to its own problems, as not everyone was invited as we wanted to keep the meeting small. (Net, the APF is by no means a well-oiled conspiracy looking to steamroller the field — we're having a hard time get a small organizing committee to agree on things).

I think it's fair to say there are growing numbers of younger or 3rd generation futurists who feel the existing institutions have not adequately addressed their needs as professionals. Partly, because the phenomenon of training younger people to be professional futurists is rather new. My only career, for instance, has been as a professional futurist — this is a different game. There are growing numbers like me, and others who are morphing into futures work at younger ages. One unavoidable development is that a lot of these people are from the Houston program — it's simply turned out the greatest volume. Also, since the group has started in N. America, we are largely N. America. Not for one second have I felt that any of us believes this should be or will be a N. American group. We are firmly committed to being global, but we

have to start somewhere. So, we've been sitting around the hallways of meetings like the WFS complaining how this isn't really what we're after — it's not helping us as professionals, blah, blah, blah. We have felt, rightly or wrongly that the WFSF likewise has not addressed the working professional's issues. So, we decide to stop whining and do something, hence discussions which have led to the APF. I can probably say this till I'm blue in the face, and some people still won't believe it, but the idea of APF is NOT to replace WFS or WFSF. It is to create a much smaller group to focus on issues relating to being a working professional futurist.

Largely due to the difficult nature of kicking off APF, all sorts of stories are circulating. I'll try to set the record straight. A group of 25 or so people met at WFS last year after hours to discuss APF, and one of the ideas that we adopted was, as way to raise some "seed" capital, we'd ask some folks to kick in \$1,000 or so, and then we'd recognize them as founding members. Sure, we needed the money, but it was also to demonstrate that we were serious. That's all. Unfortunately, that was an issue that got muddled as the organization had its growing pains, and we're still sorting out how to fix it.

I think it's unfair to say that we're in it to "make a lot of money." Most of the people I've been working with are pretty smart people, and smart people would not choose professional futurism as a way to make money. If you had been at the Seattle Summit, you would have been struck at the amazing similarity in how most of us ended up in futures work. Not a one of them involved seeing an opportunity to get rich — in every case it involved finding a passion and going for it.

I see the vestiges of an old argument that I think we're trying to put rest here, that is, a division between pure, noble normative futurists and corrupt, money-grubbing applied ones. Please, please, let's get past this, if we haven't done so already. I, for one, am willing to do whatever it takes to move us beyond this.

(2) Normative/exploratory/client-based

My apologies for muddying this up, with my attempt at creating a continuum between normative and client-based. When I went through the UHCL program in the late 1980s, we had a taxonomy of future's that included "client-based," to capture the idea of simply laying out the future for clients without interjecting your viewpoint. It's pretty clear that this is a bogus idea. Even then, we admitted you couldn't be objective, but you could admit your bias to the client up front, and keep it off the table. I agree with all the comments that this is not a good way to practice. I thought it would be useful to contrast with an extreme view of normative in which you actively pushed your point of view upon the client. I'm guessing we'd all agree that the truth lies somewhere in the middle.

What I was hoping to do was to make the point that normative and applied are not really on the same continuum, that is, you can certainly be a normative applied futurist. I think the proper comparison for applied would be theoretical or academic. It's been interesting to see that we have different views of what normative is.

From: Christopher Jones
Subject: Re: tipping point
Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002

Okay, I'll try not to succumb to a "sewer-level of analysis" (somewhere below Sohail's litany level!!!)... :-)

Thanks, Andy, for your thoughtful comments. I appreciate the clarity on some points re: APF and stand chastened — a little. I also appreciate your sense of humor and all. The truth is that were it people like you and Tom who were principally behind it, I would say "more power to you." The truth is that there are others (who I will refrain from naming) whom I simply do not trust who are also involved. So my com-

ments are more a reflection of my distrust of their "discomfort" with the WFSF, normative, exploratory, etc....

And hey, making money in the business SHOULD be okay at a certain level. I really did not mean to sound critical of that at all. That would be a wonderful development and might suggest that futures has a bright, golden future... That is one reason why I might even join APF at some point.

It is interesting about the \$1000 founders, but the perception/rumors have a kind of power (or corruption) of their own that should not be ignored...

I liked the joke about highjacking, but the colonization was palpable. It gets back to the Sohail/Galtungian analysis of the political economy/poststructural power of language. I could see it in the questions and discomfort with your/my methods presentations.

From: Tom Conger
Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002

I revisited Kaipo's original observation of the field as having an undercurrent of tension and the subsequent dialogue that tried to define or deny the existence of divisions. Here's my two cents worth.

There is a division in the futures field that creates tension, at least in the United States. Which "side" a futurist is on likely depends on the extent to which his or her worldview coincides with the dominant structures. Matterng much less if at all is whether the futurist is exploratory or applied; theoretical or pragmatic; shallow or deep.

For lack of better terminology, I'll call the two sides insiders and outsiders. (Ironically, all futurists probably feel like outsiders most of the time, even at meetings of fellow futurists, but that's another discussion.) Insider futurists have world views that generally coincide with the dominant struc-

tures; outsider futurists do not. Each type of futurist can be successful by any number of measures, including income, self-satisfaction, best-selling books, influence, etc. But the insiders, as expected, are typically more advantaged than outsiders, exacerbating the differences between the two sides.

I think that insider futurists sometimes use the term "normative" to describe outsider futurists, especially those who seek fundamental transformation (environmentally, politically, spiritually, etc.). In this sense, the more an outsider futurist's worldview differs from the dominant structures, the more normative they aware, and as the logic goes, the more likely they are to push an agenda or let their preferred future cloud their judgment. After all, "they" have a totally different world view to "promote."

If insider futurists used Jim's definition of normative futures — it's about raising ethical issues and acting ethically, or Kaipo's — it's about what should or ought to be — then the term wouldn't be divisive, yet it seems to be.

Now it's not as simple as business vs. non-profit. Clem's work with pharmaceutical companies could be as normative — in my decoded use of the term — as Christian's non-profit work in communities. But what keeps both of them as insider futurists, IMHO, is that their world view is close enough to the dominant structures that the insiders haven't "othered" them. I couldn't say the same for Barbara Marx Hubbard or Rashmi Mayur, prominent figures at WFS conferences. As I consider futures studies alumni from the University of Houston-Clear Lake, I think the staunch environmentalists are the outsider futurists.

Am I on to something or did I miss the boat?

From: Clem Bezold
Subject: Defining, using normative futures
Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002

Normative futures deal with the values of the user/client in better choosing and creating the future they prefer (using a variety of processes). Plausible futures deal with what might happen (and include a host of processes).

They are not unrelated.

At IAF we have evolved scenario construction to say that a fundamental dimension that any scenario set should include answers the question -- what would happen if a critical mass of players in this arena were successful in pursuing visionary ends?

I've come to think that as futures consultants to not ensure that looking at the plausible future includes the plausible dimension of vision (to not include scenarios that ask the client to consider what being visionary means) is to fall short of showing them an important range of future space.

We also do vision coaching for clients.

Often the failure to deal well with the future on the part of clients is a failure of leadership (inspiration, aspiration, and effectiveness). At one level as analysts (the plausible futures role) there are limits to what we can do about that. Alternatively as organizational consultants (a task that many of us play, even though many of us, me in particular, are self trained in this arena) we need to be aware of and assist clients in the vision/leadership dimension as well.

In the hand of leaders scenarios and vision are very powerful tools -- they are applied and normative. Some of you may know that the Gartner Group a few years ago did a report for its clients on change management for multinationals. The Gartner Group said that the large consulting firms sometimes could do effective change management for multinationals, but that there was a dozen small firms globally

that consistently do it well. We were one of those twelve. This is a tribute to some of our partners, but also to our ability to include normative futures work in applied futures (I would define "applied" as any futures work done for an organization or community). We don't sell ourselves as organizational change consultants -- we are futurists. Most of the time when our clients come to us they want forecasts or scenarios. We often end up with some aspect of visioning or vision/aspiration development by the time we are finished.

In this context I think the futures/foresight fan from Wendy is useful in promoting thinking about the range of techniques, but isn't complete because some of the tools that are in one bin could be in others, eg. they have different uses. Do others of you have related maps to propose?

From: Christian Crews
Date: Mon, 15 Apr 2002

Thanks Clem - you make good points here.

To me the question is boiling down to whose viewpoint is valid. Clem's comments resonate with me because they are customer-focused - wherever in the world that customer happens to be. I often say that futurists are tricksters, using various tools, sometimes sneaky or annoying ones, to get the "client" to a) realize their "official future" was created out of flawed, unchallenged assumptions b) that a number of alternative futures exist, and c) that uncertainty implies choice and that preferred futures (of the client within the larger contextual environment) can be achieved. It is not about me going in with a preferred future I thought up without them and shoving it down their throats. Not only is it immoral, it's ineffective. And that remains true whether it's a North American worldview or other worldviews. To that I would only add that we cannot judge the relative merits of particular worldviews. So we

can't say that outsider futurists are normative while insiders are not, or vice-versa.

To some extent I disagree with the idea that good futures work with a client means imposing a particular worldview. Staying customer-focused, or audience-focused if it's a research publication, can help moderate that.

From: Tom Conger
Date: Mon, 15 Apr 2002

Aloha (are we Clear Lake folks allowed to say this?)

Christian, I can't resist sharing with you that I think it would be hard for you as a relativist ("we cannot judge the relative merits of particular worldviews") to determine whose viewpoint is valid, has truth. :-)

There is probably some consensus on the technical use of the term normative (that's a bold statement!). It probably goes beyond creating preferred futures, otherwise all applied futurists would be normative futurists, correct? Only when the creation of preferred futures makes explicit use of the client's values and ethics do we consider it normative futures work, from a technical point of view. (I think this captures Clem and Sohail's thinking, but I'm not so sure if it does the same for Jim).

So whether or not your work Christian with communities makes explicit use of the communities' values and ethics would determine whether you were a normative applied futurist (to borrow Andy's phrase) or just your plain vanilla applied futurist. Incidentally, we all know now even the plain vanilla variety of applied futurists involve values in their client work, it's just that they aren't made explicit.

If there is an undercurrent of tension in the field (and not many people have indicated how they feel on that point), then I don't think that it could be attributable simply to

the fact that some futurists make explicit use of client values and others do not. So what could be causing tension? A clash of personalities exacerbated by such a small professional community? Angry exploratory futurists who feel that they are the true futurists, and we applied futurists should start calling ourselves organizational change consultants?

The best answer I could come up with was the one I proffered, and will hold onto for the moment: tension exists between those futurists whose worldview coincides with the dominant structures and those whose world view does not. I called them insiders and outsiders.

I was never saying that the outsiders were *technically* normative futurists, and insiders not. Sorry I wasn't being more clear. From a technical standpoint, there are futurists who make explicit use of values in their work — who are normative — that share the dominant world view in the United States. Insiders, who are technically normative. And I think that you're one them Chris — I say that in the nicest way :-)

Proportionately though, I wonder if there are more normative (technical use of the term) futurists who are outsiders than insiders.

My point in bringing the term normative into my discussion of the source of tension was to decode the politically correct label that "othered" (that's probably way too strong of a term) those futurists who don't share the dominant world view. That term was "normative." (As a point of illustration, "All-American" used to be the "code" word (sometimes unconscious) in the human resources industry for a white person, when referencing race became politically incorrect and legally treacherous. All-American doesn't technically mean white, obviously, but its how the term was used.)

So I think that Andy showed the insider futurist hand (sorry Andy) when he initially

offered (and later clarified) the continuum of normative futures (advance a point of view) <-----> client-based futures (don't advance a point of view)

That Devin, who would be insulted if I called him anything other than an outsider futurist, would say my analysis is "spot on" makes me wonder if outsider futurists would be more inclined to agree with me than insiders. If that's the case, I probably haven't missed the boat — the insider group is the last to see what's really going on. (I recall that as an "All-American" man I supported the notion in a report I helped author that race will lose its ability as a social differentiator. I didn't talk to a single African American that didn't disagree with me.)

Thank you for allowing me to learn with you all, and from you all, and for providing a safe space for speculation.

From: Christian Crews

Subject: The tension is about standards

Date: Tue, 16 Apr 2002 16:05:27 -0700

Ok so this post is long and potentially incendiary upon second read, but I spent too long on it not to send it along.

Tom, I think you've targeted and explained that "tension" well - so now I'm going to change the discussion to how this tension manifested in a particular way that needs to get resolved. I don't want this email to sound inflammatory, but I do want it to reflect a certain amount of frustration in that I think the whole debate around U.S. vs Rest of World, normative vs client-based is really avoiding the central issue. I don't have a problem with normative futurists, whether inside or outside. What I do have a problem with is that there are a lot of people out there calling themselves futurists and no one is out there telling the rest of society who they can and cannot trust. In that environment the slickest message with

the best financing wins, and that doesn't bode well for all of our futures.

To me the tension is around where do we draw the line. Joe Pesci in My Cousin Vinny may have been funny, but I sure wouldn't hire him to represent me. If you were on trial for your life would you hire someone who did not go to law school, but read some crime novels and watched enough Matlock to know judicial procedure? (I think I stole this example from someone - speak up anyone if it was you). And the reality is that communities, businesses, governments, and the world have a lot of lives on the line regarding looking ahead and we haven't got our act together to certify people to do it. This is not an endorsement for the APF, its an endorsement for someone, somewhere to do something about it. I'm behind any and every attempt to do that. In our drive to remain inclusive we have marginalized all of us from making significant and important contributions to society. While pop futurists may have done good research to generate forecasts, how do we know that they used the right foresight tools at the right time in the appropriate way? The consequences of bad futures work should be avoided at all costs.

It is the truth that in drawing that line we make choices. But to me that line never had anything to do with whether or not a futurist is an insider, outsider, normative, or client-focused. To me the line is about this: do you as a futurist have enough training and expertise in the following areas of futures studies that you can appropriately apply futures thinking to the benefit of a project, client, or research:

Areas: >>>How Wendy defines it: identify change, critique change, imagine alternative futures, envision preferred, plan and implement, monitor change

>>>How Wendell Bell defines it: The Possible, the Probable, the Preferred

>>>How I talk to communities about it: Looking Around (sources of change, trends, systemic structure, potential breakpoints, etc.), Looking Ahead (possible futures, probable futures, critical futures, preferred futures, etc.), and Planning Change (gap analysis, systems leverage, backcasting, etc.).

So the tension is to define a minimum proficiency in each of these areas without excluding outsiders or normative thinkers. In the attempt to say "this is what applied futures studies is" it may be that some felt threatened. That is certainly healthy, and it is healthy that we have the discussion, but the bottom line remains someone has to step up and get it done and no organization has done it effectively to date and that has stifled our voice.

I've chosen to not take an overly active role in defining the standards, because I'm white, male, american, and take tests well. I don't want to be accused of using my perceived power to create an exclusive club that my particular demographics help me with. But frankly I don't see any futures organization out there, including the new APF, as having even close to the standards I'd like to see in certifying professionals for membership. And if the standards mean knowing more about world futures methods than I've learned at UHCL - then I'll study up. If it means learning another language, I'll do it. That's what being a professional in something is all about - learning a craft enough to be proficient. I'd be a little concerned if I was certified immediately by a professional futures organization. I'm still learning from my mistakes (Michele has

certainly been a witness to that) and from mentors in the field.

So again, the tension is around standards, and who controls the standards. There is no doubt that the people who come up with the standards have the power to exclude, to other, a large number of people. We all need to get involved in creating standards through as transparent a process as possible. Except me, I will be a cheerleader on the side, look at the qualifications that are agreed to, study, do, write, whatever it takes to earn that certification.

End of part 2. To be continued in the next issue of the Bulletin.

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principles might be the very precondition to prevent future leaders of repeating past mistakes. This however requires that teachers as well as students of future planning are free to choose between a whole array of alternative means and ends. In this process social institutions as well as the disapproval of them might be rendered obsolete. Institutions may change function or meaning and ethical criteria transform beyond parameters we recognize today. In this future context people might find that there are many more conflicts about means than ends, but that there are many ways to Nirvana. They might discover that economic growth is a lesser threat to sustainability when consumption is decreasingly based to natural resources. They might fear cyber war more than nuclear war because these weapons were too expensive to maintain anyway. They might stress the "worth and dignity of persons" and simply skip the prelude "human" because all the categories of organic, mechanic and digital personalities that qualify would be to much to include.



Encouraging future planning is a different task than defining its stipulations. In his concern for a sustainable future, Boyer seems to want to do both. Despite his well-meant advices, the highest relevance might be achieved when the future planners themselves control the process. And since he praises the human potential to state ethical goals, the outcomes might exceed any current expectations.



LEARNING FROM THE LITANY

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Notes & References

* Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Aboriginal Deaths In Custody) is a literal situation as well as representative of major system failures which also include; depleting species, trenchant unemployment, some corporate crashes, certain terrorist attacks etc. where we seem to keep on achieving the reverse of what we allegedly set out to achieve.

** For example Bosnia, Rwanda, East-Timor. It is estimated that in Rwanda one million people died per month for ten months; the equivalent of half the population of Australia dead by our own hands by next April, while the world and UN looked on - a greater killing rate than Auschwitz! Yet war crime inquiries are a form of victor's justice; play by jurisprudential rules; are always after the event; and concentrate on litany, that is, individuals and actual case-by-case events rather than deeper levels/layers causation.¹²

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