2004

A narrative inquiry into the experiences of individuals in the midst of organizational change: A shift from systems to stories

Stanley M. Amaladas

A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Individuals in the Midst of
Organizational Change: A Shift from Systems to Stories

by

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M.A. University of Manitoba, 1981
B.A. University of Manitoba, 1979

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Management

Walden University
May 2004

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DISSERTATION

OF

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2004

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APPLIED MANAGEMENT AND DECISION SCIENCES

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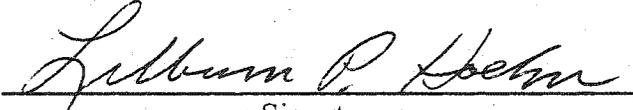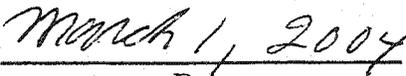
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Abstract

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Abstract

This study explores how individuals understand and make meaning of their experiences while in the midst of radical organizational change. Empirical materials for this research were obtained though written stories and interviews of two groups of managers within the Canadian public sector who were themselves in the throes of organizational change. The findings of this study were analyzed through a three-dimensional narrative-inquiry-space framework.

In this study, stories and metaphors were used as expressions of experience. The results of this study support the postmodernist notion of a dialectical, co-constructed, and recursive relationship within expressions, namely between metaphors and stories, and between expressions and experience. It was also discovered that 7 key variables moderated the relationship between expressions and experience. These variables are linked to 4 categories: cognitive, internal beliefs, relationships, and language.

The findings of this study suggest that the success of managing change is directly related to the ability of leaders to attend to the problem of the interconnectedness between cybernetics and interpretive paradigms. The scholarly need to address this problem was in direct response to the predominant tendency among scholars and change practitioners to focus exclusively on either one of the two approaches. Accordingly, the call to scholars and practitioners to shift from systems to stories is grounded in the need to shift from the cognitive tyranny of *either-or* to the genius of the *and*. Narrative inquiry is well aligned to promoting the cognitive genius of the *and* as a strategic tradition of inquiry.

DEDICATION

In a world of constant change, this dissertation is dedicated to three wonderful and beautiful constants in my life. To my dear wife and partner, Miriam, and my daughters Sacha Claire and Kayla Marie: Thank you for believing in me. Thank you for encouraging me. Above all, thank you for allowing me to fulfill my dream. Cheers!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines acknowledgment as "admitting the truth" and as "expressing appreciation." Accordingly, let me express my appreciation by admitting the truth. As much as writing this dissertation was a solitary process, I must admit that I was not alone in my journey. I want to especially thank three key social units who enabled me to complete this journey.

First, my family. Thank you for your constant support and encouragement. Thank you for allowing me to create that soulful place to finish some unfinished business.

Second, my committee members. Dr. Lilburn Hoehn, thank you for the gifts of staying connected and your authentic sense of collegiality. Dr. Raphael Becvar, thank you for your gifts of intellectual curiosity and playfulness. Dr. Annemarie Murphy, thank you for your willingness to accommodate and work with us on such short notice. Finally, thank you Dr. Sybil Delevan. I will always cherish your constant demand to raise the bar, your careful reading, and your genuine desire to be there for the student. Thank you all for making this journey enjoyable.

Finally, to all 11 participants who chose to participate in this research study. Thank you for the gift of your stories. I wish each and every one of you the very best in your journey as you meander through the messiness of organizational change. May our paths cross often!

Cheers!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Constant change and new demands continue to pressure societies, organizations, and individuals to do whatever is necessary to survive (Collins & Porras, 1998; Morgan, 1993; Piderit, 2000; Porras & Silvers, 1991; Vail, 1989). In anticipation of this onslaught of change, Alvin Toffler (1970) commented: "Change is avalanching upon our heads and most people are grotesquely unprepared to cope with it" (p. 12). Thirty years later, change is not only occurring all around us, but its effects are also being felt at both the individual and organizational levels.

At the individual level, for Bridges (1980), it is not merely "the pace of change that disorients us" (p. 4), but also a loss of faith. In his opinion, the experience of Americans is such that they "have lost the old faith that all the transitions they are going through are really getting them anywhere" (p. 4). Bridges (1980) poignantly described the human experiences of loss of faith and disorientation and captures the imagination of his readers, through his narrative.

> It is as if we launched out from a riverside dock to cross to a landing on
> the opposite shore – only to discover in midstream that the landing was no
> longer there. (And when we looked back at the other shore, we saw that
> the dock we left from had just broken loose and was heading
> downstream). [Parenthesis original] (p. 4)

Moving from the individual level to the organizational level, Handy (1996) and Kotter (1998) observed, that over the last 2 decades, organizational change has accelerated violently and traumatically. "By any objective measure," wrote Kotter, "the

amount of significant, often traumatic, change in organizations has grown tremendously over the past two decades" (p. 3). Continuing with the experience and theme of traumatic changes in the world of work, Handy (1996) described the consequences of organizational change: "Entire floors of office buildings are emptying, whole layers of management are going out the window, and full echelons of support staff are being told to support themselves" (p. 23). The effects of these types of drastic organizational change on individuals are often overwhelming. At an experiential level, there is a loss of faith (Bridges, 1980), a feeling of going in circles (Senge, 1999), a sense of abandonment, with individuals left alone to fend for or support themselves (Bridges, 1980; Handy, 1996), an increase in levels of cynicism (Duck, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Senge, 1999), anger (Noer, 1993), and a loss of soul (Moore, 1994).

Within this environment of "significant [and] often traumatic change" (Kotter, 1998, p. 3), two approaches to the study of organizational change have dominated the consciousness of academics and practitioners in the field of change management. These approaches include a systems-cybernetics approach (Ansoff, 1965; Cicmil, 1999; Shaw, 1997; Quinn, 1980), or what Habermas (1975, 1984) identified as a systems integration perspective, and an interpretive approach (Bredo & Feinberg, 1982; Bruner, 1986; Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Rainbow & Sullivan, 1979), or in Habermas' (1975, 1984) language, the perspective of social integration. For Habermas (1975, 1984), the assumptions of each approach move their practitioners to interpret and be engaged in their work differently. The perspective of system integration "poses the problem of interpreting the concept of a system in such a way that it can be applied to the interconnections of action" (Habermas,

1984, p. 151) for the primary purpose of maintaining the functional stability of a system

or an organization. At an organizational level, this system is ordered on the basis of

factors like power, money, organizational direction, or stakeholder interests, and is

integrated impersonally through cybernetic feedback (Calhoun, 1992). The perspective of

social integration, on the other hand, poses the problem of interpreting the "internal

perspective of members of social groups and commits the investigator to hermeneutically

connect up his own understanding with that of the participants" (Habermas, 1984, p. 150)

for the purpose of understanding and making meaning (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of

the experiences of individuals within the context of change.

Although a number of successful organizational change outcomes have occurred

because of the alignment or integration between these two approaches (Collins & Porras,

1994; Dougherty & Cohen, 1995; Powell & Dent-Micallef, 1997; Zammuto & O'Connor,

1992), practitioners in the field of change management continue to focus either on

technical and structural solutions to organizational change or on the human element

within organizations that enable or disable desired organizational changes (Worren,

Ruddle, & Moore, 1999). Worren et al. (1999) captured the essence of this dilemma in a

recent study. They commented that practitioners in the field of organizational change

"who have thought about people all along, now concede they forgot about markets,

strategies, and computers" (p. 284). These same authors also pointed to the reflections of

Michael Hammer, who is commonly associated with the reengineering movement, and

wrote that Hammer admitted he forgot about people: "I wasn't smart enough about

that....I was reflecting my engineering background and was insufficiently appreciative of

the human dimension. I've learned that's critical" (as cited in Worren et al., p. 284).

While both approaches are alive and well today, the issue for those working in the field

of change management, however, continues to be the tendency for practitioners to focus

exclusively on one approach over the other.

<div align="center">The Statement of the Problem</div>

A common and persistent theme can be followed in the literature on

organizational change management. At a cognitive level, there are two dominant models

or approaches within the field of change management, the systems-cybernetics model and

the interpretive model. At a practical level, the tendency has been for practitioners to

focus exclusively on one of the two models (Beer & Walton, 1987; Habermas, 1975,

1984). The systems-cybernetics or systems-integration approach is exclusively

concerned with organizational issues related to systems, structure, and work processes.

On the other hand, for the last 30 years, the interpretive, or social integration approach,

has focused exclusively on one interpretation of the experience of individuals while in the

midst of organizational change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). According to these authors, the

conventional and predominant interpretation over the last 30 years is that employees

experience organizational change by resisting change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999).

Within this predominantly *either-or* cognitive context, Habermas (1975, 1984)

recommended a third alternative. Rather than jumping on the bandwagon of choosing one

approach over the other, Habermas (1975) acknowledged that both approaches are

important and stipulated that the real "problem is to demonstrate their interconnection"

(p. 4). For him that would be a more social-scientifically appropriate response to the

study of organizational change. Through this formulation, Habermas (1975, 1984) implied that the study of organizational change would be served better by demonstrating the interconnectedness not only between these dominant approaches, but also between the different experiences of employees while in the midst of organizational change. Habermas, then, could be heard as saying that the exclusive focus on any one approach at the expense of others is problematic, because it fundamentally limits both social science researchers and organizational practitioners in their efforts to effectively understand and manage organizational change. Accordingly, the present study attempts to address the problem of demonstrating the interconnectedness between system-cybernetics and interpretive approaches to organizational change.

Background

Within the field of change management, the need to address the issue of exclusivity was indirectly confirmed by Duck (1998). Writing in the *Harvard Business Review*, Duck (1998) recounted her experience of the problems she encountered when she interviewed managers who were called upon to lead and manage organizational change. She provided the comments of a senior manager who used a medical metaphor to describe what he viewed as problematic:

> It is like the company is undergoing five medical procedures at the same time....One person's in charge of the root-canal job, someone else is setting the broken foot, another person is working on the displaced shoulder, and still another is getting rid of the gallstone. Each operation is a success, but the patient dies of shock. (p. 56)

The foregoing medical metaphor suggests that, at an operational level, managers are efficient at managing the urgent and immediate tasks at hand. Part of the problem with this way of proceeding is that each task is treated as separate and disconnected to the patient's body as a whole. While each part may be efficiently fixed, in the same way as one fixes a machine, this way of managing change does not work because, as this senior manager said, the patient dies of shock. For Duck (1998), the "problem is simple," in that those who are called upon to manage change are prone to superimposing "a mechanistic model…onto the new model of today's knowledge organization" (p. 56). While the problem may be simple, the implication of Duck's insight is far from simplistic. Within the field of change management, the larger problem is the abdication of these managers' capacity to think about what they are doing in relation to the interconnectedness of their actions.

Such a legacy, which grew out of the scientific management literature (Taylor, 1947), required practitioners in the field of change management to first break change into small pieces and tasks and then to manage those pieces or tasks. Such an approach, however, has led to disastrous results (Argyris, 1993; Kotter, 1998). Within this context, Duck (1998) argued that the real contribution, or the fundamental work of leadership, is to focus on "managing the dynamic and not the pieces" (p. 57). While Duck (1998) is quite decisive in her choice, this decision is part of the problem, insofar as her recommendation is primarily reliant upon the exclusive language of either managing the pieces or managing the dynamics. Insofar as Habermas (1975, 1984) suggested that the real problem is not one of choosing one approach over the other but rather one of

demonstrating the interconnection between the two, he could be heard as suggesting that

the real challenge confronting practitioners in the field of change management is instead

the capacity to manage *both* the dynamics between the pieces *and* the pieces. According

to Collins and Porras (2002), for example, it is precisely this integrated thinking that is

the liberating mark of "highly visionary companies" (p. 44):

> The 'Tyranny of the OR' pushes people to believe that things must be
> either A *OR* B but *not both*... Instead of being oppressed by the 'Tyranny
> of the OR', highly visionary companies liberate themselves with the
> 'Genius of the AND' – the ability to embrace both extremes of a number
> of dimensions at the same time. Instead of choosing between A *OR* B,
> they figure out a way to have both A *AND* B. [Capitalization and italics
> original] (pp. 43-44)

The consequences of the failure to manage both the dynamics and the pieces were

identified by a number of writers within the field of change management. Through his

empirical research, Kotter (1998), for example, was critically aware of the failures in

organizational change that focused exclusively on managing the pieces, and its effect

upon the individual. He commented that "in too many situations, the improvements have

been disappointing and the carnage has been appalling, with wasted resources and

burned-out, scared, or frustrated employees" (pp. 3-4). In an earlier study, Argyris (1993,

pp. 80-82) observed that 3 years after he investigated 32 major reorganization efforts in

large businesses, none of those change efforts could be acknowledged as fully completed.

In fact, he found that many people in those organizations were still fighting, questioning,

resisting, and blaming each other 3 years after change efforts were initiated. In another

study, Champy and Nohria (1996) found that such an exclusive focus on managing the

pieces led to dismal results, in that there was very "little to show for the pain" (p. 264) of organizational change.

Other writers (Bateson, 1979; Bennis, 1989a; Mills, 1959), from diverse academic disciplines, addressed the social conditions that continue to promote and sustain such an exclusive focus. Speaking from within the sociological tradition, for example, C. Wright Mills (1959) attributed the problem of exclusivity to the lack of imagination that characterizes the training of technicians. Bateson (1979), an anthropologist, suggested that this form of training encourages technicians to think in terms of patterns as "fixed affairs" rather than as "patterns that connect" (p. 13). For Mills (1959), training enables technicians to become better in what they already know. Consequently, training does not allow technicians to do different work but rather to do the same work more efficiently. In contrast, the education and imagination of social scientists, on the other hand, enables them to be engaged in a form of learning and inquiry that allows them "to shift between perspectives" and, in that process, "to build up an adequate view of a total society and its components" (Mills, 1959, p. 211). By implication, education, rather than training, would not only enable social scientists and practitioners in the field of change management, to do things differently but also the imagination to do different things (Bennis, 1989a). At the same time, education rather than training also enables the capacity to see the interconnectedness between different perspectives and approaches to change management.

Speaking from within the field of management and leadership, for Bennis (1989b), the conditions that continue to promote and sustain the problem of exclusivity is

not so much a matter of training but rather a matter of being out of touch and isolated from the complex lives of the very people that leaders are called upon to lead. At a political level, factors like position, money, and circumstance continue to insulate leaders from the ordinariness of what occurs in the streets. Within this politically insulated context, Bennis (1989b) used the metaphor of "talking through a plate-glass window" (p. 97) to describe the relationship between those who are called upon to lead and manage change and their followers. The plate-glass window separates, isolates, removes, and distances those who are called upon to lead and manage change from their followers.

With risks such as these, it is imperative for managers and leaders not only to intellectually acknowledge, but also to feel the need to manage both the dynamics and the interconnectedness between the parts and the pieces and not, as Collins and Porras (2002) would have it, be oppressed by the tyranny of the *or*. It is a matter of both the mind and the heart. However, before managers can begin to manage dynamically, it is vital for them to first engage in a way of thinking that promotes inclusiveness. Without such a change in thinking, managers would continue in their tunnelled ways of thinking and managing, and they would continue to get the failing results that they are currently getting. This need for a new way of thinking was echoed by Albert Einstein, who stated that the "significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them" (as cited in Covey, 1990, p. 42).

In summary, exclusivity and a piece-meal approach to the management of change are problematic within the arena of organizational change. These courses of action are characteristic of a predominantly mechanistic, technical, and unimaginative approach to

change management. Working within this mechanistic model, those who were called to manage organizational change were not required to manage both the dynamics and the parts or to be attentive to the varying individual experiences within the context of such changes. While such insulation protected managers from getting too close or involved with those whom they are called upon to lead, it also reduced their effectiveness. Under those circumstances, Bennis (1989b) argued that these managers would, at best, "continue to sound as if they were talking through a plate-glass window" (p. 97). Within this cognitive and social context of exclusivity, the challenge for leaders and practitioners in the field of change management, as it is formulated here, is one of demonstrating the interconnectedness between issues related to both system integration and social integration.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this narrative study was to "experience the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 80) of selected individuals within the Canadian public sector who were and are either in the midst of proposed or already-implemented organizational changes. Within the framework and lens of narrative inquiry, "experiencing the experience" aims at both understanding the experience of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change and, at the same time, making meaning of such experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This method of study included a narrative reflection of stories and narratives that were told and retold by participants in the hope that the results of this study would enable practitioners in the field of change management to be more

responsive to the critical needs that were identified through the stories of individuals who were living through those changes.

In this study, the phenomenon identified as organizational change, and the label resistance to change, that has been conventionally ascribed to the experience of those in the midst of those changes (Dent & Goldberg, 1999) do not refer to incremental changes. Incremental changes may look like the following: a change in supervisor, a change in the physical location of office space, or a change in policy. Instead, the interest is in uncovering, describing, interpreting, and explaining the experience of individuals in the midst of radical organizational changes like downsizing, amalgamation, outsourcing, mergers, organizational reengineering, or restructuring.

Significance of Study

This study is significant because radical organizational changes such reengineering, downsizing, outsourcing, mergers, and restructuring are among the most difficult challenges faced by managers and organizational leaders. The productivity and wellness of an organization's most valuable resource, its people, at least as an espoused value, is most at stake while in the middle of the identified types of radical organizational change. At a systems level, in a survey that was published in 1994, 70% of 600 American and European companies believed that they were involved in some form of restructuring or reengineering project (Oram & Wellins, 1995). At the same time, about 70% of companies that were engaged in organizational change through efforts like downsizing, restructuring, mergers, and reengineering failed to produce the desired results (Arthur D. Little, 1994; Right Associates, 1993). Cameron (1994), who spent the last 20 years

researching the phenomenon of organizational behavior and change, referred to the practice of downsizing as the most pervasive yet unsuccessful change effort in the business world. The findings of these studies, however, are not isolated examples. Other writers, like Strebel (1998), claimed that change management "isn't working as it should" (p. 140). He offered another telling statistic in saying that "leading practitioners of radical corporate reengineering report that success rates in Fortune 1,000 companies are well below 50%; some say they are as low as 20%" (Strebel, 1998, p.140). Schaffer and Thomson (1998) quoted a 1991 survey of more than 300 electronics companies that was sponsored by the American Electronics Association: "73% of the companies reported having a total quality program under way; but of these, 63% had failed to improve quality defects by even as much as 10%" (p. 192).

At a social level, the effects of such dismal results on people have not been too encouraging. Employees are continuing to experience a loss of faith that organizational changes are really getting them anywhere (Bridges, 1980). They continue to experience a loss of energy (Cameron, 1994), a feeling of being abandoned (Handy, 1996), a sense of disorientation and a loss of soul (Moore, 1994), and anger (Noer, 1993). Within this environment, not only is there a high level of cynicism (Duck, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Senge, 1999) but also that organizational changes are interpreted and perceived as being "another management fad in an endless series of management fads" (Duck, 1998, p. 63) or as being yet another "flavor of the month program" (Senge, 1999, p. 6).

In the midst of the consequences of these bleak and failed efforts, Duck (1998) outlined a critical leadership challenge:

> For change to occur in any organization, each individual must think, feel, or do something different. Even in large organizations, which depend on thousands of employees understanding company strategies well enough to translate them into appropriate actions, leaders must win their followers one by one. (p. 56)

According to Duck (1998) then, for change to occur, two things need to happen. First, each individual must think, feel and do something different. It would be insane to continue to think in the same way, to do the same things, to continue to focus exclusively on issues connected to either system integration or social integration (Habermas, 1975, 1984), and expect different results. Second, the realization of changes that would move each individual to think, feel and do different things is directly related to the work of leadership. For Gardner (1995), the success of leaders in winning their followers, one by one, depends critically upon their capacity to listen to the stories of individuals because it is precisely "*stories of identity* – narratives that help individuals think about and feel who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed – that constitute the single most powerful weapon in the leader's literary arsenal" [italics original] (p. 43). Gardner (1995) goes further to suggest that by listening to and engaging in the stories of individuals, rather than dismissing or trivializing their experience as resistant to change, leaders give themselves the opportunity to tap into the critical needs of individuals in the midst of change. Therein lies the power of leadership and also part of the rationale for and significance of this study.

By listening to stories of identity, organizational leaders may come to understand that in times of crisis, individuals are not simply be resistant to change. Instead leaders may come to understand that, in times of crisis, those whom they are called to lead may,

in fact, be craving "for a larger explanatory framework...if not definitive answers to essential questions" (Gardner, 1995, p. 56). Through such an exploration, leaders may also come to see, understand, and address critical and essential questions as they relate to issues connected to both system integration and social integration.

<center>Nature of the Study</center>

This study comprised of a purposive sample of 11 public sector managers and team leaders who were in the midst of proposed and already-implemented organizational changes. Five of these managers were asked to manage in an environment where parts of their job functions were being considered for outsourcing. The remaining six managers and team leaders were managing in an environment of already-implemented organizational changes. These organizational changes, which were effected in November 1999 were part of a larger modernization process initiated in the Canadian public sector. It fundamentally transformed this organization into an agency. As a consequence, this organization was able to fast-track many of its changes that sometimes put it at odds within hard won labor contracts under the old scheme.

From a methodological standpoint, the perspective of social integration places narrative inquirers in the middle of several different, yet connected, traditions of inquiry. Phenomenology, ethnography, and interpretive sociology, as qualitative traditions of inquiry, for example, have traditionally been used to understand the internal perspective of participants. Phenomenology, as a tradition of inquiry, has conventionally served as "the rationale behind efforts to understand individuals by entering into their field of perception in order to see life as these individuals saw it" (Bruyn, 1966, p. 90). Similarly,

ethnography's fundamental objective is to display the social organization of activities as they are revealed in the natural setting of those activities (Schwartzman, 1993). This has been expressed in a number of ways including, seeing society from the social actor's or the native's point of view. Within these traditions of inquiry, the role of the researcher is to be an active learner (Creswell, 1997). Within the field of interpretive sociology, Bruyn (1966) formulated the role of the sociologist as a participant observer in two critical areas namely the "observer as participant" and "participant as observer" (p. 16).

On the other hand, the second feature of the perspective of social integration, as defined by Habermas (1984), is one that also "commits the investigator to hermeneutically connect his own understanding with that of the participants" (p. 150). Narrative inquirers, in other words, also find themselves in the middle of hermeneutics as a tradition of inquiry. Gadamer (1975), for example, made it abundantly clear that hermeneutics is not simply a method for understanding but an attempt "to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place" (p. 263). From the standpoint of the interpretive sciences, Bruner, (1986), Gadamer (1975) and Habermas (1984) agree that among these conditions are, crucially, prejudices and fore-meanings in the mind of the interpreter. For Gadamer (1975), understanding is always interpretation and "it means to use one's own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text can really be made to speak to us" (p. 358).

The challenge for narrative inquirers, however, is not to choose one tradition of inquiry over the other because that act would essentially place them within the limits of the either-or cognitive model that was addressed earlier. Instead, at a methodological

level, narrative inquirers are challenged to actively collaborate between these identified traditions of inquiry. To do otherwise, would essentially mean treating the need to demonstrate the interconnectedness that Habermas (1975, 1984) talks about, technically and mechanically. The challenge, then was not to choose one over the other but rather to demonstrate the capacity and the imagination "to shift from one perspective to another" (Mills, 1959, p. 211) and in the process to demonstrate the interconnection between the parts (Habermas, 1975, 1984) and to imaginatively build an adequate view of issues connected to both system integration and social integration (Bateson, 1979; Mills, 1959).

Following the lead of Clandinin and Connelly (2000), this researcher collected empirical materials or "field texts" (p. 80) through participants' written stories and interviews. The analysis of field texts proceeded from the standpoint of a *"three-dimensional narrative inquiry space"* [italics original] (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 49). The first dimension focused on temporal matters. Experiences, in other words, do not occur in a vacuum but within the context of time, past, present, and future (Dewey, 1981). The second dimension refers to the personal and social experiences of individuals as reflected in their stories and interviews. The third dimension focused on what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) referred to as "situated within place" (p. 49). Taken together, the first and third dimensions are closely related to Bateson's (1979) notion of context in that all stories are relevant and meaningful in relationships and within a particular context.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in an attempt to understand the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration and the experiences of individuals within the context of radical organizational change.

1. What stories did participants involved in radical organizational change tell and what metaphors did they use to describe their experiences?

2. What, if any, could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experienced radical organizational changes that were either proposed or already-implemented?

Conceptual Framework

The construction of the conceptual framework upon which this study is analytically based is informed by two key theoretical sources, namely, Habermas (1975, 1984) and Bateson (1979). What follows is a discussion of the framework as developed by both these authors.

Habermas (1984) demonstrated the interconnectedness between the two dominant approaches to the management of organizational change by purposefully separating the two approaches and analyzing the implications of such an exclusive approach for social scientists and practitioners in the field of change management. Accordingly, Habermas (1984) began by raising a fundamental question: What does it mean to opt exclusively for system integration or social integration? Whereas practitioners in the field of change management were busy working from the assumptions of either one of these two

approaches, Habermas (1984) chose instead to raise the assumptions underlying theses approaches as a question. In making this decision, Habermas could be interpreted as suggesting that the first step toward a demonstration of interconnectedness is by adopting a reflective attitude and by taking things apart.

The Perspective of System Integration

What does it mean to opt exclusively for system integration? For Habermas (1984), the implications are two-fold. First, it is to opt "for a conceptual strategy that presents society after the model of a self-regulating system" (Habermas, 1987, p. 151). Unlike a machine model, society and organizations are viewed as living organisms that are constantly in interaction with and struggling to regulate themselves vis-à-vis unstable and unpredictable environments. The second implication is that "it ties social scientific analysis to the external perspective of an observer and poses the problem of interpreting the concept of a system in such a way that it can be applied to interconnections of action" (Habermas, 1987, p. 151). This perspective would require practitioners in the field of change management to adopt an objective stance, and to behave as if they were on the outside looking in. Their interpretation would be limited to seeing how the different actions are contributing to the maintenance of the system while, at the same time, treating the legitimacy of the system or the status quo, as a given.

The problem with the exclusive focus on system integration and its approach to organizational change, is that the individual's "consciousness plays no role" (Habermas, 1975, p.1) in the change process. The role of change management practitioners, in other words, is to do whatever was necessary with respect to the maintenance of the system.

This does not mean that individuals within organizations are irresponsible or unconscious of their role in initiating change from within. Ironically, even though organizational changes may have been initiated from within, to say that the individual's consciousness plays no role is to say that individuals can only feel the effects of change. Within this frame of thinking, individuals can only experience the consequences of those changes, as if they were some kind of external reality imposing itself from the outside upon the individual (Habermas, 1975). It is akin to the experience of a patient who is infected by some kind of contagious disease. Within this framework, how patients experience their illness or how individuals experience change, is understood as being "at most a symptom of a process that he himself can scarcely influence at all" (Habermas, 1975, p. 1).

The Perspective of Social Integration

To opt exclusively for social integration, on the other hand, is to opt for a conceptual strategy that "starts from communicative action and construes society as a lifeworld" (Habermas, 1987, p. 150) where speaking and acting subjects are socially related. Unlike system integration, where the consciousness of the individual plays no role, in communicative action, participants are active in the sense that they pursue their plans cooperatively and on the basis of a shared definition of the situation (Habermas, 1987, p. 126). Unlike the focus in system integration, where there is an assumption that societal or organizational participants share a homogenous reality, and that their role is simply to maintain the system as it is espoused, the focus in social integration is dynamic in that participants are viewed as actively constructing a consensus and a shared definition of the situation.

In formulating the concept of social integration in this way, Habermas placed it squarely within the postmodernist tradition that is identified as social constructionism. Berger and Luckmann (1966) had already spoken to what Habermas identified as the paradigm of social integration in their now classic work *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge.* This theoretical tradition makes a fundamental assumption that what humans accept as real is socially constructed. Unlike the medical model that treated reality like a contagious disease that is out there and imposing its power upon an individual, social constructionists begin with the assumption that reality is not simply out there. From within the social constructionist's perspective, what is considered as real is not simply a given even though what is taken as real may be treated or experienced as a given (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Social constructionists begin instead with the assumption that whatever is accepted as real is itself a product of social construction.

To say, then, that acting subjects are socially related is to say that they behave toward one another on the basis of assumptions and beliefs that they have socially constructed for themselves, and in ways that treat those taken for granted constructions as real. Social constructionists, then, concern themselves with how individuals go about their tasks of defining their situation, accepting a particular definition as real for themselves, and then, acting on the basis of their constructed definition. In addition to beginning with the assumption that realities are socially constructed, social constructionists also argue that what is considered real is constituted through language

and organized and maintained through stories and narratives (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

<div align="center">*On Demonstrating the Interconnection*</div>

For Bateson (1979), understanding stories narratively would fundamentally enable social researchers and practitioners to tap into the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration. For Gardner (1995), a vital advantage of this storying approach is that it would also enable organizational leaders to understand and respond to the essential questions and needs of individuals in the midst of change and thereby win their followership one by one. What is Bateson's (1979) understanding of the phenomenon called story? First, a story "is a little knot or complex of that species of connectedness which we call *relevance*" [italics original] (Bateson, 1979, p. 13). A fundamental assumption that he makes in relation to relevance is that "any A is relevant to any B if both A and B are parts or components of the same story" (Bateson, 1979, p. 13). One way of demonstrating the interconnectedness between the two dominant approaches, then, is by investigating how they could be parts of the same story. And, "what is a story," Bateson (1979) asked, "that it may connect the As and Bs, its parts?" (p. 14). In response to his own question, he offered the notion of "context," which "is linked to another undefined notion called 'meaning'. Without context, words and actions have no meaning at all. This is true not only of human communication in words but also of all communication whatsoever, of all mental process" (Bateson, 1979, p. 15).

Many other postmodern writers have stressed the central role of stories, in organizing, maintaining and circulating knowledge of individual selves and their worlds.

For example, Berger and Luckmann (1966), Bruner (1986), Clandinin and Connelly (2000), Habermas (1984), Mair (1988), Rorty (1989), Rosaldo (1986), Schwartzman (1993), Turner (1986), and White and Epston (1990) all believe that people by nature lead storied lives, tell stories of those lives, and in doing so, they continue to maintain their own realities. The work of narrative researchers, then, is to "describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of them" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 155). It is both to collect the stories that are told and to tell stories about those stories because "stories matter. So…do stories about stories" (Geertz, 1986, p. 377).

What then, are the main characteristics or features of the constructed conceptual framework that will guide this study? First, and following the example of Habermas (1984), one way of demonstrating the interconnectedness between systems-cybernetics and interpretive approaches to change management is by taking a step back, taking both approaches apart, and critically analyzing them in isolation from each other. Second, in orienting to these approaches as if they were stories, researchers are offered the opportunity to reintegrate both approaches from the perspective of their relevance in relation to both context and meaning (Bateson, 1979). This process of reintegration would require researchers to orient to system integration and social integration as being parts of the same story (Bateson, 1979). Third, and in alignment with Clandinin and Connelly (2000), one consequence of this orientation is that the role of researchers is now defined as being active collaborators between themselves and participants in the study.

Definition of Terms

Change Initiative: The planning and the execution of ways of doing business that marks a

fundamental and significant break from how the organization conducted its business in

the past. (Hammer & Champy, 1993; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994)

Incremental Change: This refers to changes that do not in anyway alter or change an

employee's tenure or employment contract within an organization. (Hammer & Champy,

1993; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994)

Radical Change: This is understood as organizational changes that potentially or really

alters or changes an employee's tenure or employment contract within an organization.

(Hammer & Champy, 1993; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994)

Description: Maxwell (1996) defines this term as a "factual narrative of what happened,

at a low level of abstraction...it makes no attempt to go beyond what is immediately or

potentially observable" (p. 32).

Explanation: According to Maxwell (1996), explanation "provides a model or map of

why the world is the way it is...It is not simply a framework...rather it is a story about

what you think is happening and why" (p. 32).

Interpretation: This term refers to "an account of the meaning given to some situation or

event by the people studies, in their own terms...it is simply a concrete account of that

meaning and has no explanatory intent..." (Maxwell, 1996, p. 32).

Metaphor: In alignment with the Oxford Dictionary's (1990) use of this term, a metaphor

is understood as an "application of a name or descriptive term or phrase to an object or

action to which it is imaginatively but not literally applicable" (p. 745).

PS 2000 White Paper: Public Service 2000 White Paper that stressed the place of public sector employees as an asset to the government of Canada.

Reification: This term refers to processes that enable the production of behaviors, beliefs or practices that take-on a *thing-like* character. Berger and Luckmann (1966) characterized this as "the apprehension of the products of human activity as if they were something other than human products" (p. 89).

System Integration: On the one hand it is a perspective that opts "for a conceptual strategy that presents society after the model of a self-regulating system" (Habermas, 1987, p. 151). On the other hand, it is a perspective that "ties social scientific analysis to the external perspective of an observer and poses the problem of interpreting the concept of a system in such a way that it can be applied to interconnections of action" (Habermas, 1987, p. 151).

Social Integration: Is a perspective that opts for a conceptual strategy that "starts from communicative action and construes society as a lifeworld" (Habermas, 1987, p. 150) where speaking and acting subjects are socially active in the sense that they pursue their plans cooperatively and on the basis of a shared definition of the situation (Habermas, 1987, p.126).

Secondment: (Pronounced *Sir*-con [as in *con*fident] -ment) A temporary movement of a full-time public sector employee to a different employing authority either within or outside the public sector for a defined period of time at either the same or a higher classification level. (Retrieved, January 7, 2004 from http://www.psier.qld.gov.au/direct/docs/2003/no5-03.pdf).

Typification: This is a process whereby people sort their perceptions into types or classes. The net effect of typification processes are the shutting-off of perceptions that do not fit the existing type, which is taken for granted as true and real (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Assumptions

The key assumptions in this study follow:

1. That research participants in this study would be willing to openly share their experiences while in the midst of organizational change.

2. That the data collected would not only reveal the experiences of research participants in the midst of organizational change but also elucidate what "it means for the persons who have had the experience," and that research participants would be "able to provide a comprehensive description of it" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13).

3. That the narrative approach to the study of organizational change would provide fruitful and useful insights into the interconnectedness of issues between system integration and social integration.

4. That there is no homogenous reality that is everywhere the same for everyone.

5. That what individuals treat as a given is itself a product of social construction.

6. That individuals sustain their sense of reality through their constructed stories and metaphors.

7. That people naturally lead storied lives and understand their world narratively and that it makes sense to study their experiences and their world narratively.

8. While resistance to change, as an experience, has dominated the consciousness of conventional academics for over 30 years (Dent & Goldberg, 1999), this study assumes that there is more than one experience of how individuals experience organizational change.

Scope and Delimitations

Within the scope of this study, a narrative approach to understanding and making meaning of the experiences of individuals while in the midst of radical organizational change was adopted. Without intending to minimize attention to other worthy approaches, the current research works from the assumption that narrative inquiry was best suited for the present study.

Two groups of individuals who were in the throes of radical organizational change were included in this study. The first group, labeled the Red Team, consisted of 5 front-line managers of a regional Compensation and Benefits work unit of human resources within a larger organization called the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). At a regional level, which is spread over three Canadian provinces, there were a total of 6 front-line managers and supervisors who were in this role within this Canadian federal department. They faced the reality that parts of their own job functions would potentially be outsourced. Their organizational unit was primarily responsible for three key functions. First, pension calculations and advising clients on matters related to their pension. Second, it included advising clients on various health and disability contributions and benefits as they relate to the Public Service Health Plan. This is generally understood as activities related to benefits-insurance. Third, this unit was

responsible for all matters related to entitlement, like the issuing of biweekly pay checks, reconciling overtime payments, or payments to employees who are temporarily in positions that are higher than their substantive positions. The proposed organizational change called for an outsourcing of functions related to pension. Functions related to payroll, continued to remain within their sphere of responsibility. Within this unit, and as the empirical materials were being collected, these individuals were in the middle of this proposed radical organizational change.

The second group, labeled the Blue Team, included 6 front-line managers and supervisors who had been through a major "modernization" process within the public sector. As part of the Canadian federal government's "modernization" exercise, this particular department was granted a separate employer status in November 1999. No longer was this government department to be regulated and governed by a piece of legislation known as the Public Service Employment Act. Through this organizational restructuring, this department, which was granted an agency status, was able to fast-track its organizational changes in ways that put it at odds with hard-won labor contracts under the old scheme. This researcher's secondment to this department enabled him to first develop a relationship with potential participants before inviting them to participate in this study. Six of 24 front-line managers and supervisors chose to participate in this study. Unlike participants in the Red Team, these individuals were all located in one physical space and in a major Canadian city.

In relation to the total number of participants to be included in any qualitative research, Polkinghorne (1989) recommended anywhere from 5 to12 participants while

Creswell (1997) suggested no more than 10. This study comprised a total of 11

participants. The first is a purposive sample of 5 front-line managers and supervisors

who were in the midst of proposed radical organizational changes. The second is

purposive sample of 6 front-line managers and supervisors who were in the middle of

already-implemented organizational changes. The definition of the usage 'purposive

sample' is further discussed and defined in chapter 3. In anticipation of the large volume

of data to be gathered through written stories and interviews, the total number of

participants included in this study was deemed as appropriate.

Limitations

Functionary-effect

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1981) identified an opinion that may have affected the

responses received. As an employee of the organization, the writer of this research is

viewed, rightly or wrongly, not only as an expert in the field of organizational change but

also as a representative of management. This view may be disadvantageous because of

the opinion that experts may be viewed as people who are inserted into an organization to

ensure the smooth functioning of that organization. Furthermore, experts might see their

chances of advancement as being dependent upon how well they perform in that function

(Gadamer, 1981).

If this is true, then part of the problem might have been the inability to control

what may be said or shared. Would participants share what they truly feel, or would they

judge the researcher as simply there to maintain the status quo and hence say what they

think the researcher would like to hear? Accordingly, one of the limitations of this study might have been related to the forthrightness of responses. However, as will be explicated later, the candid responses of participants during the interview process allayed this fear.

Tenure in Current Position

While in the middle of this study, this researcher's secondment to the RCMP came to an end for three primary reasons: (a) change in management, (b) changing organizational priorities, and (c) lack of salary dollars. Special permission, however, was requested and granted to continue the study with the Red Team, as originally planned. In addition, as a recipient of the National Public Service Fellowship award, this researcher was able to offset travel costs associated with including participants from within the Red Team. Hence, while these participants were spread across three Canadian provinces, their participation in this study was not adversely affected. On another note, as a practitioner in the field of change management, this researcher was asked to assist another large federal department, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, with their already-implemented change initiatives. Subsequently, selected front-line managers and team leaders from this department were invited to be a part of this research study.

Willingness to Participate

At the proposal stage of this research study, it was noted that there was no guarantee of how many participants would choose to participate in this research study and how many would elect to be a part of this study was unknown. While participants in the Red Team had expressed their willingness to participate through prior contact, an

Summary

Chapter 1 focused on capturing the purpose of this qualitative research study and research problem. The scholarly and practical need to address the research problem of demonstrating the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration was further evidenced by the predominant tendency among change practitioners to think in dualistic terms and thereby arbitrarily forcing a decision to choose either a system-cybernetic approach or an interpretive approach to the study and management of organizational change. While both approaches are alive and well today, the systems-cybernetics approach continues to be the prime focus at the expense of any other approaches to the study or organizational change. This study promoted the thinking that one way of demonstrating the interconnectedness between both approaches was by listening to the narrative presentations or stories of individuals in the midst of change (Bateson, 1979) and by hermeneutically connecting up one's own understanding with that of the participants in this study (Habermas, 1975; 1984). To this end, this study built on the insight of Geertz (1986): "Stories matter. So...do stories about stories" (p. 377).

Organization of Dissertation

In response to the research problem and questions raised, chapter 2 is devoted to locating the stories of exclusivity and its impact on the experiences of individuals while in the midst of radical changes in society and in organizations. In an attempt to remain true to the narrative spirit, the organization and organizing of chapter 2 is approached as narrative presentations, or stories and hence read from within "the context of their life-worlds" (Habermas, 1987, p. 136).

Accordingly, chapter 2 is subdivided into three sections. Using a funnel-like approach, the focus in section 1 is on selected stories inherited from four representatives, namely Rousseau, Marx, Weber and Durkheim, from the 18th to early 20th centuries. In this section the focus is on understanding how these authors experienced the experience of social changes, at their time, for the sake of gaining a better appreciation of how organizational change may be more effectively addressed and managed in contemporary times.

Whereas the early writers were engaged in identifying the critical needs of individuals in the midst of change and as they related to system integration and social integration, the storyline changes from the mid 20th century. Section 2 demonstrates a decisive shift in the story line in the 20th century, from a reflective-appreciative relationship (Moore, 1994) of the experiences of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change, to an exclusive focus on systems and intentional planning that is dominated by calculative reasoning.

In Section 3, the focus is on the effects of technical ways of thinking upon individuals in organizations, and the subsequent treatment of individuals who choose not to embrace proposed organizational changes. In this section, the postmodernist's attempt to shift back to the reflective-appreciative relationship that characterized the thinking of authors identified in Section 1 is also addressed.

The attention in chapter 3 is devoted to being engaged in a method and tradition of inquiry that enables researchers and organizational managers, to demonstrate the interconnection between system integration and social integration (Habermas, 1975;

1984) and the interconnectedness between the critical needs and experiences of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change. Narrative inquiry is the method used to demonstrate the interconnectedness addressed in the preceding sentence. Empirical materials were collected through written stories and through unstructured, open-ended interviews that used participants' written stories as a springboard for conversation.

Finally, while chapter 3 proceeds with a *three-dimensional narrative inquiry space* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) as a method of analysis, chapter 2 has already demonstrated what this looks like in practice. While this three-dimensional narrative inquiry space calls for researchers to be focused on patterns that connect rather than looking at patterns as fixed-affairs (Bateson, 1979), chapter 2 has already begun the process of seeing the interconnections between historic, modernist and postmodernist literature. What is argued in chapter 3 is that if stories and the telling of stories are as natural to humans as the air one breathes, if people naturally lead storied lives (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Bruner, 1986b; Rosaldo, 1986), then, it makes sense to study and experience the experience of individuals in the midst of change narratively (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The narrative presentations, stories, and metaphors of 11 participants from both the Red and Blue Teams are described, interpreted, and analyzed in chapter 4. Patterns common to all stories were discovered and themes that best expressed their experiences were identified. In addition, participants' use of unique and rich metaphors was also analyzed in relation to how they recursively informed and structured the experiences of

participants in this study. To that end, the analysis of empirical materials in chapter 4 is primarily focused on the first research question, namely, what stories did participants involved in radical organizational change tell and what metaphors did they use to describe their experiences?

Finally, chapter 5 closes the dissertation by providing a summary of the findings of this research study. Conclusions and recommendations, based on the findings of this study, are also presented. At the same time, the conclusions and recommendations are drawn from the focus on the second research question, namely, what, if any, did their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experienced proposed or implemented radical organizational changes?

interesting and critical lesson was learned with a team of nurses who were originally planned for inclusion in this study. This group was supposed to have comprised a purposive sample of nurses whose occupational specialty had been moved to a different hospital. When approached, these nurses expressed their unwillingness to participate because they had no prior relationship with or knowledge of this researcher. What this experience suggests is that unlike the use of surveys as a traditional method used in the collection of data, the narrative method of inquiry required researchers to first develop a relationship with potential participants. As a consequence of this critical learning, the team of nurses was not included in this study. Instead, the Blue Team, as identified above, was included.

From the point of view of narrative inquiry, there is already a story that is being told about the interconnection between systems integration and social integration. At a systems level, for instance, consent and permission to conduct the research had to be gained prior to conducting the research. This is an organizational requirement irrespective of whether this was a quantitative or qualitative study. However, unlike quantitative studies, and at a social level, this researcher also needed to invest the time and energy in building a relationship with potential research participants prior to approaching them for their consent to be included in a study of this nature. In relation to the Red Team, this relationship was already established. In relation to the Blue Team, prior to inviting them to participate in this study, three months was spent simply building the relationship.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

What follows is an attempt, first, to investigate and explain the stories of exclusivity from the broad study of literature on social change since the 18th century, for the sake of examining what contemporary practitioners in the field of organizational change management can learn from scholars of the past. Second, the focus funnels down to contemporary literature on organizational change and uncovers a significant gap between the mode of inquiry and insights of past scholars and contemporary practitioners. Third, the real implications of this gap, as reflected in the literature, are addressed in relation to managing organizational change today.

To remain true to the narrative spirit of interconnectedness, two key decisions were made in conducting the literature review. First, a conscious decision was made to conduct a literature review by researching a variety of interdisciplinary sources. Sociological journals, anthropological journals, narrative journals, management journals, books, novels, and other related literature were examined with the intent of exploring how authors, over the ages, narrated their understanding and made meaning of the problem of exclusivity. The subject of the experiences of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change, including outsourcing, downsizing, and reengineering was also researched and examined by reviewing the variety of journals identified above and books related to this topic.

The second conscious decision was to approach the literature, as a whole, as narrative presentations. The intent was to locate the various points of view within "the context of their life-worlds" (Habermas, 1987, p. 136) and, as Gregory Bateson (1979) suggested, in a manner that thinks like human beings. Listen, for instance, to Bateson's (1979) story about a man who consulted his computer about the nature of the mind.

> He asked it (no doubt in his best Fortran), "Do you compute that you will ever think like a human being?" The machine then set to work to analyze its own computational habits. Finally the machine printed its answer on a piece of paper, as such machines do. The man ran to get the answer and found, neatly typed, the words: *THAT REMINDS ME OF A STORY.* [Italics, parenthesis, and upper case original] (Bateson, 1979, p. 13)

Interestingly enough, the man in Bateson's story asked a machine in the best Fortran language "Do you compute that you will ever think like a human being?" The machine offered a human truth that to think like a human being is to think in terms of stories. The limit of the machine, however, is that it is restricted to the technical production of six words: *that reminds me of a story.* Unlike machines, human beings can go further. They can tell a story and tell stories about stories that have been told. What then, are the stories that have been told about the need to demonstrate the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration and how are these stories relevant to the research questions raised in chapter 1?

Section 1: Stories from the 18th to Early 20th Centuries

Rousseau's Experience and his Story of Change

Turning the page back by about 250 years, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) is heard and seen as "experiencing the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 80) of

change through his romantic novel, *Julie, Or the New Heloise: Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps*. Through the writing of his letters Rousseau (1761/1997) tapped into the critical needs of individuals in the midst of social change. In this novel, his young hero Saint Preux moves from the country to the city - an archetypal move that will be representative for millions of young people in the centuries to come. Rousseau's experience of the social and psychological conditions of living in the city, where the "man of the world takes in everything and has time to reflect on nothing" (Rousseau, 1761/1997, p. 202), are echoed in Saint Preux's letters to his love Julie. Two sections of his letters, written at different times, are quoted at length below for the primary goal of understanding and making meaning of this hero's observations, mood, and temper.

> You would think that…individuals who are independent would have a mind of their own; not at all: just more machines that do not think…There are…a small number of men and women who think for all the others…and as each person is mindful of his own interest, no one of the common good, and as individual interests are at odds with each other, there is a perpetual clash of cliques and factions…Whoever likes to get around…must be more versatile than Alcibiades… There is more; for everyone puts himself constantly in contradiction with himself, without occurring to anyone to find this wrong. They have principles for conversation and others for practice, the contrast scandalizes no one… In a word everything is absurd and nothing shocks. (Rousseau, 1761/1997, pp. 191-192)

After several months in this tumultuous social environment, Saint-Preux described the psychological effects of being in the middle this fast-paced city life as follows:

> I am beginning to experience the intoxication into which this restless and tumultuous life plunges those who lead it, and I am falling into a dizziness like that felt by a man whose eyes a plethora of objects are rapidly passed. None of those that strike me engages my heart, but taken together they

disturb and suspend its affections, so much so that I forget what I am and who I belong to. (p. 209)

What is the connection between Rousseau's (1761/1997) story and the research problem and questions raised in this research study? Recall, for instance, the comment made by Duck (1998): "for change to occur in any organization, each individual must think, feel, or do something different... leaders must (learn to) win their followers one by one" [parenthesis added] (p. 56). To what critical needs would leaders in Rousseau's time need to respond, in order to win the followership of Saint-Preux? At the level of social integration, as the story unfolds Saint-Preux was asking for the space to reflect and to think. As a stranger in the city, the consequences of being in the middle of the city's noise and 'busy-ness' were a sense of restlessness, dizziness and, as Rousseau described it, feeling "hemmed in" (1997, p. 191). While survival in this metropolitan world required him to behave as a consumer in an urban setting (Arendt, 1958), Saint-Preux, on the other hand, was challenged by the need to reaffirm his own identity and at the same time be engaged in compelling work.

At the level of system integration, Rousseau's (1761/1997) hero was apprehensive about a social system that showed a lack of concern for the common good. In a social world governed by private interests, not only was there was "a perpetual clash of cliques and factions" (Rousseau, 1761/1997, p. 191), but also that survival in this world meant being more versatile than Alcibiades. At the same time, Rousseau also expressed his concerns not only on the dichotomy between what was said, "principles of conversation," and what was done, "principles of practice," but also at the fact that such a split or

contradiction was not seen as problematic. These ways of living were treated as a reified and taken-for-granted way of life. For Rousseau, however, these effects were not accidental. They were primarily consequences of a fundamental human decision to surrender their capacity to think for themselves and to reflect upon what they were doing.

To win the followership of Saint-Preux, a leader in Rousseau's time would have needed to respond positively to the critical needs of Rousseau's hero at both these levels. To merely require Saint-Preux to be constantly and unreflectively active in this busy and noisy environment would be a recipe for the loss of his followership.

Marx's Experience and his Story of Change

Moving forward about a hundred years, another writer, Karl Marx (1818-1883), is heard and seen as "experiencing the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 80) of social change through his question: "But although the atmosphere in which we live weighs upon everyone like a 20,000 lb. force, do you feel it?" (1978b, p. 577) Like the Parisians in Rousseau's (1761/1997) story, Marx's (1978b) contemporaries were oblivious to feeling the weight of this 20,000 lb. force. The social-psychological experience of this weight can be heard and felt in the quote below.

> On the one hand, there have started into life, industrial and scientific
> forces, which no epoch of human history had ever suspected. On the other
> hand, there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors of the
> latter times of the Roman Empire. (Marx, 1978b, p. 577)

Like his predecessor, Marx (1978b) was critical about what he saw as occurring in his day, namely, that while "everything (was) pregnant with its contrary" (p. 577), no one was shocked by such a contradiction. Within the world of work, whereas machinery

promised the shortening of human labor, what was experienced instead was "a starving and overworking" (Marx, 1978b, pp. 578) of human labor. For Marx, this was fundamentally a consequence of the human decision to endow "material forces with intellectual life and in stultifying human life into a material force" (p. 578). While acknowledging the power of industrial inventions, Marx was also startled at the human decision to relate to their own productions as if they had a mind of their own. A key consequence such an irrational human decision could be formulated as follows: humans first made their machines and then decided to let their machines make them.

Whereas Rousseau's hero was beginning to feel the intoxication of city life, Marx (1978c) argued that it was the bourgeoisie's total addiction to their own successes that caused them to lose touch and become disconnected with the contradictions that they were living. What were the successes of the bourgeoisie that was so intoxicating and how were they achieved?

> The bourgeoisie…has created more massive and more colossal productive
> powers than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of
> nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry
> and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of
> whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers…What earlier
> century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in
> the lap of social labor? (Marx, 1978c, p. 477)

Those who lived a century before Marx could not have imagined the possibilities and achievements of the "productive forces that slumbered in the lap of social labor" (Marx, 1978c, p. 477). In less than a hundred years, the bourgeoisie, through their laboring and economic activity, produced a compelling image of the good life as being the life of labor and production (Arendt, 1958). The laboring activity of the bourgeoisie

was exhilarating because it enabled the production of more than what was necessary. In so doing, the bourgeoisie were able to fundamentally distinguish themselves from, as Adam Smith described it, menial servants who, like "idle guests…leave nothing behind them in return for their consumption" (as cited in Arendt, 1958, p. 86). For the bourgeoisie, it was simply invigorating to apply the principles of machinery and chemistry in the creation of a world of surplus. However, their intoxicated desire to create a surplus moved them to control and subject everything to their will, and in doing so, they also left behind a de-humanized legacy. For example, within the realm of the work-systems, they "resolved personal worth into exchange value" (Marx, 1978c, p. 475). Any economic connection between men and women, other than "callous cash-payment" (p. 475), was viewed as meaningless.

Across the Atlantic ocean, an American contemporary of Marx by the name of Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) was, at the same time, warning his readers about the deceitfulness of relationships that were simply based on money. "To have done anything by which you earned money *merely* is to have been truly idle or worse. If the laborer gets no more than the wages which his employer pays him, he is cheated, he cheats himself" [italics original] (Thoreau, 1981, p. 357). For both Marx (1978c) and Thoreau (1981), such a relationship is deceitful because it excludes the notion that there is more to the value of human beings than money.

The success of the productive power of the bourgeoisie also moved them to arrogantly "create a world after its his own image" (Marx, 1978c, p. 477). The exclusive message of the bourgeoisie was crystal clear: *be like me or suffer the pain of extinction.*

To adopt the bourgeois mode of production without question, then, meant accepting, without question, the homogeneity as defined by the bourgeoisie and, at the same time, being satisfied with the mere monetary exchange of such a relationship. Diversity and differences were excluded as a possibility.

In the midst of radical change, then, what must leaders do to win the loyalty and followership of the proletariat in Marx's time? From Marx's narrative, the reduction of an employer-employee relationship to merely one of a monetary-relationship, the utilization of workers as if they were simply appendages of machines, the dictatorial subjugation of employees to a single point of view, the decision to endow machines with intellectual life, the stultifying of human life into a material force, the eradication of diversity in the name of progress and economic productivity, and an unreflective relationship to one's decisions, were recipes for the loss of followership.

Weber's Experience and his Story of Change

In the early 20th century, another German writer, Max Weber (1864-1920), also attempted to understand and make meaning of the constant and restless activity of capitalists while in the midst of change.

> If you ask them what is the meaning of their restless activity, why they are never satisfied with what they have...they would perhaps give the answer, if they know at all: 'to provide for my children and grandchildren'. But more often and, since that motive is not peculiar to them, but was just as effective for the traditionalist, more correctly, simply: that business with its continuous work has become a necessary part of their lives... it at the same time expresses what is, seen from the view-point of personal happiness, so irrational about this sort of life, where a man exists for the sake of his business, instead of the reverse. (Weber, 1958, p. 70)

Once again, and from the point of view of personal happiness, the adverse effects

of intoxication and the irrationality of such a reversed relationship are heard in the early

20th century. Weber (1958), however, was not convinced that the capitalists of his time

were engaged in their restless activity for the altruistic purpose of providing for their

children and grandchildren, because such a motive was not peculiar to them. His

hermeneutic understanding was that the human decision to allow the work of business to

become so necessary to their lives moved capitalists to the point that they could not live

without it. For Weber then, this irrationality can be expressed as follows: humans first

created their business and now existed for the sake of their business.

When Weber (1958) stopped to experience the experience of an unreflective

relationship to one's work, he could not help but stray from his intent to provide a purely

historical and scientific discussion of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

In his reflective moment, Weber imagined the conditions that humans were constructing

for themselves.

> No one knows who will live in this cage in the future or whether at the end
> of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise or there
> will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or, if neither, mechanized
> petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For of
> the last stage of this cultural development it might well be truly said:
> 'Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines
> that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved'. (p. 182)

As a pure social scientist, Weber (1958) felt guilty in voicing these possibilities

because they were seen as belonging in the realm of "judgements, value and faith" (p.

182). However, it appears as if he could not help but make this comment in his reflective

and human moment. In doing so, he communicated several critical needs that would

compel his loyalty to the program of change. For Weber (1958), it would be critical to be in an environment that allowed him to be a specialist with spirit and a sensualist with heart. It would also be very important for him to not abdicate his authorship of the products of his own creation.

A recurring pattern that connects (Bateson, 1979) all the narratives of these authors is that each of them argued against an intoxicated, unreflective, and exclusive relationship to laboring and economic activity. For Rousseau, the human decision to surrender the capacity to think to a few was problematic. For Marx, the decision to treat human products as if they had a mind of their own was problematic. For Weber, the human decision to exist for the sake of their business was problematic. For Marx (1978), however, only someone who is sober is capable of understanding and making meaning of a human decision as referenced by Weber (1958). According to Marx (1978b) and Weber (1958), individuals who were and are addicted to constant activity, like alcoholics or workaholics, are incapable of such an understanding because they are too busy working or being drunk. Constant activity and the exclusive and addictive focus on constant change, on the other hand, was deceitfully comforting in that men and women did not have to face the real conditions of their lives (Marx, 1978; Weber, 1958).

Durkheim's Experience and his Story of Change

The social consequences of an unreflective relation to a world that was exclusively dictated by the monetary rules of the marketplace were also felt and addressed by a French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858-1917). In addressing issues connected to the steering performances of a self-regulated system, Durkheim (1964) took

Herbert Spencer to task. According to Durkheim (1964), Spencer believed that the continued existence of "social life...can naturally organize itself only by an unconscious, spontaneous adaptation under the immediate pressure of needs, and not according to a rational plan of reflective intelligence" (p. 203). Spencer, according to Durkheim (1964), believed that, similar to the natural pulling together of people in times of crisis or natural disasters, the immediate pressures of the marketplace would be sufficient to steer the social system into some form of equilibrium. However, it was precisely the development of social relationships, based on the temporary-ness of immediate pressures, that troubled Durkheim, because if only economic "interest relates men, it is never for more than some few moments" (Durkheim, 1964, p. 203). Upon completion of these types of ephemeral business relationships, in other words, there is really no reason to stay in contact.

The consequences of focusing exclusively on the competitive rules of the marketplace troubled Durkheim because it excluded a more durable moral bond. The same held true for Rousseau, Marx, and Weber from the 18th to the early 20th centuries. The different metaphors used by these men to describe the loss of strong and durable social bonds are extremely revealing. For Rousseau (1761/1997) the metaphor revolved around the versatility of Alcibiades. For Marx (1978b), it was the profanation of the holy or the melting of all that is solid into air. For Weber (1958), it was the metaphor of being in an iron cage and being engaged in work as specialists without spirit or sensualists without heart. For Durkheim (1964) it was the ephemeral nature of market relationships. At the same time, each of these scholars from the past, did not simply bemoan the transitory and impermanent character of their quickly changing times and relationships.

They chose instead to reflect upon the human decision to socially construct a world whereby men and women abdicated their capacity to think and their willingness to treat their creations as if they had a mind of their own.

In summary, this section of the literature review has attempted to demonstrate how scholars of the past experienced the experience of social change by engaging in their stories. For Habermas (1984):

> When we tell stories, we cannot avoid also saying indirectly how the subjects involved in them are faring and what fate the collectivity they belong is experiencing. Nevertheless, we can make harm to personal identity or threats to social integration visible only indirectly in narratives. (p. 137)

Similarly, through their narrative presentations, Rousseau, Marx, Thoreau, Weber, and Durkheim, could not avoid making visible the harm that was being done to personal identity and the threats to both social integration and system integration. Their ability to make such harms and threats visible required first and foremost for them to make a cognitive decision be reflective. Like Saint-Preux, they needed to act as if they were strangers in their own time. This enabled them to create for themselves a certain amount of space for reflection and appreciation. For Moore (1994), this is essentially what it meant to take an interest in one's soul. "To take an interest in one's soul" Moore said, "requires a certain amount of space for reflection and appreciation" (p. 14).

Hence, rather than being addicted to or being exclusively focused on the constant busy-ness and activity of their time, a key characteristic of the authors addressed in this section of chapter 2 was their decision to choose a *reflective-appreciative relationship,* or a *soulful relationship* to ideas, to life, and to their world (Moore, 1994). For Marx

(1978a) this choice is risky and at the same time courageous because those who choose

such an approach cannot be afraid of their own conclusions and neither can they be

"afraid…of conflict with the powers that be" (Marx, 1978a, p. 13). Finally, the critical

needs of individuals in the midst of change, as reflected in the literature, are collected

under the umbrella of four dimensions and graphically displayed in Figure 1 below.

These scholars of the past could be heard as teaching contemporary change managers and

leaders that the latter would be able to win the followership of those whom they lead, one

by one, by attending to the interconnectedness of the identified critical needs.

The Physical Dimension Money (Marx, Weber, Durkheim) Physical Capacity to Produce (Marx) Healthy Balance between Work and other aspect of one's life - not addicted or intoxicated (Rousseau, Marx, Weber)	*The Social/Emotional Dimension* Communication Systems -alignment between principles of conversation and principles of practice (Rousseau) Celebration of Differences (Marx) Moral Societal Bond through Co-operation (Durkheim) Feeling a Sense of Belonging (Rousseau) Clear sense of one's Identity (Rousseau) Concern for the Public/Common Good (Rousseau)
The Mental Dimension Ability to think for oneself (Rousseau, Marx, Weber) Being involved in work that was mentally challenging (Rousseau, Marx) Critical Inquiry (Marx) Entrepreneurship (Weber)	*The Spiritual Dimension* Creation of Space to be Reflective (Rousseau, Marx, Weber, Durkheim) To be engaged in work that was compelling (Rousseau) To be Specialists with Spirit and Sensualists with Heart (Weber) Need for a Sense of the Holy (Marx, Weber) Need to Hold on to Something Solid (Rousseau, Marx, Weber)

Figure 1. Four critical dimensions and corresponding needs.

The interconnectedness between issues relating to both system integration and social integration is graphically displayed in Figure 2 below.

Social Integration

Sense of Belonging
Engaged in Compelling Work
Space to be Reflective
Clear sense of Identity
Specialists with Spirit

For the sake of achieving strategic organizational objectives

System Integration

A Work Environment that Balances Work and Life Issues
Communication Systems: Alignment between Words and Action
System that Affirms Diversity
Equitable Pay System
Concern for the Public Good

Challenge to see the interconnectedness between the two

Figure 2. On the interconnectedness between system and social integration.

The point to be stressed is that while the critical needs identified in all four dimensions are vital to individuals in the midst of change, the exclusive focus on any one need or dimension creates the types of imbalance that has been addressed in this section of chapter 2. At the same time, it is also conceivable that the critical needs would differ from individual to individual. A one size fits all approach to the management of individuals in the midst of change, in other words, would at best be inappropriate and at worst, according to Bennis (1989b), "pornographic" (p. 97). On the other hand, if leaders

were to win their followership, one by one, they would need to attend to the

interconnected issues as demonstrated in Figure 2. In contrast to this historic

understanding of what it means to manage change, how do contemporary men and

women approach the management of change?

Section 2: From Reflective Thinking to Intentional Planning

Whereas the writers addressed in Section 1 were purposefully engaged in

demonstrating the critical needs of individuals as they were connected to both system

integration and social integration, the mid-to late- 20th century was characterized by the

lack of this purposeful engagement. This was fundamentally due to the human decision

"to be determined anew in a decisive fashion by technology" (Gadamer, 1981, p. 72).

> With the…transfer of technical expertise from the mastery of the forces of
> nature to social life…a novel expectation has become pervasive in our
> awareness: whether a more rationalized organization of society or, briefly,
> a mastery of society by reason and by more rational social relationships
> may not be brought about by intentional planning…This is the ideal of a
> technocratic society… (Gadamer, 1981, p. 72)

In comparison to the stories from the 18th to early 20th centuries, there is

significant shift in the story line today. Unlike scholars in the past who were passionately

engaged in the art and practice of reflective thinking, the unmistakable mark of the 20th

century was the technocratic desire to master social and organizational relationships by

calculative reasoning and intentional planning. Whereas the thinkers from the 18th to

early 20th centuries were motivated by a *let's think about what we are doing* philosophy,

the thinking from the mid-20th century, was driven instead by a *let's do it* philosophy.

The latter was passionately preoccupied with the question of whether a more rationalized

organization of society could be brought about through intentional planning, and were totally engaged in activities to make it happen. The excessive desire to make it happen through intentional planning entered into the world of organizations and change management through a machinist and manager in the engineering industry, Frederick Winslow Taylor (1947). To make organizational changes happen, Taylor went as far as stipulating that in all organizations "all possible brain work should be removed from the shop and centered in the planning …department (pp. 98-99).

Frederick Taylor and Scientific Management

There can be little doubt that the original publication of Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* in 1911 "laid the foundation stone for the development of organization and management theory" (Burnes, 1992, p. 12). Ironically, Burnes (1992) also noted that by the time of Taylor's death in 1915, he had also gained the reputation of being a major "enemy of the working man" (p. 22). In relation to managing organizational change and people, Taylor advocated five simple principles based on his fundamental assumption: "Men are naturally lazy" (Taylor, 1947, p. 20). As a consequence, it "is only as a result of external pressure that he (the worker) takes the more rapid pace" [parenthesis added] (Taylor, 1947, p. 20).

Based on this assumption of the working person, and in relation to managing workers in the midst of any organizational change or work routine, Taylor (1947) detailed five key management activities: (a) *Shifting all responsibility for the organization of work from the worker to the manager*. Managers should do all the thinking relating to the planning and design of work, leaving the workers with the task of implementation, (b)

U*sing scientific methods* to determine the most efficient way of doing work, designing

the worker's task accordingly, specifying the precise way in which the work is to be

done, (c) *Selecting* the best person to perform the job thus designed, (d) *Training* the

worker to do the work efficiently, and (e) *Monitoring* worker performance to ensure that

appropriate work procedures are followed and that appropriate results are achieved (pp.

25-26).

Within this Taylorian framework, the model for organizational change was self-

evident. Like the voice of command in the world of the military, Taylorian change was

achieved by edict. The chain of command was clear. Managers, who were often owners

of the means of production, reserved the right to think and change the operations of their

factories as they saw fit. Workers were expected to implement what they were told in a

robot-like fashion.

Whereas Rousseau in the 18th century was startled at the fact that men and women

in his time had given the power of thinking over to a few, Taylor, in the early 20th

century, set out to consciously construct a working environment where there would be a

systematic increase in the managers' knowledge, thinking, and control over work

processes, and, at the same time, a systematic decrease and reduction of worker's

discretion and control over what they do. Unlike Rousseau (1761/1997), Marx (1978b),

or Weber (1958), Taylor (1947) did not see any contradiction in such an organizational or

social construction. To that end, he postulated that perhaps the "most prominent single

element in modern scientific management is the task idea" (p. 39). Managers in their

factories or work places were expected to fully plan every detail of tasks that needed to

be done, how it was to be done, and to specify the precise amount of time to complete each task (Taylor, 1947).

In this working environment, workers were treated as if they were interchangeable parts of a machine. Whereas Marx (1978b) was highly critical of treating workers as simply being an "appendage of the machine" (p. 479), Taylor (1947) set out to intentionally construct a work environment that was fundamentally based on this very idea. From this machine point of view then, "the task idea" (p. 20), was viewed as being singularly important. Taylor was convinced that managing the details of the task was more important than managing the dynamics of the relationships that existed in any organization, and that efficient management could be produced through intentional planning. Is it any wonder, then, that many managers, today, continue to rely on the idea of managing the pieces, or tasks, rather than the dynamics of organizational change? One consequence of this sole access to the brainwork of the organization is captured in the following graphic.
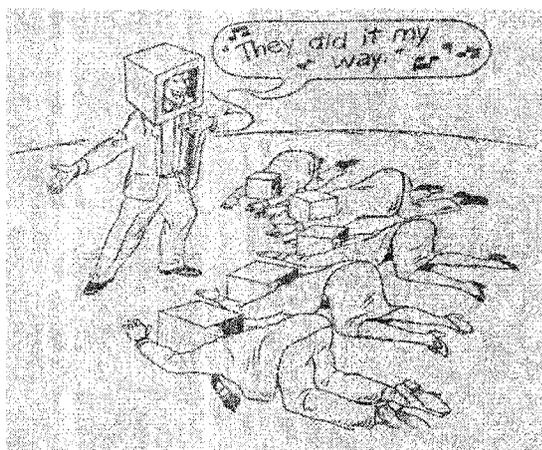
Figure 3. The ego of management a la Taylor. From G. Morgan, 1997. Imaginization: the art of creative management. p. 13. Copyright by Sage Publications, Inc. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.

However, while the governing principles of scientific management increased efficiency, so too did people's antagonism to being treated like being parts in a machine where they were faceless, interchangeable and just another number (Morgan, 1986). Such a treatment led to high rates of employee turnover, absenteeism, and at times workforce rebellion in the form of walkouts, strikes, and union demands for changed work conditions (Herzberg, 1976; Mayo, 1960). It was this organizational reality that raised the need to shift the story line and promote another way of thinking and relating to the management of people and organizational change.

Elton Mayo and the Human Relations School

Mayo (1960) and his team demonstrated the positive effects of the relationship between worker involvement and worker productivity in the early 1920s. Scientific lighting studies were conducted at the Hawthorne plant of Western Electric outside Chicago, to demonstrate that worker productivity would be higher if the level of lighting was higher. To research the effects of lighting on productivity, two groups of workers were selected from the factory floor. The test-group was placed in a test room where the work–area lighting was systematically varied. The control group was placed in a test room where the work-area lighting level remained constant throughout the study. The results of that scientific study were baffling. As expected, in the test room where lighting levels were varied, worker production increased when the lighting was increased. Unexpectedly, production also increased in the test room when the lighting was *decreased.* The control group, on the other hand, matched productivity increases by the

test group, even though the control group's lighting remained the same throughout the study.

Given these results, Mayo (1960) and his team concluded that the economic and mechanistic view of worker motivation did not take into account the critical need of involving workers in decision-making processes. Mayo argued that since the workers knew they were being studied, and because they enjoyed being consulted and included in the decision-making processes, their work motivation increased (p. 69). The nature of this positive involvement is commonly referred today, as the Hawthorne effect.

As a result of these findings the human relations model that emphasized the notion of organizations as a network of social relationships was promoted. Proponents of this model stressed the need to align the formal and informal social structures and processes of the organization, through augmenting a concern for productivity by a concern for employee motivation and morale and the context or "surroundings" (Mayo 1960, p. 112). Through this formulation Mayo attacked the mechanical treatment of employees as interchangeable parts, stressing that different employees had differing motivations; that the specialization of labor and de-skilling had created widespread alienation and de-motivation; that excessive supervision had crushed employee initiative.

What is noteworthy is that for Mayo the idea of motivation, states of tension, and potential organizational maladjustment is not a problem that resides "in the individual's head" (Barrett, Thomas & Hocevar, 1995, p. 353). Instead, Mayo's studies confirmed the hypothesis "that the locus of industrial maladjustment [was] somewhere in the *relationship* between person – work – company policy, rather than in any individual or

individuals" [Emphasis mine] (Mayo, 1960, p. 112). At a practical level then, the image

of an organization as being an organism of interdependent relationships can now be

viewed as a relationship between employees, the work or types of work performed and

organizational policies that either enable or disable alignment with states of motivation or

tension.

The Rise of Systems Thinking

Today, the relational way of thinking as presented in the preceding paragraph has

commonly been identified as systems thinking. Within this perspective, society and

organizations are viewed as living system with relationships and connectedness

(Habermas, 1975). Capra (1996), credits Ludwig von Bertalanffy for introducing this new

way of thinking in the early 1920s. According to Capra, for example, Bertalanffy set out

to replace the mechanistic foundation of science with a holistic vision, which arises from

the interactions and relationships within a living system.

From an organizational perspective, rather than simply managing individual tasks,

as Taylor (1947) proposed, Bertalanffy's view of an *open and living system* moved

managers to now manage the interaction and relationship between the different parts that

were both internal and external to the organization. For Bertalanffy, the organism is

viewed as "an open system in a (quasi) steady state…in which material continually enters

from, and leaves into, the outside environment" [parenthesis original] (as cited in Capra,

1996, p. 121). As a consequence of a contingent relationship upon the environment,

organizations were no longer seen as being in complete control of their own fate (Burnes,

1992). To embrace this environmentally dependent perspective without question is to

suggest that the best that those who are called upon to lead and manage change can do is to adapt to unpredictable environmental changes. In point of fact, Gadamer (1981) suggested that in this type of an environment an individual's or an organization's "adaptive qualities" were elevated "to privileged status" (p. 73). Whereas the reflective quality was the distinguishing mark of authors from the 18th to early 20th centuries, for Gadamer (1981) in today's "technological civilization...the adaptive power of the individual is rewarded more than his creative power" (pp. 73-74).

The task of change managers, then, is to do whatever was necessary to maintain the stability or at least a quasi-steady state of the system. Within this model, change managers needed to define themselves as functionaries of the system who were responsible for its smooth functioning (Gadamer, 1981). Kotter (1998) identified various organizational attempts at adapting to changes in the environment. These efforts

> Have gone under many banners: total quality management, reengineering, right sizing, restructuring, cultural change and turnaround. [However], in almost every case, the basic goal has been the same: to make fundamental changes in how business is conducted in order to help cope with a new, more challenging market environment (p. 2).

Adapting to change and steering the organization through the environmental challenges in an attempt to secure its desired results became the role of change managers.

Cybernetics and the Steering Role of Management

Norbert Weiner (1894-1964) grounded the image and metaphor of the manager as steersman in cybernetic-thinking. Weiner (1950) traced the roots of cybernetics and defined the term as follows:

> The word cybernetics is taken from the Greek *kybernetes,* meaning steersman. From the same Greek word, through the Latin corruption *gubernator,* came the term governor, which has been used for a long time to designate a certain type of control mechanism…The basic concept…of this term, is that of a feedback mechanism, which is especially well represented by the steering engine of a ship. (as cited in Becvar & Becvar, 2000, p. 16)

Whereas the mechanistic model promoted by Taylor was devoid of employee feedback, the cybernetic model offered a degree of feedback, albeit negative feedback. From the perspective of cybernetics, feedback is the "control of a machine on the basis of its *actual* performance rather than its *expected* performance" [italics original] (Weiner, 1950, p. 24). For Weiner, then, cybernetics was a science of guidance, control and governance that was akin to the kind of successive cycles of error correction that were involved in keeping a ship on course. Managers who used the metaphor of cybernetics to guide their management thinking tended to focus exclusively on whether or not their organizations were on target. Consequently, they did, and continue to do, whatever was and is necessary to steer their organizations to reach their specific organizational goals. The graphic below may better explain the single-loop feedback process of the cybernetic approach to organizational change.

Assessing deviation of actual performance from expected performance

Change direction…
correct error realign to
come closer to expected
performance

Negative Feedback

Steer and counter steer
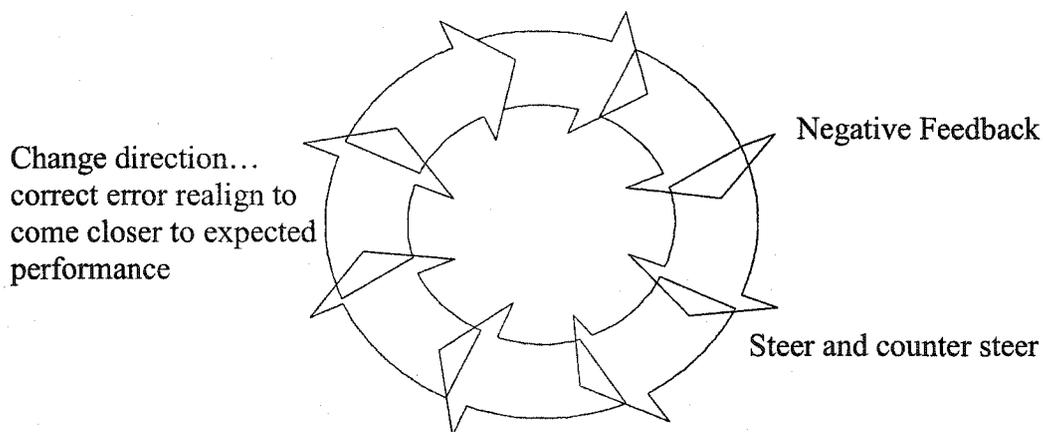
Figure 4. Negative single loop feedback.

It is precisely this reaction to negative feedback and type of thinking, that

prompted Weick and Quinn (1999) to claim that reactions to "organizational change

generally occur in the context of failures to adapt…" (p. 371). Within this problem-

solving context, rather than understanding the critical needs of individuals in the midst of

change, rather than winning their followership, one by one (Duck, 1998), O'Toole (1995)

argued "that the executive's challenge [was] to pilot through these rolling seas in a

purposeful and successful manner, to steer an appropriate organizational course in

turbulent conditions" (p. xii).

The dominance of the cybernetic language and way of thinking is unmistakable

today, insofar as organizational managers and leaders continue to use the language of

steering the ship rather than rowing the boat and see such an activity as strategic in nature

and as being the work of leaders. Part of that steering might also include the re-alignment

of organizational systems, processes or structure. The language of steering, which

resonates with the metaphor of a leader as helmsman of a ship, is also dominant in the

literature on the management of organizational change (Ansoff, 1965; Cicmil, 1999;

Hamel & Prahalad, 1989; Mintzberg, 1987; Pettigrew, 1980; Quinn, 1980). In managing

change from the perspective of cybernetics, the parallel between steering an organization

and controlling a machine is unmistakable. It is precisely this type of thinking that has led

managers to adopt a strategic approach to change management. It is an approach that is

itself grounded in the rationality that was identified by Gadamer (1981) as intentional

planning.

Andrews (1980), for example, defined strategy as a

> Pattern of decisions in a company that determines and reveals its
> objectives, purposes, or goals, produces the principal policies and plans
> for achieving those goals, and defines the range of business the company
> is to pursue, the kind of economic and human organization it is, or intends
> to be, and the nature of the economic and non-economic contribution it
> intends to make to its shareholders, employees, customers and
> communities. (As cited in Smith, 1982, p. 10)

In effect, the pattern of decisions in cybernetic organizations consists of three

fundamental steps First, decision makers within this type of an organization make a

decision about the basic business they want to be in and the contributions they choose to

make to their shareholders, employees, customers, and communities. From an economic

point of view, these contributions may be for profit or not-for-profit. Second, they

organize themselves internally to achieve their determined contributions or outcomes.

Finally, they measure and evaluate their outputs against their intended raison d'etré and,

if necessary, make the necessary corrections to how they are internally organized. The

role of leaders and managers within this cybernetic-ally organized system is to engage in

the organizational visioning process and then to steer or pilot the organization through the

process of achieving their organization's vision. As pilots, the question of the company or

organization's vision and desired outputs is treated as a given. Their jobs as pilots are to

get their organization to their prescribed destination.

Adapted from Morgan (1986), the very busy interconnection of this pattern of

decisions that continues to drive a cybernetic approach to change management is

reflected in Figure 5.
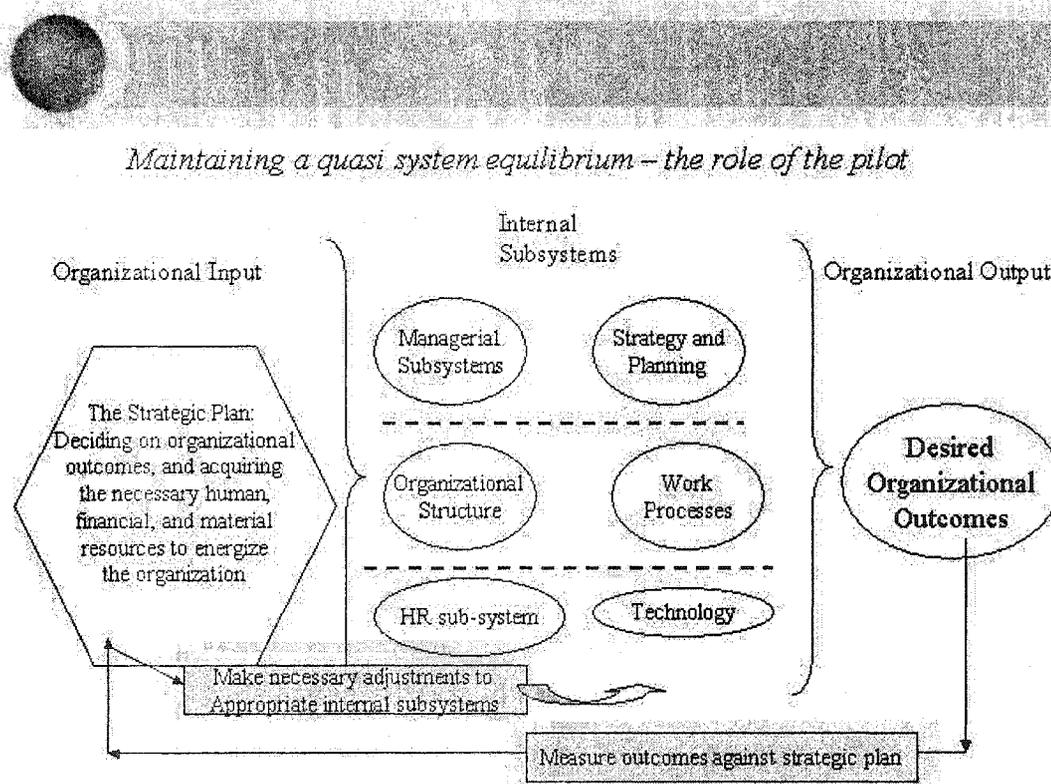
Figure 5. Interconnections of actions to maintain system equilibrium.

Proponents of cybernetic thinking moved organizational managers to focus more on the technical interaction and alignment between the subsystems within an organizational environment for the purpose of maintaining the system in a quasi state of equilibrium (Habermas, 1975, 1987). These subsystems included managerial, strategic, technological, human-cultural, and structural subsystems. This way of thinking stressed, and continues to stress, the relationships between these different variables and their influences upon the functioning of an organization. In so doing, it provided managers with a useful diagnostic tool to adjust and align parts of the organization that were viewed as being misaligned from expected outcomes, results, or outputs.

The work of steering the organization towards the achievement of its desired outcomes, however, required change managers and leaders to begin by expressing dissatisfaction with the present situation (Dannemiller & Jacobs, 1992; Duck, 1998; Kotter, 1998). This dissatisfaction is further translated as data for creating urgencies for change (Kotter, 1998). Kotter stipulated that "establishing a great enough sense of urgency" (p. 3) is the first step in initiating successful organizational change "because just getting a transformation program started requires the aggressive cooperation of many individuals. Without motivation, people won't help and the effort goes nowhere" (p. 3). Establishing a great enough sense of urgency for change among its people then, became a way of achieving newly desired organizational ends.

One implication of this model of change is that the usefulness and the success of the organizational steersman would be dependent and contingent on not waiting for negative feedbacks but on creating negative feedbacks. Durkheim (1964), however, could

be heard as taking issue with Kotter's (1998) stipulation. Recall, for instance,

Durkheim's (1964) criticism of Herbert Spencer, who believed that "social life…can

naturally organize itself *only* by…unconscious, spontaneous adaptation under the

immediate pressure of needs…" {Italics added] (p. 203). It is as if organizational change

cannot occur in any way other than when under the immediate pressure of needs that are

imposed upon it from the outside. By implication, however, urgencies are temporary. Part

of the problem with approaches to organizational change that rests solely on a sense of

urgency, is that the sustainability of change will, at best, be short lived (Durkheim, 1964).

Said in another way, when the immediate urgency for change is no longer felt, the

"aggressive cooperation" (Kotter, 1998, p. 3) that is claimed to be necessary for

successful change efforts, will also naturally decline.

Is it any wonder then, that, many of the planned change management initiatives

(Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Beer & Walton, 1987; Burke, Church & Waclawski, 1993;

Porras, 1987; Porras & Silvers, 1991), dictated by calculative rationality and by techné,

and promoted through cries of urgency, have resulted in failure (Duck, 1993; Izumi &

Taylor, 1998; Kotter, 1996; Schaffer & Thomson, 1992; Senge, 1999; Strebel, 1998)?

Peter Senge (1999), for example, referred to two independent studies that were conducted

in the early 1990s. Arthur D. Little published the first. McKinsey & Co. published the

other. Both these studies concluded that "out of hundreds of corporate Total Quality

(TQM) programs studied, about two thirds grind to a halt because of their failure to

produce hoped-for results"(Senge, 1999, pp. 5-6). As a consequence, such overwhelming

organizational failures have produced more cynicism (Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Senge,

1999). According to Senge "even without knowing the statistics, most of us know firsthand, that change programs fail" (p. 6). At the level of social integration, he pointed to the experience of cynicism in the face of failed efforts to bring about desired organizational changes.

> We've seen enough 'flavor of the month' programs 'rolled out from top management to last a lifetime. We know the cynicism they engender. We have watched ourselves and others around us 'salute the flag' and then say privately, 'Here we go again', and 'This will never work.' Some companies even create their own jargon to laugh a bit at their skepticism: At Harley-Davidson, management's latest great ideas are greeted with the phrase 'AFP', which is translated publicly as 'Another Fine Program'. (Senge, 1999, p. 6)

Some consequences of such cynicism is that "far from embracing change, many managers have had enough" (Hoag, Ritschard, & Cooper, 2002, p. 6) while others would like it to stop (Chia, 1999; Kanter, 1995). It is also interesting to note the work that proponents of intentional planning have carved out for themselves. As shown in Figure 5 the alignment of the human-cultural subsystem to achieve desired organizational ends, in other words, meant that change managers were now required to encourage employees to buy into the proposed organizational changes, to deal with employee cynicism, and to counteract the publicly-supported-but-privately-rejected attitudes of employees. Instead of thinking about and reflecting upon the fundamental assumptions that were guiding their organizational change efforts, the predominance of calculative reasoning and intentional planning moved its proponents to treat those who did not embrace the proposed organizational changes as simply being resistant to change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). It chose to view such a resistance as merely being yet another restraining force

(Lewin, 1951) that needed to be solved or fixed. From this perspective, in an effort to encourage employees to accept and adapt to environmental changes that were impacting upon the organization, much of the change management effort shifted to first understanding why individuals resisted change, and then, looking for ways to manage those identified resistances.

<center>Section 3: The Experience of the Individual in the Midst of Change</center>

<center>*The Modernist's Perspective*</center>

Rather than interpreting the problem of change from a relational perspective (Lewin, 1951; Mayo, 1960), resistance to change became reduced to residing in the individual's head (Barrett, et al. 1995; Dent & Goldberg, 1999). About the same time that Weiner (1948) had introduced the notion of cybernetic thinking, there was also the first known published reference to research on resistance to change in organizations. It was a 1948 study conducted by Lester Coch and John French entitled, "Overcoming Resistance to Change" (as cited in Dent & Goldberg, 1999). Coch and French focused their study on two main questions. First, they wanted to know why people resisted change so strongly. Second, they also sought to answer the question of what could be done to overcome such resistances (Dent & Goldberg, 1999, p. 31). Since then, there has been an explosion of research that was motivated by these two fundamental questions. A review of the resistance to change literature reveals three different conceptualizations of resistance. It has been conceptualized "as a cognitive state, as an emotional state, and as a behavior" (Piderit, 2000, p. 784).

At a cognitive level, Piderit (2000) quoted Watson (1982) who suggested: "what is often labeled as resistance is, in fact, only reluctance" (as cited in Piderit, 2000, p. 785). While Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder (1993) defined resistance in behavioral terms, they suggested that it is really preceded by a cognitive stated which they termed "un-readiness" (as cited in Piderit, 2000, p. 785). At this cognitive level, Beer (1980), Hannan and Freeman (1988), and Spector (1989) also argued that change is resisted because it threatened the *status quo*. Further research that relied on this conventional wisdom that people resisted change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999) also suggested that resistance to change might occur at a cognitive level when people distrust or have past resentments toward those leading change (Block, 1993; Bridges, 1980; Ends & Page, 1977; O'Toole, 1995) or when they have different understandings, interpretations, or assessments of the situation (Morris & Raben, 1995).

At an emotional level, studies conducted by Morris and Raben (1995), and Smith and Berg (1987) demonstrated there is a direct correlation between resistance to change and increased fear and anxiety of real or imagined consequences of change. Others argued that this increased fear of the unknown (Dubrin & Ireland, 1993; Hoag et al. 2002), threatened personal security (Bryant, 1989), and employees' confidence in their ability to perform (Morris & Raben, 1995; O'Toole, 1995) at a behavioral level. In concurrence with Coch and French (1948), Argyris and Schon (1974, 1978), and Piderit (2000), also noted that resistance to change is a defense mechanism caused by emotions like frustration and anxiety.

At a behavioral level, Davidson (1994), on the other hand, argued that the concept called resistance to change, has come to include "anything and everything that workers do which managers do not want them to do, and that workers do not do that managers wish them to do" (p. 94). From Folger and Skarlicki's (1999) point of view, resistance is defined as "employee behavior that seeks to challenge, disrupt, or invert prevailing assumptions, discourses, and power relations" (p. 36). Other researchers pointed to the negative consequences of such an experience by claiming that prevailing assumptions, discourses or power relations that were not perceived to be in the best interest of employees forced the latter into different kinds of defensive routines. (Argyris, 1990, 1994), Ashforth and Mael (1998), and Shapiro, Lweicki, and Devine (1995), defined resistance as intentional acts of commission, which is perceived as defiance, and omission and sabotage, which is understood as a willingness to deceive authorities. At this behavioral level, for Davidson (1994), part of the problem with this formulation was that it potentially obscured "a multiplicity of different actions and meanings that merit more precise analysis in their own right" (p. 94).

In relation to the problem and story of exclusivity that drives this research study, it is interesting to note that for Piderit (2000) the challenge was also to bring the three identified conceptualizations together. For her, while each of the three conceptualizations of resistance had merit and represented an important part of our experience of response to change, reframing them in a more integrative way would deepen a researcher's understanding of how employees responded to proposed organizational changes, and presumably, increased a manager's capacity to respond appropriately. Subsequently for

her, any definition that focused on one view at the expense of others was incomplete (Piderit, 2000).

Insofar as there is a shift in focus to the individual, one key point needs to be made clear. All of the authors identified in the preceding paragraphs, treat resistance to change as a socio-psychological phenomenon that exists over there and in the individual's head (cf., Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995; Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Ford, Ford, & McNamara, 2002). Unlike the insights of Mayo (1960), maladjustments or resistances are not, for example, seen as existing "somewhere in the relationship between person – work – company policy" (p. 112).

As displayed in Figures 1 and 2 earlier, whereas Rousseau, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim were able to locate the critical needs of individuals in the midst of social change, systems-cybernetic thinking moved their practitioners to interpret the situation differently. The focus now is on managing the adverse effects that stand in the way of organizational change. Figure 6 captures the essence of this new interpretation.
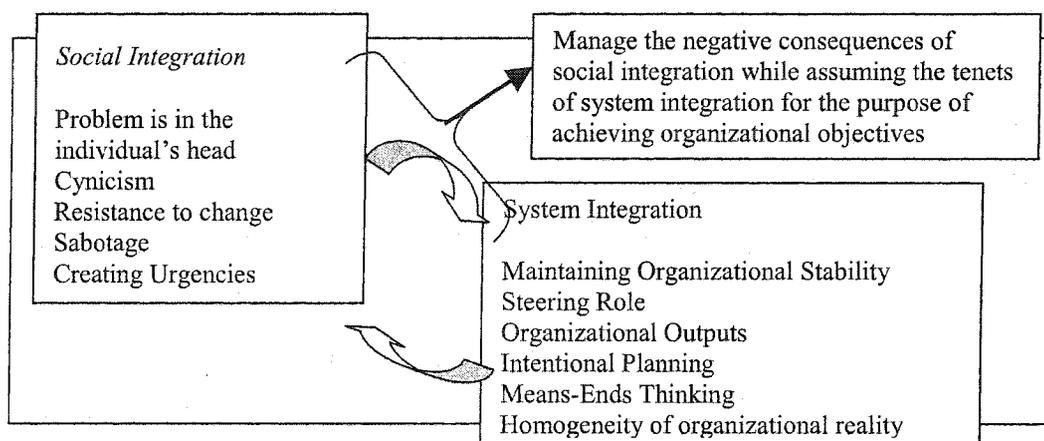
Figure 6. The interpretation and work of system cybernetics.

The Perspective of Postmodernism

More recently, another model has been advanced in the literature relating to

organizational change management. Ford, Ford, and McNamara (2002) very nicely

summarized the shift towards a postmodernist perspective. The modernist's perspective

and its corresponding interpretation of individuals as resistant to change is fundamentally

grounded in the assumption "that everyone shares the same objective and homogenous

reality" (Ford et al. 2002, p. 106). These postmodernist authors, however, raised two

interrelated questions:

> But what if we take a postmodernist, constructivist perspective in which
> there is no homogenous reality that is everywhere the same as everyone?
> What if resistance is not a 'thing' or a characteristic of an objective reality
> found 'over there' 'in the individual' but is a function of the constructed
> reality in which people live? In constructivist and postmodern
> perspectives, the reality we know is interpreted, constructed or enacted
> through social interaction. (p. 106)

Building on the social construction of reality framework that was initially

developed by Berger and Luckmann (1966), and further refined in the field of

organizational change by Weick (1979) and Watzlawick (1978), Ford et al. (2002),

argued that resistance is "not to be found 'in the individual' but in the constructed reality

in which individuals operate" (p. 26). As a consequence, they concluded that since

"different people in different positions at different moments live in different realities" it

is "not possible for participants to know any 'true' reality independent of themselves"

(Ford et al., 2002, p. 106). Social constructionists then, argued for the need to decenter

the individual and began to view meaning as occurring in our relatedness to one another

(Barrett et al. 1995). In the postmodernist's world "the process of human *relating* takes priority" [Italics original] (Franklin, 1998, p. 439).

It is truly interesting to note the return of contemporary women and men to the spirit of inquiry that moved writers in the past, like Rousseau, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. Aligned with their spirit of inquiry, proponents of postmodernism, encourage their readers to observe and study the experience of organizational change in a non-modernist's way.

> It encourages us to be careful about our assumptions and perceptions, and to be curious about, and anticipate our individual impacts and effects on the whole. In observing the world in a postmodern way we are forced to associate with it; we are forced to return to being a part of the world... Hence the postmodern world is a different world from that objectified by the modernist project. (Franklin, 1998, p. 439)

Proponents of postmodernism, then, promote two forms of inquiry. First, they encourage "us to be careful about our assumptions" (Franklin, 1998, p. 439). Second, the perspective of postmodernism forces researchers to associate with their world in a manner that is aligned with Habermas's (1984) understanding of social integration. As a consequence, and at a methodological level, it forces the researcher "to return to being a part of the world" (Franklin, 1998, p. 439) rather than standing apart from it and observing it from the outside in (Rainbow & Sullivan, 1979). A fundamental implication of the postmodernist's invitation to "return to being a part of the world" is that researchers publicly acknowledge their intersubjective, rather than objective, involvement with their worlds and research. Unlike the modernist project, in other words, the postmodernist project is characterized by its intersubjectivity.

Summary

Looking backward, the review of the literature focused on the evolution and consequences of decisive shifts in ways of thinking that guided researchers in different time periods. Whereas scholars in the past were particularly mindful of identifying the critical needs of individuals as they related to both system integration and social integration, the technological and modernist's impulse of the 20th century dictated that there was no need for such a demonstration. As reflected in the modernist's literature, what was promoted instead was the need to manage the restraining forces of change through intentional planning. Unlike the scholars of the past, the modernist literature on change management does not focus on answering the questions in this study at all. Contemporary modernist literature on change management is, instead, more reflective of successful or unsuccessful organizational outcomes rather than understanding and making meaning of the experiences of individuals in the midst of change. This focus is grounded in the fundamental decision to attend exclusively to issues of system integration at the expense of social integration. More recently, through the voice of postmodernism, there is a call to re-engage in the need to demonstrate the interconnection between social integration and system integration and to move away from the hegemony of a modernist perspective driving change management.

Looking forward to chapter 3, the research topic is nicely aligned with a narrative approach to the study of the experiences of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change. In concurrence with Bateson, (1979), Clandinin and Connelly (2000), and Habermas (1984), the narrative methodology enables the capacity to

"experience the experience" of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 81; Rosaldo, 1986). For Franklin (1998) this means that narrative inquiry invites researchers "to return to being a part of the world" (p. 439) and to once again see themselves as being "in the middle of a nested set of stories – ours and theirs" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 63). Through uncovering, interpreting, and explaining the stories that are told and retold in the midst of change, narrative inquiry allows for a return to the historic approach and treatment of what it means to effectively lead and manage change.

In chapter 3, narrative inquiry will be distinguished from other qualitative traditions of inquiry, namely phenomenology, ethnography, and hermeneutics as the preferred approach in demonstrating the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration. While phenomenology, ethnography, and hermeneutics, as qualitative traditions of inquiry are also concerned with understanding the experiences of individuals in their natural settings, narrative inquiry, comes closest to Habermas' notion of social integration. In the same say that narrative inquirers find themselves "in the middle of a nested set of stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 63), they also find themselves in the middle of different traditions of inquiry. To return to being a part of the world, then, is to acknowledge being a part of multiple and diverse traditions of inquiry and it is to be engaged in the interconnectedness of each of these traditions of inquiry. To this end, chapter 3 is devoted to describing the design of narrative inquiry, uncovering the guidelines and implications of this form of research and address the sample, data collection, validity, and ethical concerns connected to this research study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Description of Narrative Method of Inquiry

The purpose of this narrative study was to "experience the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 80) of selected individuals within the public sector who were either in the midst of proposed organizational changes or in the midst of already-implemented changes. The phrase "experiencing the experience" is a "reminder that...narrative inquiry is aimed at understanding and *making meaning* of experience" [Italics original] (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 80). This is the lens through which this study was approached and structured.

From the point of view of understanding the experience of research participants, qualitative traditions of inquiry like phenomenology and ethnography have traditionally been used to understand the internal perspective of participants. Phenomenology, as a qualitative tradition of inquiry, has conventionally served "as the rationale behind efforts to understand individuals by entering into their field of perception in order to see life as these individuals see it" (Bruyn, 1966, p. 90). Similarly, ethnography's fundamental objective is to display the social organization of activities as they are revealed in the natural setting of those activities (Schwartzman, 1993). This has been expressed in a number of ways including, seeing society from the social actor's or the native's point of view (Geertz, 1979). These qualitative methods of inquiry are very closely tied to what Max Weber called *verstehen* or empathic understanding. For Weber, such an approach would essentially enable researchers to grasp the meanings of a person's behavior by

seeing things from that person's point of view (cf., Zeitlin, 1973, pp. 167-170). The

problem with these qualitative approaches, however, is that they are limited to the first

feature of what Habermas (1984) identified as social integration.

Recall, for example, that for Habermas (1984) the perspective of social

integration ties social scientific analysis to the internal perspective of members of social

groups. As a tradition of inquiry, psychological phenomenology aims precisely at such an

analysis. According to Moustakas (1994), the central tenets of psychological

phenomenology are

> To determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the
> experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From
> the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived, in
> other words, of structures of the experience. (as cited in Creswell, 1997,
> pp. 53-54)

The objective determination of what an experience means for the persons who

have had the experience would require the phenomenological researcher "to set aside all

pre-judgments" (Creswell, 1997, p. 52), and "to 'bracket' his or her own experiences in

order to understand those of the participants in the study" (Creswell, 1997, p. 15). Such

an objective and modernist's stance, however, violates Habermas's (1987) second feature

of what it means to adopt the conceptual strategy of social integration. For him, the

second feature of social integration is also one that "commits the investigator to

hermeneutically connect up his own understanding with that of the participants"

(Habermas, 1987, p. 150). What are the methodological implications of such a

commitment?

Gadamer (1975), for example, made it abundantly clear that hermeneutics is not simply a method for understanding but an attempt "to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place" (p. 263). From the standpoint of the interpretive sciences, Bruner (1986), Gadamer (1975) and Habermas (1984) agree that among these conditions are, crucially, prejudices and fore-meanings in the mind of the interpreter. For Gadamer (1975), understanding is always interpretation and "it means to use one's own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text can really be made to speak to us" (p. 358). Bruner (1986) was brutally honest about the influence of one's own preconceptions insofar as he stipulated that no social scientist "is truly innocent" and that "all (social scientists) begin with a narrative in our heads which structures our initial observations in the field" [parenthesis added] (Bruner, 1986, p. 146). From a methodological perspective, narrative inquirers then, are acutely aware that they are always "in the middle of a nested set of stories – ours and theirs" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 63). As a consequence, narrative inquirers are involved in the dual intersubjective role of "experiencing the experience and also being a part of the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 81; Rainbow & Sullivan, 1979). This dual role enables researchers to move back and forth between being fully involved with participants and at the same time creating a distance from them.

At a methodological level, Bateson (1979) described such a movement and the co-construction of meaning through his distinction between a *linear, nonlinear, lineal* and *recursive* relationship to events or arguments. For Bateson (1979),

Linear is a technical term in mathematics describing a relationship between variables such that when they are plotted against each other on orthogonal Cartesian coordinates, the result will be a straight line. *Lineal* describes a relation among a series of causes or arguments such that the sequence does not come back to the starting point. The opposite of *linear* is *nonlinear*. The opposite of *lineal* is *recursive*. [Italics original] (p. 228)

Recursive relationships then, refer to a "relation among a series of causes or arguments such that a sequence does…come back to the starting point" (Bateson, 1979, p. 228). Within the field of organizational change, concepts related to Bateson's formulation of recursive relationships include double loop learning (Argyris, 1983), second-order differentiation process (Habermas, 1987), or double interact (Weick 1979). The central component of these recursive-related concepts is the idea that any given phenomenon, viewed in context, is both the cause and effect of related phenomena, and, ultimately, its own cause (Bateson, 1979). In contrast, a lineal view of causality clearly separates cause and effect, and causation flows in a single direction. The graphics in Figure 7 below illustrate the flow of information and the relationship between and among a series of causes or arguments between the lineal and recursive levels.

Lineal Relationship: … A ———►B … ——► A… ——►B …A——► B

Recursive Relationships

A———►B… B———► A..———►A ——► B…

Or, more dynamically

A ⟳ ————————► ⟳ B
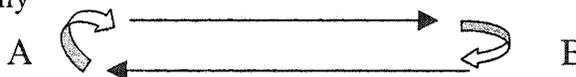
Figure 7. Difference between lineal and recursive relationships.

As a consequence of this recursive relationship, there is a shift in the role of the researcher. Whereas Creswell (1997) formulated the role of the phenomenological researcher as being "an *active learner* who can tell the story from the participants' view" [Italics original] (p. 18), Bateson (1979), Bruner (1986), Clandinin and Connelly (2000), and Habermas (1984), by virtue of their insights, expanded the role of the narrative researcher to being an active collaborator. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) build on this notion of active collaboration. According to these authors, narrative inquiry is not only a way of understanding experience, but it is also "a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20).

For Clandinin and Connelly (2000), with narrative as their "vantage point" they "have a point of reference… for imagining what experience is and for imagining how it might be studied and represented in researcher's texts" (p. xxvi). In their view, "experience is the stories people live. People live stories, and in the telling of these stories, reaffirm them, modify them, and create new ones" (p. xxvi). Stories people live then, offer both a window and a reflection of their experiences. In the telling of their stories, they reaffirm their experiences, modify their experiences and even create new experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The opinion that people, by nature, lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives is also shared by Bateson (1987), Berger and Luckmann (1966), Bruner (1986), Geertz (1986), Habermas (1984), Rorty (1989), Schwartzman (1973), and Turner (1986). A fundamental decision that narrative inquirers

make is that if people naturally lead storied lives and understand their world narratively then it also makes sense to study the world narratively (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Methodological Guidelines and Implications for Social Research

In contemplating the not so neat, and sometimes messy, complexity of experience, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) recommended three methodological guidelines. The first relates to the researchers' awareness that they are "in the middle of a nested set of stories – ours and theirs" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 63). The second guideline refers to the purpose of the work and the third guideline applies to the method of analysis.

In relation to the first guideline, while narrative researchers are acutely aware that they are in the middle of multiple stories, including their own, they also understand that their challenge is not to choose "our" story over "their" story but rather to embrace both. Similarly, insofar as Habermas (1975, 1984) suggested that the real problem is to demonstrate the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration, narrative researches, as mentioned earlier, also find themselves in the middle of different traditions of inquiry. Hence, by its very nature, narrative inquiry is "inherently interdisciplinary" (Riessman, 1993, p. 1) At the same time, the challenge for narrative inquirers is not to choose one discipline over another but to speak whilst in the middle of different disciplines.

One conclusion of this learning may be troubling for quantitative social researchers who elect to stay within the philosophy of positivism. The philosophy of positivism would urge researchers to exclude "our" story and simply focus on gathering

data about "their story" and getting that right. For positivists, to do otherwise, would simply taint the results with bias and subjectivity. Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) recommended approach however, suggests that narrative researchers who are involved in an intersubjective process risk violating the subjective variable that positivistic researchers sought to carefully exclude and control in the name of being free of bias and objectivity.

Within the tradition of qualitative research, Maxwell (1996) appealed to the reflections of Alan Peshkin who suggested that subjectivity is not a research sin or a disease that needs to be cleansed through confession or avoided like a plague (p. 28). In discussing the role of subjectivity in the research that Peshkin conducted, he concluded that the "subjectivity that originally I had taken as an affliction...could to the contrary, be taken as 'virtuous'..." (as cited in Maxwell, 1996, p. 28). Peshkin is further quoted as saying,

> My subjectivity is the basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is a strength on which I build...and as a researcher, equipping me with the perspectives and insights that shape all that I do...from the selection of topics clear through to the emphases I make in my writing...subjectivity is something to capitalize on rather than to exorcise. (as cited in Maxwell, 1996, p. 28)

In a similar vein, Maxwell (1996) discouraged his students from systematically ignoring what they know from their own experience, and about the settings or issues they propose to study. In fact, quoting Strauss (1987), Maxwell (1996) invited his students "to mind your experience" because "there is potential gold there" (as cited in Maxwell, 1996, p. 28). Does the inclusion of subjectivity, however, mean that this is a "license to

uncritically impose one's assumptions and values on the research" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 28)? No. Maxwell appealed to the insights of Reason (1988) who suggested that what is truly critical in this subjective process of inquiry is that "we raise" those personal experiences "to consciousness and use it as part of the inquiry process" (as cited in Maxwell, 1996, p. 28).

The second guideline is the idea that narrative researchers must constantly attend to the purpose or the "why of the work" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50) while recognizing that this purpose may change according to new stories which emerge, and thus lead to unexpected changes in direction. Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) response to the question of "why the work" or "why narrative" is, because "experience" was and continues to be "the starting point and the key term for all social science inquiry" (p. xxiii). An unexpected change that occurred during the course of data collection was addressed in chapter 1. A critical lesson learned through this process was that individuals are reluctant to share their stories with a stranger. The sharing of stories presupposes some level of intimacy or some kind of a relationship. As a consequence of this learning, a new sample was chosen. This learning will be resurfaced and addressed in chapter 5.

The third guideline, and from the point of view of analysis, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) created a *"three-dimensional narrative inquiry space"* [Italics original] (p. 50) as a method of procedure. These three dimensions include the temporal, the personal and social features of experience, and finally that each experience is situated in a particular place. This three-dimensional narrative inquiry space and the corresponding

method of analysis are addressed a little later in this chapter, under the heading, Method of Analysis.

<p style="text-align:center">Sample</p>

Cooper and Schindler (2000) described the sample used for this study as being both a purposive and convenience sample. From the point of view of being purposive, it included two separate groups of employees in different public sector organizations and in different public sector employment functions. A key criterion used for the selection of this purposive sample was that employees in each of these two groups were in the midst of radical organizational changes. Being in the midst of such changes was defined in this study as either being in the midst of proposed changes or in the midst of changes that had already been implemented. These participants were selected because they were living the experience being investigated. From the point of view of convenience, these samples were convenient in that participants in this study were easily accessible to this researcher.

Two teams of employees were selected in this sample. The first was an intact group of 6 Canadian managers and supervisors who were faced with the challenge of managing in the midst of an organizational proposal that would see a part of its administrative-compensation function being outsourced. These managers represented one of five compensation management teams that were housed in five different geographical regions across Canada. There were a total of 28 managers and supervisors across five regions who performed the same functions and who were at the same classification levels. While all 6 managers and supervisors in one geographical region were invited to participate, only 5 chose to respond.

During the writing of the proposal it was stated that there was an uncertainty as to when exactly such an outsourcing would take effect or whether or not it would be affected at all. However, while this research was being conducted parts of their administrative function were outsourced. The dynamics of this radical change from proposed changes to partially implemented changes is addressed in chapter 4.

These 5 front-line managers and supervisors who chose to participate in this study were responsible for managing a total of 45 employees who were spread over three Canadian provinces. Senior management continued to view these individuals as critical organizational players in managing the productivity of employees in their respective worksites while in the midst of such drastic organizational change and the productivity of remaining employees after the proposed organizational changes have been effected.

Their organizational unit was primarily responsible for three key functions. First, pension calculations and advising clients on matters related to their pension. Second, it included advising clients on various health and disability contributions and benefits as they relate to the Public Service Health Plan. This is generally understood as activities related to benefits-insurance. Third, this unit was responsible for all matters related to entitlement, like the issuing of biweekly pay checks, reconciling overtime payments, or payments to employees who are temporarily in positions that are higher than their substantive positions. The proposed organizational change called for an outsourcing of functions related to both pension and benefits-insurance. According to this proposed change, functions related to payroll, would still remain within their sphere of responsibility.

Two legitimate questions may be raised with regard to choosing this sample of 6 managers. First, why focus only on the 6 managers and supervisors? Related to this first question, the second question may be asked as follows. Since others in the compensation and benefits work unit were also affected by the proposed organizational change, why not include some of them? The decision to invite only 6 of these managers was based on the reality that while these managers were being asked to manage the implementation of the proposed radical changes, they themselves were faced with the possibility that their positions may be eliminated. At first glance, this writer would suggest that these managers and supervisors were in a rather unique and precarious position. These managers had to manage their own productivity while being called, at the same time, to manage the productivity of others in the workplace. The impact of their stories upon those whom they were called to lead is addressed in chapter 4. Since the productivity of individuals in the midst of organizational change was related to how middle level managers and supervisors dealt with the reality of those changes, a decision was made to include these managers as a unique group.

The second team, which is being referred to as the Blue Team, involved a group of 6 managers and supervisors who were in the midst of already-implemented organizational change. As part of the Canadian federal government's "modernization" exercise, this particular department was granted an agency status in November 1999. The shift to agency status was designed to give Canadians better service and to streamline tax, customs, and trade administration in Canada. The agency status was also intended to enable operational flexibility to tailor this department's administration and human

resource systems to meet its unique needs, the needs of its employees, and the needs of the Canadian public it serves. From the point of view of hiring practices, no longer was this government department to be regulated and governed by a piece of legislation known as the Public Service Employment Act.

Through this organizational restructuring, this department, which was granted an agency status, was able to fast track its organizational changes in ways that sometimes put it at odds with hard-won labor contracts under the old scheme. This researcher's secondment to this department enabled him to first develop a relationship with potential participants before inviting them to participate in this study. While 10 out of the 24 front-line managers and supervisors within a specific division of this public sector agency verbally agreed to participate in this study, only 6 followed through with their agreements. Unlike participants in the Red Team, these individuals were all located in one physical space and in a major Canadian city.

While organizational changes in this instance, had already been effected and implemented, it was deemed appropriate to include this sample because of Bruner's (1986a) insight. Bruner suggested that it is important to understand that people, by virtue of being people, continue to retell their stories. And, he goes further to say, that, "retellings are what culture is all about. The next retelling reactivates prior experience, which is then rediscovered and re-lived, as the story is re-related in a new situation. Stories may have endings, but stories are never over" (p. 17). Hence the decision to include this second purposive sample was guided by the desire to capture and understand how individuals made meaning of their experiences through the retelling of their stories.

The Collection of Empirical Materials

In keeping with the language of qualitative research *empirical materials* is used as

"the preferred term for what are traditionally described as data" (Denzin & Lincoln,

1998, p. 32). Empirical materials for this study were collected through a frame that is

identified as field texts. Clandinin and Connelly (2000), for example, used the term field

text to refer to what is usually called data in the field of qualitative research. Field texts,

however, is connected but fundamentally different from data collected through field

research. Field research has been traditionally utilized in both quantitative and qualitative

studies to gather data from the field with the intent of understanding the participants'

point of view. From the point of view of narrative inquiry and from within the tradition of

the social construction of reality, field texts are always interpretive insofar as participants

and researchers always compose and construct them at a certain moment in time

(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Examples of field texts include, oral history, family

stories, photographs or personal artifacts, research interviews, journals, autobiographical

writing, letters, conversations or field notes. Insofar as narrative inquirers approach each

of these as a field text, they view these different empirical materials as socially

constructed and guided by the particular interpretations of those who put these texts

together. Narrative inquirers then, are aware that when "we try to understand the cultural

world, we are dealing with interpretations and interpretations of interpretations"

(Rainbow & Sullivan, 1979, p. 6).

For the purposes of this narrative research two field texts as methodologies for

collecting research materials were used: *written stories* and *research interviews*.

Participants in this study were engaged in two phases of the research process. Step 1 in the collection of empirical materials included a written component. In Step 2 in-depth and unstructured audio taped interviews were subsequently conducted after the participants completed the written exercise. As a consequence of already established relationships with participants in the Red Team, personal conversations and phone-calls were first made to potential participants. A formal invitation to participate was electronically mailed to 6 managers and supervisors who were responsible for functions related to compensation, insurance and benefits in their department. This formal invitation is reflected in Appendix A. Step 1 in the process required participants who were in the midst of proposed organizational changes to first complete the following open-ended statement in writing: "Coming to work in the midst of proposed radical organizational changes is like…" For purposes of this research, these participants were labeled as belonging to the Red Team.

Subsequent to the mailing of the formal invitation to participate, additional phone calls were made and e-mails were sent to each of the 6 potential participants urging them to respond within the prescribed time-period. Five out of the 6 front-line managers and supervisors chose to respond. The non-return of phone messages and the lack of acknowledgement of e-mails from one of the supervisors were interpreted as her desire to be a non-participant in this study. That decision was respected. At the same time, this researcher had to be constantly mindful and respectful that the urgency of his desire to hear the stories of those who agreed to participate, and the urgency to complete the dissertation within the allotted timeframes, were not the same as latter's desire to tell, let

alone write, their stories or the urgency to meet the researcher's self-imposed deadlines. To that end, a tremendous degree of patience was required.

The process of collecting empirical materials for the Blue Team was similar except for three key differences. Unlike the Red Team, the Blue Team had already undergone massive organizational restructuring. This public sector department, for example, was granted an agency status. As a consequence, it was able to fast track its organizational changes in ways that sometimes put it at odds with hard-won labor contracts under the old scheme. This researcher's secondment to this department enabled him to first develop a relationship with potential participants before inviting them to participate in this study. This was the second key difference. Six out of 24 front-line managers and supervisors within a specific division of this public sector agency chose to participate in this study. Unlike participants in the Red Team, these individuals were all located in one physical space and in a major Canadian city. At full capacity, this particular center houses up to 3,000 employees.

As a natural part of establishing normal working relationships, this researcher consciously spent about three months in getting to know this management team and supervisors as co-workers. Subsequent to this, the topic and nature of this research study was broached with the Director of this divisional unit. While this delayed the self-imposed research study timelines, it was deemed necessary. With the full support of the Assistant Director, all 24 managers and supervisors were engaged in private one-on-one conversation as to the nature of the research and study. While 10 managers and team leaders verbally expressed an interest in being a part of this study, only 6 (25%) followed

through with their agreements. Two of the 6 wanted to meet and get to know this researcher more and further understand the purpose of this study before they submitted their stories. From the standpoint of narrative inquiry, this bears witness to the need to develop and establish a relationship with participants prior to being engaged in this method of inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Like the Red Team, consent forms and invitation letters were also sent electronically to all participants.

Participants in the Blue Team were asked to complete the following statement in writing: "Coming to work in the midst of already-implemented organizational changes is like..." This marks the third difference in terms of process from the Red Team. The key differences can be visually displayed as follows:

Key Differences Red and Blue Teams	
RED TEAM	BLUE TEAM
Organizational change: proposed	Organizational change: already-implemented
Relationships with participants: Already established	Relationships with participants: Needed to be developed
Question: "Coming to work in the midst of proposed changes is like...?"	Question: Coming to work in the midst of already-implemented changes is like...?"

Figure 8. Differences between Red and Blue Teams.

This second group of participants was included because as narrative researchers, the interest is also in uncovering stories that are told and retold. While organizational changes have already effected, it is just as important to listen to how they view their current reality and their current role while in the midst of those already effected changes. As demonstrated in chapter 4, the information gathered through the participants' narrative presentations enables organizational change managers the opportunity to tune in to the critical needs of their employees, for the purpose of enabling the latter's productivity in the workplace.

No limit to the length of this written exercise was stipulated for participants in both the Red and Blue Teams. This methodology allowed participants to privately articulate their feelings in a written format and without any interference from the researcher. Upon receipt of their written stories, this researcher first read and then met with each storyteller. A research interview, based on their respective stories, was then conducted at a mutually agreed upon time and place. This constituted Step 2 of the collection of empirical materials. The unstructured, in-depth, and audio taped interviews, based on their written narratives, enabled each participant an opportunity to provide greater clarity and clarification of their stories. In order to capture their verbatim responses in conversation, permission was requested to have their conversations audio-taped. Audiotaping was deemed as necessary and desirable for the sake of capturing the essence of the interviews. Each interview lasted between 11/2 to 21/2 hours for a total of about 251/2 hours. Every piece of information gathered through the written stories and

taped interviews enabled this researcher to glean the wheat and to recursively engage in and identify the reality-making sense for each person and for all.

The conversation in the interview process proceeded initially from the vantage point of giving interviewees an opportunity to elaborate their written stories in greater detail. At the same time, as the conversation evolved, in-depth probing was conducted in "a situation of mutual trust, listening, and caring for the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 109). Subsequent to the interviews, the audiotapes were transcribed. Approximately 5 to 6 hours was spent transcribing each audio taped interview for a total of about 66 hours. Transcribed interviews were then returned to respective participants for verification and further clarification.

At the same time, this researcher was mindful of the subjective and recursive involvement in the interview process. Recall, for instance, Anderson and Jack's (1991) explicit illustration of the potential and real influence of interviewers in shaping interviewees' accounts of their experience. They had suggested that even a pause, a nonverbal gesture like raising an eyebrow, a passing comment, or an impromptu question asked, could potentially influence responses received in a research interview. From their point of view and from the tradition of narrative inquiry, then, the manner in which an "interviewer acts, questions and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110). Boje (1991) further confirmed this insight. Every attempt then, was made by this researcher to be mindful of and record his own behaviors while

engaged in the interviewing process. While this recursive process is re-addressed in this chapter, under the heading of Reactivity, it is also resurfaced and analyzed in chapter 4.

Finally, this researcher was fully aware that research participants were also storying the researcher. The buzz at the workplace was that: "Stan is not only working for management but he wants to study our experiences for his Ph.D." While fully aware that comments like this may have influenced the way research participants reacted or responded to the written stories and interviews, this researcher was pleasantly surprised at the candidness and straightforwardness of research participants.

One advantage of this approach was that their stories and narratives were heard and analyzed within the context of the interviewees' lifeworld. This very approach did not aim at claiming any universalizing truths or making any universal claims. Instead, it suggests that experiences are particular to the individuals and to their context. At the same time, as the argument is made in chapter 5, the ability to "experience the experience" by listening to the stories "ours and theirs," enables managers and organizational leaders a better opportunity to more appropriately respond and manage change.

Establishing Validity

Selection of Participants

In the research proposal, the following question was raised. Would the selection of participants inadvertently include persons who are more critical and vocal or for that matter less critical and vocal? While this researcher is fully cognizant that the issue raised

in the preceding question is usually controlled by a procedural method identified as random selection, this qualitative tradition of inquiry naturally excluded such a selection. Insofar as the participants of this study were selected because they were living the experience of proposed or effected organizational change, Cooper and Schindler (2000) would further define the purposive sample as a "judgment sample" (p. 192). This researcher, in other words, was only interested in speaking to those who fit this criterion of selection. Interestingly enough, all participants had their own stories. They did not hold back. Their stories were simply accepted as being *their* stories.

Functionary-effect

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1981) identified an opinion that could have potentially affected the responses received. As an employee of the organization, the researcher of this research study was viewed not only as an expert in the field of organizational change but also as a representative of management. From the perspective of participants in both the Red and Blue Teams, this view may, according to Gadamer (1981), be disadvantageous because of his opinion that

> The society of experts is simultaneously a society of functionaries as well, for it is constitutive of the notion of the functionary that he be completely concentrated upon the administration of his function. In the scientific, technical, economic, monetary processes, and most especially in administration, politics, and similar form, he has to maintain himself as what he is: one inserted for the sake of the smooth functioning of the apparatus. That is why he is in demand, and therein lays his chances for advancement. (p. 74)

If Gadamer (1981) were correct, then part of the issue or concern would be formulated as the inability to control for what may be said or shared. It would have

meant, among other things, being worried as to whether participants would share what they truly felt. Would they judge the researcher as simply there to maintain the status quo or as one "inserted for the sake of the smooth functioning of the apparatus" (Gadamer, 1981, p. 74)? If both were so, then it would be safe to assume that they would only say what they think the researcher would like to hear. This danger was already addressed in chapter 1, under the heading of Limitations of the Study.

However, the purpose of this study was not to control for what may or may not be shared. It was instead interested in understanding and make meaning of what was shared. Participants in this study selectively recalled and filtered their stories from their own frameworks. As a researcher, their stories and narratives were accepted as being *their* stories. As mentioned earlier, this researcher was pleasantly surprised at their openness and candidness in sharing their stories both in writing and during the interview.

Credibility

As a way of enhancing the credibility of what was received, a triangulation method was used (Creswell, 2003; Maxwell, 1996). To place the discussion of triangulation as part of the issues connected to validity might be misleading in that this method might be viewed as a strategy or tool of validation. In point of fact, Denzin and Lincoln (1998) made it extremely clear: "Triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation" (p. 4). From the perspective of quantitative methodology, validation is appropriate. For qualitative research, on the other hand, triangulation is the alternative.

From the standpoint of the writing-process, the analysis of field texts like written stories and research interviews was compared against written stories that were collected by this researcher since 1997. For the purpose of this research, while these previously collected written stories were treated as historical and reference data, they did not form a part of the analysis of stories and metaphors for this study. The purpose for referencing these historical data, as corroborating evidence, is linked to the notion of generalizability. The notion of generalizability, as it is being used here, is once again different from quantitative researchers' understanding and use of this term. Quantitative researchers, for example, use this term to reflect the representativeness of their findings, which is based on a probability sample, to a larger population. From this point of view, qualitative researchers, who usually study a smaller number of individuals or a single setting, "rarely make explicit claims about the generalizability of their accounts" (Maxwell 1996, p. 96). However, according to Maxwell (1996), Ragin (1987), and Yin, (2003), this does not mean that qualitative studies are "not generalizable beyond the settings or informants studied" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 97). Maxwell (1996) offered three arguments in support of his thinking.

First, Maxwell (1996) suggested, "qualitative studies often have...*face generalizability*; there is no obvious reason *not* to believe that the results apply more generally" [italics original] (p. 97). Second, that "the generalizability of qualitative studies [is] based...on the development of a theory that can be extended to other cases" (p.97). Third, Maxwell (1996) appealed to Hammersley (1992), and Weiss (1994) who listed a number of other features "that lend plausibility to generalizations from case

studies or non-random samples" (p. 97). These features include (a) the "similarity of dynamics and constraints to other situations" (p. 97), (b) "including respondents' own assessments of generalizability" (p. 97), (c) the "presumed depth or universality of the phenomenon studied" (p. 97), and (d) "corroboration from other studies" (p. 98). Be this as it may, it is also important to note that for Maxwell (1996), none of these "permit the kinds of precise extrapolation of results to defined populations that probability sampling allows" (p. 98).

In relation to the written stories that have been collected since 1997, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggested that historical empirical materials could be used as another form of field text. Some of the written stories received were from intact management teams and others were from adult students who participated in the management and leadership courses that this researcher was responsible for teaching within the federal public service sector. Workshop participants were all in the throes of radical organizational change. The disadvantage of these historical empirical materials, however, is the absence of research interviews simply because such was not the purpose at that point in time.

For purposes of accuracy, verification, and further input (Maxwell, 1996, this researcher's interpretations of stories told and information gathered through interviews were shared with participants in this study. This feedback process is known as "member checks" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). For Maxwell (1996), this particular "sort of feedback deserves special attention" because it is "the single most important way of ruling out the

possibility of misinterpretation of what they (participants in a study) [parenthesis added] (said) and the perspective they have on what is going on" (p. 94).

It is, however, important to state that from the perspective of social integration it is not just the internal perspective of participants that is at stake. That would essentially be like phenomenology. From the point of view of social integration and narrative inquiry, what is also at stake is the researchers' capacity to hermeneutically connect their own understanding with those of the participants. (Habermas, 1984, p. 150) Hence, not seeing it only from the perspective of participants in this study, or misinterpretation from this point view, is part, parcel and the risk of narrative inquiry. Schwandt (1999) confirms this risk by paraphrasing Wittgenstein. All "attempts to make sense," Schwandt (1999) suggested, "entail the risk of making no(n)-sense, and to understand is to take the risk of misunderstanding" [parenthesis original] (p. 459). Finally, the analysis and interpretation of empirical materials collected was compared against this researcher's own notes that were recorded during and after the interviews. This offered yet another opportunity to understand the relationship between the researcher's own comments or gestures and the participants' response.

<p align="center">*Reactivity*</p>

The idea of reactivity is directly connected to trying to control for the effect of the researcher in a study. Within research interviews, however, "reactivity is a powerful and inescapable influence" because narrative inquirers are aware that what participants say in an interview is "always a function of the interviewer and the interview situation" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 91). As seen earlier, such is the power and sequence of a recursive

relationship. From the perspective of narrative inquiry, however, what was critical for this form of inquiry was not so much a question of minimizing the researcher's effect but rather of understanding "how you are influencing what the informant says, and how this affects the validity of the inferences you can draw from the interview" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 91). It is, in other words, a question of being aware of the researcher's presence and influence. The results of this awareness is surfaced and analyzed in chapter 4.

Ethical Concerns

A primary concern for the success of this research study was the issue of research participant confidentiality. From the point of view of the Red and Blue Teams, all managers and supervisors in this purposive sample were personally contacted and the nature and purpose of the study was shared. During this time, this researcher was able to determine their willingness to participate and, more importantly, gauge their opinion of the appropriateness of their involvement in such a study. From the perspective of both the Red and Blue Teams, all the formal processes connected to any research involving the use of human subjects, were invoked. Subsequent to the organizational consent to conduct this study, the Walden University Institutional Review Board approved the request to conduct this qualitative research study on July 31, 2003. Participants in this study then completed the *Participant Information and Consent Form* prior to their engagement. Copies of the Consent Forms that were sent to participants in this study are attached in Appendices A and B.

In relation to obtaining permissions from the university, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) raised another ethical concern. According to them, this very process of "obtaining

approval for…research…prior to beginning…places narrative inquirers in a catch-22

position" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 170). To maintain the integrity of the research

process, researchers were, on the one hand, required to not approach research participants

until institutional ethical approval is granted. However, from the standpoint of narrative

inquiry, these authors argued that if participants are approached with ethical approval,

"then some aspects of the inquiry are no longer able to be negotiated" (Clandinin &

Connelly, 2000, p. 170). For purposes of this study, for example, the process of asking

participants to first write their stories and then be involved in interviews were prescribed.

This process was not negotiated with participants in this study. Clandinin and Connelly

(2000) view such an approach as violating the nature of collaboration and the building of

relationships that are critical for narrative inquirers and narrative inquiry. "Furthermore,"

they suggested, "beginning participant negotiations with a set of already-approved forms

and requests for signatures is a forbidding starting point" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.

170).

In relation to the Red Team, relationships were, however already established.

While process methods were not negotiated, participants in this study readily accepted

them. The acceptance of the process was primarily due to the already established

relationships. Consent forms and requests for signatures, in other words, were not used as

a starting point. In relation to the Blue Team, however, this researcher spent three months

in building a relationship with potential participants prior to inviting them to participate

in this study. Similar to the Red Team, participants from the Blue Team readily accepted

the identified research steps and process as adequate and reasonable.

Finally, this researcher was sensitive to the notion that telling one's story in the midst of traumatic organizational change, may have unanticipated psychological impacts on any participant. However, he was at the same, pleasantly surprised at the forthrightness and comfortability of participants in this research study.

Method of Analysis

The stories, narratives, metaphors, and conversational interview notes were the units of analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These were read and analyzed with a view to understanding and making meaning at two levels. Recall, for instance, that according to Duck (1998), for real change to occur, not only must individuals think and act differently but also that leaders must win their followership one by one. At one level then, the analysis occurred at an individual level primarily because the key to the many is the one. At another level, the analysis also occurred at a social level because participants are "always in relation, always in a social context" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2) and hence they also need to be understood within the context of their relationships. What this simply means is that for Clandinin and Connelly (2000), while "people are individuals and need to be understood as such…they cannot be understood only as individuals" (p. 2).

Recurring themes in terms of how research participants constructed their stories and made meaning of their experiences were captured. Each theme was broken into meaningful units and graphically displayed in order to illustrate the interrelationship between each theme. Plausible explanations were offered in relation to the interconnectedness of issues related to social integration and system integration. The

"social-scientifically appropriate" theoretical construct (Habermas, 1975, p. 4) that guided the analysis was one that continues to promote a way of thinking that sees the interconnectedness not only between the multiple and often conflicting meanings and interpretations of individuals in the midst of change but also one of demonstrating the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration. Second, plausible explanations are also offered in relation to the recursive relationship between participants in this study as subjects and objects of their experience.

As mentioned earlier, from an interpretive level, the analysis proceeded from the standpoint of a three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. The first of these dimensions is identified as the temporal dimension. This dimension focuses "on temporal matters; they focus on the personal and the social in a balance appropriate to the inquiry; and they occur in specific places or sequences of places" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). For these authors, this term is also used "to show how an inquiry is structured by the inquirer" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 55) who is also living a particular experience at that time.

The second dimension refers to the personal and social experiences of individuals as reflected in their stories. Within this second dimension, narrative researchers are encouraged to simultaneously focus their analysis in four directions. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). First, there is an inward focus, in the sense that narrative researchers are called upon to identify the feeling, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions of research participants. Second, there is an outward focus, in the sense of paying attention to the interconnection of actions in the wider environment, the world of

social roles and relationships, and the kinds of lives people live. The third and fourth

directions refer to the backward and forward foci, which essentially refers to the

temporality of experiences, past, present, and future, and the intentionality of the person

or persons undergoing such experiences. For these authors, then, it is not simply a

question of having an experience but also one of experiencing an experience. "To

experience an experience is to experience it simultaneously in these four ways and to ask

questions pointing each way" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50).

The third dimension focuses on what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to as

"situated within place" (p. 49). For Clandinin and Connelly (2000), this third dimension

"attends to the specific concrete physical and topological boundaries of inquiry

landscapes" (p. 51).

In general, the analysis of empirical materials was approached through a four-step

process.

1. An initial description of the temporal and physical boundaries that formed part

of the context for participants in this study.

2. A description of the participants' experiences with the phenomenon of radical

organizational change as identified in and through their written stories and interviews.

3. The creation of meaningful units and dimensions through the interpretation of

statements by using participant's verbatim language, gathered through their written

stories and interviews, to illustrate the units.

4. Finally, to tell the story about what this researcher thinks is happening and

why. For Maxwell (1996), for instance, a "useful theory is one that tells an enlightening

story about some phenomenon, one that gives you new insights and broadens your understanding of that phenomenon" (p. 33). Clandinin and Connelly's three-dimensional narrative inquiry space was utilized as one way of describing, interpreting, explaining, and telling such a story on the basis of the information gathered.

Summary

As stated in chapter 1, the purpose of this narrative study is to *both understand* the experience of individuals in the midst of organizational change *and*, at the same time to *make meaning* of such experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) for the sake of demonstrating the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration (Habermas, 1975, 1987). From the review of the literature, the need for such a demonstration is further evidenced in the predominant, and modernist's, tendency to focus exclusively on either one approach to organizational change at the expense of others.

Through reviewing the scholars of the past, it became extremely clear that the capacity to demonstrate the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration, required practitioners in the field of change management, first and foremost, to stop and think about what they were doing rather than simply being addicted to the urgent demands of managing tasks, fixing things, and putting out fires. In creating a soulful space (Moore, 1994) for a reflective-appreciative relationship to their work, scholars of the past like Rousseau, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Thoreau were able to imaginatively "build up an adequate view of a total society and its components" (Mills, 1959, p. 211). Narrative inquiry, as it was used in this research afforded a real

opportunity to reconnect with the reflective spirit of these scholars of the past, and in so doing to be able to actively collaborate with research participants in demonstrating the interconnectedness between the dominant approaches to organizational change-management.

In chapter 4 the focus is on the analysis of stories and metaphors used by participants in the midst of proposed and already-implemented organizational changes. The primary focus of chapter 4 is on the first research question, namely, what stories do participants involved in radical organizational change tell and what metaphors do they use to describe their experiences? Finally, chapter 5 summarizes the findings of this study. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made by focusing on the second research question, namely, what, if any, could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experience radical organizational changes?

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL MATERIALS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to "experience the experience" (Clandinin &
Connelly, 2000, p. 86) of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change. As
seen in chapter 1, "experiencing the experience" of individuals within the context of this
research study, aims at both understanding the experience of individuals and, at the same
time, making meaning of such experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 86). The
empirical materials gathered for this study were from a purposive sample of 11 middle-
level managers and team leaders from two different public sector organizations. These
individuals were in the midst of proposed and already-implemented radical organizational
change.

From the perspective of social integration, experiencing the experience includes
(a) interpreting the internal perspectives of participants in this study, and (b)
hermeneutically connecting one's own understanding with that of the participants
(Habermas, 1984). In relation to the analysis of the empirical materials collected, and
following the insights of Bruner (1986a), Becvar and Becvar (2000), suggested that when
researchers attempt "to 'understand' another person, idea, or concept, (they, namely
researchers) create meaning according to the framework of constructs that (they) use to
make sense of the world around (them)" (p. 353). Quoting Sieburg, they shared the
conclusion that "it is not likely that any person can ever experience another's experience;
he can only infer by the other's behaviour what that person's experience is, at any given

moment" (as quoted in Becvar & Becvar, 2000, p. 353). Hence, understanding and making meaning of the experience of others in the midst of change can never be innocent or a one-way directed act of attention. Instead, it is collaborative and co-constructed between research participant and researcher. As a way of first gaining access to the internal perspectives or framework of research participants' mental constructs while in the middle of radical organizational changes, and then engaging in a hermeneutic dialogue with those mental constructs, two specific research questions were posed:

1. What stories did participants involved in radical organizational change tell and what metaphors did they use to describe their experiences?

2. What, if any, could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experienced radical organizational changes?

Staying within the analytical construct of the *three-dimensional-narrative-inquiry-space* identified in chapter 3, the analysis of empirical materials proceeds *from* the temporal (first dimension) and situational (third dimension) contexts, *to* the personal and social experiences of individuals (second dimension) within that context. Recall, for instance, that the first dimension is literally about time - past, present, and future. The notion of experience then is such that it cannot be talked about in a vacuum. According to Clandinin & Connelly (2000), "wherever one positions oneself in that continuum – the imagined now, some imagined past, or some imagined future – each point has a past experiential base and leads to an experiential future" (p. 2). What this implies is that the notion of learning from one's experiences in the here and now, for example, already suggests that experiences grow out of other past experiences and at the same time leads to

further experiences in the future. The third dimension, which refers to the physical landscape, suggests that experiences "occur in specific places or sequence of places" (p. 50). Taken together, the first and third dimensions shape the temporal and physical contexts for this study.

The second dimension, the personal and social, refers to another type of context. In saying that experience is both personal and social, Clandinin and Connelly (2000), suggest is that while people are individuals "and need to be understood as such...they cannot be understood *only* as individuals" [emphasis added] (p. 2). In concurrence with Bateson (1979), Berger & Luckmann (1966), Blumer (1969), Dewey (1981), and Weick (1995), these authors are also of the opinion that individuals are "always in relation, always in a social context" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2) and hence they also need to be understood within the context of their relationships.

For purposes of analysis, the first and third dimensions are addressed prior to the second dimension. From a temporal perspective, for example, both the Red and Blue Teams find themselves in a common historical context within the federal public sector. Temporally, they were and are in the same change parade as it currently affects the Canadian federal public service. However, from the standpoint of their physical places and situations within the change parade, their histories differ when organizational changes specific to each department was investigated. They both have their own unique histories in relation to how their respective organizations have chosen to engage in the process of organizational change. From the point of view of the second dimension, which

refers to the personal and social experiences of individuals, the participants' stories and metaphors are used as materials for analysis.

It is important to restate that in addition to understanding how participants in this study make meaning of their experiences and hermeneutically connecting one's own understanding with that of the participants, the analysis of participants' stories and metaphors also proceeds with a view to demonstrate the interconnectedness between system integration *and* social integration as formulated by Habermas (1975, 1984).

Analysis: Three-Dimensional-Narrative-Inquiry-Space

The First Dimension: Temporal Context

Within the Canadian Federal Public Service, the mid-to-late 1990s were a time of unprecedented change. The advent of the 1990s heralded a national economic recession, a mushrooming federal debt, and continuing deficits. Business and consumer confidence had reached all-time lows. In order to prevent a major economic crisis, the finance minister for the government of Canada tabled a national budget that included *"bringing government's size and structure into line with what we can afford"* [italics original] (Federal Budget Speech, February 27, 1995).

In 1995, the federal government unfolded its "Getting Government Right" program by announcing that, "the public service will be reduced by some 45,000 positions, of which 20,000 will be eliminated by the summer of next year." Downsizing was seen as the most effective way to reduce its financial debt. To that end, the Finance Minister announced a 19% cut in federal spending by federal public service departments

for the period April 01,1995 to March 31, 1998. In actual financial terms, these figures

amounted to about a $7.1 billion reduction in the budget allocated to Canadian federal

departments over a 3-year period[1].

At a social–psychological level, The Report of the Task Force on Public Service

Values and Ethics, entitled *A Strong Foundation* (2000), succinctly captured the

sentiments, experiences, and feelings of public servants while in the midst of

organizational downsizing. The quote below is the Task Force's description of the

experience of public servants in the midst of downsizing.

> Many public servants were shocked, and their faith in public service
> values was shaken, both by the *fact* of downsizing – that it was done at all
> – and by the way it was done. Many public servants believe that an
> implicit employment contract and the commitment to security were
> breached by personnel reductions. [Italics original] (A Solid Foundation,
> 2000, p. 19)

To paraphrase Max Scheler's idea of the "relatively natural conception of the

world" (as cited in Schutz, 1964, p. 95), downsizing shocked the relatively natural

conception of what it meant to work for the government. The breaching of this relatively

natural conception or thinking as usual (Schutz, 1964) could be heard through an

everyday tacit and unquestioned belief: join government and you are set for life. The

"fact" that downsizing was done at all was experienced as a breach of this natural

conception.

The structural fact of downsizing and corresponding social reactions to that fact

can be imaginatively storied as follows. Once upon a time, it was simply taken for

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[1] See http://www.fin.gc.ca/toce/1995/buddoclist95-e.html

granted that if you worked for government you would be set for life. People simply

believed that their employer would look after them till retirement. In those days it was

generally accepted that working for government guaranteed insulation against shocking

organizational practices that were common in the private sector. However, today,

downsizing, a rude organizational practice, generally associated with the dog-eat-dog

world of the private sector, is now a reality in public sector organizations.

As a consequence of being storied in that manner, many federal service

employees felt a sense of "betrayal." Analytically, their sense of feeling betrayed made

sense within the context of their taken-for granted storied existence within the public

sector. What added to sense of betrayal was that the downsizing initiative "followed close

on the heels of the statements contained in the PS 2000 White Paper to the effect that

people were the greatest asset of the public service" (A Solid Foundation, 2000, p. 19).

They also felt like "scapegoats" (A Solid Foundation, 2000, p. 19) in that they interpreted

the budget speech as insinuating that they were the major reason for the country's

problems of debt.

It was within this social and organizational context of downsizing, feeling

betrayal, shock, disbelief, and "public distrust of governments" (Task Force, 2000, p. 19)

that this researcher, as a practitioner in the field of change management, was called upon

to work as a change management specialist and to assist in the performance productivity

of senior and middle management teams. A critical part of this researcher's employment

role was to work with intact management teams who were being called upon to "keep the

ship afloat" in the midst of drastic and radical organizational changes. This researcher, in other words, was also in the eye of this storm of radical organizational change.

Since 1995, the unprecedented radical changes within the public sector have not stopped. Within the Canadian federal public sector, efforts are continually being made today to gain greater financial efficiencies. Federal departments continued and continued to operate under the pressures of budget reductions. The organizational challenges to operate within this fiscal reality were and are common to both the Red and Blue Teams.

The Third Dimension: The Landscape

Red Team

The Red Team consisted of 5 managers who were responsible for Compensation Services in a large federal public sector department at a regional level. This department, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), was primarily responsible for matters related to policing at a national level. While the region spread across five Canadian provinces, the Red Team is housed in three provinces and in three major Canadian cities. From the point of view of change, being confronted with radical organizational change was not something new for the Red Team. As reflected by one of the compensation managers, Jennifer (a pseudonym), "This unit has been downsized, reorganized, always a threat of being regionalized and now facing outsourcing."

From the point of view of compensation services to their clients, the Red Team was in a rather unique position because of the complex way this organization was configured. Joan, another compensation manager, described this configuration as "convoluted." For example, the compensation unit continued to serve two distinct client

groups even though both were employees of the same organization. Each of these client groups was regulated and governed by different pieces of legislation in terms of its *raison d'etré* or reason for being. At the level of systems, the RCMP Act governed police officers within this department and the Public Service Employment Act (PSEA) governed nonuniformed public servants. At the level of social integration, uniformed officers in this department were identified as 'members' and they enjoyed all the benefits that came with "membership." Nonuniformed public servants, on the other hand, were not only identified as "non-members" in this organization but, as Melanie said in her interview, were also "viewed as fourth-class citizens." "Third-class citizens in this organization," said Melanie, "are the dogs, the canine unit. Can you believe that? That tells you how valued we are, doesn't it?" As will be seen later in this chapter, this bit of information and context will inform part of her unfolding story line.

Furthermore, the separation of uniformed and nonuniformed personnel was not as clear as it appeared. Within the uniformed side of the organization, for example, there were nonuniformed employees who were also hired under the RCMP Act. They were identified as civilian members. According to Melanie, civilian members were "treated as second-class citizens." The other nonuniformed personnel or non-members hired under the PSEA, were identified as public servants. All research participants of the Red Team represent the public service side of this organization.

When this research study was conceived and initiated, employees within the Red Team were faced with the proposal that elements of their compensation and benefits functions be outsourced. However, during the course of the collection of empirical

materials, *some* of the proposed outsourcing changes were implemented. Hence, the dynamics of this research changed in mid-stream. Not only was this team in the middle of proposed organizational change, but they were also in the midst of partially implemented organizational change. During a follow-up interview, Kathy mentioned: "The member compensation... it has gone to the outsourcing already. They (the outsourcer) have taken over the responsibility of providing the pension checks for members... not providing the entire pension counseling but providing checks..." The social effects of this change will be addressed later in the chapter.

At a structural level, the Red Team's organizational unit was primarily responsible for three key functions. First, pension calculations and advising clients on matters related to their pension. Second, it included advising clients on various health and disability contributions and benefits as they relate to the Public Service Health Plan. This was generally understood as activities related to benefits and insurance. Third, this unit was responsible for all matters related to entitlement, like the issuing of bi-weekly pay cheques, reconciling overtime payments, or payments to employees who were temporarily in positions that were higher than their substantive positions. The proposed organizational change called for an outsourcing of functions related to members' pension, benefits, and insurance. From the point of view of the proposed changes, functions related to payroll for uniformed employees, continued to remain within their sphere of responsibility.

Blue Team

The second group, the Blue Team, included front-line managers and supervisors who had been through a major "modernization" process within the public sector. As part of the Canadian federal government's "modernization" exercise, this particular department, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA), was granted an agency status on November 1, 1999. At a structural level, the shift to an agency status was designed to give Canadians better service and to streamline tax, customs and trade administration in Canada. Through this organizational restructuring, this agency was able to fast track its organizational changes sometimes in ways that put it at odds with hard-won labor contracts under the old scheme. Participants in the Blue Team were primarily responsible for managing the processing of individual and business Canadian Tax returns or payments. Kevin, a Team Leader, described their operational environment as follows:

> Kevin - Interview: This is a factory environment in the sense that we process 2.5 million (tax) returns. 2.5 million returns for just our Prairie Region We have to keep the (paper) flow going, 95% of the time. It is a 3-month window.

As discussed earlier, this researcher's unanticipated secondment to this department enabled him to first develop a relationship with potential participants before inviting them to participate in this study. While 10 out of the 25 front-line managers and supervisors within a particular divisional unit of this agency verbally agreed to participate in this study, 6 followed through with their verbal agreement. Unlike participants in the Red Team, these individuals were all located in one physical space and in a major Canadian city.

The preceding paragraphs were presented to outline the temporal, situational, and physical landscape of organizational changes that made up the partial context for participants in this study. From the point of view of the narrative space of inquiry, the temporal and physical dimensions are not disconnected but integrally related to and influenced the personal and social dimensions. Individuals, in other words, live their experiences within a particular context. The first and third dimensions are part of their temporal, situational, and physical context.

The Second Dimension: The Personal and Social

In relation to the personal and social dimension, it must be noted that the names of research participants were changed in order to protect their identities. Given that research participants responded by providing written narratives and through interviews, these distinctions are preserved in the presentation of their language. From the standpoint of analysis, following the lead of Clandinin and Connelly (1998), the second dimension was "simultaneously focused in four directions: inward, outward, backward and forward" (p. 158).

> By *inward* we mean the internal conditions of feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, moral dispositions, and so on. By *outward*, we mean existential conditions, that is, the environment or what E.M. Bruner (1986) calls reality. By *backward* and *forward* we are referring to temporality, past, present, and future. To experience an experience is to experience it simultaneously in these four ways and to ask questions pointing each way. [italics original] (p. 158)

To simultaneously focus in all four directions, suggests the fluid nature of discussion and analysis. Each of the four directions, in other words, was not approached as "fixed affairs" (Bateson, 1979, p. 13). Instead, in keeping with Bateson's (1979)

invitation, during the interview, questions were asked in all four directions with a view to understanding the connecting patterns.

For the purposes of analysis, first, a graphic overview of metaphors used by participants in the Red and Blue Teams will be presented (See Figure 8). Second, given that there were two distinct types of radical organizational changes that are being addressed in this study, namely proposed and already-implemented changes, the analysis will initially focus on the influence of Red Team's metaphors on the stories and narratives of participants in the Red Team. This will then be followed with the influence of metaphors on stories and narratives of participants on the Blue Team.

Stories as Informed and Structured by the Use of Metaphors

In response to the first research question what metaphors did participants in the Red Team use, what stories did they tell to describe their experiences and reality? In response to the second research question, what do their metaphors and stories reveal about how they experienced their changes?

As reflected in Figure 9 below, participants in the Red and Blue Teams used multiple metaphors to describe their experiences while in the midst of radical organizational change. While each of these metaphors suggests different and distinct ways through which individuals understand and make meaning of their experiences, an argument is also made that metaphors are not only a reflection of how individuals experience their environments, but also that they inform and structure the experiences of its users (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

In terms of understanding the experiences of individuals through their use of metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Morgan (1997) are of the opinion that metaphors enable an understanding of one domain or one element of experience in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 117; Morgan, 1997, p. 4). However, while Lakoff and Johnson (1980) conceptualized these domains of experience as "an *experiential gestalt*" (p. 117), thereby suggesting a sense of coherence and wholeness, Morgan (1997) pointed to the paradox inherent in a metaphor or in the use of metaphors. For Morgan (1997), the conceptualization of metaphors as a whole or as a gestalt is both powerful and limiting at the same time. According to him, while metaphors imply "*a way of thinking and a way of seeing* that pervade how we understand our world" [italics original] they, at the same time frame our understanding of the world "in distinctive yet partial ways" (Morgan, 1997, p. 4). As a consequence, while metaphors "can create powerful insights," they can, at the same time "also become distortions, as the way of seeing created through a metaphor becomes a way of *not* seeing" [italics in original] (p. 5). So, while metaphors point to *a way* of seeing or viewing, they are, according to Morgan (1997) also by definition, ways of *not* seeing. For Morgan (1997) while distinctive and coherent, metaphors are by definition partial and a distortion.

One question needs to be answered: how are researchers to treat the use of participants' metaphors? Are they to be treated as a whole or as distortions? The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines distortion as "putting out of shape" or as "misrepresenting motives, facts or statements." In the case of misrepresentation, what is presupposed is the idea that there is an accurate or objective reality or fact. Hence, whatever is

represented can be measured and verified against that standard. To suggest that metaphors are a distortion is to orient to metaphors as putting such an accurate reality out of shape. This notion of distortion begs two questions. First, is there such a thing as one accurate reality or for that matter, one accurate story? Second, who possesses such an accurate version of reality? To approach and seek to answer these questions in this dualistic manner is, however, a mark of a modernist approach.

The Personal Narratives Group (As cited in Riessman, 1993) offered an alternative postmodernist argument that echoes the hermeneutic understanding of this researcher.

> When talking about their lives, people lie sometimes, forget a lot, exaggerate, become confused, and get things wrong. Yet they *are* revealing truths. These truths don't reveal the past 'as it actually was,' aspiring to a standard of objectivity. They give us instead the truths of our experiences…Unlike the Truth of the scientific ideal, the truths of personal narratives are neither open to proof or self-evident. We come to understand them only through interpretation, paying careful attention to the context that shape their creation and to the world views that inform them. [Italics original](As cited in Riessman, 1993, p. 22)

As mentioned earlier, participants' stories and metaphors were accepted as being *their* stories and metaphors. In so doing, their stories and metaphors were accepted as revealing the truths of their experiences within their context. So, in response to the question that was raised earlier, namely are metaphors whole or a distortion, postmodernists like Riessman (1993), the Personal Narratives Group (1989) and this researcher would answer: "neither." They are not whole and neither are they a distortion. At the same time, as argued below, metaphors do have a sense of coherence (Lakoff &

Johnson, 1980) and the do imply *a* way of seeing and thinking (Morgan, 1997), namely the participants' way of seeing and thinking.

In this research study, metaphors, "unlike the truth of the scientific ideal," (Personal Narratives Group, as cited in Riessman, 1993, p. 22) are not approached as if they aspired to some standard of objectivity. Neither were their stories, narratives, and metaphors put to such a test. They were, instead, treated as revealing the truths of the experiences of participants within their context. According to the Personal Narratives Group (1989) and Riessman (1993), researchers can gain a better understanding of them through interpretation and by carefully attending to the contexts that shape their construction.

To summarize then, to proceed from the standpoint of whether metaphors are whole or a distortion is to get caught up in the tangle of the modern world of duality and exclusivity. Postmodernists offer another way of thinking and approaching this issue. In calling upon their readers to accept participants' metaphors and stories as *being* theirs, postmodernists untangle the modernist's tangle. In so doing, postmodernists offer an opportunity for researchers to appreciate the truths of participants' experiences for what they are. No more and no less.

While there were a total of 12 metaphors used to describe their experiences, these metaphors were offered by 10 of the 11 participants in both the Red and Blue Teams. The metaphors used can be visually displayed as follows:
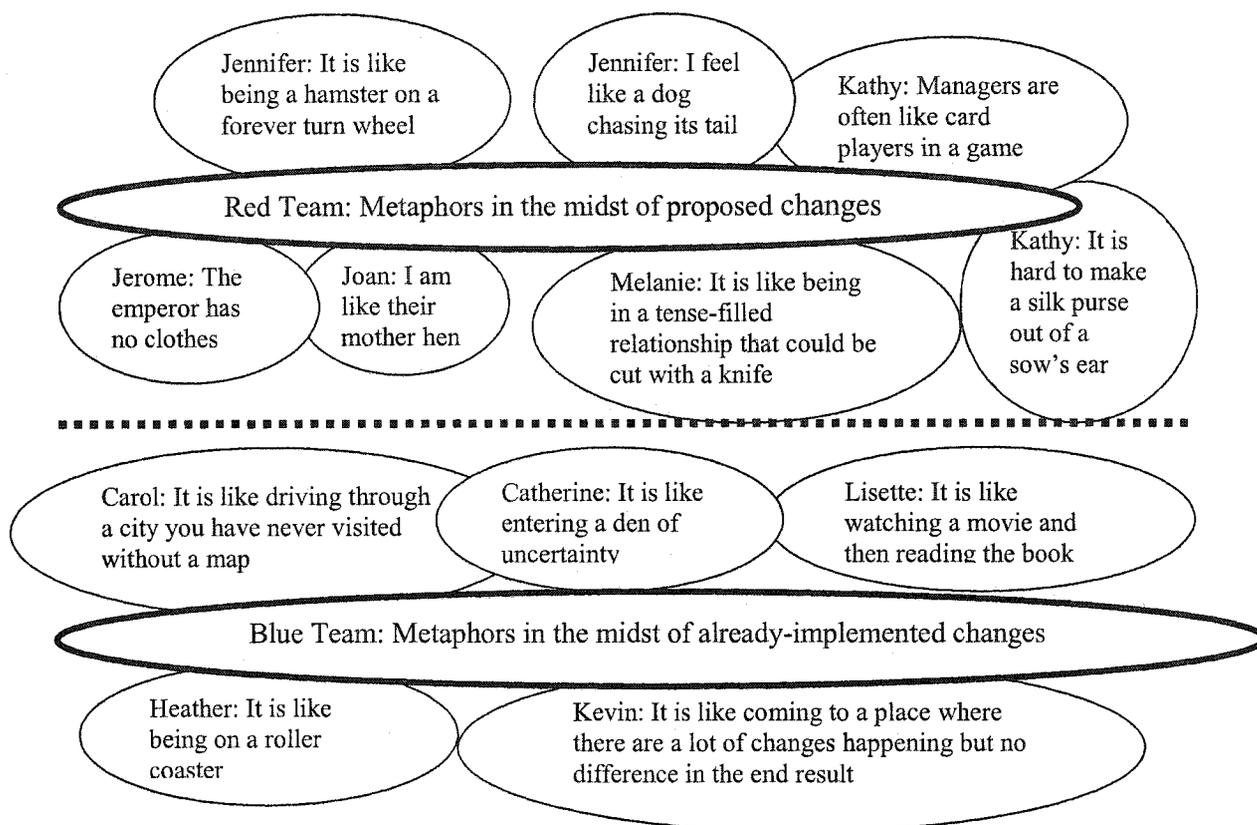
Figure 9. Differing metaphors.

Metaphors used by participants in the Red Team will be unpacked first.

The Red Team

Jennifer: It is like being a hamster on a forever turn wheel and a dog chasing his tail. Jennifer employed two metaphors to describe her experience of what it meant to be in the midst of radical organizational change

> Jennifer – Written presentation: I felt like a hamster on forever turn wheel, no matter how fast I went, I couldn't get anywhere and I couldn't get off the wheel.
>
> I felt like a dog chasing his tail.

The first metaphor offered Jennifer's truth of her experience. In the midst of proposed organizational changes, she felt (a) unproductive and stuck: "no matter how fast I went, I couldn't get anywhere"; and (b) feeling imprisoned: "I couldn't get off the wheel." Not only was her conceptual framework of being stuck, feeling unproductive, and feeling imprisoned metaphorically structured, but also her corresponding everyday activities and experience were also metaphorically structured.

When probed with the question, "What's preventing you from getting off the wheel?" Jennifer responded by saying,

> Jennifer – Interview: Oh I don't know…The saddest part of all of this is that those of us who work in pay truly enjoy it and wouldn't have traded this experience for anything…I don't know. Maybe I am simply too close to retirement.…

Her reality of feeling imprisoned, insofar as she stated that she is unable to get off the wheel, is complex in that her definition of her situation is partially self-imposed. She chose, in other words, to stay in that relationship because she was "too close to retirement." The complexity of this self-imposed imprisoned relationship is further reflected in Melanie's narrative in that she too spoke about her lack of choices by virtue of being so close to retirement.

> Melanie – Interview: Well to be frank, I don't have a choice right now than to come to work and to make the best out of the situation to the best I can because I am so close to retirement. I have close to 4 ½ years…ummm…the penalty on my pension is too great for me to do anything else…I am not the rock of Gibraltar that I used to think I was…yeah, they have broken me.

In being so close to retirement, both Jennifer and Melanie could not imagine being anywhere else or doing something else for that matter. All Jennifer felt that she could do was to go faster on "the forever turn wheel" and she continued to be frustrated with getting the same results. Is it any wonder then that she also used the metaphor of feeling like a dog chasing his tail? At a literal level, the partially self-imposed mental image of being imprisoned translated into another powerful image of powerlessness: that of going around in circles. Jennifer's regret and confusion can be stated as follows: She enjoyed her work in the area of compensation; she wouldn't trade this experience for anything else. So, how was it possible that she felt that way? At a figurative level, then, these metaphors conjure an image of the lack of purpose in her work world. At the same time, while their work world was being experienced as purposeless, the full benefits of pension through retirement and the penalty for retiring earlier continued to keep Jennifer in an imprisoned psychic and mental state, and Melanie with a broken spirit.

Interestingly enough, while Jennifer pointed to how hard she worked and Melanie pointed to the work of making "the best out of her situation" to the best of her abilities, their metaphors projected a sense of powerlessness. Jennifer projected her powerlessness through her metaphor of being a hamster on a forever turning wheel. Melanie, on the other hand, projected her sense of powerless through her metaphor of no longer being "the rock of Gibraltar that I used to think I was." However, the full benefits associated with their pension scheme, continued to keep that in that state of powerlessness. What this essentially implies is that rather than be penalized for retiring earlier they chose instead to suffer their condition of self-imposed powerlessness.

Kathy: It is like being card players in a game. Another front-line manager, Kathy, used another metaphor to describe her experience of powerlessness.

> Kathy - Written presentation: Managers are often like card players in the game, but only given a few pages out of the rule book and little choice in what card game we are actually going to play. It's hard to make a silk purse out of the Sow's ear.

While in the midst of radical organizational change, Kathy's sense of her world was informed and structured by her image of herself as a "card player." "Managers," said Kathy, "are often like card players in the game, but only given a few pages out of the rule book." But, for her it is more than that. She also stated that she has "little choice in what card game we are actually going to play." Unpacking this metaphor, her listeners are implicitly led to the powerful images that are contained in a card game and at the same time to the powerlessness of their role in the game.

In general, the nature of a card game is such that players first agree on what card game they are going to play and then organize themselves accordingly. Whatever that common game is, another critical feature of any card game is such that card players share as little information as possible with others in the game and that they take every precaution to not show their card-hand for fear of losing. At best they make a calculative guess at what they think the other card players have in their hands. Professional card players also carefully manage how they appear to others in the card game in an attempt to keep the others in a second-guessing mode. Hence the term "poker-face." This illustration, however, acknowledges that card-players know that they are in a common game. They are all, for example, playing poker.

While it may be fun in an actual card game, the ugliness of being in this kind of a situation was reflected in her second metaphor: "it's hard to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." Kathy, in other words, could not imagine making something as beautiful as a 'silk purse' when she was only given little bits of information. It was as if she was in the middle of practices that were deceitful and dishonest. She could not, in other words, imagine how she could make something beautiful from something as ugly as this deceitful situation.

Jerome: The emperor has no clothes. For Jerome, however, another kind of game and corresponding experience was reflected and structured through his metaphor, "the emperor has no clothes."

> Jerome – Written presentation: 'The Emperor has no clothes'. The role of the team is that of 'busy work' geared to presenting an image to the outside world that suggests commitment and progress in the absence of any evidence. Positioning, posing and acting are...required. Rewards are reserved for the best performance rather than the best results...both leaders and followers need to be clear about their roles if the illusion is to be successful...

His metaphor suggests that while in the midst of organizational change, he saw through the charade and the theatrical performance in his organization, where "positioning, posing and, and acting are what (was) required." Jerome, in other words, chose to dramaturgically interpret his experience while in the midst of proposed organizational change. Within that context, the various actors in the play were required to present the as the image of "busy work...in the absence of any evidence." Like Jennifer, he too questioned the purposefulness of such an activity.

In the midst of proposed organizational change, for him the organizational mantra was interpreted in two ways. First, it was to "get busy" for the sake of appearing to be doing something rather than actually doing something. Second, it was also reflective of an organization where there was a tacit agreement to not question their assumptions or roles: "both leaders and followers need to be clear about their roles if the illusion is to be successful." Their roles were to play their parts well. Accordingly, he defined his work-world as a place where "rewards are reserved for the best performance, rather than results." Insofar as he was directed by his colleagues to "do it slowly and (to) put a lot of processes around it and (those) sort of things," change processes that were put in place within his organization were interpreted by Jerome as stalling tactics and a lack of willingness to be engaged in real change. As a consequence, he was convinced that the executives within his organization were more interested in giving the appearance of being engaged in change rather than actually changing. While Jerome's metaphor was markedly different from Kathy's or Jennifer's, they were connected in that their metaphors pointed to the deceitfulness of the relationships that existed while in the midst of organizational change and to the lack of purpose in their activities.

Melanie: It is like being in a tense-filled relationship that could be cut with a knife. Related to the how "looks are sometimes deceiving" and focusing outwards, Melanie offered yet another metaphor that provided a distinctive yet partial accounting of the interpersonal relationships that existed in her workplace.

> Melanie- Written Presentation: All appears to be running smoothly on the surface. Looks are sometimes deceiving. I feel like there in a tension in here that could be cut with a knife! There is still an "US" "THEM"

mentality...The role of our "LEADER" was never defined and was not living up to our expectation of this function...

I don't hold out much hope for things to change because I have seen so little change. I have told and retold my story. I don't like how negative I feel about this whole thing and I am not expecting much change.

Outward relationships, which appeared smooth on the surface, left Melanie with a distinctive mark: "I feel like there is a tension in here that could be cut with a knife!" Kathy also mentioned that, "the in-fighting was bad." The tensions that Melanie saw were fundamentally played out through the use of another metaphor and within the framework of an *us* vs. *them* way of thinking and relating. In her written presentation, Melanie not only capitalized the word leader but also placed it in quotation marks. In doing so, she communicated her definite nonacceptance and rejection of the 'them' in the latter's role of being her manager. The predominant existence of this adversarial way of thinking and relating, caused her to lose hope: "I don't hold out much hope for things to change because I have seen so little change...I have told and retold my story...(but) I am not expecting much change."

Interestingly enough, listeners and readers of Melanie's metaphor and story are once again reminded of Bateson's (1979) understanding of a recursive relationship. Bateson (1979) could be heard as suggesting that the identity of the *us* and everything that the *us* feels cannot be sustained without at the same time constructing and maintaining the identity of the *them*. The identity of the *them* is everything the *us* is not. Within this context, the '*them*' are defined as simply imposing their demands upon the *us*. Within this prescribed definition, the *us* are simply left with no other options but to feel the negative impacts of such an imposition. Hence, Melanie's comment: "I don't like

how negative I feel about this whole thing..." Said differently, Melanie, through her metaphor, quietly suffered being a victim in her work environment while in the midst of organizational change. At the same time, in her quiet suffering of the tension-filled environment that "could be cut with a knife," she managed her presentation of herself in everyday life as if everything appeared smooth. To use the metaphor of the card player that was used earlier, she chose to put on a "poker face" in the face of a workplace that was filled with tension.

To experience the *us* as victims, then, also required Melanie to construct and sustain an image of the them" as abusive and as not caring. The recursive nature of this process is that in assigning a metaphor to *them*, like not caring or abusive, Melanie also began to assign a reciprocal metaphor to herself and thereby defined the nature of the relationship between *us* and *them*. These reciprocal relationships may be visualized as follows:
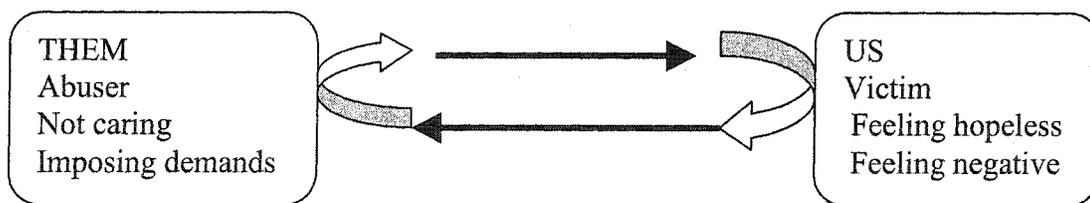
Figure 10. Recursive relationship where effect does come back to the cause.

From Bateson's (1979) perspective, the metaphors of *us* and *them* or victim and abuser, are interconnected in that they are two parts of the same story. Melanie, in this instance, cannot identify herself as *us* or as *victim* without at the same time constructing n image of the other as the *them* and as imposing demands. The identity of the *us* is

integrally and directly dependent upon such a construction. Such a construction, however, was not something that was merely cooked up in Melanie's head. It was instead based on selected events that were recalled through her acts of remembering. The *us* in other words, cannot continue feeling the effects of being *us* without at the same time keeping the story and identity of the *them* constantly alive. Said differently, her feeling of hopelessness or feeling negative is only *relevant* in this context. The meanings that she made out of this situation then, was relevant only insofar as she continued to *actively collaborate* in the construction and maintenance of such a recursive relationship.

Joan: I am their mother hen. While Jennifer defined and experienced her role as a hamster on a wheel and like a dog chasing its tail, and Kathy as a card player in a game not of her choice, and Jerome as an actor on stage, Joan offered a different metaphor and experience. In the midst of organizational change, Joan's experience was partially structured by her definition of her management role as a "mother hen."

> Joan – Interview: I think I'm their mother hen. I think it is just my own
> personality. It is probably the biggest thing. I'm always concerned about
> everybody…So, I have to make sure that all my chicks are fine…and
> ummm…I just want harmony (laughter).

Interestingly enough, her description of herself was immediately followed by a nervous laughter. Such a reaction suggests that even though she has formulated her role as being a mother hen, she was not comfortable or at ease with her definition of her role. Mother hens, by nature are extremely protective of their young. Similarly, Joan is protective and concerned about her staff. At the level of system integration, this concern and protection, translated into "making sure that everyone in my team has all the

information." At the level of social integration, something else was taking place. Listen, for instance to her account of her personal "quandary" as she put it:

> Joan – Interview: I want to keep ensuring them that they will be OK and keep giving them the information I am getting. I am continually being told that you are going to be looked after or that nobody's going to lose their jobs or that positions will reduced when people go to pension or leave through attrition, that the numbers will be fine. In the back of my mind, I just don't really believe that at all ...and what will we do if we start to jump ship? So, it is a real quandary here because I worry about them too. I don't want all of these people to be stuck in a dead end...for me, that's a hard thing, and I don't think that we are really being honest...and none of us is really that stupid.

Her personal "quandary" or dilemma as a 'mother hen' may be understood as follows. On the one hand, she wanted her employees to have the necessary information. That was part and parcel of protecting those whom she was responsible for leading. On the other hand, she did not believe that she was being given the full information. While she was informed that none of her employees would lose their jobs as a consequence of the radical changes, she did not believe it. She shared Jerome's capacity to see through the charade by saying that, "none of us is really that stupid." For her, this meant that her credibility as manager was also at stake. Her inability to reconcile the two left her in her state of being in a sticky situation both in terms of looking after the best interests of those whom she was responsible for managing and being credible in the process. While she did not withhold any information that was given to her, she did not in her heart of hearts believe that information to be 'whole'. Given her statement that "none of us is really that stupid," Joan was also perturbed about how she would be perceived by those whom she managed. What is interesting to note in Joan's narrative, is that her experience of being in

a quandary was constructed and structured fundamentally by her already formulated decision that "they" are not being honest.

The foregoing analysis of metaphors commenced with the assumption that they were, on the one hand, a reflection of how individuals experience their environments. On the other hand, it was also suggested that metaphors also have the power to structure the stories and narratives of individual metaphor users. The analysis that follows shifts to demonstrating how participants' stories and narratives are further influenced and structured by the logical outcomes of their metaphors.

Storying as a Product of Already-Made Decisions

As reflected in narrative presentations below, an everyday understanding that information is a critical variable in the process of making informed decisions was a stumbling block for Jerome. In the midst of proposed changes, his experience was that no amount of information given was sufficient to increase the confidence in what managers were being told. Joan, for example, reflected: "Although we are being told consistently that...ummm...no one is going to lose their jobs...I don't think we are hearing the whole truth." Joan, for example, was convinced that they "were living a lie" in part because she had already made her decision in terms of the outcome of the proposed changes. Jerome was fully aware of this lack of confidence and belief: "I know that a lot of what I have been saying, they like to hear. But they can't believe it." Jennifer also shared the same conclusion.

> Joan - Interview: OK, pension outsourcing, insurance outsourcing, those are on the list right now, for this year. When is payroll outsourcing on the list? What year is that because I know it is coming. There are companies

like Ceridian…that can do this type of work. So, it has to be on the list somewhere…why can't they share it with us? I just feel like they are not giving it (information) to us because they are scared that we are just going to jump ship…I sense they are not being truthful. But I don't have any verification for that…I am just sensing it…I am sensing that there is way more than what is being shared with us.

Jennifer – Written presentation: We all privately suspect that in time pay will be outsourced but we do not know when it will happen.

Jerome – Interview: I know that a lot of what I have been saying, they like to hear. But they can't believe it.

Transformation of "If" to "When"

Notice for instance, the use of the language "when" rather than "if" to describe their situation. Unlike the language of "if" the language of "when" is more definitive and conclusive. Joan and Jennifer's reasoning may be heard as proceeding in the following manner: We know it is coming and it is simply a matter of time. Interestingly enough, their private sensing and suspicions of the outcome, which as Joan mentioned were without verification, were now treated as a foregone conclusion. Joan and Jennifer's narrative presentations, in other words, were actively mapped and structured as a consequence of their own taken-for-granted decisions. Relying on their private suspicions and on what they sensed to be true, they were convinced that all functions within Compensation would be outsourced in the future. It was this piece of information or the lack thereof, rather than any other information that dominated their consciousness. As a consequence, these participants created their own interpretations as to why information was being withheld. Joan justified her interpretation by saying, "I just feel like they are not giving it (information) to us because they are scared that we are just going to jump ship." The recursive relationship between Joan's metaphor of being their mother hen and

corresponding experiences within the context of already-made decisions is graphically

traced in Figure 11. Following the direction of the arrows in the graphic below, the

sequence of the recursive relationship can be pictured through this single-loop as follows.
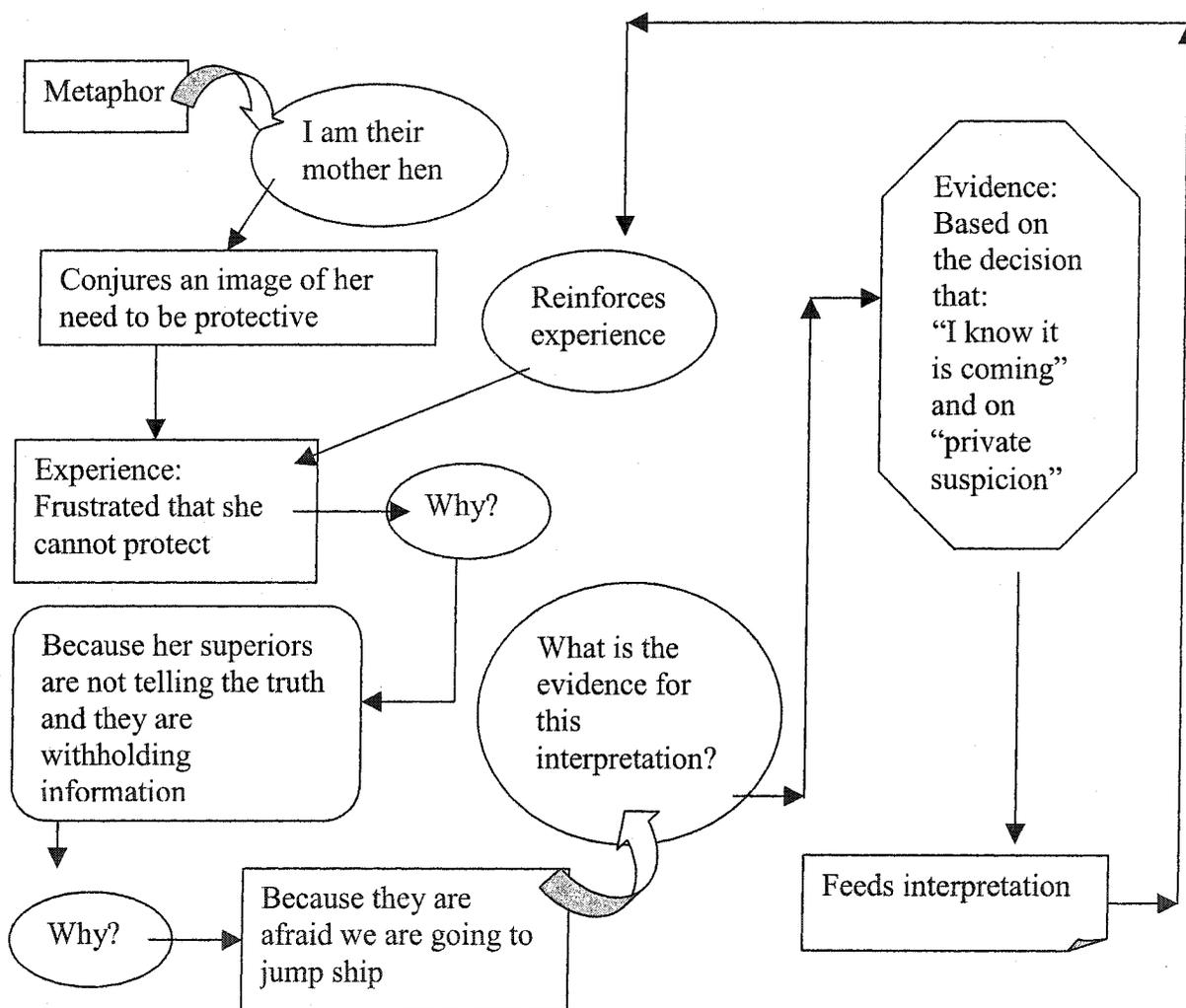
Figure 11. Metaphor sustained by mental decisions and influencing experience.

Fabricated Conclusions as Driving Decisions

Garfinkel (1967) from the school of ethnomethodology, superbly explained the above noted behavior and process of decision-making in his study of decision-making in juries (pp. 104-115). Through his observations of a jury's decision-making process, he noted, for example, that the sequence of events was not (a) deciding on the harm that was done, (b) seeing the extent of the harm, (c) allocating blame, and then finally (d) making a judgment or choosing a verdict. Instead, through his observations he insisted that jurors first decided on a verdict and then selected the "facts" from among alternative claims of what was allegedly done to justify their verdict. As a consequence, Garfinkel (1967) offered another way of thinking about the process of making decisions. It consisted "of the possibility that the person defines retrospectively the decisions that have been made. *The outcome comes before the decision*" [Italics original] (p. 114). Accordingly, Garfinkel (1967) proposed that a critical feature of decision-making in daily life is that decision-makers look for ways to justify their courses of action on the basis of their already-decided and prescribed outcomes.

Joan and Jennifer, for example could be viewed as being engaged in a similar process of decision-making. Their decisions to not trust the information they were given, to treat what they were given as lies, to feel that information was deliberately being withheld came *after* their formulated outcome of what was really going to happen. What Joan and Jennifer treated as self-evident was that it was simply a matter of time before all functions within compensation would be outsourced. Once that outcome was treated as real, Joan then went about her task of rationalizing 'why' information was being

withheld. Information was being withheld because management was afraid that "we are just going to jump ship." The fact that this outcome was based on a private suspicion and without verification was of no real consequence.

The Forgetfulness of Authorship

A critical feature of how individuals understand and make meaning of their experiences then is not as simple as making sense of human situations as information becomes progressively clarified. Instead, this clarification often works in the reverse. Garfinkel (1967), and later Weick (1995), suggested that the actors' fabricated outcome develops and authors their definition of their situation. What this suggests is that Joan and Jennifer first authored their formulation of an outcome and then acted as interpreters of that outcome as if it was a reality that was out there and constructed by someone other than themselves. Berger and Luckmann (1966), for example, identified this process as reification. By this they meant the "apprehension of the products of human activity *as if* they were something other than human products" [italics original] (p. 89). In taking some liberties with Marx's formulation of irrationality, it was as if participants in this study first authored and constructed their definition of the situation, and then chose to forget about their own authorship. As a consequence, they focused outwards and interpreted the actions of others insofar as the latter contributed, or did not contribute, to their formulated outcomes.

Interestingly enough, Joan's assumptions and interpretation continued to inform her own decisions and actions in other areas. During the course of this research study, for example, Joan was offered another permanent position within the Cadet Training

Academy of this same organization. When the offer for new employment was made, Joan

wrote via e-mail:

> Joan – Personal Communication: I am desperately trying to work it
> through my mind and unfortunately I have this devotion to my group that
> makes me feel guilty abut the offer. I know others will perceive me as
> 'jumping ship'…and you know me, it is always about what others think of
> me…geez, why am I a Catholic… ha-ha.

Permission was asked and granted by Joan to include her comments in this

research study. Joan's interpretation continued to influence and structured her experience.

Recall for instance, that her interpretation for why management was withholding

information was "because they are scared that we are just going to jump ship." In

choosing to accept her new employment offer, she now acted as her own judge and jury

of how she would be viewed by others: "I know others will perceive me as jumping

ship." She was convinced of this in the same way as she was convinced that all functions

within compensation would be outsourced. However ,rather than orienting to her own

choices, she attributed her feeling of guilt to being a Catholic. Her religious upbringing

was now blamed for her feelings of guilt.

The devotion to her team and her feelings of guilt, however, were not sufficient

reasons for her to refuse the employment offer. Curiously, Joan's explanation and

rationalization of her decision to accept the employment offer could be heard as being

influenced by a way of thinking and seeing that she had communicated during the

interview. Prior to the employment offer and during the interview, Joan said:

> Joan – Interview: I have been with the RCMP for 26 years. I think I have
> made a contribution but I think that once this transition is complete… I
> don't think that they are going to be too concerned with the Joan's of the

department or of the organization...because you are just a dime a dozen...and you are not as valuable So, for myself, personally, I have to start thinking about my own career and what it is that will make me continue to survive until I am dead.

Once again, her conviction of her outcome continued to influence her decision-making process. Joan was convinced that as soon as the organizational transition was completed, she would be released from her place of employment. As a consequence she began to act on that prescribed outcome as if that was already a reality. When the offer for new employment was accepted, it was a perfectly logical outcome of her decision "to start thinking about my own career." In her estimation, while others may accuse her of jumping ship, she took pride in her belief that she has made a contribution to her organization and was not afraid to make a move. At the same time, she justified her decision on the basis of the definition of her identity. She deprecated an image of herself as simply "being a dime a dozen" and therefore quite easily replaceable.

On the Connectedness Between System Integration and Social Integration

To return the dynamics of the situation, as presented above, to a quasi-state of steadiness, proponents of system-cybernetics might interpret their task as the need to provide more information. Jerome, for example, did precisely that. However, if Garfinkel's (1967) explanation of the process of decision-making is accepted as credible and believable, then no matter how much information was provided, the recipients of information in this situation, will continue to focus on aspects of information that were not being shared or on pieces that were being, in their minds, deliberately excluded. Hence Jerome's frustration: "I know that a lot of what I have been saying, they like to hear – but they can't believe it."

For Melanie, this lack of belief only added to her confusion and lack of confidence in her ability to perform her tasks.

> I feel overwhelmed. I feel underappreciated and I am confused. My confusion is that we know our jobs very well for a lot of years and all of a sudden we start second guessing ourselves because the changes are so rapid…that you find yourself second-guessing…and that is really…really frustrating.

From the perspective of social integration, however, Weick (1995) offered another alternative. For Weick (1995), individuals who are overwhelmed and confused in situations like these do not need more information. "Instead," Weick (1995) suggested, "they need values, priorities and clarity about preferences" because "clarity on values clarifies what is important" (pp. 27-28). Weick then could be heard as suggesting that Jerome's frustration could be alleviated if he expanded his response to include *both* information *and* clarity of values. The exclusive focus on providing more information continued to be his stumbling block. At the same time, the lack of clarity of their own preferences and decisions continued to feed into how participants in the Red Team negatively experienced the proposed organizational changes. This became their stumbling block.

Another issue that was surfaced at the level of social integration was that the issue was not really about the lack of information. Joan, for example, did not say: I don't believe in the information. Instead, she said, "I sense they are not being truthful." The issue then is not about the lack of information but the lack of belief or trust in the information givers: "they are not being truthful." Within this interpreted context, what was being suggested was that the work of change managers cannot simply be limited to

providing information and yet more information. Instead, the management of change has also to include the building and re-building of relationships if trust and believability are to flourish. (Covey, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1995) These issues will be addressed a little later in this chapter.

<center>*Stories as Informed by the Power of Recall*</center>

Curiously, 4 out of the 5 respondents began to narrate their stories vis-à-vis the proposed organizational changes by engaging in a mental activity of remembering, recollecting and recalling. They chose to begin by recalling an organizational change that had occurred three years ago. For example, "Well...where to start my story," said Kathy, "I guess at the beginning." Interestingly enough, what was treated as her beginning, were issues that were at best not listened to and at worst left unsettled with an organizational change that occurred 3 years prior to this research study.

In choosing to focus their attention by looking backward, the stories that were told were affected by the participants' selected "acts of attention" (Schutz, 1967, p. 51). Their telling of their stories, in other words, was a function of that which they chose to remember. By selectively attending in that way, they chose to make certain phenomena meaningful in their telling of their stories (Riessman, 1993). Figure 12, as displayed below, is intended (a) to capture the relationship between the theme of the story, which is identified as the need to bring closure to unfinished business, and narrative presentations contributing to this theme; and (b) to demonstrate the interconnectedness between system and social integration. At a social level, then, one set of stories that were told in the midst of proposed changes, was directly influenced by their power of recall. Said

differently, their telling of their stories was directly influenced by what they chose to

attend to through their power of recall.

Kathy: The Move happened and we went kicking and screaming... the infighting was bad.

Jennifer: I had very little knowledge of the other pay system

Joan: Amalgamation was making my life a living nightmare

Jennifer: To add insult to injury, one of our managers never even took the time to introduce himself to this office

Theme: Bringing closure to unfinished business

Melanie: I thought it would offer me the opportunity to work with new people...I was angry and hurt...(with implications) that our service was substandard

Melanie: The move/ amalgamation took place on February 24th 2000. That is history now, but I spent two years pulling knives out of my back

Kathy: The amalgamation experience was like putting a stick in my eye...

Jennifer: Amalgamation and regionalization... was one of the most difficult times in my life...we never knew from one day to the next what was going on...I felt betrayed...no one seemed to care that pay would be closed...

Figure 12. On the relationship between the theme and the stories.

Three years prior to this research study, there was an amalgamation between two

units that essentially performed the same compensation function but as mentioned earlier,

for the two different client groups within the same organization. However, while the

amalgamation only affected the physical relocation of these two units, the social effects of such a move were far-reaching.

Four out of the 5 respondents began their stories by treating this event as if *that* was their beginning. Kathy's language descriptor of the move was rather revealing. In her written story, she did not just write "the move happened." Instead, she capitalized the event as follows.

> Kathy – Written presentation: The Move happened and we went kicking and screaming...we were plunked in an office...with staffing because (they) had no room for us and we were left on our own with no boss...with people who did not really care to have us there either...

Another participant, Melanie, was more specific in her written story about her attitude towards the amalgamation.

> Melanie – Written presentation: I fought for many years for our work location to remain status quo but to no avail. The decision was made by our Human Resources Officer ...that Compensation services for the Regional and Member pay to work together as a unit...The move/amalgamation took place on February 24th 2000. That is history now but I spent two years pulling knives out of my back.

While Melanie "fought for many years" against amalgamation, when it occurred their team went, as Kathy mentioned, "kicking and screaming." As reflected in Figure 12 above, in recalling this event, Jennifer bemoaned her interpretation that no one seemed to care that their unit may be closed as a result of amalgamation. Again, as stated earlier, Jennifer's interpretation was primarily informed by her "private suspicion" that all services within the compensation unit would ultimately be outsourced. While the physical move was, as Melanie mentioned, "history," their graphic recall of what they experienced

at that time, suggests that their experiences of that move were very much alive. Perhaps

this is what Bruner (1986a) meant when he said that, "stories may have endings, but

stories are never over" (p. 17). Three years later, Melanie, for example, even remembered

the exact date of the move. "The move/amalgamation took place on February 24th 2000."

These participants singled out a structurally related event as a significant and traumatic

social event. As evidenced in Melanie's narrative presentation below, the trauma that was

experienced at a social level was further fueled by the interaction that occurred whilst in

the middle of that move. When the physical change of amalgamation was announced,

Melanie described her experiences as follows.

> Melanie – Written presentation - When the amalgamation was
> announced...I thought it would give me the opportunity to learn other
> aspects of the job...and offer the opportunity to work with new people and
> create new friendships...
>
> During this time there were many rumors circulating. The 'rumors' were
> such things as e-mails that were sent out to...clients...advising of the
> upcoming changes and apologizing for their clients' not going to be
> receiving 'the same level of service' that they were previously accustomed
> to...
>
> I was angry and hurt that anyone would assume that these clients would
> not be looked after as well as they had been previously and implying that
> our service was substandard...

Even though she fought the move for many years, when the changes were

announced, Melanie looked forward to the "opportunity to learn other aspects of the job,"

working "with new people" and creating "new friendships." From her narrative

presentation, the rumours more than dashed her hopes. Three years later, she continued to

retell her angry story. Melanie formulated her identity through the outward conduct of

others. What was recalled, in other words, through the lack of closure of things like past

comments, rumours, and e-mails, continued to influence the formulation of her identity. She did not have the capacity and neither did she give herself the opportunity to influence the conduct of others or comments made by others. Consequently, she appeared to be simply feeling the effects of what was said, written, and implied.

Recurrence of a Recursive Relationship

Recall, for instance, Bateson's (1979) notion of the co-construction of meaning through his distinction between, *linear, nonlinear, lineal,* and *recursive* relationships to events or arguments. Recursive relationships, he suggested, refer to a "relation among a series of causes or arguments such that a sequence does…come back to the starting point" (Bateson, 1979, p. 228). With this level of understanding, Bateson (1979) could be heard as suggesting that Melanie was equally responsible for the construction of her work-identity in the midst of the rumours. It is then a little more complex than an external stimulus causing a reaction as in a *lineal* relationship. Melanie, for example, chose to keep a particular stimulus alive through memory and continued to react to her chosen stimulus and to justify her anger. The anger she felt about being defined as one that would provide a substandard service continued to be maintained and kept alive through her focused and selective attention on that particular event.

During the interview, Melanie was further probed with the following statement and question: "Help me understand. This happened three years ago. Right? So…" Before the probing question was completed, Melanie quickly responded:

> Yes, it happened three years ago…but that is my reality Stan…I mean no
> one has addressed this. And to make matters worse I have to work with the

manager who made this comment as a colleague… like one big happy team!

While she spoke, Melanie nonverbally used her index and middle fingers to place "one big happy team" in quotation marks. Here then, was another issue that had yet to be closed. No one in her organization had addressed that event either presumably because it was a thing of the past, or because it was not perceived as being important enough to be addressed. As a consequence, it continued to be like an open wound for Melanie, and it continued to adversely and sarcastically affect and bias her working relationships. It continued to exclude her from being a part of the projected and desired story of the new organization, namely, to behave as if they were "one big happy team."

At an intersubjective level, Melanie attributed a meaning to the circulation of e-mails, which in effect, made a judgement on the level of service that could be expected. She was angry at the insinuation that professional services provided by her team would be substandard. It was this meaning that was reflected in the kind of attention that was directed to her current relationships and experience. At another level, in relation to the physical move without accompanying space, or having a senior manager who "never even took the time to introduce himself to this office," the interpreted meaning of those acts or behavior was that 'they' don't really care. Three years later, those meanings had not undergone any modifications and they continued to inform experiences while in the midst of yet another round of organizational change.

Significance of Backward Glance

What is the significance of this backward glance for those who are called to lead and manage organizational change? Recall, for instance, Duck's (1998) comments that for change to occur in any organization it is imperative (a) for people to think, feel, and behave differently, and (b) for leaders to win their followers one by one. What then can leaders and researchers learn from this backward glance so that they can win the followership of participants in this? At the level of system integration, the unresolved issues that were reflected in their narratives, ranged from complaints about the lack of physical space for employees affected by the amalgamation, communication via rumors, having a senior manager who did not know the business, to having a senior manager who did not make himself available to his employees. At the level of social integration, these structural issues were inwardly experienced as feeling abandoned and being in a work environment that demonstrated a lack of caring. These experiences of hurt, anger, betrayal, feeling abandoned, powerlessness, feeling like someone put a stick in one's eye, and that no one cared made Joan's life a "living nightmare." As a manager of one organizational unit, Joan mentioned that much of her time was spent on "keeping the peace" in an environment where, as Kathy mentioned, the "in-fighting was bad."

The experiences outlined in the preceding paragraphs are closely related to Argyris' (1993) observations that were outlined in chapter 1. Recall, for instance, that Argyris (1993), observed that 3 years after he investigated 32 major reorganization efforts in large businesses, none of those change efforts could be acknowledged as fully completed. In fact, he found that many people in those organizations were still fighting,

questioning, resisting, and blaming 3 years after the initiation of change efforts. A similar

observation is made in this study in that the infighting among employees that the Red

Team managers and supervisors were responsible for managing and supervising. Argyris

(1993) observed that upper management's response of applying pressure in terms of

forcing people to work together, knocking a few heads together, and even eliminating

some heads continued instead to contribute to the problem. As will be seen be seen a little

later, in the case of the Red Team, upper management was also accused of not doing

anything and doing too much at a micro level. They, as will be seen in the section labeled

stories about the lack of management support, were charged with both acts of omission

and micro-commission.

On the Interconnectedness Between System Integration and Social Integration

At the level of systems integration, while the issues of space and the hiring of a

new and more competent senior manager had since been settled, the fact that these stories

about an event that occurred three years ago continued to be recalled, suggests that issues

related to social integration have yet to be settled. The unsettled issues related to system

integration in other words, continued to be used as examples of their social definition of

the situation and as a consequence confirmed the coherence of their reasoning. This lack

of closure continued to influence their lives. They were also brought on as extra baggage

as they entered into yet another "roller-coaster" (Jennifer) round of radical organizational

change. Each change, in other words, was not only placed and experienced within an

ongoing sequence of events but also in relation to past events that were not addressed and

closed.

Within the context of these stories, the interconnectedness of issues between

system integration and social integration is visually displayed in Figure 13 below. The

primary objective in the display of this interconnectedness is to suggest that the work of

change managers, insofar as they are challenged "to win their followers one by one"

(Duck, 1998, p. 56), is such that they need to be attentive to both.
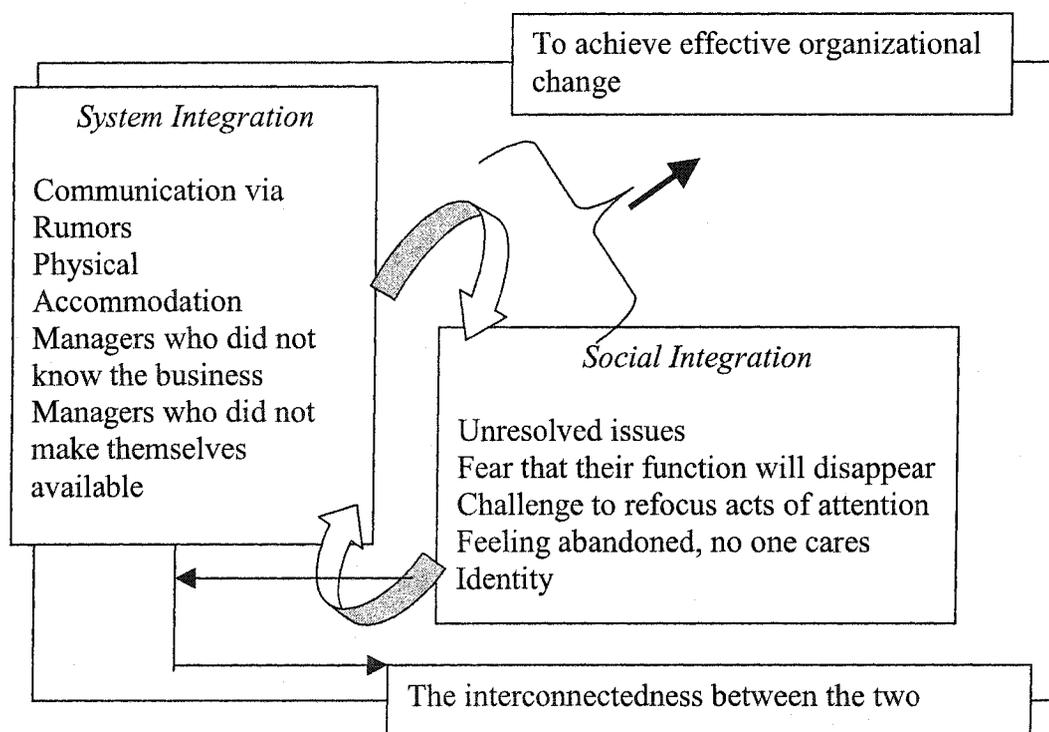
Figure 13. On the interconnectedness between system and social integration.

Stories about the Lack of Management Support

Looking Outward and Corresponding Inward Reactions

Another set of stories and corresponding experiences that participants in the Red

Team apprehended and marked out as worthy of their attention, is captured under the

theme labeled as *feeling the lack of management support*. The narrative presentations that

fed this theme are visually presented below.

Melanie: We were assured that the staff was looking forward to having us… that my role would be easier…complete lies…

Jennifer: We were often left out in the cold…

Joan: I feel a lot of frustration with upper management…

Joan: I don't think our best interest is always at the top

Jerome: I don't really get…a sense that they are desirous…of change

Theme: Feeling the lack of management support

Kathy: …it seems like they do not have any real personal contact with you to know what's going on…since I have been on the job (my boss) has not been to see me on a business level…

Melanie: Saw an ad…and then I thought…do I really want to throw myself to the wolves again?

Jennifer: To add to the demands of the job, our Manager for the Region was forever changing…no one knew what we did, no one seemed to care…

Melanie: I feel like a beaten dog, a school child who had misbehaved, and a child who had disappointed a parent and now that parent has no trust in me…We are now being 'managed' to the 10th degree

Figure 14: On the relationship between the theme and the narrative presentations.

Part of the unfolding story was that in the midst of proposed radical

organizational change, those who were led looked to their leadership for some kind of

positive support and direction. Their focus, in other words, was outward and it was based

on the behaviors or conduct of those to whom these front-line managers and supervisors, for example, reported. This outward focus highlights the social aspects of the process of making meaning. What is interesting to note here is the recursive relationship between the outward observation of the conduct of people occupying positions in upper management, and the subsequent construction of shared meanings and the use of common language to sustain those shared meanings.

Concretely, the behaviors of those to whom they reported were viewed in relation to (a) what they said: "we were assured that the staff was looking forward to having us (as a result of amalgamation)…complete lies," (b) the absence of personal contact: "since I have been on the job (my boss) has not been in to see me on a business level…" or simply being absent: "we were often left in the cold," (c) the revolving door syndrome of senior managers who were responsible for that particular portfolio: "our manager for the region was forever changing," (d) the actions of upper management: "I don't really get a sense that they are desirous of change," (e) being micro-managed: "We are now micromanaged to the 10th degree." At an individual and collective level, these outward observations, were inwardly experienced as (a) not caring: "no one seemed to care," (b) abandonment: "I don't think our best interest is always at the top," (c) having to fend for themselves and feeling like one has been thrown into a pack of wolves, and (d) oppressed: "I feel like a beaten dog, a school child who had misbehaved." Accumulatively, these experiences could be heard as being voiced as "frustration with upper management." How can the construction of these shared interpretations and meanings be understood?

The Voice of Symbolic Interaction

The process of making meaning can be understood and explained in one of two ways. On the one hand, the relationship between the outward observation of the conduct of others and subsequent construction and sustaining of shared meanings suggests that the process of making meaning is not solitary and neither is it in one's head (Barrett et al. 1995). The narrative presentations of what a person experiences internally, in other words, are contingent upon what individuals take into account from the conduct of others. This formulation and understanding, is essentially grounded in the interpretation of scholars from within the school of symbolic interaction. Herbert Blumer (1969), a key representative and scholar from the school of symbolic interaction suggested that in interacting with others "human beings…direct their own conduct or handle their situation in terms of what they take into account" (p. 8). According to him, this outward focus enables a number of different response options. Vis-à-vis the actions of others "one may abandon an intention or purpose, revise it, check or suspend it, intensify it, or replace it" (Blumer, 1969, p. 8).

Similarly, the outward focus on the conduct of others, moved participants in this study to take into account what individuals in upper management positions were doing or not doing and they directed their own conduct in terms of what they took into account. However, in the face of the actions or non-actions of upper management, the conduct of upper management continued to intensify their interpretations of the lack of management support. It did not for example cause them to abandon their interpretation, check it, revise it, suspend or replace their interpretation. While Blumer's insight suggests that meaning

is constructed in the interaction between what others do and what one takes into account, Marx (1978b), as seen in chapter 2, argued differently and thereby offers a different understanding and explanation.

The Voice of Critical Theory

Marx (1978b), for example, could be heard as arguing that what individuals take into account is itself a personal choice. Recall, for instance, his criticism of the human decision to endow "material forces with intellectual life and in stultifying human life into a material force" (Marx, 1978b, p.578). As seen in chapter 2, this irrationally translated first into humans making their machines and then endowing their machines with the capacity to make them. From the point of view of the participants in Red Team, and through the comments reflected in Figure 13 above, Marx could be heard as arguing that participants in this study chose first to endow the upper management team with the capacity to effect the kinds of feelings that they were experiencing and then to experience those effects as if they were being directed from the outside in. As Marx (1978b) might argue, the irrationality of relating to others in this way consists first in their choice to give their power of influence away and then to experience themselves as powerless in that relationship.

It cannot be denied that those in organizational positions of authority have the ability to influence those whom they are called to lead. However, the difference between being influenced by the actions or conduct of others and being determined by them is 180^0 (Covey, 1990; Frankl, 1984). So, while they may be "forced to direct their own conduct or handle their situation in terms of what they take into account" (Blumer, 1969,

p. 8) with regards to the conduct of others, what was not taken into account by research participants was their decision to give away their own power of influencing their own processes of what they took into account. To stay within the language of narrative inquiry as proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), the outward focus on the conduct of others and the resultant inward feelings, as they were expressed within this sample of narratives, were first and foremost a result of a human decision to disempower themselves and empower others with the capacity to determine how they feel.

Recursive Relationship as Proposed by Bateson

Within Bateson's (1979) notion of a recursive relationship, the interrelationship between what was assigned to upper management, what was taken into account, and what participants experienced, can be seen as follows. In assigning their upper management with the quality or the metaphor of 'not caring' participants in the Red Team also assigned themselves a reciprocal identity, namely, victim. As victims, they demonstrated their accounting and understanding of the behavior of others and, as a consequence, experienced the negative effects of such an understanding. To feel differently, would in effect require them to change their identity and to engage in a process of re-identification. This would essentially require them to take responsibility for their own decision to disempower themselves and empower upper management or others with the capacity to determine how they felt. Their capacity to reconstruct a different metaphor would in effect also mean reconstructing what they took into account insofar as that related to the conduct of upper management. If, as Duck (1998) mentioned, the occurrence of change in any organization is also dependent upon the capacity of "each individual to think, feel,

and do something different" (p. 56), then each of these research participants would also

be required to re-think, re-construct, and revise their own interpretations, and take

different behaviors of their upper management into account.

Stories as a Product of Competing Understandings of the Problem

As reflected in Jerome's narrative presentation below, Jerome could be heard and

seen as making a serious effort to revise and even replace decisions that were made on

the basis of particular understandings. In a follow-up interview, Jerome told his story in

this way.

> Jerome – Interview: I said to them…look the real problem is not the health
> billing system itself. Sure there are delays and dual entries and all the
> things that you have in any other kind of system. It is basically that you
> don't really have enough money to cover your bills here and you never
> will unless you are prepared to make some changes in this area…
> outsourcing will not fix that.

While his colleagues' understood that the real organizational problem resided in the

inefficiencies of health billing system, Jerome suggested that it resided instead in the

social decisions that were made to sustain and maintain such a system. Jerome, in other

words, did not simply focus on the conduct or behavior of others. Instead he chose to take

into account the decisions that were responsible for such a behavior. For Jerome, the real

organizational problem was instead the unwillingness of his colleagues to confront the

financial non-sustainability of the organizational health benefits system that they had

constructed for themselves. To recommend fundamental changes to the constructed

health benefits system would in effect mean being prepared to relinquish some of the

privileges and benefits that were enjoyed under this scheme.

Colloquially speaking, his colleagues could be heard as responding with a "don't go there" type of comment. Jerome however, could be heard as recommending that unless his colleagues made manifest and confronted their taken-for-granted decisions, they would continue to tinker at the edges and not bring about any real change. The exclusive technical focus on making the health billing system more efficient, correcting delays or dual entries and outsourcing, rather than addressing the organizational health benefits system as it was constructed, was but one example of tinkering at the edges. The unwillingness of his colleagues to address the fundamental issue of the financial sustainability or non-sustainability of the existing health system, and the silent collusion to make the health billing system more efficient, as if that was the organizational problem, led Jerome to conclude that he did not "really get a sense that they (his colleagues) (were) desirous of change." In his mind, they were instead more interested in tinkering. Is it any wonder, then, that it was Jerome that produced the metaphor" "the emperor has no clothes"?

In a similar fashion, Kathy also noted a similar side stepping and tinkering on the part of those to whom she reported.

> Kathy – Written presentation: I feel at the times that the RCMP still turns
> a blind eye to the problems within and uses the transfer and pay method to
> fix problems instead of owning up to them and ensuring they do not
> happen again.

Kathy's observation was that rather than owning up to the real interpersonal problems that confronted them, senior managers within her organization continued to superficially use the transfer and pay method to fix their problems. In this particular case,

rather than addressing and resolving interpersonal conflict, for example, they fixed the problem by moving or transferring either one or both of the employees. To win Jerome and Kathy's followership, it was imperative for their colleagues to address the latent decisions that they had currently excluded from their decision making process. Whereas Jerome and Kathy's narratives and stories were informed by the unwillingness of their colleagues to confront their latent decisions and by their silent collusions, the next section will address how stories are also sustained on the basis of silent collusions between participants and researcher.

Storied Outcomes Inadvertently Affirmed by the Researcher

Recall, for instance, Anderson and Jack (1991), Boje (1991), and Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) explicit illustrations of the potential and real influence of interviewers shaping interviewees' accounts of their experience. As noted in chapter 3, these authors suggested that even a pause, a nonverbal gesture like raising an eyebrow, a passing comment, or an impromptu question, could potentially influence responses received in a research interview. From their point of view and from the tradition of narrative inquiry, then, the manner in which an "interviewer acts, questions and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110).

During the course of the interviews, this researcher's inadvertent influence was reflected in the participant's use of the language "you know" and the researcher's reaction to it. The constant use of this phrase in everyday conversation may suggest that

such a usage is simply a verbal tic or a stalling technique used by speakers to give

themselves the time needed to think of something else to say. For example,

> Kathy - Interview: It is hard to figure out what going to be in everyone's
> best interest you know…ummm…(thinking pause) because you don't
> really know. And it is hard to figure out who's, you know, genuinely
> stressed as a result of work… you know…how to figure it out? It is really
> difficult to do that, you know.

As the language of "you know" was used within this context, there were times

when this was used as a stall while Kathy processed her thoughts and there were other

times when the usage was simply a tic in that it was used in a matter of fact way.

However, the use of this language combined with nonverbal behavior, as reflected in

Joan's the quote below, suggests something very different than a verbal tic or a stall.

> Joan - Interview: Everyday there is something new and my frustration
> with, you know…(raising her eye-brows and pointing in the direction
> where the person she reported to was physically located)… with people I
> have to report to…I don't think our best interest is always (pointing
> upwards) you know (tightening her lips), at the top."

During the course of the interview, this researcher caught himself responding

nonverbally with positive nods. What is the significance of the researcher's interaction

with the interviewee in this instance? The nonverbal nod by the researcher is like a

conduit that translated into acknowledging that the interviewer knew what the

interviewee was talking about and to whom she was referring, without the actual naming

of any names. Combined with her nonverbal behavior of pointing, raising of her eye-

brows, tightening of her lips and in saying, "you know," Joan was actually

communicating something like the following: I know that you know to what and to whom

I am referring. So, I am not going to mention any names. You can fill in the blanks. It is

precisely this type of a discovery that led Boje (1991) to conclude that the words "you know" has the power to "invite the hearer to fill in the blanks" (p. 115).

In nodding his head in agreement, this interviewer influenced the interviewee not only in acknowledging that he knew to what and whom Joan was referring, but also co-affirmed her feelings and thoughts as being real and true. The nonverbal nodding in this case could itself be interpreted as a silent collusion with all the assumptions contained in the two words: *you know*.

Second, the interviewer also colluded with another conventional assumption that naming names is simply impolite. Both the interviewer and the interviewee, in other words, worked out of the assumption that it was not polite to name names. That would, in effect, be tantamount to talking behind one's back. Curiously, while the language of "people I report to" or "people at the top" was a depersonalization method, the language of "you know" and the corresponding nonverbal behavior on the parts of both the interviewer and interviewee, re-personalized the issue without actually naming names. In effect, then, both the interviewer and interviewee could be charged as being guilty of taking behind someone's back even though no names were mentioned. In nodding his head in agreement, the interviewer became intersubjectively involved with the interviewee in co-constructing the assumed and taken for granted definition of what it meant to conduct oneself politely in an interview. So, while on the surface there was the social appearance of politeness, upon reflection, the impoliteness of such an interaction was neither addressed by the interviewer or the interviewee. Through their nonverbal communication both, in other words, chose to remain silent on that issue.

The Blue Team

Similar to participants in the Red Team, participants in the Blue Team also offered a number of unique and differing metaphors to describe their experiences while in the midst of already-implemented changes. Allow this writer to duplicate Figure 9 for the primary purpose of reintroducing the metaphors used.

Jennifer: It is like being a hamster on a forever turn wheel

Jennifer: I feel like a dog chasing its tail

Kathy: Managers are often like card players in a game

Red Team: Metaphors in the midst of proposed changes

Kathy: It is hard to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear

Jerome: The emperor has no clothes

Joan: I am like their mother hen

Melanie: It is like being in a tense-filled relationship that could be cut with a knife

Carol: It is like driving through a city you have never visited without a map

Catherine: It is like entering a den of uncertainty

Lisette: It is like watching a movie and then reading the book

Blue Team: Metaphors in the midst of already-implemented changes

Heather: It is like being on a roller coaster

Kevin: It is like coming to a place where there are a lot of changes happening but no difference in the end result

(Duplicate) *Figure 9.* Differing metaphors

Stories as Informed and Structured by the Use of Metaphors

Participants in the Blue Team were asked to submit their narrative presentations in response to the following open-ended statement: "Coming to work in the midst of already-implemented organizational changes is like..." What, if any, could their metaphors and stories reveal about their experiences in the midst of their already-implemented changes?

Carol: It is like driving through a new city without a map. In her written presentation, Carol described her experience as follows:

> Carol – Written presentation: Coming to work in the midst of already-implemented organizational changes is like taking a drive through a city you have never visited before without the benefit of a city map...I found that I could not rely on what had been done in the past as reference to go forward...that's how I experienced my change and how I thought because when you are driving and you have a map, at least you know what is ahead, you know what streets are coming up. In my experience it was like we had no map but we still had to keep moving. You can't just stop the car and wait. You need to forge your own way as you went...that was the only thing I could equate it to...

Carol's experience in the midst of already-implemented organizational changes was reflected and structured by her metaphor, which conjures an image of being lost. She described this through the task of navigating in unfamiliar territory without a map. Her metaphor tentatively points to a significant difference between the work of leaders and the work of managers while engaged in the process of organizational change. For many writers within the field of organizational leadership and change (Bennis, 1997; Covey, 1989; Kotter, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 1997; Senge, 1999), the capacity to create a compelling vision was seen as being an important quality of a leader. "The single

defining quality of leaders," said Bennis (1997), was "the capacity to create and realize a vision" (p. 15). It is this forward-looking quality that is stressed as being critically important for successfully leading organizational change and transformation. What is treated as crucial by these authors is not simply the ability to visually take people to a new place but also "the ability to translate that vision into reality" (Bennis, 1997, p. 15).

Carol's metaphor, however, points to a different role for managers at the level of systems integration. Now that they were in this new place, team leaders and managers could be seen as being challenged with the task of enabling those who report to them to move around in this new place. As a consequence, Carol could be heard as follows: now that we are here, where's the map? Within the environment of the old organization, Carol could have relied "on what had been done in the past as reference to go forward." Past practices, experiences, and ways of doing things were her maps in the old environment. In this new environment, she found herself in a disadvantaged position.

Heather also expressed the absence of having a reference point while relating her story about preparing and going for performance-based interviews in this new environment.

> Heather – Interview: We did not have a coach or be able to go to anyone we could talk to. That was difficult. We did not have some one who could say, "No Heather, you are on the wrong track. You are not getting the underlying notion here or that you have missed the boat. So…preparing our portfolios and going for interviews…even then we didn't know how we had done because we had nothing to compare it to.

Whereas the need for a map was identified at the level of system integration, the need for a coach was identified at the level of social integration. Their success in

navigating in this new environment required both a map and a coach. Whereas the map

provided the layout of this new environment, the coach would enable them to navigate in

this new environment. Interestingly enough, in the old environment, Carol and Heather

could have relied on their experience to serve as their coach. In this new environment, the

coach needed to come in the form of another person who has had the experiences of the

new environment. In the language of Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), what was also needed

in the midst of already-implemented changes was the capacity to translate, transform, and

convert tacit knowledge such as shared mental models and technical skills into explicit

knowledge. According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) the "key to acquiring tacit

knowledge is experience. Without some form of shared experience, it is extremely

difficult for one person to project her or himself into another individuals thinking

process" (p. 63). It was precisely the absence of a shared experience of this new

environment that characterized the world of both Carol and Heather. Hence, Carol's

difficulty in navigating within this new environment, and Heather's stumbling with the

new interview process.

Kevin: It is like coming to a place where there are a lot of changes happening but

no difference in the end result. Whereas for Carol and Heather the new place was

characterized by its unfamiliarity, and the inability to rely on past experience, for Kevin,

the new place was only all too familiar in terms of its management practices. In his

written story, for example, he wrote:

> Kevin – Written presentation: Coming to work in the midst of already-
> implemented organizational changes is like coming to a place where there
> are a lot of changes happening but no difference in the end result...I have

been here a few years now...Technically it is changing...but as far as the culture is concerned...that's part of the problem with this place. They talk about open and transparent management but even today all decisions are made behind closed doors, all hush, hush...and two days before anything has to be changed they will let the floor know. Same story. They are talking the talk but they are not walking the talk.

Kevin's narrative presentation and experience, is reminiscent of an obstacle for real change that was identified by Kotter (1996) in his book *Leading Change. "Nothing,"* suggested Kotter, *"undermines the communication of a change vision more than behavior on the part of key players that seems inconsistent with the vision"* [italics original] (p. 97). As far as Kevin was concerned, his experience in the midst of already-implemented changes was informed and structured by a similar obstacle. While there were a lot of technical changes, his observation was that the patterns of management behavior were consistent with the old organization. While the vision and promise of the new organization was, among other things, to also be about "open and transparent management," the practices connected to decision-making were inconsistent with that new vision. For Kevin, there was a gap between what was said and the outward conduct of managers: "They are talking the talk but they are not walking the talk."

Another manager, Heather, in her written narrative presentation, acknowledged the criticism voiced by Kevin.

> Heather – Written presentation:: Sometimes communicating with staff is difficult as they don't understand why some things are done and we don't always let them know how things came about. Staff often criticizes management on... communication and timeliness of letting staff know.

The "timeliness of letting staff know" was precisely the criticism that Kevin leveled against his superiors. In his interview, Kevin expressed his frustration at what for him

was an all-too-familiar practice of receiving information two days before anything was changed. At the same time, Heather also acknowledged, that those whom she was called to lead, also wanted to know the underlying rationale for decisions made.

The power of silence in the co-construction of meaning. When probed with the question: "Why do you think that is happening?" Kevin responded as follows.

> Initially there is a loss of power, and they don't want to do that. But then again Stan, I don't need to tell you about that. You **know** what I mean. You have studied this stuff more than me. I really don't have to tell you. (Interviewee's intonation of emphasis, original)

Two critical factors need to be flagged here. On the one hand, Kevin offered his interpretation of management's behavior. Kevin interpreted the withholding of information as being an issue of power. The implication is his interpretation was that to share information in a timely fashion was to lose power; it was to lose control. It appears as if Kevin's image of management was such that the latter was directed by the desire to keep their staff second-guessing. On the other hand, he cleverly seduced the interviewer into acknowledging what he meant: "You **know** what I mean." He was emphatic in his tone when he used the word 'know'. The interviewer, in this instance, allowed himself to be seduced by Kevin's storyline insofar as he chose to remain silent on this issue. Probing any further on this question would in effect have violated Kevin's perception of the interviewer: "You have studied this stuff more than me." It would have meant admitting that the interviewer did not, in effect, know more than Kevin. If knowledge were power, then probing any further would have meant a loss of this researcher's power. In staying silent and nodding his head in agreement, the interviewer, in this instance (a) chose to

preserve the interviewee's projected image of the interviewer; (b) confirmed that Kevin did not have to say more than he had already said; and (c) tacitly acknowledged that he knew exactly what Kevin meant about the use of power. Similar to the response of 'you know' that was addressed earlier, Kevin's story was no longer simply Kevin's story. It was a storyline that was co-constructed between the interviewee and the interviewer. The storyline was co-developed not by the adding of more words but by remaining silent and by nonverbal affirmative nods.

Catherine: It is like entering into a den of uncertainty. Whereas Kevin's metaphor was informed by the outward behavior and conduct of managers, Catherine's metaphor was informed instead by how she felt internally.

> Catherine - Written presentation: Coming to work in the midst of already-implemented organizational changes is like entering into a den of uncertainty...having no power or control over my future...
>
> Interview: I guess I see it in a way as not having a lot of control and being uncertain as to what is going to be thrown at you next. But when I think about that, I guess I think about... ahhh...(sic) sort of being trapped in a cave or just being trapped in the whole process of what you have to manage...The big cloud that we are going to change; we are going to change everything. It felt at that time, like I don't know what they are talking about. What is that? What does it mean? Is it going to crush me? Is it going to destroy me? So big...so uncertain. It felt so dark, very confining...

There appears to be a sense of logic and orderliness in the language descriptors that follow the use of her metaphor, "like entering into a den..." Catherine associated the notion of being in a den as being akin to being in a cave. A cave is dark, musty, confining, and damp. The uncertainty of being in a cave is akin to not knowing where the next turn is and not being able to see it. Having only a map under these conditions would

not be helpful. Catherine's need was also for a lamp that would shed some light in her new environment. Whereas Carol was heard as asking for a map, Catherine could be asking, "Where's the lamp or the lamp-switch?"

Catherine further linked her feeling confined in a cave to being under "a big cloud." This very metaphor begins to structure her experience. The questions that she raised: "Is it going to crush me? Is it going to destroy me?" could then be viewed as being logical outcomes of the use of her metaphor. These questions, for example, would not be the logical outcomes of Kevin or Carol's metaphors. What this suggests is that Catherine is also responsible for the production of her experience.

Analogous to the relationship between the use of metaphors of other participants in this study and their corresponding experiences, a similar pattern between stimulus and response continues to emerge in Catherine's narrative. The stimulus is not simply out there and impacting or imposing itself upon the individual. Instead the stimulus is internally fabricated through Catherine's interpretive act and outwardly expressed through the use of her linguistic metaphor. Her experience, in other words, is not simply a reaction to outward changes. Instead, it is a reaction to how she chose to see her world: "I guess I see it in a way as not having a lot of control and being uncertain as to what is going to be thrown at you next."

Catherine's subsequent reasoning was just as instructive: "But when I think about that, I guess I think about…ahhh…(sic) sort of being trapped in a cave or just being trapped in the whole process of what you have to manage…" What this mental activity of thinking confirmed was that Catherine's reflection was focused on the way she chose to

see or interpret the changes. Catherine's logical reasoning, awareness and subsequent experiences could be seen as proceeding as follows: when I think about the way I see and interpret the organizational changes as being in a den of uncertainty, my interpretation and seeing leads me to feel like I am trapped in a cave.

As early as 1924, Follet, in her book *Creative Experience*, provided an excellent explanation of the *nature* of the activity noted in the two preceding paragraphs. It is an explanation that would later be addressed by Bateson (1979) who, as mentioned earlier, described by the nature of the activity in terms of a recursive relationship. Follet is quoted at length for the singular purpose of gaining a fuller appreciation of her thinking.

> The activity of the individual is only in a certain sense caused by the stimulus of the situation because the activity is itself helping to produce the situation which causes the activity of the individual...In talking of the behavior process we have to give up the expression act "on" (subject acts on object, object acts on subject); ...What physiology and psychology now teach us is that part of the *nature* of the response is the change it makes in the activity which caused so-to-speak the response...I never react to you but to you-plus-me; or to be more accurate it is I-plus-you reacting to you-plus-me. [parenthesis and italics original] (as cited in Weick, 1995, pp. 32-33)

Within the context of Catherine's narrative presentation, her interpretive act contributed to her situation or experience of feeling trapped or the experience of wondering if she would be crushed or destroyed. The complexity of Catherine's recursive reasoning could be viewed as being informed and structured by (a) her (I) reaction to organizational change (you) – I-plus-you – and (b) her reaction to her formulation or interpretation (me) of that change (you) – you-plus-me. Hence, it is not, simply a *lineal* relationship of external changes impacting upon the individual (Bateson,

1979; Follet, 1924), or objects acting on subjects and vice versa, but rather an "ongoing codetermination that occurs" (Weick, 1995, p. 32) during the process of understanding and making meaning of situations.

Heather: It is like being on a roller coaster. While Carol, Kevin and Catherine used active verbs like driving, coming, and entering respectively, Heather, on the other hand, used a passive verb to describe her experience. For Heather, it was like *being* on a roller coaster. To be on a roller coaster suggests that Heather was being taken on a wild ride, up, down, and all around.

> Heather, Written Presentation: coming to work in the midst of already-implemented changes is like being on a roller coaster...I felt I was on a roller coaster and it was going faster and faster.
>
> Interview: Everything happened so fast. Before we became an agency, we were going on a path and doing the same thing on a straightaway. Then the agency came about and the changes started to happen and quite quickly...that is the way life is around here...we are on a curve (laughter) and I get motion sickness (laughter). So it isn't fun.

Insofar as she felt that "it was going faster and faster," her language descriptor suggested that she was going downhill on the roller coaster. At the same time, she also mentioned that not only was she on a curve but that she was also getting motion sickness thereby pointing to the notion of being ill while in the midst of already-implemented changes. In relation to feeling sick, another Team leader from the Blue Team, Tony, mentioned something similar:

> Tony – Interview: From my experience, organizational change can go as far as to make an individual physically ill...Why? My best guess would be fear of the unknown, which, for some is intriguing, and for others terrifying.

Tony not only expressed his experience but also sought to provide an answer to his own expression. Tony's "best guess" was that being on a curve while on the roller coaster produced illness because of the fear of the unknown. Interestingly enough, in addition to making an individual physically ill, he suggested that the fear of the unknown could also be experienced as "intriguing" or "terrifying."

Once again, the explanation provided by both Follet (1924) and later, Bateson (1979) is significant. The conditions of being on a roller coaster, being in a new town without a map, being in a den or cave, and being in the midst of an unknown, in and of themselves are stimuli for multiple responses. Specific reactions or responses to any of those conditions are governed instead by the act of interpretation. Said differently, it was the mental act of interpreting a situation that produced feelings of being intrigued, feeling terrified or becoming physically ill. In Weick's (1995) terms, the experience of feeling terrified of the unknown, feeling intrigued by it, or being physically ill as consequences of being in the midst of an unknown, are codetermined in that they are co-dependent upon one's interpretation or way of seeing. The sequence of this stimulus-response relationship and consequently, the process through which individuals understand and make meaning of their situations is visually displayed in Figure 15 below.
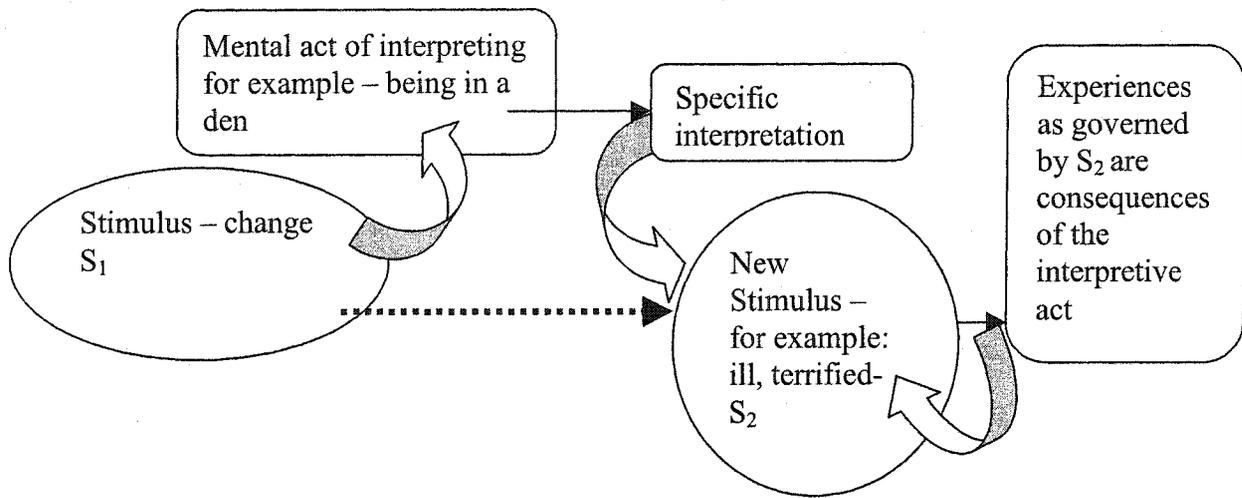
Figure 15. Codetermination of stimulus-response.

Lisette: It is like watching a movie and then reading the book. In her written

presentation, Lisette offered another unique metaphor to describe her experience in the

midst of already-implemented organizational changes.

> Lisette - Written presentation: Have you ever watched a movie and then read the book? If you have, then you'll understand my story...while I often feel that I am watching a movie showing me little pieces of each initiative and how it evolved, eventually with the last scene showing the agency's clients and employees walking in and out of the front doors smiling and greeting each other with 'good morning', I often find myself looking for the book that expand on exactly how we got there.

> Interview: Well, it just feels like when I come to work especially with the big initiatives you get this big kind of splash...I don't know...sometimes like I always watch movies and then read books (sic)...so, it is the same kind of thing. When I read the book, I know what's coming later...you have the background. But in the movie there are a lot of players in the background and middle ground that are not in the big picture. You don't read the book... you don't really know what happened behind the scenes to get to wherever they are trying to go.

Through the use of her metaphor and in her narrative presentation, Lisette indirectly pointed to one of her critical needs. As a team leader in the midst of already-implemented changes, it was important for her (a) to understand the background that moved leaders in her organization to restructure the organization in the manner in which they did; and (b) to "know...what's coming later." According to Lisette, watching a movie conjured an image of not simply being exposed to many 'extras' in the movie but, more importantly, not knowing where they belonged in the big picture. There appeared to be a disconnection and a confusion between "a lot of players in the background and middle ground" and their roles in the picture as it was played or acted out. In her translation, the book was viewed as providing for those types of information.

According to Lisette, being in a movie afforded her only little pieces of each initiative. At the risk of heaping one metaphor upon another, for her, it was like being in the midst of fragmented pieces of information. As her managers continued to mange the pieces, a la the Taylorian model of scientific management, Lisette asked for a picture of the whole. The book, instead of the movie, enabled her the possibility of seeing such a holistic picture.

Stories as a Product of Belief

Three of the 6 participants in the Blue Team attributed their positive experiences while in the midst of already-implemented organizational changes, to their belief model. For example,

> Heather – Written presentation: I'll take you back a few years. In the fall
> of 1999, the then Revenue Canada Taxation became Canada Customs and
> Revenue Agency...as an employee and team leader at the time, I had

information on the changes that would affect us; however, I did not feel any great stress as to whether I would have a job in two years.

Interview: There were a lot of question marks surrounding that (2 year job guarantee). They were asking what happens after two years. Are we all going to be out the door?

My understanding and belief was that the change was for the benefit of the organization ...for me I was saying 'No', that's not how it is going to happen. That was not my understanding of what this is here for.

Lisette shared Heather's belief.

Lisette – Written Presentation - There was much talk among my colleagues surrounding the two-year job guarantee that came with the transformation. Many felt that the two-year job guarantee was put into place to enable the employer to release employees who were not meeting performance standards. The agency's response was that the two-year time frame would allow for contract negotiations to take place. This seemed reasonable to me and I accepted their response.

Catherine, on the other hand, described her positive experience as being a consequence of having a positive attitude.

Catherine – Written presentation: Overall my experience with change has been good. I've learned to be flexible and my natural instinct is to accept change and roll with the punches. I've learned that having a positive attitude (glass half full) and looking for and finding the reasons for the change and the possible results has been helpful. . (Parenthesis original)

Interview: Where some people may look at that as not necessarily a good thing...because I may appear naïve at times or I don't know...maybe not like burying my head in the sand, but maybe just gullible sort of...I am always accused of having rose colored glasses on....I have always found that in addition to explaining the reasons trying to find at the end of the road or at this point in the change, these are the good things that I see happening...trying to put a positive spin for myself and others

Recall, for instance, Weick's (1995) insight that in the midst of rapid change individuals "need values, priorities and clarity about preferences to help them be clear" about what really matters because "clarity on values clarify what is important" (p. 27). In

the midst of the changes, all three participants chose to believe in and accept the vision of their new organization. Rather than viewing the changes with an attitude that the glass is half-empty, Catherine, for example chose to focus on it as half-full. Their internal belief system, in other words, moved them to behave in ways other than those who chose not to believe. Her internal belief system moved her to accentuate the positive and "spin" positive outcomes. By implication, she spun negative outcomes out off her mental system. Her internal belief system, however, did not go unchallenged. As seen in Catherine's narrative above, she voiced her concern of being accused of naiveté or with "always having rose-colored glasses on," or as being "gullible."

Lisette, on the other hand, spoke directly to the difficulty of managing in an environment of disbelief.

> Lisette – Interview: I find it hard to manage in that environment...I am always faced with the comment that I live in a bubble and that if I had been here for 20 years, I would be used to the pendulum swings...for a long time I had a hard time even listening to that...
>
> Written presentation: This forms the general feeling of employees like 'it's just one more initiative, give it a few year's and they'll come up with something new'.

Interestingly enough, there appears to be a direct relationship between belief, disbelief and one's tenure in that organization. From Lisette's comments, those who had been in the organization for 20 years or more appeared to be more likely to adopt a mental attitude of disbelief primarily because, unlike Lisette, they had been exposed "to the pendulum swings" of the organization for a longer period of time. According to Lisette, employees who were employed longer had seen changes come and go and practices

repeated. Kevin, for example provided a number of examples of the pendulum swings that he experienced in his organization.

> Kevin – Written Presentation – About 10 years ago the change vehicle was STLI (Service Through Leadership and Innovation)…But without adequate time and training, the change did not produce expected results…A few years later, the concept of Empowerment was introduced involving staff involvement in the decision making process. From the staff viewpoint it did not amount to much as the managers were not willing to share decision making with staff…When Revenue Canada became CCRA a whole set of changes were introduced. The jury is out on this round of changes as it is still ongoing.

> Interview: Whatever problem you see now, 10 years from now you will see the same set of problems. Talking to some of the people here who have been here for 20, 30 years…it goes in cycles. Same types of problems.

Kevin and Lisette's narratives were reflective of the high level of cynicism that was echoed in the research studies of Duck (1998), Kouzes and Posner (1995), and Senge (1999). As mentioned in chapter 1, the cynicisms of participants in their studies were a result of being in the interpreted middle of "another management fad in an endless series of management fads" (Duck, 1998, p. 63). Kevin listed a string of management fads. Is it any wonder that Kevin would use the metaphor, of "coming to a place where there are a lot of changes happening but no difference in the end result" to describe his experience?

Kevin's disbelief about the new direction of the organization was informed by his observations of past change initiatives and his formulation of the failure of past change initiatives to "produce expected results." His conclusions were confirmed by his discussion with others who had been in the organization "for 20, 30 years." According to Kevin, those seasoned individuals had witnessed numerous changes and they talked about them as a repetition of similar cycles. From Kevin's response, it appears as if Kevin

continued to sustain his disbelief and his narrative presentation by actively seeking evidence to further confirm his disbelief. By implication, any counter information provided by employees with lesser years of service in his organization was treated as non-credible. The belief that was displayed by Lisette and Catherine, for example, were trivialized and dismissed by the more experienced employees as being the mark of naiveté, as living in a bubble, or as simply being the mark of inexperience.

In being clear about their values, however, Catherine and Lisette chose not to allow the disbelief of others to adversely affect their course of actions in their workplace. While acknowledging the difficulty of managing in this type of an environment, their values enabled them the capacity to not be bullied by labels such as naiveté, being gullible, having rose-colored glasses on, or living in a bubble.

Storying as a Product of Decisions

Similar to the narrative presentations provided by participants in the Red Team, a similar pattern appeared in the experience of participants in the Blue Team. Akin to the narrative presentations of some participants in the Red Team, no amount of information was sufficient to increase participants' confidence in what participants in the Blue Team were being told. In relation to the Red Team, for example, two managers expressed disbelief about what they were being told because of their already-made decisions. In relation to the Blue Team, however, the situation was reversed. It was a manager who expressed the challenge of having to manage in an environment of already-made decisions.

Lisette – Interview: They really believe that there are these hidden agendas…and you have to deal with them and if you don't then it gets worse…

Interview: It gets hard…what happens is that people start to believe that there is a true gap between what management is doing and what they are telling them…so that when we come out and try and roll something out and you try and be as open and transparent…because there is the perception that we are withholding information…as soon as you roll something out…there is an immediate reaction that there is something else that is going on…

For Lisette, to ignore the reactions or to dismiss them as trivial would only worsen the situation. Interestingly enough, Lisette, like Jerome from the Red Team, chose to respond to her situation by providing more information. Said differently, she chose to respond from the standpoint of system integration. Given her reasoning that, employees who were on the "cusp (didn't) know where to go," Lisette felt the need to fill the gap with more information. For her information responded to the need for making a decision. The exclusive focus on providing more information in the midst of already made decisions, however, exacerbated the issue. Like Joan in the Red Team, no amount of information would be sufficient for people who distrusted management and believed that the latter was withholding information.

Akin to the Red Team then, a similar theme continued to surface. Recall, for instance that the organizational issue as it confronted the Red Team was not so much a lack of information but rather a lack of trust. The same pattern was repeated with the Blue Team. It appears as if employees were preprogrammed to distrust management and that they continued to work out of that program without question. As mentioned earlier, in organizations such as these, the organizational response cannot be limited to providing

more information even if the information giving occurred in an environment of openness and transparency. In order to win the followership of their employees, one by one (Duck, 1998), change managers must also include the need to rebuild the relationship between themselves and their employees. From the perspective of social integration, this process of relationship building must also be included and built into their change management program.

The Power of Positive Influence

While Carol described her experience of being in the midst of already-implemented changes like "taking a drive through a city you have never visited before without the benefit of a city map," her experience in that environment was not limited to being lost or confused. Instead, her experience and her story were also influenced by her boss' positive influence.

> Carol – Interview: My boss…is very encouraging…and with his help I am growing… I need that type of environment to make me feel comfortable first, before I can reach my potential and he's been very good to allow for my potential…His confidence in me has given me confidence…he's very good at allowing you to do it your way… He does not micromanage at all. I have been in other situations where I was in a box of what I was allowed to do and I found that it suppressed what I could do. He is very nurturing and supportive within the framework of my job.

Carol was fortunate to have a manager who used his positional authority to serve others. In the midst of already-implemented changes, Carol's boss he served Carol by creating an environment where she was able to take control of her own life and gain confidence in doing things her way. Kouzes and Posner (1995) formulated this behavior as the being the mark of a "credible leader" (p. 185). Unlike micromanagers, credible

leaders, they suggested, give their power away in the service of others and in so doing they become more powerful. In choosing to serve his employee by nurturing, encouraging, and by being supportive of Carol "within the framework of (her) job," Carol's boss increased his power of influence. So, Carol's narrative presentation is not simply about her positive experience while in the midst of already-implemented changes, but also about the power of being in the midst of credible leadership. Unlike micromanagement, through his credible leadership, Carol's boss released rather than suppressed her potential. His encouragement enabled Carol to increase her confidence in herself in spite of not having a map. At the level of a practitioner, the behavior of Carol's boss could be viewed as being a map that addressed the issue of clarifying values and preferences. This issue was for example, raised by Weick (1995). Carol's boss understood Carol's deeper need. She needed encouragement. She needed confidence. While addressing those critical needs, Carol's boss was able to create conditions for Carol to confidently navigate within her new environment in spite of the absence of a map and not feel boxed-in.

Joan and Melanie, from the Red Team, however did not have the pleasure of having the type of support that Carol enjoyed. In her interview for example, Joan narrated the following:

> Joan – Interview: I really need some validation. I can't live without validation...I don't get it ever. I don't hear that I am doing a good job, or I am not doing a good job; positive feedback; negative feedback. I need some kind of feedback. I don't have any...I need a little bit...ummm recognition of some of the changes or initiatives that we have started. There is not feedback at all. So, I never know for sure if I am going in the right direction. To be honest with you, I'm kind of flailing around and I

guess I just keep re-assuring myself. Well, no news is good news. But to me this is really frustrating.

As seen earlier, Melanie, from the Red Team, also complained about the fact that she was "micromanaged to the 10th degree." Unlike Carol, who continued to receive positive feedback, Joan was left to continue managing in her work world with no feedback at all. To win her followership, she needed some validation and recognition. Those who embraced the concept of credible leadership understood this process. Micromanagement, however, made Heather to "feel like a beaten dog" or as a "child who has misbehaved." In the case of Joan and Melanie, they found themselves without a credible leader. For Joan, there was nobody at home. For Melanie, she had a micromanager. Carol, on the other hand, was blessed with having a credible leader.

Stories as Informed by the Power of Recall

Whereas 4 of the 5 respondents in the Red Team chose to begin their stories by looking backward, only one participant in the Blue Team was similarly engaged. Kevin, for example, recalled an incident that occurred two years prior to this interview as his piece of evidence for the non-changes that he saw at the level of "culture." Through his narrative, Kevin attempted to convince the interviewer of the validity of his point of view.

> Kevin – Interview: I will give you one case in point. The details may not mean anything to you but you can see the trend. Matching is one of the functions we work on. We used to do that in our division…2 years ago they decided to transfer that into another division as part of a compliance program…individual returns division. When they said that, it was on the understanding that of our staff will still be helping them… because they are fully qualified and trained to do that.

> In April or May, of that year they said that they had made a decision as a
> management team...to shift the workflow from this division to that
> division but you are all guaranteed work this year. You will go to that
> division, do the work and come back here. But before the program
> started...in Oct / Nov, they changed their minds. They wanted to hire their
> own people and use some of our people in our division. That was not
> communicated to them until a week or two weeks before the start of the
> program. And then they said...we are going to keep our best people here
> and send the people at the bottom of the list over there. But what happened
> was that we ran out of work here and so we had to lay our people off and
> these were the best people whereas people at the bottom of the list had
> work for the rest of the winter. This caused a lot of friction and morale
> problems. There was no reason for that. If they had kept people informed
> right through the process: this is what we have decided; this is what we are
> going to do and given them the option to do what they want to do, I think
> it would have been a much better process.

In response to his story, Kevin was probed further: "Are people still talking about that?"

"Oh yes," replied Kevin, "it is still a hot topic on the floor." Two years later, this incident

and event continues to be a hot topic. When further probed with the question: "How are

you managing in this environment?" Kevin responded as follows.

> Only thing I can do at my level is apologize for what happened, that it was
> an honest mistake and that somebody just goofed, and ask them to forget
> about that and not just carry on about that...it's done and there's nothing
> we can do about it...

While Kevin asked those whom he managed "to forget about that and not just

carry on about that," he continued to tell and retell the story. In so doing, he continued to

keep the injustice of that event alive. It was still being experienced as an open wound.

Again the words and insight of Bruner (1986a) continue to ring true: "Stories may have

endings, but stories are never over" (p. 17).

Another manager, Lisette, spoke to the problem of unresolved issues and the

lingering need to bring closure to unfinished business.

> Lisette – Written presentation: One of the most visible changes (yet difficult to see) [parenthesis original] that the agency enacted was its new Dispute Policy. Prior to the formation of the agency, a conflict in the workplace would be resolved using a rights based mechanism. The agency adopted an interest-based approach to resolving conflict as an alternative…what I was surprised to learn was that much of the unresolved conflict was long standing employee/management related and it had never been addressed.

At a systems level, a change in the organization's method of resolving conflict in the workplace was instituted. It changed the mechanics of conflict resolution from a rights based approach to adopting an interest-based approach. At the level of social integration, however, unresolved conflicts that had never been addressed continued to influence current relationships. In her written presentation, Lisette offered her analysis of the situation. While many of the "conflicts are easily resolved," the stumbling block, for Lisette, continued to be the perception of employees. "I am continually amazed," said Lisette, "at perceptions that you should not discuss issues with your manager, as they will 'hold it against you'." Consequently, the important task for her was the "need to find a way to reach those employees and address unresolved issues in order to end the negativity that they (brought) into the workplace."

In this particular scenario, Lisette could be viewed as encouraging her team of managers to focus on issues as they related to both systems and social integration. In addition to the production of new dispute or conflict resolution policies, there was also the need to re-build relationships and trust in the workplace. For Lisette, the latter was equally as important as the former. Since the negativity in the workplace continued to be fed by the lack of trust and the perception that what one says will be used against them, Lisette's recommendation of rebuilding the relationships could also be viewed as being

akin to cutting off that food chain. For her, it was a necessary task in the process of

getting on with the job of working in the midst of already-implemented changes.

Stories as Informed by the Desire to Get On with the Job

Driven by the desire to get on with the job, other research participants in the Blue

Team identified different challenges through their narrative presentations. For Catherine

and Heather the challenge revolved around the issue of new competency based hiring

process.

> Catherine – Written presentation: The most negative part of agency
> change for me, has been experienced recently. I bought into this whole
> competency based assessment process for staffing…that is until I started
> to document my events. The process is extremely difficult and I think it
> may have been rolled out too soon and without any thought for her, put
> into it.
>
> Interview: The whole process was gut wrenching. That's what it felt like. I
> swear. There were times that I would go home and cry. I would doubt
> myself. Is this the right thing to do?

In relating to the same competency based hiring process, Heather wrote:

> Heather – Written presentation: At times I feel we jump too quickly into
> something just because we want to have the glory of being the first…
>
> Interview: There were a lot of…resource guides but we did not have a
> coach…that was difficult…there was a lot of anxiety. I wish I had
> someone to talk to. There was a lot of sharing. We would read the profiles
> of others and provided feedback and talked about the example and how it
> fit the competency. But your guess is as good as mine (laughter). That was
> basically the conversations that were happening.

From Heather's narrative presentation, it appears as if the desire to be first

trumped the need to be thoughtful about the process and taking the time to adequately

prepare employees for success. The desire to be first or to be seen as first, however, is not

a systems issue. Instead, it is a social issue. In these narrative presentations, the social

definition of the situation, namely the desire to be first, dominated the issues that also

needed to be heeded at the level of system integration. Systems issues would have

included organizational practices like (a) providing adequate training for employees to

succeed in the new hiring process, (b) having a coach to assist employees through the

new process in addition to the resource guides, and (c) putting some thought into the

systematic implementation of the new competency based hiring process. The lack of

these produced tears, feelings of being gut wrenched, anxiety, and self-doubt.

In their desire to get on with the new tasks at hand, two participants, Tony and

Heather, spoke about the challenges involved in the new performance management

process.

> Tony – Interview: We had a good discussion about performance
> management this morning... We heard stories about team leaders who
> have a template for a great employee, a good employee and a poor
> employee. Their big decision is who gets what template...and some team
> leaders have written 10 pages per employee...10 pages...I cannot even
> imagine, how people can write 10 pages for 20 some odd employees.
> That's more than 200 pages! This is my first time doing it...I can't
> imagine ...this is a critical part of my job...my staff deserve it. But I have
> heard other team leaders say that they don't care...They (their employees)
> don't care, so, why do I (manager) have to put my time into it. That
> becomes a big juggling act.

> Heather – Interview: I had seven people who had been red-circled at some
> point in their career...when I had seven out of 18, that's a big part of your
> group saying we have gone through this before. There is a lot of
> skepticism about performance management. It's like a cookie-cutter thing.
> Just change my name to your name. There is a lot of that...It is getting
> better. We introduced performance management in 2000. We worked in
> baby stages. First assessments were done in 2001.

Tony struggled with the challenge of doing the right thing for his staff because they deserved it. At the same time, he was torn between responses that appeared to be at two ends of a continuum. On the one end of the continuum, some of his colleagues "have written 10 pages per employee." He could not imagine how they could write 10 pages "for 20 some odd employees. That's more than 200 pages!" On the other end of the continuum, some of his colleagues admitted that they didn't really care. For those who didn't care, stories circulated about the use of a three-dimensional template that divided employees into great, good and poor categories and it was simply a matter of plugging names into those categories that contained already written assessments. The latter fuelled further stories about the significance and relevance of performance assessments.

There was, however, an additional challenge that confronted Heather. She struggled with conducting a performance assessment for seven of her 18 employees whose positions had been "red-circled."[2] Being red-circled meant that while the positions that these individuals were hired against no longer existed, they were maintained in the organization at the same salary levels while performing functions in positions that were classified at lower levels. At the level of system integration, while performance assessments appeared to be the right thing to do, it was a challenge for Heather at the level of social integration because she was assessing people who were hired at higher classification levels and had demonstrated their capability at those levels. According to Heather, "there was a lot a skepticism from those people and understandably so, because they had been affected very deeply by change before."

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[2] See http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Regulation5-01_39830_7.pdf.

Summary

The empirical materials gathered spoke to the stories and metaphors used by participants while they were in the midst of proposed and already-implemented radical organizational changes. Consistent with Bateson (1979), narrative inquiry is about stories and metaphors that individuals tell and construct for themselves and perform in the theatre of life. It is about how these stories and metaphors become their experienced reality. According to Mair (1988) for example,

> Stories are habitations. We live in and through stories. They conjure worlds. We do not know the world other than as story world. Stories inform life. They hold us together and keep us apart...We live through stories. We are lived by the stories of our race and place. (p. 127)

Through their constructed narrative presentations, participants in this study provided glimpses of not only of how they lived their lives and experienced their worlds but also how they were lived by their constructed stories. Insofar as Mair (1988) claimed that "we do not know the world other than as story world" (p. 127), this author could be heard as suggesting that participants in this study lived a reified reality. As mentioned earlier, reification, according to Berger and Luckmann (1966) is "the apprehension of the products of human activity *as if* they were something else other than human products" [italics original] (p. 89). Furthermore, reification, according to these authors implied that human beings were "capable of forgetting (their) own authorship of the human world" (p. 89). In other words, participants in this research study could be seen as first making their stories and in their forgetfulness that they authored their stories, they now experienced the effects of their stories as if they were something out there and imposing itself on

them. The 'real' world that participants in this study experienced was, in effect, a co-constructed world. For participants in both the Red and Blue Teams, their fabricated stories and corresponding experiences were

1. Influenced and structured by the production and use of their metaphors;

2. Constructed on the basis of their *internal* interpretations and definitions of the outward conduct of others;

3. Products of their *internal* decisions of future outcomes and internal beliefs;

4. Nurtured by the positive *outward* influence and conduct of others;

5. Informed by the desire to get on with their lives in their new environment;

6. Authored by their *backward* acts of attention in terms of what they chose to recall; and,

7. Co-constructed between interviewee and interviewer.

In telling their stories and using their metaphors, participants in this study were, according to Mair (1988), not only experiencing their lives in and through those stories, but they were also being lived by them. They were in other words, both subject and object of their stories and metaphors. In relation to the connectedness of issues between system integration and social integration, Figures 15 and 16 below outline critical variables that need to be holistically attended to and addressed in both the Red and Blue Teams.

Organizational effectiveness

System Integration

The need to amalgamate

Need to effectively manage communication system via rumors

Managers who need to make themselves available and be present

Managers who know their business

Communication systems: alignment between words and actions

Need to correct revolving door syndrome of managers

Need to create an efficient system

Need for information

Need to connect with and influence the use of metaphors

Existence of a pension system

Getting busy with work

Social Integration

Challenge to refocus acts of attention

Need to address the problem of identity

The need to bring closure to unresolved issues

Need to focus on the relationship between what was said and done

Social definitions and interpretations of the outward behavior of others

Need to address feelings of abandonment, no one cares, frustration

Competing understandings of the problem

Need to address the lack of trust

Need to focus on underlying assumptions that maintains existing system

Need to clarify values and preferences

Storied world as a consequence of the construction and use of metaphors

Need to address issues of being handcuffed because of a pension system

Getting busy with meaningful and purposeful work

Figure 16. Red Team – Interconnectedness between system and social integration.

Organizational effectiveness

System Integration

Need for a clear vision of where
the organization is headed

Technical changes need to be
balance with cultural changes

Unfolding of organizational
changes

Accelerated pace of change

Need a map to navigate in an
unfamiliar environment

Introduction of new systems

Social Integration

Need to have a map once they have
arrived

Storied world as a consequence of the
construction and use of metaphors

Need to clarify values and preferences

Cultural changes need to follow
technical changes

Regaining responsibility for one's
interpretation of what one sees

Need to understand the background of
change journey

Positive belief and attitude as
grounding individuals in the midst of
rapid change

Providing positive support while in the
middle of an unfamiliar environment

Need for support like a coach

Figure 17. Blue Team - Interconnectedness between system and social integration.

In chapter 1 of this dissertation, it was stated that while the purpose of this study

was to experience the experience of individuals in the midst of radical organizational

change, it was also hoped that the results of this study would enable practitioners in the

field of change management to be more responsive to the critical needs that are identified

through the stories of individuals who were living through those changes. The following

critical needs, captured within four categories, are extracted from Figures 16 and 17

above.

The Physical Dimension

Need for a physical place for work
Need for information
Need to create an efficient system
Aligning technical changes with changes in behavior
Need for a map

The Social/Emotional Dimension

Communication systems: need for alignment between words and actions
Need for positive support
Need to address problem of identity
Need to address feelings of abandonment, that no one cares, and frustration
Need to address lack of trust
Need to have a coach
Need to be validated and recognized
Need for managers to be present

The Mental Dimension

Need to reflect on the use of their metaphors
Challenge to refocus acts of attention
Taking responsibility for one's interpretations
Questioning underlying assumptions that maintain existing systems
The need to reframe one's own mental model
Need to convert tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge

The Spiritual Dimension

Need to clarify values and preferences
Need to bring closure to unresolved issues
Need to be engaged in meaningful and purposeful work
Positive belief and attitude

Figure 18. The four dimensions and corresponding critical needs

It is, on the one hand, imperative for change managers and leaders to not view each of the four categories as "fixed affairs" but rather as "patterns that connect" (Bateson, 1979, p. 13). At the same time, it is also important for individuals in the midst of change to also view the interconnectedness between the categories because their stories and their lives continued to be influenced by the interaction of variables in all four categories. For example, at the physical level, it was important for managers to provide as much information as possible in the midst of change. From the point of view of the spiritual category, on the other hand, it was just as important to work with their followers in a way that assisted them to clarify values and preferences because that would enable the latter to become clear about what really matters (Weick, 1995).

At the level of social integration, it was not only important for individuals in the midst of change to describe their experience through the use of their constructed metaphors. It was also important for participants in this study to first become aware of how their constructed metaphors were structuring their experience and second, to then act on their awareness. Through their increasing awareness of the patterns that connect, individuals will eventually come to think and act differently and change managers and leaders will begin to win their followership one by one (Duck, 1998). In short, it is only through processes like these that real change will occur.

Chapter 4 addressed and analyzed the first research question, namely what stories did participants involved in radical organizational change tell and what metaphors did they use to describe their experiences? Looking forward, the final chapter focuses on providing an overall summary, conclusions and recommendations that flow from the

findings of this research study. At the same time, chapter 5 focuses on the second research question, namely, what, if any, could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experienced radical organizational changes that were proposed or implement?

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

Chapter 5 is subdivided into six sections: a summary, conclusions, recommendations, statement on social impact, contribution to the literature, and implications for future research. The summary section is subdivided into two sub-sections. First, it is a summary of how the study was conducted. Second, a summary of the findings of the process of "experiencing the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change is presented. In relation to the research questions raised in this study, chapter 5 focuses on answers to the following questions.

1. What conclusions can be drawn from the narratives and metaphors that participants used to describe their experiences in the midst of change?

2. What could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experienced radical organizational changes?

As an extension of the second question, the conclusion of this chapter also addresses what change managers can learn from the experiences of participants in this study. Contributions and implications of this research study are described and recommendations for future study are made in the third section. Finally, the dissertation closes with a statement of social impact, contribution to the literature, and implications for future research.

Summary

Methodology

The empirical materials for this study were collected through a frame that was identified as field texts. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) used this term to refer to what is usually called data in the field of qualitative or quantitative research. From the point of view of narrative inquiry, field texts, as mentioned in chapter 3, are always interpretive insofar as participants and researchers always compose them at a certain moment in time (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Denzin, 1998; Rainbow & Sullivan, 1979). Two field-texts and methodologies were used in the collection of empirical materials: written stories and research interviews.

Empirical materials were gathered from a purposive and convenience sample of participants in two phases. In Phase 1 of this study, participants who were faced with proposed radical organizational changes, the Red Team, were invited to complete the following statement in a written format: "Coming to work in the midst of proposed changes is like..." Participants who were in the midst of already-implemented changes, the Blue Team, were invited to complete the following statement: "Coming to work in the midst of already-implemented changes is like..."

Phase 2 of this research process included in-depth, unstructured, and audio taped interviews that were based on participants' respective written stories or narrations. For purposes of this research study, the notion of stories and narratives were used interchangeably. These participants were purposefully selected because they were living

the experiences that were investigated. At the same time, this was a convenience sample in that these participants were readily accessible to this researcher.

As outlined in chapter 3, the analysis of participants' stories, narrative presentations, and interviews, proceeded along the path of the three-dimensional-narrative-inquiry-space as identified by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Essentially, this three-dimensional-narrative-inquiry-space included the temporal dimension, the situational dimension, and the personal and social dimension. The analysis of the written stories and interviews were returned to all research participants in an attempt to give them an opportunity to provide additional comments. According to Maxwell (1996), this member check process "is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning of what they say and the perspective they have on what is going on" (p. 94). While 8 of the 11 participants from both the Red and Blue Teams verbally agreed to provide their feedback, only 5 responded. Three participants from the Red Team responded via telephone and 2 from the Blue Team responded via a personal visit with this researcher. For purposes of timelines related to the completion of this study, a decision was made to not wait longer than the allotted time frame for more responses.

Four of the 5 participants who responded expressed an element of surprise that they were co-constructing their own realities. Joan, for example, mentioned, "I never thought about it in that way…hmmm…surprise, surprise." Two went so far as to say that the recursive reasoning identified in chapter 4 was "not accurate" and "a misinterpretation" on the part of this researcher. Kevin, for example, said, "I don't know

if this is what your University wants you to think but as far as I am concerned, if

management changed their behavior then, we will have a different reality, it is as simple

as that."

Recall, for instance, the perspective of social integration as espoused by

Habermas (1979, 1984). On the one hand, this perspective moved researchers to

understand the internal perspective of participants by entering into their field of

perception and seeing it as they saw it. As mentioned in chapter 1, this is essentially the

approach of psychological phenomenology (Bruyn, 1966; Creswell, 1997), traditional

ethnography (Schwartzman, 1993), and interpretive sociology (Weber, cf. in Zeitlin,

1973). On the other hand, according to Habermas (1984) the perspective of social

integration also committed "the investigator to hermeneutically connect his (sic) own

understanding with that of the participants" (p. 150).

Insofar as the method and process of narrative inquiry operates on both levels,

Bruner (1986), Gadamer (1982), Habermas (1984) and Schwandt (1999) singularly argue

that member checks will always suffer and risk the charge of misinterpretation primarily

because the researcher is also an integral part of the interpretation process. For Gadamer

(1982) hermeneutics was essentially about clarifying the conditions in which

understanding occurred. From the standpoint of the interpretive sciences, Bruner, (1986),

Gadamer (1982) and Habermas (1984) agreed that among these conditions are, crucially,

prejudices and fore-meanings in the mind of the interpreter. For Gadamer (1982),

understanding is always interpretation and "it means to use one's own preconceptions so

that the meaning of the text can really be made to speak to us" (p. 358). For Schwandt

(1999), what this implies is that the desire to understand always entails the risk of misunderstanding and of making no sense to the originator of stories.

From this perspective, part of the "burden" of a postmodernist interpretation is the acceptance of the reality that different people could view the same event differently. According to Schutz, (1967), the telling of stories is itself a function of the tellers' "acts of attention" (p. 51). Insofar as researchers and participants tell and interpret their stories, they continue to engage in attending to some aspects of their lifeworld, some texts while excluding other aspects and other texts. Within the context of this study, while participants' interpretations and the telling of their stories were accepted as legitimate and having a place within the polyphony of voices, the scholarly interest in this study aimed at discovering how their stories and metaphors contributed to the construction of their experiences and realities.

Summary of Findings

In chapter 2, Bateson's (1979) story about a man who consulted his computer was referenced. In response to this man's question, "Do you compute that you will ever think like a human being?" the computer printed its answer: *"THAT REMINDS ME OF A STORY"* [Capitalization and italics original] (p. 13). This fairly innocent phrase represents a unit of meaning in that something in the present reminds the listener of something that bears some form of resemblance from the past. Second, as noted in chapter 2, a fundamental difference between a machine and a human being is that while machines can programmatically and technically state the power of recall, only human beings can actualize their recall-capacity by telling or retelling their story or stories. At

the same time, human beings, rather than machines, also have the power to create new stories.

Within the context of this study, the stories, narratives, and metaphors used by participants in this study were reflective of their recalling of selected past events. This selective remembering continued to frame their current experiences, and it enabled them to make sense of their future on the basis of their interpretations of their present circumstances. In their responses, in other words, it was not so much a "that reminds me of a story" frame but rather a "let me construct my story on the basis of what I remember for you" frame that governed their narrative presentations. So, what conclusions can be drawn from the stories and metaphors that participants used to describe their experiences in the midst of change? Second, what could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experienced radical organizational changes that were either proposed or already-implemented?

Conclusions in Relation to the First Research Question

In response to the first question, a basic pattern connects (a) participants' metaphors and stories; and (b) participants' metaphors, stories, and their experiences. Within the context of this study, participants' metaphors and stories were viewed as expressions of their experiences. At the same time, the relationship between metaphors and experiences were not interpreted as being analogical or lineal but rather recursive and dialectical in nature. Recall, for instance, Bateson's (1979) lens and frame of recursive reasoning. For Bateson (1979) recursive reasoning refers to a "relation among a series of causes or arguments such that a sequence does...come back to the starting point" (p.

228). Recursive reasoning and relationships, in other words, are dialogical and dialectical in nature. What this essentially means is that experiences structure expressions and expressions structure experience. Said differently, stories and metaphors structure experiences and experiences structure stories and metaphors.

In relation to the notion that experience structures expressions, a basic pattern emerged in that participants in this study constructed their metaphors and stories on the basis of their self-understanding of what they experienced as problematic. In relation to the notion that expressions structure experiences, the metaphors and stories used by research participants continued to inform and structure how they understood and made meaning of their experiences. As shown in the paragraphs below, this dialectical and recursive pattern of relationships is reflected at two levels. First, there is a recursive pattern of relationships within the expressions. There is, in other words, a recursive relation between metaphors and subsequent telling of stories and narratives. Second, there is also a recursive relationship between their expressions, namely, metaphors and stories, and their experiences. In Bateson's (1979) language, this is a pattern, which connects all their narratives and stories.

Third, recall, for instance Duck's (1998) suggestion that for real change to occur, leaders need to win their followers one by one by responding to their critical needs. As seen below, the critical needs of participants in this study are also reflected in their narratives.

Red Team: Recursive Relationships between Metaphors and Stories

Joan, for example, used the metaphor of a mother hen to describe her relationship with her team. As a mother hen she felt the need to protect those whom she was called to manage. Whereas proponents of system cybernetics would focus on providing more information, Joan's narrative was about her distrust in the information giver and hence her frustration with her inability to protect her team. Her story also reflected her understanding that information givers deliberately withheld information for fear that their employees would "jump ship." Her metaphor continued to influence how she felt when she accepted another position within her organization. She felt guilty and she also interpreted her own decision as jumping ship. The critical need for Joan was the necessity to build a relationship of trust between herself and the information givers. This element of trust was singularly absent in her relationship with her managers.

Kathy used two metaphors to describe her experience. On the one hand, her narrative was informed and structured by her metaphor of being a card-player: "Managers are often like card players in a game." According to her, not only were some cards missing but also that she did not have a choice in the kind of card game that was being played. The story that followed reflected the challenge of managing in an environment that lacked information. As seen in chapter 4, her second metaphor of not being able to make a silk purse with a sow's ear was also reflective of her experience of being in the midst of something ugly and deceitful. She could not imagine how she could make something as beautiful as a silk purse from something as ugly as a sow's ear. Like Joan, Kathy's critical need was also the necessity to build a relationship of trust. In addition, it

was also important for her to be on a level playing field in making decisions while in the midst of radical organizational change.

Jennifer also used two metaphors to describe her experience, (a) "It is like being a hamster on a forever turn wheel," and (d) "I feel like a dog chasing its tail." The narrative that followed was about her struggle to find purpose in her work and feeling stuck. Jennifer, however, chose to remain in the hamster's cage because she was too close to retirement. Her experience, in other words, was fundamentally tied to her decision to remain in the cage. Jennifer's critical need was to reclaim and regain her sense of value and purpose in her work.

Melanie used the metaphor of "being in a tense-filled relationship that could be cut with a knife" to describe her experience. The narrative that followed was about *us* and *them*. Her narrative was about the injustice that the *them* were doing to the *us*. At the same time it was a story that fundamentally depended upon preserving the distinction between and the defined positions of the *them* and the *us*. Melanie's experience of the victimized *us* in other words, depended upon Melanie actively keeping the abuser-identity of the *them* alive. Within this environment her narrative proceeded along the lines of remaining silent about the actions of the *them* or the *us* and feeling the effects of walking on eggshells. Melanie's critical need was reflective of the need to rebuild the relationship between the *them* and the *us*.

Jerome used the metaphor, "The emperor has no clothes" to describe his experience. The narrative that followed was about his awareness that he was being called to play the game. However, although he was in the game, his narrative suggests that he

played the role of the outsider looking in. "The role of the team is that of 'busy work' geared to presenting an image to the outside world that suggests commitment and progress in the absence of any evidence." According to him, the appearance of being busy trumped the need to be engaged in meaningful and purposeful work. As seen in chapter 4, in the midst of proposed organizational change, Jerome interpreted the organizational mantra to 'get busy' in two ways. First, it was to "get busy" for the sake of appearing to be doing something rather than actually doing something. Second, it was also reflective of a tacit agreement among the players to not question their assumptions or roles: "both leaders and followers need to be clear about their roles if the illusion is to be successful." Their roles were simply to play their parts well. At the risk of introducing another metaphor, Jerome's critical need was the necessity "to come clean." Like Kathy, he could not imagine himself sustaining a relationship of deceit.

Blue Team: Recursive Relationships Between Metaphors and Stories

In the midst of already-implemented changes, Carol used the following metaphor to describe her experience: "It is like driving through a city you have never visited without a map." The story that followed was about her struggle to find her way in this new place. Now that they had arrived in this new place with already-implemented changes, she needed a map to navigate in this new place. In the absence of a map, she told the story of how well she fared in this environment by acknowledging the positive support that she received from her manager. What was important for Carol was positive support and she received that from her manager.

For Catherine, her experience in this new organization was "like entering a den of uncertainty." Accordingly, her story and experience was about not having control over her future and feeling trapped. In her words, "it felt so dark, very confining." Her story also included the notion of being uncertain as to her career within her newly formed organization. Catherine's critical need was to regain her sense of control. She was able to do that by reconnecting with what was important to her in terms of her set of values.

Kevin described his experiences through his metaphor of "coming to a place where there are a lot of changes happening but no difference in the end result." The story that followed was about how he saw a lot of technical changes but no changes in the behavior of management. This fed his sense of cynicism and his behavior of seeking further evidence to justify his conclusions. For example, he chose to gather his evidence from individuals who were in the organization for 20 to 30 years. They verified for him that while in the midst of a lot of changes, patterns of management behavior continue to not change. Kevin's critical need was the necessity of being in the midst of behavior that was aligned with the talk.

For Lisette it was "like watching a movie and then reading a book." Subsequently, her story was about her initial confusion with the players on the scene and in the quickness of each moving slide in the movie. Unlike the book, which according to her, (a) offered more information, and (b) that she could have used as a historical reference, the movie was terse in that she had to fill in the blanks. Lisette's critical need was reflected in the notion of understanding the background and the reasons for

organizational changes. The book, rather than the movie, allowed her that historical sense.

Finally, for Heather it was like being on a roller coaster. The story that followed was about her experience of being ill while being in the ups, downs, and tight turns of the roller coaster. While Tony did not provide a specific metaphor to describe his experience, he also alluded to the experience of being ill: "From my experience, organizational change can go as far as to make an individual physically ill." Reflected through Heather's metaphor was her critical need to steady herself in the midst of change.

In summary, in all of the metaphors and stories told, there is a consistent recursive pattern that connects all the stories and metaphors. The first is that metaphors informed and structured their stories. At the same time the stories that were told continued to reinforce and sustain their respective metaphors. Second, as expressions, metaphors and stories continued to inform and structure the meaning of their lived experiences. At the same time their experiences continued to maintain and sustain their metaphors and stories. Insofar as stories and narratives were used as a way of understanding the meaning of the experiences of participants in this study, the relationship between the construction of stories and the meaning of their experience can be understood as follows. In constructing their stories, narratives, and metaphors, participants in this research study could also be understood as creating their meanings. Said differently, narratives and metaphors could be viewed as expressions of how they engaged in the process of understanding and making meaning of their lives in the midst of organizational change.

Third, all 11 participants voiced their particular needs. As mentioned in chapter 1, for Gardner (1995), the success of leaders in winning their followers, one by one, depends critically upon their capacity to listen to the stories of individuals because it is precisely "*stories of identity* – narratives that help individuals think about and feel who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed – that constitute the single most powerful weapon in the leader's literary arsenal" [italics original] (p. 43). Gardner (1995) went further to suggest that by listening to and engaging in the stories of individuals, rather than dismissing or trivializing their experience as resistant to change, leaders give themselves the opportunity to tap into the critical needs of individuals in the midst of change.

How do the critical needs that are identified here compare with the critical needs as identified by classical writers like Durkheim (1964), Marx (1978c), Rousseau (1761/1997), and Weber (1958) and as summarized in Figure 1 of chapter 2? Similar to Figure 1, and as reflected in Figure 19 below, the critical needs identified in this study also fall into four dimensions, namely, the physical, mental, social/emotional, and spiritual dimensions. The use of the term dimensions, in this instance is not to be confused with the three-dimensional-narrative-inquiry-space as proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). To enable for an easier reference, comparability, and readability, a duplicate of Figure 1 is placed below Figure 19.

|	
The Physical Dimension Need for a physical place for work (Kathy) Need for information (Joan, Kathy) Need to create an efficient system (Jerome's managers) Need for a map (Carol) Need to stay healthy (Heather, Tony) Need to look after one's interests (Joan)	**The Social/Emotional Dimension** Communication systems: need for alignment between talk and walk (Kevin) Need for positive support (Carol) Need to address problem of identity (Melanie) Need to address feelings of abandonment, that no one cares, and frustration (Melanie, Joan, Kathy, Jennifer) Need to address lack of trust (Joan, Kathy) Need to have a coach (Lisette, Heather)
The Mental Dimension Challenge to refocus acts of attention Jerome) Questioning underlying assumptions that maintain existing systems (Jerome)	**The Spiritual Dimension** Need to clarify values and preferences (Catherine, Lisette, Jennifer, Melanie) Need to bring closure to unresolved issues (Joan, Jennifer, Melanie, Kathy) Need to be engaged in meaningful and purposeful work (Jerome, Jennifer, Tony) Need to believe in themselves. (Lisette, Catherine, Carol, Heather)

Figure 19. Four critical dimensions and corresponding needs as reflected in this study.

In relation to the critical needs of individuals in the midst of change, compare for instance, the similarity of the findings of this study with the findings of classical writers from the mid 18th to the early 20th centuries that was addressed in chapter 2, Review of the Literature.

The Physical Dimension	*The Social/Emotional Dimension*
Money (Marx, Weber, Durkheim) Physical Capacity to Produce (Marx) Healthy Balance between Work and other aspect of one's life - not addicted or intoxicated (Rousseau, Marx, Weber)	Communication Systems -alignment between principles of conversation and principles of practice (Rousseau) Celebration of Differences (Marx) Moral Societal Bond through Co-operation (Durkheim) Feeling a Sense of Belonging (Rousseau) Clear sense of one's Identity (Rousseau)
The Mental Dimension	*The Spiritual Dimension*
Ability to think for oneself (Rousseau, Marx, Weber) Being involved in work that was mentally challenging (Rousseau, Marx) Critical Inquiry (Marx) Entrepreneurship (Weber)	Creation of Space to be Reflective (Rousseau, Marx, Weber, Durkheim) To be engaged in work that was compelling (Rousseau) To be Specialists with Spirit and Sensualists with Heart (Weber) Need for a Sense of the Holy (Marx, Weber) Need to Hold on to Something Solid (Rousseau, Marx, Weber)

(Duplicate of *Figure 1*)

The findings of this study support the insights of classical writers as they engaged in their inquiry into social and organizational change. It appears as if the critical needs of individuals in the midst of change have not changed over time. Within the context of this research study, it behooves leaders to listen to the critical needs of their employees while in the midst of radical organizational change. The capacity of leaders to win the hearts of the many, in other words, depends first and foremost on their ability to win the heart of the one fundamentally because the key to the many is the one. Every 11 participant in this

study, for example, is a one. The basic problem with systems-cybernetics approach to the management of change is that its universal structural method excludes the particular needs of the one. It focuses instead on the general maintenance the organization in a quasi-state of equilibrium at best by attending to the general needs of individuals and, at worst, by ignoring individual needs.

Conclusions in Relation to the Second Research Question

The second research question asked: What could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experienced radical organizational changes that were either proposed or already-implemented? While the discussion in the preceding paragraphs focused on the dialectical relation relationship between experience and expressions, it is also worth noting that their experiences were also informed and constructed by several intervening or moderating variables. As seen in Figure 20 below, these intervening or moderating variables included, participants' acts of attention, already-made decisions, beliefs, competing understandings of the problem, interpretation, recursive relationships, and their uses of their metaphors, contributed to how they experienced their organizational changes. While these seven moderating variables are classified under four main categories and visually presented below, it is also important to note that how participants understood and made meaning of their experiences is also a function of the interrelationship between the categories.
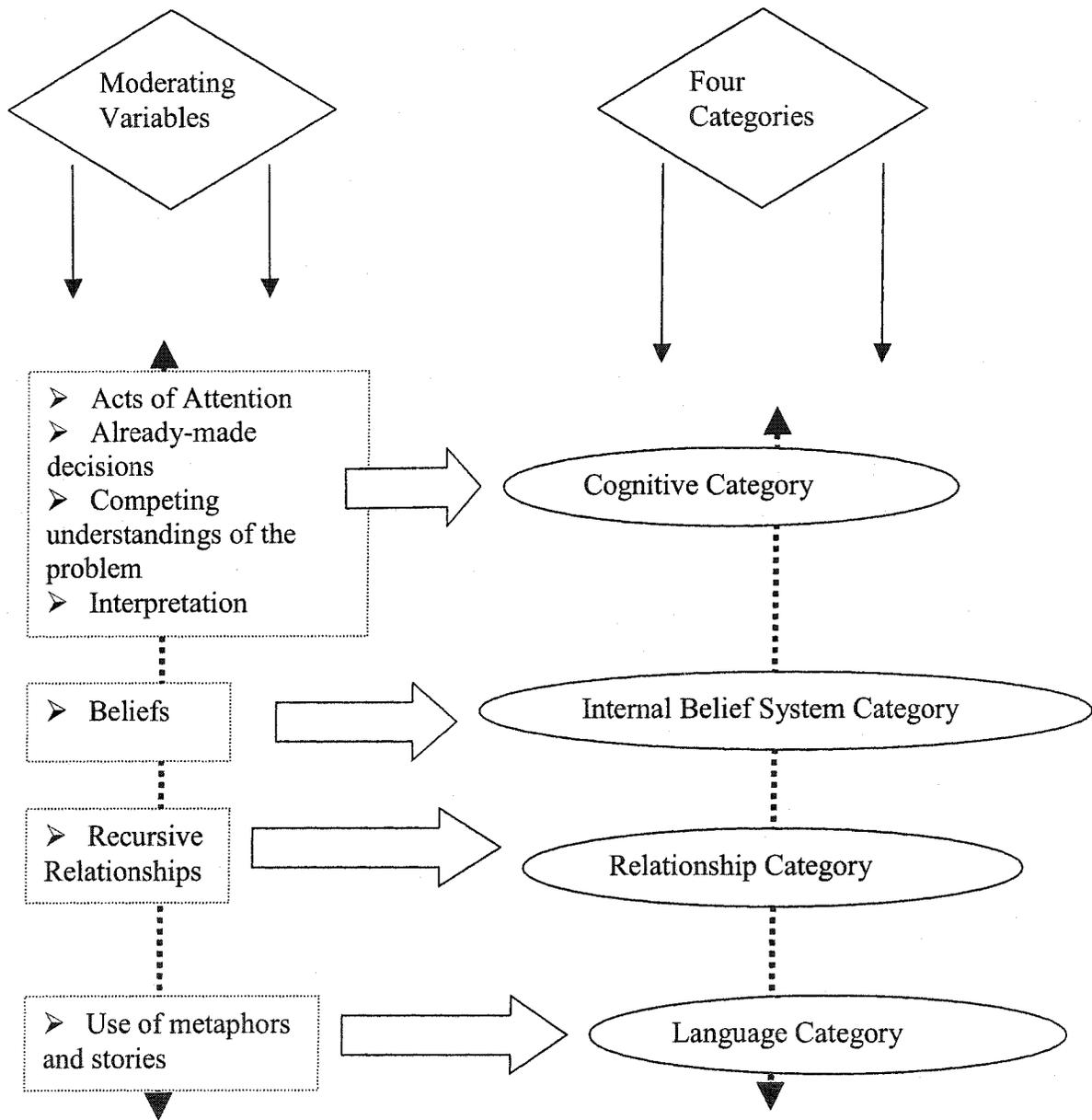
Figure 20. Moderating variables linked with categories.

The place of the four identified categories within the recursive relationship

between expressions and experiences is visually displayed in Figure 21 below.
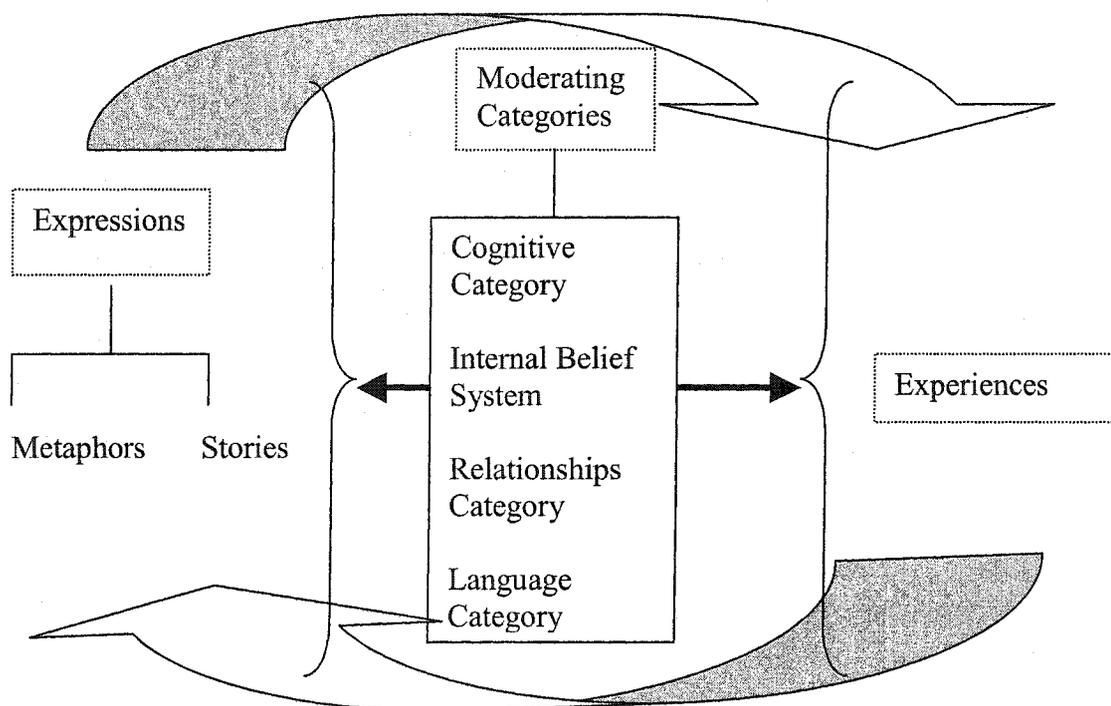
Figure 21. Linking expressions and experiences with moderating variables.

The recursive relationship between the seven moderating variables collected under the four noted categories and how (a) participants in this study experienced their organizational changes and, (b) they went about the process of understanding and making meaning, are summarized below.

The Cognitive Category

Revelation 1: The dialectical and recursive relationship between experience and acts of attention. The notion of "acts of attention" is borrowed from Schutz (1973). Weick (1995) picked up on this notion and addressed its influence on the creation of meaning by quoting Schutz.

> When, by my act of reflection, I turn my attention to my living experience,
> I am no longer taking up my position within the stream of pure
> duration...The experiences are apprehended, distinguished, brought into
> relief, marked out from one another; the experiences which were
> constituted as phases within the flow of duration now become objects of
> attention as constituted experiences....*For the Act of Attention* – and this is
> of major importance for the study of meaning – presupposes an elapsed,
> passed-away experience- in short, one that is already in the past. [Italics
> original] (Schutz, as cited in Weick, 1995, p. 25).

Within the context of the creation of meaning Weick (1995) unpacked several

implications contained in Schutz's quote. First, that the "creation of meaning is an

attentional process" (Weick, 1995, p. 25). It is a *backward glance* that attends selectively

to that which has occurred (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 1993). According to

Bruner (1986a), the telling of participants' stories is really "an arbitrary imposition of

meaning on the flow of memory, in that we highlight some causes and discount others"

(p. 7).

All of the narrative presentations in this study can be seen as being influenced by

such an attentional process. This attentional process was presented in chapter 4 through

participants' power of recall and by selectively attending to their constructed metaphors.

Four participants in the Red Team and one participant from the Blue Team, for example,

chose to focus on particular events that occurred as far as 3 years prior to this research

study. By recalling past events, participants in this study voiced a similarity in patterns of

behavior that occurred in the past. This leads to the second implication as reflected in

Schutz's quote. Insofar as what was occurring for research participants in their here and

now revealed some resemblance to what occurred in their past, the former influenced

their act of attention. For them, in other words, their act of attention contributed to a

sense of coherence in terms of how their story hung together.

Recall, for instance, Kevin's act of attention on and interpretation of the different

types of changes that have come and gone in his organization.

> Kevin – Interview: Whatever problem you see now, 10 years from now
> you will see the same set of problems. Talking to some of the people here
> who have been here for 20, 30 years…it goes in cycles…same types of
> problems.

From a diversity of people that Kevin could have talked and listened to in his

organization, Kevin chose to talk and listen to the stories of people "who (had) been (in

the organization) for 20, 30 years." In doing so, he chose to attend exclusively to their

story while at the same time discounting others. He highlighted their interpretations and

discounted others. From the point of view of those who were in the organization for 20

years or longer, they were convinced that their current problems would be repeated "10

years from now." Those who had a longer tenure in the organization, in other words,

were turned to as the "historians" of the organization. Their historical experience moved

them to attend not so much to the cyclical nature of problems in their organization but

rather to the repeated problems in their organization: "10 years from now, you will see

the same set of problems." Insofar as this conclusion is no longer questioned, participants

such as Kevin will continue to tell and retell their stories by attending to those

organizational aspects that feed such a way of thinking and interpreting.

This leads to the third insight as narrated by Weick (1995). According to him,

because the event "to be interpreted has elapsed, and is only a memory, anything that

affects remembering will affect the sense that is made of those memories" (p. 26). Within the context of this research study, variables affecting the remembering of research participants were not just another structural change, or the behavior of those who were responsible for leading them through their changes. Their remembering was also influenced by other cognitive acts, namely their interpretations, their already-made decisions, and competing understandings of the problem. These will be further elaborated a little later.

The fourth implication is related to the equation between stimulus and response. Conventionally, stimulus is considered as being out there and individuals react to that stimulus. Within the context of the metaphors and stories that were told in this research study and the corresponding experiences of participants in this study, the stimulus is not really out there. Instead it is co-constructed and co-determined. (Weick, 1995) It is co-constructed between the event and their acts of attention. Through their acts of attention, they co-constructed their stimulus through the mental act of selection and then acted upon that stimulus. Their creation of meaning, in other words, is fundamentally dependent upon the reliance upon their particular mental act of selection. The analytical sequence of co-determination can be seen as proceeding as follows: attend, interpret, and tell. Their telling, in other words is a product of their interpretation of what they have chosen to focus upon through their act of attention.

To this end, Schutz (1973) and Weick (1995) are particularly insightful. In concurrence with Schutz (1973), Weick (1995) also agreed that "meaning is not (simply) [parenthesis added] 'attached to' the experience that is singled out. Instead, the meaning

is in the kind of attention that is directed to this experience" (p. 26). In Schutz's language, the "*meaning* of a lived experience undergoes modifications depending on the particular kind of attention the Ego gives to that lived experience" [italics original] (Schutz, as cited in Weick, p. 26). Within the framework of the analytical sequence provided above, the kind of attention that participants gave to their lived experiences was reflected in the participants' interpretation of their situation. Between stimulus and response in other words, there were intervening variables. Within the cognitive category, acts of attention have the power of informing and modifying the meaning of a lived experience. Given the findings of this research study, the lived experience of research participants were also influenced by another cognitive dimension, namely their already-made decisions.

Revelation 2: The recursive relationship between already- made decisions and experience. What is interesting to note in the narrative presentations is that their experience followed their decisions on prescribed outcomes. Their narrative presentations made perfect sense, it was perfectly coherent, and it hung well together within the frame of their already-made decisions of outcomes. An example of the nature of the coherent relationship between decisions and corresponding meanings of experiences was graphically outlined and reflected in chapter 4, Figure 10. Even though some participants acknowledged that their decisions were based on a private suspicion or on the lack of verifiable evidence, these were non-consequential. In this situation, the provision of more information was also of no consequence. As Jerome mentioned, "I know that a lot of what I have been saying, they like to hear it, but they don't believe it." This will be further addressed under the category of internal belief system.

Revelation 3: The recursive relationship between competing understandings of the problem and experience. Through Jerome's narrative presentation, for example, the formulation of the problem influenced the types of stories that were told. Within the context of his narratives, for example, two forms of rationality informed the formulation of the problem. Jerome's colleagues adopted a technical-calculative rationality in formulating what they saw as being problematic. At a technical level, and within the context of Jerome's story, there were inefficiencies in the health billing system in that there were "delays and dual entries and all the things that you have in any other kind of system." His colleagues saw their role as being one of fixing the inefficiencies. Fixing the inefficiencies would be a technical-calculative and mechanical solution to fixing the problem. Jerome, however, interpreted this solution to the problem as tinkering at the edges, as not addressing the real organizational issue, and hence, as not bringing about real change.

Unlike his colleagues, Jerome adopted a form of rationality that was identified by Marx (1978a) as "a ruthless criticism of everything existing" (p. 13) in formulating what he saw as problematic. Marx (1978a), for example, was quite clear in what he meant by 'ruthless'. He used the idea of ruthless in two senses: "The criticism cannot be afraid of its own conclusions, nor of conflict with the powers that be" (p. 13). In adopting Marx's (1978a) critical rationality as his point of departure, Jerome was not afraid that his conclusions might have been in conflict with existing organizational powers.

Thinking critically, Jerome was moved to tell a different story. His story was about the need to look instead at the very structure of the existing organizational health

system and decisions made to sustain such a structure. According to Jerome, the constructed organizational health systems structure was not sustainable within their organizational and fiscal realities. To pursue that option would have meant foregoing some of the benefits enjoyed under the old scheme. His story, then, was informed by his desire to move his colleagues to examine, clarify and even change their own positions. Accordingly, for him, an organizational response like outsourcing might fix the technical problems like double billings and delays in the short-term, but it would not address the financial sustainability of the health system as it was constructed. Competing understandings of the problem, as informed by different forms of rationality, then produced different stories. At the same time, they produced different types of experience.

Revelation 4: The recursive relationship between interpretation and experience. Nearly all of the narrative presentations were informed not so much by the influence of others but rather by participants' interpretation of the actions of others. Proponents of symbolic interactionism might argue that the interpretation of research participants was influenced by what they chose to take into account. For example, behaviors like the presence or absence of managers, and micromanaging in the case of the Red Team, and providing positive support, in the case of the Blue Team, were all behaviors that were selected and interpreted by research participants. The meaning of those actions and behaviors in other words, were not contained in the behaviors as such. Meaning was constructed instead, through their interpretive understandings of those actions.

Following Follett (1924), for example, Weick (1995) used the language of "enactment" (p. 30) to exemplify the notion that people are co-producers of their

experiences and the environments that they confront. The environment, as stimuli, in other words, is not simply out there. Instead the stimulus is partly a product of human activity. To paraphrase Marx (1978b), human beings first make their interpretations and then they allow their interpretations to make them by forgetting that they were authors of their own interpretations. In so doing, interpretive acts become, in the language of social constructionists like Berger and Luckmann (1966), reified. Their own interpretive acts, in other words, became treated as external objects and experienced as if it was imposing itself from the outside in.

Internal-Belief System

Revelation 5: The recursive relationship between internal belief systems and experience. Recall, for instance, Catherine's comment in her written presentation: "Overall my experience with change has been good." In the narrative presentations of those in the midst of already-implemented changes, two other participants shared Catherine's experience, primarily because they chose to attend to what they believed. Heather, for example, claimed: "My understanding and belief was that the change was for the benefit of the organization." For Lisette, on the other hand, she chose to believe in the reasonableness of what was being said and her acceptance of the organization's response. The information that was provided to them appeared coherent from the point of view of what they chose to believe.

In an article that spoke to the difference between argument and narration in organizational communication, Weick and Browning (1986), for example, suggested that, "whenever I judge any facts of any communication, I will ask, first, does it cohere, and

second, does it ring true?" (p. 249). Within the context of the narrative presentations of some participants in the Blue Team, the facts of what was communicated cohered and rang true for them because they chose to believe that "change was for the benefit of the organization." It must be noted, that the questions of whether it cohered or rang true are not to be measured against some objective standard or reality. (Riessman, 1993) Instead it rang true for these participants because they believed in it.

Joan from the Red Team, for example, chose not to believe in the information that she was provided. She believed, instead, that information was deliberately being withheld because the information givers were "afraid that (they were) going to jump ship." Given her belief, the information provided did not cohere and neither did it ring true. Participants of the Blue and Red Teams then shared something in common in that they both reversed the relationship between seeing and believing. Whereas it is commonly accepted that seeing is believing the narrative presentations in this research study, demonstrated instead that believing is seeing. Their seeing, in other words, was selectively informed by their beliefs.

In addition to making judgments, participants' beliefs also had the power to initiate action in ways that lent credibility to the way they chose to respond to their situations. Take Joan, for example, who chose to receive the information provided as follows: "In the back of my mind, I just don't really believe that at all …and what will we do if we start to jump ship?" That was her rationalization as to why the information possessors were withholding information. When Joan accepted another employment offer within the same organization, she wrote: "I know others will perceive me as jumping

ship." As mentioned in chapter 4, based on her beliefs, she now acted as judge and jury of her actions. The point to be made here is that her beliefs initiated an action that made her own beliefs a self-fulfilling prophecy. Using Joan's voice in the fist-person, the sequencing of her beliefs, actions, and meanings then can be seen as follows: (a) I believe that they are not giving me all the information because I believe that they are afraid that I am going to jump ship; (b) I jumped ship when another opportunity was provided; (c) I know that I will now be perceived and judged as jumping ship; (d) I don't really care about what they think because I need to think of myself and my own career. To paraphrase Schutz ((1973), the meaning of her lived experience was intensified by her exclusive focus on her belief system.

Relationship Category

Revelation 6: The recursive relationship between social relationships and experience. The preceding paragraph leads to the nature of a nonlineal or a recursive relationship between a subject and an object. Following Follet (1924) and Bateson (1979), proponents of postmodernity would argue that in "talking of the behavior process we have to give up the expression act 'on' (subject acts on object, object acts on subject) [parenthesis original] (Follet, as cited in Weick, 1995, p. 32). As seen through numerous of the narrative presentations uncovered in this research study, the recursive relationship is more closely aligned with a subject and object reacting to an object and subject. In Follet's language, it is more accurate to speak of responses or recursive relationships as "I-plus-you reacting to you-plus-me" (As cited in Weick, 1995, p. 33). The meaning that evolves through this relationship then is co-determined and co-constructed.

The nature of this recursive relationship was seen through metaphors like them and us, abuser and victim, not caring and feeling hopeless, imposing demands and feeling negative. These recursive relationships were graphically displayed in chapter 4, Figure 9. The fundamental point to be made here is that in assigning a metaphor, like abuser to the other, individuals also assign a reciprocal metaphor, like victims to themselves. (Becvar & Becvar, 2000) The identity of the one depends upon the activity of keeping the identity of the other alive and hence individuals need to actively collaborate in the maintenance of such a recursive relationship.

Duck (1998) for example, mentioned that, for real change to occur individuals need to think and behave differently. Insofar as the behavior of research participants were driven by their self-identities, it would stand to reason that a change in their behaviors would also require a change in their self-identities. Ironically, a change in the behavior of research participants would first and foremost require them to alter the metaphors that they had selected to describe their realities. In so doing, there is also the possibility that relationships might also change.

Language Category

Revelation 7: The recursive relationship between language and experience. The richness, emotional intensity, and depth of research participants' understanding of their situation and the way they went about the task of making meaning were reflected in the use of their unique and distinct metaphors. However, not only were metaphors a reflection of their mental and emotional state, they were also primary contributors to sustaining and keeping research participants in their mental and emotional state. What

this suggests is that metaphors reflect, sustain, and structure mental and emotional states. How research participants experienced their world in other words, was fundamentally informed and structured by the metaphors they used.

With respect to the cause-effect relationship or to the relationship between stimulus and response, it is critical to acknowledge that there are essentially four conditions at play. First, there is the context of the situation. Metaphors, narratives, and corresponding experiences are the second and third conditions. As will be argued a little later in this section, the fourth condition is values. As witnessed in the stories of participants in this study, metaphors were used as the language descriptor of research participants to express their experiences in the midst of their situation. Hence, insofar as the situation remained the same, it was possible that metaphors and experiences would continue to remain the same. A change in the situation might change one's experience and hence one's metaphor. Recall, for instance, Kevin's reasoning: "…as far as I am concerned, if management changed their behavior then, we will have a different reality, it is as simple as that." This line of reasoning or argument would then suggest that the development of metaphors and experiences are as basically a product of the situation or the environment. It would, in other words, be the argument of environmental determinism.

"This reminds me of a story." The story that is presented below is an example of what Weick (1995) referred to when he said that in the midst of organizational change, managers would be better served if they enabled their employees to focus on values and priorities. According to Weick (1995) and from the perspective of social integration,

values more than anything else would allow them to center their attention on what truly mattered and it would allow them the capacity to change their metaphors and hence their experiences while in the midst of change.

An extreme and inspiring example of a life that argued against environmental determinism could be observed through the experience of Victor Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist who was imprisoned in the death camps of Nazi Germany because he was a Jew. His experiences became the basis for his brilliant autobiographical account called *Man's Search for Meaning*. While in this Nazi camp, he experienced unbelievable indignities and tortures. In this place of utter misery, pain, torture, and ugliness, where the human soul was torn open and exposed to its depths (Frankl, 1984, p. 108ff), Frankl observed the behavior of both his fellow prisoners and camp guards. He himself experienced terrible things. Some of his own loved ones were cremated alive.

While he expected the same fate, for some reason the Nazis saved him for experimental purposes. One day, they stripped him naked, put him under white light, and began to perform those ignoble sterilization experiments upon his body. It was then that he discovered what he called "the last human freedom," which essentially meant that any man or woman has the power to choose their response under any condition. And he cultivated a sense of meaning by seeing himself in his imagination lecturing to his students in Austria following his release from the death camp about the very experiences he was having at that time and about the insights and the learning that he was acquiring. Through this process he came to postulate that the highest value was the power to choose one's attitude in situations over which one has no control.

The experiences of camp life show that man does have a choice of action. There were enough examples, often of a heroic nature, which proved that apathy could be overcome, irritability suppressed. Man *can* preserve a vestige of spiritual freedom, of independence of mind, even in such terrible conditions of psychic and physical stress.

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. ...[Italics original] (1985, pp. 86-87)

The preceding example suggests that there is more to explaining human behavior than environmental determinism, as proposed, for example, by B.F. Skinner (1974). In the environment of the death camps, for example, Frankl (1984) observed that some behaved like animals and others like saints. This went against his intellectual upbringing. Intellectually, he was raised in the Freudian tradition that postulated that one is basically a product of one's childhood (psychic determinism). Frankl (1984), however, observed that in the midst of the same environment, there were two very different and opposite types of behavior. This example restates a point made in chapter 4, namely, that the difference between being influenced and being determined is 180^0.

This analysis does not debunk Skinner's contribution. It does, however, suggest that while the environment does have the capacity to exert its influence upon the individual it does *not have the total power to determine the behavior of the individual.* The experience of Victor Frankl (1984) suggests that "man *can* preserve a vestige of spiritual freedom, of independence of mind" [italics original] (p. 86), even "in such terrible conditions of psychic and physical stress" (p.86).

The independence of mind that Frankl (1984) suggested was possible because of another type of change.

> What was really needed was a fundamental change in our attitude toward life. We had to learn ourselves and, furthermore, we had to teach the despairing men (sic), *that it did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us* [italics original]. We needed to stop asking about the meaning of life, and instead to think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life – daily and hourly. (Frankl, 1984, p. 98)

Choosing the attitude as proposed by Frankl (1984) cannot then come from the environment. It came instead through the capacity to ask a different question. It came from the capacity to ask: "What is life expecting from us?" or "What this situation is asking of us?" Choosing the attitude that Frankl (1984) talked about did not and could not come from the question: "What is the meaning of life?" By implication, this fundamental change in attitude is a result of surfacing what one values and gaining clarity about what is really important. Whereas situations have the capacity of influencing metaphors, Frankl (1984) could be heard as suggesting that values also have the capacity to produce different metaphors and hence different experiences. Said differently, Frankl's (1984) values enabled his to construct a different language.

A key learning that can be gained from Frankl's story is that it offers an alternative to those who exclusively embraced a systems-cybernetics way of thinking or the argument of environmental determinism. Proponents of systems-cybernetics could be viewed as treating the need to provide information in the midst of change as important because that would be one way of surviving in the ever-changing environment. Recall, for instance, that Duck (1998), mentioned that for real change to occur, leaders need to

win their followers over one by one. Frankl (1984) could be heard as suggesting that change managers would be better served by addressing values because that, more than anything else, would allow for a fundamental change in attitude toward their lives. By implication, providing information from a distance would be a recipe for failure. The perspective of social integration would argue that managers would be better served and would be of better service if they connected with their followers and hence gave themselves the opportunity to influence their followers' language and hence their capacity to choose their attitudes in the midst of their situation or organizational environment.

To summarize, while situations have the capacity to inform the production of metaphors, so do values. In the midst of his situation, for example, Frankl (1984) believed and acted on his value that he had the capacity to choose his own way. He did not give his power away to his demonic conditions. He chose instead to reclaim his power to choose his "attitude in any given set of circumstances" (p. 87). For participants in this research study, then, the recursive relationship between metaphors like abuser and victim could potentially change if the latter acted from a platform that focused instead on the value of choosing their attitude in the midst of their circumstance and reclaiming their power to act on and influence their circumstances instead of feeling tyrannized by the latter.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

While the purpose of this study was to explore how individuals understood and made meaning of their experiences while in the midst of radical organizational changes, it

was also engaged with the problem of demonstrating the interconnectedness between system-cybernetics and narrative or interpretive approaches to organizational change. To that end, the mutual relevance of both the system-cybernetics and narrative approaches need to be highlighted. It is critical to note that each of these approaches produces different organizational structures (Weick & Browning, 1986). These approaches and the production of different structures have implications for both scholars and practitioners in the field of change management. As an extension of the second research question, what could change practitioners and scholars learn from the narrative presentations of participants in this research study? Five conclusions and learning, relating to both change managers and researchers who choose narrative inquiry as their research methodology, are identified below.

1. The problem is out there and the problem is co-constructed. The first conclusion can be formulated as follows. Change managers would be better served if they changed their thinking from treating the problem as being out there to one that reflected upon how they were contributing to their own problems and reality. In nearly all of the narrative presentations in this study, participants formulated what they saw and experienced as problematic, as being out-there. Examples of what was seen, perceived, and experienced as problematic in both the Red and Blue Teams included (a) the behavior of their managers; (b) the deliberate withholding of information; (c) fixing technical problems like dual entries and delays in the health billing system; (d) the lack of management support; (e) the gap between what was said and what was done; (f) not having a map; (g) not walking the talk; (h) deceitful relationships; and (i) playing the

game. From the perspective of systems-cybernetics, the task now became one of fixing these identified problems.

The cognitive model governing a systems-cybernetic approach could be formulated as follows. From a systems-cybernetics perspective, employees could be heard as saying: if only managers would change the way they behaved then, my experience in this organization would be different. Managers, on the other hand, could be heard as saying: if only employees fixed their errors, like dual entries and delays in the billing system, then our efficiencies in this area would increase. Both approaches, in other words, engage in the practice of laying blame in the midst of failures.

Argyris (1993) coined the terms single-loop learning and double-loop learning as his way of enabling practitioners to first understand the nature of the real issue and then to act on that new understanding. Argyris (1993) could be heard as suggesting that, proponents of system-cybernetics have mastered the art and technique of problem-solving and single-loop learning. It basically consists of "identifying and correcting errors in the external environment" (Argyris, 1993, p. 84). As the pilot of a ship, *kybernetes*, the role of managers is formulated as steering the organization to re-achieve its purpose. The organizational structure then is organized in such a manner that experts could be brought in to identify and fix the errors and thereby increase efficiencies. In the case of the Red Team, outsourcing a work function was seen as being their management's solution to the issue of inefficiency. As seen in chapters 1 and 2, these approaches are essentially aligned with the idea of task management and scientific management (Taylor, 1947). While acknowledging the importance of problem solving, Argyris (1993) argued that, if

learning is to persist, and if real change was to occur, managers and employees must look inward. Argyris (1993) identified this type of learning as double-loop learning.

> They need to reflect critically on their own behavior, identify the ways
> they often inadvertently contribute to the organization's problems, and
> then change how they act. In particular, they must learn how the very way
> they go about defining and solving problems can be a source of problems
> in its own right. (Argyris, 1993, p. 84)

For Senge (1990), this process of looking inward is precisely what it meant to be truly proactive. "*True proactiveness*," Senge (1990) suggested, "*comes from seeing how we contribute to our own problems*. It is a product of our way of thinking, not our emotional state" [italics original] (p. 21). This double-loop way of thinking, reflecting, and learning is not a product of the systems-cybernetics paradigm. It is instead a product of the perspective of social integration. In this study, Jerome's metaphor of "the emperor has no clothes" and his narrative presentations came closest to surfacing this issue.

On the other hand, the narrative presentations offered by participants in this study, pointed to how they themselves contributed to the issues they faced through their acts of attention, interpretations, beliefs, and actions based on their decisions. Whereas systems-cybernetics thinking would move its proponents to identify errors and then look for solutions, double-loop learning would move its proponents to look the very assumptions that produced their problems. (Argyris, 1993; Senge, 1990) Proponents of double-loop learning would argue and demonstrate that there is a direct match or alignment between results, behaviors, and ways of thinking. The results they are getting, in other words, are directly aligned not only with their behavior but also with their way of thinking. The nature of their contribution to the co-production and co-determination of what

participants accepted as their reality was addressed in chapter 4 through Bateson's (1979)

notion of recursive reasoning.

At a practical level, managers and employees could learn the art and practice of

double-loop learning and uncover how they might themselves be contributing to their

problems through a process that is graphically depicted in Figure 21 below. This

reflective learning technique and process needs to be utilized in a way that encourages

managers and employees to speak out of both the system-cybernetics and narrative

paradigms. Beginning with 'results' both managers and employees would be required to

work in an anticlockwise direction.
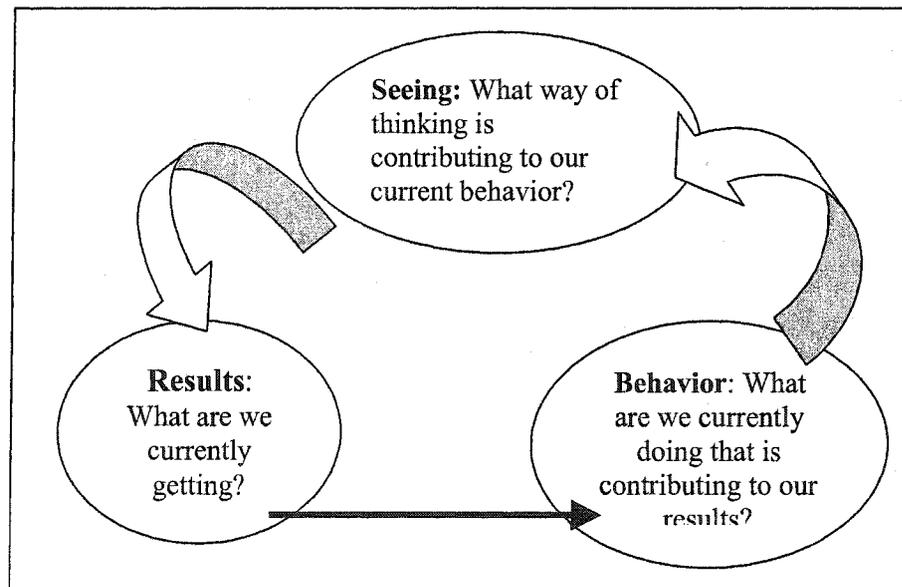
Figure 22. A practical tool for double-loop learning.

The computer metaphor and language of WYSIWYG, meaning "what you see is

what you get," could be an apt description of this learning process. One's way of seeing,

in other words, influences certain types of behavior and thereby is responsible for results

that one gets. Hence, if different results were desired, not only would individuals need to

behave differently, but also that they would essentially need to think differently. At an

organizational level, the different approaches to single-loop learning and double-loop

learning are demonstrated in Figures 23 and 24 below.
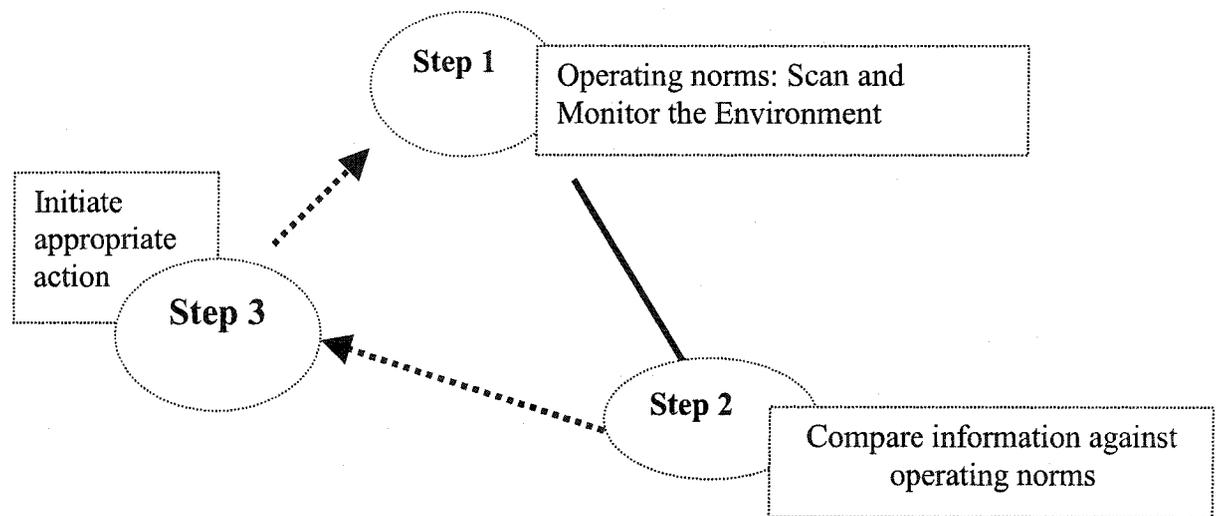
Figure 23. Single-loop learning.

As reflected in Figure 24, double loop learning on the other hand, takes a second look at

the situation by questioning the relevance and the basic assumptions of operating norms.
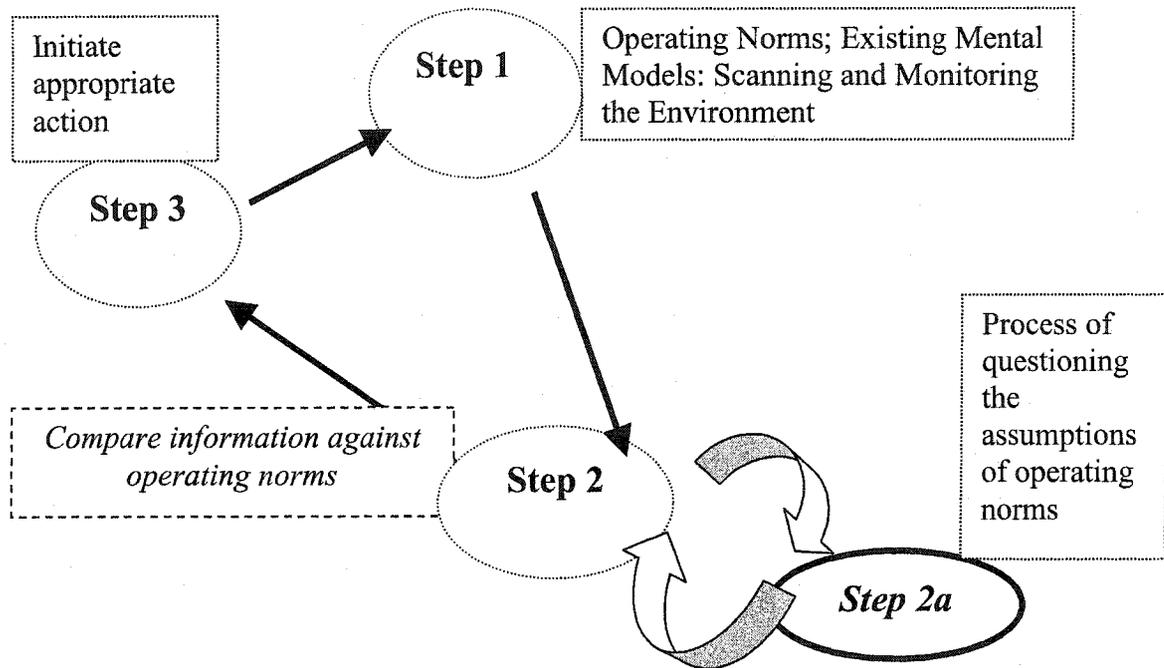
Figure 24. Double-loop learning.

Argyris (1990), for example, demonstrated that one of the biggest barriers to

double-loop learning is created by processes of bureaucratic accountability and other

systems for rewarding or punishing employees. This was reflected in the types of

micromanagement practices employed by managers in the Red Team. Argyris (1990) also

suggested and demonstrated that people who feel threatened or vulnerable often engage

in "defensive routines" designed to protect themselves and their colleagues. Narratives

from Joan and Jerome of the Red Team and Kevin from the Blue Team could be seen as

examples of the defensive routines that Argyris (1990) surfaced. Those who were

engaged in defensive routines found ways to obscure or bury issues that will put them in

a bad light and of deflecting attention elsewhere. They become skilled in all kinds of impression management (Giacalon & Rosenfeld, 1989) that could make situations for which they are responsible look better than they actually are. They often fail or ignore to report deep-seated issues and often hold back or dilute other bad news. It was practices like these that moved Jerome for example to describe what he saw through his metaphor: "the emperor has no clothes."

For Senge (1990) such forms of defensive routines successfully contributed to what he referred to as "the myth of the management team" (p. 24) in organizations. For Senge (1990), this is a form of a learning disability. To maintain an image or "the *appearance* of a cohesive team" [italics original] (p. 24) managers tended to "squelch disagreement" and they tend to pretend that "everyone is behind the team's collective strategy" (p. 24). Recall, for instance, Jerome's awareness of such a reality: "the emperor has no clothes." From what he observed in his organization, "both leaders and followers need to be clear about their roles if the illusion is to be successful." If there is disagreement "it is usually expressed in a manner that lays blame...and fails to reveal the underlying differences in assumptions and experience in a way that the team as a whole could learn" (p. 24). Recall, for instance, Jerome's formulation of what he considered to be "the real problem."

> I said to them...look the real problem is not the health billing system itself. Sure there are delays and dual entries and all the things that you have in any other kind of system. It is basically that you don't really have enough money to cover your bills here and you never will unless you are prepared to make some changes in this area.

According to Jerome, his management team chose to stay silent on what he considered to be the "real problem." His management team's defensive routine was such that they chose to lay blame on the delays and dual entries of health billing system. In doing so, they gave the appearance of a being a cohesive team with a commonly identified issue to resolve. Double-loop learning, as proposed by Argyris (1990) would enable this management team to address the "real problem" that Jerome surfaced. It would enable them to uncover their underlying assumptions and real issues connected to their health benefits system. Double-loop learning, in other words, would enable Jerome's management team with the opportunity to see how they were co-constructing their own realities and their own issues through their silent collusions.

A critical lesson that can be learned from these types of experience is that the issue was not really about disagreements but rather mismanaged agreements. Proponents of systems-cybernetics through their problem-solving mode might encourage readers to address the narrative presentation from the standpoint of a conflict and hence offer conflict resolution as a problem solving solution. From the point of view of social integration, the myth of the management team that Argyris (1990) and Senge (1990) described, and the relationships reflected in the stories narrated by participants in this study, suggest that they were not really in conflict. The practical problem was that while they behaved out of a certain frame of thinking, assumptions, or beliefs, they chose to remain silent on their way of thinking, assumptions, or beliefs. They chose, in other words, not to reflect upon their underlying assumptions. It is precisely this silence that continued to contribute, sustain, and maintain their realities.

2. Information and interpretation. The second conclusion relates to the notion that change managers would be better served if they focused on issues related to *both* system integration and social integration. The need to focus on both paradigms and the interconnectedness between the two was demonstrated earlier through the relationship between information and interpretation. Proponents of system-cybernetics would argue for the need to provide more information in the midst of change. Their reasoning is such that the provision of information would 'correct' the behaviors of managers and employees. As seen through the narrative presentations, no matter how diligent senior managers were in providing more information, their managers and employees did not believe them. From the perspective of social integration, what was lacking instead, was trust. Trust, however, is not simply built on providing more information but rather on re-building relationships between managers and employees and by following through on commitments made (Covey, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1995). Absentee management was a recipe for failure. For example, practices like providing more information via e-mail, management by screening around, and the physical absence of management were simply insufficient.

In the midst of absentee management, a pattern of behavior surfaced with the Red and Blue Teams. Employees tended to fill in the gaps. So, in the face of absentee management, employees engaged in gap management. Lisette, from the Blue Team, better described the consequences of being in the middle of absentee managers.

> Lisette – Interview: When that gap happens, that's when the hidden
> agenda and gossip nonsense starts where some people start expressing
> opinions that are really invalid. And that seems to carry a lot of weight
> because there's that missing information that we did not portray ahead of

time, so I learned. It just seems to carry itself through the building. They just hear that. They may or may not believe it but if they do not hear anything else, it may be more true than it isn't.

Gap management, then, is such that a few dominant voices expressed and influenced others. The opinions of a small group of people "carry a lot of weight" precisely because they tended to fill in the blanks. While absentee managers provided the information, they were not around to build the relationships and influence the interpretations of others. Consensus then began to form around what Lisette labeled as "hidden agenda and gossip nonsense" that were spread by interpreters who chose to be present. In the face of not hearing anything else, the presence of fill-in-the gap interpreters and interpretations became more credible and more believable as their messages appeared to hang together in a coherent way. As Lisette mentioned, it appeared to "be more true."

3. Problem and paradox. The third conclusion is also connected to the notion that change managers could potentially be more successful in winning their followers one by one by focusing on issues connected to both system integration and social integration. Within the systems-cybernetics paradigm the work problem solving is rampant and prevalent. As mentioned earlier, the challenge for proponents of systems-cybernetics was to first identify the problem and then to correct it. From the point of view of system-cybernetics, the types of issues raised through the narrative presentations in this study would at best be treated as anecdotal and at worst as gossip and as nonsense. As Lisette mentioned: "that's when…the gossip nonsense starts." It is nonsense because, according to Lisette, the narratives that circulated in her organization were absurd and they contradicted the facts, as she knew them.

Interestingly enough, the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines paradox as a "seemingly absurd or contradictory statement, even if actually well founded." According to Benson (1977), the incidence of paradox increases when "the social world in a continual state of becoming – social arrangements which seem fixed and permanent are temporary... One set of arrangements gives way to another" (p. 3). The findings of this study supports Benson's statement. From the standpoint of systems-cybernetics, the incidence of contradictory statements was prevalent among participants in this study. However, to dismiss the stories and meanings of participants of this study in the name of absurdity and contradiction would in effect be claiming that there is no inherent value to their stories or narratives.

Recall, for instance, an earlier argument of neither treating participant metaphors as whole or as a distortion. The dictionary definition of paradox appears to be more closely tied to the notion of distortion. As argued earlier, this very definition presupposes that there is a more accurate reality or a truer story. Stories that were not aligned with the predetermined "true" story were treated as a distortion, as absurd, and as contradictory. The official story was to be accepted as the true story. Hence, from the standpoint of system-cybernetics, stories or narratives that were not aligned to what it considered to be "true" were not "problems" or "issues" that needed to be addressed, let alone solved. They did not even fall within the radar screen of managers who chose to live within the frame of systems-cybernetics. In so doing, the truths of the lived experiences of participants in this study, and by implication, their identified critical needs, were dismissed and trivialized (Riessman, 1993).

The unofficial stories and narratives however continued to be circulated. They continued to be told and retold and they continued to influence workplace behavior. The real absurdity of the situation as demonstrated through the experiences of participants as managers in this study, was that their very practices contributed to the production and telling of the unofficial stories. Practices like absentee-management, lack of relationship building, and lack of trust, and their own beliefs-system continued to feed and sustain alternative stories.

As a subtext to this predominant approach to organizational change, little has been done in the area that carefully attends to the management and resolution (not solution) of paradox, namely the "absurd or contradictory statements" (Concise Oxford Dictionary). Much, however, has been done in dismissing those types of statements as nonsense or as being the mark of a cynic. Little has been done to address or speak to the paradoxes that arise in the midst of change as legitimate and worthy of attention (Weick & Browning, 1986).

4. On building relationships. The fourth conclusion is related to how scholars and researchers who choose narrative inquiry might learn from the experience of this researcher while in the midst of the collection of research materials. At the research proposal stage of this dissertation, this researcher had proposed the inclusion of nurses who had just been through a radical organizational change as his purposive sample. Unlike surveys as a method of collecting data, where anonymity of research subjects are preserved, celebrated, and even expected, potential nurse participants who were approached for this study chose not to participate precisely because they did not know the

researcher. In terms of engaging others through a narrative inquiry process, it appears then, that this method requires, first and foremost, the building of relationships with potential participants. The nurses approached, for example, were extremely reluctant to share their story or stories with a complete stranger.

This condition of participation would not be a limiting factor for a research process like surveys. In the case of surveys for instance, participants would want to know information related to factors like (a) organization sponsoring the study; (b) the qualifications of the researcher; (c) the nature and purpose of the study; (d) for what purpose the information will be used; or (e) confidentiality of data. While these pieces of information were just as important in this study, participants also wanted to personally know the researcher prior to being engaged in the process of telling their stories. In a telephone conversation with one of the potential nurse participants, she said: "I'm sorry, but surely you can't expect me to share my story with a complete stranger." This is interesting for narrative inquirers in that the success of their mode of inquiry would require them to first build a relationship with participants, and by this very process, risk bias and intersubjectivity.

5. On the relationship between interviewer and interviewee. Finally, as evidenced on a number of occasions in the collection of empirical materials for this study and reflected in chapter 4, the fifth conclusion relates to the relationship between interviewer and interviewee. The experience of this research study was such that it was not as innocent or objective as research scientists of the positivist-scientific paradigm would like it to be. Upon reflection, it is interesting to note the interviewer's influence occurred

not with the use of language but rather through silence and nonverbal nods. For example, as noted earlier, in choosing to stay silent and respond with an affirmative nod in response to a statement like "you know what I mean," the interviewer instantly communicated that he knew what the interviewee meant. In addition, he also communicated the notion that it was not necessary for the interviewee to say anything more. The interviewer, in other words, left the interviewee with the impression that he was knowledgeable enough to fill-in-the-blanks. In this case then, what the interviewee meant, in other words, did not remain or belong only to the interviewee. Instead, a shared meaning was constructed between interviewer and interviewee through silence and through nonverbal cues. What was also lost in the silent collusion was the opportunity to gain further clarification from the participant.

To summarize, the five conclusions identified above bear testimony to the different organizational structures that are produced by those who opt for either system-integration or social integration. These different structures are graphically identified in Figure 25 below.

Systems-Cybernetics Paradigm	Narrative or Interpretive Paradigm
Problem is out there ◄─────────►	Problem is constructed
Need to provide more information ◄───►	Need to attend to diverse interpretations
Need to provide more information ◄───►	Need to attend to values
Need to provide more information ◄───►	Need to build trust
Survey –preserve non interviewer-interviewee relationships ◄─────►	Narrative inquiry – the need to build relationships with participants
Interview – objective ◄─────────►	Interview – intersubjective
Focus on problem solving ◄─────►	Focus on identifying and integrating paradoxes as a legitimate experience

Figure 25. Different paradigms and different organizational structures.

A key learning that can be gained from the differing organizational structures that are produced by different ways of thinking was that the issues raised through the narrative paradigm cannot be resolved by working out of a systems-cybernetic paradigm. As reflected in Figure 25, notice for instance, the issues that were raised through the narrative paradigm. There was, for example, the need to attend to diverse interpretations, values, build relationships, and trust. Proponents of the systems-cybernetics paradigm continued to respond to each of those critical needs with its one-size fits all solution of providing more information. Hence, in their inability to get their desired results, proponents of system-cybernetics continued to try harder by doing the same thing. It is probably this type of an experience that led Einstein to state that the "significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we

created them" (as cited in Covey, 1990, p. 42). In the midst of radical organizational change, then, the problems that were produced from the point of view of systems-cybernetics cannot be solved from within the structure and thinking of systems-cybernetics. There needs to be a shift from systems to stories (Bateson, 1979; Bruner, 1986; Freedman & Combs, 1996; Riessman, 1993). However, it is not a shift that negates systems-cybernetics but rather a shift that looks for another way to re-connect issues that were raised from within each paradigm.

<center>Recommendations and Implications</center>

The underlying concern pursued in this dissertation was related to the need to demonstrate the interconnectedness between system-integration and social integration. While much of the current research on organizational change has grown out of the school of systems-cybernetics, it has missed the opportunity to address and show the need for both ways of thinking and organizing. Narrative inquiry, on the other hand, enables researchers the opportunity to see its interconnectedness through the narrative presentations, stories and metaphors used by participants in describing their experiences in the midst of change. Further research in this area may have direct relevance for both scholars and practitioners in the field of organizational change.

From the point of view of research on organizational change, Weick and Browning (1986), for example, stated that the "implication of the narrative paradigm is that stories and storytelling are not just diversion. Stories connect facts..." (p. 255). Through the narrative presentations uncovered in this research study, the stories of participants in the Red and Blue Teams did something other than connect facts. In fact,

their stories trumped facts as established and acknowledged by proponents of systems-cybernetics. And more than trumping facts, through their stories, narratives and metaphors, research participants created their own facts. Change managers could learn something significant from this finding. In the midst of organizational change, managers would be better served if they stopped managing, as Bennis (1989b) mentioned, through a "plate-glass window" (p. 97) because it separates, isolates, removes, and distances them from their followers. Continuing to stay absent would guarantee them the results they were getting. The effectiveness of change managers could potentially increase if they chose to connect with the stories of their followers and be engaged in a meaningful dialogue with their followers and their stories (Bennis, 1989b; Gardner, 1995).

Stated negatively, direct conversation and dialogue could discourage the fill-in-the-blanks type of conversations that naturally took place in the midst of the physical absence of change managers. Stated positively, change managers have the potential to affirm or change the patterns of organizational behavior by being physically present. These positive changes, however, would not occur if they continued to manage through "a plate-glass window" (Bennis, 1989b, p. 97). The realization of such a potential, however, depends upon the ability of change managers to invest in building a relationship between themselves and those whom they are called to lead. In relation to participants in the Red Team, for example, their fill-in-the-blanks stories were negatively informed by the lack of trust and the absence of their managers. For Carol in the Blue Team, her stories were positively informed by the presence of trust, by the active presence of a senior manager, and by credible leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 1995).

The narrative paradigm also has implications for decision-making. Whereas proponents of systems-cybernetics worked from the assumption that individuals made informed decisions as information became progressively clarified, the narrative presentations in this study suggested something else. From the standpoint of the narrative presentations of this study, decisions were also being made on the basis of the level of trust that existed between the storytellers and the information givers. Potentially, the information given may have been sufficient. It may even have been good enough. However, the larger story that was being told through the narrative presentations was a story about existing relationships or the lack of credible relationships between managers and employees. If change managers were to win their followership one by one (Duck, 1998), they would need to rebuild their relationship with their followers. In doing so, change managers could potentially offer themselves the opportunity to influence and enable their followers to tell a different story.

From the standpoint of systems integration, providing information in the midst of change is deemed as extremely important. To that end, much effort has been spent on spreading the news through e-mails, meetings, memos, newsletters, and speeches. According the Kotter (1996), the results of these types of communication approaches have been less than desirable. Ironically, one result that has surfaced in this study is that insofar as change managers focused exclusively on systems integration and excluded the opportunity to connect with the multiplicity and plurality of voices in their organizations, they continued to suffer from an insufficiency of data. They failed, in other words, to take

into account the information that their employees were giving. They failed to take into account the critical needs of their individual employees.

From the point of view of learning and given the findings of this study, another recommendation is that managers need more learning and less training. Training, as formulated by Mills (1959) in chapter 1, would enable managers to become better and do better at what they already know. Within the paradigm of systems-cybernetics, managers, for example, have been schooled in the single-loop learning of problem solving. However, when they try to solve problems through a calculative reasoning process, they overemphasize technical logic and exclude the notion that there are multiple rationalities, interpretations, and meanings. Worse still, students of systems-cybernetics thinking tended to dismiss rationalities and arguments other than their own (Gergen, 1991).

Stories, on the other hand, contained much that calculative rationality excluded. As a consequence, managers also need to be engaged in narrative learning. To take some liberties with the words of Weick and Browning (1986), narrative learning would teach a "manager (to) argue logically with facts and then cover the same points with stories that ring true and hold together" (p. 255). In so doing, narrative learning would enable managers to demonstrate that they "understood the issue more thoroughly" (Weick & Browning, 1986, p. 255). In the telling of their stories in ways that rang true and held together, managers could demonstrate their thorough understanding of the issues *and* they could potentially act on their thorough understanding. Notice for instance, the "genius of the AND" (Collins & Porras, 1994, p. 44) that informed the insights of Weick and Browning (1986).

The final recommendation deals with the method of analysis in this study. Upon reflection on the learning gained through this process, an alternative method of analysis is proposed for Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) second dimension, namely the personal and social dimension. Recall, for instance that this second dimension focuses simultaneously in four directions, namely, backwards, forwards, outward and inward. The alternative method of analysis for the second dimension adds two more steps identified by Riessman (1993) and it further builds on Clandinin and Connelly's four directions.

As graphically displayed in Figure 26 below, Steps 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7 belong to Riessman (1993). Steps 3 and 6 have been added. Between telling and transcribing, for instance, the researcher is also actively involved in listening to the telling. The listening, however, is not innocent. As seen earlier, researchers are also actively involved in influencing the telling of the participant's story through their verbal and nonverbal acts and through their silence. Given the experience of this researcher in this study, Step 3 was identified as having a rightful place in the sequence of analysis. The retelling of participants' story was also identified as having a rightful place because researchers write up their analysis. In their writing, they check, revise, reread and continue to revise in an effort to be succinct. In so doing, the retelling of the participants' stories becomes filtered.

Step 7 – **Reading** – When readers read the researchers' retelling they too become engaged in Steps 1 though 5 and include their own voices in Step 6

Step 6 – **Retelling** –Researchers retell the story in the writing of their analysis. The retelling is already filtered.

Step 5 – **Analyzing** – At this stage, researchers are also involved in various "acts of attention" (Schutz, 1967, p. 51). They are actively involved in including and excluding various components of participants' stories. They hermeneutically connect their understanding in their analysis and their role in Step 3

Step 4 – **Transcribing** – Researchers transcribe their notes from Step 3. They capture both what participants said and what researchers said and did to co-construct the stories told

Step 3 – **Listening** – Researchers listen to participant stories and in the process they record, probe, question. In questioning, researchers influence the direction of stories, co-construct stories and collaborate in their participants' stories

Step 2 – **Telling** –Participants tell their stories on the basis of Step 1

Step 1 - **Attending**: Researcher focuses on participants "acts of attention" (Schutz, 1967, p. 51) Participants acts of attention are based on their interpretations, their selective remembering, their beliefs, their decision, and their memory of previously existed relationships

Figure 26. An alternative method of narrative analysis.

A Statement on Social Impact

As seen through the narrative presentations of participants in this study, the issues

that were surfaced from the perspective of social integration were closely related to the

issues and experiences of social change that were reflected in the stories of classical

writers like Rousseau (1997), Marx (1978b), Weber (1958), and Durkheim (1964). As

seen in chapter 2, a critical choice that was made by these classical writers was to reflect

upon (a) the human decision to construct a world whereby men and women abdicated

their capacity to think about what they had created or were creating, and (b) the decision

of human kind to the treat their creations as if they had a mind of their own. As reflected

in chapter 2, through their narrative presentations these classical writers could not avoid making visible the harm that was being done to personal identity in the midst of both those decisions As seen in chapter 2, Habermas (1984), for example, stated,

> When we tell stories, we cannot avoid also saying indirectly how the subjects involved in them are faring and what fate the collectivity they belong is experiencing. Nevertheless, we can make harm to personal identity or threats to social integration visible only indirectly in narratives. (Habermas, 1984, p. 137)

Similarly, the story of this study was partially a story of the harm that was being done to individuals who were in the midst of radical organizational changes and the harm participants in this study were doing to themselves. According to Habermas (1984), the harm that was done could be made visible only indirectly through narratives. Unlike direct approaches, the power of narratives then resides in their capacity to pull others in rather than push them in. It enables others, including change managers, to connect with human needs, including their own. The shift from systems to stories or narratives was not intended to replace one paradigm with another. Instead, it was a way of identifying the critical needs of employees at the level of system integration and social integration and demonstrating the connectedness between the two.

From the point of view of social change then, the power of leaders and managers in winning their followers one by one, is not dependent upon the tyranny of choosing one approach over the other but rather by creating conditions where they and those whom they led could develop a reflective-appreciative or a soulful relationship (Moore, 1994) to the perspectives of both social integration and system integration. In the words of Collins and Porras (1994), to win their followers one by one, change leaders and managers would

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need to shift from the "tyranny of the OR" to the "genius of the AND" [Capitalization original](p. 44) as a way of thinking and being.

As mentioned in chapter 1 of this dissertation, constant change and new demands continue to pressure societies, organizations, and individuals to do whatever is necessary to survive (Collins & Porras, 1998; Morgan, 1993; Piderit, 2000; Porras & Silvers, 1991; Vail, 1989). For practitioners of organizational and social change, given the results of this study, it would make sense for managers and leaders to include the perspective of social integration, as an integral part of their change strategy. The results of this study suggests that the exclusive focus on the systems-cybernetics approach to change has resulted in a less than smooth transition to a new way of doing things. Within the parameters of this study, it has led to employees who are less than thrilled about organizational change. Participants in the Red Team for example, were not resistant to change. Instead, their narrative presentations were more about their disgust, their sense of betrayal, their lack of trust, and their feeling abandoned. These experiences led to a decrease in their productivity. Their experiences led to feeling like they were spinning their wheels. Jennifer, for example, used the metaphor of feeling like a hamster on a forever turn wheel to describe her experience. Participants in the Blue Team, wanted instead, to get on with their jobs. To do so, they expressed a number of critical needs that needed to be satisfied. These critical needs were expressed through the need to have a map and a coach.

Managers and change leaders then, could potentially improve the entire change process by finding out (a) how the recipients or ultimate users of the change viewed the process and proposed outcomes, and (b) what the critical needs of their employees might

be. The perspective of social integration or the narrative paradigm would enable them a way of entering into such a process. Absentee management or managing exclusively from the perspective of system integration is a recipe for failure. To focus exclusively at the interconnection of actions at a structural level is akin to managing in a de-contextualized environment. As seen in chapters 1 and 2, these de-contextualized organizational change efforts have resulted in more failures than successes.

In contrast, there will be a greater propensity for employee-buy-in if managers and change leaders (a) included those who do the work on a regular basis in the planning and implementation of organizational change, and (b) addressed the need of their employees within the latter's context. This insight, however, is not new. As seen in chapter 2, it was an insight that was already promoted by Mayo (1960) and the Human Relations School. It was then identified as being the Hawthorne effect.

The gifts of stories or narrative presentations as offered by participants in this study provided some insights not only for managing and leading organizational change but also for those who are responsible for leading social change. In broad terms, some participants' metaphors and stories were about their identity or self. Others were about the group. In both cases they were also about meaning, values and differing understandings and interpretations of their situation. In making the shift from systems to stories, leaders could potentially give themselves a real opportunity to make a deliberate shift to connecting with their followers at all three levels, namely, self, group, and meanings or values (Gardner, 1995). In staying connected at this level, change leaders could potentially be able to influence and nourish the minds, hearts, and souls of their

followers (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). At the same time, and at a social level, they could also nourish a feeling of what it would mean to be an integral part of an authentic community (Peck, 1987).

It is precisely this sense of authentic community that is absent in our world today. Today, the worldview is singularly carved out in dualistic terms of black and white, good and evil, either you are with us or against us, and us versus them. This dualistic way of thinking is even being espoused at the highest levels of government both in the so-called free world and in the world of dictators. In North America, post 9-11 has cemented this dualistic way of thinking into everyday consciousness. Whereas Europe saw the tearing down of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, today, barely 15 years later, new walls are being erected in the Middle East. It is rather ironic that in our world of diversity, we, as inhabitants and stewards of Mother Earth, continue to allow ourselves to be dominated culturally, socially, and individually by a dualistic way of thinking and behaving. Consequently, if there is to be authentic social change, this socially pre-programmed dualistic way of thinking and being has to change.

Contribution to the Literature

At a scholarly and practical level, this research identified a gap in the literature that demonstrates the interconnectedness between systems integration and social integration. As reflected in the literature review, Habermas (1984) is one of the few scholars to speak of the need to engage in such a project. He also formulated a method that he argued was a "more social-scientifically appropriate" (Habermas, 1975, p. 4) approach to the study of organizational change. It must be made clear, however, that

organizational change was not the focus in his book *Legitimation Crisis* (Habermas, 1975). Rather, Habermas (1975) argued for the need of such a demonstration while addressing the notion of crisis. Within the context of this research, the need to demonstrate the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration was addressed in relation to organizational change.

Typically, the literature has focused on one of the two approaches, that is, either system integration or social integration. Where systems-cybernetics or systems integration has been used as the predominant method in the study of organizational change or planned change, there has been a greater interest in the use of narratives (Barry, 1997; Boje, 1991; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1996; Weick, 1995). The recent interest in narratives is reflected in Hevern's (2003) extensive and comprehensive literature search of psychological studies involving narratives. Between the years 1960 and 2001, Hevern (2003) discovered that "as a percentage of all citations in the PsycINFO ^{TM} database, those concerned with narrative (rose) from an average of **0.058%** during 1960-1964 to **1.49%** during 1997-2001, a comparative growth of 2569%" [bold original] (Hevern, 2003, p. 3). Within the broader field of the social sciences, Rainbow and Sullivan (1979) described the increased use of narrative and interpretive approaches as a reaction to positivism and the efforts of positivists "to integrate the sciences of man within a natural scientific paradigm" (p. 4).

Within the confines of this research, a conscious decision was made to not engage in the study of organizational change from either the point of view of systems integration and system-cybernetics *or* from the point of view of social integration and narratives.

Instead, the intent of this study in organizational change was motivated by the need to demonstrate the interconnectedness between these dominant approaches. An integrated approach such as this is currently missing in scholarly studies and in the practical thinking of change managers. The shift from systems to stories was used in this research as a way of responding to the task of demonstrating the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration.

Second, whereas psychological phenomenology has traditionally focused on identifying and recovering emerging themes of human experience of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 1997; Moustakas, 1994), this study contributes instead to an understanding of how stories are constructed, co-constructed, and maintained. To this end, the findings of this study contribute to the literature that focuses on the construction and co-construction of social and organizational realities (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Riessman, 1993; Weick, 1995). In addition, the findings of this study add to the body of knowledge that treats narrative as more than simply the telling of stories. It adds, instead, to the body of knowledge that focuses on how narratives operate "as an instrument of mind in the construction of reality" (Bruner, 1991, p. 6) and how individuals use narratives to enact an account of themselves and their worlds (Browning 1991; Weick, 1995).

Implications for Future Research

In the midst of continued and continual organization change, further research that demonstrates the interconnectedness between system integration and social integration is necessary. In designing and conducting such studies, researchers are able to raise

practical awareness about the "significant problems we face [that] cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them" (Einstein, as cited in Covey, 1990, p. 42). It is critical to note that the level of thinking that Einstein referenced may persuade some to formulate the challenge as the need to move from system integration thinking to social integration thinking. As demonstrated in this research, the problems that practitioners face when confronted with organizational change are not so much in thinking about system integration or social integration; rather, the issue is the exclusive orientation of one or the other. To paraphrase Einstein, the significant problems that change practitioners face cannot be solved using this exclusive orientation of thinking. By contrast, inclusivity rather than exclusivity and integration rather than reaction are ways of thinking that promise a new approach to the study and understanding of organizational change.

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Appendix A: Consent Form for Red Team

Participants in the midst of proposed radical organizational change: consent form

Walden University

Consent Form

Title of Study*: A Narrative Inquiry into the Experience of Individuals within the context of radical organizational change: A shift from systems to stories.*

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a qualitative research study that aims at understanding and interpreting the experiences of individuals in the midst of radical organizational changes. It is hoped that the results of this study will enable managers and leaders to effectively manage organizational change.

You were selected as a possible participant because of your knowledge and experience related to the topic. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before acting on this invitation to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: *Stanley M. Amaladas*, a doctoral candidate at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand and interpret the experiences of individuals in the midst of radical organizational change by listening to their stories and metaphors. This research is fundamentally guided by two research questions:

1. What stories do participants involved in radical organizational change tell and what metaphors do they use to describe their experiences?

2. What, if any, could their stories and metaphors reveal about how participants in this study experience radical organizational changes that are either being proposed or have been implemented?

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be engaged in a two-step process.

Step 1, Writing Your Story.

You will first be invited to complete the following open-ended statement.

    a) "Coming to work in the midst of proposed organizational changes is like..."

While you are not limited to the length of your story, you are however, asked to respond within 10 working days. Please mail your written story to the principal investigator in the self-addressed and stamped envelope. Please include your name, telephone number, and best time to call to arrange for Step 2 of this research process.

Step 2, Research Interview

You will then be invited to participate in an audiotaped interview with the principal investigator at a time that is most convenient to you. Your written story will be used as a springboard for the interview. The interview will be open-ended and unstructured. It is anticipated that the interview will not go beyond an hour and a half. A written copy of your audio taped interview will be mailed to you for verification and/or further comments.

All audio taped and written information shared through these steps will be treated in strict confidence. All names will be changed to protect the identity of participants.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with your current employer. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time later without affecting those relationships.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Risks:

In the event you experience stress or anxiety during your participation in the study you may terminate your participation at any time. All efforts will be made to enable and maintain a healthy conversation.

Benefits

It is hoped that the information gained through this study will enable managers and change leaders to better manage the process of organizational change.

The information gained will also be critical to deciding whether of not this narrative method of inquiry would need to be included in curricula involving the management of organizational change

Compensation:

There will be no monetary compensation for your participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any report of this study that might be published, the researcher will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records.

In accordance with the requirements of Walden University, all audio taped information will be retained for at least 5 years after the approval of the dissertation. Only the principal researcher will have access to these recordings

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Stanley M. Amaladas. The researcher's adviser is Dr. Lilburn Hoehn Should you have any questions, you may either contact Stanley M. Amaladas or Dr. Lilburn Hoehn as follows:

Stanley M. Amaladas   Dr. Lilburn Hoehn

618 Avila Ave.,   3149 NE 49th Street
Wpg. MB R3T 3A4   Ocala, Florida 34479
204-261-3887   352-369-3192

The Research Participant Advocate at Walden University is Dr. Dale Good. You may contact him at 1-800-925-3368, ext.1210 if you have questions about your participation in this study.

You will receive a signed copy of this Consent Form from the researcher.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Name of Participant:

Signature   Date

Signature of Investigator: Date: May 26th 2003

Appendix B: Consent Form for Blue Team

Participants in the midst of implemented radical organizational change: consent form

Walden University

Consent Form

Title of Study*: A Narrative Inquiry into the Experience of Individuals within the context of radical organizational change: A shift from systems to stories.*

A similar letter as reflected in Appendix A was sent to participants with the following change in the open-ended statement: "Coming to work in the midst of already-implemented radical organizational changes is like…"

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ALONG WITH ANY APPLICABLE PAYMENT, TO THE ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE.   THANK YOU!

Curriculum Vita

Stanley M. Amaladas, 618 Avila Avenue, Winnipeg, MB. R3T 3A4
E-mail: amaladas@shaw.ca
Telephone: 204-261-3887

Primary Objective: *To enhance integrated organizational change and renewal efforts, through learning & development, consulting, facilitation, coaching, and public speaking..*

PROFILE

• Primary resource for learning & development, facilitation, change management, continuous quality improvement, strategic planning, consulting and management coaching.

• Promoted integrated leadership and change management approaches through the design and delivery of learning programs.

• Partnered and built capacities through 'train-the trainer' programs for the purpose of increasing levels of interdependence and accountability.

• Led project teams in the assessment of critical learning needs and influenced clients to respond in ways that were congruent with organizational Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Priorities.

• Integrated a wealth of change management knowledge, experience, skills, and passion in ways that are practically and meaningfully responsive to the critical needs of organizational clients.

• Implemented cross-practice strategies and provided expertise for critical people initiatives, organizational wellness programs and work processes.

• Provided expert input and participated in HR program design, delivery and evaluation teams.

• Continues to be an asset to clients as a project leader, senior management advisor, facilitator, curriculum and course design and delivery, trainer and public speaker.

Education

Degrees

PhD. *Walden University*, 2004 Minneapolis, Minnesota, *School of Management*, Applied Management and Decision Sciences, Specialization: Leadership and Organizational Change.

Master of Arts (MA), *University of Manitoba*, Winnipeg 1980. Specialization: Organizational Sociology.

Bachelor of Arts, *University of Manitoba*, Winnipeg 1974 Major: Sociology; Minor: Economics.

Certifications

Covey Leadership Centre, Certified Facilitator and Instructor, 1997.

Qualified Instructor, Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator, *Association of Psychological Types*, 1994.

Employment History (1990 – Present)

Project Manager, Workplace Innovation, Interdepartmental Initiative April 2003 - Present)

Senior Human Resource Strategist, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, North West Region, April 2001 – March 2003

Senior Regional Learning Consultant, Training and Development Canada, 1997 - 2001

Project Leader, Business Planning Process Consultant, City of Winnipeg, 1998

Project Leader, Business Process Improvement, Industry Canada, 1996 – 1997

Human Resource Management Advisor, Consulting and Audit Canada 1994-1995

Project Leader, Organizational Change Initiatives, Canadian Heritage, 1995 – 1996

Human Resource Management Advisor, Department of Supply and Services Canada, 1993-1994

Training and Learning Specialist Communications Canada, 1992-1993

Human Resources Advisor, Public Service Commission of Canada, 1990-1992

Conferences/Presentations

International Institute of Qualitative Methodology, Edmonton, Alberta. Presented paper on: "A narrative inquiry into the experiences of individuals in the midst of organizational change: A *shift* from systems to stories," January, 31, 2004.

Financial Management Institute of Canada, Regina, Saskatchewan, Topic: "Releasing the Potential and Power of Employees in the Workplace" May 2001

Northern Saskatchewan Learning Partnership Saskatoon, Saskatchewan June 2000 Topic: "Leadership in our Permanent White Water World"

Malaysian Catholic Schools Conference, West Malaysia, August 2000 Topic: "Leadership: A Matter of Choice"

Emerging Issues Forum for Leaders lll, Winnipeg, MB. April 1999 Topic: "Leadership: Releasing the Talent, Energy and Contribution of People"

International Association of Facilitators, Santa Clara, California, January, 1998 Topic: "Building Community in Organizations with Stories and Metaphors"

Manitoba Association of Learning Facilitators, Winnipeg, MB. Sept. 1998 Topic: "Developing a Learning Community: A Transformational Perspective"

Human Resource Management Workshop Regina, Saskatchewan. October, 1998 Topic: "Leadership: Imagination, Action and Leaving a Legacy"

Society for Manitobans with Disabilities. Winnipeg, MB. May 1997. Topic: "Challenge of Change: Staying within Your Circle of Influence."

Society of Incentive and Travel Executives, Vienna, Austria. November 1996 Topic: "Leadership: Listening to Mom and Dad"