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The OD Practitioner In the Business World: Theory Versus Reality

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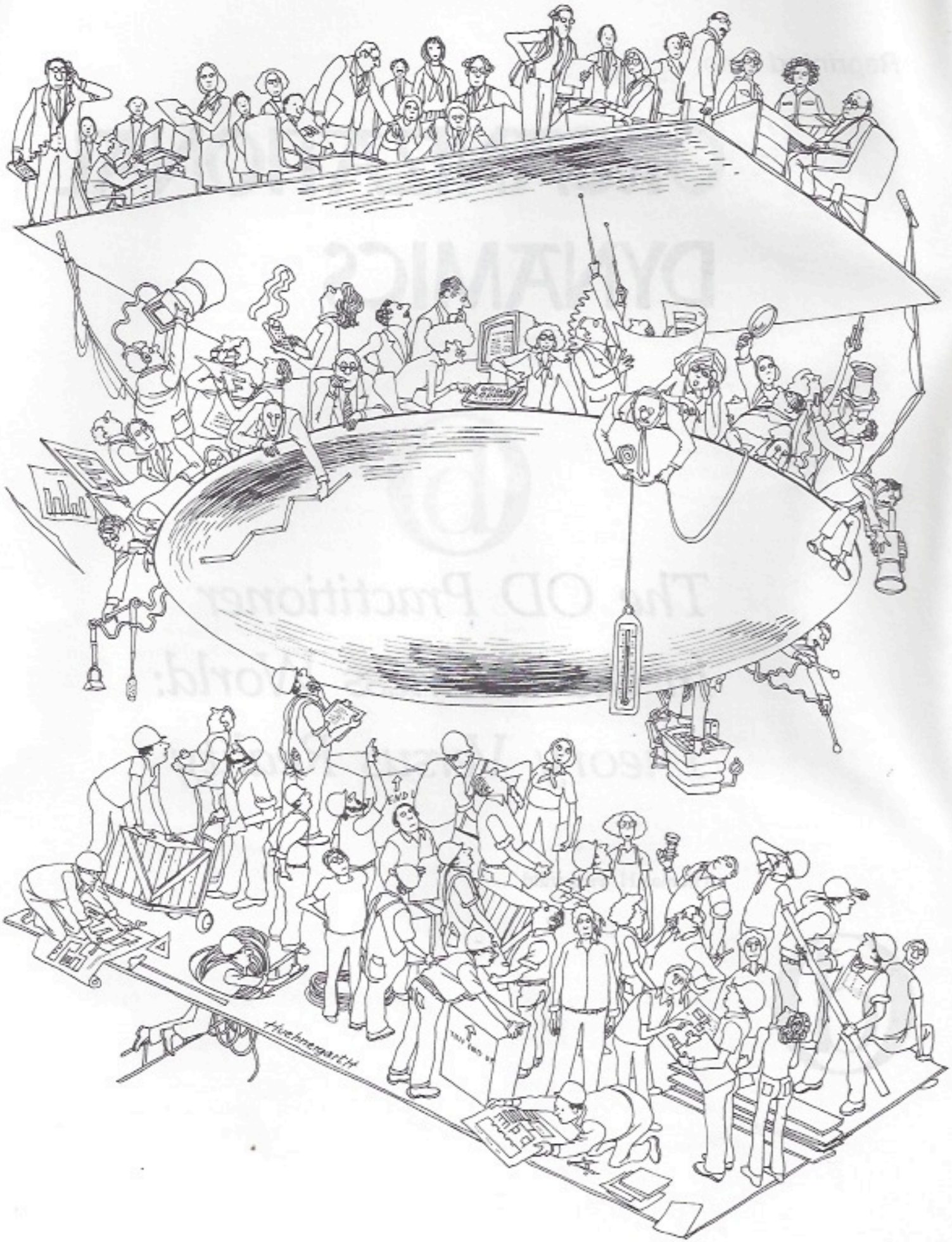

OD consultants should not be exempt from the same scrutiny to which they subject their client companies. Is the profession free of the deformations of self-interest? Do the theories underpinning it distort what's going on in the real world?

The OD Practitioner In the Business World: Theory Versus Reality

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Practice is always based on theory, whether articulated or not; and theory is corrected by practice, in a continuing circular relationship. In this article I want to show how the practice of organizational development (OD) professionals is shaped and constrained by a collection of cognitive assumptions, concepts, and eclectic methods that inform the discipline itself and how these, in turn, necessarily collide with managerial ideology and the deep-seated phenomenological realities of employee worklife. The results of that collision are often resistance to change and unsuccessful outcomes of our work.

If we intend to improve our diagnosis of problem organizations and the efficacy of our counsels and change interventions in them, we need to periodically critique how theory orients our practice—to candidly examine what we think we're up to—and to anticipate the implications for practice of possible alternative assumptions. We should query whether our efforts as consultants are entirely beneficial and whether our theoretical formulations are uncontaminated by self-interest. Put another way, OD practitioners should not claim exemption from the same scrutiny to which we subject client groups.

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN HUSHINGARTH

The Managerial Mindset

When consultants are invited into an organization, they enter not only the physical premises, but also a tangled web of expectations, rules, procedures, records, traditions, practices of cooperation and conflict, work skills, and experience in solving their own problems. What consultants bring in is mostly intangible, but it soon meets another intangible: the reigning managerial ideology. A neutral and balanced description of

managerial ideology probably cannot be agreed upon, but three central themes can be identified: modes of thinking and acting that (in my experience) characterize not only most business and industrial enterprises, but governmental and quasi-official organizations as well.

The Tendency to Standardize and Quantify

Most familiar is a standardizing and quantifying mindset, informed by the disciplines of engineering, finance, and applied technology. In contrast to social, moral, or aesthetic concerns, organizational problems are seen as hard-edged and unambiguous, as physical and mechanical matter indeed are. Problems can be clearly defined and stated in numerical terms; they can be solved with clear, usually quantitative, goals for action. They have a "thingness" character, especially in their components, that gives them high visibility within a defined context. Problem objects can be reduced to interchangeable modules and can be directly manipulated. Engineering, technical, and accounting problems can be said to be well structured; they can be discussed in a common vocabulary and defined through uniform methods of analysis. The system within which the problem at hand is addressed can be both physically closed (to control variables and outside influences) and conceptually closed (to exclude second-order consequences and costs). Experimental tests can be constructed with relative ease and low risk, making evaluation of proposed solutions a matter of comparative statistics. The problems facing engineers and technicians are "objectified"—that is, they are inert and passive and clearly separate from the problem solver, who is active. Expectations for certainty and predictability arise from technology's origins in the prestigeful physical sciences, and provide a congenial outlook to those executives whose own background has been in engineering, science, or accounting.

The Doctrine of Utilitarianism

The second theme of the managerial mindset is the taken-for-granted moral doctrine of instrumental utilitarianism. This was originally codified by classical economists who saw the world as a marketplace where rational individuals compete for maximization of utilities by the free and informed exchange of commodities: goods, resources of all kinds, energy—wealth in whatever form. Consistent with the utilitarian logic of calculation and competition for relative shares, labor does not escape being considered as another asset to be traded, moved about, replaced with capital goods, and so forth. It is not that managers actually believe employees are so many ingots or bales or metric tons, but that decisions about employees replicate in style and substance the calculations made for commodities. This can be seen (if not often noticed) in the phrases "human resources accounting" or "management of human assets." In short, individual worth is its value-in-use as part of a larger, rationalized production system.

Control and Coercion

The third characteristic of the managerial mindset is control. Domination of the many by the few and the use of economic force to coerce subjects have a long history and an extensive literature, not only in political governance, but within industry and business. While its forms and expressions have changed, control has always been the everyday preoccupation of managers; indeed, it constitutes their *raison d'être*. It is hard to imagine managers who don't demonstrate that characteristic drive for establishing and

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maintaining order, for neutralizing unfriendly environments, and for reducing uncertainties. Hierarchical structure itself is a strategy of control, as are rewards and other incentives established to ensure, as far as possible, that individuals in pursuit of their own self-interest will work for the organization's goals. Whatever the complaints about the persistent dysfunctions of the administrative arrangement known as bureaucracy, or its inevitable conversion of normative means to ends, it remains a durable and formidable machine for the rational exercise of control on the basis of specialized knowledge; it cannot be talked out of existence.

Control is not as conspicuous as it once was. It no longer wears a military mask, and it is rarely expressed now in harshly autocratic, overbearing, or peremptory postures. While a certain oblique style has replaced the practice of ordering people about, the command mentality—with its inner demand for compliance and mastery—has hardly faded away. The ambition is to control, as the recent attempts to "manage" corporate cultures suggest. Computers are welcome, as Paul Strassman points out, because they promise greater control: more information for evaluation with human discretion (error) replaced by automatized judgment.

How Employees See Their World

It would be a mistake to claim that substantive improvement is impossible inside the ideological boundaries of engineering, utilitarianism, and control. Real difficulties, however, can be anticipated when management tries—with or without consultants' help—to reshape the organization while ignoring the tension between (1) those central themes and (2) what might be loosely termed the lifeworld, "world outlook," or "framing" mindsets of wage earners, employees, and hired hands.

One need not become another romanticizer of the working class to recognize that the world of work appears quite different from the bottom looking up, than from the top down. The most striking contrasts between the managed and their managers involve rules, direction, and compliance. Reared in a democratic—even egalitarian and populist—country, each man and woman thinks of himself or herself as a free citizen: autonomous, independent, self-directed, able to decide and to choose. Yet when these free citizens pass through the plant gate to their workstations or through the office door to their desks, their status sud-

denly changes. As "subordinates," they become subject to standards for personal behavior that are different from those that prevail in the outside world. They must comply with unwritten status boundaries that define who is to speak and who is to listen. People in the lower ranks are encouraged to affect a demeanor of dependence and uncritical compliance. They are keenly aware of the many forms of managerial control: carefully graduated rewards and sanctions, output checks, the varying degrees of confinement in assigned workplaces, censures for infractions, and so forth.

More control is experienced by employees at the lowest levels. This is because each of the layers above them levies demands of its own, and because bottom ranks find few opportunities to elude restrictions or answer back. Just being in the bottom rank implies the need for closer scrutiny. Every day, lower-level employees see prescription and evaluation flow from the few to the many, but little initiative or critique flowing the other way. Their rights to appeal, of course, are largely left behind in the outside world. Factory workers and the armies of clerks are not alone in this; health-care workers and public school teachers complain of being functionaries with little say over their situation or their work goals. The intention here is not to take sides but to assert that control remains a concrete and consequential reality of organizational life, for many employees if not for our executive clients.

There are other tensions between the perspectives of the two groups. Most employees are not aware of the extent to which they are objects of study and advice in the managerial media. They do not think of themselves in the terms of the managerial vocabulary. They certainly don't regard themselves as "instrumental resources," as another interesting engineering problem, as labor market statistics, as weighed bundles of psychological needs, as priced commodities in a calculus of interests, or as means toward transnational ends—indeed, it would be thought odd if they did. They have, however, learned to be skeptical of official solutions and programs for their improvement, especially when these are put together by in-house staff who exclude them from the discussion. Employees hear conflicting messages from management; on the one hand they hear about loyalty and caring and, on the other, they hear defenses of the hard-headed, pragmatic, business decisions made on their behalf. At the same time, rationalist orientations spread among a generally better-educated workforce and tend to undermine the sensed legitimacy of management's authority, once solidly established on a patrimonial modeling.

To ascribe these tensions between managers and the managed to differences in subculture or to label them as problems of organizational climate, suitable for professional handling, misses the point. The differences here have to do with ways of seeing the world and knowing it—that is to say, with

different epistemological orientations. To that we will return.

Consultants as Iatrogenic Agents

When consultants enter this well-established theater of cross-purposes, they add to the dissonance of voices and expectations heard there. They often share the mindset of management, since they themselves have had business experience or attended a business school. They may even work for one of the growing consulting conglomerates, whose sympathies are never in doubt. But consultants usually import their own preconceptions and ideas about organizational life to provide a more balanced perspective than that of either management or the managed. Their outlook is perhaps more subtle than management's—less concrete and hard-edged, for example—but more didactic and programmatic than that of the employees.

It is, nevertheless, a skewed perspective, with limitations of its own. A proper account of the OD mindset cannot be attempted here even in outline form, but it is possible to point to a dozen or so theorist/practitioners who have contributed to the intellectual capital we have been living off. In addition to the big ideas, concepts, and theories, the profession has been assembled from an inventory of past and present movements, techniques, services, and fads: National Training Laboratories and interaction labs, Tavistock, group dynamics and process analysis, goals/roles clarification, quality of worklife and quality circles, racism consciousness-raising, Gestalt, neuro-linguistic programming, team building, strategic planning, organizational transformation, human resources management, socio-technical systems, transactional analysis, survey feedback, and the "management" of organizational cultures. At the margins are such offerings as management by objectives, stress reduction, conflict resolution, and communication skills.

Underpinning these approaches to problem organizations and the people who inhabit them is a vast and, I would contend, fundamentally flawed body of sociological and psychological research and theory. In addition, certain strains and ambivalences within OD practice serve to limit, and even defeat, its good intentions. A few examples of OD approaches can illustrate this.

Persisting Problems in the Work

One problem in OD work is the uncritical application of borrowed technique. Small, leaderless groups and team building, once so impressive at Bethel (as was Gestalt hot-seat work at Esalen), soon migrated into efforts at helping large organizations. The OD profession was slow in recognizing, however, that these methods have only limited potential for getting at and relieving bureaucratic pain or for changing complex organizations. A further irony is that many graduates of that training—and other early workshops on

ways to achieve personal autonomy, empowerment, authenticity, and self-realization – now contract to improve organizations' managerial apparatus.

Another borrowed technique is the employee-attitude or job-satisfaction survey. Like public opinion polls, surveys offer an easy method of collecting data in large organizations to identify and possibly correct workplace problems. They also provide other benefits: convincing executives of the existence of bad feelings "down there," or temporarily giving employees the impression that management is really listening.

Despite the popularity of surveys, serious questions arise about the validity of measuring such intangibles as attitudes, values, and beliefs – the subjective/cognitive environment of working – along with the political implications of interpreting them. Satisfaction surveys tend to be narrowly focused, and they ignore the rootedness of employee expectations in the work situation itself. Notwithstanding the benefits of exposing differences so that they might be discussed and resolved, paper-and-pencil surveys contribute to the typification of lower-level employees and allow consultants to maintain a comfortable social distance from them. Beyond that, checking a multiple-choice answer to questions like, "Do you get enough information to do your job?" or, "Do employees work well together around here?" explores neither the tectonic plates that grind and shift beneath large organizations, nor the subterranean thermal springs that nourish their continuity. Instead, surveys resemble thermometers or pressure gauges briefly stuck at intervals into the surface.

Virtuoso statistical manipulation of last week's "yeas," "nays," "sometimes," and "undecideds" does not constitute diagnosis, nor does it necessarily compel a decision to live and work differently. This is especially true since members of management frequently discount or explain away numbers that fail to acclaim their regime – or they simply hedge on the point spread. As Robert Kahn points out, perhaps the most difficult advice for behavioral scientists to absorb is

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that, "Our data are not their data." Obviously, surveys may be followed by other methods, such as individual interviews or participant-observation, but when that information is collected, it forms a more phenomenological sort of knowledge than that of quantifying hard science, and permits employees to join the conversation and even argue their views.

A third group of borrowed techniques over the past 20 years concerns management styles. Between Robert Blake and Jane Mouton's Grid and the currently popular Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, various typologies have been offered, numerous articles of evangelical tone have been published in business journals, and experiential programs have been launched to help managers "gain insight" and to reshape their image. Few of their tutors, however, have shown interest in the styles of the managed. Even less research has been devoted to employees' responses to the "improved" managerial styles presumably emerging from the seminar. If such follow-ups were conducted, they might show that employees notice little difference: Managers continue to talk and act like managers; no one could confuse them with the hired hands. Body language, the habit of speaking as if one should be listened to and not interrupted, a readiness to break off a discussion and move on, and the conviction of importance and self-regard that still leaks through the new veneer do not go unnoticed by employees. More than a decade ago, feminist writers pointed out male body language and their condescending gestures, their special idiom for keeping women defined in pejorative ways—but people in the rank and file see these behaviors all the time in managers and executives.

Some consultants display similar managerial bearing. They are breezy, self-assured, and excessively articulate, and they take charge of the discussion. Employees soon figure out whose side they are on. That style may be connected to the itinerant nature of the work—always meeting new people, moving from one organization to another, and living with ambiguity. That style, however, permits consultants to gloss over the grubby realities of worklife or to translate those realities into the bland terminology of the trade.

Maintaining Reflexivity

These observations point to another problem in OD work—maintaining reflexivity about the chosen role of professional helper. By that I mean staying aware, as an anthropologist would do, of how one's reports and advice are as much grounded in one's own community as the natives being studied are grounded in theirs. For example, being a paid OD intervenor seems to require producing visible change in organizations to supply a sense of potency and energy; even psychiatrists, with their detached and ironic outlook, like to see a few of their patients get better—why else do that soggy work? The assumption—that unless the OD professional appears on the scene, the organization will not improve—is a common, if gratuitous, diagnosis.

Producing change also supports an image of expertise—not without use in securing contracts to deliver a service of highly speculative value. The impulse is to protect that image from challenge, whatever reservations the consultant might have personally about his or her own skills. Challenge always contains the potential to undermine experts' self-confidence. Their ministrations must be accomplished with aplomb and self-assurance if they are to be convincing and if their paying clientele are to feel confidence in them. Whatever the ambiguities and knotted conflicts in the situation facing the OD con-

sultant, confidence remains a sort of stock-in-trade, for who will hire a consultant selling pessimism and doubt?

The need to produce visible results might be paraphrased in the dictum of an earlier, impatient theorist, "[T]he point is not to analyze [organizations] *but to change them!*" In which direction, to what ends? If asked, many working in OD will talk about providing services for greater efficiency and productivity. Others may espouse liberal and humanistic values popular among the New Class, even though these values may be cautiously expressed on the client's premises (where consultants are included within the established economic model as another—if more exalted—group of knowledge workers). When not reduced to slogans, the affirmation of values is worthy of respect, but these values are quickly discredited by contemporary relativism, the corruption of moral discourse by psychologisms, and the dogma of "value-free" social science—all of which tend to undercut our sense of conviction. The upshot is that clients' rational utilities prevail by default. I do not mean to advocate that OD specialists develop Better Values but, instead, greater candor about those that actually govern them and greater awareness about how their announced values become assimilated and neutralized in client organizations.

Reflexivity suggests not only reflection upon, but seeing ourselves as performers who are being observed by employees and others. Some consultants, after years in the work, seem to have appropriated the costume of sophisticated travelers across corporate continents, courageously confronting yet wisely undeceived by any pretense or show. They do not seem to see themselves as one more bloc with practical interests of their own. Are clients—who have vanities of their own—really unaware of this unspoken assumption of moral superiority?

Aversion to Criticism

Organizational development practitioners, moreover, display a curious reticence to criticize the work done by others in the field. This

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phenomenon has been examined in a contiguous field by Richard Farson who comments on "the technology of humanism." Describing much of group therapy as "showmanship, rhetoric, mystification, oversimplification, easy answers, and quick results," he observes that many people "will not pay for a serious discussion of the complicated predicaments of everyday life, but they will pay a great deal for a good show, a dramatic performance, an intensive experience, a turn-on, a simplistic answer to life's problems and, most of all, for what they hope will cure them." In a similar way, organizational improvement programs are promoted with such enthusiasm, confidence, and apparent selfless desire to help, that one must appear as a sour pessimist to demur.

How OD Compares with Social Welfare Programs

The failures of many programs created by societal guidance and welfare professionals to solve the country's dreadful problems are instructive for our own work. Both groups, for example, display similar practices for staying in charge:

- Impatience with theory and a rush to demonstrate expertise and technique.
- Hostility when outsiders question them about responsibility for results, but unwillingness to examine failures on their own.
- Piety toward "helping" or uplifting their sometimes recalcitrant clientele, but resistance to criticism from these clients.
- Role conflict deriving from opposite pulls between "caring" and "control." (This is similar to OD consultants, who are divided between their need for power/influence and their humane values.)
- Thinking that the face they present publicly in marketing and funding efforts has nothing to do with their essential *gravitas* as private persons.

Specific examples of planning and administrative failures of the welfare state are not hard to find:

- Modern prisons, which are supposed to be correctional institutions designed to rehabilitate criminals and reduce recidivism.
- Public housing projects and aid to dependent children, which are supposed to strengthen family life and reduce dependency.
- "Counseling," which is supposed to deter or cure hard drug use.
- Cross-district busing, which is supposed to restore racial balance in urban schools.

Similarly disappointing results, though on a smaller scale, could be found in OD work, but they are not visible to the public and receive little attention in the literature.

Perhaps the comparisons between OD and other social-engineering professions are unfair. After all, OD itself is becoming hard to define because its boundaries are increasingly fuzzy. The numbers of people who identify themselves as OD professionals are growing in both national and regional associations. By their own account, however, many of them are working in such peripheral areas as management and employee development or as helpers in conventional training and human resources management, as internal communicators and employee relations specialists, or as other kinds of adjusters and lubricators of large organizations. This shift shows in the mail, as well, which regularly brings announcements of seminars, conferences, and workshops with titles like "Managing Motivation for Productivity, Fun, and Profits," whose presenters never neglect to append a reassuring Ph.D. to their names.

After listening to presentations by many OD professionals, I am impressed by the peculiar innocence—or heartlessness—

they express about the social context and political implications of their practice. They are, of course, protected by the antiseptic terminology of the social sciences and the business schools; they seem to be free of an aesthetic or moral vocabulary by which they can name greed, or guile, or irresponsibility. Some seem ready to sign up and march under any flag. If the gig calls for "counseling" about "new careers" for crowds of middle-age industrial workers dumped onto the job market, or training up "teams" of operatives for fast-food franchises, they just do it with that willed cheerfulness one sees in graduates of certain New Age therapies.

The disappointments of many social welfare projects are instructive for us in another way, because they started with the hidden assumptions, mental models, and theories of relatedness, held by the researchers and advisors who planned, sold, and helped run the projects. And all of their premises include a failure to take into account the assumptions held by client groups. Even when wrong, standard models tend to prevail because they are self-confirming; disparate observations can always be "fitted in" or statistically set aside without challenging the assumptions of the model. They prevail, moreover, because they rapidly become protected ideology, as professional careers and other interests become attached to them. Those who plan and administer these interventions are often sincere and well-intentioned, but they inadvertently contribute to the justification and continued reconstitution of the same structures they attempt to ameliorate. Similarly, much of conventional organizational theory serves and inadvertently sustains the existing institutional order.

The Lack of Central Theory

To point out that organizational development, as a professional discipline concerned with applied research and change strategies, lacks a unified and central theory is not especially surprising (or disturbing) to many working in the field. Practitioners apply a mixture of favorite concepts, heuristic diagrams, and *ad hoc* versions of organizational processes; and they blithely switch back and forth between essentially opposed theoretical positions. The implications for their practice are largely unexamined.

One set of theories asserts that the way to reform an organization is to improve its members. This is because individuals are the key causal variables. Applications of this individualist outlook are familiar enough, and they include all sorts of methods for motivating, training, and developing employees – for example, how to get better job performance by setting higher performance goals in appraisal interviews. Another version of psychologism calls for bringing forth a leader whose attractiveness, vision, and

commitment will enlist others in his march on excellence.

A rival set of theories sees the essential reality not in individuals, but in collectivities and their environment. It looks to situational variables, underlying factors and forces in the political economy, societal trends, material conditions, and coercive institutional structures as the sources of both stability and change. Open-systems theory, a version of this point of view, has been popular in OD circles, perhaps because its language—"feedback, process, (dis)organized complexity, holistic, emergent properties, environmental adaptation, etc."—seems closer to experiences of organizations than do reified, analytical-reductionist concepts or robotic stimulus-response explanations. More practically, it has provided something that looked new and modern for OD consultants to show to clients. The intrinsic weakness of "systems" as explanation cannot be elaborated here—questions about the boundedness or possibility of closure of systems, unlimited multiplicity, weakness in prediction, terminological vagueness, and its nondelivery of a promised science of organizations—but they add to the strains of the OD project.

The implications for practice, however, in both OD approaches—the mechanical variance and the organic systems models of interdependent, interactive, extensively linked and adaptive wholes—appear first in analysis. Since the cause of any error or fault in outputs is the malfunctioning of some subsystem, and everything affects everything else in reticulated wholes, the individual actor tends to disappear. His or her purposes, initiative, and responsibility tend to dissolve in equilibrium equations or cybernetic circuits. In such a world, no meaning is left for praise or blame, for reward or reprisal. Persons are only instruments of larger functions, constraints, and influences of which they are unaware—which operate "behind their backs." Behind this mainstream social science methodology, of course, are the traditional assumptions of positivism and the Newtonian/Lockean/Cartesian conception of the physical world. While reliance on the anonymous authority of science may be convenient for discrediting or merely ignoring uncredentialed lay critics, a more serious consequence of this pattern of thinking is the erosion of notions of the autonomous, choosing self—notions upon which political democracy is based.

An Alternative Mindset

The individual men and women who form organizations cannot be adequately known, nor can their actions be properly explained or changed, by approaching them with the objectifying mindset of management and conventional social science. The critical difference separating persons from material objects is that people give meaning and find sig-

nificance in the lifeworld around them; they experience their environment as being more or less coherent, connected, and patterned in particular ways. Thus they can form a concrete understanding of it and act on this understanding. Each person lives within a given reality that not only presents itself, but presses in from every side—a dense here-and-now, a taken-for-granted, unarguable, *lived* world held in common with other people. He or she directly apprehends moral and aesthetic aspects of the world, even if not able to articulate them according to the canons of educated discourse.

Such an individual's "behavior" (itself an antiseptic and distancing term) cannot be interpreted solely from external measurements and detached observation. The interpretation must include her or his own understandings of the actions taking place within a specific setting, which they also define. Those understandings—how people make sense of what they are doing or not doing and how they define what is going on around them—are formed within a framework of shared values, absent rules, and learned meanings. Their subjectivity extends to the *inter*-subjectivity they share with others like themselves—linguistic frames, cultural typifications, and so forth—which are not "inside" people, but between them. Each person, moreover, continually affirms and attempts to sustain a self-conception (who they believe they are in their own milieu) by expressive and symbolic actions in relation to significant others.

Social scientists often translate these understandings into quantified, instrumental, or academic vocabularies, but inevitably content is altered, so that their accounts are impoverished and banal compared with the experience the subjects have of themselves. In contrast to the passive, material objects of physical science, individual persons are self-aware, capable—even canny—agents in their own situations. There is always the potential for initiative in them, even though they may be constrained to a greater or lesser extent by circumstances and sedimented traditions they find themselves within. Their reasoned choices and active responses—based on tacit knowledge of practice—constitute, gradually change, and continually reconstruct organizations and society itself.

The assumptions of positivist social science—its reigning paradigms, so to speak—whose conceptual orientations and research technology underlie much of OD practice—are themselves now being challenged. We are losing confidence that we possess an authoritative perspective for viewing things as they *really* are or a superior matrix for dividing up and explaining the world. Richard Rorty argues that we should free ourselves from "the domination of the mind by ocular metaphors [and] the notion of the mind as a mirror." In doing so, we would no longer be so concerned with getting more accurate representations by inspecting, repairing, and polishing the mirror. Organizational and social life is contingent and equivocal—made up not only of discrete events, but a dense mass of inertia and routines, an unpredictable interaction of will and circumstances, patterns of activity whose validity is inseparable from our methods of knowing, interpreting, and discoursing about them. The web of meanings in organizational life must be understood interpretively, with intuition and insight beyond textbook recipes. Interpretation itself is a circular process—as anthropologist Clifford Geertz puts it, "a continuous dialectical tacking" between local detail and global generality, between part and whole understood in terms of each other. In a sense, it is a dialogue with the material, persons in their own contexts, a receptive, continuing conversation.

Implications

Space limitations simply do not permit detailing how a theoretical and cognitive shift, as advocated here, might change everyday practice. Even to attempt to do so, moreover, would exemplify the overly ambitious reach and habits that I have commented upon. Given, however, the realistic circumstances of many of those in practice, along with their own interests and situated clientele, I have no illusion that my commentary will incite the profession to mount substantial change strategies in its own house. Instead, I look forward to an extended conversation with others having similar concerns to explore the politics of a more self-reflective, theory-critical practice.

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A growing body of literature in this country critiques mainstream social science (which forms the basis of much of the work done in OD), though many of the critical themes were originally developed in Europe. Anthony Giddens is especially good in providing an overview of theoretical developments; see his *Profiles and Critiques in Social Theory* and *Central Problems in Social Theory* (University of California Press, 1982 and 1979). A figure of considerable importance who is not well known here is Jurgen Habermas, but he should be; his ideas are accessible in *Habermas and Modernity*, edited by Richard Bernstein (MIT Press, 1985). The ways we think about and therefore act toward organizations are based on social research, and conventional research methods have been evaluated and supplemented in *Beyond Method*, by Gareth Morgan (Sage, 1983) and *Methodology for the Human Sciences*, by Donald Polkinghorne (SUNY Press, 1983). Perhaps more difficult is *Redirections in Organizational Analysis*, by Michael Reed (Tavistock Publications, 1985) and *Explaining Human Behavior*, edited by Paul Secord (Sage, 1982).

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