

CHAPTER 9: HOW TO CONSULT TO STORYTELLING ORGANIZATIONS

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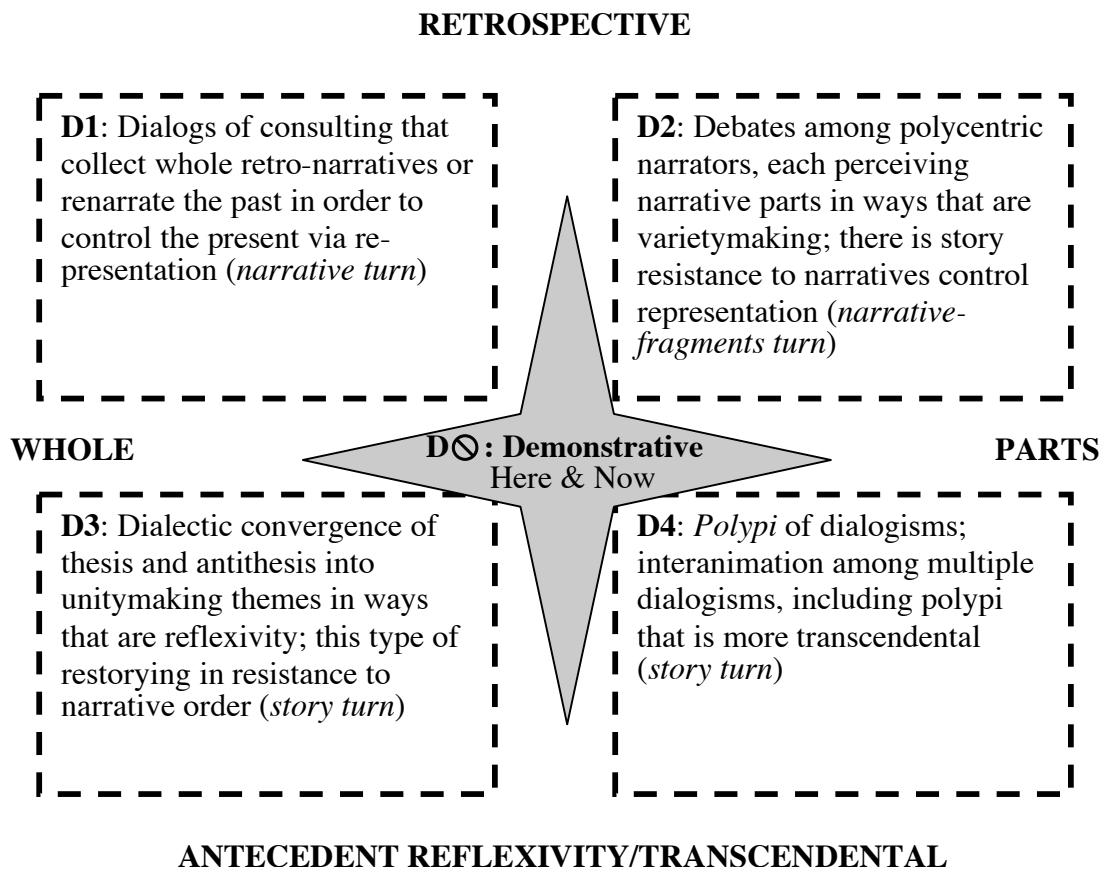
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This chapter is about how story consulting is too much about 90 second springy-control narratives (elevator pitches) and not enough about emergent story webs, to be very practical or useful. It introduces *story turn* of reflexivity and transcendental that interacts with what is well known as the *narrative turn* of representation. The distinction is made between dialog, debate, dialectic, and dialogism in development practice.

Figure 9.1 is interplay of D1 (dialogues of retrospective narrative convergence), D2 debates among retro-narrative-fragments, D3 dialectic reflexivity, D4 transcendental dialogisms beyond polyphonic, and D \odot (demonstrative) here-and-now story sensemaking. All five modes interpenetrate one another.

Figure 9.1: Four Ways Practice Develops Storytelling Organization¹



¹ D \odot (Demonstrative) is defined as the interplay of narrative and storyteller turn in the here-and-now of emergence. It can be understood as not-story, or not-yet story.

STORY TURN

"*Story Turn*" is, I believe, a new paradigm. One finds lots written about the *Narrativist Turn* (Lyotard, 1984; Polkinghorne, 1988). If we take Bakhtin's dialogisms (i.e. dialogic manner of story), Derrida's distrust of narrative, Stein's aversion to developmental narrative, and Benjamin's preference for story competencies seriously, then it makes sense to posit a *Story Turn* that is beyond (or before) the *Narrative Turn*. IN pervious parts of the book, I have distinguished 'narrative,' defined in Aristotelian ways that has over the course of modernity become representationalism, and a more '*Story Turn*' that is more about reflexivity and transcendental metaphysics.

My distinction between *narrative* and *story turns* rests on this point: Narrative genres are encased in linear, monological framework (Bakhtin, 1973: 13) that has become representation, detached from living story life. Renarrating is used as a device to unify diverse fields of vision into managerialist homophony discourse into dead representations, general archetypes, and abstract models. I take the radical position that retrospective sensemaking narratives renarrate experience into centripetal force of heteroglossia, while ignoring the more centrifugal forces of story. This results in the narrative fiction of "systematic monological philosophical finalizedness" (Bakhtin, 1973: 26). The counter-force, of multi-story dialogism is the more centrifugal force of difference or divarication. The *Narrative Turn*, in sum, is $D1 \rightarrow D2$, from monologocentric dialogue to polycentric debate. A *Story Turn* is more about $D\infty$, $D3$, & $D4$.

How would a *Narrativist Turn* and *Story Turn* differ in terms of ontology, epistemology, methodology, and praxis? Ontology is of $D1$ narrativist is monologic, monovocality. Ontology of $D2$ narrative turn is polylogical, here and there, polyvocal. Both are all about retrospective sensemaking of experience.

Story Turn is defined as a priori, transcendental logic and transcendental aesthetics. That is the important difference between Weickian narrative control and Kantian/Bakhtinian manner of story dialogicality. In other words, on many levels narrative and story are similar, but on the dialogisms they are different. Weickian retrospective sensemaking knowledge of experience is different from Kantian knowledge

of pure reason derived a priori in the inner sense of thought and idea. By praxis I mean interventions into systemicity.

D1 narrativist praxis is at the level of “micro dialogue” (Bakhtin, 1973: 33). It is about people doing story as part of meetings and conversations (be they in the same room, or more virtual, such as by Internet). *Dialogue*, can be broadly defined as, one person addressing themselves orally, in writing, or in (theatric) gesture to another person, to a third person. In managerialism, what passes for dialogue, is more accurately monologue. Debate takes us into polycentrality, and sometimes (rarely) into polyphonic dialogism. Polyphony is this “multivoicedness [that] reveals the variety of life and the complexity of the human experience” (Bakhtin, 1973: 36).

Story praxis is about storying and restorying that is dialogical. D⊗ is more about the ways retro and ante, and reflexive and transcendental collide in the here-and-now. D⊗ story is several unmerged, unfinalized, contemporary, and traditional stories, arising side-by-side, in the moment of Being.

Complex Responsive Processes (CRP): Clearly, a more comprehensive theory of story complexity and change is needed than current managerialist-functionalist approaches that claim *Narrative Turn* (Boje, 2006b). I would like to propose an integration of Ralph Stacey’s (2006) latest rendition of Complexity Theory with the *Story Turn*. Stacey’s (2006: 124) *Complex Responsive Processes* (CRP) argues for a complex adaptive heterogeneity rooted in the “wider improvisational processes” of writing and talking about organizations that is heart of emergence.

CRP Theory is relatable to all five modalities of story consulting in Figure 9.1 Stacey (2006) never uses the term ‘story,’ and only mentions ‘narrative’ once in passing, and in a derogatory way. I will therefore have to translate story into complexity. Because there are no wholes, and no boundaries to complexity systems, Stacey (2006: 128) rejects the mechanistic and organic models of system theory. Stacy (2006: 126) mentions Kant as introducing the notion that system is a useful metaphor, but cautioned applying the concept directly to human action. Kant (1781/1900: 466) says, “by the term *Architectonic* I mean the art of constructing a system” which is useful for constructing science, but a human storytelling systemicity is “an aggregate, and not a system.” Stacey (2006) is close to what I mean by “systemicity”: the unmergedness and unfinalizedness of parts. If

systemicity is the interplay of parts, “there is then no need to think in terms of systems or wholes” (p. 125). Local story interaction in organization systemicity is more of a *rhapsodic*, emergence. Yet, emergence is only rhapsodic for a moment, and then one or more mode of story control stops it.

D⊗ (Demonstrative): Emergent story can be improvisational and spontaneous, in the ‘here-and-now’ is demonstrative of emergence. Central to CRP Theory is the “notion of emergence” (Stacey, 2006: 139); “global patterns continually emerge in local interaction.” As we saw in the collective memory chapter, this one would be called highly polyphonic, in the moment of Being that is quite face-to-face direct participation by wide range of stakeholders, where answerable action could be noticed among participants.

Emergence comes about in the absence or, or despite the four forms of deliberation and governance (D1 to D4). However, story emergence vanishes in the moment of its improvised and spontaneous performance becomes a repetitive pattern, an ordered narrative re-presentation. And this is the one place that Stacey (2006: 137) mentions “narrative form” as something that controls. As Stein (1935) argues the continuous presents of instants is not a beginning, middle, and end linear narrative; nor is it a developmental story. In each succeeding present instance complexity emerges and re-emerges in interactive story that is out-of-narrative-control. D⊗ Demonstrative improvisation quickly falls prey to one or several forms of story control (D1 to D4).

In D1 (Dialogue) is more about managerialist collective memory monologue. Global patterns are assumed to change system-wholeness, as the result of some totalized managerialist-derive global story, outside the, local in-the-moment, interaction of storytellers. The only dialogue is a managerial one (stakeholders of mind-reading what monologue is expected here), which all others must imitate or pay the consequences of their resistance. In strategy, dialogue is the interaction of managerialist planners to create a strategic plan or design in advance of its implementation. The assumption is the strategy story comes before implementation. If one assumes the managerial narrative-consulting model, then the global narrative (in its 2 minute elevator pitch) concocted by management will control the whole (its more systems thinking, more arrogance & hubris). The narrative assumption is problematic, because with authoritarian rule over story, there emerges passive, sometimes active resistance to monologue passing itself off

as dialogue. Many narrative-consulting methods that call themselves by the name “dialogue” do outlaw debate. Or in the case of Denning (2005) teach executives how to use humor to overcome resistance to their two-minute *Springboard* narratives.

In D2 (Debate) is more about more multi-lineal collective memory, perhaps some punctual. Stacey posits a radical shift in what is the dynamic complexity of the *Storytelling Organization*. In story terms, there is a myriad of local storytellers interacting, in various parts of the organization. The story improvisation is not a matter of programming some kind of master narrative from the top, and inculcating it throughout, as in D1. What is story improvisation in this mode of sensemaking? Here, story noticing comes from taking into account the wider interests of powerful subgroups, one of which is certainly D1 managerial story control, but it is also noticing the emergent patterns. Debate is the rivalry among distributed local groups of narrative and story-tellers who debate representation and interpretation, and what account will become some collective story. Positing a whole system is a distraction when groups of storytellers debate what is and what is not. The shift in thinking in CRP theory is to pay attention to local storytellers. It is naïve, Stacey argues, for small segments of local communicators for follow rules analogous to digital agents in some computer simulation of complexity. The distinctive complexity property of a *Tamara Storytelling Organization* is that living storytellers (and narrators) are locally interacting all at the same time in different rooms (Boje, 1995). Since storytelling is fundamentally a social process, and not only retrospection, but also reflexive, then there is another form of story control beside rivalry.

In D3 (Dialectic) is definitely a collision of two collective memories, sometimes more. Stacey reaches for his George Herbert Mead (1934) book. Mead’s theory is that there are many ‘Generalized Others’ that serve to control one’s communicative interactions. In the Storying Turn, this translates to reflexivity upon how others will receive the story you tell. Foucault (1977a) would call it the ‘internalized gaze.’ Those generalized others surveil our telling of a story, its contents, implications, and the way we tell it. As Stacy (2006: 126), the communicative agents are capable of what is “essentially reflexive and reflective” sensemaking and do not follow “mechanistic rules.” Storytellers are reflexively conscious and self-conscious, and sometimes unconscious of their generalized others, who watch them, tell and not tell. The

generalized other is a more powerful form of social control than managerial dialogue, and the debate among factions. A story interpretation of Mead (1934) is that the many generalized others are the 'Me' of a story reflected upon by tellers and listeners. The 'I' is our independent voice. This sets up the classic "'I'-Me' dialectic" that Stacey (2006: 130) posts are socially formed while forming the social complexity of organizations in acts of reflection and reflexivity. The 'I'-Me' dialectic is not some face-to-face dialogue, not it is a debate among storytellers distributed in different divisions. The storyteller's 'I' is the subject of the man 'Me's', the apperceptions of Others (i.e. groups, organizations, community, societies, and even the transcendental Others). This 'I'-Me' dialectic of interacting selves of the social in stories told by storytellers in the *Storytelling Organization*. It is a radical shift away from the sender-message-receiver-feedback model of first order cybernetic system theory (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). The 'I' and 'Me' are socially constructed in 'we' storytelling animals. One cannot story independently of social control of the generalized others internalized as "Me's." 'I' inhabits a society of social selves. Inside each teller and listener there are a society of social selves doing a reflexivity role play, and many of the "Me's" are disembodied others that haunt our conversation. Like at Disney where one asked, and still asks, "What would Walt do?" Or at Wal-Mart where people always ask, "What would Sam do?" (Boje & Rosile, 2006). Or at McDonald's, "What would Kroc do?" (Boje & Rhodes, 2005a, b). Social control in storying turn, is exactly the "role play/silent conversation of a body with itself, and the social" and the 'public vocal interaction or conversation between bodies' (Stacey, 2006: 130). But the storyteller's interaction forms and is formed by the social in one more way.

D4 (Dialogic) when it is directly participatory it can be at the level of polyphonic collective memory. The social control of story is intertextuality of multiple discourses that are dialogic to one another. As we saw in the stylistic strategy chapter, the dialogism can be orchestrated, image management. Khadija (2006), extending Bakhtin (1981) posits an internal dialogism of the selves (analogous to Mead's internalized dialectic of the social selves) and the external dialogism of multiple discourses. Stacey (2006: 135) does not use the term dialogic, but does write about how groups do struggle "frequently about which discourse is to dominate." Bakhtin (1990) extends Kant's theory of architectonics, as the interanimation of not only cognitive appreciation of

transcendental (as in multiple selves in Mead's theory) the interplay with aesthetic and ethical discourse. In the dialogic manner of storytelling, multiple discourses are intertextual to one another.

Multiplicity: The implication for the “story turn” is that the important interaction among storytellers is at the local level. At the local level, telling is communicative interaction in ways that are self-organizing emergent processes. However, there is still ‘story control’ going on. Out of the local interaction global patterns of “coherence” are produced but in the absence of some “global programme or plan” (p. 125). There is emergence without the imposition of narrative control from the top (or center), such as by a managerialist group. More accurately CRP theory recognizes, several social control forms that are applicable to Figure 9.1

I therefore theorize five interactive forces (D \otimes to D4) of retrospective and reflexive, as well as whole narrative and more fragment (part) story practices. Figure 9.1 is not to be read as a two-by-two. Rather, the multiple ways of storying are interactive, sometimes simultaneous, other times iterative, and not in any particular order.

D \otimes *demonstrative* is here-and-now, but can devolve to other types. Demonstrative means that all that is not story is being evinced. D \otimes is not story. Heidegger (1990: 26) says, “If we are to understand the problems of Being, our first philosophical step consists in ... ‘not telling a story’.” D \otimes enters in the middle telling; it is not yet story. Story threatens to emerge, but can unravel into antenarrative fragments. D \otimes forsakes developmental telling of D1 (e.g. Denning) or D2 (collecting and typing story fragments, e.g. Snowden). D \otimes is in-between teller and listener: “The narrative” says Stein (1933: 55) “in itself is not what is in your mind but what is in somebody else’s.” What does it mean to not story? Bakhtin (1929/1973: 44-45) cites a segment of “*A Gentle Creature*” where Dostoevsky says: “The point is that this is not a story and not a sketch.” The teller is distraught, does not concoct story or narrative, and keeps at the emergent level, until story emerged.

My *theory of storyability* is that story turns event into experience, and shapes that into collective memory makes a major contribution to Weickian enactment and retrospective sensemaking theory. In retrospective sensemaking it is assumed that there is no difference between event and experience, that event just becomes experience by

application of sensory perception. Second, sensemaking theorists assume that there is no important difference between retrospective narrative, reenactment, and more prospective antenarrative theory. Finally, there is no role for emotion, as a way of sensemaking, a way to recover from trauma, where one just keeps reenacting, and not storying, not being in control to willfully story. I argue that reenactment and storyability sensemaking are quite different.

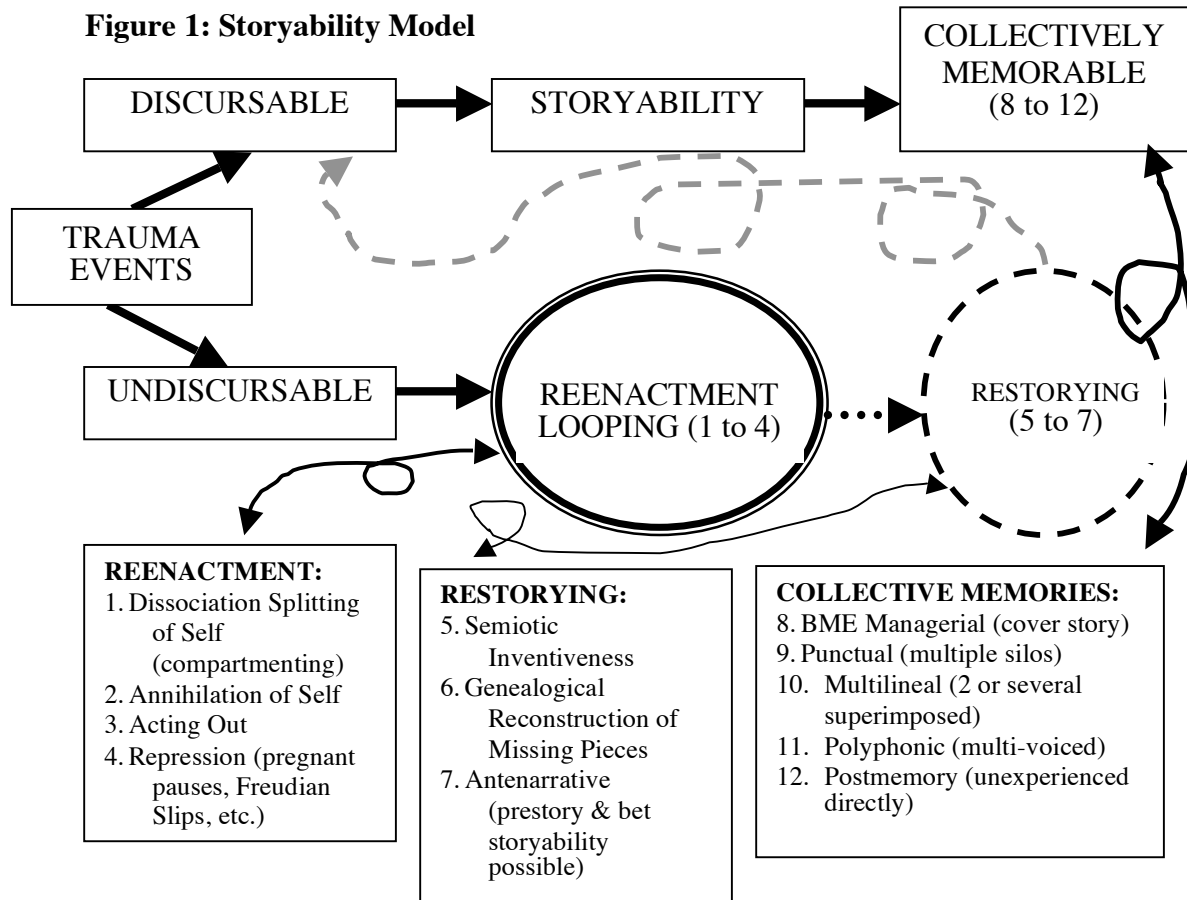


Figure 1 gives a summary of a storyability model, which I hypothesize, is compatible with complexity and trauma theory. According to *storyability theory* not every event in complexity or in life trauma is storyable into experience.

Reenactment Looping The theory is that events only become experience when we willfully story event into experience. Research into Holocaust, genocide, war, rape, child abuse, accident, loss of loved ones, and other severe trauma events suggests that trauma is initially just reenactment without storyability into experience or memory (Bal, 1999; Hirsch, 1999). In what I call ‘reenactment looping’ trauma victims dissociate (#1 in

Figure 1) from the trauma-event by splitting of the self to compartmentalize, annihilates the self (#2), acts out (#3, such as reliving past events of trauma, triggered by resonance in the presence), and that repression (#4) of the events can leak into discourse in pregnant pauses, Freudian slips (as the unconscious struggles to break into consciousness).

Restorying is the theory that it is possible to help trauma victims to overcome a dominant story that is hegemonic, and invents a new story if it becomes supportable by an individual's circle of relationships (White & Epston, 1990). However, in the case of reenactment looping, the events have not become storyable into experiences or memory. Therefore I propose several new steps. Semiotic inventiveness (#5) recognizes that to story is only possible in discourse (be it gesture, oral, or textual). It takes symbols and images in the hermeneutic sense of storying, to create plots, or replot. To restory trauma means to engage in the genealogical reconstruction of missing pieces (#6). Genealogical method (Nietzsche, Foucault, Adorno) has not been used in conjunction with restorying (or as its called in clinical social psychology, narrative therapy). Finally, before story, there is what I have invented as antenarrative (#7, antenarrative bet that prestory can lead to storyability).

Collective Memories - The more complex case is more polyphonic collective memory (#11) where the collective memories are fully embodied by different actors (persons & their groups), and these interact to negotiate collective storyability, and the restorying, as well as antenarrating possibilities. Finally, in trauma research, there is what Hirsch (1999) terms 'postmemory' (#12). Postmemory is definable as collective memory that was never directly experienced by the person having the memory. For example, going to work and hearing a founder's story, or historical saga, to which you never had any direct participation with the events. Or, in the case of trauma, the subject of this essay, when you study sweatshops, but never actually worked in one (unless you call universities sweatshops, but that is a stretch).

What Stein (1935) adds, is an answer to Gabriel's (2000) question, where does story reside? It resides in-between tellers and spectators (or readers). For Heidegger, to get at Being, means to not story. It suggests that story consulting may be finding coherence where life is in disarray. I tell fragments of some story I only partially understand, interrupting it with exposition, and contradiction, and leaving lots of blanks,

pauses, and spaces where you the reader fill them in, or take off into some story fill-in that has litter and maybe nothing to do with story I am telling tersely. Gabriel (2000: 5) and I (2001), for example, agree that “Not all stories are good stories, nor are all individuals effective storytellers.” I can agree with his point. Yet, I disagree with the next part of his charge “... in particular, factual or descriptive accounts of events that aspire at objectivity rather than emotional effect must not be treated as stories” (Gabriel, 2000: 5).

In storyability, there is much that is not yet storied, or antenarratives, that are not yet narrative.

D1 dialogue consulting can achieve *renarrating*, but has not been conceived at the (D4) level of dialogism that is *restorying*. Renarrating moves from one coherence narrative to another. *Restorying* is defined as deconstructing any dominant story, in order to develop a story out of fragments that can be liberatory from oppression (White & Epston, 1991). D3 and D4 represent two types for restorying that involves reflexivity, rather than retrospection. First, restorying an organization through (D3) dialectic of metaphors and archetypes against ways of storying and restorying an organization that are reflexive about unconscious symbolism. D3 is reflexive about transcendental or unconscious ways of telling. Story reflexivity is also attaining awareness of stories we are telling that we do not know we are telling (like the tells in a Poker game, or the blind spot in JoHari Window). Second, D4 restorying is reflexivity in a different way. D4 storytelling is through multi-dialogisms (beyond just polyphonic); the tellings are intertextual in ways that require reflexivity (i.e. multi-stylistics, multi-chronotopics, & multi-architectonics). In D4, each type of dialogism is reflexive on multiples stories of other people that are beyond the plasticity of dialogue interventions at the level of narrative metaphorization or debates among fragmented narrativists. In particular, D1 and D2 focus on the *narrative* turn, while D3 and D4 are more concerned with what I would like to call the *story* turn.

Heteroglossia is polyphony and carnivalesque. Both are relevant to OD because they are about the forces of renewal and contemporalization. For example, polyphony is “imbued with a carnival attitude to the world” (Bakhtin, 1973: 87) as well as the “life-giving power to transform” (p. 89). In modernity or postmodernity, “a critical ear always

perceives even the most distant echoes of the carnival attitude to the world” (1973: 88). Dialogism is the juxtaposition of carnivalesque and more managerial points of view. Carnival provokes these viewpoints in the words of interlocutors. Carnival is about renewal through a pathos of change that facilitates “misalliances” (1973: 101), such as sacred with profane, lofty with low, etc in a jolly relativity that brings hierarchy down to earth, into the zone of familiar contact with carnivalesque laughter. “In the act of carnival laughter death and rebirth, negation (ridicule) and affirmation (joyful laughter) are combined” (p. 104).

A polyphonic praxis of OD breaks down the character masks of monological unity, destroys finalized conceptions of whole system thinking, goes beyond closed philosophy of managerialism, breaks with narratives of the dialectic as well as with organic stages of evolutions. Rather than system wholeness, finalizedness, or merged parts, the focus is on unmergedness and unfinalizedness of systemicity.

D1 Dialogue is not the same as (D2 or D4) dialogicality. Dialogue consulting interventions lack critical and carnivalesque realism; there is not enough dialogic imagination. Dialogue consulting does not achieve the complexity level of D2 fragmented logics (polylogic), or D4 multi-dialogisms. We will review various stakeholder, search conference, and learning organization approaches to dialogue in Chapter 10, 11, and 12. Each dialogue approach claims to move beyond managerialism through interventions in dialogue. Yet the dialogue interventions reenact chamber masquerade of more managerialist plasticity. Dialogue is not carnival enough to be dialogic; it lacks the free flow of misalliances of thoughts, images, and ideas. There is too little street language, too much archetype abstraction, and too much retrospection to allow a more carnivalesque forces to take place. I imagine here a new OD, one that changes the “dialogical angle” (1981: 150) of consciousnesses, and their ideas, in acts of juxtaposition. It is OD beyond the narrative canon.

MANAGERIALIST NARRATIVE OD

Sometimes story control is quite necessary. D1 narrativist dialogue consulting reduces dialogic complexity to a single plane, usually, managerialism renarrating in metaphorizations of frames, machine, cell or plant organicism. That can be a necessary

focus, a way to bring people together. More often consulting promises D2, but delivers more D1. The more D2 polyphonic dialogism is not achieved because the intervention does not transcend this plasticity with what is life-generating, and life-affirming. This still leaves D3 and D4 (story turn) to theorize.

Managerial consensus sacrifices elements of the diversity of locality idea-forces in ways that subverts complexity (D2 → D1 or D4 → D1). The danger to organizations is from monologic centripetal conditions of managerialism occurs where alternative and multiple points of view are driven out by convergent renarration. Local voices are co-opted into marginality. There are situations when a more polyphonic organization is not ideal, when a more monoglotic organization is appropriate. The downside of annihilating localism, or renarrating diverse local idea-forces into just the one narrative identity, is the demise of polyphonic organization that could have been the requisite variety to make more complex sense of turbulent environments.

D3 and D4 are reflexive. Imagine, if you will, an organization that is something like a Dostoevsky novel (Bakhtin, 1981: 60): “multi-generic, multi-styled, mercilessly critical, soberly mocking, reflective, in all its fullness the heteroglossia and multiple voices of a given culture, people and epoch.” Heteroglossia is the interplay of centripetal (centering) forces and centrifugal (decentering) forces of language. Heteroglossic manner of story is complexity in storytelling organizations.

D1 *Renarrating* and D3 *restorying* is centripetal force that gets the better of more centrifugal forces of D2 fragmentation and D4 antenarration in dialogic manner of *restorying*. This suggests that, as narrative turn forces D1 are centripetal, whereas D2 narrative turn forces are centrifugal. In story turn, D3 is unitymaking (centripetal), while D4 is variety-making (centrifugal). In short, the order of complexity of narrative and story turns each have force and counterforce.

There are several reasons why managerialism has not been given a clear-cut narrative-theoretical basis. First, managerialism, even in dialogue, is a “philosophical monolog” posing as dialog that thwarts the dialogic “plurality of unmerged consciousnesses” (Bakhtin, 1973: 22). Managerialism degenerates and destroys the dialogized “fabric of the story” (1973: 44). In multi-story we glimpse the fabric’s

unfinalizability, indeterminacy, and its interaction with unmerged consciousnesses. Claims on the present are placed along side unresolved claims of the past and future.

Secondly, dialogism is not about the dialectic narrative “reduced to thesis, antithesis and synthesis” (Bakhtin, 1973: 22). Rather, dialogism is “not evolution, but coexistence and interaction” (p. 23). Nor is dialogism a retrospective sensemaking. Much of organizational development (OD) is about narrating organizations in stages of development and retrospective sensemaking narratives of experience. A dialogic approach focuses upon juxtaposition, putting memories of the past side-by-side with the unfolding present, such as an “unexplicated sin or crime, an unforgiven insult” (Bakhtin, 1973: 24). Juxtaposition is not retrospective; its focus is coexistence of divarication, not stages of organizational development. Divarication is the branching into differing viewpoints and thoughts that constitute contradictory philosophies. In dialogism there is a move beyond “*systematic monological philosophical finalizedness*” (Bakhtin, 1973: 26). The intersection of unmerged consciousness in the sphere of ideas, multiple styles, multiple conceptions of space and time defies the “finalized monological whole” of retrospective-coherence narrative (p. 34).

Third, in antenarrative, the pre-story is a bet that a coherent narrative or a multi-story dialogism will be forthcoming. Antenarrative is antecedent to retrospective sensemaking. Antenarrative is full of stops and starts, and meanderings; Antenarratives unfold in the present, picking up and depositing context as they traverse the social (Boje, 2001). Antenarrative is too confused and erratic a form to meet the dictates of proper narrative cannon.

Finally, we can bring antenarrative, narrative, and dialogism together to understand the interaction of managerialism with other philosophies. Managerialism refracts one voice through the verbal or textual verbiage of some other person’s milieu (Bakhtin, 1973: 166). Failing such acts of cooptation, there is either expulsion of non-managerial philosophies, or negotiations to limit the full force of more dialogic philosophies. In all these approaches the result is hegemony of managerialism. Dialogism, by contrast, allows for the life of multi-story, in unrefracted, unfinalized, and unmergedness. Absentee interlocutors enter into dialogic collusion (Bakhtin, 1973: 170). There is a “*zone of dialogical contact*” that is beyond dialogue (Bakhtin, 1981: 45). In

dialogic consulting, multiple ideologies interanimate each other instead of moving to consensus.

RENARRATING STORYTELLING ORGANIZATION

Rosile and Boje (2002) applied White and Epton's (1990) *Narrative means to Therapeutic Ends*, to organization change. White and Epton call it "restorying", but I will argue it is more accurately called, *renarrating*. These are the basic renarrating steps:

1. **CHARACTERIZE:** Describe the organization at its best, if it were functioning perfectly and living up to all its ideals. An influence map will expose relevant persons and problems keeping a dominant narrative in play.
2. **EXTERNALIZE:** What is the problem, viewed as separate from any individual, as an external entity? A problem, not individual (s) is the problem. E. G. What does a "Power struggle" look like? Who does Power report to? Who does Power hang with?
3. **SYMPATHIZE:** What benefits does the organization derive from the problem? In deconstruction, it is finding the dualism, and exploring each side of each dualism.
4. **REVISE:** Disadvantages of the problem, benefits foregone, and reasons to change. In deconstructing dualisms, the limitations of dualisms are stressed.
5. **STRATEGIZE:** Find a "unique outcome" from the past, even a potential, which allowed the organization to defeat the problem. These exceptions to what the dominant narrative posits, become basis for authoring a new narrative. E.G. when did you speak back to power?
6. **RE-HISTORICIZE:** Make the "unique outcome" the rule (instead of the exception) in a NEW narrative of freedom from the problem.
7. **PUBLICIZE:** Enlist support for the new narrative. Use letters, ceremony, etc to socially reinforce and concretize the new narrative.

What I think is needed is to move from renarrating organizations, to restorying organizations in the more dialogic manner of a story turn approach to change and organizational development. I think what is pioneering in White and Epston's (1990) narrative family therapy is that it works at a systemic level, and combines deconstruction with narrative and renarrating. What renarrating lacks is a dialogic theory and praxis of antenarrative, story and restory.

RESTORYING AND DIALOGISM

I would like to sketch the basics of a dialogic restorying model. Narrative therapy is deconstructing the dominant narrative, by externalizing the problem from people characterizations, sympathizing, revising and strategizing to reverse the dualities, rehistoricizing to find examples when the dominant narrative did not have its death grip on the identity of the individual, and finally publicizing to reinforce the renarrative change in the family network. Restorying organizations that are theorized as unmergedness of parts, unfinalized wholes, with multi-level orders of systemicity complexity is beyond simple renarrating.

Readers of Weick (1995: 127-129) without exception took sensemaking to be about emergence of variety rather than control. They were blind to the Aristotelian premises about narrative coherence: causal chain, with wholeness of beginning, middle, and end. If the one cultural situation aimed at is story control, then the assumed story emergence of complexity is no where to be found in Weick's often cited section. A myth has been created about stories only being about retrospective sensemaking of emergence.

Reflexivity inaugurates self-examination. Retrospection is about a romantic view of sensemaking stories during an era when control by executives has begun to erode. Retrospective story control is an Emersonian perfectionist model of self-realization through heroic emulation. Selling sensemaking control in Springboard stories appeals to executives who are out-of-control of their complexity organizations. Structural/functionalist stories makes executives the hero, able to regain control that eluded them. Executives are given an Aristotelian formula of story control. Executives have only to apply the will of their creative imagination. Story control is nothing more than Nietzsche's (1967) will to power.

A neglected source of sense emergence is the mass of people whose stories are marginalized by managerial control over their story by some executive eager to hear their own voice and no one else's. They cry out against narrative control, and their loss of voice.

The important question is how to listen to the variety of narratives and stories already in motion in *Storytelling Organization*. It is time to look beyond executive's will to power

in reducing story variety to narrative control. It subverts the emergence forces of complexity.

How Polyphony is used in Organization Studies: Mumby (1994) accused management research texts of being monophonic; he stresses that in polyphonic text each voice is equally valid. There has been writing that imagines something called “polyphonic organization” (Hazen, 1993, 1994; Boje, 1995; Mumby, 1994). . Bate (1997, 2000) picks up Hazen’s call for “polyphonic organization” in study of change in a hospital, from hierarchy to networked community. Methodologically, he does not study the way the voices (heard) are dialogically dynamically intertextual *in situ* to one another. Instead Bate collects a plurality of subculture voices, and culls out *emotion schemas* within the narratives/stories he collects.

Can polyphony get beyond managerialist control? My research looked at the polyphonic aspects of dominant (official) narrative and marginalized counterstories at Disney (Boje, 1995). Oswick et al (2000) looked at how polyphony gets subverted, how a team player developed consensus around a univocal narrative in a hegemonic exercise of power. More accurately, it was not only monologic but also homologic. A homophonic text is one where “all aspects of plot, dialogue and characterization are subordinated to the monologic will of the author” (Gardiner, 1992: 27).

Barry and Elmes (1997: 442) polyphony challenge was “strategists adopting this method [that] would be less focused on promoting their own strategy and more concerned with surfacing, legitimizing, and juxtaposing differing organizational stories.” They cited Semler (1993), Boje (1995), and Smircich, Calas, and Morgan (1992 a, b) ways to juxtapose dialogically linked views/stories.

Not every strategist is sure that polyphony is best. Ng and de Cock (2002) argue that they do not want to give a polyphonic interpretation to collected boardroom (strategic) narratives, since it would compromise the story they (as researchers & omniscient-narrators) prefer to tell. This seems to replace one hegemony with another. One possibility is suggested by Roth and Kleiner (1998), who view Van Maanen’s

“jointly-told tale” as polyphonic fieldwork, “sharing authorship” and giving “equal validity” to two (or more) meaning systems

Polyphony, too often becomes used as a metaphor by consultants and practitioners. Using polyphony as a metaphor serves to colonize and entrench dominant narrative. Palmer and Dunford (1996), for example, focus on ways that authorities stylize dialog by reframing context in order to sustain managerialist influence over business practices. Along this vein, Phillips (1995: 628-629) explores example how a dominant character in a text can bring in another point of view without the sense of closure of an omnipotent author. Payne and Carlton (2002) apply dialogic to stakeholder theory using a polyphonic approach; the challenge in dialogic research is to move from theories of one (stakeholder) consciousness (be it omniscient narrator or research) reading various other consciousnesses. In sum, polyphonic studies are finding that stakeholder dialogues are hegemonic, and polyphony is applied metaphorically without attention to equal rights of participation.

How do we theorize an OD Practice at Level of Polyphony? First, I think, one must distinguish between stakeholder dialogue approaches, and what Bakhtin theorizes as more dialogic manner of story. Dialogue consulting interventions focus on surfacing warrants and points of disagreement among stakeholders in order to achieve consensus. Such processes as Future Search (Weisbord, 1992) and Social Ecology (Emery & Trist, 1965; Emery, 1993, 1994, 1997) and dialogue coaching (Senge, 1992).

A Futures Search can take up to 3 days, but includes stakeholders such as executives, staff, managers, employees, and external constituencies.

Social Ecology (also called search conference) takes a year to several years, involving a jury process to identify stakeholders who will move changes into place, plus a structured approach to environmental scanning, and ways to bracket and put aside disagreements as common ground is forged among participants. The emphasis in dialogue coaching is on the pursuit of order, often defined as overcoming resistance to change through active listening, and attaining consensus. Consensus as a goal of such

dialogue processes has been criticized for creating a monologic consulting intervention (Deetz, 2001). People are trained by dialogue consultants to actively listen, to tell better narratives, and to understand metaphor creativity, but not to address the systemic level of language.

Too much organizational change work centers on increasing participation in dialogue, but in ways that remains quite monologic (one logic). Even when a diversity of points of view interact in dialogue, the stress is placed upon achieving consensus, or in utilizing rhetorics of persuasion to negotiate a common ground for all. In *Future Search, Social Ecology and Dialogue Coaching*, this keeps contentious points of view on the margin, and allows the majority to trudge forward. These ideas are pursued more systematically in Chapter 12 (*Transorganization Storytelling*).

AGAINST CONSENSUS

Volosinov's (1929/1973) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* and Bakhtin's (1986) *Speech Genres*.² Both works argue that the utterance is the product of the immediate social situation, history, and the broader social milieu. Bakhtin (1981: 272) theorized two counter-forces, one centrifugal (deviation amplifying) and the other centripetal (deviation-counteracting) that defined language systems. In a given dialogue, in an utterance of that dialogue, there is a dialogic conflict of multiple points of view being expressed by any given participant, and more dialogic points of view by the social milieu constructing rebuttals and submitting what has been shared to their own reading of the facts. In short, from a dialogic theory perspective, "language lives" (Bakhtin, 1984: 183). The utterance of change is not just about dialog it also includes the more systemic

² Volosinov's (1929/1973) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* written in Russian in 1929 (English in 1973) is widely thought to be 90% the work of Bakhtin. During his commune period (late 1920s) a Bakhtin Circle was formed and authorship by the individual was sub-texted in favor of communal writing works. For more on this see Holquist's intro to *Dialogic Imagination* (1986).

qualities of utterance of change that are dialogic at levels of systemic complexity. Meaning and change is not only generated through dialog interaction with other stakeholders, it is a dialogic interpretive process that is systemically embedded in the organization and its social milieu. A monologic consensus process can masquerade as a dialogue. On the other hand, what sounds like “single-voiced discourse” (Bakhtin 1984: 189) can be multi-voiced dialogic, expression, even out of the mouth of one participant. People double-narrate, and speak with double-voices (not in the sense of forked tongue).

RE STORYING POLYPHONIC DIALOGISM

The essence of polyphony is precisely in the fact that the voices remain independent and as such, are combined in a unity of a higher order than in homophony (Bakhtin, 1973: 17).

“Such would be the polyphonic manner of the story” It is “dialogical field of vision” (p. 60).

The polyphonic dialogic manner of story is beyond managerialist or retrospective narratives of control. It is outside the dominant field of vision of retrospection; it is more what Kant calls apperception, but with Bakhtin this is from a dialogized plurality of points of view. Further renarrative centering (centripetal) and restorying divarication (centrifugal) are part of the heteroglossic force and counterforce of language (of which narrative and story are domains).

Apperception of organization and environment from plurality of points of view is not the same as retrospective sensemaking that dominates much of OD work. Rather, the past, present, and future, as well as local and global are set side-by-side in dialogic juxtaposition, that I am calling *a priori* apperception. My thesis: polyphonic dialogicality consulting the monological scenes of managerialism can be deconstructed and reconstructed to be dialogically pluralized through acts of juxtaposition. Further what passes for polyphony consulting is mostly at the level of micro-dialogue, that does not escape the “*Weltanschauung*” of “systematic-monological” managerialism (Bakhtin, 1973: 64). Micro-dialogue is not the same as dialogism. Next, I will give a condensed review of how polyphony has been address in organization theory.

Renarrating Polyphonic Dialogism: It's is firstly, changing the balance of dominant narratives and marginalized forces of storied-ideas, points of view, ideologies, or philosophies. Secondly, renarrating polyphony changes the complexity of participation and governance from managerial consensus monologues masquerading as dialogue to polyphony of idea forces. *Polyphony* is defined as “the plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses” (Bakhtin, 1973: 4). Polyphony is “destruction of the organic unity of the ... narrative fabric”; it is the multi-story “whirlwind movement of events” (p. 11). Polyphonic dialogism of multi-narrative fragments is at a higher order of complexity than monologic narrative convergence.

Restorying Transcendental: Restorying that is dialectic, is thesis that is opposed by an opposite antithesis. The logic of this world is reversed in the logic of the underworld. The ration meets a more carnivalesque netherworld of masks. Our subconscious desires spill onto the stage of everyday life.

Restorying Stylistic Dialogism: A second type of restorying sets the transcendental in interplay with multiple-dialogic forces. Whereas D3 dialectic is unitymaking, the multiplicity of discourses introduces a level of complexity that is multi-dialogic. Restorying stylistics, for example, moves beyond orchestration of diverse stylistic modes of telling for image management, to a pluralistic stylistic. Organization change and development theory and praxis has been completely deaf to “dialogized style” (Bakhtin, 1981: 274). The dialogue of face-to-face style has been thought to be no different than that dialogic intercourse that is not face-to-face (i.e. written, visual, or theatric-gestures). A stylistically dialogic analysis of a corporation would focus on the points of intersection of the dialogized styles.

Restorying Chronotopic Dialogism: Restorying chronotopicities moves beyond being stuck in mono-chronotopic monologue to more relativistic plurality of space and time conceptions. Traditional organization change and development theory and praxis is wedded to developmental narratives of temporality in ways that ignore other chronotopicities. In chronotopic dialogism, we enter the “complex unity of an Einstein universe” with its jolly relativity (Bakhtin, 1973: 12).

Restorying Architectonic Dialogism: Restorying architectonics resituates the interanimation of cognitive, aesthetic, and ethical discourses. Narrative and Story are

subdomains of societal discourses. This restorying is a resituation of societal, organizational, and individual ways of narrating and storying.

Polypi Dialogism of Dialogisms: Restorying at this order of systemicity complexity involves the interrelations of knowable and unknowable. Specifically, it is the interrelation between what is retrospectively knowable by sensemaking of experience, and the a priori apperception of transcendental logic and transcendental aesthetic.

The question I want to pursue in this chapter, what is restorying polyphonic dialogism? Subsequent chapters will look at theory and praxis of organizational change and development that involve the interactivity of the other dialogisms, in respective orders of complexity.

IDEA-FORCES

Storytelling Organization theory, research, and consulting practice began with the idea that stories are situated within systems of communication and relationship (Boje, 1991, 1995; Gephart, 1991; Boyce, 1995; Kaye, 1996). A storytelling organization is constantly adding stories to its collective memory bank, while deleting stories or just forgetting some by choice or attrition. Each new event sets off vibratory energy dynamics into collective memory of storytelling organizations. Each new event sets of revisions and transformations to collective memory, to story space. Old stories linger on obstinately, antenarratives (pre-stories) seek to gain a foothold, but many old stories cannot be swept away. In this way collective memory evolves. While the individual can change their inner life story through meditation and narrative therapy, transforming the life story of a storytelling organization is a different level of analysis, something where restorying at a dialogic level of intervention must take place in praxis (Kaye, 1996).

One approach that is promising in OD is the mirroring of one's consciousness through others' consciousnesses. Bakhtin (1973: 43) gives this example" "he looks in all the mirrors of others' consciousnesses and knows all the possible refractions of his own image in those mirrors.... His self-consciousness lives on its unfinalizedness, its openendedness and indeterminacy." This seems to me to be at the level of self-

reflection, self-elucidation, and self-revelations, an internal dialogism with internalized voices of others and conversations with the other, refracting your own ideas.

Polyphonically conceived organizations are more about the dialogism of ideas than it is about retrospective narratives of experience or narratives of evolution in growth stages. Juxtaposition sets human consciousnesses, embodied ideas, side-by-side to defeat ideological monologisms. This move frees the sphere of pluralistic ideas from finalizedness and determinacy.

The idea begins to live, i.e. to take shape, to develop, to find and renew its verbal expression, and to give birth to new ideas only when it enters into genuine dialogical relationships with other, *foreign* ideas (Bakhtin, 1973: 71).

Stylistic dialogism, by contrast is about the juxtaposition of multiple images of the ideas. In the struggle among ideas, there is assumed to be absentee interlocutors. Diatribe is “conversation with a character who is absent” (Bakhtin, 1973: 129) such as the invisible stenographer or some invisible inquisitor. Boje and Rhodes (2005 a, b) look at the diatribe with dead CEOs, how their idea-forces live on. The many styles and voices exist as “idea-forces” (Bakhtin, 1973: 73). The danger to organizations is that ideas become self-enclosed in managerialist idea-forces, which drive out other *foreign* ideas. It is time to imagine a consulting praxis where the “vertex of dialogically intersecting consciousnesses” (1973: 74) is considered a creative force. Retrospective sensemaking of experience can be helpful in generating empirical evidence of ways the idea-force or some coalition of idea-forces is appropriate to the environment. The implication is that the vertex of dialogically intersecting of different ideas affects strategy as well as strategic change. Most OD praxis, focused on consensus or negotiation, serves to reduce dialogic complexity and plurality.

A polyphonically dialogic approach to OD would explore the labyrinth of voices, points of view, philosophies, and consciousnesses. The result could be a polyphonic organization of “mutually illuminating consciousnesses” (Bakhtin, 1973: 80). Dostoevsky called for a method of “integral contrapositions” (pp 78-80 in Bakhtin, 1973) that could be the basis for this new approach to OD. I have asserted that the contrapositions are *a priori*, rather than retrospective, and praxis that looks at juxtapositions could break out of

narrative petrification one finds in stage-growth models. Instead of plotting organizations in the Aristotelian framework of tragedy, comedy, satire or romance, an integral contraposition method would focus upon multi-story, multi-plot, multi-stylistics, and multiple unmerged consciousnesses.

In sum, polyphonic dialogic contrapositions cultivates the multi-story of multiple independent wills, philosophical views, and ideas that gets reduced to monological singularity in dialogue consulting and stakeholder conference models. Stories have idea-force that belongs to someone, is embedded in socioeconomic context. Antenarrative traces interact with full-fledged narratives, and more dialogic manner of story, in the complex fabric of storytelling organizations.