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**NARRATIVE
LEARNING
AND CULTURE**

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Narrative, Learning and Culture

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Introduction

In this book, I enjoy the privilege of presenting the outcome of the conference 'Culture, Narrative and Mind', which was held at Copenhagen Business School (CBS) in June 2005.

The history of the conference goes back to the first term of the bachelor programme in psychology and economics that started at CBS in August 2004. Starting a new programme is always thrilling and overwhelming. At mid-term we teachers had been through a process of intense teaching, and the students gave the impression that reading all the literature had been hard. So I told the programme secretary that we ought to do something to cheer them up. In the very same moment it came to me: why not invite Jerome Bruner? The students would be inspired by meeting today's most significant psychologist and by experiencing the written literature from the author's own mouth.

The idea was to invite Jerome Bruner and Carol Feldman to come to Copenhagen to introduce the second term of the bachelor programme in February 2005. This proved unsuccessful, but fortunately at the end of term we made it! The aim of cheering up the students was not as pressing as earlier, because they had now already learnt so much that they had begun to correct the professors. But we were very excited that both Jerry and Carol could participate in the conference, which was in every respect a great success. It gathered people from many of the most important institutions of education and research in Denmark and Sweden. This book is a presentation of the lectures made that day in June,

and I am of course very happy to present them to a larger public than the almost 350 people who attended the conference.

Jerome Bruner is a professor at New York University, School of Law. He came into my life when I was a newly graduated psychologist who had started his career as a new-born lecturer at a teachers' training college in Copenhagen in 1976. One of my colleagues had the very good idea that we should use Bruner's book, *The Relevance of Education* (1972). I had of course heard about Jerome Bruner during my time as a student at the University of Copenhagen, but up till then I had never read anything from his hand. That book became the opening, and my interest increased a few years later when I began working with Associate Professor Aksel Mortensen from the Psychological Laboratory, University of Copenhagen.

During my career I have had the pleasure of reading Jerry's writings several times, especially when I was writing my doctoral thesis in the mid-90s. During those years Jerry had a very productive period working on narrative (1986, 1990), and this work began appearing in Danish translation. This became - and still is - an anchor for my work.

Jerry's article, *Culture, Mind, and Narrative*, is to some extent a short version of what has occupied his mind during the last 15 years. He starts off with culture as context and mind-shaper and goes on to narrative as connected to and embedded in culture. In particular he unfolds the connection between conflict-coping and storytelling. At the end of the article Jerry retells a story from J. Conrad's *The Secret Sharer* about a young captain and his adventure with a man who entered the ship. Of course Jerry leaves us querying both himself and us, but at the same time he points to the function of fiction as alienating the familiar.

Carol Fleisher Feldman was a professor at New York University, Department of Psychology. In my mind Carol was closely related professionally to Jerry. She and Jerry made a study in *Narrative from the Crib* (in Nelson, K. 1989 and in Bruner, J. & Haste, H. 1987). The study is the fascinating exposure of little Emily's development in storytelling from her first one-or-two-words story to her more advanced use of language where problem-solving is in focus. It is also about people's use of categorisation, attribution and transference, or - as I put it - making room for investigation of '*surplus des sens*' in the life project. Carol's work is admirable, but when I took the initiative to have Jerry's book *La fabbrica delle stories* translated into Danish and found the very competent translator, Seren Segar, who knew Carol and Jerry, I heard some real admiring remarks. When the publishing company heard that Carol and Jerry were actually coming to Denmark, one of the employees responded by quoting Seren Segar: 'She is the most astonishing and beautiful woman I have ever met. She overrules Bruner in most areas!'

Carol's article, *Ambivalent Identities in Nations as "Hardened" Croups: France and the US in 2005*, is a very concrete study of national identity. National identity is a subject of very high importance, especially after 9/11, and also in Denmark following the case of the satirical cartoons of Mohammed in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in the autumn of 2005. Since 1997, Carol has asked psychology students eight times what they feel about having an American national identity. The answers are certainly very interesting - the mere fact that you can see the changes after the 9/11-disaster makes them sensational. Before sharing the results with us Carol takes us to the fields of theory and discussion to define what culture and national identity is.

I, *Mads Hermansen*, am a professor and director of the bachelor programme in psychology and economics (HAPsyk) at Copenhagen Business School. My research has been concentrated on the topic of learning, especially in organisations. 'Relearning' (2006) is my latest publication.

My article, *Learning and Storytelling*, has two parts. In the first I highlight some of the most important issues from my theory of learning (2006). By way of a three-dimensional model I begin to explore the consequences for teaching. The conclusion is closely connected with the possibility of creating a '*surplus des sens*' in the culture of teaching, especially by using systemic, appreciative enquiry and narrative in teaching.

Jan Molin, who has written the last article, is my colleague. He is a professor and associate dean at Copenhagen Business School, where we both enjoy the privilege of working in the Department of Organisation and Industrial Sociology. Jan is studying complex systems. The title of his doctoral thesis has been translated as *The Infolded Order - the Unfolded Practice* (2002). In this Jan investigates the interactions between system theory, communications theory and social construction. In this work he succeeds in writing a story about the interaction between real life, the individual and the social field. The *quiasme* of these elements exposes infolded order and unfolded practice. In a more humorous - but still very serious - area, Jan has lately initiated a course in self-irony. It is a two-day course for leaders who have a tendency to take themselves too seriously.

Jan's article, *The Unintended Side-Effects of Talking to Other People*, is a tribute to Jerry. The article starts with the story of Jan's first encounter with a text from Jerry's hand. After that he investigates the nature of language and its connection with action. With

the help of Goffman and Gergen, Jan defines relationship as the fundamental unit of social life, incorporating mutual trust and providing an analytical view of what happens in dialogues. Then he focuses on what draws our attention to sense-making and the investigation of reality. He views analytically what happens in meetings where consensus is a goal in itself, and where management often results in nothing. As expected, Jan ends the article in a self-ironical manner, almost roaring a quotation from Elvis Presley: '... a little less conversation - a little more action!'

I hope this little book containing these four lectures will interest you - or even better - will make you feel uncomfortable because it moves you, irritates you or puts you on the track of something you have not been aware of before.

Just before this book was ready for printing I received a sad message from Jerry that his beloved wife Carol Feldman had passed away in Rome on 18 March 2006. We all share Jerry's grief and are thankful that the conference as well as this book became a reality.

Mads Hermansen

Copenhagen Business School March 2006

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Culture, Mind, and Narrative

Jerome Bruner

By what means does a *culture*, the patterned ways of everyday life, manage to capture the minds of those who live under its sway - what we come to expect, what we take for granted, even what we willfully ignore? How do we manage, given culture's power to shape mind, how do we manage nonetheless to maintain our idiosyncratic selfhood, whether typical Danes or Navajos? Have we social scientists, in our theorizing about 'personality and culture' really faced up to the incommensurability of individuality on the one hand and cultural identity on the other?

In dealing with this puzzle, we typically fall back on some version of Freudian-inspired psychodynamics - how a culture's norms or ways become 'incorporated' into our individual super-egos where they are transformed by our ego defenses into a 'disguised' but acceptable form, and so on. And no doubt such processes, in some form, are forever at work. But there is an evident gap in this account, a large one.

For one thing, the *fin de siecle* model inherited from Freud makes it seem as if individuality were somehow pitted against the ways of the culture, as if we as individuals were engaged principally in 'defending' ourselves against culture's demands and strictures. But is this really so? In fact, we easily and often I eagerly embrace the banalities of our local cultural setting and

even object when 'critics' attack them. Indeed, we gladly (even proudly) identify ourselves not only as individuals in our own right, but as New Yorkers, Frenchmen, or, indeed, as dedicated readers of Marcel Proust or Henry James.

I am not implying that there are *no* psychodynamics involved in all this, that (as my grocer once put it) 'you have to be a little out of your mind to live in New York.' What I intend, rather, is that our minds are shaped in remarkable degree by the widely accepted banalities of the worlds around us - the 'realities' of conversational exchange, mass media, occupational habits, and the like. Our psychodynamics, indeed, probably lurk in the background -like some sort of 'need to conform.' But the shaping of our 'psychic realities,' for all that, are largely from the outside in, strikingly public, and cultural in origin and with minimum resistance.

I want to argue in what follows that *the* principal way in which our minds, our 'realities,' get shaped to the patterns of daily cultural life is through the stories we tell, listen to, and read - true or fictional. We 'become' active participants in our culture mainly through the narratives we share in order to 'make sense' of what is happening around us, what *has* happened, what *may* happen. We pattern our realities on these narratives and come to live in a world fashioned by them.

And we do so from the start of our lives. For it is not just hap penstance that our earliest, childlike way of 'making sense' of the world, real and imagined alike, is through story telling and narrative exchange. Our fate, it seems, is to live our lives from start to finish in a storied world. Indeed, these shared story-worlds may even shape our psychodynamics, for even our theories about these matters take a narrative form.

That much said, let's now get to the details.

Let's begin by asking what we mean by a *culture* and what it is to learn 'it.' Surely we don't do it just by following routines, though that is part of the story. Nor do we learn our culture's ways as we would master geometry, the particulars deriving from superordinate axioms, though that enters too. And certainly we don't learn it as an anthropologist would, looking always for connections, everything *ex hypothesi* presumably related to every thing else. Indeed, the first point that needs to be made is that we humans 'know' our own culture more implicitly than explicitly - not unlike the way that the proverbial fish 'knows' the water in which he lives. So, characteristically, when we finally and consciously 'become conscious' of something general about our culture - the operation of the class system, for example, we typically do so with a shock of recognition, as if we'd known 'it' all along but now 'recognize it' in some more explicit way. Plainly, we knew something more implicitly before that - in some pragmatic, or 'living' way.

So how then should we conceive of *culture* looked at from the vantage point of 'life-as-lived'? Perhaps most realistically a culture, any culture, is best conceived as a relatively workable, somewhat makeshift but opportunistic system for getting on with the exchange business of life (of which much more in a moment when we discuss Levi-Strauss's views). Before we 'know' our culture in any explicitly ideational way, we know it, as it were, for sheer ordinariness, even banality - it's what we do ordinarily. Cultures get to us by making daily realities seem routine.

But cultures must also make the inevitable and occasional violations of its customary expectations seem somehow ordinary. For as Bronislaw Malinowski taught us a generation ago, cultures everywhere are replete with lapses from ordinariness that seem 'forgivable' or at least tolerable. Indeed, as with Malinowski's

Melanesians, members of a culture see ready for 'ready' for surprises and minor breaches, well prepared to live with discordant individual stances. By so doing, cultures seem to maintain their apparent 'single-mindedness' despite the helter-skelter of their daily practices.

And this is all managed with only rare recourse to 'last ditch' enforcement measures like 'the law' or other forms of coercion. I propose that it is principally by narrative intervention that cultures achieve this sort of cohesion. For it is by narrative (as we shall see in a moment) that we 'tame' day-to day violations of the expected by rendering them into a familiar, acceptable form.

One of the ways in which this is accomplished is by storytelling's inherent *particularity*. Even stories with a presumed 'universal' require a local particularity to achieve authenticity - like Moses receiving the Ten Commandments on a tablet provided him by God in the desert. Indeed, culture itself, in the words of the gifted anthropologist, Clifford Geertz², seems always local. Nobody ever lives in the whole of it, and when we invoke cultural generalities to justify our acts, we do so with reference to the local scene. To use Pierre Bourdieu's expression, we each shelter ourselves in a restricted *habitus* with its unique rules and norms - as waiters, lawyers, mothers, New Yorkers, fruit-stand operators, prostitutes, professors, or some combination thereof.³ Yet, despite our localness, we somehow sense (however implicitly) that we are part of some larger whole, even when we are divided by such potentially divisive forces as the division of labor or gender differences. How do we manage this?

One obvious and doubtless universal aid in this is, of course, the distinctively human gift (or perhaps illusion) of 'knowing each others' minds' - what in current lingo is called *intersubjectivity*. I use the word 'illusion,' for in fact our intersubjective gift is

(and is generally known to be) far from accurate or profound. Even so, there is no other species on the face of the Earth that can match our reliance on this intersubjective gift - or better, on this Illusion of interpersonal transparency. Without it, human culture would probably never have emerged, as many many students of human evolution insist⁴. Interpersonal transparency (or our illusions about it) is achieved, rather, by our sharing certain common but implicit culturally inculcated conceptions about 'reality,' a reality that itself is culturally constructed. And we are convinced, almost innately, that we share that 'reality,' however poor we are at mind reading.

To be sure, we 'know' Other Minds locally by dint of speaking a shared language - though a common language can also divide. But as important as a shared language may be for achieving workable intersubjectivity, equally important is the narrative gift, the ability to share stories. As with language, it is made possible by a universal, surprisingly complex gift. But just as the universal gift of language expresses itself in different 'surface' languages, so the narrative gift finds expression in different narrative conventions - 'our' conventions of story telling, with recognizable characters, recognizable settings, recognizable occasions for telling. Narratives, to be sure, may translate readily from one language to another but beware! This is not as obvious as it seems, and we shall return to the matter later.

But let me return to a matter already broached. Since, in fact, we can't really read others' minds that all 'directly' or accurately despite our intersubjective gifts and a shared language, our success in sharing what's on our minds must depend upon culturally shaped preconceptions about the world and our faith that others 'like us' share those preconceptions. Every culture has its 'folk beliefs', its 'folk physics,' 'folk biology,' 'folk astronomy.' But

where our personal-social worlds are concerned, folk beliefs are much more consequential. For disagreements in this world easily produce conflict and disagreement.

And I want to argue that the risk of such disagreement is all the greater, given the oddly disordered ways in which cultures manage their communal lives. For as Claude Levi-Strauss long ago reminded us, cultures typically require multiple exchange systems that often clash - e.g., systems for exchanging goods and services, marriage mates and kin connections, mutual esteem, and information.⁵

Given the inevitable conflicts that may arise between these systems, cultures can never be immune from conflicting expectations and irresolvable uncertainties. Nobody, to be sure, lives in the 'whole culture.' But everybody needs *local* knowledge, sometimes desperately, in order to fit them into *their* place in the culture's related exchange systems. Living in a culture, in consequence, requires knowing not only what's *conventionally* expected, but also having some sense of the *troubles* that conflicting expectations can produce. It is here that narrative in its particulars serves a crucial function.

For narrative characteristically portrays conflict, but 'denatures' it by conventionalizing, even banalizing it. My proposal is that story telling - fictional and real alike - is every culture's way of 'taking the teeth out of' potential conflicts of interest. It banalizes conflict by putting it into an accepted genre. Narrative, in this sense, provides a means for neutralizing the discordances inherent in the potential conflicts between a culture's different modes of exchange in Levi-Strauss's sense.

Not surprising, then, that narrative is culturally universal. Story telling is probably innate as well. Nobody anywhere has to be taught to tell or understand stories. Children who cannot do

so, as with severe Asperger's syndrome or autism, are simply unable to enter the culture (Baron-Cohen, 1993).⁶ So what is narrative, what is the deep structure of its stories? We know little more about its underlying nature than we know about the nature of the innate language gift. But we know a good deal about the inherent structure of stories. So let us turn to that now.

A story, any story anywhere, starts by presuming the existence of the ordinary and conventional in some world. This is often called a story's *initial canonical state*: a presumptive stable ordinariness in the world to which our habits of mind are tuned. 'I was walking down our street the other day, around noon ...'

Narrative then requires that this ordinariness, this banality, be upset that it encounter some 'trouble' - what Aristotle called a story's *peripeteia*, classic Greek for 'adventure.' Next in narrative, is the action: what's done to restore the initial canonical state of things. The action, if successful, produces a resolution. Stories also have a *coda*, a commentary or 'lesson,' as in an Aesop fable with its 'A stitch in time saves nine' - much out of fashion nowadays.

'Adventures' and their resolution. But let it be noted that redolutions are not just 'happy endings.' They also have the function of 'conventionalizing' certain human plights. As Aristotle long ago reminded us, for example, there is the genre of tragedy in which the 'hero' is undone by the noble traits that made him seem heroic in the first place. Stories serve not as 'moral lessons' but as instantiations, ways of setting forth and, indeed, even 'standardizing human plights.

But we need to say a word about 'plights' and how they are made 'ordinary' - how, in more detail, stories are constructed. Let me offer this account.⁷ Stories must take heed of what logicians like to call 'the universal arguments of action,' the minimum componentry that makes human doings comprehensible to hu-

man beings. These must include an *Agent* who performs some *Action* that has some *Goal* as well as somebody who is its *Recipient*. All of this must take place in some local *Setting*. Agent, Action, Goal, Recipient, Setting - a narrative's 'pentad' of components conforming to those 'universal arguments of action.' Nothing could be more ordinary.

But to turn human action into a *story*, one further crucial thing is needed: *Trouble*. There must be some clash between the five elements, something that violates ordinary expectations: an *Agent's Action* is inappropriate to a particular *Setting*. Or the *Action* is ineffective in achieving its intended *Goal*. Or the *Recipient* of the *Action* doesn't belong in this *Setting*. *Trouble* happens when the culturally ordinary encounters the unexpected.

'Real life' stories, I have argued, must also serve to make Trouble ordinary. And they do so readily. For stories, however subtle, come in culturally prescribed genres: 'love stories' or 'crime' or 'political corruption,' and on down the list, all banal at root however much we 'liven' them by unique particularities. For stories, however lively their particulars, are dedicated to illustrating how the disruption of expectation can, somehow, be coped with. I am late for dinner, say, and my 'excuse' story invokes the New York transit strike as its highly conventional *peripeteia*. Or I fail to return a phone call, and my duties as a teacher provide the 'out.' Or again, I tell of my summer trip abroad and explain how it departed from its planned route through the generosity of one of my hosts. Or, indeed, I tell of my son's projected career as an Arabist - and tell of how a detour into diplomacy led him along a quite different route. Expectancies altered by equally conventional 'surprises.'

When we depart from this process of banalization, curiously, we do so by somehow feigning fiction - as in the odd expression

‘the truth is stranger than fiction,’ as if to apologize for departing from the rules of banality. I'll come to fiction shortly.

But let me return first, briefly, to our opening claim - that a culture shapes its members to its patterns by conventionalizing not only the account of ordinary events, but also by rendering more familiar their disruptions by conflicting demands. Yet, most cultures, if not all, make a distinction between truth and fiction, with fictional tales presumably freed from the heavy constraints of ordinariness. I want to explore the particulars of this latter claim.

Everybody will agree, I'm sure, that fiction requires the illusion of reality, culturally acceptable reality, if it is to do its proper job of exploring possible worlds, possible minds, possible circumstances. For well wrought narrative fiction serves a function quite strikingly different from everyday tales about 'what happened'. The illusion of reality requires enough 'everyday ordinariness' to keep us in contact with cultural banality, if only to make its excursion into the realm of possibility convincing. I want to offer as an example of this reality-based-voyaging into the domain of possibility a well-known novella by Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Sharer*. Let me tell it briefly.

The young captain in the tale is on his very first ship's command, his vessel anchored off a foreign tropical coast, fully loaded and ready to return home. Our young captain has decided to depart at dawn the next morning and to assure his crew a full night's sleep, he decides to stand the pre-departure night watch alone.

That's the canonical opener, familiar enough, however far-off its setting. Then the *peripeteia*:

Walking the lone deck the young captain sees a boarding ladder that's been carelessly left hanging over the ship's side and

goes routinely to pull it up. But there's somebody in the water below hanging on to the ladder, a stranger.

And then the *action*:

The captain invites the stranger aboard (his name is Leggatt, we presently learn). Leggatt, it turns out, had escaped from the *Sephora* of which he'd been first mate, a ship anchored a kilometer off. He'd broken out of the *Sephora's* brig, having been imprisoned there for killing a cowardly shipmate with a blow of his fist during a threatening storm, perhaps justifiably so, and arguably in the line of duty. The young captain, moved by Leggatt's tale, hides him in his own captain's quarters, planning to let him over the side unnoticed when his ship departs at dawn.

And now to the *resolution*:

When dawn comes, ship's anchor up and sails set, the young captain steers his ship daringly and dangerously close in on shore so that Leggatt can better swim unseen to safety. Into the water he goes - a 'secret sharer' and 'proud swimmer,' as the young captain calls out to him. But the early morning breeze is so light and fickle close in on shore that the ship is in danger of losing way and drifting disastrously ashore.

What finally enables the young captain to tell whether his ship is still under way is Leggatt's hat floating motionless in the water. Leggatt, it seems, had forgotten to take it with him when he slipped stealthily overboard, but the young captain had thrown it to him hoping it would shield him from the tropic sun. Now, floating there motionless in the water, it reveals that the ship is still under way. Disaster averted; the 'secret sharer' swims ashore unnoticed.

Resolution!

The coda is left for us. Why is Leggatt a secret *sharer*? What's being shared? Why *hide* Leggatt? Was Leggatt unjustly accused

on the *Sephora*? Why all this on the young captain's *first* command? Why the merciful hat in the water? What's risked and why? Indeed, more abstractly, what is justice?

But what is inescapable is that the story remains deeply anchored in a compelling cultural reality - one from which, of course, it must depart in the end. Indeed, Leggatt's escape to land is an escape into a possible world, one that has plainly captured the young captain's mind as well - and the minds of thousands of readers. Yet, though fanciful and only-to-be-imagined, it is a potentially comprehensible possible world.

Plainly, narrative fiction comes from the same roots as true narratives. Indeed, we can say that where the function of fiction is to make the familiar strange, the function of everyday true stories is, somehow, to make the strange familiar - somehow a little banal.

The interesting paradox is that we narrativize real life to make the bizarre more banal, but when we turn narrative to art we also use it to warn that the banal may be more bizarre than we first expected. Perhaps, narrative is our human way of reconciling one of culture's inherent dilemmas - the inevitable susceptibility of the culturally ordinary to surprise. Perhaps it is that culture is too tumultuous to withstand everyday life. It needs a way of setting forth the working rules of its everyday life, but doing so in a way that recognizes their instabilities.

It's in this sense that I've offered the argument that a culture's narrative corpus provides the best and least disruptive way of passing on a culture's, any culture's somewhat shaky working ways. And by doing so, it shapes the minds, hearts, hopes, and even the anxieties of those who must live under its sway.

I know no other way in which it could do so.

Notes

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Ambivalent Identities in Nations as "Hardened" Groups: France and the US in 2005

Carol Fleisher Feldman

Abstract

National identity is membership in a group, but a group of a special kind. Like other identities - regional, linguistic, professional on which it is layered, it is constructed using cultural instruments that group members share as their collective interpretive system. But unlike other identities, national identity derives from a group hardened by law and enforcement. In other words, it has strong exteriority and constraint. This can give rise to complex and ambivalent relationships with one's own national identity, however much it may seem to be part of the given in a life. Two examples are American national identity in the past several years, and the recent French vote on Europe.

National identity is one of our many group identities. It differs in some important respects from other group identities a person would normally have simultaneously with it, say identity in a work group, or gender identity. A fundamental difference is the effective and sometimes aggressive administrative apparatus that represents the national group and all its members. But national identity is not just membership in an administered social group.

It, like many other group identities, say ethnic group membership, or family membership, or more ideologically defined group memberships where the role of culture is far more evident such as political party or religion, is also a cultural reality.

The present paper will first discuss some of the theoretical considerations in the neighborhood of this claim, some of the general implications of treating national identity as a semiotic matter. Throughout this theoretical first section, special attention will be paid to the rather special case of American national identity, where, in the absence of common history or biology, a nation must be built entirely out of such cultural materials as common ideals.

The second section is empirical. It reports a data from a multi-year study of American national identity. Interviews of New York college students were collected from which we were able to infer some synchronic patterns in their enculturated conception of American identity at each time point. Then, using conventional tools of social science research in somewhat unorthodox ways, we describe some diachronic changes in the students' conceptions of their American identity across the period of several years. These changes are of two kinds: gradual, linear trends that seem to reflect a deep reorganization under way across the whole time period, and saltatory changes that seem to correspond to important civic events - to civic moments of great engagement, or what Durkheim (1911/1974) called, 'collective ferment (p.91)'.

National identity as a cultural concept

In contrast with some national groups that may overlap with ethnic group membership (a shared biology), or with connected

family identities due to long historical co-residence (a shared history), American national identity is perhaps more evidently based on culture. The absence of common ethnicity and religion is at least unusual among nations, some have said 'exceptional.' In this situation, everyday mores and praxis, and especially the ideals and ideology they are seen as expressing, become central in the idea of the nation (Lipset, 1996) In our case, the common culture must be *sui generis*, or distinctive to the ideals of the nation. The simple fact is that as a nation of immigrants of great diversity of cultural origin, there is nothing but the nation's own national culture that we all share - no non-national religion, no non-national common values, no non-national universal ideals.

Thus, however thin we may think the cultural materials are that constitute Americanness, even if among them football, hot dogs, the Fourth of July, and cowboys and / or football seem to be carrying more weight than they can bear, these national cultural symbols, and other cultural products of a weightier kind, must by default be the basis of our shared national identity.

What has been smuggled into this discussion, and it is partly responsible for the trouble posed by the special properties of American identity, is the notion that there must be some culture of the nation shared by all, and I do mean all, Americans. But why? Is this not a mistake? Is not the solution to puzzle of American identity simply to deny that there is anything at all that we all share? Are we not so diverse that American identity must mean something different for the members of each of our cultural subgroups when refracted through its distinctive values? In fact, virtually all of the empirical social science literature on American identity has focussed on the different subgroup identities, and many scholars believe that there is nothing, or nothing important, that we all share. What could possibly be held in common be-

tween various subgroups, regions, political party groups? What of their subcultures? How can I defend the importance of one (national) culture at the expense of the seemingly more vivid other cultural identities we don't all share?

I believe that American identity makes powerful claims on the personal identity of all its members, quite apart from functional considerations including police powers, and quite apart from the engagement demanded by democratic electoral processes; specifically, it makes powerful *cultural* claims on all its members. All Americans feel that their nationality, including certain political and social ideals, is an important part of their identity. About the differences between them, many times they argue that their version is truer to the American ideal (or more truly American) than that of their adversaries. They want to be insiders, and to be acknowledged as such, even, or even more so, when they are critical of current practices, or recently arrived on these shores. In this sense, Jeremy Tai has pointed out to me, American identity has a quality of a sentimental attachment to a beloved actor in need of support (which can take the form of critical instruction). This is how we share a common identity in spite of differences among us, some of which may at times trace to subcultural differences, or factionalism, even the original factions of the founding fathers.

Our shared national identity, then, consists of a common set of points of reference in mores, in norms and ideals, in founding documents in which sometimes competing ideals were proposed as a national ideology, in historical narrative and myth, in popular narratives, and in the use of all of these as instruments of interpretation. It does not consist of singular collective approval of current practices. Rather, it is made of a diversity of opinion, even factionalism, about current practice which however refers to a common basis for the diverse interpretations of current events.

This is why it is possible to be a fervent American in favor of or against the War in Iraq, and how it is that diverse attitudes to the Iraq war can express an active and engaged expression of shared foundational ideas about American identity.

The national identity is cultural because the national group members' shared identity is built on the basis of cultural products - mores, values, ideals, and aspirations, and founding texts, along with popular narratives and genres - that tell us who we are. It is universal because these cultural products form a universal basis for (the diverse) interpretation(s) of current events that is known to all of us - that is, they are seen as points of reference for interpretation of current events by all members of the national community.

Our common national identity, then, can be seen as a *unitas multiplex*, where the unity is given by our common knowledge of cultural instruments to be used in interpreting national events. But what kind of knowledge is the knowledge of cultural instruments? This knowledge base must endow a form of thinking or cognition, but it looks a little strange. Unlike the knowledge of such familiar schooled tools as mathematics, it is not taught in school. Of course, it must in fact be acquired during the course of development. but rather than being taught formally in school is picked up on the fly by participating in everyday life within a family that participates in the culture .

And of what is it composed? The cultural tool-kit is made up of models of the world, by which I mean to imply both that as models they describe the world and also that they do so in a certain way -namely, that they are patterned according to some set of rules. This is more evident for schooled skills like mathematics or grammar where we recognize the need for formalized instruction in the patterns that compose them. But, it is equally true of

cultural instruments that are picked up on the fly - by playing with peers, or in instruction within the family, that they are patterned in certain particular ways. How we interpret the meaning of observed action and utterance is perhaps the most critical skill whose acquisition is left to the instructional vagaries of everyday life. But just as for mathematics or grammar, interpretations, and especially interpretations of civic events which depend on cognitive mastery of the communal cultural tools of the national culture, can be correct or canonical, or wrong.

The most important point here is that they are social. These patterned cultural products are shared by the members of a social group (as part of the knowledge base of each of them), and, moreover, each member also knows they are shared with the other group members. This conscious sharing of instruments is what makes discussion among members of a social group possible, and therefore invites their use for interpretations that are intended to be shared with other group members. If we begin with the consideration that humans like to feel themselves a part of a social group, then we can see that they would seek to participate. To do so successfully they make use of these cultural instruments that serve as the coin of entry into connected discourse with other group members who also refer to the same instruments.

Like school-based skills that permit the ascent from the actual to the possible, the acquisition of cultural instruments of interpretation are an important component of the changes in late adolescence that Piaget characterized as creating an entry into possible worlds. But early acquisitions of cultural products are seen as young as ages 4 and 5, when young children in a classroom develop standard stories and interpretations of them that are known by all (and only) the children in that one classroom, as Paley

(1988) has observed. Like the birthday party conversation in the doll corner, with its restrictions and rules of good form, cowboys in our American narrative cannot be corrupt, and bad guys in the doll corner cannot have birthdays. In either case, anyone who wants to enter these communities has to know the narrative patterns that will give them entry. The classroom narratives can be seen as actually *constituting* the classroom's *local* culture, the culture of a group that is composed of the small number of children in that particular classroom. In the same way, a larger group, for example the national group of all Americans, is also culturally constituted in part of shared narratives - e.g. the Declaration of Independence, the immigrant narrative, the frontier experience, and so on. All members of our national group are members of a common culture constituted partly of these shared narratives.

When an important new national event occurs, members of the national group may seek to discuss it with one another, and if so they go about coming up with their own interpretations by drawing on these shared narratives. That is how the individuals that compose the group have the possibility of sharing interpretations. This is what turns them from a national group into a national community - it is their sharing of narratives and interpretations.

So far we have taken the world-out-there, a world of classroom communities, and national communities, as given and even immutable even if subject to interpretation. But the matter is not so simple. To begin with, an interpretive system such as a set of narratives, can be seen as an *epistemology*, or way of knowing. Then, once in hand, or mind, epistemologies are used to interpret ontologies, or things in the world such as events in national life. But interpretations have a subsequent effect on the world-out-there as constituted objects of understanding. They lead later to

reconstruction of the events they first interpret, to a new version of the events built along the lines of settled interpretation.

An important, indeed essential, discovery, proposed in the philosophy of Nelson Goodman (1978), the sociology of Berger and Luckmann (1966), and the psychology of Jerome Bruner (1990), is that interpretations made with cultural instruments are *constructive*. By this, I mean to indicate that what they interpret is not a world fixed out there once and for all, not the unchanging ontology sometimes called 'naive realism.' Rather, the world is built, or re-constructed, along the lines of its interpretation, or after it is known, in a new version.

The world-out-there, the ontology, is built out of the cultural epistemology, beginning with the process of looking at the world-out-there from a certain perspective or point of view given in the epistemology that will be used to interpret it. This look at the world from a point of view puts things in it into a certain light and emphasis. What is seen from a certain angle, with its points of clarity and blank places, when largely settled in the discourse of a community, can become a new version of the world, now taken as the world as it is. In this way, we group members can construct an object or a nation anew in a form that embodies a prior interpretation. Then, at the next step, this newly constructed version can be subjected to a new interpretation, at the next level up (Feldman 1987). This process of stepping interpretations down into the given, what I called 'ontic dumping,' goes on without limit over time. It is a dynamic force that drives change in the common understanding of the world-out-there including its nations. And this process can give us a theoretical model for understanding the process through which the identity of social groups can change.

In contrast with changing constructions of national identity,

but also in tandem with them, there are also new events. Among the most dramatic of these are changes in government.

Governments change. They are dis-elected or impeached, or undergo revolution, whether peaceful, or as in American and in French history, they may undergo violent, but largely popular, revolution. These changes, when they occur, must often be at least in part attributable to prior changes in the shared interpretations of a national community that has already agreed to a changed version of themselves in their national conversation. But also whatever happens in a government even, and perhaps especially, when new government actions seem to be a break with the settled understanding of the nation among its citizens, these happenings can affect the community's version of itself. When even this much engagement with the community's discourse fails, when there is not even a reactive incorporation of government action into the discourse of its citizens, a government can only survive with the heavy hand of tyranny. More typically, we can expect national identity as culturally constituted to undergo change with time in response to new events. Durkheim's (*ibid*) proposal about creative ferment tells us how this process might go, and I want to say a little more about it now.

The central idea is that certain events, or moments, in public life lead to tremendous changes in the community and in the community's sense of itself. The manner in which certain events can have these massive effects is by virtue of their triggering an intervening process of energized engagement and talk. Here is what Durkheim (1911/1974) says:

When individual minds are not isolated but enter into close relation with, and work upon each other, from their synthesis arises a new kind of psychic life. It is clearly distinguished by its peculiar intensity from that led by the solitary individual ... (p. 91)

It is, in fact, at such moments of collective ferment that are born the great ideals upon which civilizations rest. The periods of creation and renewal occur when men for various reasons are led into a closer relationship with each other, when reunions and assemblies are most frequent, relationships better maintained, and the exchange of ideas most active ... Such were the Reformation and the Renaissance ... (p. 91-92)

Durkheim has in mind the long sweep of history and its major changes, but I believe that this process would apply just as well to the smaller changes found in shorter historical sweeps. I will make use of his notion of creative ferment in discussing data in Section II below.

One issue begging for discussion here, but which I am not going to address, is sometimes called 'internalization:' how do cultural instruments work in constructing the national identity of individuals, that particular one of their myriad identities, as a part of the self of each member of the national group? Or, more particularly, how do the stories of America and their shared group interpretations come to be part of *my*, and every American's, story as an American? Through what process is the nationally shared version of national experience 'written,' if we can put it that way, into the self-narratives of the (many) individual(s) that compose the national group? All I will say about this here, for I think internalization is a disturbingly murky claim about process, is that if my account of national identity processes above is largely right, there would be no need for internalization, since the nation's ideas about itself would have been derived from those of its individuals in the first place.

Nevertheless, I could say a word about the process of self-redefinition over time, for it could be similar to the processes of

national redefinition discussed above. In the case of the self, the ontology is not a thing apart from the person but is the epistemological person themselves, now taken as an ontological object. In other words, the set-up is reflexive. We have seen that beginning with taking a point of view, constructive processes are at work in the making of such cultural objects as nations. We can also see the self as a cultural object that is subject to construction and reconstruction through a process of thoughts (epistemology) about the self turning into a version (ontology) of the self.

National identity is not only cultural. For one thing, things happen, governments act. For another, every social group, but even more so, every government has exteriority and constraint and enforcement powers of many kinds. And conversely, the person who expresses their national identity as a member of the social, interpretive community of the nation also undertakes formal and consequential actions including voting for a government, and obeying or breaking laws. Citizens may vote for one government but find themselves under another, or vote for one that doesn't act as they expected. This government is still theirs, and they are bound, if only by the enforcement powers of the state, but more normally also by a desire to remain a member of their national community, to accept it as their own. And yet, if disappointed by the outcome of events, they are also bound to dislike and perhaps even fear it. To accept a national identity is to agree to enter as a player into a relationship with hardened structures. Even when we approve them, their enforcement powers can give us a pause. The situation then is such that many people are bound to feel ambivalent about their national identity under many circumstances, and this gives national identity a distinctive stamp, one quite different from other culturally constructed identities.

National identity empirically observed

We have been studying American National Identity since 1997 in eight waves of interviews. Each wave occurred not too long after an event of a least moderate importance in American civic life. Each wave had about twenty interviews of about an hour apiece, and we usually had two or three interviewers in a wave in order to compress the time it took to gather the twenty or so interviews. The interviewees were students in an introductory psychology course with an average age of around 19, therefore different people each year. The first wave, in 1997, served as a stipulative baseline. Like Franz Boas' well-known view in anthropology, which alas turned out to be wrong in many cases (see, e.g. Rosaldo, 1989), we have been tempted to imagine that American national identity had been in a steady state for a long time before we began studying it, but it would be truer to say that we don't know anything about how steady the state we found in 1997 was. The second wave was Spring 1999 after the Clinton impeachment. Wave 3 was during the Bush/Gore campaign in Fall 2000. Wave 4 came after the year 2000 election in Spring 2001. Wave 5 took place two weeks after 9/11. Wave 6 was in the Spring of 2002 after the 'War on Terror' began, Wave 7 in the summer of 2004 after the Iraq war began, and Wave 8 in May of 2005, after the Bush re-election.

Important turning points, seen as punctate changes in the observed patterns of interpretive thinking, came in apparent responses to the Clinton impeachment, in Wave 2, and to the WTC bombings on 9/11, in Wave 5. Other changes in the interpretive pattern took place gradually across the entire period. These showed up as significant linear trends, sometimes without any significant contrasts between adjacent Waves. This, of course,

does not show that they were not responses to events, though they may not have been, for it is possible that their trigger event had taken place earlier than our first wave, or that it produced slower changes than our timing of adjacent waves.

A question about nationality was asked to get basic demographic data onto a sheet of paper - gender, school, major, place of birth. It was asked prior to the national identity interview. In response to this question, our subjects now report their nationality largely as being American, but in 1997, we were very surprised when only 25% of the subjects answered a question that asked 'what is your nationality' by mentioning America or the United States at all- even with a hyphen, and only 15% said simply that they were American or of U.S. nationality (just American). There has been an enormous, if uneven, increase over the years since 1997 in the percentage of our subjects who see themselves as American, and by Wave 8 it had risen from 25% to 65% who say they are American in some way, and from 15% to 50% who say they are (just) American or U.S. In fact, they are all American nationals. So, the change to thinking of themselves as Americans, is perhaps a matter of progressive dis-alienation. It has come gradually, and unevenly, over the years of the research reported here. The percentage who are 'just' American, from Wave 1-8 is: 15,29,38,27,36,58,36,50. The percentage who mention America or US in any format from Wave 1-8 is: 25, 53, 57, 55, 50, 58, 41,65.

Alienation seems to have more to do with the constructed meaning of American identity than with specific events. The 1997 refusal to accept an American identity is noteworthy because it came during the Clinton years when our largely Democratic students should not have felt politically alienated. Their current dis-alienation comes at a moment when the national community is sharply split into red pro-Bush and blue Democratic camps that

are at true loggerheads, and they are unrepresented, the converse case from 1997. Their ambivalence, then, is attributable not so much to current civic events, but to deeper sea changes in the cultural construction of the national identity that show up in their way of thinking about it.

The first interview question asked the subject to think about his or her situation in America - family, friends, school, then went on: 'One thing that we have in common is that in one way or another we're both Americans, and yet being American is not the first thing that comes to mind. What does it mean to be an American? What does being an American mean to you?'

Further questions asked about when they first noticed they were American, and about the 'typical' American. They would answer and then we asked about them. For example 'And what does that typical American say about *your* way of being an American?' We asked them about standard characters and stories, about how things look from a foreign journalist's point of view, about how the President represents them. In later waves, we added questions to the end of the interview about the elections, 9/11, and Abu Ghraib. We followed up freely on their answers, pursuing threads to get closer to the meaning they made of things.

The primary analyses looked at frequency counts of interesting groups of lexical items, proportionalized for total talk. This gives a pretty objective measure, free of the vagaries of coding, but of course it leaves out a lot, a matter I will return to in a moment. We were looking for distinctive ways of talking shared by the subjects of that wave, features of the discourse of their cultural community. Two kinds of results could come out of this. The shared discourse patterns might be distinctive to a Wave, which we tested for with adjacent wave t-tests, or they might reflect changes across the whole set of Waves, which we tested

for with F-tests followed by trend analyses, where we were especially interested in significant linear trends. Separate analyses were run on the talk of subjects and of the interviewers, and results described below are changes in the talk of subjects.

Each group of words examined represented a hypothesis about ways of thinking and talking. For example, noting the progressive dis-alienation with time on the demographic question, we created pronoun word groups that could reflect alienation-first person singular (*I, me, etc.*), and third person plural (*they, them, etc.*) as markers of alienation, and first person plural (*we, us, etc.*) as markers of dis-alienation. Many such word groups were created, but only a few showed changes. Perhaps other changes we thought we saw when reading the transcripts were really there, but simply couldn't be detected in distinctive lexicon; this is a serious potential limitation to the kind of analysis described here. There are simply too many non-lexical ways to express every kind of meaning in English (Feldman, 1974).

There were several significant linear trends, including two for the pronoun groups mentioned as examples above, which would seem to parallel the variability in self-identification as an American that we had found in responses to the demographic questionnaire. In fact, we did obtain some parallel results. There was a significant linear trend away from the isolated first person singular, *I*, and a significant linear trend toward the inclusive and dis-alienated first person plural, *we*. Over eight waves, they came to feel more and more a member of their community of co-nationals, more and more engaged.

Uncertainty about the meaning of being an American could be expected to track along inversely with engagement, with more engaged subjects feeling less uncertain about their national identity. As a measure of uncertainty, we counted frequency of use of

the phrase, 'I don't know,' and found a significant linear decline across the eight Waves that seems to reflect the increase in engagement.

Modal verb usage can also sometimes reflect uncertainty, since it takes expression out of the black and whites of unmodalized declaratives, and phrases things as occurring in the domains of the possible or the necessary. There was also a significant linear decline over the eight Waves in usage of modal verbs.

There were significant linear trends across the eight waves, then toward greater engagement as citizens, and a less uncertainty about the meaning of their national identity.

In contrast with the linear trends, there were some linguistic features that showed reliable specificity to a single wave on adjacent-wave t-tests. Nearly all of these showed changes at Waves 2 and / or 5. These two time points seem to have been the most important, and transformative, national moments in the time period we studied. Both of these times, the Clinton impeachment and the weeks after 9/11, fit Durkheim's notion of mechanism for change: they were in fact times when the citizenry of the nation were greatly engaged in civic discourse.

The clearest marker of Waves 2 and 5 was the 'some' words (*something, someone*, etc). In Kenneth Burke's (1945) sense, these words reflect narrative structure - agent, action, instrument, goal and setting. These words mark places, or are place-holders for, these functional! structural constituents. Their use by our subjects, highest at Waves 2 and 5, indicate that they give narrative structure to their talk at those moments, or, to put it another way, they impose formal patterns on it. This rule-patterned use of cultural instruments is connected to turning points, probably because more highly patterned, rule-bound cultural instruments have greater power to transform the narratives of the group.

Finally, there were no differences obtained in the results reported above between students from New York and the others, even if many New Yorkers are surer that they are New Yorkers, or even about what kind of Nike's represent them correctly, than about they are about their national identity.

Conclusion

Our turn to American identity was an effort to grope our way toward an empirical cultural psychology. We meant to do it once and stop at that to see if we could characterize the interpretive thinking of a very large social group like the nation that, as Benedict Anderson (1983/1991) notes, is so largely composed of people most of whom will never know each other. Because of this, it is only their chains of discourse that can connect them to each other, and create their group. This gives discourse processes and meaning-making in social groups a central role in national identity. However, the project took on a life of its own and taught us at least one new lesson about the challenges of an empirical cultural psychology; namely, that its material is at times rapidly changing. Probably all of it is - not just national identity.

In spite of the importance of meaning making for national identity, actual events also have an important, even an exaggerated role. The recent French no-vote on Europe can be seen as a stronger solution to the problem of alienation than the American reworking of the narrative since it tries to prevent the real-world conditions from coming about that could lead to internal exile. In the context of the current discussion, it can be seen as a practical act designed to avoid a situation where one may not be able to create a civic self, or must do so by semiotic means in the face of

perceived exclusion. If the French currently do feel they are members of the French citizenry, they can easily be imagined wishing to avoid losing their sense of belonging and then having to try construct it afresh from semiotic materials that may or may not be satisfactory or ready to hand.

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Learning and Storytelling

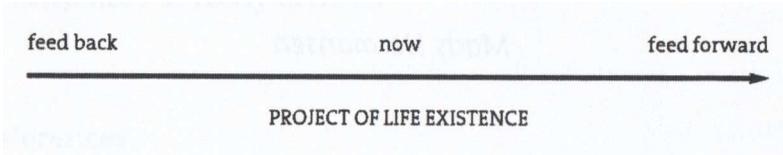
Mads Hermansen

The more I have been concerned with learning, the more I have felt that much has already been said, and that the variation in topics relates to very few factors, much of them discussed repeatedly in different ways. This view is somewhat reflected in my book *Relearning* (2005), in which the first chapter unfolds my thoughts about learning-minimalism by way of a 3-dimensional model. My ambition was to create a general dynamic model that would capture both necessary and sufficient aspects of the learning process.

This way of thinking is new, however, so I shall briefly summarise my theoretical point of view as follows:

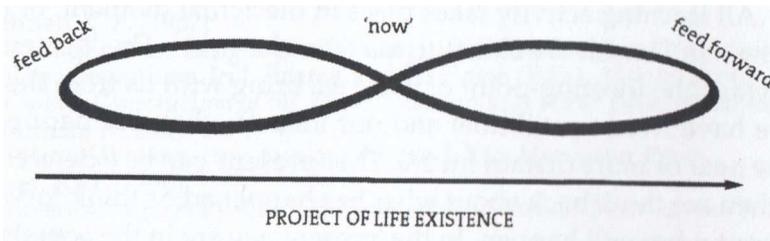
All learning activity takes place in the actual moment, or present - in Danish we called it '*nuei*' or 'the now'. The 'present' is always the meeting-point of what we bring with us from the life we have lived up till now and our idea of what will happen in the near or more distant future. This 'present' can be extended, as when we think back about what has happened or think forward about what will happen. In the 'present' we are in the actual moment, so to speak, as well as back and forth from it at the same time. To put it in a different way, in this 'now extended across time' we learn that both prospective (feed forward) and retrospective (feedback) scanning are nevertheless connected with the

'ontological now', or what is being done in practice at the very moment. This process may be illustrated as follows:



'The now' progresses, of course, with the activity in the flow of time, and the infinity sign precisely captures this process between feed back and feed forward.

The following lemniscate curve constitutes the basic figure at the heart of the model, which encompasses the two first dimensions in a dynamic process. It inscribes the conceptual pair, feed back - feed forward, and describes the relation between these concepts as an infinite process.



The concrete 'being in the present' may thus be described as a state of being simultaneously ahead of and behind oneself. In order for this 'being ahead and behind oneself' not to become

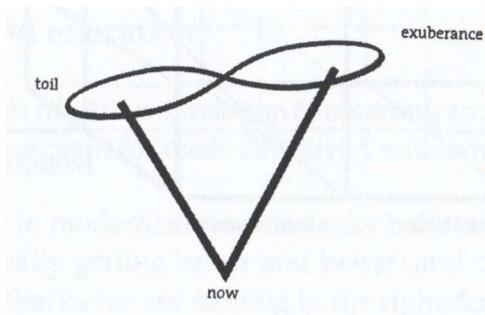
stressful, it is imperative that these excursions into the future and the past should be substantially related to the meaningful narrative under construction in 'the present'.

Previous models have described the process of feed back - feed forward as habitual, i.e. non-reflective. Thus the current model merely serves to describe a process of automatic learning.

However, it is evident that learning also occurs in the reflective mode. Thus, in order to incorporate both the reflective and habitual modes of learning the former model has to be constructed on two levels, where the top level is the reflective mode and the bottom one the habitual mode.

The basic tenet is that learning processes in the habitual and the reflective modes are subject to the same laws. The dynamic interaction between habitual and reflective modes provides the second pair of concepts, where feed back and feed forward were the first pair.

Learning by toil is characterised by a struggle with the content as well as the need to overcome resistance on a personal or existential level. Exuberant learning, on the other hand, is a less strenuous process of acquiring knowledge by way of play or experimental activity. This may be illustrated as follows:



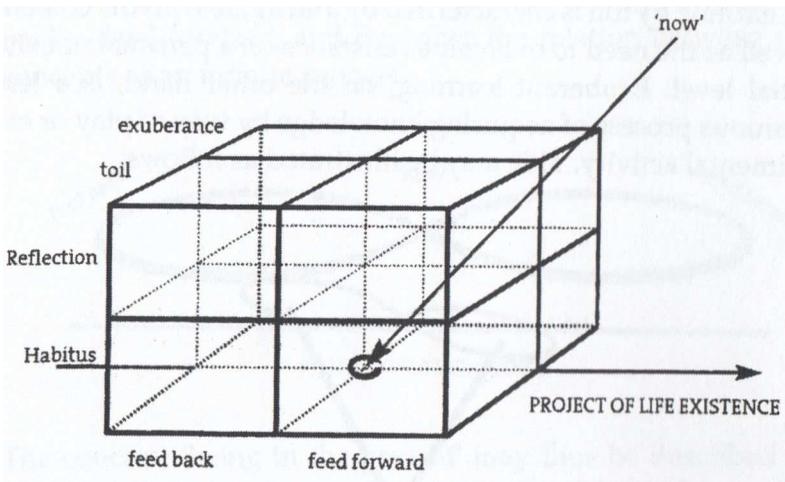
This model seeks to capture the fact that from an evolutionary perspective toil precedes exuberance. Thus the relation between the two components in this part of the theory is not quite complementary. The exuberant learning mode initially requires a certain amount of toil.

The lemniscate curve still accurately describes the process, since it is characterised by fluctuation between the two modes. This pair of concepts constitutes the third and last one.

We can now identify three pairs of concepts with which to describe three crucial dimensions in a general theory of learning:

- Feed back - feed forward
- Habitus - reflection
- Toil - exuberance

Thus, this was the final model:



Storytelling and learning

The function of the story as a means of recapturing good development
 I can phrase this as a statement: Man must have something against which to pit his values, something to create coherence and meaning in his life. If the story about the great project of developing conditions for human life under rational modernisation is no longer to be trusted as a guideline, one has to find an alternative. And this is what man does, if he obtains no help to create coherence and meaning.

Individual strategy in relation to selecting such a counter-story, can develop in manifold ways. At the present time we can see some signs of such variation. Some people lament this variety, because it weakens cultural and social coherence and common guidelines. Others celebrate and stress that the phasing out of the great stories points to local ways of defining the foundation on which to live and build a society.

The optimism of modernity (Giddens 1991) together with good progress on the one hand and postmodernism 's dismantling of the same belief (Polkinghorne 1991) on the other becomes a central battleground of meanings.

Storytelling and education

Discussion and clarification in relation to meaning and coherence are especially important for those employed with education.

- If you adhere to modernism you basically believe that everything is generally getting better and better, and that despite temporary setbacks we are moving in the right direction.

- If, on the other hand, you adhere to postmodernism you are basically in doubt about the direction.

In both cases one might say that it is up to each individual to suggest how to create coherence, value and direction for the good life. It is a little easier if you adhere to modernism, because this makes you part of a development that you basically believe is moving in the right direction, whereas postmodernism is often more practically orientated, seeking to satisfy demand without questioning meaning or usefulness.

An aid to finding aim and value

The function of the story

This is all about revitalising the story:

About creating good space for and possibilities for unfolding the story of what we do and what we think. Or, in other words, of creating the possibility for story and examination in contexts designed to listen and reflect. This involves following a set of rules where

- the participants recognise the storyteller and
- attempt to assist him to deduce the essence of his story, and
- thus to understand himself and
- deduce his own possibilities for action.

My claim is that by introducing a recognisable space for telling and reflection you can strengthen the formation of values and personal development, and make it easier to orientate and determine the developmental direction.

This claim concerning the story's potential as a medium of

acknowledgement is a central point in the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur's reinterpretation (1976) of Aristotle's theory of *mimesis*, or imitation. It is in fact Ricoeur's opinion that we learn and form our own opinions by imitation. Thus, imitation becomes a framework for acknowledgement and storytelling in relation to the creation and negotiation of the fundamental values necessary in life.

Ricoeur understands what we do as an interconnected 3- phased process beginning with some action.

- Thus, the first phase of *mimesis* concerns our unreflective actions, based as routine as part of an automatic and spontaneous repertory. Such actions are both common and practical, because they make us do the right things without reflection. Frequently, what we do automatically is also the right thing to do. So, when done, we give it no second thought.
- However, automatic reactions are not always preferable. When we find that our well-functioning automatic reactions do not solve the problem, the second phase of *mimesis* begins, which may be termed the storytelling phase. We all know how irritating it is when automatic reactions make us do something inexpedient. This is when we stop up and regret what we have done more or less overtly. It is at this very point that Ricoeur claims that by means of narration you can learn to understand what you actually did when automatically making a mistake. The precondition is that someone is willing to listen to our story. In this way, it has an organising function. Whether you form or create an opinion by telling the story is a matter for discussion, and even though this discussion sometimes has been quite intense it is somewhat irrelevant in relation to what

happens to the individual. Nevertheless, when storytelling has an organising and acknowledging function, it is due to the way we tell the story. The act of telling is perhaps one of the most basic forms of connection between people, possibly because we are constantly telling personal stories to organise some event that has happened in the past, is happening right now, or may happen in the future. Another reason may be that the encounter between language and the human striving to organise chaos through human storytelling has created the basic structure upon which we tell our stories.

Through storytelling we frequently find out what we should have done instead of what we actually did, even though the listening party may not have made any comment but simply paid attention and displayed acknowledgement. It is during this second storytelling phase of mimesis that we stop up and say, for example: 'Well, of course, that was what I should have said (or done)!' This is the moment of acknowledgement when the new routine grows out of the old one and old practice comes to a halt. This is when the field opens up and produces 'surplus meaning', as Ricoeur calls it, and now we come to the third phase of mimesis.

Thus, we can conclude that our actions, the stories about what we did as well as the possibility of learning what we could have done, are all interconnected. That is, if you have a chance to relate your story to attentive listeners.

- The good thing about the acknowledgement that arises from what you narrate is that the storyteller himself owns it. He is the one who has learnt how things could be done in a different way.

- Contrary to this is the good advice about what we should have done. No matter how good this advice is it has one conspicuous flaw: namely, that it was the other party who produced the good idea. When the fact that you yourself failed to think of the obvious is thus revealed, the advice easily acquires the character of criticism. Therefore, good advice is often followed up by an unwillingness to examine its possibilities, and energy is concentrated on counter-arguments instead.

As a result, stories open up for possibilities whereas good advice does the contrary.

A methodical basis

The story as basis for participation

The framework for storytelling can be refined in numerous ways, and this is basically what good advice is all about. I shall only touch upon them here.

- It is, among other things, the role of the teacher / adviser to unfold the possibilities dormant in storytelling in relation to the individual student, or group of students, when standing at the threshold of a vulnerable process requiring new acknowledgements to handle the tasks.

Here we reach the central point both in relation to teaching/ advising and other potentially developing processes. At the start you are vulnerable and to some degree defenceless. At this point you are forced to accept that, basically, you have not been 'good enough' when you recognise or reluctantly have to face the fact

that you have to develop or improve your production methods or production facilities.

Thus, the beginning of any development is vulnerable and calls for the defence or protection of your self-esteem as being 'good enough'.

Referring to my initial considerations, one could say that the development of late- or postmodernism has made this vulnerability an everyday condition. I always make a point of describing how we can find support in easy solutions, such as lifestyle choices, or can throw ourselves into the arms of the latest trend or fashion and seek help there.

When working with storytelling, claimed above to be a sturdier support for adjusting the direction of development, you have to take vulnerability into account, otherwise confrontation will close the initial function of storytelling as regards possibilities. If no account is taken of the storyteller's vulnerability, the course of the advising and development will be characterised by a fight between tellers and listeners in almost any field.

- However, if we agree to make the storytelling framework increasingly a matter of self-examination by acknowledging stories about problems and difficulties, then the chances of viewing a new fruitful possibility are much bigger.

When a story has the power of acknowledgement, it is due, among other things, to its organisation of time. A story is often structured with preliminaries or a beginning, a more or less broad-middle section, where the story unfolds, and a conclusion in which the story is imbued with coherence of meaning.

But storytelling is not merely a question of acknowledgement. J. Bruner (1990) has minutely examined the function of storytelling from a folk-psychological perspective. He claims that story-

telling not only has organising and acknowledging functions but always an aspect of negotiation as well. Thus any story is also a negotiation with our fellows as regards the acceptance of the story just related.

Bruner says that narrative is always about people who have in practice become marginalised, or differ from the norm in what they do. Thus, storytelling also purports to obtain acceptance of new ways of doing things.

We may observe the story's function as negotiation when, for example, we see what children, or for that matter, adults, do when they have done something wrong. They start off by telling us, often with the overt aim of showing 'that it was not my fault, but Alexandra or Frederic who started it, and in fact I could not help it because they provoked me!'

Some of the stories we are introduced to we accept immediately, while others we reject at once, but to a large number of them we listen, in order to judge whether we believe that what was told could be likely, often according to standards related to the likelihood of whether we could have done it ourselves.

Thus, the social interconnections in which storytelling takes place are influenced or even created by stories told in this way. Actually, this has been known in the business world for many years. For example, we could consider the professional and very effective way the people running the Danish pump factory Grundfos still talk about the founders' entrepreneurial spirit. They tell us about the founder's modest background when he started producing pumps in his own garage.

In direct line from this story about the energetic entrepreneur, they tell the present story about the social responsibility displayed by Grundfos in always employing a small number of people with social or mental handicaps.

This furthers the good story about Grundfos as a responsible and decent establishment - storytelling as management and well done.

In the Danish context it would be justified to say that the agricultural organisations face a great challenge when seeking to make the population and the politicians believe the stories about why the agricultural sector needs large subsidies from EU and national governments.

Some remarks about practice

Consequences: Systemic intervention

It is important, of course, to work with stories, hypotheses and suppositions in education. In fact, I don't think we can do without them. It is important not only because I have just based my arguments on them, but also because they belong to the storytelling tradition which, at least in Denmark, has been part of our history, where the co-operative movement has gone hand in hand with societal development, starting with the folk high schools and the foundation of cooperation, especially in the field of agriculture (i.e. dairies).

This has resulted in a high professional level in many fields of society and production. As the result of modernisation or post modernisation, however, it lacks popular support, since it is disconnected from the self-perception of ordinary inhabitants and not least out of touch with the population's idea of how things should be done.

In schools, the good thing about the storytelling culture is that it transgresses and keeps doubt alive. And listening to doubts can keep us from repeating some of the mistakes we have made

throughout the years by making decisions solely on the basis of the teacher's expert advice. The stories of both teachers and students must be examined together and at length, and must crystallize into a sturdy and well-trying solution that contains a story in which the student can proudly see himself.

If one were to point out a number of techniques and possibilities for staging storytelling as a basis for professional teaching, it would be natural to point at systemic communication theory in practice (Watzlawick 1980).

The ultimate demand in systemic thinking is that you must express yourself hypothetically and circularly, and thus formulate your suppositions in the form of a question. This puts a stop to diagnoses and know-all attitudes.

It is much more likely, no matter whether it contains a pre-understanding or hypothesis, that a question rather than a know-all statement will be examined as a possibility.

If you aim at questioning and examining culture, you participate in fact in processes where feed back (evaluation), feed forward (prediction), and reflection are central points. This provides the participants with the possibility of taking stock of the adjustment of their own activities by telling their story. And that is exactly what systemic angles are suitable for. And looking closely, you will see that we are now back where this article began in the foundation of learning process.

Thus, the key point for the teacher (and the student) is to reflect upon himself as a player.

In some teaching situations one could imagine that it might increase the quality to work in teams of teachers (and students), who take different roles or points of view in relation to the case on which they want to throw light.

Perhaps one could imagine that the student's story (or specific

idea) forms the starting point. The teacher's part could be cast in such a way that he starts by questioning possibilities, and later in the process starts examining questions raised in the group's conversation about the matter in hand. Thus, the conversation sways back and forth above the actual case and the examination of the conversation's fruitfulness.

In this way meta-communication is used actively when somebody is talking about what happened as an extra feed back. This provides new points of view and opens for new possibilities.

To start using such forms of work and reflection will initially require some help. But if the student is already being educated in supervision and possibly trying it out in practice, some of the qualifications required for the work will already be present.

Appreciative inquiry

Another way to work from a similar angle is 'appreciative inquiry'. This is founded on the idea that we get energy and pleasure by focusing on the good - on the cases in which we succeed (Barrett 1995, Cooperrider 2000).

The stories must meet with appreciation, which means that the listener must show that he/she has heard the story and can 'take it' without criticism or rejection. Subsequently, the listener can try to challenge the story by putting concerned and interested questions.

The phrase 'you cannot see the wood for trees' illustrates that sometimes it may be difficult for us to see aspects of our own reality; good interlocutors, however, can help us in this direction. Another way to challenge the story is when the listener explores and reflects new aspects of it. The listener should not force his

interpretation on the storyteller but speak for himself. For example: 'I had just come to think of the story about... when I heard you telling me this. What do you think about that?' Or the listener can put a specific question about what 'the good version' of 'the bad story' would be like.

By isolating what is good and workable instead of what is not, the things we should uphold or should do more often becomes clearer to us. This is what a good dialogue in exchange with others can help us to isolate.

A few rounds with colleagues where you relate the best experience 'since the last time' is a way to keep and remain connected with what is valuable. One might say that we live in many ways in a 'problem culture', where it is almost more legitimate to talk about what is difficult than to talk about what makes one proud and happy, etc. We almost feel naked when telling colleagues what we did well or are good at.

Questions like, 'What is the best thing that happened in relation to the decision you made?' or 'Which of the two possibilities are you most enthusiastic about?' open for new resources and self-portrayals.

These questions could, for example, be framed by colleagues' appreciative interviews according to an interview guide where the focus, for a change, is on what gives life and works and on resources rather than deficiencies and mistakes.

Conclusion

I have now examined a number of reasons for reconsidering the basis and practice of professional teachers' attitudes. I have tried to focus on what opens for possibilities, and what makes you

orientate towards the other party's story, so that the stories about scientific rationality and pragmatic management can become two sides of the same storytelling relating to the unfolding of good practice in learning and education.

It is my hope that I have demonstrated storytelling as a basis for teaching and learning, because it

- opens for possibilities and fellow thinking
- makes the student aware of owning what he has done, since it is his story that is the basis of the work
- is better able to contend with problems because the student's story is the basis for reflection and the starting point of learning.

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The Unintended Side-effects of Talking to other People

Jan Molin

Let me express how privileged I feel to be giving a lecture in this distinguished company.

Let me start with a flashback:

In the early seventies I read psychology at the University of Copenhagen. As part of my studies I had an internship at the State University Hospital's department for patients with mental disorders. I was there, not to help the patients, but to help design a training programme for psychiatric nurses. One day the chief psychologist gave me a copy of an article she was overtly enthusiastic about: It was copied from *American Psychologists*, vol. 27, no. 8 1972, and the title read: *Nature and uses of immaturity*, by Jerome S. Bruner.

I read the article and lost whatever self-confidence that I might have possessed prior to my reading.

This twenty-page article offered a comprehensive discussion of the intricate mutual interdependencies of action, language, learning and culture, starting with the great apes and ending with the analysis of the young generations of society at that time.

And all this supported by more references and more cross disciplinary discussion than I could ever dream of being able to administer myself in a lifetime. All in a singular twenty-page article.

I am not sure that I ever recovered from this experience. Nor-

mally I tend to loose papers and suchlike, but to my relief (and surprise) I found my old, brown and somewhat crumbled copy of the article when I began my preparations for this lecture in Professor Bruner's honour.

I read the article all over again, and I decided to do the sensible thing, that is to reduce the complexity and the generosity of this rich text. I picked out tiny pieces from the article's discussion fragment, that I thought I could handle to gain support for what I intend to talk about today: *The unintended side-effects of talking to other people*.

Let me brief you all on some of the arguments in the '72 article, and focus on the important distinction between talk and action:

The decontextualized construction of context

There are numerous accounts of how the child learns to talk. Basically these observations point to how the initial use of language is probably in support of and closely linked to action.

So what the child shows us is that initial development of language *follows* and does not *lead* his development of skill in action and thought. It is only after a distinction has been mastered in action - that it appears in initial language.

With further growth, the child demonstrates a use of language that is less and less an adjunct of action or a marker for representing the close and immediate experience.

It is soon the case that language becomes in this way increasingly free of the context of action: Whereas 'to understand what a baby is saying, you must see what the baby is doing', nothing of the sort is true for the adult.

Language, thus, following Elliott Jaques, becomes a capacity

to form statements/propositions that are disengaged in the sense of not being tied to any specific actions in the immediacy of their utterance, but are rather about imaged things and events in absent time and places.

In this way, the development of language in humans not only moves in the direction of becoming itself free of context and accompanying action, it also frees the attention of the user from his immediate surroundings, directing attention to what is being said rather than to what is being done or seen.

So, although, language springs from and aids action, it quickly becomes self-contained and free of the context of action. In this process, language becomes a powerful instrument in selectively directing attention to features of the environment represented by it ...

On the one hand language detaches itself and is decontextualized with respect to concrete patterns of observable action... on the other hand language becomes the primary vehicle for the construction of context.

The mutuality of being separated by language

The decontextualized construction of context through language emerges out of everyday patterns of relationships. In effect, a proper understanding of the performative character of language requires that we focus our attention less on the linguistic acts themselves and more on the broader patterns of interaction in which they occur, To put it more directly, the performative value of an utterance is derived from its position within a more extended pattern of relationship.

Here relationship rests on face-to-face interaction, which we,

following Goffman, may roughly define as the reciprocal influence of individuals upon one another's actions when in one another's immediate physical presence.

Conceptions of the self and others are derived from and sustained by such linguistic and concrete patterns of relationships. Through relational coordination language is born, and through language we acquire the capacity to render ourselves intelligible. Relationships thus replaces the individual as the fundamental unit of social life.

With relationships as the fundamental unit of social life, an observation so precisely made by Kenneth Gergen, we may reinstall *the significant other*, the second person, as it were, that brings meaning to any first person's sensation of being.

There are, thus, a number of reasons why the second-person role is important:

'You' constitute for me someone who is like myself, able to be a member of the dominant social order, someone to whom it makes sense to address my remarks, and whom I can reasonably expect to be moved by them in some way, in other words 'You' provide the motivation for my remarks ... and vice versa. You and I are different from other constellations, we respect and trust each other.

Mutual trust (and respect) lie at the heart of any possibility of a good society. By *mutual trust* I mean relationships in which individuals can rely on each other not to engage in doing damaging, harmful or injurious things to each other. Fear and admiration may play a strong role in the way that people relate to others, but these are not mutual qualities, Trust and respect (like love) will only work in a relationship as mutuality, If trust and respect are not trusted and respected they slowly dies out.

Thus members within such interpretive communities are held

to control, within these domains, what are considered to be valid forms of knowledge and action. When taken out of these domains, their purported meanings and anticipated effects are rendered incoherent by the lack of contextual significance. Social order, to follow Knorr-Cetina, is not that which holds society together by somehow controlling individual wills, but that which comes about in the mundane but relentless transactions of these wills.

So we are faced with decontextualizing language applied in mutually interdependent dialogue: on the one hand language separates people, generating private worlds only loosely coupled to the concrete patterns of local action - on the other hand it is precisely the common use of a decontextualized language that enables people to transform occasional interaction to mutual interdependencies. The paradox being that language in this sense is a contextual asset in the local construction of meaning,

Narrative accounts are embedded within such social action; narratives are accounts that render events socially visible and typically establish expectations about future events. Divided by a common language, in this way, people form mutually dependent interrelationships out of which everyday activities are made intelligible and socially sustainable.

The fallacy of misplaced concreteness

Karl Weick has repeatedly drawn our attention to the interesting processes of sense-making. He has described the way that the mapping of context is similar to the narrative accounts - that such maps bear a close affinity to narrative sense-making. Great storytelling consists of narratives that are powerful, not so much be-

cause they evoke a standard reaction, as because they recruit what is most appropriate and emotionally lively in the readers' repertory,

To recruit personal interests, the stories must allow for co-writing by the reader.

In the loosely coupled, chaotic, anarchic world differences are everywhere and people need abstractions to smooth over the differences. Storytellers and cartographers alike try to fashion those disconnected abstractions into more orderly, stable and plausible patterns. Having become storytellers and cartographers, people then need to adopt the myth that their representations are a sufficiently credible version of the territory that they can now act intentionally.

Enterprise Resource Planning Systems (ERP) offer externalized, standardized managerial means of control. Generally speaking they allow managers to focus their attention on key factors and performance criteria that are expected to represent the multifaceted and complex data-streams of everyday organizational life from purchases to sales, from production to economy and back again.

Looking at his ERP monitor the manager resembles the fighter-pilot in his cockpit with missiles locked on target. The reduced complexity of the ERP system is locking the organization into a fix where abstract systemic points of control substitute real-time and ongoing development of processes and relationships.

ERP may be considered exemplary to basic human attempts to convert the complexity of everyday life experiences into a meaningful and orderly perception of reality.

We are all embedded within a dominant social order which we must, at least to some extent, continually reproduce in all of the mundane activities we perform from our place, 'position' or

status within it - , .. A feeling of necessity that we must account for all our experiences in terms that are intelligible and legitimate within this order; and also, paradoxically, a kind of rational blindness to the fact of our involvement in such an activity.

In other words we fail to register the fact of our involvement with others, and in taking them into account in all we do, we continually reproduce a certain way of structuring all the social relations in which we are involved,

This tendency to selectively abstract ideas - to concretize them as essential aspects of reality and then to take them as appropriate units of analysis, whilst ignoring and forgetting this process of decontextualization -leads to what has been previously termed by Whitehead as the fallacy of misplaced concreteness.

Perhaps you remember Bateson's restaurant guest, reading the menu, contemplating what course to choose... finally deciding on the composition of his meal, carefully placing the menu-card on his plate ... taking his knife and fork; eloquently cutting out the description of the course - and finally picking up the little piece of the menu-card and eating it.

The story is nice, because it is so easy to laugh about the mistake he makes.

Melvin Pollner calls this *mundane reason*. The principle idea is a simple one. When we are discussing features of our world with others - what went on, who did what and so on - we make a fundamental assumption. We assume that we all have at least potential access to the same underlying reality. Any neutral, competent observer placed in the same position will see the same thing.

Do you know the story about the happy small kingdom, that once had a witch stopping by ... In the night she poisoned the village well - and from the next day on every citizen in the kingdom got infected by

the poison,, getting more and more insane, .. all except the king, who had a well of his own.

Day by day the king got more and more troubled by the unruliness of his citizens... Until one night the king sneaked out of his castle to drink from the village well - and the following day the people of his kingdom rejoiced in having again a sane king on the throne.

In the context of social interaction persons construct an interpretable universe or known space within which they live and move and have their being. Technically this is called social reality which can be defined as, 'that which people believe that other people believe'.

The paralysis of consensus

The formative nature of language seems to be such that vague and only partially structured events and phenomena in the world can be specified further within communication; in other words to follow John Shotter, people can be 'moved' linguistically into treating their circumstances in certain socially recognized and recognizable ways.

The danger is that of our being amazed by language, intrigued by it, puzzled by it, and eventually idealizing it. Word-mongering became and has maintained a highly valued asset ... even con-men and medicine men are able to ply their trade because people fall for their words. And those who are said to work with their brains have been more esteemed than those who work with 'mere' muscle - an attitude that is rife today with the arrival of the so-called information age and the so-called knowledge workers who are reported to be replacing the so-called physical worker.

The dangerous part of the idealization of language is that it

plays tricks with our sense of reality. Just because we have a word for something it is assumed that something really exists. The world of language comes to be seen as the real world. The more generalized the language, the more real it is seen to be. By contrast, tangible things, tangible actions get demoted. They lose their value in the scheme of things.

In decision theory it has for long been an established observation that a management group's capacity to make decisions outgrows the same group's capacity to get its decisions implemented. There are many layers of interesting explanations attracted to this empirical phenomenon. Without taking a stand in this discussion it is interesting to observe how these management group processes celebrate an ideal of working by consensus. Managers appear to be proud when they are able to tell the story about never having to vote at meetings - of reaching decisions based on mutual agreement.

So consensus becomes an end in itself, and the abstract quality of a decontextualized language supported by a highly professionalized jargon makes it possible to make ends meet. Against all odds, people with different interests and a variety of experiences and assumptions manage to agree. Perhaps this is why we call them managers. Anyway, it seems that agreement is often based upon the least common denominator - a poorly enacted version of mediocracy carried by words and a ceremonial narrative that reinforces and institutionalizes the power of management and its amazing capacity to make decisions.

Because our micro-worlds are so transparent, stable and grounded in symbolic narratives - not only do we fail to see it, we do not see, that we fail to see it ... Or as Ronald D. Laing phrased it: 'Someone who's mind is imprisoned in a metaphor, cannot see it as a metaphor ... it is just: obvious.'

Opting for consensus becomes more of the same behaviour - and as I guess most of you have oftentimes experienced: more of the same brings about more of the same.

Consensus breeds consensus and consensus is about words, so the narrative becomes still more dominant and the paralysis accompanying the process is inevitable.

Jeffrey Pfeffer touches on this discussion in a recent paper where he makes these surprising observations:

Doing something, actually requires doing something! It means tackling the hard work of making something happen. It's much easier and much safer to sit around and have intellectual conversations, to gather large databases, to invest in technical infrastructure - and never actually implement anything.

Mistaking talk for action, thus, is worse than just a simple error: talk can actually drive out action.

The rigor mortis of turning play into a game

Language, socially built and maintained, embodies implicit regulations and social evaluations. By acquiring the categories of a language we acquire the structured ways of a group, and along with the language the values of those 'ways'. Our behaviour and perception, our logic and thought, come within the control of a system of language.

With C. Wright Mills, this means that along with language we acquire a set of social norms and ideals. A vocabulary is not merely a string of words; immanent within it are social textures - institutional and political contingencies. Behind a vocabulary lie sets of collective action.

To return to Professor Bruner's 1972-article:

The child learns to talk through his play with objects ... gradually play becomes serious play in the sense that people engage in and create mutual interdependencies where they learn from observation. A kind of 'matching to model' ... that permits one to distinguish and relate what is analogous in my behaviour (self) to that of another member of the species (the other).

On the one hand, play - or let's call it social play - becomes that special form of violating fixity and, on the other hand, play - as serious play - becomes a game... when the fundamental human responsivity through the grammar of living in a languaged world becomes a social order with inherent and constraining interrelationships... When doing gets ruled out by talk, ritualized behaviour and abstract standards ... when the convention becomes more important than the content regulated by the convention, then play becomes a game... and... when play becomes a game, culture dies - to quote Johan Asplund, the underestimated Swedish sociologist.

And, finally, when the game has taken over we witness a different kind of play: deep play.

By deep play Jeremy Bentham 1840 meant play in which the stakes are so high that it is irrational for men to engage in it at all - a situation in which the marginal utility of what one stands to win is clearly less than the marginal disutility of what one stands to lose ...

As eminently demonstrated by Professor Bruner it may be observed that deep play is an indication that there are deep and unresolved problems in the culture ... that there is ample reason to believe that the different forms of deep play point to a thwarted backed-up need for defining competence, both individually and socially, to oneself and to others,

The languaged regimes with enacted systems and evaluative

constraint appear to play a dominant part of everyday life. The narratives have conquered and left us with ritual and highly regulated interrelationships.

We have learned the importance of words, and the force of story-telling ... and in a Danish business school we find that, regardless of the type of corporate problem described in varying case-based exams year after year, the students produce almost consensus like essays where the preferred solution is 'dialogue'.

Acknowledging the unrivalled importance of paying attention to language and the rich implications of narrative - there are still unintended side-effects of talking to other people that I have tried to draw your attention to today ...

Let me close my contribution with a quotation from contemporary music:

... a little less conversation - a little more action (Elvis Presley).

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NARRATIVE LEARNING AND CULTURE

In this book four articles present the outcome of an important and fruitful meeting between Danish and American scientists.

During the conference, „Culture, Narrative and Mind“, held at Copenhagen Business School in June 2005 nearly 350 participants experienced the unequalled psychologist, Jerome Bruner, the grand old man who has worked out a sovereign overview of the developments in psychology since the 1940's.

The four articles are written on the basis of lectures from the conference:

„*Culture, Mind and Narrative*“

by professor **Jerome Bruner**, New York University

„*Ambivalent Identities in Nations as 'Hardened' Groups: France and the US in 2005*“

by professor **Carol Fleisher Feldman**, New York University

„*Learning and Storytelling*“

by professor **Mads Hermansen**, Copenhagen Business School

„*The Unintended Side-Effects of Talking to other People*“

by professor **Jan Molin**, Copenhagen Business School

These articles are not only interesting. They might even make the reader uncomfortable in the sense that they might be moving, irritating or revealing something that he or she was not aware of before.