

DISSERTATION

TOWARD A RELATIONSHIP PARADIGM: AN AUTO-NARRATIVE REFLEXIVE
ETHNOGRAPHY OF CO-PARTICIPATION AND CO-CONSTRUCTION OF THE
CULTURE OF MEANING

Submitted by
John R. Tracy
School of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado
Spring, 2005

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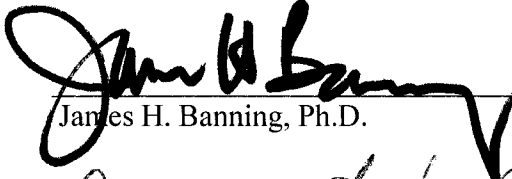
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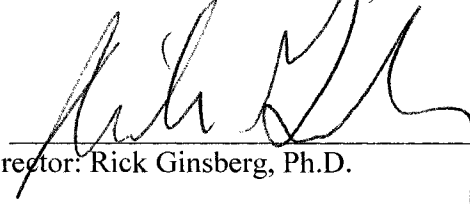
Committee on Graduate Work


James H. Banning, Ph.D.


Mona C. Struhsaker Schatz, DSW


Roxanne M. Gonzales-Walker, Ed.D.


Adviser: Gene W. Gloeckner, Ph.D.


Director: Rick Ginsberg, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

TOWARD A RELATIONSHIP PARADIGM: AN AUTO-NARRATIVE REFLEXIVE ETHNOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATION OF CO-PARTICIPATION AND CO- CONSTRUCTION OF THE CULTURE OF MEANING

This study is a reflexive ethnography in which the material unfolds using a combination of the author's relationship epistemology and axioms from systemic human communication theory (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967) as a basis for culture of meaning analysis (CMA). The purpose is to understand how the data illuminate co-participation and co-construction of the culture of meaning. This is done reflexively assuming "that where there is meaning, there is culture" (Ellis and Bochner, 1996, p. 16).

Three sets of data include the author's personal narrative (1945 to 1961), State of Iowa records (1956 to 1961) regarding the author's institutionalization and foster care, and the literature review with focus on the historical and theoretical context related to the epistemology, methodology, the time periods, child welfare, foster care, and geographic location.

The introduction begins the unfolding process by clarifying the purpose, concepts, questions, focus, significance, and the researcher's perspective. This is expanded with an unfolding of the literature in relation to the co-participants in the study and its design. Chapter three develops the methodology particular to the nature of and purpose of the study. Chapter four opens the two main data sets by means of a descriptive analysis of the co-participants. Chapters five and six relate a reflexive process of analysis of the

relationship messages and relationship perceptions of the co-participants of each other in a way that the reader is allowed to co-participate in the unfolding process of the culture of meaning. These chapters are divided between the author's (Johnny's) institutionalization and foster care experience. It is in these chapters that the richness of the culture of meaning is unfolded for full view of the reader. Chapter seven provides a degree of conclusion to the study, but the nature of the study is not one of conclusion, but rather to unfold for view the culture of meaning. As an ongoing here and now process, it does not end with this dissertation. You the readers continue the dialogue, expand, and redefine anew the culture of meaning.

John R. Tracy
School of Education
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
Spring 2005

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my partner, Sandy Nesbit Tracy, who is always open to discussion and willing to listen. It is also dedicated to my children and grandchildren whom I love deeply and who I hope in some way will benefit from this endeavor. Most importantly, I dedicate this work to all those who have suffered and continue to suffer the wounds of oppression.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This investigation introduces a relationship epistemological paradigm that challenges the current scientific perception of relationship and knowing. The culture under study is the culture of meaning existent between myself, as given in auto-narrative data, and those involved in my life (ages 10-16) as reflected in State of Iowa records regarding institutionalization and subsequent foster care. The auto-narrative consists of four parts. Part 1 is an overview written mostly in the eyes and language of myself as an adult looking back, part 2 is stories written by me as “Johnny” covering the period from birth until age 6, part 3 is also stories written in Johnny’s eyes covering from age 6 until age 16, and part 4 is descriptions by me of some dreams and visions that occurred between birth and age 16, which were especially influential to Johnny. The state records are divided into sections 1-7 with the first section including the initial court records and commitment (see Outline of State Records in Appendix). The remaining sections are sequential from 1956 through 1961. The analysis does not go past 1961 although Johnny was a ward of the state until 1967.

How do the co-participants co-construct the culture of meaning? What is the culture of meaning and what does it mean? What is learned that can be applied in our understanding of the mainstream culture and children and others considered at the “cultural margins”?

Other questions and considerations arise from the introduction of the notion of culture of meaning and use of the relationship communication concepts of co-participation and co-construction. Challenged is the positivist or post-positivist epistemology in which relationship (only that which is observable) is examined from the perspective of cause and effect, rational objective, dualistic, linear, formal logic. The challenge is epistemological and entails a view of natural relationship as consciousness interacting with consciousness and interconnected according to individual and collective uniqueness at and within all levels of existence as a mutually affirming creative process (Tracy, 1995). It is paramount that people take the time to examine who they are and how each worldview reflects our manifest awareness and perceptions of self and the rest of reality. This work represents a push for the development of critical thinking and critical consciousness, dialogue, and reflexive work around how people co-participate and co-construct meaning and culture. It is a work designed to help redefine culture, meaning, and relationship. Redefinition creates new behavioral options, and relationship possibilities, and changes meaning and culture.

Labeling my approach to the understanding of meaning as fitting any particular epistemology is undesirable. According to Thomas Schwardt (2001), it is not only typical of Americans to categorize and label complicated theoretical perspectives as either this or that, but it is dangerous insofar as it binds us to enduring issues, shared concerns, and points of tension that fragment and hinder progress. It is more important that each inquirer develop his or her own identity as a social inquirer without the use of heavy labels, which hinder the development of new or expanded epistemologies.

Culture, to this participant observer, is a conceptual reality. It exists whenever and wherever there is relationship between and among living beings. Culture is the meaning experienced in the relationship of self and other (all that has identity different though not necessarily disconnected from the self). Culture is enacted experiential felt behavior according to the participant relationship perceptions of self and other.

Howard Handelman (2000) gives a definition of culture by way of defining ethnicity, wherein he equates the two. Handelman quotes Donald Rothchild and Victor Olorunsola (1983), “They [ethnic cultural groups] generally have (or believe themselves to have) a common history, traditions, beliefs, and values that unite their members and distinguish them from other cultures” (p. 20). Handelman goes on to say how “ethnicity [culture] requires a subjective group consciousness that enables its members to establish mental boundaries between themselves and others” (p.49).

Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) inform us that consciousness is like the Black Box concept from the field of telecommunication and electronics insofar as it is possible to observe the communication of the sender and the receiver, but not know what goes on inside the Black Box or in this case, consciousness. The subjective consciousness that Handelman (2000) refers to is what I would call a living relationship paradigm that includes perceptual energy fields, the learning process, multiple types of consciousness, and our primary perceptual framework as shown in Figure 1.

The interaction of all the components in Figure 1 are essential and significant to the formation and experience of person in relationship. In this paradigm, relationship is active not passive. Relationship is the interaction of all that is (seen, unseen, macro, and micro) as a creative process. This relationship includes our perceptual sensory receptors,

consciousness, learning, and a relationship perceptual framework of our interpretation of reality.

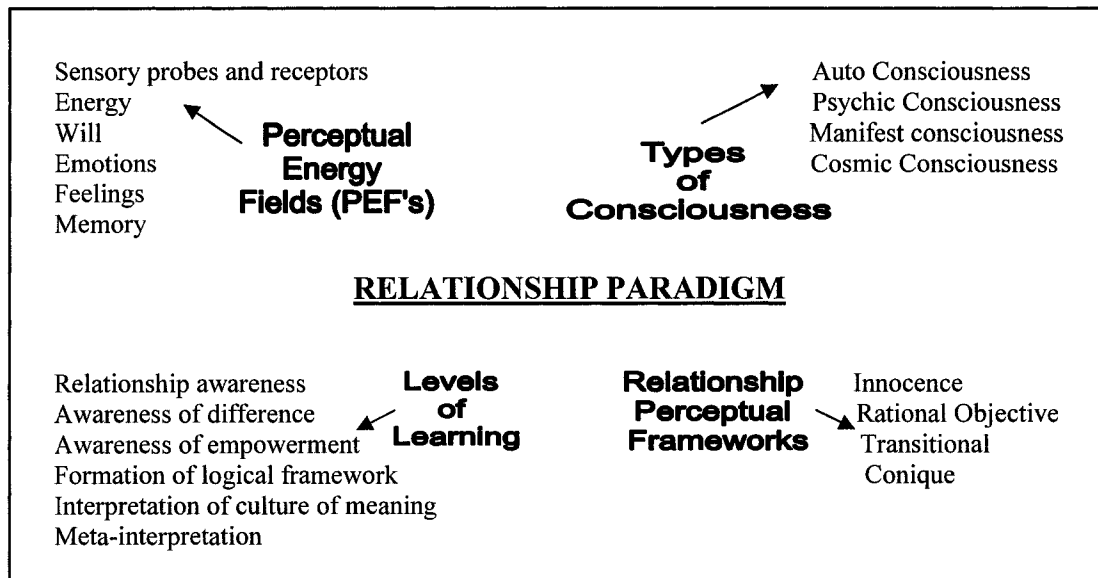


Figure 1. The Relationship Paradigm (Tracy, 1990) indicates four interconnected components essential to relationship as a creative learning process of consciousness interacting with consciousness according to each type and between persons and environment.

This paradigm involves far more than is the focus of this dissertation (e.g., identity theory, learning theory, theory of consciousness and reality, and relationship theory). However, it is given to help illustrate the complexity of relationship and many of the factors intricate to understanding its interconnected nature.

If relationship is consciousness interacting with consciousness, then what is consciousness? In a playful though serious mode, I propose that consciousness consists of and persists through perception, memory, will, energy, feelings, emotions, and love and that these work together to form individual and collective perceptual energy fields (PEF) of consciousness. Feelings, defined as sensual experience, are the major part of

experience when our fields of consciousness interact with those of others. Consciousness is the facilitator of all our feelings, which includes those of genetic origin.

Generally, people do not distinguish well between emotions, feelings, and thoughts. The terms are often used interchangeably. For example: look at the statement, “I feel sad.” If feeling is sensual experiential awareness, then sadness is not a feeling. It is an emotion, which involves numerous feelings to which we have attached numerous interpretive messages. I call happy, angry, scared, and sad emotions. This does not mean that most people (occasionally even myself) won't still call them feelings. However, it is important to understand that each of these emotions actually involves a combination of feelings and interpretations. Love is a realization, insight, metanoia, or change of heart and mind linked with a felt experience of natural affirmation and empowerment. It is experientially becoming manifestly aware of our deep interconnected uniqueness... the sensually intimate connection of self and other. Love is neither a feeling nor an emotion although it entails feelings and arouses emotion.

Each PEF is unique and energized as a life force with sensory receptors and probes. As consciousness, each is empowered with logical interpretive learning capacity, and decision making. DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is perhaps an example of PEF's joined together to form the genetic foundation for nearly every particle of biological behavioral limits and potential (Howard, 2000; Ramey, 2001). Perception is interconnected with the growth and development of our physical and psychic sensory capacities, development of consciousness, decision-making abilities, our experience of the world around us, and all of these factors combined.

Levels of learning (Figure 1) involve a change in conscious awareness, that is, some form and degree of knowing representative of one or more of the different types of consciousness. Knowing is experienced by way of receptivity toward radiated and projected energy embedded with memory, will, emotion, and feeling. What is done with this is relative to a person's or group's paradigmatic interpretation (Figure 1). "If we remain as observers, objective scholars of another society [culture], we will never enter into its essence. However, if we approach it in a spirit of humility, respect, inquiry, and openness it becomes possible for a change of consciousness to occur" (Peat, 2002, pp. 10 – 11). If we believe that consciousness is no more than an epiphenomenon or secretion of the brain, then you may be entrapped in your skull (Peat, 2002). Changing consciousness is not as important as what you do with what you learn. "In indigenous context this always means responsibility to the group and relationship to all of nature" (Peat, 2002, p. 147).

Perceptual frameworks (Figure 1) are introduced in chapter two (Figure 7) as one of the tools used in data analyses. Perceptions include what Werner Erhard (1975) identified, in a lecture I sat in on, as ways of knowing such as mysteries, symbols, definitions, beliefs, rules, values, and attached feelings regarding self and other. These perceptions are defined in terms of relationship perceptions of self and other.

Our interpretation of the relationship messages, verbal and non-verbal, of others is greatly influenced by our development in each of the sections (Figure 1). Our interpretation forms and/or modifies our relationship perceptual frameworks.

Culture, then, could be said to be a commonly held relationship perceptual framework that constitutes the primary perceptual definitions, beliefs, rules, values, and

attached feelings regarding self and other (co-participants). However, it seems that culture is actually the meaning we experience, define, redefine, and redefine ad infinitum as our perceptual relationship framework. Culture of meaning is our interpreted relationship experience. Relationship experience is the interaction of self and other as manifested in the communication messages we send and receive in our individual and collective attempts to define the relationship experience (culture of meaning).

Co-construction is the attempt and/or act of defining meaning to the ongoing relationship experience. Co-construction by name seems to imply a working together to define meaning. However, this essential process, as most people know, is not generally a process of reaching consensus. It is more often one person or group seeking to influence, coerce, or impose their definitions upon another, with or without consent or agreement.

Ideally, co-participation is a form of exchange or partnership. For example, the teacher informs the student and the student informs the teacher in a way that co-constructs deeper understanding and meaning for his or her representative groups. The teacher learns the student's voice and thereby transforms his or her and/or the institution's voice to be more compatible with that of the student and the student learns the teacher's voice and thereby transforms his or her voice in a language that the groups he or she represents can understand. Both inform each other and partner to co-construct anew the culture of meaning. In such a relationship, there is no hierarchy. It is a dialogic relationship. It is not about power over, debate, regurgitating deposited information back onto test forms, or grading (Freire, 1990). It is about the freedom to co-construct meaning and the culture of meaning. In such a relationship, the culture of meaning is an ongoing creative process that draws upon multiple traditions, personal and group experience,

environmental experience, the very depths of all that is seen and unseen past, present, and future.

Going from one paradigmatic worldview to another is much like going from one world to another. Each is dramatically different and a person's reference is that of his or her own world by which to interpret the other. Heisenberg (1930) developed the uncertainty principle relative to quantum theory when measuring electron speed and position. Heisenberg found that when you tried to measure position, the speed would become uncertain and when you tried to measure speed, the position would become uncertain. Similarly, shifting consciousness is difficult, if not impossible, from a worldview that includes laws, principles, and rules that are epistemologically inflexible and exclusionary of other possibilities.

On the other hand, co-construction of the culture of meaning could also be whatever meaning is held by each participant as they interact. In such a case, there would likely be multiple meanings and multiple perceptions of relationship and reality with varying degrees of agreement and disagreement.

The culture of meaning is understood by examining the relationship of the co-participants, that is, how the participants (narrative and state data) co-construct the culture of meaning. No matter what one's perceptual field may be, the culture of meaning is re-created daily, with or without conflict, at all levels of personal and group experience.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this inquiry is to arrive at a deeper understanding of ourselves, our relations, how we change, how we think and relate, and how we co-

construct the culture of meaning. A second purpose is to introduce Systemic Human Communication Theory (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967) in combination with the Relationship Perceptual Paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995) as a new and effective system of analysis. This is especially true when investigating individuals and groups who hold multicultural or other cultural worldviews (relationship perceptions of self and other). A third purpose is to emphasize the need for a shift in research from mainly looking at relationship in the cause and effect linear perspective of classical formal logic to that of looking at relationship in terms of messages and the relationship perceptual framework that inform our understanding of the culture of meaning.

Auto-narrative and the state records create the opportunity for a reflexive ethnographic inquiry using innovative methodology to examine the interactive process of the co-construction of the culture of meaning. This gives the opportunity to take a deeper look at ourselves, our relations, and how our worldview is so important regarding the quality of our lives and of those around us. It is important in how we live and behave. It is important in how we structure our social, economic, and educational institutions. The information gained here can inform various professionals such as educators and social workers. More specifically, we can learn more about the impact of communication and how policy and practice might be changed.

Conscientização

Conscientização is referred to by Paulo Freire (1990, p. 19) as change through critical consciousness (a combination of open non-judgmental exploratory inquiry, dialogue, and personal and/or collective experientially based insight), which he experienced as an 11-year-old. Freire was radicalized by the experience of extreme

hunger and poverty. In the narrative story that follows, I too was radicalized. As a child who experienced extreme abuse, neglect, poverty, and homelessness, I was captured by the police and suddenly encountered the juvenile justice system: jailed at the age of 10. I was committed as an inmate at Toledo State Juvenile Home for Delinquents on my 11th birthday.

A long silver-gray ribbon of road narrowed as it stretched over the rolling Iowa hills into the darkness. Suddenly, for a brief moment headlights appeared, disappeared, and then appeared again.

James [pseudonym] held out his thumb.

“No! They’ll catch us,” I said. “We should’ve stayed in the old barn for the night. Quick, get out of sight!”

“They won’t catch us!” said James.

The set of headlights became two, one car behind another. Stepping onto the road, James held his thumb out even farther. His frame was lit by the headlights. Then, red lights flashed, sirens howled, and the cars sped toward us.

“It’s the cops,” I shouted, running into a ditch and up to a barbed wire fence. Barbs tore my skin as I squeezed between wires. Numbed by fear, I pushed through.

Inside was a cornfield. The stalks stood about five feet high, a foot taller than me. I hid in the rows and looked back. The police cars came to screeching stops and turned their spotlights on James, who stood mesmerized.

“Hold it, boy,” ordered an officer.

Damn, I thought and ran deeper into the cornfield.

It wasn't long before someone hollered, "Come out of there before you get hurt, boy." I saw two flashlights shinning in the field.

James must've told! I have to get away, I said to myself. I can't go back there. I crept deeper into the cornfield trying not to be seen or heard. The leaves seemed as loud as someone tearing paper in a quiet room. The crickets and locusts stopped their sounds to listen.

Someone was coming. I dropped to the ground. I heard breathing.

"Come on out, boy. Give it up. Stand up and come over here! Come on, move it," he shouted.

A scarecrow-like man, taller than the corn, waved his flashlight like an old lantern and shouted, "Over here, I got him over here!" He aimed the light into my face.

I covered my eyes and slowly stood. He kept the light in my face.

"That's it, boy. Come over here." Behind his flashlight, he appeared as a dark deathlike shadow silhouetted against the night sky.

I took a step toward him and then turned and ran as fast as I could the other way. Razor-edged leaves cut my face and arms. I didn't care. Another flashlight appeared in front of me just as I was grabbed from behind.

"Hold up, boy. That's enough running tonight."

"Leave me alone," I yelled, hitting.

"What's the matter Jake, can't you handle a little boy?" said another.

"I'm not little! I'm 11 years old," I shouted. "I'm not afraid of you."

“This one’s a real fighter,” said Jake. He took hold of my left shoulder with one hand and my crotch with the other and in one powerful motion, raised me above his head like a victorious hunter with his prey. My efforts to break free were useless as he carried me back to the fence.

A policeman on the other side of the fence said, “Looks like you got yourself a wild one there, Jake.”

“You can say that again,” said Jake, lowering me over the fence.

The cop pulled my arms behind me and put handcuffs around my wrists. “This will slow you down,” he said. He turned me and pushed in the direction of the police cars parked on the edge of the road with their lights still flashing.

The push gave me another chance for freedom and I ran down the road.

“What’s the matter, Elmer, couldn’t you hold on to him?” Several men laughed.

“I’ll get the little bastard,” said Elmer.

I heard his footsteps drawing near. I stopped and turned. He was about five feet away and stopped, too.

“Look, son, you can’t get away. You may as well give up and come with us.” He slowly stepped toward me, reaching out his hand. I waited until he was near enough and kicked him in the shin as hard as I could.

“Dammit,” he cried as he grabbed himself. There was more laughter from the others. I was not humored.

I turned and ran again. My mind raced with thoughts of other places and my senses sharpened. I could hear every sound, taste the sweat dripping onto my

lips. Though it was dark, I could see as if it were daylight. Above was the moon full and bright on the fields and road. Its familiar face radiated a magical light. I ran toward it hoping it would make me invisible or give me strength.

“Gotcha,” said a cop, grabbing me. “You won’t get away this time.” A police car pulled up beside us and I was shoved into the back seat, next to James.

“It was all Johnny’s idea. He’s the one who wanted to run. He cut the chain in the infirmary window. He made me run with him,” said James, the traitor.

I looked at him in disbelief. “You liar! You’re bigger and 14 years old. You wanted to run as much as me.”

“Quiet back there,” said Jake. They did a U-turn and headed back to Toledo State Juvenile Home for delinquents.

The officers parked their car and marched us back into the infirmary. Inside the door were two security guards, a night worker, and the night supervisor, Mrs. Johansen.

“Well, well, well, look what we have here! Our criminals have returned,” said Mrs. Johansen.

“Found them hitchhiking out along the highway, headed toward Bell Plain,” said Jake.

“He made me run,” said James pointing at me.

“I don’t think you’ll have any trouble out of that one,” Jake said, “but this one is another story.” He turned me around and removed my handcuffs. “We

practically had to hog-tie this one. He's got more fight in him than an alley cat. I'd say he's your troublemaker."

"We'll see about that," said Mrs. Johansen. "Thank you, officers, for your help. We're sorry to have troubled you tonight, aren't we, boys?" She glared at us.

"Yes, ma'am," said James.

I didn't answer.

As the officers left, Mrs. Johansen ordered the night worker, "Roger, take James back to his bed." She grabbed me by the ear. "You, Mr. Hot Shot. You're coming with me. I have just the place to teach you who is boss around here." She pulled me down the hallway, stopped at a tan metal door across from her office, pulled out a bunch of keys, knowing just which one it was, unlocked the door. A small square window, high enough for her to look through, was in the door. Wires were woven in the glass.

She flipped a light switch and opened the door. We entered a small gray room with a high ceiling and bare walls. A single light, covered by a wire guard, was centered in the high ceiling. There was an east window with five black iron bars vertically fastened into the window frame. Beside a twin bed covered by a green bedspread was an army green metal stand of the same height as the bed. In the corner, behind the door, was a toilet. The floor was hard gray tile. The rest of the room was empty.

Handing me a pair of light blue pajamas, Mrs. Johansen said, "Take off your clothes and put these on."

I hesitated, waiting for her to leave or at least turn around.

“I said, take off your clothes and put on the pajamas right now, boy! Unless you want a whipping.”

I slowly took off my shirt and put on the pajama top. Then, I took off my shoes and socks and slowly unbuckled my pants and pulled them off and started to put on the pajama bottoms.

“Take off your shorts, too. You won’t need them in here. Besides, you haven’t got anything I haven’t already seen.”

Turning away from her, I took off my shorts and put on the pajama bottom.

“Now pick up your clothes and shoes and put them on the floor outside of the door.” She stepped out in front of me to make sure I wouldn’t run. “Now, go back in.” She waited until I was inside and announced with great satisfaction, “This is lock-up, solitary confinement, and you will be in here until Hell freezes over as far as I’m concerned. You’re nothing but worthless white trash, a juvenile delinquent!” She pulled the door shut hard and locked it.

I sat on the bed. All I had left was me. I was tired, alone, and afraid. My brother Hank Jr., 15, was at Eldora Boys Reformatory and my oldest brother Rex, 16, was in Glenwood State Mental Hospital. My mother and father had abandoned us 5 years before, leaving us to survive on our own. My sister April, 12, was just down the hall but powerless to help.

I silently cried myself into sleep.

Miss Schultz spoke English with a German accent, her face was as red as her hair, and her fat hips and breasts shook when she spoke. She looked the same

no matter whether she was happy or angry. Maybe she was just angry all of the time, I thought.

From a gray push cart, Mrs. Schultz took a metal pitcher filled with ice water, a tin glass, and a tin dish with two slices of white bread and set them on top of the stand beside the bed.

“Ya better learn quick to do what yer told if ya want ta get out of lock-up,” she said, as she straightened up, “or I’ll get ze board myself and teach ya a lesson you’ll never forget.” Mrs. Schultz left the room.

I thought about all that had happened since I arrived at Toledo 2 weeks earlier. I ran because I felt raped of my dignity and my freedom. They shaved off my hair, gave me shots, drilled my teeth with holes, took my clothes, threw them away, hosed me down for lice like a diseased swine, beat me, and gave me institutional shoes and clothes. If I complained or argued, I was beaten again. It was as if I was in prison.

I looked around the room. I was in prison! My number was 2950. My crime was running away.

I got up and walked over to the window. I could see a big tree and some buildings in the distance. There was some paint peeling in the sill so I reached through the bars and pulled it free. It was hard and I used it to scrape an X on the wall by the window. “This is day 1,” I thought and put the paint chip back on the sill for future use.

I decided I would not speak, eat or drink. I marked 12 days of X's on the wall before I lost count. They left me alone and only changed the bread and water twice daily.

The lines were drawn. Their door was locked and so was mine. I was ready to die before I would give up. They had my body, but they could never have my spirit. I am a human being, I thought. I am not a horse to be broken.

Dizziness caused the room to spin around me. Nausea and dry heaves wrenched me. The walls of my stomach painfully rubbed together. No one cared whether I lived or died. I was scared and alone. I wanted my father.

I prayed to God for help. I asked God to be my father since mine was no longer around to help.

Intuitively, thoughts came to my mind. I felt a presence. I heard the words, "Don't be afraid." Warmth and comfort embraced me.

I realized the walls were the problem and not the people. Freedom, I thought, does not need walls. The walls are oppression built by violence, hatred, fear, greed, etc. The walls must come down if there is to be freedom.

It made sense. Excitement and joy took the place of hunger and fear. Of course, these were not the words at the time, but they reflect what I realized at the time.

I jolted awake when the door opened and a woman threw a Bible on the bed beside me.

“Here,” she said, “Read this and learn how to be a good kid.” As quickly as she entered, she left and locked the door behind her. Previously she had called me “a bad, a good-for-nothing kid.”

Although I knew she wanted me to read the Bible, so I could see the evil person she thought I was and give in to what they wanted from me, I felt compelled to read it anyway. I slowly opened it and read:

For freedom, Christ has set us free from the law, not by works of the law, but by faith through love. (This is how I remembered what I read from Galatians 5:1)

For me, it was a matter of life and death, of making a choice regarding what to do in my immediate situation (Tracy, 1996).

What is this Study?

The data in this study include auto-narrative and State of Iowa documents regarding my family background, commitment to a state juvenile home, and foster care. The timeline covers the years 1955 through 1961 (Figure 2).

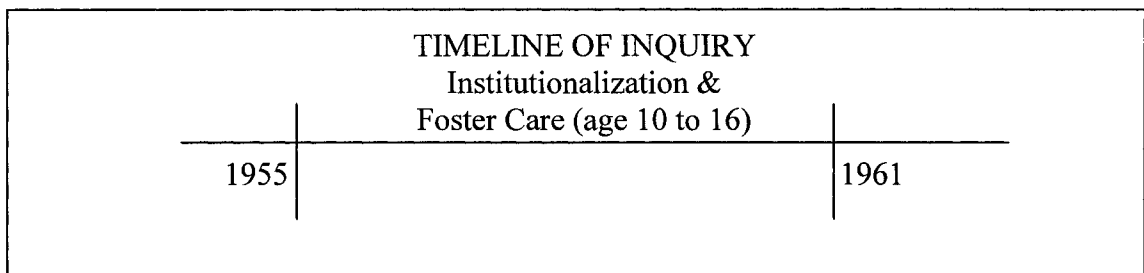


Figure 2. Categorical Timeline of Inquiry. The time frame of the data to be analyzed.

Johnny’s initial perception of his situation in lockup is in Figure 3. It shows a “Self vs. Other” adversarial relationship perspective of separate and disconnected. This is a position in which power and control is the primary issue of relationship and is acted out

in terms of conflict, resistance, aggression, or noncompliance. In this case, it was a battle by Johnny for control of self.

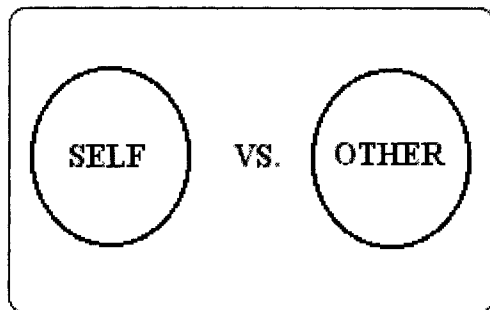


Figure 3. Formulation of Other as the Problem. Other is generally seen as the problem when a person sees a situation as them vs. me or self vs. other.

When we see other and ourselves as separate and disconnected, then power and control, trust and mistrust, good and bad, right and wrong, male and female, etc. all become the primary focus of the relationship. We perceive other and ourselves as separate and disconnected as illustrated in Figure 4.

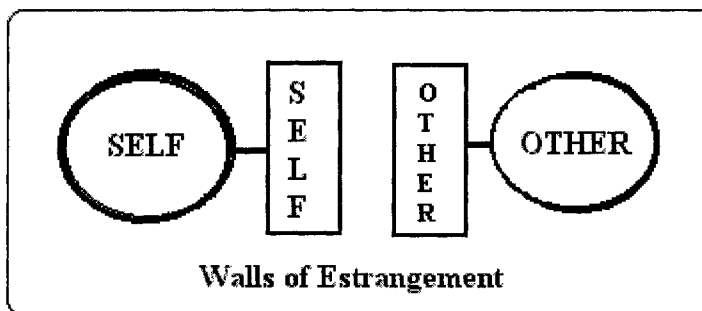


Figure 4. Walls of Perception. Our perceptions can become as walls, which estrange us from others. The walls of estrangement are the problem not the people.

When we see other (person and/or all other) as separate and disconnected, our related perceptions (definitions, rules, beliefs, values, and attached feelings) become walls that estrange natural healthy relationship.

Figures 3, 4, and 5 demonstrate that the problem addressed in this study is relationship. It is a study of self and other and how these interact (co-participate) with

each other to form the culture of meaning. Deep within the story of our experience lives our interaction with other as we co-participate in the construction of the culture of meaning. Each life is part of the mosaic (Figure 5).

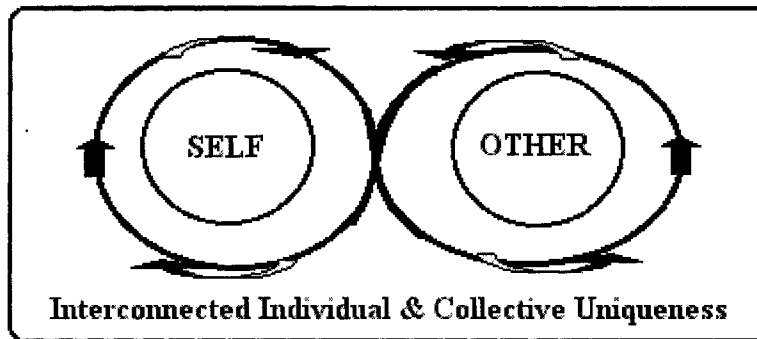


Figure 5. Individual and Collective Uniqueness. Natural relationship depiction.

The journey of this inquiry is far more important than the conclusions. This is especially so since the journey continues as this dissertation becomes a part of it and the reader becomes a co-participant. The narrative data are written, as much as possible, through my eyes (memory and perspective). It is therefore subject to error and distortion of so-called facts. However, this inquiry is not so much about finding factual truth as it is about perceived lived experience and its meaning.

The narrative text refuses the impulse to abstract and explain, stressing the journey over the destination, and thus eclipses the scientific illusion of control and mastery; and the episodic portrayal of the ebb and flow of relationship experience dramatizes the motion of connected lives across the curve of time, and thus resists the standard practice of portraying social life and relationships as a snapshot (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 744).

In auto-narrative ethnographic inquiry, meaning is the major issue. Miles and Huberman (1994) tell us that the reason they wrote their book *Qualitative Data Analysis:*

An Expanded Sourcebook was to answer the question of meaning, “Put simply: How can we draw meaning from qualitative data?” (p. 1). They present obtaining or identifying meaning as perhaps the primary purpose or function of analysis. “Most scholars...concur that all forms of narrative share the fundamental interest in making sense of experience, the interest in constructing and communicating meaning” (Chase, 1995, p. 1). Laurel Richardson (2000) says, “Qualitative research has to be read, not scanned; its meaning is in the reading (p. 924).” For Richardson, the reader is clearly co-participant. The narrator, researcher, and the readers, then, define meaning. Meaning does not just emerge from the data. It emerges from the writer’s interpretive construction of the data, the autoethnographer’s systematic interpretive codification, and the reader’s interpretive perspective. All participants benefit by taking co-ownership for co-construction of meaning and therein acknowledge positional worldviews. Perhaps this is what gives authenticity to any inquiry. The following conceptual framework illustrates the data and methods of analysis used in this inquiry (Figure 6).

Other major factors used and examined in analysis are experiential difference and difference in relationship perceptions of self and other among the participants in this inquiry. These differences are especially important since we are historically and concurrently co-participants and co-constructors of experience and meaning. The underlying cultural constructions are the perceptions (relationship paradigms) that are used as guides for how we think and relate (communicate).

This inquiry, like all communication, has content message and relationship message (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967; Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974). It is about voicing content and relationship, analyzing these, and interpreting their

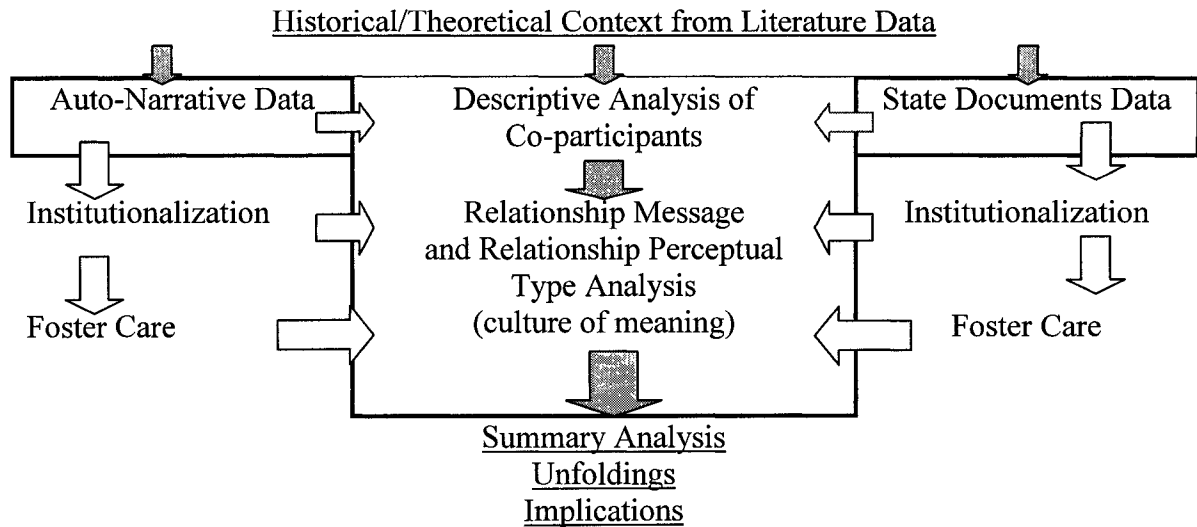


Figure 6. Dissertation Conceptual Framework. Illustrates and describes reflexive ethnographic culture of meaning analysis methodology in terms of data groups, and reflexive focus.

meaning to the reader. Again, like in all communication, the reader responds with his or her own interpretation and message. For, as Watzlawick et al. say, “you cannot not communicate. There is no opposite of behavior” (1967, p. 48). Every action or inaction involves response relative to both content and relationship message. The narrator, researcher, and the readers co-construct meaning. I realize, of course, that I am also the researcher, but the narrator hat is different. Most of the narrative data were written in 1996 well before this inquiry and so was not manipulated to fit this study.

A challenge for us as co-constructors is to analyze and interpret in such a way as to allow the meaning to emerge and not to smother or deny it due to error or bias. This is most difficult since our perceptual relationship framework (cultural worldview) is of itself positional. If, for example, I use classical logic to examine the meaning, identify problems, and pose solutions, then it is likely that much of what I discover through

analysis will be similar to that of others who use the same logic. Even our interpretations and recommendations will likely be similar.

This particular challenge is extremely important to the voice of the narrator that informs us in this inquiry. The voice is not mainstream. To analyze it from a mainstream worldview is again, to fail to hear the child's voice. So, the question arises, how should the data be analyzed? This researcher's choice is to use a combination of Watzlawick et al's Human Communication Theory (1967) and the relationship perceptual paradigm that I constructed as part of my master of social work thesis (1986).

Using this approach will help to avoid the problem of "more of the same" and essentially "no change" if it were analyzed only by means of mainstream perceptions (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967; Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974). For example, if we use mainstream culture, according to its linear Newtonian perspective, which teaches and adheres to the notion that the past cannot be changed and that we can only look back and plan in the present to change the future, then we would miss an important aspect of meaning in the narrative. Johnny's experience, indigenous cultures, and new science inform us of this perspective (Peat, 2002; Neihardt, 1932; Rank, 1932 and 1941; Wheatley, 1999). F. David Peat, physicist and a leader in the new sciences of chaos theory and complexity theory, tells us, "in our present living, time flows through us and we participate in it. Time is animate. It is the activity of the spirit, alive, nonlinear, present and accessible from the moment" (2002, p. 199).

The narrative reveals how Johnny often experienced having his worldview ignored or disqualified and how this, in part, led to persistent and recurring difficulties. According to Systemic Human Communication Theory (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson,

1967; Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974), "...whenever we observe a person, a family, or a wider social system enmeshed in a problem in a persistent and repetitive way, despite desire and effort to alter the situation, two questions arise equally: 'How does this undesirable situation persist?' and 'What is required to change it?'" (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974, p. 2). Watzlawick, Weakland, and Fisch (1974) use group theory, the theory of logical types (Whitehead and Russell, 1950) to explore the answers to their questions. These theories and their relevance are explained further in the literature review.

Research Questions

In this inquiry, the principal theme is the ongoing tension between the mainstream worldview and that of the narrator, which as Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) said, "person, family, and the wider cultural system are enmeshed in a persistent and repetitive way, despite desire and effort to alter the situation" (p. 2). I address this system of enmeshment by first recognizing co-participation in the co-construction of reality as a vital issue of relationship. The dysfunction is relative to how the system interacts as a co-participant and how it, through its representatives, dominates the process of construction of reality.

The primary research question is how do the co-participants illuminate co-construction of the culture of meaning?

Sub-questions include:

What are the relationship messages of co-participants?

What are the relationship perspectives of co-participants?

What are the relationship perceptual frameworks?

What does the culture of meaning mean?

The major emphasis of the study is ethnographic analysis (Banks & Banks, 1998) of my personal narrative, personal dreams and visions that inform my identity, governmental documents about my life, and historical context. I will analyze the data with respect to who the participants are, what their worldviews are, the relationship of the participants respective of their worldviews and related behavior, and the meaning of all of this.

Focus of the Study

Generally, ethnography does not include the identification of limits or delimits. This is a function found in quantitative not qualitative investigations. However, it is reasonable enough to say that this is not a study of abuse and neglect, nor of foster care or of any of the other thematic issues involved in the story (as important as they are), except as they are a part of the issue of co-participation and co-construction of the culture of meaning. The focus of this study is not so much about the content involved in the data as it is about the relationship issues and meaning directly stated and indirectly implied. This is neither a study about the narrator nor a study about the people involved in the state records. It is about their relationship, how they co-participated to co-construct the culture of meaning, and what that culture of meaning meant to them and what it means to us today. Of course, with that said, it is still important to look at the co-participants and their perceptual frameworks in order to better understand the relationship issues and process (see chapter four).

Unfortunately, the State Juvenile Home in Toledo, Iowa destroyed most records of the inmates (youth) after they were no longer in their custody. This serves as missing

data that is no longer available. In this major time of institutionalization for Johnny, the personnel at the State Juvenile Home engaged in constructing the culture of meaning by destroying significant records. Even without many records it is still critical to this study to reveal something of the relationship nature of Johnny to that of the State Juvenile Home and the larger issue of institutionalization. However, I do have many records on foster care.

Significance of the Study

Because conflicting worldviews are a recognized global problem, it is likely that many may be interested in discovering other ways to understand and deal with the problems. It is an overall goal of this inquiry is to contribute to new ways by which to understand and address our individual and collective needs and concerns.

Qualitative inquiry was named such as a reformist movement (from early 1970) in the academy (Schwandt, 2001). This inquiry serves to expand the notion of qualitative research beyond the epistemological limits of reform to include a relationship paradigm in which the definition of relationship is incompatible with that of traditional objective scientific inquiry.

This dissertation introduces and applies a paradigmatic framework that rejects traditional objective scientific inquiry in which relationship is defined as causal between otherwise separate and disconnected entities or elements. It denies the objective capacity of the researcher. The epistemological claim of this author is that researchers (no matter what their design orientation may be), in fact, co-participate and co-construct meaning with the study population(s) as an on-going creative process in which the culture of meaning is continuously informed and redefined. The claim is more than a “general

rejection of... scientism, foundationalist epistemology, instrumental reasoning, and the philosophical anthropology of disengagement that has marked mainstream social science” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 190). More significant is the introduction and identification of co-participation and co-construction of the culture of meaning and how it occurs in the context of the study participants, the researcher, and even the reader.

Perhaps even more significant is what this means to how we do the business of human services, including social services and how we teach those who administer and provide those services. Additionally, if readers of this work come away inspired, challenged, or even left wondering, then this work is significant (Ellis & Bochner, 1996).

Researcher's Perspective

My personal experience, interpreted by me as felt lived experience, best serves the purpose of this study as uncensored. I selected literature with an attempt to provide historical context and relevant points of view. To me, bias is a condition of being positional in such a way as to be “involved” with something. That involvement can be simple or go as far as to include a conscious or unconscious agenda or perspective that can greatly influence what one does.

My biases are probably far more than I realize. This does not mean that people cannot change their perceptions or be more open to new thinking. My personal experience, professional experience, familiarity with the subject matter, and recent review of related literature serve as both bias and strength. Other bias includes a preference toward the qualitative paradigm and a great dislike for ignorance, oppression, violence, and injustice.

I believe bias and strength exist in me as someone who experienced severe abuse and neglect, jail, and institutionalization. I believe bias and strength exist within me from working over 20 years as a human service professional in the classroom, in foster care, in a settlement house, in mental health centers, as a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), as a therapist with sexual offenders and their families and victims, and as a human service administrator and community leader. Bias and strength exist in me through what I was taught as an undergraduate with a bachelors teaching degree in all social sciences, a masters degree in counseling and guidance in education, a master of social work degree, and my studies toward an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in education and human resource studies with a specialization in social work. All of these influence my thinking along with many other factors.

What Follows

Chapter two is a literature review, chapter three describes methodology used in this study, and chapter four describes the co-participants. Chapter five focuses upon analysis of the institutional experiences of Johnny. Chapter six is an analysis of Johnny's foster care experience. Chapter seven is a summary of findings, implications, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This inquiry is a reflexive ethnographic analysis of my auto-narrative and the collected State of Iowa documents relative to me in terms of how they illuminate the culture of co-participation and co-construction of meaning. The research question then is how do the co-participants illuminate the culture of co-participation and co-construction of meaning? Systemic human communication theory as developed by Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) is used to examine the communication of the co-participants with focus upon the punctuation of the relationship as identified in selected significant communication sequences. From this, the literature review includes material on the American culture related to child social welfare and poverty, cultural perspectives of the participants and others as reflected in the data sets, systemic human communication theory, and research design and methodology. In the discussion of the literature, particular attention is given to why do the study, how the literature helps to inform and expand our current knowledge and understanding of this subject area, and literature critique (Hart, 1998). The literature helps to form a backdrop of historical context related to this inquiry.

This dissertation is a look at child welfare policy and practice but also an even deeper look at how the dominant culture communicates (relates) with the cultures of poverty and difference to form meaning. A search of the literature, which included the keywords, children of poverty, child welfare, juvenile justice, and research methods, did

not reveal a similar study. Instead, most literature related to abused, neglected, and delinquent children primarily converge upon examining youth problems, needs, and ways to bring them into the system or control unwanted behavior. Such material is not within the purpose of this study. However, it does point to the values and agenda of the child welfare and juvenile justice system and those who research this field.

This inquiry is centered upon relationship analysis of the American culture as represented in State records and the personal narrative of a child who came from a background of extreme poverty, neglect, abuse, institutionalization, and who is mixed race (1/8 Native American Sac and Fox and 7/8 European Caucasian). The literature review includes looking at the historical context of American social welfare toward such children during the years 1945 to 1964. Since the narrative also contains the issue of “personal and social culture worldviews,” literature related to both areas is briefly reviewed. The last two sections of literature review include a look at systemic human communication theory as a primary tool of analysis, and research methodology.

Child Social Welfare and Poverty

Contextual Historical Cultural Roots

There is an overwhelming abundance of literature written by those who, trained in the dominant cultural perspective of social economics, focus on when children come into the system or are already in the system and thus have a legitimate interest in exploring the question of how to help these children. The major focus of this literature is upon rehabilitation, protection, and reform. Children are often defined as victims who will become perpetrators if professionals do not intervene early in their lives. Such views tend to define such children as being or having a problem that must be addressed for the sake

of society and “for their own good” as Alice Miller (1984) identifies in her work entitled, *For your own good: Hidden cruelty in child-rearing and the roots of violence*.

Tess Ridge (2002), a British scholar, writes that there is, “almost a total absence of children’s own voices, accounts, and experiences” (p. 33). Children (3 – 12), it seems, are not assumed to have a *developed cultural perspective* and therefore this is barely if at all addressed in policy or practice.

June Axinn and Mark Stern (2001) inform us of, perhaps, some of the roots of the prevailing cultural perspective of the American response to the needs of the poor and the oppressed, including children. “The goals of social welfare programs for the poor derive from the goals of the larger society for itself and from the view that society holds of itself and of its various members (p. 1).” Generally, social welfare programs involve a redistribution of resources from the “haves” to the “have nots.” However, this nation, says Axinn and Stern, has held instead to a faith in *laissez-faire* and individualism. The country has valued the private economy over the public and individual autonomy over social interest and issues. The English Poor Laws essentially differentiated those unable to work and those able to work. The goal was to prevent people from “falling into pauperism” and to prevent them from being a burden upon society. To a considerable extent, social welfare programs for the poor in the 20th century are based upon this same orientation. The Poor Laws adhered to the view of human nature as being inherently evil and easily seduced into idleness and pauperism. This view led to coercion, the workhouse, indentureship, apprenticeship, and contracting out. “A belief in the superiority of any group in the population—indeed, any racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual hierarchical ordering becomes a basis for discrimination and exploitation” (Axinn &

Stern, 2001, p. 6). The history of social welfare in the United States reflects this in how it continues to blame the victim.

In the 19th century, social dependency was primarily considered to be due to individual character flaws. It was believed by many that the help given the poor by organized charity made the problem worse. On the other hand, Axinn and Stern (2001) tell us that if people were considered essentially good (that is, ambitious), the response to need is more likely to be guided by the offer of incentives and the development of programs that provide opportunity for self-advancement into and within the system.

Many so-called community programs are, in fact, efforts by the vested or invested community to train and bring those it deems essential into its economic and social well-being and into its way of thinking and doing that meets its social-economic agenda. For example, many youth programs are focused upon community leadership and service according to class, race, sex, gender, age, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, etc. Most are designed to orientate youth to create a class of youth who will best serve the interest of the vested community as is found in the newly evolving Positive Youth Development Program and its “40 development assets” (Eccles & Appleton, 2002, p. 320). The assets include the categories of physical, intellectual, psychological, social, safety, and personal and social-economic opportunities. The apparent goal of this program is to divert youth from current or potential youth-related problems, encourage them to become successful productive citizens, and to believe in the “American Dream.” Such programs promote the belief and the idea that anyone can be successful if they just believe it and if they just try. Of course, the implication and relationship message is: if you don’t make it, you must be bad, mad, stupid, or just plain lazy.

Economy was the driving force behind welfare (Axinn & Stern, 2001). In good times, citizens are more generous and in poor economy, they are not as generous. The vested class (the wealthy elite) is running a business called a country to serve its conglomeration of businesses, profit margins, and general worldview. Their socio-economic-ideological institutions are designed and maintained to serve their primary purposes and to teach, train, induce, and coerce when necessary the majority of the population, which it sees as human capital. Goldberg and Collins (2001) argue that major responsibility for the dependence and chronic poverty of millions of women and children is directly related to the labor market and inadequate employment opportunities with the exceptions of the war years (40s, 50s, and 60s). It appears that Goldberg and Collins buy into the thinking that poverty is about economy. Axinn and Stern, however, give the perspective that poverty is really about power, control, and greed and how that is played out in relationship. It is this relationship and its message punctuation that is examined between the co-participant databases of this inquiry. Interestingly, this focus and approach does not appear in the findings of this literature search.

Homelessness

Between the ages of 5 ½ to 9 ½, Johnny and his siblings were street children in Davenport, Iowa. They engaged in what most street children did: missing school, living in and out of various abandoned places and temporary housing, going through trash for food, stealing, selling newspapers, shining shoes, and just trying to survive and not get caught. They believed being caught was the worst possible thing that could happen. The literature has a library of its own on homeless or street children. Interestingly enough, most of it is about children in places other than the United States.

Marjorie Mayers (2001) provides a wonderful example of an interpretative approach to inquiry. In her book, *Street Kids & Streetscapes: Panhandling, Politics, & Prophecies*, she gives an accurate gut-wrenching description of the struggle to be recognized. While the book touched on many similar experiences Johnny had, the late 90s were far different from 1950 to 1954, which Johnny spent on the streets. There were no cell phones, attitudes were different, laws were different, children were denied legal rights, shops were easier to break into without getting caught, panhandling was not an option as it meant getting picked up by the police. What Mayers's book did find similar was the need, the starvation—not just for food and shelter, but for personal recognition and affirmation. She went into the streets and heard the stories and was moved deeply. She did not analyze the relationship of the youth and the system, except in weighing the tragedy she saw on the streets and the loss she felt to society as a whole.

Juvenile Justice and Institutionalization

At the age of nine, Johnny and his siblings were picked up by the police. Johnny was in the system until age 22. That system included confinement, fugitive status for about four months, jail for nine months, juvenile court for about five minutes, ward of the State of Iowa for 12 years, incarceration in Toledo State Juvenile Home as inmate number 2950, solitary confinement (lock up) for over two weeks, and foster care from 12 to 22 years of age. The system is a co-participant of this inquiry, which includes, what relationship messages and perceptions did the system communicate to Johnny, how did he respond, and to what relationship perceptual types did they adhere? These questions are explored in chapters 4-6 as analysis of relationship.

Prior to 1900, children of poverty (ages 2-16) were sent right along with adults as inmates to the institutions of almshouses, indentureships, apprenticeships, orphan asylums, mental hospitals, and correctional facilities (Axinn & Stern, 2001). Social welfare leaders, the Child Welfare League of America and other groups pushed for reform. They believed that such youth, in spite of their inherited tendencies toward pauperism, could be guided to be more functional if they were removed from the direct influences of their parents, adult paupers, criminals, and the insane (Axinn & Stern).

Given public pressure and pressure from charitable organizations, the enactment of the first juvenile court act in 1899, “An Act to Regulate the Treatment and Control of Dependent, Neglected, and Delinquent Children (Historical Statistics, p. 46)” took place (Axinn & Stern, 2001, p. 105). This was a major breakthrough in which children were no longer to be adjudicated in adult courts. This law was promoted and drafted by the Illinois State Conference of Charities. Additionally, youth were to be removed from the adult correctional system and from general welfare (Axinn & Stern, 2001).

Children did not have recognized rights until the 1967 Supreme Court decision, “*In re Gault et al.* No. 116 [italics in original] argued December 6, 1966: Decided May 15, 1967” (Axinn & Stern, 2001, pp. 261, 262), that children were given the right to counsel, confidentiality, silence, and due process.

Conditions for children only gradually improved starting in 1875 with the “Act to Provide for the Better Care of Pauper and Destitute Children” and in 1899 with the “Act to Regulate the Treatment and Control of Dependent, Neglected, and Delinquent Children” (Axinn & Stern, 2001). Axinn & Stern explain how between 1875 until 1967 children were sent to adult facilities such as prisons, work centers, county jails, and city

jails. Many were placed into the newly formed foster care programs, and many were sent to orphanages, state institutions for youth (run by the same boards as state prisons), and mental hospitals (Axinn & Stern). These children were rarely adopted due to the belief that they had an inherent nature to be paupers and delinquents. In the foster care system, expectations were low and cautious. These children were believed to need a firm hand with strict oversight and instruction (Axinn & Stern, 2001). Foster care was and continues to be an institutional socio-economic arm of the juvenile justice system.

New Science, Native American Science, and Johnny

Johnny was Native American and though he had no tribal affiliation, he learned about Native American history and beliefs. He learned to read at the age of 4 and read comic books like *Red Rider* and *The Lone Ranger and Tonto*. Before his father left the family (December 1955), Johnny sat and listened days on end to the radio, which included episodes of *The Lone Ranger and Tonto*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, and many other programs that told something about Native Americans. Of course, White people wrote most of these.

Because he looked white, those who encountered Johnny did not know they were dealing with a Native American. Johnny had his own understanding and perception of Native American ways of seeing, thinking, and living. This, along with his personal dreams and visions, which included instruction from Native American spirits, contributes greatly to his development and sense of his personal cultural worldview. Johnny did not see time as linear. He saw himself, all of natural reality, and the spirit world as interconnected. He believed it was the place of people to live at peace with all existence

and together with the rest of existence to be creative. He believed that no one owned the land...that it was mother to all people and creatures.

Black Elk Speaks (Neihardt, 1932), *Wisdom's Daughters: Conversations with Women Elders of Native America* (Wall, 1993), *Touch the Earth: A Self-Portrait of Indian Existence* (McLuhan, 1971), *Medicine of the Cherokee: The Way of Right Relationship* (Garrett & Garrett, 1996), *The Cherokee Full Circle: A Practical Guide to Ceremonies and Traditions* (Garrett & Garrett, 2002), and many more works relate stories and ways of thinking of different Native Americans. Perhaps the strongest of these are the words of Black Elk who informs us and fills the heart with tears, the body with the wounds of the people, and the spirit with hope. Black Elk tells us, "Once we were happy in our own country and we were seldom hungry, for the two-leggeds and the four-leggeds lived together like relatives, and there was plenty for them and for us" (Neihardt, 1932, p. 8).

Visions and dreams are sacred among Native Americans and most indigenous peoples. Describing a vision he had when 9 years old, Black Elk mentions one part that Johnny too had seen in a vision.

The fourth Grandfather spoke... 'Behold, the living center of a nation I shall give you, and with it many you shall save.' And I saw that he was holding in his hand a bright red stick that was alive, and as I looked it sprouted at the top and sent forth branches, and on the branches many leaves came out and murmured and in the leaves the birds began to sing... 'Behold the earth!' he said, and in the

center of the hoop of our peoples...bloomed the holy stick
that was a tree (p. 24).

As an adult, Johnny experienced the following vision about this same tree:

I met my father at the edge of a great desert. He was
driving a buck-wagon with a team of black horses. He
stopped and asked me to get on with him. I did.

My father drove us into the middle of the desert. All around
everything was dry, barren, and lifeless. There was only
sand in every direction as far as the eye could see. Color
was absent except for black, gray and white. The air was
heavy and oppressive, hard to breathe.

In the very middle of the great desert was a dead tree next
to an old dry riverbed. The silence of this place cried out in
great pain and anguish. Something in me remembered this
place from another dream but it had changed. Before it was
the river of life with the tree of life next to it in full
blossom. Now it was dead and barren.

We got off the wagon and went to the tree. My father
commanded me, 'Reach out your hand and touch the tree.'
I did as he said and touched the tree with the tips of my
fingers of my left hand.

I felt a wonderful healing energy of the Water of Life flow
through me into the tree. I could see this blue light flow

down around, through my arm, and into the tree. I held my hand to the tree and watched as the tree transformed before me. It went through each stage of growth until it was fully renewed ... covered with healthy green leaves. (Year of this vision was 1989).

The connection felt and experienced by Johnny was deep and continues. Not unlike Black Elk who, fearful of what others might think, did not tell his dreams and visions for many years, so too was Johnny afraid to do so. For many years, this was a private part of his life.

For this reason, it is important to address the fact that Native Americans and other indigenous peoples have and often continue to present a different problem to mainstream society... that is, they often held a different paradigm of person, nature, and culture. This country's approach to these groups was (is) to break them up and to destroy (disempower) their cultures to the level they are not a threat to the dominant paradigm (theirs). Up to recent decades, child training among Native Americans has been the study of anthropologists who even after years of living among aboriginal tribes assumed, just as did the general public, that primitives had no child rearing, that they grew up "like little animals" (Erikson, 1963, p. 117). Erikson tells us, "The young and seething American democracy lost the peace with the Indian when it failed to arrive at a clear design of either conquering or colonizing, converting or liberating, and instead left the making of history to an arbitrary succession of representatives who had one or another of these objectives in mind..." (p. 117).

New Science

Pioneer researchers such as David Bohm (1981,1992, 2000) and F. David Peat (1987, 2000, 2002) have informed us of discoveries that change the paradigm upon which Western science and pedagogy have built as their foundation for the business of civilization. Their discoveries are so recent that the old paradigm is still in place in mainstream society. Thomas S. Kuhn (1996) declares how “Normal science, the activity in which most scientists inevitably spend almost all of their time, is predicated on the assumption that [they] know what the world is like” (p. 5). For Bohm, and Peat, new theory implies a change in the rules governing the practice of science and scientific investigation. Kuhn (1996) tells us how the transformation resulting from a new theory requires a reconstruction and re-evaluation of the old, a revolutionary process that is rarely completed in one lifetime. It is no secret how normal (prevailing theory and practitioners) science is resistant to change (Kuhn, 1996). It is no secret how mainstream culture and its practitioners are resistant to change. The two are deeply interwoven and often comprise the same people. While many may find the following vision interesting, they would not see the science in it and would find it difficult to think of the creator and teacher as a man giving birth and also as a lecherous fool (Peat, 2002).

Dancing Buffalo was the medicine man. He could cure anything and knew all the mysteries of the Earth herself.

I asked Dancing Buffalo, “How did the Earth begin? Where did people come from?”

He said, “The Great Spirit is pregnant—pregnant with the Earth, the moon, the sun, the stars, all of the

animals, and us humans. We are all his children and the Great Spirit loves each one of us.”

Morning Sun looked at me and said, “We are all sisters and brothers.”

“On his teepee, the Great Spirit has a picture of a small circle inside of a big circle,” said Dancing Buffalo.

“Like this.” He drew two circles in the dirt.

“What do the circles mean?” I asked.

“The big circle is the Great Spirit and the small circle is all of his children. When his children are ready,” said Dancing Buffalo, “then the Great Spirit will give birth to them as he did us.”

Morning Sun laughed, smiled, and teased Dancing Buffalo, saying, “I think your head is pregnant and if it becomes any more pregnant, it will burst!”

Tall Elk and me laughed, and Dancing Buffalo placed his arms around Morning Sun and said, “You better watch your tongue or I’ll make you pregnant, too” (Tracy, 1996, p. 147).

There seems to be a vast canyon that separates so-called modern science with that of indigenous science. Peat is among the first to see deep connections with what he and other physicists have discovered: that time is nonlinear and not causal and that the physical and spiritual are linked via consciousness that appears present in all that is seen

and unseen. In his book *Blackfoot Physics: a Journey into the Native American Universe*, Peat (2002) takes the reader on a journey that shows how, what many indigenous people have known for centuries and what new science is just now discovering.

Of course, Peat and others are still in what Kuhn (1996) calls the revolutionary phase of scientific change and are not yet mainstream. Western rational objective logic still does not acknowledge the legitimacy and value of subjective intuitive interconnected logic. If it did, this dissertation would be a philosophical inquiry based upon intuitive logic.

Communication and Perception

David Bohm (2000) says, “communication is essential to perception in science” (p. 67). This is a major part of the theoretical perspective used in this inquiry. He writes, “Indeed, it is difficult to imagine scientific research, in any real sense, that does not involve communication...[which] plays an essential role within the very act of scientific perception.” Bohm defines science as creative perception—communication. For him, perception and communication are inseparably joined as a part of the creative process. Perception goes beyond the senses and includes the whole disposition of the individual, that is, their cultural orientation, definitions, rules, beliefs, and values. Interestingly, in a dialogue with F. David Peat, Bohm responds to Peat asking for an example of the relationship of scientific ideas to underlying philosophy. Bohm says:

My insights sprang from the perception that the [electron] plasma is a highly organized system which behaves as a whole. Indeed in some respects, it’s almost like a living being. I was fascinated with the question of how such

organized collective behavior could go along with the almost complete freedom of movement of the individual electrons. I saw this as an analogy to what society could be, and perhaps as to how living beings are organized (p. 5).

What a wonderful insight! This is a magnificent gateway from one paradigm to another. Bohm (2000) recognized the essential interconnected nature of individual and collective uniqueness as a creative process. A man at the peak of scientific research recognized a break in the normal paradigm. It was a break away from the linear model. It was a break away from seeing reality as separate and disconnected in a cause and effect relationship.

Peat replies to Bohm (2000), by telling him that, “it was this work that caught his [Peat’s] interest in the relationship between individual and collective behavior” (p. 5). It is a major part of the insight needed to move into the new science that was to become chaos theory. It is also the perception held by Native Americans and by Johnny from what spirits had taught him starting, according to memory, at the age of 2. It is the foundation of the relationship paradigm that I later named *conique* (adj.) and defined as “inter-co-nnected individual and collective unique-ness as a creative on-going process of mutual affirmation of co-participation and co-construction of meaning” (Tracy, 1995, p. 12.). Other parts of speech include *coniquely* (adv.), *coniqueing* (v.), and *coniqueness* (n.). I later discovered that conique is a French word meaning conic or elliptic. The French meaning is not used in this study as the definition for conique.

This way of thinking, perceiving, knowing, and living was already the primary worldview that Johnny held when he was taken off the street with his siblings. Of course,

he also held some of the perspectives of the mainstream culture he had learned from his parents and others. Analysis is an examination and opportunity to see the interaction between Johnny and his primary cultural paradigm and the system and its primary cultural paradigm and meaning.

Other literature that strongly complements the cultural perspective of Johnny include “creation centered spirituality” as taught and promoted by theologian Matthew Fox, OP (1983, 1985, 1988, 1991, 2000) in a number of his books and in his Institute of Creation Spirituality—Naropa West in Oakland, California. It is found in works by authors such as Starhawk (1982) in her classic feminist account of Western oppression of women *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex, and Politics*. It is found in the works of the medieval feminist and scholar Hildegard of Bengin (Fox, 1985). It is found in the epic tales of *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* compiled by James B. Pritchard (1969). Herman Melville (1969) gives us *Children of the Rainbow*, a delightful retelling of some of the history and thinking of ancient Polynesians and Native Hawaiians. Scholars such as bell hooks (1989, 1994, 2000), Carol Gilligan (1982, 1987), Angeles Arrien (1993), Ken Wilber (2000, 2001), and Thich Nhat Hanh (1992, 1999) embrace an interconnected paradigm in one way or another.

Human Communication Theory

A primary work used in this analysis is that of Paul Watzlawick, Janet Helmick Beavin, and Don D. Jackson (1967), *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes*. This work remains the primary text regarding understanding systemic human communication theory and practice. Paul Watzlawick, now age 83, is still active within the Mental Research Institute (MRI,

located in Palo Alto, California), which he helped to found. Now directed by Wendall Ray, the institute continues to be an international force in research and practice. The aspect of this work that is significant to this inquiry is communication theory and not the practice of psychotherapy. The practice side of this theory goes by several names, such as brief therapy and strategic therapy. However, this is mentioned to clarify that it is communication theory and not psychotherapy based on the theory that is critical to this study.

Pragmatics (behaviors), as I shall refer to the text, is a complex set of a number of theoretical insights and perspectives from Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967), and others they cite in their work. It is the effort to create a comprehensive framework for the semantics (clarification of meaning) of human communication. It borrows from the science of mathematics and philosophy. The work of Alfred North Whitehead and Bertram Russell (1950), *Principia Mathematica*, is major to the formation of communication theory. Whitehead and Russell introduce the theory of logical types and group theory. Understanding these is vital to understanding Watzlawick's theories.

Russell (1950) says regarding the theory of logical types, "whatever involves all of a collection must not be one of the collection" (p. 164). Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) say, "This is the basis for the Russellian paradox, which he [Russell] claims is due to a confusion of logical types or levels. A class is of a higher type than its members; to postulate it, we had to go one level up in the hierarchy of types" (p. 192). The point is that logical confusion arises between class and type. To speak of each simultaneously creates a paradox. An example given is the class of all concepts is itself a concept is not false, but meaningless, for if the statement was false, then its negation

would have to be true, which is plainly false (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967). Concept on the lower (member) level is not the same as concept on the higher (class) level.

If we perceive marbles as that with which we can play the game of marbles and have no other sense of meaning, except perhaps of throwing them at other people, then all we can do with marbles is play with them or throw them at other people. Those are the only options we can conceive. Marbles is a class and marble game and throwing them are members of its class. This moves us into understanding group theory, which joins the theory of logical types in terms of class and members. We are told that mathematically, logically, the class of marbles cannot be and is not a member of itself. It is a member of one or more possible other classes, such as glass. In the class of glass, we may have marbles, windows, drinking glasses, eye glasses, glass blowing, etc. We do not have marble games or throwing marbles at others. Each class and its membership form a logical group, although the class itself is not a member of its own group. This sets up the foundation for errors in communication of paradox, dilemma, and confusion, which you the reader may well be experiencing at this point. It is at about this point that many students of communication theory close the door.

If human communication is to be understood, it is important to explore its depths. That is what Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) does. They even go deeper, to identify axioms or principals that apply to human communication.

1. The Impossibility of Not Communicating

So often the words are spoken, I just can't communicate! The notion of not being able to communicate was popularized during the 70s and the words are still mainstream.

Watzlawick (1967) teaches that, “one cannot not communicate. Activity or inactivity, words or silence all have message value. They influence others and these others, in turn, cannot not respond to these communications and are thus themselves communicating” (pp. 48).

This turn-about is major and essential toward understanding the actual communication process. It paves the way along with the rest of the axioms toward an actual science of human communication process.

2. Content and Relationship Message

Every communication conveys content and relationship communication (messages) and implies a commitment and thereby defines the relationship.

...communication not only conveys information, but...at the same time presumes behavior. Bateson (1960) calls these “report” (p. 132) and “command” (pp. 179). Report conveys information or content and command refers to what or how the message is to be understood by the intended receiver and thus is essentially a proposed definition of the relationship. This can vary from being very unclear to very specific. Relationships are usually defined hit-or-miss and without full awareness. Unhealthy relationships often involve incessant struggle about the nature of the relationship. The content becomes less important but it may be used as the vehicle by which to indirectly discuss the relationship. Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) explain, “Every communication has a content and a relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former and is therefore a metacommunication (communication about communication). In logical analysis, using group and logical theory, class is defined by its membership and therefore

content could be said to define the relationship aspect. However, here, the focus is not upon content but on relationship message” (pp. 51).

3. Communication Punctuation

“The nature of relationship is contingent upon the punctuation of the communicational sequences between communicants” (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967, p. 55). Early psychological studies regarding behavior introduced the notions of stimulus, response, and reinforcement (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson). This appeared as an uninterrupted chain of events. However, Bateson (1960) gives us the phrase “punctuation of the sequence of events” (p. 55). With dogs or rats the uninterrupted possibility exists, though it is not likely. With humans the sequence is generally longer and simultaneous stimulus, response, and reinforcement occur. Because these are overlapping, they form a triad or chain of triadic links.

People will generally punctuate the sequence so that it will appear that one or the other has initiative, dominance, dependency or the like. They set up patterns of interchange (about which they may or may not agree) and these patterns become the rules of contingency regarding the exchange of reinforcement. While the rats are too nice to re-label, some people are not. Good or bad are not the real issue. It is important to understand that punctuation organizes behavioral events and is vital to ongoing interactions (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967, pp. 59).

A classic example of punctuation is given by Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) of the couple in which the man withdraws and the woman nags. The man says he withdraws because she nags and she says she nags because he withdraws. Each accuses the other of distorting the real problem, which they define as the other's behavior. This disagreement regarding punctuation forms the basis of an ongoing relationship struggle. He punctuates the triad of "I withdraw because she nags" and she punctuates the triad of "I nag because he withdraws" (p. 56). Each sees the opposite and is not seeing the full reality of the relationship interactive sequence. Their oscillatory pattern can go on forever and is usually accompanied by charges of badness or madness (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson). For the purpose of this inquiry, it is only necessary to know what punctuation is...especially culturally. In a particular culture, people share many conventions of punctuation that organize common important interactional sequences such as calling a person who behaves in a certain way, teacher and another student.

Punctuation is especially a critical element examined in the interactional sequences identified in this inquiry. However, not all of the interaction is direct between the narrative and the state documents since most of the documents were communications to someone else and the narrative is telling about or showing in story form. This can still be examined inasmuch as they communicate relationship message perceptions expressed in the narrative and state documents.

4. Two Types of Communication: Analogic and Digital

Two types of communication are called "analogic" and "digital" by Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967). Simply defined, analogic is nonverbal communication and digital is verbal communication. Analogic "comprises posture, gesture, facial expression,

voice inflection, the sequence, rhythm, and cadence of the words themselves, and any other nonverbal manifestation...” (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, p.62). This includes any communicational clues present in any context in which the interaction takes place (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson).

“Digital language has a highly complex and powerful logical syntax [organization] but lacks adequate semantics [clarification of meaning] in the field of relationship, while analogic language possesses the semantics but has no adequate syntax for the unambiguous definition of the nature of relationships” (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967, pp. 66-67). This inquiry does not need to focus so much upon these two aspects of communication given the nature of the research data. It is important, however, to keep these factors in mind as a degree of condition upon the inquiry.

5. Patterns of Interaction: Relationship Types

In an observational study of the Iatmul tribe in New Guinea, Bateson (1960) tells of an interactional phenomenon he observed. He called it ‘schismogenesis’ and defined it as a process of differentiation in the norms of individual behavior resulting from cumulative interaction between individuals. Bateson also indicates in his findings that there is a “tendency towards progressive change” even when there is no apparent disturbance of the relationship from the outside (p. 176). Two types of relationship patterns appeared in his observation, which he called submissive and assertive. Bateson (1960) observed how each tends to escalate in degree to greater excess over time.

Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) renamed these as complementary and symmetrical schismogenesis. Symmetrical is used more similar to the notion of mirror like behavior (position of equality) toward each participant and complementary is used to

represent difference such as one-up and one-down. Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson suggest there may be a third type of relationship which they call metacomplementary, in which one participant forces the other to be in charge (complementary). They also suggest a fourth as pseudosymmetry in which one lets or forces the other to be equal (symmetrical).

Symbolic and Literal: A Logical Reframe (Tracy, 1986) and subsequent unpublished research demonstrate another additional framework by which to identify relationship types and models. Using group theory, the theory of logical types, symbolic logic, and literal logic, a relationship framework was theorized and tested through the use of a personal inventory named the *Symbolic Literal Orientation Inventory* (Tracy, 1986) and later renamed as the *Personal Archetypal Orientation Inventory* (Tracy, 1991). The study indicated two primary relationship perceptions (modifications of the paradigmatic symbolic and literal), which were later redefined as rational-objective and conique. The hypothesis was that there are two primary worldviews of self and other, which are mutually exclusive, i.e., they cannot be used simultaneously without experiencing directional confusion. The comparative population groups were master of business administration (MBA) and master of social work (MSW) graduate students. The statistical findings showed a difference between the worldviews of the sample populations (MBA = 70 and MSW = 69) as $t(130\text{ df})$, indicated at a probability of $\hat{\alpha} = .000$ per cent level of significance (Tracy, 1986). Since it is likely that there is some difference due to chance or error, it is best to say that the difference is within the 99.9% confidence interval. In essence, the alternative hypothesis of difference was supported by the findings and suggest that the instrument does likely indicate actual difference in the

population groups according to the symbolic and literal types of relationship and most of the subcategories which were also at the 99.9% confidence interval.

Of course, this study involved the use of quantitative design and analysis and is therefore subject to limitations according to the premises of this study. However, most important was the actual development of a paradigmatic framework of relationship according to both the rational objective and the conique worldviews, which closely parallel quantitative and qualitative research design (see Figure 7). The instrument was able to substantiate measurability of the relationship worldviews, which is that, the definitions of each, their types and models are distinct and reflexive (common) relationship perceptions.

As indicated in Figure 7, the rational-objective is a linear-causal relationship perception of self and other as separate and disconnected entities (Tracy, 1986). Other includes other people and everything outside of oneself. The rational-objective includes the relationship types of dependence, independence, and indifference.

The dependent type of relationship under rational-objective includes the models named parasite, vulnerable, poor me/hurt me, confused, dealer, and interdependent. The definition of each of these is added to that of the dependent type of relationship, which is added to the definition of the rational-objective paradigm.

The independent type of relationship includes autocrat, *autobrat* (n.), and do-gooder. Autobrat is a word I made up to describe the perception of seeing self and other as separate and disconnected and as independent insofar as each is theoretically equal, self-responsible, and self-determining (Tracy, 1986). Auto is used to reflect the autobrat as a child of the autocrat, but with some difference in relationship perception. Other parts

Relationship Perceptual Paradigm: Primary Perception(s) of Self and of Other by John Tracy								
INNOCENCE: Instinctual with limited awareness and experience.		RATIONAL-OBJECTIVE: Perceives self and other as separate and disconnected and...			TRANSITIONAL: Perceptions with the momentum toward the conique paradigm.		CONIQUE: Sees and relates to self and other as being interconnected according to individual and collective uniqueness as a natural mutually affirming creative process and...	
		↓	↓	↓			↓	
Dependent: other has or is something self wants or needs and...		Independent independent of others and...		Indifferent: faulted, immoral, without purpose, place or meaning and...		Creation Centered: as a systemic family empowered to be...		
Parasitic	sees other as potentially hostile or rejecting.	Autocrat	as superior	<i>Existential Despair</i>	mostly has given up caring about self and/or other.	Healer	a healer or means to healing.	
Vulnerable	as vulnerable and dependent on forces beyond control.	Autocrat	as independent free agent	<i>Transcendental Escape</i>	seeks a way out, literally or through some other means.	Teacher	a keeper of the stories and storyteller guided by wisdom and compassion.	
Poor me/hurt me	self is a victim. Seeks control through no control.	Do-gooder	has a mandate to do good by choice and help the less fortunate.			Visionary	a seer of the past, present and/or future.	
Confused	self is a victim of confusion, paradox or highly threatening dilemma.					Leader	a facilitator of dialogue and action with respect for person and creative process.	
Dealer	makes a deal to get what each wants.					Guardian	guardians of Mother Earth, the innocent, and all life.	
Interdependent	are dependent on each other.					Artisan	a witness of meaning and being through the arts and crafts.	

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Figure 7. Relationship Perceptual Paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995). Paradigms and types (across), and models (down).

of speech for autobrat include *autobratish* (adj.), *autobratiness* (n.), *autobratty* (adj.), and *autobratly* (adj.). The indifferent type of relationship includes existential despair and transcendental escape (see Figure 7). Conique is, as indicated previously, the perception of self and other as interconnected according to individual and collective uniqueness as a creative process.

Conique is creation centered and includes the models of healer, teacher, visionary, leader, guardian, and artisan. Figure 7 indicates the basic definitions (perceptions) for each position including the models of relationship connected with each type. Also identified are the relationship archetypes of innocence and transition or transformation.

Innocence, rational objective, transitional, and conique are relationship paradigms. Each is based upon a root perception of the relationship of other (everything and everyone that is outside of self) and of self. They are definitive because each entails a primary perception of self and other that is not compatible with the others and is therefore distinctive and measurable (Tracy, 1986). The descriptive definitions on Figure 7 are each layered downward in the sections below rational objective and conique. You see the words “Perceives self and other as separate and disconnected and...” then go to one of the frames below to which the arrows point and continue to read. If, for example, you go to the section marked Do-gooder, the full description is *Perceives self and other as separate and... disconnected and independent of others and...has a mandate to do good by choice and to help the less fortunate*. Each of the other sections flow in a similar manner from the top down as in the example given. Innocence and Transitional are given as relationship paradigms, but are not further developed in this framework. Autobrat was

made up to represent the relationship perception given to it (Tracy, 1995). There is no movement across the framework other than the description that follows each model.

Relationship is the logical process of consciousness interacting connecting with the consciousness of self and other in an enabling environment. It is the ongoing experience of that interaction. Relationship is the interconnection of the spiritual and temporal and of all that is seen and unseen. In relationship, time is not restricted to a linear direction, but moves as an interconnected process. These axioms of relationship permeate the entire process of being and becoming and of communication and meaning. When you look at the framework in Figure 7, it is important to know that nothing is truly fixed or permanent and that it is not about right or wrong. We come to know (perceive) according to our genetics (encoded memory), interpretations and meta-interpretations of our life experience of all the interconnective dynamic processes.

The relationship perceptual paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995) as described herein is also limited as to accuracy and meaning, yet it serves as a framework by which to begin to make sense of our relations with others and ourselves and serves to help us to see something of the process of meaning making. A more complete description of the relationship perceptual paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995) is included in the appendix.

The value of using this perspective along with communication theory is that the two join at the level of relationship types of communication. The *Relationship Perceptual Paradigm* (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995) brings into the data analysis the element of perception as David Bohm (2000) identified as essential to relationship analysis. Also, the relationship types of complementary and symmetrical as described by Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967) are logically based upon rational-objective perception and the

Relationship Perceptual Paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995) which includes both rational-objective and conique. Bringing the two together addresses a major problem in the framework of Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, (1967). It is important to know that in cases where there is significant differences in cultural perceptions of self and other and in related definitions, rules, values, and beliefs, singular use of communication theory may be almost worthless. Worthless if we do not have knowledge of what is going on inside the black box. Communication theory looks at behavior (verbal and nonverbal communication sequences) as a basis for understanding relationship. Unfortunately, this can fall short of being an accurate reflection of the relationship. The reason this is so is that, in spite of the systemic focus, the observed is or can be very much out of context if it does not include the relationship perceptual framework of the co-participants (the black box).

A criticism of systems communication theory is the claim that it fails to see relationships in context (Taggart, 1985). Driven by feminist critique (Leslie, 1995), the issues of gender, culture, ethnicity, and race have been added to the list of insensitivity along with spirituality (Walsh, 1999). Most of this criticism is targeted at family therapy, but it is fair to say that it is essentially targeted at systemic human communication theory and its application. Gregory Bateson (2000) as a cultural anthropologist and leader in systemic human communication theory might disagree with this, since his entire perspective was focused upon communication in culture and cultural diversity. Bateson (2000) says, “In fact, the phenomenon of *context* [italic in original] and the closely related phenomenon of meaning defined a division between the ‘hard’ sciences and the sort of science which I was trying to build” (p. xxv). Context for Bateson seems essential

to his systemic linkage of person and environment. He claims we need a systematic framework or classification which shows the relationship context, event sequences, and behavior toward self and others (Bateson, 2000). Context is used here as the element of relationship involved in a social—environmental—conscious—interactive experience.

Context is often elusive—perhaps impossible to fully know. Take, for example, witnesses to a crime. Each gives a different description as to what they observed even though they were direct witnesses. Context is the whole story, but it is not the whole truth. We can only aspire to relate information in context as best we can knowing that the full story is beyond our knowing.

In this study, Johnny does not hold the rational-objective perspective as his dominant worldview. Johnny's worldview was essentially conique. Because rational-objective and conique are logically incompatible, a person cannot think or act according to each simultaneously without experiencing what I call “directional confusion or even directional paralysis” (Tracy, 1991). Anytime we misinterpret group and logical type membership there are serious problems in the communication process.

Communication theory along with the relationship perceptual paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995) provides the means to see when messages involve logical error. These allow for greater depth, meaning, and relevance to emerge when using a combination of them in analysis. The combination fits the nature of the data given the multi-directional relationship messages, which exist within the data. This will be discussed further in the chapter on methodology.

What is an Auto-Narrative Reflexive Ethnographic Qualitative Study and Why Do One?

Qualitative Design

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible beyond that of normal quantitative research. These practices transform and turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3).

Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of experiential materials. In this case these are personal experience (narrative), introspection, and historical state records that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings. Qualitative researchers use a range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Qualitative research offers the opportunity to go beyond the statistical level of interpretation to the level of learned experience. Qualitative investigation allows the researcher to interact with and thus co-participate in the research

process in a way that validates the culture under study. It is for this reason that the qualitative approach was selected.

Reflexive Ethnography

Carolyn Ellis (Ellis & Bochner, 1996) says, “Ethnographers inscribe patterns of cultural experience; they give perspective on life. They interact, they take notes, they photograph, moralize, and write. ...[they] eventually turn toward some form of cultural analysis” (p. 16). Art Bochner (Ellis & Bochner, 1996) says, “The goals of ethnography were transformed from the search for laws to the search for meanings. Now we just assume that where there is meaning, there is culture” (p.16). The aim of ethnography is to deepen and enlarge our sense of a human community.

Equally important is that through this qualitative research design, the ethnographer is not apart or independent from the research. “Thomas Kuhn [1996]; philosophers such as Rorty [1982, 1989, 1996], Derrida [1978, 1981], Lyotard [1984], and Foucault [1970]; culture critics such as Marcus [1984], de Certeau, and Tyler [1986]; and feminists such as Haraway [1988, 1989] and Harding [1986]” all help to dissolve the notion of objectivity and non-participatory thinking and practice in research (Ellis & Bochner, 1996, pp. 19 - 20).

Art Bochner (Ellis & Bochner, 1996) says, "Ethnography should broaden our horizons, awaken our capacity to care about people different from us, help us know how to converse with them, feel connected. The borders between autoethnography, sociopoetics, and reflexivity are pretty fuzzy” (p. 28). In a way, all ethnography is self-conscious reflexivity, dialogue, and multiple voices.

"Reflexive ethnographies primarily focus on a culture or subculture" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 28). This qualitative auto-narrative reflexive ethnographic inquiry is an examination of how the co-participants in this study co-construct culture and meaning.

The culture under study here is the culture of co-participation and co-construction of meaning. The culture of co-participation and co-construction of meaning is a culture insofar as it exists as a process by which individuals co-participate in co-constructing meaning. Unfortunately, those who represent and control most of the cultural decision-making process carefully define co-participation and co-construction of meaning. This means that the process exists, but not without considerable qualification.

Auto-narrative as Autoethnography

Autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth autoethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations (also see Deck, 1990; Neumann, 1996; Reed-Danahay, 1997) (Ellis & Bochner, 1996, p. 739).

Auto-narrative, autobiographic, and autoethnographic works are usually written in first person (Ellis & Bochner, 1996). "In these works, concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality, and self-consciousness appear as relational and institutional

stories affected by history, social structure, and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought, and language” (p. 740).

In this inquiry, auto-narrative is joined with reflexive ethnography. The narratives consist of personal episodes mixed with some reflection and descriptions of personal dreams and visions experienced by me. This material is used as data, which is analyzed according to some variation of ethnographic analysis. This is further described in the chapter on methodology.

In the spirit of reflexive ethnography, I am focusing upon my auto-narrative (personal experience) of self-other interaction with that of the state records and how [they] illuminate the culture under study (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). As previously stated, the co-participants in this study are my narrative, the set of state records, my role as researcher, and the reader.

Why do this Study?

Looking back, this study has been a process from the time of my birth and has emerged over the years. It is important that people see and feel their connection to the story and the social-political worldview that co-creates such realities, not only as readers but also as members of this or any society. Social workers, educators, policy makers, practitioners, administrators, and anyone who might read this work need to become aware or more aware of their role or function as a co-participator and the function of worldview in their role as co-participators in the classroom, the workplace, the home, and the community.

Co-participants need to listen to others, create ways for others to participate in decision making, seek out the stories of others, seek out the opinion of others, their

worldview, and affirm and acknowledge others and what they think. As co-participants we need to examine or re-examine our thinking and doing. We need to remember that we only see a small part of the whole and that we need others in order to see more.

When youth related policy and programs are designed through the lens of the dominant culture, that is a problem. It is a problem because the lens is oriented to assimilate and/or control those on the fringe. As social workers, teachers, juvenile justice workers, court officials, foster parents, residential treatment workers, psychotherapists, and youth extension workers we need not only to see how the system is often not fair, how it has prejudices and practices that need to be changed, but we need to be accountable to the child's relationship cultural perspective.

Rarely do we think that the system might be the problem. It is important to not only see how the system has problems, but also how it is the problem.

This inquiry takes a deep look at how the dominant culture defines itself, relates to, and defines a child from extreme poverty and abuse. It also takes a deep look at how the child defines himself, relates to, and sees the dominant culture.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

A New Epistemology

This inquiry involves use of my own epistemology in which “relationship is consciousness interacting and interconnecting with consciousness” (Tracy, 1990, 1995). In this relationship, meaning (knowledge) is not absolute, but constantly changing. Meaning is realized individually and collectively *anew* each moment by those who co-participate (interact) and therein co-construct the “culture of meaning.” The culture of meaning is ever changing, non-linear (neither forward nor backward), and is inclusive of all consciousness. Meaning is both individually and collectively a way to understand how we relate to each other and how in our relating we co-construct and experience the culture of meaning.

It is within this perspective that I step into the circle. Knowledge is about learning. Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) explain, that “there are two kinds of knowledge: knowledge of things and knowledge about things” (p. 260). They identified knowledge as founded on sensory experience and a process of interpretation, meta-interpretation, and ad infinitum (Figure 8). Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson’s orders of knowledge served to stimulate my own thinking and led to development of the levels of learning shown in Figure 1 and Figure 9. This was a major breakthrough for me at the time.

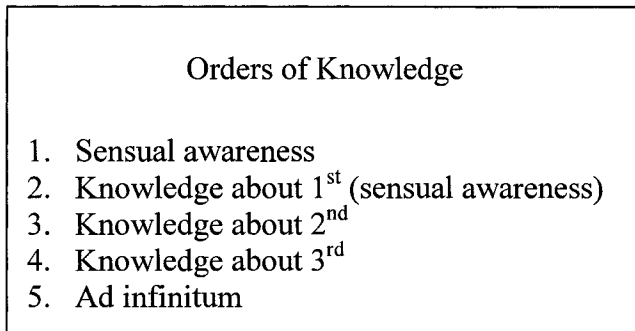


Figure 8. Levels or Orders of Knowledge

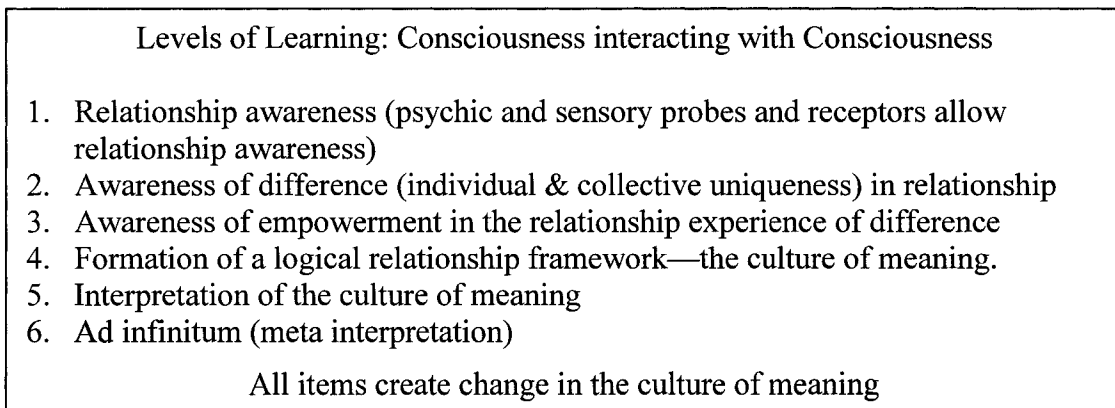


Figure 9. Levels of Learning, revised from (Tracy, 1995, p. 81)

Levels of Learning (Figure 9) is an existential framework that can be added to the analysis of data insofar as it provides minimal descriptors that can be applied when looking at participant knowing. A difficulty in use of this in this inquiry is that the data used in this study does not always clearly reveal the levels from which they were derived. Use of learning levels would be far more valuable in a study that allows for direct interview, observation, and self-revelation.

Interpretivism

My approach of looking at knowledge and meaning is similar to interpretivism. Schwandt (1997) claims that for the social scientist to understand, he or she must grasp the meanings that constitute the action. To say that an action is meaningful is to say that it

has certain intentional content or that its meaning is linked within the system of meanings in which it belongs (Fay, 1996; Outhwaite, 1975). Therefore, where possible, both context and intention are examined when interpreting meaning. Wilhelm Dilthey (1958) describes a variation of interpretivism as empathic identification in which the researcher grasps the subjective consciousness or intent of the participant. Phenomenological sociology and ethnography aim to grasp how we come to interpret our own and others' action as meaningful and to "reconstruct the genesis of the objective meanings of action in the intersubjective communication of individuals in the social life-world" (Outhwaite, 1975, p. 91).

Conceptual tools often include indexicality and reflexivity (Potter, 1996). Indexing and coding is to show how meaning of a word or utterance is related to context. Reflexivity signifies that utterances are not just about something but are also doing something [act]... both help to define meaning in terms of conversation and interaction. This is close to what Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) have to say and in my use of their punctuation process in communication or relationship and content message analysis. To this, Schwandt (1997) explains that human interaction systemically acquires meaning. Schwandt says that understanding the systemic nature of meaning is the goal of interpretivism (*Verstehen*). According to Gadamer (1996), understanding is interpretation.

Interpretivism and hermeneutics (*Verstehen* tradition) rose in human sciences in reaction to neo-Kantian German historians and sociologists (i.e. Dilthey, Ricket, Windleband, Simmel, Weber) in the late 19th and early 20th century to the epistemology of positivism and logical positivism wherein interpretivists argued that the human

science's purpose is to understand human action (Schwandt, 2001). Schwandt tells us that part of the difference seems to be around explanation (*Erklären or Erklärung*) vs. understanding (*Verstehen*) (p.p. 87-88). That is, one seeks to explain while the other seeks to understand. This difference of emphasis significantly alters the direction of methodology as analysis (explanation) for the positivists and understanding (meaning) for the interpretivist and those who hold to the philosophy of hermeneutics. Understanding is participative, conversational, and dialogic. Text, as used for data in this study, is not independent of interpretation. Meaning is co-constructed in the act of experience and interpretation; it is not simply discovered. To the hermeneutist, understanding is existential (Gadamer, 1996).

Construction or co-construction does not mean fabrication or even construction by the researcher as much as looking at the construction as negotiated by the co-participants from agreement or disagreement. Unlike social constructivism, where there appears a dissonance between interpretation and the existential ontology (the nature of being or existence), this study not only acknowledges ontology, but includes it as essential.

Every epistemology and related methodology serves some purpose toward gaining a deeper richer understanding of who and what we are, what is real and not real, and what this experience we call life and all of its manifestations mean. Each epistemology has limits in its approach due to its unique perspective. With respect to each, it is hoped that one will come to understand more of the overarching question of meaning. Likely, that understanding will be complex and involve multiple and changing meanings.

Research Design

This inquiry is an epistemological study using qualitative reflexive ethnographic analysis of the researcher's auto-narrative and the collected State of Iowa documents (relative to the researcher) in terms of how they illuminate the culture of co-participation and co-construction of meaning (Denzin, 1991). Norman Denzin (1991) explains that ethnographic studies describe, document, and otherwise represent lived experience in settings with characteristic patterns of communication.

The patterns of communication and their underlying relationship perceptual frameworks are examined in this reflexive methodology of the two participants (narrative and state records). This approach allows for emergent meaning through relationship and content analysis and coding procedures, application of systemic human communication theory by Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967), and my own perceptual relationship paradigm (1995).

Data Collection

The collected data provide a rich contextualized format. The sources of data include records from the State of Iowa and my personal narrative. The state records begin with a letter indicating enclosure of a certified copy of the Order of Commitment, case history on my family and myself (7 pages), and some school records on 2 of my siblings, but not myself. The letter (1956) is addressed to the Director of the Children's Division of the Board of Control of the State of Iowa requesting approval to admit a sibling and myself to the State Juvenile Home at Toledo, Iowa. The next set of records is in regard to my transfer to Toledo and initial psychological and medical evaluation. Few records exist for while I was at Toledo. The next records are concerning my placement out of

Toledo into a foster home. The majority of records are letters and reports from 1957 to 1961 regarding me as a foster child.

All significant names and addresses in the raw data, used for this study, were blocked out with black marker except for those on official letterheads and other documents that are a matter of public record. If there is a chance that even in these public documents that a name may be or could be used to track the current whereabouts of someone directly involved and identified as a participant in this study, then those names were blacked out. All blacked-out names were replaced with fictitious names. Likewise, a fictitious location is given for the foster home. Careful effort is taken to prevent knowledge of the participants involved within the state records.

My auto-narrative is my story up to 1961. The narrative provides focus upon Johnny's experience that informs the reader of his worldview that is of extreme importance to the purpose of this study.

Data Analyses

Analysis in this inquiry is a qualitative reflexive ethnographic cross-group design. It includes the steps as identified in Figure 10 and earlier in Figure 6.

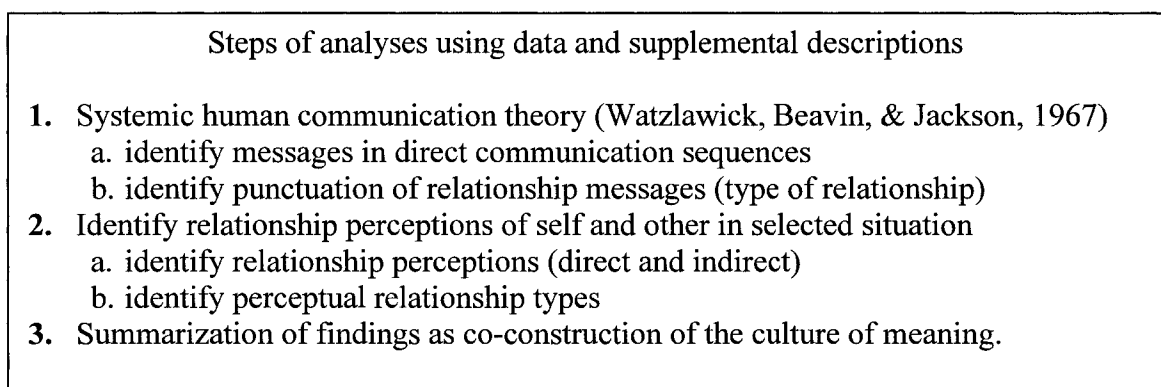


Figure 10. Steps of Analysis

Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson's (1967) communication theory is used to identify both relationship messages and areas of agreement and/or disagreement regarding the nature and definition of the relationship. It needs to be remembered that the data examined is both verbal and non-verbal and that this can be inferred from the context of the data as relationship is implied by relationship positions of each corresponding set of data. Relationship messages include verbal and non-verbal behavior. The state records do recite some direct verbal exchange with Johnny, but are most useful insofar as they establish position of relationship.

Ethical Considerations

As a feminist and member of an alternative cultural paradigm, I have attempted to allow for diversity of position, acknowledge personal bias where it is applicable, and avoid misrepresentation of the participant perspectives. This study does not involve human subjects other than myself and has been approved as exempt by Colorado State University Human Subjects Research Committee.

There is an element of consideration of the participant, State of Iowa, insofar as the documents originated from them. However, these documents are now my property, per request, compliments of the State of Iowa.

CHAPTER FOUR: DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CO-PARTICIPANTS

An Overview

This is not a study of the co-participants or their lives; it is about how the co-participants co-construct the culture of meaning. However, the answer to this involves looking at the co-participants in the context of their lives.

The research co-participants are those represented in the data (the narrator and the state documents), readers, and the researcher. As a reader, you critique, relate this work with your perceptual framework, and co-participate in the co-construction of the culture of meaning perhaps more than any other participant. Without you, these words would simply gather dust on a shelf. The cornerstone of any culture is relationship—that we interact no matter what form that interaction takes. Any reflection or action on your part as a reader makes this dissertation worth the effort and validates (quantitative) or authenticates (qualitative) the meaning of this work and you as a co-participant.

We exist in relationship, as consciousness interacting with consciousness as a creative on-going learning and living experiential process (Tracy, 1995). We are co-participants whether we like it or not. We “cannot not communicate [relate]” (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967, p.48). The question then, is not whether we relate, but how.

Co-participants are not necessarily friendly. Yet, friend or not, we interact to co-construct the culture of meaning, which is an ever-changing referential relationship

framework as we continue in our co-construction. We each experience this framework individually and collectively at different levels of meaning.

Each of the co-participants is described according to historical information, the social worker's perspective, and the narrator's perspective. A brief description of the historical period is provided as the background of influential social forces on the lives of the participants.

Names and Pseudonyms

The data named state documents includes court documents, case summaries, physical and psychological evaluations, social worker letters, foster care supervision reports, official letters from the State of Iowa Board of Control and other agencies, applications for foster care by Johnny's foster parents, and letters by Johnny's foster parents (see Appendix: Outline of State Records).

Each document is representative of someone who co-participated in the co-construction of the culture of meaning experienced specifically in relation to Johnny. Some documents have not had the names or addresses blocked out of then known state officials and state agencies. However, other names and addresses in the documents have been blocked out with black ink in order to achieve some anonymity for particular co-participants even though most have since died (e.g., the foster parents). Pseudonyms are used in place of actual names and personal addresses for private persons.

The state records begin with Juvenile Court commitment papers and a case summary of the Tracy family history. Johnny's biological parents' first names have been changed to Lola and Hank, Sr. and Johnny's siblings are given the names of Rex (5 years older than Johnny), Hank, Jr. (4 years older), and April (1 year older). Johnny's name and

demographic data are not changed. Names of judges and public officials are true with the exception of the foster care social worker whose fictitious name is Jenny McGuire. Johnny's foster parents have the fictitious names Ed (Edward) and Betty Kite. Most others are described according to specific relationship or title.

The Setting

The location of all of the interactions used in analysis take place in the mid-section of the United States of America in the states of Illinois and Iowa. The period is post World War II (WW II) from 1945 into the Modern Era (1956-2002) (Jenkins, 2003). Illinois and Iowa were in the midst of recovery following WWII.

America of 1946 had just helped win two wars (Europe and Pacific), was proud, and transformed as the most powerful military scientific industrial complex on Earth. It now was the leader of the so-called *Free World*. The year 1946 also marked the beginning of the largest birth population increase in this country as soldiers victoriously returned home to their spouses or partners.

Iowa and Illinois were major states in America's breadbasket. With the rise of farm implements, rural electric cooperatives, farmers' cooperatives, and rural extension services, mid-America joined the modern age and the economic boom. It was mainly those who owned the land and provided the equipment and services who were able to benefit from these changes. On the downside, there were returning soldiers who found themselves displaced and who had to learn to fit into a new booming industrialized agrarian economy with growing megafarm implement manufacturers such as John Deere and International Harvester (Jenkins, 2003). Some soldiers returned with serious alcohol problems, limited skills, and as yet not identified post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Horse-powered farms were being replaced with tractors, combines, and hay bailers (Jenkins, 2003). There was a sudden decline in the number of people needed in farm labor. One alternative was working in factories that were crude, dangerous, and dehumanizing for the farmer—soldier—now civilian. Other alternatives included farm labor, sharecropping, and other unskilled labor jobs, which did not pay living wages.

Wages were low, housing and other necessities were rising in cost, and a great migration began from rural America to the cities. Most adults in the late 1940s had fresh memories of their experience of the Great Depression in the mid 1930s. They were cautious and guarded as they entered the modern age. America was still heavily enmeshed in the spiritual roots of conservative Protestantism and Catholicism. Moral values remained similar to that of the early colonists especially regarding strong work ethics, poverty, welfare, social conduct, and justice (Jenkins, 2003). Racism, classism, and sexism continued under a powerful white patriarchal dominated society. Poor houses still existed, children had no civil rights, and prisons began to fill with social misfits (Axinn & Stern, 2001). Hobos grew in number briefly during 1945 to 1950 as many men could not or did not want to fit into the new society (Jenkins, 2003).

McCarthyism, named after Joseph McCarthy, was a period of intense anti-communism, which occurred in the United States from 1948 to about 1956 (Jenkins, 2003). The government actively persecuted the Communist Party in the United States with the goal of destroying communism and its leaders, anyone suspected of being communist, or of having any affiliation with communism. The times were also marked by an aggressive offensive by J. Edgar Hoover, director of the U.S. Federal Bureau of

Investigation (FBI) from 1924 until his death in 1972, who sought out and criminalized anything and anyone he thought was radical or subversive (Jenkins, 2003).

The influence of McCarthy, Hoover, and others with similar agendas set a tone of considerable fear. The threat of communism linked with fear of a nuclear attack, spawned the infamous Cold War (approximately 1946 to 1991) with a race for military might and supremacy between the Soviet Union and the United States until the Soviet Union collapsed in December of 1991 (Jenkins, 2003).

The relationship perceptions of self and other of people who lived during the years 1945 to 1961 have been influenced by and influenced the hippie movement, the civil rights movement, the American Indian Movement (AIM), the Black Power movement, the formation and activity of the National Organization of Women (NOW) and the larger feminist movement. Other movements with roots in the 1930's and 1940's were emerging early in the 1960's such as the Chicano movement with Cesar Chavez and the National Farmer's Organization.

Representatives of the State Documents

Descriptions and worldviews of significant persons represented in the state documents are essential in order to establish a deeper understanding of them as co-participants. The co-participants include the foster parents and their families, social worker and the State Board of Control. Others include people in the community and the community itself.

Foster Parents: Family and Farm

Betty Odensen and Ed Kite were married April 25, 1946. Betty was 18, just out of high school, and Ed was 28, after five years in the Army and serving in Europe. They

lived on a 390-acre farm since 1946 in a prosperous Iowa farming community. The Kite farm and those nearby had hilly land. The house was a modernized One and one-half story (formerly two) stone house built in 1850 along with two three story barns (1859 and 1865). All three buildings were made of limestone blocks (approximately two feet wide by two feet tall) from a nearby quarry. The house had a large wood/coal furnace in its full-unfinished basement that heated just the first floor of the house. The first floor had one bathroom, one bedroom, a living room, kitchen and dining room. The attic had one finished bedroom, a storage area, and an unfinished bedroom. There was no insulation in the attic, which was bare wood in the unfinished areas. The Kites had a radio, television, and telephone. The farm, owned by Mrs. Kite's parents, had hilly pastures that overlooked about 160 acres of rich river bottom land next to a small river. On the other side of the river were bluffs covered with woods. The entire scene was quite beautiful. All that was needed to complete the scene was a covered bridge over the river where a country road went through.

Betty

Betty was age 30 when Johnny arrived in her home on August 29, 1957. The social worker describes her as somewhat heavy due to affliction of multiple sclerosis (MS) and her inability to exercise. She was, at that time, in a wheel chair most of the time. Mrs. Kite's speech was somewhat affected by MS and her movements were sometimes spastic. Mrs. Kite had MS since she was 14 years of age and lost an older sister to MS before she herself was diagnosed. Her disability was progressive. In evaluation of the foster home, the social worker visited with Dr. Wilby, who said,

Mrs. Kite is a very courageous person and that she remained on her feet and active longer than most persons suffering with Multiple Sclerosis. Because she fell so much, and, was in danger of breaking bones, she gave up trying to walk with a cane and crutches and now depends more on the wheel chair (State Data).

The social worker, (State Data), describes Mrs. Kite (people generally used Mr. and Mrs. during 1956) as,

having an unusually cheerful manner and makes every attempt to live a normal life. She is mature in her thinking and understanding of teen-age problems because of her youth, contacts with nieces and nephews and children who visit there, and also because of her almost two years of supervising Freda for two years and one year with Ben [foster children placed there prior to Johnny and his sister April].

Ed (Edward)

Ed Kite, age 39 (when Johnny was placed in his home), was 6 foot and 3 inches tall. A high school graduate with a self-proclaimed IQ (intelligence quotient) of 145, Ed stayed and ran his mother's farm until a brother returned and took over the farm when Ed joined the Army. While in the service, Ed was a drill sergeant. His brother lost most of the farm while Ed was away. Ed had a little bit of the George Bailey syndrome of wishing he could have done more with his intelligence other than farming, but felt that circumstance prevented him. He expressed resentment of this numerous times while I was his foster child. Ed and Betty, like most of Betty's family, believed Betty would not live long, since her sister died within two years of diagnosis of MS and physicians gave her 10 to 15 years at the most to live. She had already lived longer than expected.

Ed rented on a share crop basis. He owned a full line of farm equipment and livestock (sheep, hogs, cattle, chickens, and a couple of milk cows). In 1957, the Kites had a 1952 Chevrolet.

Generally, Ed was quiet and often kept to himself. He presented an interesting combination of strictness and dry humor. He prided himself on his strict German background and upbringing. He believed in work before play and there was always work to do. He often said, "The land and animals are our bread and butter. If we don't take care of them, they won't take care of us." He believed firmly that everyone should carry their load and that cleanliness was next to godliness. He used a white glove to check if cleaning was good enough and if not, it had to be done again. Beds had to be made with military corners and he dropped a quarter on the bed to test if it was tight enough. If it wasn't, he pulled the bedding off and required it to be made over until it passed. Floors had to be scrubbed on hands and knees and waxed with paste wax that had to be buffed to perfection. The same level of expectation applied to the farm work. He also expected not to have to repeat himself. If I as a foster child did not get it right the first time, I experienced consequences, which included no supper, extra work, doing things over, loss of privileges, spanking with a board, and the threat of being sent back to the State Juvenile Home. If I did well, Ed was kinder and more considerate, but since he expected nothing less, good work was considered its own reward.

Ed was a dry alcoholic. He explained that he was told by doctors that he had to stop drinking since his liver was giving him serious problems. Ed was dry the entire time I knew him, until near the end of his life when he drank heavily and died of liver failure. Although he was dry during Johnny's foster care, he demonstrated many characteristics

of an alcoholic, such as dependency and co-dependency in his relationship with Betty and occasional depression. Of course, I see this mostly in hindsight as a trained mental health clinician. Medically, Ed spoke of having a serious case of chronic ulcers and chronic anxiety. While he effectively treated his ulcers through diet, he did exhibit considerable worry and anxiety about Betty, the farm, and was usually afraid that earnings would come up a *dollar short* as he used to say. He would constantly check and double-check the livestock, my work, and even his work. He wasn't wrong about being close to bankruptcy, as Betty required many medications and numerous hospitalizations that were not covered by insurance as she could not get insurance coverage.

Ed was also somewhat estranged from his immediate family due mostly to the major issue of his brothers allowing his mother to lose the farm. He expressed anger about this whenever he spoke of his family.

The social worker described Ed as,

a tall slender man with twinkly blue eyes, kind in manner, quite analytical and very human. He displays much patience and understanding with Freda [former foster child] and her temper tantrums and his wife who is a semi-invalid. He reads considerably, uses modern methods in farming and is reasonably successful. In spite of Mrs. Kite's handicap of Multiple Sclerosis Mr. Kite married her when she was a senior in High School and they have been very happy (State Data).

Kite History of Foster Children

Before Johnny was placed into the Kite home, they had three other foster children. A boy named Ben had many problems at the Kite home. He was quite intelligent and this was stated as a problem for the Kites and for the other foster child,

Freda. Mostly, Ben did not like the farm. Ben Coop, now 15 [at the time he was taken out of the foster home], was in the Kite home for one year from February 1955 to March 1956 (State Data). Ben and Ed could not get along as Ben would challenge and disagree with Ed. Records say that Freda was jealous of Ben's academic ability as she struggled to make even average grades. After Ben was removed, the Kites made application for another boy. Freda was still with them. They expressed interest in:

a 12 year old boy of average but not superior ability. The boy should be on the "little boy" side of maturity rather than a husky young man with a changing voice. They want a child they can call their own, so a mature 13 year old wouldn't quite meet this need. The social worker believed Mr. Kite would do better with a boy on the younger side. The boy must be interested in the farm (State Data).

After the Kites made application for another boy, Freda decided to go back to her biological mother. This changed their plans and they switched their application asking instead for another girl. They felt they needed a girl more than a boy, so Betty could have someone to help her in the house.

In the Spring of 1957, a female child, age 13, was placed with the Kites. Her name was April. April was my sister who had also been in the State Juvenile Home at Toledo.

Apparently, April liked the farm and the Kites, but wanted the Kites to get her little brother Johnny, as she called him. She cried and asked for them to get him, so the Kites decided to ask about Johnny.

Psychological evaluation indicated that Johnny was "dull normal" intelligence, good with his hands, very small for his age, and friendly. This description fit the bill, so

to speak, as it was just what the Kites wanted in a boy. Therefore, they got Johnny on August 29, 1957.

Betty called the local newspaper and announced that they now had the Tracy children in their home as foster children. She frequently made announcements to the local paper about “goings on in her home” as she called it.

The Social Worker: Mrs. Jenny McGuire

Looking back from today when there is so much turnover in jobs in the social work field, I am amazed that I had the same social worker from the moment I entered foster care on August 29, 1957 until I was formally released by the Board of Control of State Institutions (BCSI) for the State of Iowa, Juvenile Division on January 4, 1967. My court commitment was to the BCSI at the State Juvenile Home, Toledo, Iowa effective May, 29, 1956. The BCSI ran both juvenile and adult institutions which included state prisons and juvenile correction and care facilities. I was formally defined as an inmate (#2950) at the State Juvenile Home until I was released in 1967. Although I was a foster child, it was not through a county system. I was *placed* into foster care by the BCSI and remained under their custody until release. It was comparable to an adult being on parole only in this case it was foster care. Mrs. Jenny McGuire was a social worker for the Board of Control of State Institutions—Juvenile Division. It was to her supervisor, Director of the Children’s Division, that she reported. During the time of my foster care, Mrs. McGuire made approximately six supervision reports per year. Not bad for someone who covered the entire State of Iowa. Additionally, she wrote hundreds of letters and made contacts with state officials, county of origin officials, school officials, physicians, hospitals, and anyone else needing contact and did so in a very timely manner.

The narrative data describes Mrs. McGuire was a very pleasant, always professional woman. That is, she was friendly, but kept about her appropriate manners, appropriate speech, focus, and appropriate distance. She made it clear, verbally and non-verbally, that she was the one who was in charge of my care and to some extent destiny. She was clear about the rules of acceptable behavior (do whatever the Kites wanted and not make trouble) and unacceptable behavior and the consequences for the unacceptable, which was back to the juvenile home. Mrs. McGuire made it clear that I was being placed into foster care only because my sister April, who was placed with the Kite family about a month earlier, was crying and begging the Kites to get her little brother Johnny. Mrs. McGuire said that because I was a runaway at the juvenile home, they did not normally let boys like me go into foster care. Mrs. McGuire seemed like a fair and honest person, but was mostly focused upon pleasing and on me pleasing the new foster parents. She seemed to assume that my needs and interests would be met by this opportunity and that I should be grateful. She told me not to talk about my past, that people did not want to hear about those things and that I should put my attention on the present and the future. It was good for me to hear these things as it helped me to know where I stood and what was expected. She was true and consistent to her stated position during the entire 10 years.

The Kites made it clear to me that some things should not be told to Mrs. McGuire, secrets which included Ed's health problems, Betty's smoking and drinking problems, how much work my sister and I had to do, and anything else that she might not like to hear. We were told to make sure that Mrs. McGuire thought that both Ed and Betty were always nice and did all they could for us. They said this was important because if Mrs. McGuire thought they were not good parents that we would be taken

back to the juvenile home. The impression was that the Kites did not like or trust Mrs. McGuire although they always went out of their way to impress her. Mrs. McGuire seemed to accept everything they said, and my sister and I kept the secrets.

The Community

Community involves not only the geographic area and population but also communities within communities such as school, youth, smart kids, farm kids, etc. The farm was in southwestern Iowa. It was and still is a rural based region in the heart of America consisting of farmers and farm related businesses. It is a politically conservative group of people who have strong work ethics similar to that of Ed Kite. People in this region believed in the power of *good old common sense*, hard work, and honest living. They were divided about consumption of beer and hard liquor. Some counties voted to be dry and others voted to be wet. The people who wanted wet usually drove to the wet counties to find their drink of choice. Farming was seen as a hard but good life where the fruit of one's labor could be seen. People were a religious mix of Protestant and Catholic, but mostly found the church to be a place for formal events such as weddings and funerals. Their spiritual lives were more in the land and the labors of their hands. Neighbors helped one another and shared tools and equipment. Farm sales and livestock auctions were better attended than Sunday morning worship. As farmers acquired tractors, combines, hay bailers, corn pickers, etc. the days of work horses, threshing machines, and large numbers of field hands became history. When I was there, it took only two people to harvest a field of hay and two or three to harvest oats and corn. Because of this change in the number of people needed, lower income proportionate to cost of living, and not many jobs to be found in the region; most children of the farmers

moved away after graduation from high school and went to college or to search for jobs in the big cities.

The youth were mostly *spittin' images* of their parents. That is, they held the same values about work and community. Right and wrong were as clear to these people as the sky on a sunny day without clouds. There was very little in the way of problem youth except occasionally someone who could not “handle their liquor” as the locals would say and thus blame the victim and not the liquor. Sports and extra curricular activities, except during the winter, were mostly something town kids did as the farm kids had chores and fieldwork to do. Between school and the farm, there was very little time for much else for the youth that lived on farms.

The social worker described the Kite family and home as an unusually happy home with much consideration and understanding. Relatives visit often and are close. There are many family get-togethers for reunions, birthdays, etc. Looking back to this community from when I was there, I now see that it was metaphorically the classic Norman Rockwell and Grant Wood America.

In making these paintings, as you may have guessed, I had in mind something which I hope to convey to a fairly wide audience in America -- the picture of a country rich in the arts of peace; a homely lovable nation, infinitely worth any sacrifice necessary to its preservation. Grant Wood, in a statement accompanying his final painting (Malyon, 1999-2004).

However, living it was different than looking at the paintings so admired by others. It was not idyllic. Problems and conflicts existed behind closed doors. Interestingly, people in this region seemed to try to live the idyllic and pretend as if

things were just as they were in the paintings. I saw many a home, barbershop, and doctor's office with prints of Rockwell or Wood hung proudly on their walls. In fact, Ed looked very much like the man in Grant Wood's most famous work, *American Gothic* (1930).

It appears to me, looking back, that the people of this region were in many ways still in the mindset of the 20s and 30s, but faced with the modern age of technology, telephones, televisions, electricity, refrigerators and freezers, not to mention tractors, automatic milkers, etc. Not unlike myself, they too were adjusting to a new culture.

Johnny: Family and Background

As indicated in chapter two, Johnny has a very strong orientation toward indigenous thinking and worldview. He has had over 14 visionary dreams in his life starting with this vision at the age of two:

Crystal Rocks 1947

I lay comfortably, in the back of our old Roadster, on top of my family's life accumulations and away from the others as we traveled from cotton field to orchard and from campsite to campsite.

The sun broke through a canopy of green leaves and separated the shadows as they moved beneath the car.

White guard posts stood their silent watch while we made our way around the Appalachian curves.

We were going through a narrow mountain pass when time stood still. Beams of golden light flooded into the car from

the crystalline walls of the pass and totally encompassed me, I felt lifted into mid-air. A vibration and tingling sensation penetrated my entire being. My mind and soul became one with the light. Somehow, I was changed... transformed and permanently connected with another reality, another consciousness. My mind and body joined with the light. I could see things and places . . . some I had seen before and some yet to happen.

Other people were in the light with me. No one spoke, yet I heard many voices. I saw people gathered in a courtyard, listening to the one I knew long ago. Horse riders sought after someone . . . they were after me.

A giant tidal wave rose toward a great city and covered it. Then, in another place, the ground moved and heaved, buildings crumbled and people fled for safety.

I was filled with wonder.

I could see the people in the car. They were my family. I was no longer afraid of them. They were not moving. The car was not moving. I tried to get their attention but no one noticed.

Then, I floated back down to rest upon my family's clothes piled inside the car and we were moving again.

“Did you see the light?” I asked.

“What light?” said my mother. “I didn’t see any light.”

This marked the first time I spoke to my family since I was taken from the hospital where I had lived from the age of 10 months until 22 months (hospital records). When I was a student at the University of Iowa I read the hospital records of that hospitalization. Unfortunately, according to the records department, the records have since been lost or misplaced. This left me in the position of relying on my memory to share this important information. I do remember it well, almost verbatim, as it was very significant to me. As I remember, the hospital report said,

Admitted March [day unsure] 1946, a male child, John “Johnny” Tracy, age 10 months, unconscious and unresponsive due to apparent starvation and gross neglect. According to the mother, the child was 3 lbs. under birth weight (6 ½ lbs.). She also indicated she had used a “old wives concoction” of kerosene and water to induce her labor. Upon admission, the child had body sores and feces spread over his body. [Pulse and respiration were recorded as extremely low.] The record had a statement from the physician stating this as the worst case of malnourishment and neglect he ever saw. He weighs 3 1/2 pounds, is grossly underdeveloped, and will likely have brain damage. After two months, the child came out of the coma and responded well to feeding and care. He quickly gained weight and began to ambulate and speak with the nursing staff who became rather fond of him. His body development was very delayed. He was walking and was talking well by about 20 months of age. He does not appear to have any brain damage and although small is gradually catching up to normal developmental

abilities. March of 1947. It was the recommendation the physician and the hospital staff that this child not be given back to his family due to the severity of neglect, but rather be placed for adoption (partial document reconstructed from memory regarding John Tracy at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital, original was dated March 1947).

Before I could be put up for adoption, my father came to visit and while there, took me out of the hospital. This was my first memory. He came toward my white metal crib, gave me a fire truck, grabbed me into his arms, and walked out of the hospital. I was afraid, though a nurse had said he was my father. He tossed me into the back seat of an old car. Inside were three children, whom I learned later were my siblings. I did not know these people and was afraid. I did not speak to them until after the vision of the light. From there on we traveled as migrant workers until I was three and one-half years old, going from cotton fields to grapefruit orchards, and spending many hours on the road.

We came to the Quad-Cities (Davenport, Bettendorf, Rock Island, & Moline) where we stayed briefly with relatives until we moved into an apartment about 50 feet from the Mississippi River. To me, this was an idyllic setting with the river, a road along the river, a fish store, our place, a railroad just to the North about a quarter of a mile, with a round house, tavern, café, grocery store, and plenty of woods, and hobos living in the woods next to the tracks. This became my playground for the next two years.

When I was five and one-half my father abandoned us and I quit kindergarten. I was very distressed by his leaving and was not close to anyone in my family. I was closer to my imaginary Native American friends, nature, and hobo friends. I spent most of the

rest of the winter in the woods with the hobos. My family never came looking for me or asked where I had been when they did see me.

Right after I turned six, my mother and her boyfriend, Harry, moved from the river to an apartment in town. As we were moving in a social worker came to inspect. The following is a portion of my recollection of that visit:

“Now that you are getting ADC, you should take better care of these children. Otherwise, we will take them away and you will lose them,” the worker calmly said and looked around.

“What is ADC?” I asked. Mom gave me a look that meant to keep my mouth shut.

“Aid to Dependent Children,” said the worker giving me a look of surprise. “It’s money from the county to help your mother buy you food and clothes... to take care of you and your brothers and sister.” Turning toward Harry and speaking to Mom, the worker said, “You only have two bedrooms for yourself and four children and ...” looking Harry in the face, “who are you? Do you live here too?” There was a moment of silence as Harry and Lola quickly glanced at each other. As yet, the social worker hadn’t once smiled. She didn’t seem very happy about having to be here.

“Harry is just helping me move,” Mom said. “He doesn’t live ...”

“I see,” the worker interrupted. “Still, where is everyone going to sleep?”

“The boys will sleep in one room and April will sleep with me,” answered Mom.

“Are the children all enrolled in school?” asked the worker.

“All but Johnny,” said Mom. “With the flood and all, I haven’t had a chance to get him enrolled. They tell me I have to enroll him at Washington School on Concord.”

“Where do the others go?” the worker asked.

“Rex and April will go to Taylor School and Hank will be going to Monroe.”

“Good,” said the worker who then disappeared into one of the bedrooms and came out and went into the other and then went to the kitchen where we were and started looking into the crates. No one had moved since she came into the apartment. It was as if she had total control of their lives and could tell us to do anything she wanted and we would have to do it. Of course, Mom was lying to her about Harry and pretending to be nice.

The worker, who never told us her name, looked as if she was trying not to touch anything or anyone for fear of getting cooties.

“We had bed bugs, cockroaches, and snakes in our other house...” I said.

“Johnny!” my mother shouted and then in a voice that didn’t sound like hers she said, “Why don’t you kids go across the street to the park and play? Hank, take April and Johnny to the park. Make sure they get across the street safely.”

That was the last time I saw a social worker after we moved into town. Our mother did not live with us. She lived somewhere with her boyfriend Harry. I recall only seeing my mother about seven to nine times over the next three years. My siblings and I lived in six different places from 1951 to 1955: four of them were apartments rented by

our mother and two were abandoned houses we found to live in when we had nowhere else to go.

My siblings went to school most of the time as far as I know. My mother enrolled us in schools each year. I usually went to school about a week or two each year and skipped the rest. The following is a description from memory of what it was like when taken to Washington School for first grade:

Harry came after me, grabbed me, carried me back out to the kitchen, and said, “If you don’t do as your mother says I’m going to beat your ass.”

I went with them to the school.

A woman inside the school asked, “What is his name, date of birth and what grade was he in last year?”

“John Tracy. He was born May 29, 1945. That makes him 6 now.” Mom gave her all the answers and the woman said, “He’ll be in first grade. You can leave him here and I will take him to class.”

Mom and Harry walked out without saying a word to me. The woman came around from a counter and said, “Follow me”. We walked quietly down a long hallway until she came to a classroom door. She knocked on the door and a woman opened the door and said, “Yes.”

“Got a new one for you. He looks like he could be a problem. His name is Johnny Tracy. Johnny, this is your teacher, Mrs. Peterson. Do as she says and there won’t be any problems.”

The teacher looked down, gave me a warning frown and said, "This way."

There were a bunch of other kids in there and all of them were looking at me.

"He stinks," said one girl as I walked past her. I looked back at her to see she had her nose pinched with her fingers. The other kids all started going Pee U and holding their noses too.

The teacher said, "Sit here at this desk" and turned to the other kids and said, "All right children, behave."

One of the girls in the class raised her hand and the teacher called on her.

"Mrs. Peterson," she said. "He stinks. I want to go to a different room."

Mrs. Peterson looked at her for a moment and then turned to me and said, "Mr. Tracy, we can't have you coming in this classroom and upsetting the other children. You do need to take a bath and put on some clean clothes! My God! You smell like urine. Now go home and don't come back until you are clean."

The other kids giggled and laughed.

I didn't know what the word urine was, but I didn't like her attitude.

I felt an anger something awful well up in me and blurted out, "I hate your school! All of you stink!" and ran out of the classroom, out of that school, and never went back again.

Most of the time during those years I played down by the river, shined shoes near a bank, sold newspapers on skid row, went to movies, and broke into stores with my

brothers at night. They needed me because I was little and could crawl through a broken window and easily let them in. We robbed about nine different places.

My oldest brother, Rex, was terribly abusive of me and beat me about 20 or more times, including nearly to death a couple of times. He would chain my sister and myself up and leave us. I also watched him knife other kids and run away. I tried to stay away from him when my other brother was not around.

The authorities finally caught up with my brothers when I was 10 years old. The following is from the state records on family history (State Data) describing the apartment we were living in at the time.

In the summer of 1955, when Rex was picked up for breaking and entering and the Officers went to the apartment to recover some of the loot, they found the place in such filth and squalor that they called in the City Board of Health, Fire Marshall, Building Inspector and Juvenile Authorities.

Every dish, glass, pot and pan in the place was dirty plates of moldy and spoiled food was found in every room in the place, some under the davenport in the front room, others in the single bed room, etc. Forks and spoons left in some of the food had become tarnished and covered with corrode. Several cartons of melted ice cream that leaked out of containers onto other food, spoiled tallow taken from roasts, spilt grease and milk reeked out as the refrigerator door was opened. A portable washer half full of stagnant soap water with several pieces of clothing was obnoxious when the lid was lifted, and this was also true of the large sized washer stored on a closed-in back porch. The kitchen table, ironing board, sink, stove and cupboard was [sic] piled high with dirty dishes, with food, pots, papers,

boxes, empty cereal cartons and jelly and peanut butter jars, empty salad dressing jars, all molded. Only a few pieces of clothing were found hung on hooks. The rest lay scattered on the floors in the various areas and dirty dishes, bread crusts, meat bones, torn magazines and papers that without doubt had been walked on and trampled on for weeks and months.

All of the loot (pellet gun, 22cal. Rifle, 32 caliber pistol, bow and arrows, squirt guns, set of bone handled knives, ammunition, dozens of hunting knives, jack knives, etc.) were found hidden under the floor in the crawl space under the apartment.

Rex, Hank, Jr., and the two younger children April and Johnny, were taken to the Davenport Juvenile Home. It was only a few weeks later that the boys ran away.

Hank, Jr. and I ran away to Chicago for a couple of months and were on our way to New Orleans and got caught just south of Chicago at Monee, Illinois by a truck driver who was also a part-time deputy sheriff. This man and his wife wanted to keep us but the State of Iowa sent someone to come and get us. We were put in an upstairs cell in the Davenport Juvenile Home. Our brother Rex was already in the cell. The cell had six beds bunk style, a stool behind a small partition, two barred windows, and the opening to the hall was barred with a doorway made of bars. To me it was jail. I was in there from that fall until my birthday next May. I did not get out for exercise and was sexually assaulted while in the cell by older inmates. The cell was for males up to the age of 21. I liked the hamburger and beans mixed, which we called jail food, and I liked the song, *The*

Wayward Wind, sang by Patsy Cline, that I heard played about a thousand times on a radio—it kind of felt made for me.

On May 7, 1956, my sister and I appeared in Juvenile Court. I tried to tell the judge about the deputy sheriff in Monee, but I was told to be quiet, that kids were not allowed to speak in court. I tried to speak again, but the judge ordered me taken out of the court room. They had to carry me out kicking, cussing, and screaming. On May 29, 1956, my sister and I were taken to Toledo, Iowa to the State Juvenile Home infirmary to be processed for internment. We were in a prison for kids. The ones who ran the juvenile home also ran the state prisons for adults. As I related in the introduction of this dissertation, I escaped, was caught, and put in lock up. Because I ran, I was not allowed to go to the public school as did the other children and was instead given chores to do during each day for the entire time I was at Toledo except when I was in lock up.

On June 6, 1956 (State Data) I was given a physical and psychological evaluation. I include this evaluation report below in full as important background material because it was something that was forwarded to Mrs. Jenny McGuire, the social worker for the State Board of Control, and also given to my foster parents. Unfortunately, this information served to bias them greatly as to my personal and career potential as well as my actual family background.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION

NAME: TRACY, JOHN ROBERT - #2950	BORN: 5-29-45
EXAMINED: 6-9-56	AGE: 11 Years
EXAMINED AT: STATE JUVENILE HOME	CLASSIFICATION: DULL NORMAL

1. PROBLEM:

John's mother has been separated from her husband since 1954. She has been receiving ADC but has also been working in a restaurant from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. During this time the children are left to care for themselves. The home is neglected since most of Mrs. Tracy's time is spent in working or running around with men. John was admitted at the State Juvenile Home 5-29-56 as a neglected and dependent boy.

2. TESTING OBSERVATIONS:

John was very cooperative during the testing. At times he had trouble following verbal instructions but when given individual attention he did well. It was noted that he talked very little, nodding or shaking his head for most of his responses.

3. TESTS USED:

The following tests were administered:

Jastik-Bijou Wide Range Achievement

Otis Mental Ability

Thorpe Mental Health Analysis

Sentence Completion

4. TEST RESULTS:

A. ACHIEVEMENT:

The following grade points were obtained on the Wide Range Achievement Test:

Reading Grade Point 4.8

Spelling Grade Point 3.1

B. Mental Ability

A full measure I. Q. of 87 indicates that he is functioning within the dull normal range of intelligence.

C. Personality

John has made good personality adjustment considering the home background he comes from. He shows some defensiveness about his physical stature [4' 4 ¾" and 67 lbs.], wanting to "grow up" like other boys. I'm sure he realizes, as well as an eleven year old can, that he possesses limited mental ability. He seems to have adjusted to this through the rationalization that he can do with his hands/things to gain recognition that are beyond his capacity to do mentally. He shows a great desire to make things. He could profit from gaining social skills in dealing with people but again will be shy in his contact due to his feelings of inadequacy over his physical size.

SUMMARY:

John is a very small eleven year old boy who was admitted at the State Juvenile Home 5-29-56. He comes from a home where the parents have separated and there seems to be a total lack of supervision and guidance from the mother. Since his mental ability is within the dull normal range only limited academic success can be expected, but he does show a desire for vocational training where he could "learn to make things". He is rather defensive over his lack of physical size and tries to act much older and bigger than he is. His long term adjustment to the State Juvenile Home should be good.

I was kept in the infirmary for several months before I was moved to White Cottage for boys 9 through 12. There I did chores in the house, fieldwork, and other chores while the rest went to the public school in Toledo.

I saw my sister only a few times from the distance in the dining hall where each cottage sat at separate tables. All inmates were required to march in single file. Cold showers, isolation, and a spanking board were used for discipline. Our clothes were all the same for the boys—denim jeans and shirts and brown work shoes. Our inmate numbers were not put on the outside of our clothes, but rather on the inside—as if anyone from the outside world could not tell where we were from.

Biological Parents

State data and narrative data include the following information on Johnny's parents:

Born in 1905 in Springfield, Illinois as the ninth child of ten, Hank Tracy (senior), after serving in the Pacific Theatre (war), returned from the Army with an Honorable Discharge, a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star, chronic malaria, and alcoholism. Prior to the war, he had been pursuing a career in music and had four other children with his wife Lola. Hank had come from a working class family.

Lola was born in 1917 in Clinton, Iowa, the third child of three. In 1918, she and her sisters were committed temporarily to a juvenile home due to charges by their father regarding their mother being a filthy housekeeper and neglecting the children. The Probation Office claimed to have old records on their family regarding filthy housekeeping and neglect. The father of Lola also had a record of family desertion, a poor work record, and failing to provide for his family. In

1919, when Lola was 2 years old, she and her sisters were committed to an orphanage as neglected children. In 1920, Lola was placed into foster care with a family who later adopted her. During Lola's third year of high school, she found her mother and left to live with her until in 1939 when she married Hank Tracy.

Johnny's Siblings

By the time Johnny was in the Tracy family, it was already very dysfunctional. Johnny's birth certificate indicates he was the fifth child. He never knew of another child beyond him as fourth and youngest. The other child remains a mystery. Hank, Jr. said, the other child was a twin to Rex and Lola said the other child was a girl who died before April was born. Except for historical context, none of Johnny's siblings had a significant role in the focus of this study except his sister April. This is because she was in the foster home before Johnny, got him into the foster home, and was there with him for four years.

Rex

The oldest, Rex was already abusive of the other children and only grew more abusive as time went on. He nearly killed Johnny on at least three occasions before Johnny reached the age of five. As indicated earlier, he had a very violent nature and was to be avoided as much as possible by his siblings. Rex taught Johnny much about violence and how to cope with it. Johnny learned to stand up to it no matter what the consequence.

Hank Jr.

Hank Jr. was mostly kind, but distant. He was not around very much and when he was he seemed off into his own world. He is the one Johnny ran to Chicago with. He did

help, at times, to protect April and Johnny from Rex. What Johnny learned from Hank, Jr. was to be cautious and stay away from dangerous people if he could.

April

Johnny's siblings and he were all invisible children until they started breaking the law. April was even more invisible as a girl with three brothers and no parent to help. Occasionally, she and Johnny played together, but the older boys mostly paid little or no attention to her. Sue Books (2003, Ed.) and others wrote about *Invisible Children in the Society and Its Schools*. Not unlike many of the children described in her book, April was an invisible child.

April was a frail and seriously neglected child. She always tried to please people and help them whenever she could. She was well-mannered, friendly, and caring. She cared for Johnny far more than he did her. Johnny would not have cried for his sister April like she did for him. This is not because Johnny did not like her. He loved her, but to Johnny too, she was often invisible. There were a couple of times that especially bonded April and Johnny together. These times were when Rex was very abusive and Johnny was able to help her.

Summary

All of these people, along with you, the reader, are co-participants in this study. It is impossible to name all who have and continue to co-participate, but those described are among the major players. The context of each of their lives is important in how they co-participate—how they each interact directly or indirectly with Johnny. As seen, even geographic location is significant to who we are and how we interact.

In the next chapter on “Johnny and Institutionalization,” the relationship perceptions and types of the key players are analyzed to see how they co-constructed the culture of meaning. It is important for the reader to keep in mind the layers of context in the previous chapters that have led to this next level of definitional relationship. This is followed by a similar analysis of “Johnny and Foster Care” in chapter six and the final chapter, which looks at the findings and what they suggest.

CHAPTER FIVE: JOHNNY AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The primary research questions are how do the co-participants co-construct the culture of meaning and what does this mean? Analysis of relationship, in this study, involves use of the conique systemic interconnected epistemological design and not the traditional empirical scientific positivist (post-positivist) epistemological design that currently tends to dominate research. The traditional continues to dominate even much of qualitative research by requiring (expecting) researchers to maintain neutrality and objectivity in design, data collection, and data analysis. However, clarification of the influence of the traditional paradigm is important for understanding the process introduced in this study. According to an interconnected perspective, the purpose of the research is not about comparing sides and positions and looking for difference or no difference in relationship, but rather to look for meaning and how the co-participants co-construct their meaning. The focus is not on bias, argument, or objectivity. The study is not about looking for difference or no difference as in the traditional approach and is instead about looking at how meaning is constructed. The criterion of measure is no longer validity or reliability, nor is it objectivity or subjectivity. The criterion of measure is individual and collective meaning seen as being “in process.” Authenticity, the usual measure of qualitative research is still a factor insofar as the process is congruent with our relationship experiences and prior knowledge. However, authenticity is part of what is challenged as the process moves and meaning changes. The focus of this study is upon

relationship as a process of interaction and co-participation and co-construction of a culture of meaning. Key is the word “process”. As process, interaction is best examined from within the context of relationship communication and meaning, which includes influences from the past, present, and future. During the timeline of the period under study, 1955 to 1961, meaning got defined and redefined repeatedly by each co-participant into changeable relationship patterns of behavior and meaning. It is especially important to realize that each new disturbance involved another shift in patterns. In other words, it is a process of consciousness interacting with consciousness as an ongoing creative process within environment.

The question, then, in conducting an analysis of relationship in this study is what methods can be used to answer the question of how do the co-participants co-construct the culture of meaning and what does this mean. Since this is essentially new territory in qualitative research, I have not found any simple formulas or ready-made methods. Fortunately, as discussed previously, systemic human communication theory (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967), new science, indigenous science, and my own relationship paradigmatic framework inform the research of the nature of the interconnected process and some methods by which to conduct analysis.

The concept that “one cannot not co-participate or co-construct” is essential in the analysis used in this study. Participation takes place by doing, not doing, saying, not saying, presence, or lack of presence, even in the reading of these words, and in many more ways. Substantiality, you and all readers of this study, are perhaps the primary co-participants, because you are the ones who determine, along with myself, how this work gets interpreted, whether you work to make some of its ideas and findings known, how

you use the information, who you might pass it on to, etc. Whatever you do or don't do becomes a part of this work and its subsequent meaning. The same was true for Johnny and those directly and indirectly a part of the state records. While people may or may not agree, the point here is that we each, in our own way co-participate and co-construct meaning as members of an ongoing process.

Although the study investigates a period of time, it is not without prior historical roots or influence from the future. You and I have stepped into the process and by doing so, keep it alive and moving. Thus, the examination of relationship in terms of messages, meaning, and context must also include you and me and our relationship framework and context. I have placed my own context into the material, but I cannot place yours. You are doing this yourself even as you read and digest this work. So, I leave that up to you as I bring together the two data sets, and examine their relationship process and meaning. The methods of analysis used hereafter includes identification of the key co-participants, identification and description of relationship communication messages (content-relationship-behavior-source) between the co-participants, identification and meaning of relationship punctuation and types involved in the communication process, and identification of possible meaning of patterns and influences in the relationship process. The focus is upon Johnny's institutionalization and in the next chapter with Johnny in foster care. Each chapter ends in summary by looking at the how the culture of meaning is co-constructed by the co-participants in the data.

What is Institutionalization?

Most people have a general idea of what an institution is, which includes an organization (public or private) and/or a conditional relationship (e.g. marriage)

sanctioned by a larger group (Douglas, 1986). Physical, legal (legislated), moral, and social constructed institutions clearly reflect epistemology, ideology, and relationship worldview. Douglas writes, “Not just any busload or haphazard crowd of people deserves the name society. There has to be some thinking and feeling alike among members” (p. 9). However, Douglas (1986) claims that “Institutions cannot have minds of their own” (p. 9). United States law gives them legal personal status with the rights of individuals, but they do not think for themselves. Institutions do attempt (directly and/or indirectly) to inform individuals how individuals should think and act and institutions establish rewards and consequences for compliance and non-compliance.

Institutions tend to be formed and altered over time through a combination of conflict, agreement, compromise, inclusion, exclusion, force, coercion, strength, weakness, myth, ritual, relationship perceptions, etc. These include members who have died, who were mythologized, and whose words were often taken out of context and used to argue for position. The formation and continuation of institutions do not normally entail a consensus of all participants and more usually involves some level of ongoing confusion, struggle around definitions, interpretations, and meanings. Name a family, workplace, or even government that does not reflect this. How change takes place in an institution varies according to how the institution allows for change, the nature of the change, and the relationship of the people to the institution. Social, economic, and ecological conditions and events also influence institutional change.

Johnny's Worldview and Cultural Orientation

From the narrative, we learn that to Johnny, the institution was the mainstream culture as a whole and more specifically the juvenile homes, jails, courts, professionals

who worked for those who ran the institution, and its many facets. While Johnny's worldview was discussed in the introduction and literature review, it is useful to again lay out Johnny's worldview and cultural orientation as an anchor point in relationship analysis.

Johnny was, for approximately ten years (1945 – 1956), a member of a homeless family who lived in the culture of severe poverty. Johnny's mother also came from severe poverty while his father's parents and family were primarily working class. However, neither Johnny's father nor his family had little contact during those ten years. The perceptual definitions, rules, values, and beliefs that Johnny learned while with this family are foundational to his co-participation and co-construction of meaning. Johnny illustrates in his stories (part 2) his worldview. In these it can be seen how this was different from that of the dominant mainstream culture. For example, Johnny tells of a time when, at age two, he... "watched as the sun broke through a canopy of green leaves that separated the shadows as they moved beneath the car. White guard posts stood their silent watch as we made our way around the Ozark curves" (Part Two, lines 374-376).

Johnny (parts 1 and 2) informs that the family morals were simplistic with limited social boundaries. He tells how he picked up his family's gender and sexual biases, which included no boundaries for sexual behavior except consent of the other person(s). Age and gender were not boundary issues. Prostitution was considered normal acceptable occupational behavior. Stealing, squatting on land, and lying to authorities were also considered acceptable survival behavior. Johnny also explains how the family held strong beliefs in the existence of the spirit world. His mother claimed many connections with spirits.

Johnny, as indicated earlier in this study, held deeply to belief in the spirit world and claimed contact through both dreams and in visions. He informs the reader that his belief is that if he did not get help from the spirit world that he would not have lived or survived the severe abuse and neglect of his family. Johnny linked the spirit world with natural reality essentially in a panentheistic philosophical perspective in which all life has spiritual being, i.e. the trees, animals, etc., and involves seeing the creator as being in process, intimately connected and within all creation (Hartshorne, 1984). Alfred Whitehead (1950), proclaimed this process theology. This perspective is very similar to that of indigenous peoples throughout the world. Much of Johnny's beliefs and experiences were compatible with that worldview and cultural orientation. Johnny claimed to have learned this perspective from his spirit contacts and nature. It is from spiritual contact that Johnny, in his narrative, tells the reader he learned a strong belief in non-violence although his parents and oldest brother were extremely abusive.

Also significant regarding Johnny before his encounter with the system of institutionalization was that he had little acculturational contact with the dominant culture. His perception (narrative part one) of the dominant culture was to see it as "the rich." For him there was a dichotomy between rich and poor. The rich lived in houses, drove fancy cars, wore fancy clothes (store bought), got milk delivered to their door, and had control of the system professionals (police, teachers, etc.) who, according to Johnny, "did their dirty work." Dirty work included things like arresting and putting the poor in jail, etc. The narrative leads one to believe that this was the level of sophistication of Johnny's view of the dominant culture. He stated the belief that, for the most part, he had to avoid that part of society in order to survive. Johnny tells that he had very little

knowledge or experience regarding the dominant culture other than from movies he saw and what he saw while running the streets of Davenport's inner city's poorer neighborhood and downtown Davenport.

Davenport is a Mississippi River town with high bluffs set back about four blocks from the river. Below the bluffs was downtown and the poor/working class community. The narrative explains that Johnny rarely went up the bluffs and into the rich neighborhoods. Further on the outskirts of the town next to the river were a number of the more destitute poor, whom Johnny tells us were referred to by town dwellers as "river rats." Hobos also had their makeshift shacks in this same area, which was separated from town by a railroad. The city dump was located next to this area on the river side of the tracks.

Johnny tells of one particularly strong relationship in which he modeled after a hobo called Old Blue. In this relationship, Old Blue taught him to see freedom as the ability to decide his own way in the world and to avoid those who would tell him how to live. Johnny did his best to avoid those who would control his life and saw any infringement on him as a violation of his freedom. The narrative gives the insight that Johnny saw freedom and being a person as synonymous. To take away or infringe on his freedom was to infringe on his personhood, that is, on his being able to be a fully human person. These perspectives of Johnny played significant roles as to how Johnny later responded to the system and to being institutionalized.

Co-participants

The co-participants are anyone and everyone (person and/or institution) that has anything to do with Johnny's institutionalization. The co-participants involved with

Johnny's institutionalization are Johnny, Johnny's biological parents and family, Mrs. Tracy's lover, the Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, the deputy sheriff in Monee, Illinois, public officials (city, county, state), African-American and other people of color such as Old Blue, school officials, juvenile court officials and the juvenile judge, the community of Scott County, officials at Toledo State Juvenile Home for Delinquent Children, The State of Iowa, the United States Government, and future persons or institutions who may have any legal involvement with Johnny. Each of the above co-participated in some way or another in the process and experience of Johnny's institutionalization.

For those such as policy making government entities and the general population, there was not, of course, direct contact with Johnny or even knowledge of Johnny. For them, Johnny was unknown except according to the intent of the law and subsequent policies and regulations that were a part of what went into the entire experience. These are those discussed in the literature review that set the law, the tone of the law, and related social policy.

It can be said that this relationship process of the institutionalization of Johnny was initiated by institutional authorities, which included probation officers, police officers, prior court orders placed on Johnny's Mother, etc. It could easily be argued that Johnny's parents started this by their behavior, or that Johnny's grandparents by their behavior, or that the country started it by the laws and policies they wrote and how they enforced them. As in all communication, according to Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967), it could easily be argued as to who started what, but the important thing is not so much who started things, but rather the nature of the relationship that came to be.

However, most readers would agree that Johnny did not initiate the process and that he was ultimately a recipient of consequence of the larger social dynamics in society and in his family. Of course, Johnny was an active participant in his family and community before taken into custody, at age 10, by city officials.

Relationship Messages

Every communication conveys information and at the same time gives a relationship message that can be taken by the receiver as a command or proposal regarding behavior (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967). With the data in this study there are few direct, person to person, relationship messages; however, there are some made to Johnny from the social worker and foster parents in the state data which claims the worker said this and Johnny said that. Most of these reports of a verbal exchange are not so relevant as we only have the reporters' word. It is more important in this study for the reader and this researcher to realize that every communication conveys...content and relationship message. The state records and Johnny's data are forms of communication and each provides both content and relationship messages that are especially relative to Johnny's institutionalization and later foster care.

The purpose of examining the data for relationship message is not so much to identify personal pathology, but rather to see how by identifying primary relationship messages along with taking into account social and environmental context, that the process of co-participation and co-construction of a culture of meaning emerges. Once a culture of meaning is brought into some degree of focus, then it is possible to better understand the process of relationship in general and thereby perceive ways in which it is

possible to improve the professional tools of assessment, education, personal and social intervention, policy and regulations, etc.

The exchange of messages is a two way street. It is a process of communication by which two or more consciously interact. Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) inform that the point of agreement or disagreement is what they call punctuation. When people come to agree or disagree or agree to disagree they have a mutual understanding of the relationship even if they don't always agree what that is.

Examination of key messages in the data regarding Johnny's institutionalization found in section 1 of the state records and parts 1 and 2 in the narrative, are indicated in Figure 11.

State Relationship Messages (section 1)	Relationship Messages in Narrative (parts 1 and 2)
<p>Johnny's mother's mother: described as "filthy housekeeper, neglectful parent, and welfare recipient." Mother's father: a deserter and poor provider.</p> <p>Johnny's father: described as dirty, a drunk, unskilled, sexual criminal, convict, poor provider, deserter.</p>	<p>Johnny described his mother's mother as kind, neat, good grooming, and never mean. Johnny had no contact with either of his grandfathers.</p> <p>Johnny described his father as kind to him, musically talented, intelligent, a war hero who taught him things, took him places, was loving and considerate, tried hard, had a drinking problem, and had chronic malaria.</p>
<p>Johnny's Mother: described as a filthy housekeeper, neglectful, immoral, and attractive.</p>	<p>Johnny described his mother as a filthy housekeeper, neglectful, abusive, intelligent, and a great storyteller. In the narrative overview, she is also described as overly stressed from poverty, and lacking in parenting skills.</p>
<p>The act of the police taking the children into custody and removing them from the streets.</p>	<p>The narrative described this as a violation of his freedom, disregard for his beliefs, and "personhood [humanness]".</p>
<p>The act of putting Johnny and his brothers in a juvenile jail cell following running away.</p>	<p>Johnny describes being sexually abused in the cell.</p>
<p>The act of the judge in court not letting Johnny have a say and having him taken from the courtroom.</p>	<p>Johnny attempted to provide a solution to his problem and the court's problem. Johnny tells how he tried to tell the judge and reason with</p>

The act of committing Johnny and his sister to a state juvenile home.	him. Johnny tells how he became angry when no one would listen to him and how they carried him from the courtroom kicking and screaming.
The acts of giving Johnny inmate number of 2950 and processing him as a new inmate in the state juvenile home.	Johnny was not given a choice.
Put Johnny in isolation for running away with only bread and water for 2 days.	Johnny was not given choices except to comply or resist. Johnny tells of being molested by one of the staff on intake. Described the experience of being processed in the juvenile home as feeling like “I was raped of my personhood, stripped of my dignity...dehumanized and treated like a sub-human being, object, and property of the state, a prisoner.”
The act of not letting Johnny go to public school with the other children. Records say Johnny was sent to school on-campus.	Johnny described his experience of being put into isolation and how he was totally defiant by not eating, drinking, or talking for over 12 days. There is a discrepancy of 10 days between the sources. Johnny described how he reframed his experience and relationship with the system.
The act of labeling Johnny as dull normal and scripting his ability to others in the juvenile home and later in foster care.	Johnny described how he was treated and not let go to school with the other children and how he did get to have an art class now and then but did chores otherwise and had no other classes.
	Johnny was not aware of this until at the end of his foster care.

Figure 11. Comparative figure of key relationship messages regarding the institutionalization of Johnny.

Figure 11 shows several areas of significant difference in the two data sets. Included in the state data regarding the institutionalization of Johnny is a family history prepared by the probation office and submitted to the court as evidence and documentation for the request to have Johnny and his sister committed to Toledo State Juvenile Home for delinquent children. The Family history as written for the court and use by subsequent officials constituted an action (relationship message) to influence and support a court order for commitment. The documentation, most likely requested by the

court, also served as relationship message to the children's mother who was said to be present at the court hearing, her boyfriend, other members of their family, juvenile authorities, the juvenile home, the Iowa State Board of Control, etc.

Figure 11 begins with a comparison of state data with narrative data regarding Johnny's grandparents and parents. There is no agreement between Johnny and the state data regarding his mother's mother. The narrative (parts 1 and 2) relate how Johnny saw his grandmother as mostly the opposite of how the state pictured her to the court. The family history also describes Johnny's grandfather as having "deserted several times, had a poor work record, and failed to support or provide for his wife and daughters" (p. 1). The narrative makes no mention of this, as Johnny was apparently unaware of any of the state documents or what they had to say until 1996. The significance for this study is the messages given the court and to those who had access to these records thereafter.

Johnny presented a very different picture of his father than that of the family history. The family history author described Johnny's father as dirty, a drunk, unskilled, a sexual criminal, convict, poor provider, and a deserter of his family. The record included a rumor "that Mr. Tracy was responsible for the pregnancy of a thirteen year old girl..." (p. 1) as part of its evidence regarding the father so as to further influence the court of the children's roots.

The narrative does show congruence with the state records the description of Johnny's mother, especially regarding her neglect. However, even though Johnny tells us that he always felt estranged from his mother, he also describes her as intelligent, a great storyteller, and overly stressed from poverty. Johnny saw the human side of all of his family. He saw their strengths as well as weaknesses. This was especially true of his

father whom Johnny modeled after until the father left the home. The state documents do not indicate any effort to identify strengths of Johnny's parents or of his family. One can easily assume that to have done so would have implied a different agenda and outcome for the court hearing.

The family history gives a description of Johnny and his siblings being taken into custody and a graphic description of the apartment in which the children lived. Johnny's reaction to this invasion of his life space is revealing of his primary worldview and will be discussed later in initial analysis. For now, the narrative indicates how Johnny saw this as a violation of his freedom, disregard for his beliefs, and a taking away of his personhood or as he described it, "I was a whole person and they made me less than whole by locking me up. In the jail, I was forced to give the older boys [up to age 21] oral sex. No one cared inside or outside what I thought. No one granted me to be a person. I was just an object. Now, they want to take my soul, but I will not let them" (Narrative Data).

The narrative informs us that no one from the court or otherwise asked or interviewed Johnny prior to or during the court proceedings about his perceptions, concerns, thoughts, etc. Legally, as learned from Axinn and Stern (2001), Johnny had no legal recognized rights. It was not until 1967 that civil rights were given to children and this court proceeding was May 7, 1956. However, Johnny informs us, as does the state records, that Johnny apparently assumed that he deserved to be heard. Both sets of data inform that Johnny was not recognized, was ordered to be silent, and when he refused, he was ordered physically removed from the courtroom. The court moved forward and the judge ordered the commitment of Johnny and his sister to Toledo.

Analysis of Institutionalization

What were the relationship messages in the process of institutionalizing Johnny?

The court papers were clearly designed to promote the commitment of the children and to remove them from their mother. It is interesting that the author of the family history included the quite negative descriptions of the children's grandparents as well as their parents. The author of the family history also excluded information regarding the children's other grandparents or aunts and uncles that were in the community at the time and who may have been willing to assist with the children. There was mention of a maternal aunt taking Johnny's brother Hank into her care. There was no mention in the data of whether this or any other option was explored regarding April and Johnny. The inclusion and exclusion of material and the nature of the descriptors strongly suggest the author of the family history wanted the court to see the family of the children in as negative perspective as possible. It appears their agenda was to influence the court to remove the children completely by describing not only deplorable living conditions but also suggesting that there is no one in this family worthy of care of the children.

The family history (State Data) describes Johnny, "John has tried to be and act like his brothers, and therefore he has a somewhat 'tough and hard boiled' attitude... a quick temper, and when taken to the [Davenport] Juvenile Home by officers he kicked and swung his fists at them..." The author of this description, it appears, is trying to influence the court to believe that Johnny is following the same path as that of his parents and brothers. The message draws upon the notion that the "apple does not fall far from the tree," that if Johnny stays he will be like them and is, to some degree, already like

them. The family history author labeled the grandparents and parents as immoral and unworthy of having custody and care of children.

Another relationship message in the recommendations is that the court and professionals know better than the children's family or the children what is best for the children. This is reinforced by the law, which did not yet recognize children's rights, and the refusal of the judge to allow Johnny to speak. The relationship position of those who wrote the state documents, including state and federal laws regarding children, held complementary relationship positions in which it was made clear that the court was dominant and had full authority. According to the perceptual models of relationship (Figures 7 & 12), this is an "autocratic" relationship position in which self sees other as separate and in a cause and effect relationship in which they see themselves as superior, not needing other (Johnny and his family), but in which they do see other as needing them. The court with its legal authority placed it in a power-over relationship with the children and their family. Johnny was ordered to take a complementary relationship of compliance when the judge ordered him to be quiet. When Johnny refused, it changed to a symmetrical or adversarial relationship.

As a licensed clinical social worker, I realize that if the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fourth Edition* (DSM-IV, 1994) were in use by professionals in 1956, Johnny would have likely been diagnosed as having "oppositional defiant disorder (ODD)" (code 313.81). The first DSM was published in 1952, but did not gain widespread usage until the publication of DSM-III in 1980 by the American Psychiatric Association. The state data of family history and the initial psychiatric evaluation regarding Johnny describe symptoms of this disorder, which occurred over a

period longer than the required six months and which exceeded that of a child of similar age and development. The point is that in 2004, children are still seen as problematic if they consistently refuse adult authority and fight it. Now, children are often initially placed in a detention center, given a mental diagnosis such as ODD or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), placed on medication, and given mental health therapy. Johnny was carried out of the courtroom, placed back in his cell in the Davenport Juvenile Home, and later taken to Toledo State Juvenile Home for delinquent children. The relationship message is essentially the same: that children who do not do what adults say have and/or are a problem that requires corrective measures.

The intervention of removing the children from the custody and care of their mother and committing them to the custody of the Iowa State Board of Control, which had authority over state prisons and institutions, was deemed by the court and representatives of Scott County of Davenport, Iowa as an appropriate intervention. The court behavioral messages were perceived by Johnny as a punitive intervention as well as unnecessary. Johnny expressed that his freedom and personhood were taken away from him.

Underlying the court intervention were the messages that the children needed to be acculturated into the culture by force and that this required strict supervision. The intent was to clean their slates of old memories, behavior, and history, and write on them mainstream cultural beliefs and values. The message was, you will be acculturated and made into a productive and acceptable citizen.

Johnny was not fully compliant. The most significant relationship communication sequence took place between Johnny and the participants of the state records (State

Data); the juvenile judge orders (commands) that Johnny and his sister be committed to the state juvenile home. Johnny did not agree with the order. According to his narrative, we learn he attempted to appeal to the judge and tell the judge about a couple in Monee, Illinois who would like to have him live with them. The judge's response was to disqualify Johnny and command him to be quiet. In their sequence of communication, Johnny protested being ordered to be quiet and was responded to by the judge ordering officers of the court to take Johnny from the court room.

Even though the judge never had any further direct contact with Johnny, the relationship of Johnny with the judge continued as symmetrical wherein state officials continued to act in the stead of the judge and carry out his orders and Johnny continued to resist by later breaking out of the state juvenile home and running away. The relationship remained symmetrical up to the point at which Johnny had a vision in which he was able to reframe how he saw the judge. At that point the judge was no longer the enemy or adversary. Johnny did not yet agree with the judge, but what he did was to move the relationship to the next logical type or higher logical level in which he no longer saw the judge or the judge's surrogates as the problem, but rather as having a problem together with him.

Johnny defined the walls as the problem and not the people behind the walls. He defined the walls as the perceptions, definitions, rules, beliefs, and values. He saw his walls and he saw some of their walls. He decided to shift the relationship and his message by trying to remove his walls and doing what he could to speak to others about their walls and the need to remove them. The response Johnny got was to get out of lockup or isolation, because he was now seen as becoming compliant with the judge's initial

relationship command, which was “to be compliant and not resist.” It would not have been possible to have seen or uncovered this primary (overriding) relationship without having gone through this analysis of relationship process.

However, analysis shows that the judge is not the overriding relationship that dominates any attempts of intervention with Johnny as far as Johnny was concerned even though he was not to any great extent conscious of it. There was a more significant relationship that had precedence and to which the judge was a co-participant. That relationship was the one Johnny had with society in general wherein he saw himself as rejected by “the rich” who virtually had the power to and did run everything and everyone that they chose. The judge, like the police and others, was a servant of the rich in Johnny’s view. It was the rich, those who dominate and run society, that told the judge what to say and do, and who spoke through him. Therefore, when Johnny reframed his relationship with the oppressor, he was in fact reframing his relationship with those whom he perceived to run society.

The reframe response was to ask others for an equal playing field. If they held to the old paradigm (command), then Johnny was being uppity by claiming equality. Data indicates that Johnny remained in this relationship for the most part throughout his institutionalization experience and on into foster care.

Summary

The primary relationships between the two sets of data include an attempt by the system to create a complementary relationship (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967) from the relationship perceptions of autocrat and do-gooder models (See Figures 7, 12). Johnny rejected the complementary relationship type and proposed a symmetrical

relationship by how he chose to behave (respond), which the system accepted according to their symmetrical behavior (punishment) still aimed at gaining a complementary relationship. Johnny expressed behavior consistent with the relationship perception of the autocrat. The relationship perceptual models are found in figures 7 and 12 and the types of relationship are from Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967).

When Johnny experienced a vision in lockup, he had a shift in his relationship paradigm and models. He moved from those just mentioned to that of the conique paradigm with the natural model of relationship as his dominant behavioral relationship type. The other co-participants from the system did not shift their position and continued to interpret Johnny's behavior from within an autocratic (dominant) and at times a do-gooder relationship perspective. At times, according to Johnny (Narrative Data), his change in behavior did not match how they saw him, as either compliant or defiant. The mismatch created some level of confusion until they either disqualified, rejected, or ignored the new behavior.

Perhaps the most significant influences on the relationships involved in Johnny's institutionalization are the overarching historical attitudes of the general public toward children from poverty and the laws relative to these attitudes. Johnny's limited exposure to the dominant mainstream culture and his connection with nature and the spirit world were equally important.

The analysis from this chapter and the next will be examined in the last chapter to answer the question of how the co-participants co-constructed the culture of meaning. Thereafter, the findings will be discussed in terms of their implications for the academy and especially education and social work.

CHAPTER SIX: JOHNNY AND FOSTER CARE

Johnny's sister, April, was placed into foster care with Ed and Betty Kite. State documents tell of April asking for her little brother Johnny. The Kites then inquired about getting Johnny and so Johnny got the opportunity to go into foster care. Copies of Johnny's court family history and recommendations, his commitment papers, and his evaluation (physical, academic, and psychological) records were sent to the foster parents and to the school system where he was to attend school.

Foster care, in 1957, was perceived by Johnny as another level of institutionalization. Johnny tells (Narrative Data) that foster care was organized to control and assimilate youth from a different cultural background into the dominant culture as a second class citizen. Foster care, in Johnny's words (Narrative Data), represented...

more freedom, more opportunity 'in' the system, and more personal choice. It meant, in my case, a chance to be with my sister again and to grow up with her together. It meant a chance to go to regular school, although this made me somewhat apprehensive, that I might run into more of the same as I did as a small child. I was worried how I might do. I had not really attended school hardly at all. I did not know many things. I might fail.

I didn't know what kind of disciplinarians the foster parents might be. They could be worse than here in the juvenile home. I would have to take a chance. There was also the chance that if I didn't like it or wasn't good enough for them and went back to Toledo, that my chances of going to another foster home would be small.

I was afraid of the farm. I was never on a farm except at the juvenile home and it was a large farm designed to provide food for all of the children. Was I going to be used to pick green beans and strawberries, and pull weeds? Was I just going to be cheap farm labor for the family that ran the farm? Then there were the questions such as would the foster family like me? Would my sister still like me? My apprehension was very high although I tried to cover it. I would have said yes to going to the foster home no matter what as long as it let me be with my sister. April wanted me, which meant she needed me to help her and to be there for her. I had to go.

What is Foster Care?

Most readers are likely to be familiar with foster care as families providing children in need with a home and temporary care on behalf of county or state juvenile services. Foster care is a level of care provided for and managed by the state government as an institutional program. Axinn and Stern (2001) explain how in 1850 the apprenticeship indenturing of children mostly disappeared with the rise of industrialization. There was a shift from children being trained to children providing services. The Children's Aid Society of New York, founded in 1853 by Charles Loring Brace started a new approach to child care (Axinn & Stern). Brace wanted children out of institutional asylums where children learned corruption and vice. He conceived of foster

home care where children were removed from asylums and their parents and placed in an environment totally different such as on farms out West. Brace argued that farm labor was in demand and that the children could be used for labor and taught solid Christian values, and contribute to society instead of taking from it. The intent and purpose of foster care was to break the generational cycle of crime and filth and to acculturate youth to the dominant culture and its values As to youth in which heredity was too strong, institutionalization remained an option (Axinn & Stern). Heredity was perceived as a major cause for crime, filth, and immoral living thus supporting the notion that the apple does not fall far from the tree. Individuals coming from such backgrounds were often the first to be suspect whenever a crime occurred. Johnny's writes (Narrative Data) how he was often blamed for things just because he was the likely suspect based upon his background.

Johnny expressed how he saw foster care as an opportunity to have a home, a family, and to be treated as a whole person who was free to make his own decisions. A chance for freedom meant a chance to regain his soul. As Johnny's imaginary friend, Dancing Buffalo, said, "to be free is to be a human being" (Narrative Data). Foster care was also a way to get out of the juvenile home.

Co-participants

As indicated in chapter three, the co-participants in Johnny's foster care experience were many. The key players were the judge who ordered commitment, Johnny's family, Toledo State Juvenile Home for Delinquent Children, the State of Iowa Board of Control of State Institutions (BOC), the field worker (social worker) for the BOC, foster parents Ed and Betty Kite and their families, the public school system, the

church, and the general community where Johnny was placed. Johnny might also want to add how the hogs seemed to have a say about how his experience went. Overall, as indicated in earlier chapters, the experience of foster care was systemic, which included the times, values, rules, and worldviews of all of the co-participants including Johnny.

According to Johnny (Narrative Data), the most influential was his relationship and contact with the spirit world through dreams, visions, and intuition. The spirits involved with Johnny were God, Jesus, Mary, and totem spirits of the bear, turtle, horse, and especially the eagle. Johnny claims these spirits helped him along the way and gave him courage to keep going. Johnny held a very strong belief in these guiding spirits and saw them as present. Religion was not central to Johnny's spirituality although he tells of contact with God, Jesus, and Mary. He describes his experience of these as personal and not girdled with theology and doctrine. Johnny claims it is from the spirits that he learned most of what he knows regarding understanding people, relationship, and natural reality. There were several dreams in which Johnny tells of being instructed about people and the world. Johnny even credits his imaginary friends from childhood as teaching him to read from comic books while they sat together and smoked sacred cigarettes. Clearly, for Johnny, the spirits were co-participants in his journey through the experience of foster care.

Again, there is you the reader who with your personal and professional eyes interpret as you read this material. You are a major influence and gatekeeper to the future of this culture of meaning as it emerges before you on these pages and joins with your own narrative.

Relationship Messages

Relationship messages come within the realm of “microethnography” that is related to cultural causal-relations codification of meaning, which is commonly called language (Streeck, 2002, p. 324). In this study, there is a shift in emphasis from the traditional causal process to that of a co-construction of meaning through diversity and interconnection. Unlike the anthropological microethnographer who seeks to rewind and replay the communication sequences repeatedly until some form of structure is definable, this study emphasizes the emergence of culture anew in each moment. This is not an evolutionary process but rather creative events involving all participants.

Culture as used in this study is not the anthropological view of an evolving "set of prosthetic devices by which human beings are able to function...such as symbolic and representational systems," but rather culture is the creation of meaning as held in our diverse and collective relationship perceptions of self and other (Streeck, 2002, p. 303). Culture is consciousness interacting and interconnecting with consciousness as a multi-layered complex of synchronous expressions formed into a logical framework of perceptual definitions of self and other with behavioral options. The culture of meaning is this logical framework that is co-constructed through the experiential process of consciousness interacting with consciousness as illustrated in Figure 1 of which a generic interpretive framework is postulated in Figure 7 and elaborated in Figure 15.

The dominant culture that Johnny encountered was constructed symbolically and was a representational system as evidenced in examination of the relationship perceptual messages of the state representatives and the foster parents who were approved as representative of the general public and mainstream values. Johnny was cast into this

cultural milieu and defined symbolically (categorically) as a delinquent neglected dull problem child in need of care and acculturation. The farm was perceived in 1853 by Charles Loring Brace as a symbol of rehabilitation and acculturation for children from destitute and immoral families (Axinn and Stern, 2001). Ed and Betty Kite, the social worker, the state authorities, and foster care regulations are all part of the representative system's rehabilitation formula that Johnny experienced and with whom he co-constructed a new culture of meaning.

Figure 12 is similar to Figure 11 in chapter six, except that here the parallel perceptual relationship messages from the data sources in the relationships of the co-participants apply to the time of Johnny in foster care.

State Relationship Perceptual Messages	Narrative Relationship Perceptual Messages
<p>The psychological and academic evaluation of Johnny informs the SW, foster parents, and school that Johnny will not do well academically, will never be good at anything except with his hands, is a child of inappropriate parents, is small for his age, tries to act bigger than he is, needs juvenile home type of care/supervision, and to improve his social skills.</p> <p>Kites request children who are mentally slow who would do well as helpers on the farm and with Mrs. Kite in the home.</p> <p>A letter from the director of the Children's Division of the Board of Control of State Institutions described Johnny and April: "Both April and John made an excellent adjustment and were highly regarded by their respective cottage parents... and others in charge at Toledo." Johnny was transported to foster care placement 8-29-1957.</p> <p>Kites describe children as doing great, going to church, and liking school. Mr. Kite said, Johnny has done more and showed more interest in the work and taken more</p>	<p>The narrative describes how Johnny was not aware of these reports until 1964 when the Kites told him they never thought he would graduate from high school since he only had an 87 IQ. The Kites said something when Johnny first came to them about Johnny being slow in school and never expressed any expectations or hope of him doing well.</p> <p>Johnny was not aware of this request.</p> <p>Johnny described how his cottage parent said to him privately "You will be back. Delinquents like you never last on the outside. I give you two months at the most before you are brought back." When in front of the SW, the cottage mother said with a smiling face, "Bye Johnny, we wish you the best."</p> <p>Johnny describes the Kites as very strict about doing things "just right" or they had to be done over and over until they were correct. Ed used a white cloth to see if Johnny dusted</p>

responsibility in the month since he has been here that the last foster boy did the entire time he was there.

Descriptive notes of SW on disparity between Johnny's hard work and friendly attitude and Johnny having a problem with forgetting things. The latter is seen as on purpose and punishment is discussed. Mr. Kite said, "you can't punish these kids. If you deny them privilege, it doesn't bother them."

The data tells how the Kites were baffled by the fact that Johnny would work until he dropped, he never complained, he would do anything he was asked, he was always apologetic if he did something wrong, he never argued with punishment and accepted it without complaint, he never held a grudge and was always nice even during and after being punished.

The SW records Mrs. Kite telling of Johnny scoring well on an achievement test with a 9.5 grade equivalent in language skills. [Johnny was in the sixth grade at the time.] The worker questions the accuracy of this and says the "real problem" is Johnny's tendency to "goof off" on his work. Punishment is discussed. Johnny is said to say "He doesn't know why he doesn't get them done." SW notes, "There is

well, required military style bed making, and used a quarter to check its bounce. The floors had to be scrubbed on hands and knees, waxed with paste wax, and buffed to a reflection shine. Mrs. Kite made sure the children went to a local church, although Mr. and Mrs. Kite never went. Johnny also describes how one of Ed's and Betty's ways of getting kids to work harder was to pit them against each other. If one child did well, the other was made to look and feel bad. The Kites also showed favoritism to children of their relatives and expected their foster children to take second place be it at the table, doing chores, dishes, etc.

Johnny describes how Ed told him to turn on the hog waterer and then go feed the pigs because that was the efficient way to do it. Johnny says, "I wasn't into efficiency. I turned on the waterer and forgot about it. The hog lot flooded." Johnny explains how forgetting things was not deliberate, but he felt he had to go along with the Kites in front of the SW.

"I knew I couldn't mouth off to Ed. Ed did not tolerate someone contradicting him. He would spank me with a board. That happened 3 or 4 times during the first two years. I was always threatened with the possibility of being sent back to Toledo."

Johnny says, "neither the state nor my foster parents knew I had not been to school hardly at all before coming to the foster home. Thus, they had no idea how good I really was doing. The Kites and SW noticed what I was doing in school, but really didn't seem to care or expect me to do well. In some ways that helped, in other ways it did not. Their focus was upon me doing well with chores and other responsibilities. They thought that I deliberately forgot things and was purposely irresponsible."

something here that I have been unable to discover regarding this boy's attitude. The Kites have no complaints about April. "

Kites and SW threaten to take Johnny to Eldora, a high security juvenile center for criminal children, in two weeks if he doesn't straighten up and be responsible. Johnny is ordered, "You must be responsible."

SW describes Ed as frustrated and taking control of Johnny by strict treatment and spanking because "Johnny is spoiled and he [Ed] has not spoiled him. He said that he is small for his age and when he rolls those big eyes at people they fall for him and... all of the relatives think Johnny is cute and humor him. This has gone to his head." Mr. Kite spanked Johnny. SW inquired as to what the children lied about and Mr. Kite said "Oh just different things."

Johnny is described when confronted by the SW, as saying, "Well I know what's the trouble with me, I'm lying too much." When the SW asked what he lied about, he said "Oh just different things."

Johnny is noted as telling why he lies, saying, "because we are scared." Johnny said that they say what they think the Kites want them to say when actually it is not true.

The SW asked Johnny if they thought the Kites were unkind to them. Johnny said he knows his place and when he has it coming. SW talked to the children about truth and responsibility and how they should always tell the truth and be responsible.

Johnny describes how he put up with the strictness and punishment of the Kites and felt he had to go along with what they told the SW or he would end up going back to Toledo. Johnny's agenda was not to go back to Toledo, no matter what.

There was the one time he recalls telling the social worker the truth, but she didn't want the truth so he went back to the lies.

Data describes principal saying “Johnny is quite a nice boy and is doing average work but could do better. Johnny is well liked, mixes well, has a nice personality, and makes friends.”

In spite of school performance, SW tells Johnny that if his attitude toward his chores did not improve, she was going to remove him from the placement, and she was sure no one else would want him in their home.

SW notes she thinks Johnny gets by with things because he is friendly and pleasant and everyone likes him.

After Kites say they have “had it” with Johnny, the SW tells Kites she will take Johnny back to Toledo. The Kites say when under supervision you couldn’t find a better worker than Johnny. “We want to keep him.” The SW notes, the whole thing seems quite inconsistent.

Act of April leaving foster care shifts focus of foster parents and social worker toward Johnny, though they say Johnny shifted his focus, “Johnny is doing nicely since April left, and the Kites believe he is relieved since she is gone.” They have no complaints to make about Johnny’s attitude or the way he does chores now. Now they notice his school, his accomplishments, and remember his persistent desire to go to college.

It was frustrating for me to have the Kites and social worker pay little attention to my academic and extracurricular growth and achievements. All along, I told them I wanted to go to college, but no one took me seriously until after my sister left the foster home. Even so, it was better late than never.

Figure 12. Comparative figure of key relationship messages regarding Johnny in foster care. The messages are chronological starting from 1957 to 1961.

The primary messages from the foster care data that reflexively inform this study and illuminate the culture of meaning are presented in Figure 12. While some of the messages were not so direct, they were nevertheless communicated in one form or another. For example, Johnny did not know about the psychological evaluation report, but he was definitely informed of how this was interpreted, by how he was treated and how he was told regarding low expectations for his academic performance. Here, he was given the message that school was not that important and learning how to work was. He

was also given the message that working on the farm was the Kite's main agenda for him and his sister April. However, since the State of Iowa Board of Control of State Institutions Children's Division was involved through the person of the social worker, the Kites had to at least give the appearance of valuing religious moral training, education, social skills and development, and proper care and management of the children as mandated in the foster care placement agreements that were renewed annually.

The day Johnny was transported to the Kite farm, he informs in his narrative how the cottage mother at the juvenile home told him when they were alone inside the cottage getting together his clothes, "you will be back. Delinquents like you never last on the outside. I give you two months at the most before you are brought back." When in front of the social worker picking Johnny up, the cottage mother said with a smiling face, "Bye Johnny, we wish you the best." The narrative explains how this message from the cottage mother struck a deep chord in Johnny, who thought, "you will never see me again." The message made Johnny determined to never return to Toledo State Juvenile Home for Delinquent Children.

The narrative informs how he was aware that if the Kites had their way, that April and he both would just be working on the farm and not going to school. In fact, this is exactly what they were able to do with April after 4 years. This is also what led to her being dissatisfied and leaving the foster home and her brother Johnny.

Both data sets refer to Johnny having a problem with forgetting or doing some chores improperly and as this being a prominent issue in the relationship of Johnny, the Kites, and the social worker. Much of the state records and narrative focus upon this issue, which remained unresolved until April leaves the home in 1961. No one, including

Johnny, knew why he had trouble remembering things. The Kites and social worker assumed that it was deliberate on Johnny's part, but never quite follow through with the ultimate threat (punishment) of sending Johnny back to Toledo or to Eldora.

An interesting phenomenon in the relationship messages that got repeated in the state data by the Kites over the entire range of years is how the Kites were baffled by the fact that "Johnny would work until he dropped, he never complained, he would do anything he was asked, he was always apologetic if he did something wrong, he never argued with punishment and accepted it without complaint, he never held a grudge, and was always nice even during and after being punished." What amazing statements to make about a child under any circumstances let alone a child who was also said to be a problem child. There is in this a huge contradiction in the accusations of his character and in his performance of character. Along with this, the Kites and social worker kept getting favorable and even glowing reports of Johnny in school. The social worker wrote in her supervision reports, "There is something here that I have been unable to discover regarding this boy's attitude."

As observers, we know that Johnny was simply behaving from within his relationship paradigmatic framework. Had he held the mainstream paradigm, the Kites and the social worker would have understood him. As it was, he was outside of their framework and could only be explained as bad, mad, or a mystery. Yet, his behavior influenced their thinking, gained a level of personal respect and admiration inspite of problems or the need to keep him as a problem child. For example, Betty and Ed often consulted him privately regarding personal matters as if he were a counselor or therapist. Somehow, he must have conveyed a sense of being spiritually and emotionally centered,

as these were the areas in which his “opinion” was sought. Also, he was seen as keeping confidence.

The social worker and the Kites present Johnny with a classic double bind paradox as discussed in chapter two. The bind comes in the form of the command, “be responsible.” Amazingly, Johnny responds with an equalizing paradoxical bind that is relationship focused, which is “I am lying.” For all pragmatic purposes, anyone placed in a paradoxical bind is in an untenable position and ultimately perceived as mad or bad (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967). Additionally, Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson inform that “Paradoxical communications... invariably bind all concerned. What these patterns have in common is that no change can be generated from within and that any change can only come from stepping outside the pattern (p. 232). Such a logical relationship can become a “Game without end” (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, p. 232). It is on this basis that we hear the social worker say, “There is something I’m missing here.” The game without end ended when April left the foster home. This, along with several other factors, supports the notion of the presence of powerful systemic family dynamics, which included the social worker and the legal status of the children.

Analysis of Foster Care

Clearly, at least on one hand, the foster care system gave Johnny the message “we care about you, we want you to have a better life, a chance at being normal, and a chance to become a contributing member of society.” This message is embodied in virtually every communication in the state records. However, within this message include the messages “to be normal means to let go of your former ways, forget what you learned from your family, do not give in to your inherent urges toward crime and immorality,

conform with the new values taught to you by your foster parents and foster community. We do this for your own good, and if you don't comply or appreciate this opportunity, we will find someone who does and you can go back to being number 2950." The "be responsible" command in response to Johnny's initial adjustment problems placed him in a no win or damned if he does and damned if he doesn't position. To be responsible one must have free choice. Without free choice, the best one can do is to be compliant. By ordering responsibility, choice is negated. Choice requires freedom. Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967, p. 200) quote Nicolas Berdyaev (1957),

Freedom cannot be identified with goodness or truth or perfection: it is by nature autonomous, it is freedom with goodness. Any identification or confusion of freedom and a strengthening of methods of compulsion; obligatory goodness ceases to be goodness by the fact of its constraint (pp. 69-70).

Johnny is presented with the command to be responsible with an implied command to "be good." The social worker and Kites clearly equate the two commands. Responsibility requires the spontaneity of freedom and vanishes under command (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967). Johnny dealt with this by giving an equally powerful and paralyzing paradox in response to being accused of lying by saying, "I am lying." This response had the effect of neutralizing the command to be responsible and served as a meta-comment on the command to be responsible and on the relationship between him, the Kites, and the social worker.

The foster care system sends the relationship message that although we care, you are still a ward of the state, and inmate number 2950 of Toledo State Juvenile Home. Numerous staff in the juvenile home called the inmates by their numbers rather than their

names. Narrative data revealed Johnny felt that foster care was more like parole from prison and that at any time he could be taken back. This was reinforced frequently by the foster parents and the social worker who made threats to do just that.

Understandably, the social worker, foster parents, and school officials needed to know Johnny's academic background. The foster parents and social worker needed to know Johnny's personal family and social background. This information was important to better understand Johnny and to not only help him to adjust to the changes he encountered but to help the social worker and foster parents adjust to Johnny.

Unfortunately, the data reveals how the social worker and foster parents used the information they received as a way to classify Johnny and his sister, April. For example, the psychologist's evaluations were used as permission for how to treat and direct the children. The evaluation seemed to support and justify the Kites' expressed desire for children who were mentally slow, in good health, and who should therefore be trained to be good farm hands. The Kites had plenty of work to offer.

Until 1961, when April left the foster home, Johnny was under nearly constant criticism and punishment for not doing his assigned chores correctly. The following narrative gives Johnny's initial impressions of the Kites and the farm:

I left Toledo State Juvenile Home at age 12 to come to this foster home. I had never lived on a farm before or been in a foster home. I knew next to nothing about either. Yet, my foster father expected me to understand and do things that he could at my age. Of course, Ed was born and raised on a farm with mud and manure between his toes and fingers.

Even though I tried hard to learn and fit in, Ed frequently made it clear that he thought I was stupid and unfit to be a farmer. He told me stories about real farm kids.

“Why, by the time I was your age, I had shown horses at the fair. At your age, I was doing all of the chores and the fieldwork. Here you are at age 12 and you can’t do any of these things!” He laid these expectations on me just weeks after I arrived from the juvenile home.

With all this pressure, I got so obsessed about doing things right I got mixed up. Do you put six scoops in this yard, or eight scoops? Ed told me to turn on the waterer and then go feed the pigs because that was the efficient way to do it. I was not into efficiency. I turned on the waterer and forgot about it.

Reading the state records reveal that Johnny did tell the Kites why he had problems doing his chores, but they did not believe him. There was no indication that the Kites or social worker explored or considered any other possible problem other than that of Johnny deliberately not doing as he was told. As far as the state records show, they felt Johnny was being bad or that he might be mad. There was one reference wherein the social worker suggested that maybe he should be taken to visit the State Board of Control’s psychologist.

The narrative explains how after the foster children had been on the farm about a year, the Kites took a seven-day vacation to Texas to see friends. The Kites left Johnny and April in charge of doing the chores and told them to call the neighbors if they had any problems. The children were directed to never let the social worker know about them

being left alone like this or they would be sent back to Toledo. The Kites had a neighbor woman come and check every other day to see how the children were doing. During this time, Johnny wanted to run away because of Ed's strictness and spankings. April did not want to run, but Johnny decided he would. This portion of the narrative describes what went through Johnny's mind at that time:

With the back of my hand, I wiped sweat from my forehead as I stepped to the edge of the bluff and looked down at the scenic farm valley. It was the end of August... hot and muggy. The corn was just starting to turn brown. It would be ready for harvest in a few weeks.

At the bottom of the bluff was a creek, surrounded by fields of corn and hay on one side and the bluff on the other. Across the valley stood two three-story barns made of large limestone blocks, quarried nearby, just below to the south and east of a two-story limestone house. The last was completed in 1875.

I loved the old barns. One had burned down years before and looked like an old Roman ruin. The other was still intact and in use. Inside was a room that went all the way up to the roof from the second floor. Hanging on its walls were harnesses and other working horse equipment. I was disappointed that my foster family didn't have horses. Of course, I would have been scared of them, just as I was of the hogs, the cattle, the old hens, the sheep, and two milk cows.

I was in the process of running away. I had had just about enough of my foster parents. It seemed to me that all they wanted was someone to do the chores, the field work, and to cook and clean. Whenever I made a mistake, you would think I

had just destroyed their lives. It seemed they always made a mountain out of a molehill, exaggerated and even lied to the social worker.

They treated April and me more like slaves than children. They had no children of their own, but pointed out that their nephews were related to them by blood, unlike us. Even though they gave us food, shelter, clothes and a roof over our heads, they still managed to make us feel unimportant.

Ed and Betty were strict and believed in keeping a kid busy as the way to shape and mold their character. They also made it clear that their way of getting kids to work was to threaten them, constantly compare them with other kids, embarrass, humiliate, and inspect everything they did and if it wasn't good enough to make them do it over until it was the way they wanted it.

With chores, fieldwork, and housework, I had little time for anything else. Be it killing 100 chickens and dressing them all in one day or wallpapering every room of the house, Betty always did things in a big way. She never wanted one room cleaned; she always wanted the whole house cleaned.

Betty ordered April and me from her wheelchair. Her wheelchair was like the throne of a queen. Ed ordered us around, too. He didn't explain things as well as Betty and was always putting me down. He would say, "Hand me the crescent wrench," only I didn't know what a crescent wrench was and he would say, "Obviously, you will never be a mechanic if you don't even know what a crescent wrench is. Every good farmer has to be a mechanic."

I didn't want to leave April by herself with these people, but she didn't want to run with me. Sitting there on the bluff looking down at the farm, I thought about whether I should really run. I knew what it was like on the streets and eating out of garbage cans. If I left, probably I'd get right back into it. I also knew the chances were good that if I were caught, I'd have to go to the State Training School at Eldora. I wondered where I would go...New Orleans, Chicago, Monee, back to my mother? None of these sounded like much of a plan. I decided that in spite of how hard it was at times, I would probably not find any better situation than with the Kites. I wanted to go to college and I wanted my freedom. I wanted to be old enough that no one would come after me ever again. I wanted to make my own decisions, do what I wanted to do, and not just do what others wanted me to do.

I remembered the cottage mother who said, "You'll be back." I remembered my vision in lockup in the juvenile home. The walls were the problem. The Kites were not my enemy. I could gain my freedom if I take down my walls and not get angry at them, but show them love instead... love no matter what they did or would do to me. It was time to quit running, I decided. I would make it work. I knew I was not alone...that the spirits were with me and that they would help me and protect me. What made the difference to me this time is that I had a choice.

I headed back down to the farm.

This story from the narrative provides major insight into the relationship of the Kites and Johnny. The Kites never knew about Johnny's near run and "choice to stay."

However, this information gives the reader and researcher valuable insight that the Kites, the social worker, or others did not have. Through this information it is possible to see why Johnny behaved the way he did. His personal and relationship agendas are clear. Unfortunately, there is no record or hint that the foster parents or social worker ever asked or cared to ask Johnny what he wanted. They had their own agendas supported by the threat to take Johnny back to Toledo. Data show how Johnny was afraid to tell them some of his thoughts, as he believed he would have been sent back to Toledo. He knew the Kites had already sent back a foster child that didn't like the farm.

Johnny tells how he was told to be complicit and keep his mouth shut if he was present when either a staff member or a foster parent was telling something that Johnny knew not to be true even if it meant he would get into trouble. Johnny knew that if he didn't go along, things would only be worse for him and that rarely would anyone believe him over an authority figure. In addition, even if they did believe him, such as the social worker regarding the foster parents, he would likely just be taken out and put back into Toledo. Johnny's agenda to stick it out in this foster home until he could be his own person placed him in a position to go along with being complicit with the Kites. The element that seems to have enabled Johnny to endure this situation was his spiritual beliefs which included seeing people's perceptions as the problem and not the people themselves. He treated them with love no matter what they did to him, he did not fight or argue with them. Also important in this story is that Johnny made a choice to stay. This in itself gave him a measure of freedom knowing he was no longer there because he had to be.

Summary

There are six factors especially important in this analysis that bring clarity into the culture of meaning that these people created. The factors include Johnny's agenda, the social workers' agenda, the Kites' agenda, April's agenda, the paradoxical binds that emerged, and especially the systemic nature of this relationship system.

The analysis reveals that April, not Johnny, was the major co-participant in the relationship system. As the researcher and as Johnny grown up, I can say that I never realized that April was their target until this analysis. When the Kites asked for a girl from the state, it was for a "mildly retarded child" that was healthy and could work well. It was the agenda of the Kites to get April out of having to go to school and for her to be a permanent helper for Betty. The Kites succeeded in getting the child they asked for from the state, getting her out of the school system, and into the home on a full time basis. It took them four years, but they did it with the state's blessing and the school system's support. Johnny was not originally in the plan, but since April did not want to stay with the Kites unless her little brother Johnny could come too, the Kites agreed to get him. The Kites saw how Johnny was a way to keep April with them. If Johnny was to go back to Toledo, so would April. They could not afford to have Johnny go back in order to reach their goal of April becoming Betty's helper. The state was complicit in providing a child that met the Kite's interest, expressing how this was appropriate for a child that would otherwise not have many career options. Johnny too was seen as mentally suited for farm life as a child of dull normal intelligence. There was no expectation of either child doing well in school and in fact, it was believed they would not likely complete school beyond the eighth grade.

It is not known from the data whether April ever realized her power in this family system, although whenever she had a problem or complaint, it was addressed quickly to the satisfaction of April. There were several times when April indicated she was not happy and wanted to leave before the time she actually left. In each of these times, Johnny was used to help keep her from leaving. Johnny was the surety, the pawn, and dupe used to keep April from leaving. It became clear to the Kites that when Johnny was seen by April as doing well, April started thinking of leaving. This meant that Johnny had to have problems and be a problem.

Johnny was the perfect identified problem child (Satir, 1983). He had memory/adjustment problems and did not always do his chores the way he was expected. The Kites saw this as a way to control April by making Johnny perceived as irresponsible and in trouble. The Kites even encouraged April to join them in pushing Johnny to do better. The targeting of Johnny as a problem was difficult to manage given his loving and forgiving nature and his outstanding performance at school. The way this was handled was to create Johnny's good nature as a mystery and to mostly ignore his performance in school. Actually, Johnny's good nature became useful as a way to both complain and yet resist sending him back to Toledo when the social worker became too willing and determined to pull him out of the foster home.

Making Johnny the identified problem child and putting him into the paradoxical bind to "be responsible" was critical to maintaining family homeostasis and to accomplish the Kites' primary goal of getting April to be Betty's permanent full time helper (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967). This was doable only because of the sibling and love bond that existed between the children. "There are characteristics of the

system, that is interactional patterns, that transcend the qualities of individual members—for instance, the complements of mutually double-binding communication “ (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, p. 135). The second major paradox was from Johnny when he said, “I am lying.” This served a complementary role as well insofar as it enabled the continuation of lying and also enabled him to tell the truth while saying I’m lying and thus negating intervention by the social worker. Johnny was unaware of the Kites’ ultimate agenda for April and how he was being used.

The relationship paradigm held by Johnny was the conique paradigm. Johnny functioned as healer, visionary, and artisan. He did this primarily through modeling. As the Kites claimed, Johnny never held a grudge, was always forgiving, etc. Because he did not see others as the problem and because he saw loving others as the way to take down his walls and help others to be able to take down theirs, Johnny was a healer. In the data, both Johnny and the Kites indicate his expressing many ideas about how they could do things differently. This was visionary thinking. Generally, the response Johnny received was “get your head out of the clouds and come down to the real world.” Ed would ask Johnny, when Johnny wished things were different, “If you spit in one hand and wish in the other, which one fills up first?” However, there were a few times when Johnny’s ideas were put to use. For example, when Ed handed Johnny a machete knife (almost as big as Johnny) to go with him to cut a wagon load of green corn stalks from the corn field to feed to the hogs, Johnny said, “Why don’t we hook up the mower and use it to cut stalks and save ourselves the extra work and time?” Ed said, “This is the way we’ve always done it.” However, the next time they used the tractor mower to cut what they needed.

Johnny also held the artisan model in the conique paradigm. This was expressed through his activities in speech, drama, music, and art. It was mostly conique because it was original creation and focused on addressing various walls of estrangement. For example, Johnny promoted in his speech contests, the concept of cooperatives and partnering in business instead of adversarial “dog eat dog” competition.

Had Johnny known of the Kites’ agenda, he may have confronted it to prevent unnecessary harm to April and himself. The Kites allowed Johnny many opportunities and pleasures, such as getting to participate in extra-curricular activities. It is possible this was, in part, insurance to keep him from being too unhappy as the problem child.

The social worker, though she is the primary historian of the state data, seems to have been naively complicit with the Kites regarding Johnny. She was knowingly complicit regarding the Kite’s agenda with April. Otherwise, she seemed mostly concerned only that things did not get out of control. Her major role was that of historian. She had the most power in the relationship, but she was kind and generous and gave all participants great benefit of any doubt. She also seemed to have implicit trust in the Kites. Her relationship type appeared primarily the independent do-gooder. She stressed her moral mandate to help less fortunate children to have a chance to better their lives.

Just before April left, something happened that broke the tightly knit family system. The state records do not clearly say, except to say April was unhappy. April was unhappy many times before. It is not likely that this was the reason for her leaving. The state records indicate that after April left, a tape recording was made regarding an incident. The recording is not available as data. One can only speculate that something happened of an inappropriate nature between April and Ed and/or Betty. Whatever

happened, it broke the current culture of meaning. Suddenly, the culture of meaning shifted drastically.

Suddenly, Johnny could do no wrong. Johnny was no longer the problem child. Johnny was no longer the bad child (identified patient). Johnny's work in school gained full attention, interest, and respect from the Kites and the social worker. The key player and true target victim was gone. The game without end—ended.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

How do the co-participants co-construct the culture of meaning and what does that mean? Investigation of the two data sets and how they reflexively illuminate the culture of meaning serve these research questions along with the introductions focus upon epistemology and relationship paradigms.

The concept of “findings” is essentially rooted in the rational-objective paradigm that seeks to know “outcome” from its objective perspective. This study demands, at the very least, a reframe of the concept of findings. The reframe I offer for this study is the concept, “unfolding.” Unfolding is used here as gradually opening our understanding, an unveiling of meaning, and blossoming of the creative process as it continues on its journey of “here and now.” This entire study has been an unfolding of meaning as held by the co-participants. From the seeds of inquiry, I have nurtured the culture of meaning to unfold before our very eyes. This has not been a process of explanation, but rather one of gradually opening our understanding. Understanding is seeing the need for you and me to open our minds to new visions and new meaning.

In 1976, while sitting in Dr. Jack Rieske’s class, Theories and Techniques of Counseling, as part of my master of arts program in counseling and guidance in education, I developed a construct that shows the position of “openness” (Tracy, 1976). I called the construct the *Actualization Diagnostic Construct* (ADC) (Figure 13). “I don’t

know but I'm open to find out" is the position that is needed to unfold meaning and gain new insights (Figure 13).

Growth Based	
<p>1: I don't know, but I'm open. Meaning seeking and sharing, experiential, spontaneous, honest, sensual, sensitive, humanistic, free, here and now, courageous, democratic, in touch with just being, exploratory, horizontal (egalitarian) in most relationships as opposed to vertical (hierarchical). Flexible values of knowing and non-judgmental. More reflexive, risk taking, and accepting of vulnerability.</p>	<p>2: I know- The eureka or ah-ha experience. Insight, temporary knowing, truth is not static but evolving and changing. Truth must be rediscovered repeatedly as it changes (for example, love is not changeless, but must be rediscovered again and is new and different each time). Empowerment of choice, celebrative, accepting of other, intuitive, connected, and creative.</p>
<p>3: Impasse/Confusion Indecision, afraid to move or make decisions. Can experience dilemma or paradox.</p>	
<p>4: I don't know and I don't care. Pretense of caring or not caring. Ability to separate out, to differentiate (indifference). Values include avoidance, gaming, dishonesty, irresponsibility, apathy, insensitivity to other, and contradiction. Has low self-worth and low opinion of most other people. Afraid to make commitments.</p>	<p>5: I know and I'm right. Has a sense of certainty and is decisive. Perceptions of independence, dependence and interdependence. Values are moralistic, concrete, rigid, dualistic, competitive, legalistic, and authoritative. Will accept a dependent or interdependent role if they believe that is their place. Have perspective of ownership, sees most people as basically faulted, lives mostly in past or future, goal oriented, defensive and offensive, uses words such as should, ought, have to, my job. Phobic. Relationship issues are mostly power, control, and trust based. Sees others as allies or competition or as "mad" or bad. Demands loyalty and respect. Security conscious.</p>
Fear/Security Based	

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Figure 13. Actualization Diagnostic Construct (Tracy, 1976).

Figure 13 is used here to illustrate the point of openness and unfolding. It has many other uses that are outside the scope of this study. However, it is partially one of the steps of insight that helped to form the relationship perceptual paradigm as shown in Figures 7 and 14. If one comes to any situation or interactional process without having some degree of openness, he or she is not likely to experience any new insights and will instead be more likely to impose or seek to impose his or her perceptions into the cultural milieu.

The Unfoldings

The major unfolding is that each co-participant's relationship perceptual framework is the backbone or blueprint for how he or she interacts, which thus informs— together with others—an experiential culture of meaning. From and during this experience each may or may not make a second order change of his or her perceptual framework (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967). However, each co-participant is co-constructing (refining and reframing) his or her relationship perceptual framework at a meta-level of interpretation based upon new relationship experience and information. By the time Johnny came to the Kites, the Kites, the social worker, April, and Johnny already had strong perceptual cultural relationship frameworks regarding self and others. When they came together, they needed to develop a culture of meaning among themselves that allowed for social function within their systemic historical and current socio-ecological environment.

This unfolding demonstrates how our relationship perceptual frameworks can be examined along with social function. As indicated earlier, the perceptual frameworks are equivalent to the black box or consciousness which Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) claimed was impossible to know. They argued that we should look at the behavior (communication) between the boxes (each person). The behavior is what I call social function. This study reveals that social function does not occur in a vacuum. It occurs in relationship from a culture of meaning as co-constructed by the co-participants. For example, if two strangers met who spoke different languages, had different skin color, were different genders, one was much bigger than the other, wore different clothes, and had different relationship perceptual frameworks, how would they know how to relate?

They would begin interaction based on sending proposed relationship messages (verbal and nonverbal behavior) according to their frameworks. Depending on the responses, they would, hopefully, come to some level of agreement, disagreement, or agreement to disagree, which would somehow allow them to relate in a social context on an ongoing basis. The “agreement” is the culture of meaning that is played out in relationship. In order to understand the culture of meaning it is necessary to look at both the behavior and the relationship perceptual framework. From this, if there is a perceived need for change, then the information is available to plan change in such a way as to potentially benefit all who are willing and often even when they are not willing.

This study did not involve conducting an intervention. It is an investigation into how the co-participants co-constructed the culture of meaning and what that culture of meaning means. By taking my personal narrative and state records on me when institutionalized and in foster care, I was able to examine the relationship messages and identify primary relationship perceptual frameworks. This information allowed insight into the culture of meaning that the co-participants co-constructed. If we had only one or the other of the data sets in this study, the culture of meaning could have only been speculative. Each co-participant is critical to seeing the culture of meaning. The epistemology and methodology used in this study allowed for an unfolding of the culture of meaning that existed within the period of this study. It was possible to know the child welfare system at its level of intervention with Johnny and his family and the juvenile home. The reflexive approach illuminated how the co-participants co-constructed the culture of meaning in relationship. Congruently, the culture of meaning is visible in the relationships of those involved in Johnny’s foster care.

Relationship is described in two distinct ways: the rational objective and the conique interconnected perspective. In the rational objective, self and other are perceived as separate and disconnected with a causal linear relationship. In the conique, self and other are perceived as interconnected according to individual and collective uniqueness as a creative process or as the event of here and now. Complexity theory and new science along with indigenous science are presented as similar to that of the conique, while the rational objective is linked with mainstream culture, the banking system of education and learning, and research wherein subject and object are seen as separate. The conique is presented in this study as more congruent with natural reality and natural relationship as consciousness interacting to create meaning. Findings or claims made here are not centered upon validity or objectivity, but rather qualitatively as understanding and meaning. While some explanation is given, the purpose is to show meaning.

The investigation revealed Johnny's relationship worldview was conique. The narrative data provided numerous stories, dreams and visions, which illustrated Johnny's perception of self and other as interconnected. This was punctuated by Johnny's vision while in lockup, wherein he came to see the hurtful perceptions of people as the problem and not the people themselves. This set into motion the conique paradigm as Johnny's primary worldview.

The state data co-participants were discovered to hold the rational objective relationship perspective. The rational objective is the perception of seeing self and other as separate and disconnected in a linear casual type of relationship. The relationship types uncovered were both the independent and dependent. The dependent type sees other as having or being what self wants or needs and self as needy—as incomplete. The

independent sees self and other as separate and disconnected, but sees themselves as not needing other and other as needing them and/or as inferior. The independent has three models which include autocrat (self as superior), autobrat (self and other equal—self-determination and self-responsibility), and do-gooder (has moral mandate to help less fortunate). The dependent type of relationship has the parasite (other is hostile host, must manipulate to get), dealer (trades something for something), poor-me/hurt me (a true victim, who seeks control through no control), and confusion (a model when used to avoid responsibility) as more specific models of relationship. Every person tested according to my research with the SLOI (Symbolic-Literal Orientation Inventory) holds some of each of the relationship types and models. However, they can only function within one at a time and tend to be dominated in one or two models in their relations with others (Tracy, 1986).

While it is not so important to go through each co-participant's perceptual relationship frameworks as revealed in the data, it is valuable to show some examples of this and how co-construction of meaning took place. Ed and Betty both exhibited perceptions of the parasite. It was parasitic in that they saw April as being and having what they wanted and needed, and seeing her as not being cooperative with them if they told her (or Johnny) their agenda. So how does a parasite get what he or she wants if he or she can? The parasite attempts to get what he or she wants by lying, cheating, stealing, manipulating, even telling the truth if it helps...essentially anything that works! The Kites did a great deal of this type of manipulation of the children and the social worker and even coerced the children to lie with them to the social worker. The children responded to what was presented as the truth and to the threats to be returned to Toledo.

The children did not agree, but complied out of fear. The social worker believed the Kites throughout the relationship and accepted what they said as true.

The poor-me/hurt me model of dependency entails the perception that not only does other have or is what the person wants, but that “other” is hostile and would purposely hurt the person if he or she knew the truth about them. They see themselves as a true victim of others who take advantage of them. They tend to deal with this by proving that others do this even to the point of lying or manipulating things to make it look that way. They love to hear how they are martyrs. This gives them power. Betty especially facilitated (enabled) Ed in this. “He is so wonderful and goes out of his way to help others even when it means more work for him. Look at all he does for the children and me,” says Betty. Ed, Betty, and the social worker appeared to strongly adhere to the model of dealer. This model includes the dependency perception, but sees other as not being necessarily hostile. They also see themselves as having something other wants and/or needs. Thus, the message is “let’s make a deal.” It is the classic quid pro quo or something for something. The Kites and the social worker believed that if the children wanted to play they must first do their work. Ed expressed this to Johnny when he said, “We have to take care of the animals if we want them to take care of us.”

Of course, not all factors can be known that co-participate in the co-construction of the culture of meaning; however, it is not necessary to know all factors. By knowing historical and current context, behavioral relationship communication messages, and primary relationship perceptual relationship types and models, we can gain understanding of the culture of meaning.

Implications

The mirror is an important invention. It is also a metaphor for the great wisdom saying “know yourself.” Culture of meaning analysis becomes a new metaphoric mirror for “knowing ourselves.” Instead of asking, “Who am I and who are you,” now we can ask, “Who are we” (Erhard, 1975)? We can now know how our relationship perceptions come to influence how we think and relate both individually and collectively. Co-participation and co-construction move to center stage in the relationship process.

The very idea that a culture of meaning exists and that it can be identified in terms of relationship perceptual frameworks and systemic human communication analysis has far reaching possibilities. We are no longer bound by the traditional rational-objective relationship paradigm. Through what I now choose to call “culture of meaning analysis” (CMA) it is possible to gain in-depth understanding of human relations and appreciation and respect for cultural difference that go beyond recognition for only “safe differences” that don’t challenge the hegemony. CMA leads to identification of social function and social dysfunction within relationship. Behavior is social function. This study reveals that social function does not occur in a vacuum. Adolphus Huxley (1944) suggested that no one is an island disconnected from the reality of self and other. It occurs in relationship from a culture of meaning as co-constructed by the co-participants. CMA allows examination of relationship at macro, mezzo, and micro levels. It can be applied to organizations as easily as to people. It can be used in evaluating the impact of legislation, policy, and regulation, such as child welfare, foster care, etc. Recognition and application of CMA in social work means considerable change in textbooks, in the classroom, and in practice.

For example, Johnny shows how treating him as a “client” was an approach filled with problems that were created by the approach itself. No one took time to see what he wanted or what he believed. Johnny was treated as needing rehabilitation and strict training. His abilities and limitations were improperly assessed. He brought answers to his situation that were not only ignored, but shoved aside.

After hearing my story, people in social work and in education have told me that “times have changed.” As a practitioner for 20 years and now having gone through the educational system to the level of Ph.D., I can say that yes, times have changed, but the paradigm has not. It has not changed in the classroom or in practice. There are millions of children and adults who are assessed and treated by a system that continues to adhere to the rational-objective cultural paradigm as its primary relationship blueprint. Many have examined the poor, the oppressed, the discriminated against, and people brought into the justice system, few have looked at the system itself, and even fewer have looked at the personal cultural paradigm that drives the system. Unless research steps outside of its own paradigm it is likely to engage in first order change and not second order change (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967).

In most graduate and undergraduate courses in which I have been a student or an instructor, it is my opinion that many students had little notion of their relationship perceptual frameworks. Most did not appear to think how their perceptual definitions, rules, values, beliefs, and attached feelings about themselves and others influenced them in the classroom and would influence them in practice, in policy making, or as future teachers. This study indicates how the culture of meaning needs to be paid attention to. It demonstrates the power of relationship perceptions and the need not only for social

workers and social work students too learn how their relationship perceptual frameworks influence what they do, how they think, and behave, but how all of us in every profession as educators, practitioners, and non-professionals need to learn and become aware of our relationship perceptual framework. . The study unfolds the pain and horror in the culture of meaning when people are objectified, manipulated, abused, and denied respect and honor. The study also displays the seeds of potential, should there be a shift toward recognition and respect for how we are interconnected and how we co-participate and co-construct the culture of meaning.

In this particular study, it helped me to better understand my experience with institutionalization and foster care. Through CMA I now know, even from material as limiting as state documents, how the co-participants co-constructed the culture of meaning and how that influenced my own life and the lives of the others.

Recommendations

This research provides an example of how to develop culture of meaning analysis as a research epistemology and methodology. The epistemology is grounded in the relationship theory of interconnectedness as found in new science, indigenous science, and the relationship perceptual paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995). The methodology is inclusive of using the relationship perceptual paradigm, systemic human communications theory (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967), and historical context.

For further research, I would like to follow this with further development of my relationship inventory using some of the findings from this study, and then doing a CMA study of an organization, a community, and specific social legislation, subsequent policy, and regulations. I encourage others to use CMA in other research areas, including the

classroom, teaching pedagogy, and social intervention strategies. Figure 14 is a generic framework for doing a reflexive ethnographic culture of meaning analysis. However, at this time more work needs done to further develop CMA. Anyone who would use CMA

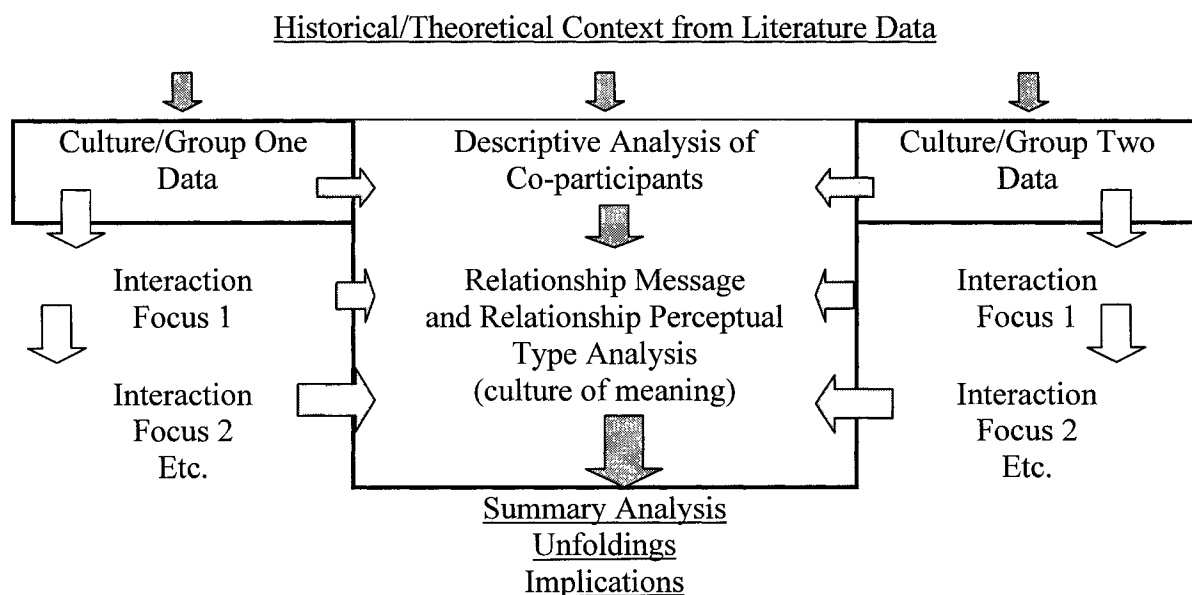


Figure 14. Culture of meaning analysis generic research layout.

must be familiar with systemic human communication theory and study my own theoretical framework beyond what is presented in this study. Since I have not yet published beyond this study and my earlier thesis in social work, you may want to wait for me to do so, connect and work with (or consult) me, or play with the ideas yourself and see what you can do.

Many traditional schools of higher education would find this research design and methodology a challenge and stretch beyond their “normal” (rational-objective) research expectations and requirements and would likely not approve of its use in meeting academic requirements. Should you seek to follow upon this work, be sure you have a committee who is supportive.

I am hopeful that new programs, new legislation, and other changes will occur as a result of studies such as this. If, for example, we treat clients, students, people of color, other nations, etc. as co-participants and partner with them and dialogue for mutual understanding, then the culture of meaning will become a liberating experience.

Last, but not least, since you are the primary co-participant, I hope that you too will have found meaning in these pages, and that you will see additional implications and possibilities for further work.

EPILOGUE

Some readers may wonder how someone who did not attend grades 1-5 could have done this work, especially, someone with an 87 intelligence quotient (IQ). As was indicated, the IQ was of someone who had not been to school and was from a culture of severe poverty and homelessness. The IQ score went up in leaps of 19, 10, and 5 points in subsequent testing. I am afraid to test it again for fear it might diminish.

I was fortunate not to have any major physical or mental damage from a number of life-threatening incidents of neglect and abuse. I was also fortunate to have spiritual guidance. It is my opinion that certain spirits not only protected me, but also have informed me over the years. They helped to teach me to read, write, and know things that I would not and could not have known without their help. It is unthinkable that I could have scored as well as I did on achievement tests during my first year of school when I had not attended school previously. These spirits have informed me in a dream of the construct of the relationship perceptual paradigm (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995) by putting names on stones arranged similar to Stonehenge in England. I have been blessed with the ability to recall a great deal of my experience from the age of 22 months and to have the consciousness of an observer of the process as it unfolds. My worldview was influenced by the spirits and my socio-ecological environment. Perhaps no one can really know or understand everything, but it helps if people keep open and put judgmentalism aside. It

also helps to see interconnection and to understand that relationship is consciousness interacting and co-constructing the culture of meaning.

Since high school, I majored in all social sciences in education for a bachelor's degree. This included minors in English, music, art, and science. I went to theological seminary for 2 years, later earned a master's degree in counseling and guidance in education, 10 years later a master of social work degree, and now a Ph.D. in education with specialization in social work. I have worked professionally for over 30 years in education and in human service organizations. I am a licensed clinical social worker. Credentials are not so important to me as what I learn. I have a thirst that demands formal and experiential process.

In my experience at Colorado State University, I have found less flexibility and willingness to explore the unexplored than I experienced in academia between 1964 and 1986. I think this may have more to do with a shift in the country toward conservatism. To me learning is only possible by being open, vulnerable, and willing to take risks outside of our safety or comfort zones. Unfortunately, I found several faculty members present themselves as gatekeepers for the rational objective paradigm in the name of academic rigor. While I support a logical framework for research, I realize logic comes in many forms. Some of these do not agree with the dominant pedagogy. It is my opinion that in the interest of learning, we cannot stand at the gate as keepers of the old paradigm, but rather need to present ourselves as co-investigators ready and more than willing to explore the unknown and as yet unexplored. Fortunately, I have also found faculty who value innovative work that entails an epistemology and methodology that is not mainstream and who do not see this work in conflict with academic rigor. It does appear,

however, that the times, which include significant ideological pedagogical constraints upon educational institutions and the jobs and tenure and promotion of faculty, play a role in a greater emphasis to keep research safely in the box. Thankfully, there are exceptions. “*Viva la learning!*”

In a dream, I was taught that we need to honor difference, honor diversity, honor person, honor group, honor culture, honor organization, and etc. We can honor in terms of saying you have a right to be, to think, to act, to believe, to be recognized, to be seen and heard, to be a member, to share, to experience, to live, to be remembered, to be affirmed according to your natural individual uniqueness and according to your membership in collective uniqueness...as a living being. Honor is not the same as respect although honor includes respect...respect often does not include honor in how people use and define it. When we honor, we honor the people individually and collectively not just according to their individual and collective uniqueness but according to, and from within our own individual and collective uniqueness and from our shared interconnected being.

People uniquely move through life at different levels of knowledge and maturity in wisdom and understanding. People have the ability to think according to each of the paradigms addressed in this study...the rational objective (quantitative) and the conique (qualitative). The quantitative involves objectification and dissection of the natural and sees relationship as linear, hierarchical, and causal as well as valuing relationship in terms of objective economic and social worth... creating class division, and putting power and control and trust (mistrust) at the top of a long list of relationship issues. This is a problem in an otherwise useful approach to learning.

When it comes to honoring, we respect difference. We respect each other's difference in thinking and in beliefs. We do not have to agree with those beliefs or support those beliefs or the thinking behind them. We are free to disagree. If we disagree, we still honor the person. It is my hope that as co-participants in this life journey, that we can honor one another and move toward greater understanding and depth of meaning.

There may be some that read this work who would like to know about my contact with the people mentioned in this study. My oldest brother, Rex, has passed away as has my biological and foster parents. I still have limited contact with my sister and brother Hank Jr., and some contact with the family of my foster parents. I did see my biological mother several times after becoming an adult, but I did not feel close to her or try to re-enter her world.

Many people have expressed amazement at my personal narrative and frequently asked "What made you turn your life around?" My answer has always been, "I did not ever turn my life around." The question somehow smacks of implying that somehow I was or had a problem and that I was the one who needed to turn around. To me, it is the dominant culture that needs to turn around and wake up to a new paradigm that does not estrange the relations of people with people or people with nature.

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APPENDIX

PERCEPTUAL MODELS OF RELATIONSHIP

Perceptual models are interpretive frameworks linked with a relationship type and a perceptual archetype.

These models, uniquely and jointly, serve as the basis for: our rules, our values, our behavior, our social-economic organization, the things we build, and even how we build them. In other words, they are the blueprints for nearly all our relationship activity.

It is not just as individuals that we hold and act out the perceptual models, but also as families, interest groups, clubs, corporations, institutions, communities, political parties, and governments... any combination of individuals or any association which represent a group's perspective.

Every model has a range of behavior. Each has its limits and potential as determined by its definitions, rules, values, and to the extent to which there is a physically, spiritually, and socially enabling environment. For example: an autocrat can behave all the way from being benevolent to being tyrannical depending upon their mood, strength, and upon the environment of other.

It is extremely important to realize that no individual holds or adheres to just one model (although entities such as corporations or governments can). We have been taught and hold several if not all of the models. They are our relationship palette from which we may choose according to our perceived need.

It is also important to realize that these models, as I describe them, are merely conceptualizations and are only valid insofar as they are congruent with our actual perceptions. Likewise, it is not likely that they are totally inclusive of all our perceptions. In the development of these models, I have modified them several times.

Whenever we think or act from within a dualistic model, whether we are aware of it or not, we bring about estrangement of the natural intimate creative process of self and other. The models within the natural conique archetype are mostly compatible with the paths that Angeles Arrien (1993) describes as part of the four-fold way.

PARADIGM OF RELATIONSHIP
<i>WorldView:</i> We are born into the world as consciousness interacting with consciousness. Consciousness matures and grows as it interprets information from others, sensual difference and empowerment. Gradually, we come to interpret our experience into logical perceptual worldviews (frameworks which include mysteries, myths, symbols, beliefs, definitions, rules, values and attached feelings. Erhard, 1975) regarding self and other. This is a continuous process and is the primary basis for how we relate to (co-construct meaning) ourselves and to everything and everyone around us. For those who think genetics is primary, they need to understand that genetics is itself a process of consciousness and encoded memory.
TWO BASIC WORLDVIEWS LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP PERCEPTIONS
CONIQUE (CQ)
We are born of and into a natural universal system of relationship, an on-going creative process in which every facet of reality is interconnected according to individual and collective uniqueness as a creative process. The elements of interconnectedness and uniqueness guided by both individual and collective consciousness is what makes the system work; that is, creating a physically, socially and intellectually enabling environment which empowers (affirms and enables) all others and ourselves.
RATIONAL OBJECTIVE (RO)
We are taught (directly and indirectly) by our families, schools, and society to think and view ourselves and others (including nature herself) objectively. It is thinking and behaving as though self and other are separate and disconnected and exist in a linear causal relationship. To think objectively is to be free from or independent of personal feelings. The reality of self and other is divided into subject and object, valued according to difference, and placed into a dualistic hierarchical structure. The moment we see self and other as disconnected, we objectify and in such a relationship power, control, trust, mistrust, etc. become the primary issues of relationship along with survival and fulfillment of perceived needs and wants. This archetype includes the dependent, independent, and indifferent relationship types and their models.
RELATIONSHIP TYPES BASED ON LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP PERCEPTIONS
CONIQUE
Sees self and other as interconnected according to the natural interconnection of individual and collective uniqueness. Morality: <i>Says YES to natural relationship and seeks to heal the wounds of estrangement.</i> Says NO to estrangement of the conique. This archetype includes the natural relationship type and its models.

DEPENDENCE
Self sees and relates to other as being separate and disconnected and to other as having or being what self wants or believes, he or she needs. Behavior depends on the strength of perceived need or want and level of fear and trust. Morality: <i>Life is unfair. I deserve what I want or need.</i>
INDEPENDENCE
Self sees and relates to other as separate independent agents. The nature of their relationship depends on other's strength or weakness. Morality: I don't need you although you may need me. Survival of the fittest.
INDIFFERENCE
SELF sees and relates to OTHER as being innocent, immoral, and/or ignorant. Often sees self and/or other as undeserving. Seeks to shut out, escape, or give up. Doesn't care anymore. Morality: <i>Who cares? I don't.</i> Very rigid rules in which both self and other can only fail.
PERSONAL-SOCIAL MODELS OF RELATIONSHIP BASED ON RELATIONSHIP TYPES
Models are distinct members of a relationship type which is a member of a specific logical perceptual relationship archetype by which we define, value, and organize our relationships with ourselves, others, and the world around us. We use these models to determine our interpersonal behavior but also to structure our families, buildings, schools, businesses, factories, governments, etc. In other words, they become our relationship (behavioral) blueprints. Every model has a range of behavior; that is, each has its limits and potential, which are determined by its definitions, rules and values and the extent to which there is a physically, socially and spiritually enabling environment. For example, a dictator's behavior can range from benevolent to tyrannical depending on their mood, strength, and the environment. In addition, no one adheres to just one model, but rather uses several primary models of relationship. However, it is impossible to simultaneously use the conique archetype (in thought or action) with the rational objective, without experiencing what I call <i>directional paralysis</i> . They are mutually exclusive logical perceptions.
MODELS BASED ON DEPENDENT TYPE OF LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP PERCEPTIONS
PARASITE
Sees self as incomplete. Sees other as being or having something self wants or needs. Believes other cannot be truly trusted and is a potentially hostile host. One must lie, cheat, steal, even tell the truth, or force the other in order to get what they want. <p>Deep within their psyche, the parasite sees self as not being complete or as having an emptiness within. Thus, the parasite is driven by one or more perceptual psychological compulsions in order to fill their sense of emptiness or complete their sense of incompleteness. Other is seen as being separate and disconnected and as a potentially hostile host or enabler who does not necessarily need them.</p> <p>As a result, self must deceive (pretend) and manipulate to get what they want. Others are not truly trusted by the parasite even though the parasite may act like they trust them. Even truth, for the parasite, is simply another tool for manipulation and pretense. The parasite develops such a pattern or habit of deception that even when</p>

they don't need to lie, they often do. Common compulsions often include one or more of the following: control, work, sex, security, love, food, drugs, alcohol, property (cars, home, clothes, things)... in other words, anything self perceives themselves as having to have. The nature and direction of compulsion depends upon the individual's conscious awareness, perception, interests, environmental conditions, and success.

To be a highly successful parasite generally requires above average intelligence, physical strength or ability, excellent communication-manipulation skills, a strong knowledge of people, the ability to identify the weaknesses of others, socio-economic advantage or opportunity, non-life-threatening compulsions (addictions), and luck. Successful or not, the parasite is seldom for long satisfied. When not successful, they tend towards more desperate or more overt measures in their attempt to gain control, including threats and violence.

The most susceptible models to the parasite are the victim models [will use them and add to their victimization], the do-gooder [takes advantage of them], the dealer [takes advantage of them], and another parasite [unknowingly is fooled by them as being something other than a parasite: each is fooling the other]. However, we are all vulnerable to the extent that: we care for them, believe what they say or do [do not recognize their pretense], are blinded by our own agenda, or simply get in the parasite's path.

The motto for the parasite is "Whatever works!" This is because they will, ultimately, do anything that will or might get them what they believe they must have.

Not everything a parasite does appears negative, yet there is no apparent so-called good that is done without at the same time being self-serving. For example, a corporation publicly contributes to a fund designed to save the environment, while at the same time they sell products which directly damage the environment and promote their products as being good for the environment. Obviously, the objective is not altruistic, but rather designed to mislead the public and allow for business as usual.

Before you are ready to go out and hang all parasites, or hang me, please take into account that it would be an extremely rare person indeed that was 100 percent parasite. Also, it is likely that you, as I know I do, hold at least some parasitic perceptions even if we never fully actualize them.

I probably cannot stress too much that most people hold perceptions of each and every model and tend to be dominated by two or three. In addition, the parasite is no more estranging than any of the other dualistic models. Remember that behind the facade is a real human being.

DEALER

Sees self and other as incomplete. Must trade something for something (*quid pro quo*).

MOTTO: *Break even or get ahead.* Boy, have I got a deal for you! This is a deal you just can't afford to pass up! My word is as good as gold! Let's make a deal! You rub my back and I'll rub yours! Here's the deal...! Just sign right here and it's yours! These are just some of the hundreds of statements we've heard regarding making a deal, trade, contract, agreement, or bargain.

When we are in an open market place, the most fun is not just in buying unusual things but in wrangling the price lower than asked for and thus walking away feeling we got a deal.

People who hold the perceptions of the dealer generally like to think of themselves as being independent *wheeler dealers* rather than as dependent. However, the model is very much within a dependency perception. The dealer has a deep underlying perception of both self and other as incomplete and as having needs and wants which only the other can satisfy. Thus, one must trade to get. The deal is something for something. For the dealer, everything and everyone has a price.

Bargaining and making successful deals is essential, as far as the dealer is concerned, in order to fulfill one's perceived needs and wants. The true dealer is straightforward and unpretentious. If they are deceptive and misleading, then they are not dealers, but rather parasites posing as dealers... *wolves in sheep's clothing!* Experience tells us that there are perhaps more wolves in the world than there are true dealers.

The relationship of self and other is perceived as separate and disconnected except by cause and effect association. The deal is structured according to the relationship perception; as separate disconnected parties entering into a cause and effect agreement (written or verbal) according to certain conditions which are binding once the deal is closed (finalized). If someone breaks the deal, then the deal is off and there is usually a penalty price to pay. Trust/mistrust and control/no control are relationship issues that are essentially dealt with as part of the deal.

If a dealer is unlucky, has poor trading skills, or usually ends up with the short end of the stick, then they become embarrassed, frustrated, confused, angry, and eventually see themselves as a failure and/or a victim of circumstance or foul play. Where they turn depends greatly upon what other models they hold and their social environment.

The successful dealer can be and often is a victim of their own success insofar as the estrangement produced from the deal will eventually get to them and others. In our society, however, a successful dealer is greatly envied and elevated as a model for emulation. Who hasn't been tempted to find out their secrets of success?

Not everyone who trades or bargains is a dealer. As in all of the models, it is the perception which determines the relationship and not necessarily the behavior. Two people can do the same act and yet hold very different perceptions.

All of us have to trade or bargain for life's essentials. However, we can do this without objectifying self and other and within natural relationship. The activity may be similar to that of the dealer but the relationship is considerably different.

VICTIM TYPE I

Victim I is a condition. It represents the position in which we are all vulnerable to victimization by circumstance, natural forces, other persons, and even ourselves directly, indirectly, intentionally, or otherwise. The perceptual model we use in such circumstances will greatly determine how we cope with our victimization.

MOTTO: Life is not perfect. Some things can't be helped.

VICTIM TYPE II

Sadistic and/or Masochistic. Seeks control by ordering or manipulating others. Self sees self as victim. Other is potential perpetrator. Needs to make other *show their true self* or weakness in order for self to be safe.

MOTTO: Life is unfair. I get even by making others pay or make them give me the sympathy I deserve. Poor-me/hurt-me is a self presentation designed not so much to

solicit sympathy or abuse, but rather to establish definition of self and other.

A person holding this perception is both victimized and scripted into the position of victim. They were usually physically and mentally abused as infants and children and were taught (scripted) by the same people that abused them. They were told that they were really innocent and good and that the ones who hurt them are the bad ones and that nobody can be trusted. Further, they were taught that everyone will hurt or take advantage of them if they get half a chance and that all they can do is take the abuse and thus prove that they are good and others are bad. There is a bind in this education, insofar as the teacher is the victimizer; the one who tells the victim that they are good, and that they, the abuser, cannot be trusted... in whom they, the victim, must put their trust.

Eventually, poor-me/hurt-me comes to believe that they get victimized because they are good. Their consolation is in knowing (believing) that they are good and everyone else is bad. Yet, simultaneously, the yoke which keeps them trapped is their goodness. Their relationship with others is one of fear, envy, and hatred. Their self-view is one of pride (in being good), pity (for continued abuse), anger (for being weak), and hatred (for being good and putting up with it).

The poor-me/hurt-me victim eventually and understandably makes many excuses in order to avoid certain types of stressful contact. Unfortunately, they often believe their own often-repeated excuses. For example, a bad back excuse to avoid working with an abusive parent actually becomes a bad back even if ten doctors say nothing is wrong with it... obviously the doctors are lying.

Victim II both desires and distrusts a non-abusive relationship and will often knowingly and unknowingly sabotage it... if other is being good or trying to befriend them, obviously (they believe) something is wrong.

Poor-me/hurt-me thus exhibits to varying degrees paranoid hypochondriac sado-masochist behavior. Additionally, they fantasize what reality does or seems to deny them, such as loving non-abusive parents.

Bound by their own goodness, poor-me/hurt-me sees self as having little or no control over their own fate, but rather subject to other and to conditions beyond their control. Ironically, it is through their victimization and no-control that they attempt to gain control—to win by losing and in doing so turn the tables on the apparent offender. Other is the bad guy and they are the innocent victims.

Relationships are generally competitive and self-defeating. The victim is the saboteur. When they are truly victimized, others will not hear the last of it.

Until poor-me/hurt-me changes their perception of self and other, they will not really be comfortable with anyone... as no one can be fully trusted... anyone can hurt you and probably will!

Poor-me/hurt-me is further victimized by the dependency perception in which they see other as being or having what they need or want. Since other is bad and unworthy, in Victim II's eyes, there is, then, no justice and one must sacrifice (submit and objectify) themselves to others in order to get what they want or else, do without.

CONFUSION: VICTIM III

Victim of dilemma or paradox. Either caught between two or more poor choices or there is no escape: damned if they do; damned if they don't. Extreme confusion and indecision. Directional paralysis when confusion is between the two archetypes. MOTTO: *I can't decide or think.* This model is more of a condition or an experience than a model. Yet, it can and does become a model if we hold a high enough percent of it within our overall perceptions. Victim III's are victims of serious choice anxiety (dilemmas), paradoxical binds, and/or especially directional paralysis.

Choice anxiety is essentially being in a position in which we see ourselves as having to make a choice and finding it very difficult to choose. This is usually because none of the choices is seen as desirable or they are seen as having equal value.

A paradoxical bind is much more immobilizing. It generally involves self and other, in which self is given a command by another (sometimes two or more commands by one person or more) with which it is impossible to comply. For example, the command: you are ordered by this court to be a self responsible person. It is impossible for the victim to comply. Since they are being ordered, any action on their part will be considered as a response to the order and not as self-responsibility (failure to comply) and no- response will be considered as irresponsible and therefore also as failure to comply.

To be self-responsible requires spontaneous behavior without command. Command, in fact, is an attempt at power- over and requires obedience. If the command places the victim in a bind, then they are damned if they do and damned if they don't. No matter what a person does, they cannot be responsible by command. If they try, they fail, and if they don't try, they are judged as bad or mad.

I choose not to describe directional paralysis as dilemma or paradox, although it is paradoxical insofar as it is a confusion of logical types. I refrain from using paradox to describe this victimization primarily because it does not necessarily involve a direct command from self or other except in the form of incompatible perceptual definitions.

The primary definition of each component within the Paradigm of Perceptual Interpretation determines the logical compatibility of each component with the others. Two or more perceptual definitions are referred to as compatible if they can be thought or acted out at the very same (simultaneous) moment within a person's manifest consciousness. The reverse, of course, is that they are logically incompatible if they cannot.

When we, in our manifest consciousness, simultaneously think or act according to incompatible perceptions, we experience directional paralysis.

There are essentially four ways in which we can experience directional paralysis: (1) between archetypes, (2) between relationship types, (3) between models, and (4) between the different types of consciousness.

While we may switch instantaneously from archetype to archetype, relationship type to relationship type, and model to model, it is impossible to use both archetypes, two or more relationship types, or two or more models simultaneously, without experiencing directional paralysis. If, for example, we should attempt to sit and stand at the very same instant, we would (for as long as we continued trying do

both), in a sense, be paralyzed and unable to move in any direction.

Directional paralysis between and within the different types of consciousness occurs at any point or level where there is attempted simultaneous use of rational objective and conique logic. Wherever this conflict takes place, we experience directional paralysis even if we are not manifestly aware of it. It is my opinion that this is one of the primary causes of numerous bodily disorders.

Individuals suffering extreme on-going confusion have generally been victimized from the day they were born and can end up spending a major part of their lives in and out of mental hospitals as essentially dysfunctional human beings. We have all been victimized in this way to variant degrees and generally without understanding our confusion and hold the thought that somehow there is something wrong with us.

We can break out of directional confusion by going to the next logical level—above the conflicting views. From there, we can make a choice.

Aside from the loss and pain experienced from being confused, there is a great danger in how we handle or break out of our confusion. All too often, the solution is dualistic and violent. It is a violence aimed at self (to eliminate the pain) and/or other (the perceived source of the pain). Of course, the nature and level of violence varies as to the severity of the confusion, the perceived source, and the environment.

One of the things that makes confusion dangerous is that it is perpetrated more often than not without the perpetrators' awareness of what they are doing. People in authority (parents, teachers, ministers, judges) frequently put us in dilemmas, binds, and paralysis by their commands, demands, and perceptions, generally with the best of intentions.

It seems to me, that in our society, we have a tendency to be concerned primarily with the most severe cases of confusion (usually defined as something else), and essentially attribute our day to day confusion to normal stress, fatigue, and poor communication. This needs to change.

CO-DEPENDENT

Relationship in which each seeks a provider/enabler to fulfill secret self-perceived wants and/or needs, usually under a cloak of pretense unless the other finds them out. In this case, the person pretends or does switch models—Most often to victim type II, despair, or escape.

MOTTO: *Other is weak and vulnerable.* Co-dependency is not really a model, but since our culture has recently given so much emphasis to co-dependency, I describe what according to the paradigm of perceptual interpretation would be a co-dependent relationship.

Quite simply, co-dependency is two persons (entities) or more who are interacting each from the position of a parasite in which both are seeking a host/enabler to fulfill self perceived needs and wants all under a cloak of secrecy or pretense.

Enabling in itself cannot be legitimately considered co-dependency as long as there is no pretense and the activity is based upon genuine natural interdependence and mutually recognized uniqueness. We can all be deceived by a parasite and bullied after we know the truth into continuation as coerced enablers. However, once

the truth is known, the relationship changes, and other models and factors come into play.

MODELS BASED ON INDEPENDENT TYPE OF LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP PERCEPTIONS

AUTOCRAT

Sees self as independent and self-made. Likes a good contest but hates to lose. Motto: *Control of self and other*. Objectifies world and relations . . . rationalizes behavior as good and/or necessary no matter what. Sees other as inferior, to be used, or as competition. Tradition and the Law are the autocrats' allies although they must, at times, go above or beyond the law. Of course, they have a good reason. The world is up for grabs. The autocrat has been the dominant model of Western civilization and is only recently being seriously challenged by the autobrat.

The autocratic individual (entity) holds the perception of self and other as being separate and disconnected and sees self as not needing or dependent upon what other thinks or does. Other, however, is mostly seen as inferior and as there for the taking... to use as the autocrat sees fit.

Sometimes other is another autocrat who is considered a worthy or unworthy competitor. The autocrat likes a good contest but hates to lose. The autocrat is an aristocrat from top to bottom and usually manages to have some level of sovereignty be it in the home, at work, or wherever.

The autocrat tends to hold very rigid absolute dualistic moral values, which they will often use and twist, to their advantage or purpose. Their behavior can range all the way from benevolence to total tyranny, whether it is over a country or over their cat or dog.

Of course, the autocrat usually lives in a palace of mental fantasy while in reality they are often frustrated. However, some have managed to rule over others and have established a hierarchical system of power, whether in the seat of government or the family system.

The primary source of power for the autocrat is not money or position as most people (including the autocrat) might think, but rather rational objective thinking which as we know objectifies and divides self and other into complementary or adversarial relationships. The autocrat seeks to be number 1; that is, having absolute authority and control over their life and the lives of others. There are many would be Caesars if they had half a chance.

It seems that others who also hold rational objective thinking tend to hate and/or envy the autocrat. History has shown how the victims of the autocrat in successful revolutions have generally become autocrats themselves.

AUTOBRAT

The child of the autocrat. Mostly focused on self and self-gratification. Spoiled . . . want things their way. See themselves as independent agents. Motto: *You do your thing and I'll do mine*. Autobrats adhere to rules of equal rights, self-responsibility, self-determination. This alleviates them of responsibility for other, allows them to remain free agents. An autobrat is the ultimate consumer. Intimacy is conditional and

designed to protect autonomy. They fight for rights, mainly when their own are threatened. Like their parent, the autobrat sees self and other as being separate and disconnected, and they see themselves as independent of other.

However, the autobrat veers off from their parent's perceptions insofar as self and other are not only separate, but each independent of the other. Each person is defined and related to as an independent agent: self-controlling, self responsible, self determining, and self actualizing whether they agree, want to be, or not. The autobrat is absolute and seeks total social-legal compliance. Independence is demanded and ordered by law... as the means to the end.

Within this perspective, relationship is competitive, legalistic, and conditional. The rules define the relationship into an either/or reality. Either you follow the rules or you don't play.

Not unlike their parent, the autobrat is a full blooded aristocrat regardless of their success or lack of it and they too are selective when it serves their interests. This is especially true when it comes to formation of the law and enforcement of the law.

The autobrat is the ultimate consumer with primary focus on self and self-gratification without having to be responsible for or to other, except according to individual rights. However, the perception is, your rights end where my nose begins. For example, if approached by a homeless person asking for spare change, they would likely think he or she may have rights but not the right to harass others.

The autobrat presents their model as the ideal model for freedom from repression and oppression and as the model most compatible with democracy. The individual is, at least on the surface, glorified in terms of personal and minority rights, but the rules designed to promote and protect these rights, in fact, lead to sameness or separate but equal because of dualistic objectification.

For example, the stated purpose of so-called equal rights is so that every person will be treated the same within the eyes of the law. Of course, the intent is to prevent discrimination, which is very real, painful, and unjust.

However, the problem is not the intent. The problem is the solution, which entails a dualistic perspective that defines freedom as equality and oppression as inequality. Equality gets defined as no-difference or sameness within and mandated by law. Further, these are defined in terms of right/wrong, responsible/irresponsible, politically correct/incorrect; the list goes on.

The motto of the autobrat can be expressed in the statements found in the Gestalt Prayer (Perls, 1962), "You do your thing and I'll do mine, I'm not responsible for you and you're not responsible for me, Your rights end where my nose begins, and You respect my space and I'll respect yours!"

DO-GOODER

Member of the same family, except they have a moral mandate to do good and help less fortunate. They give the less fortunate the advantage of their wisdom, empathy, skills, resources, to teach, counsel and guide, to make the world a better place, more just, more equal, to follow the Golden Rule even to die for other. MOTTO: *While I may be independent, I am not selfish, and I care.* The Proof: I don't have to do this. I do it for your own good. If you don't accept my help, you are a recalcitrant, ungrateful, ignorant fool. Another member of the independent family who also sees

self and other as separate and disconnected (independent), but who, even though they do not see themselves as responsible for other, believe they and everyone else SHOULD CARE about the well-being of those less fortunate than themselves.

The real underlying message, though the do-gooder would not admit it, is that they are superior and good because they care about the less fortunate and disadvantaged. Again, while it is not generally stated, it is at the same time implied that other is inferior and/or ignorant.

The do-gooder's primary proof that they truly do care is found in the often repeated and familiar statements; such as, I don't have to do this, I do it for your own good, and this hurts me more than it hurts you! Another proof consists of the level of personal sacrifice sometimes made by the do-gooder; some have given away their wealth and worldly goods... some even their life. How could one ask for anymore proof than this?

The underlying message to others is: 'I am caring and good and if you are smart you will listen to me and do as I say. If not, you are an ignorant recalcitrant ungrateful undeserving fool.'

Many of the United Nation's development personnel, Peace Corps workers, and missionaries have sought to teach others how things should be done... a better way of doing and living. When such projects and efforts fail, the do-gooder often blames the object of their goodness as ungrateful and ignorant peasants or heathen.

Not all helpers are do-gooders and not all do-gooders are helpers. There are undoubtedly many persons, including United Nations personnel, Peace Corps volunteers, and missionaries who are genuine helpers. As I have indicated before, we cannot always tell the model a person is acting out just by observation. The act of lending a hand needn't be dualistic as it is with the do-gooder. It can very much be a part of the conique perception, so please, don't be quick to judge a person's perspective.

The do-gooder operates from a mildly to powerfully interpreted mandate to help the less fortunate... to do-good. They do not see the either/or, superior/inferior part of their perception and sincerely believe that they can and should help others. If they fail to act out their belief, they will likely experience a mild to powerful sense of personal guilt and will eventually resent the givers of the mandate and/or those they tried to help.

MODELS BASED ON INDIFFERENCE TYPE OF LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP PERCEPTIONS When the other models we have relied upon to fulfill our sense of purpose, place, meaning, needs and wants repeatedly fail us, we will sometimes give up on them, at least temporarily if not permanently, and turn to the perceptions of indifference: existential despair and/or transcendental escape.

The more desperate and hopeless staying with our former models appears, the greater is our desire to give them up.

EXISTENTIAL DESPAIR

Sees life as hopeless both here-and-now and beyond. The more desperate the sense of hopelessness the greater the need/desire to escape. Motto: *Nothing matters. Nobody can really change thing. I don't care.* This is not self-pity. This is hopelessness to the point of severe indifference or apathy to both self and other. Behavior ranges from living it up because this is it, to isolation and grave disability. In T. A. Terms, "I'm

not OK; you're not OK." There is NO HOPE. Existential despair is for most a gradual experience of progressive disqualification and disempowerment involving one's primary perceptual definitions, rules and values of self and other. It can only be experienced from the position of dualism in which empowerment and identity are relationship issues.

It seems, at least for the most part, that it is human nature to fight against despair with a powerful optimism in which we believe that as long as we are alive, there must be hope. But, the erosion of one's perceived sense of control and self-identity can ultimately leave us feeling powerless, stripped of our personhood, worthless, and without hope.

It is like being on a sandbar in the middle of a flooding river and watching the water erode the sand from beneath you until you feel yourself sinking and slipping into the turbulent current. At its extreme, it is the experience of having all that you have worked for, believed in, cared for, stood for, and fought for... crumble before your eyes as having been for nothing... pointless.

The behavior may include depression, psycho-social withdrawal, or an eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we may die attitude. Simply put, nothing matters; they just don't care any more.

This is not self-pity as in poor me/hurt-me. It is hopelessness to the point of severe indifference to both self and other.

There are several ways of getting out of despair which include: turning to another dualistic model which they have not yet tried; changing archetypes; or becoming absolute judge, jury, and executioner in which case others and/or themselves are condemned and sentenced.

TRANSCENDENTAL ESCAPE

Sees life as hopeless in and of itself. However, decides to escape the pain, frustration, loneliness, etc. This is usually by means of flight or suicide although it can often be losing oneself (escaping personal responsibility for caring) to religion, drugs, sex, crime, etc. Motto: *I am tired and want out.* I don't want to have to think or deal with things anymore.

[CAUTION: Not everyone who practices religion or is spiritual is necessarily seeking transcendental escape. Those who adhere to this model have stopped caring about the world, and seek control through some form of escape.] Like in existential despair, a person who holds the perception of transcendental escape sees life as hopeless and meaningless. However, although they have given up on humanity and the corporal world, they seek help to give them power to escape this existence via the transcendental. They hold the belief that there must be something better than this... something better beyond this life!

The answer is usually sought from God, universal consciousness, or a higher truth, which is perceived by self as being separate from and more important than anything in this life, ultimately to the extent that all else no longer matters.

The transcendental tends to see self as one of a select group with a higher destiny and power. It means having a way out or a solution to the grievous condition of man's inhumanity. The transcendental's behavior ranges from preparation for their transformation to evangelizing their newfound reality like a lifesaver to those

drowning in a doomed world.

Not everyone who meditates, believes in God, believes in an afterlife, seeks greater understanding, or who has a new vision to share (such as myself) is necessarily in the position of the transcendental.

The transcendental, as used here, no longer cares about the world and seeks both control and escape... usually they claim knowledge of and allegiance to a higher good or higher law which reinforces their position of indifference to the condition of the world. The focus is generally upon the hereafter and like the person who holds existential despair, they have judged the world as worthless and hopeless.

The motto of the transcendental could be said to be: there must be something better than this! Even when they aren't sure just what that may be... they become diligent seekers and I might add, vulnerable to some heavy duty parasites who are not shy about relieving them of their worldly possessions.

THE CONIQUE TYPE OF LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP PERCEPTIONS

NATURAL Creation Centered

Does not objectify self or other. Sees relationship as a natural system and process in which self and other interact according to the natural uniqueness of each, and according to their common needs and bonds (collective uniqueness). This interconnected uniqueness is defined in the new word *conique*. Interconnected means intimately linked together such as a tree, which is in the ground, in the air, and in which the ground and air are in it. *I am in you and you are in me*. Coniqueness involves mutual respect and appreciation of one another's natural individual and collective uniqueness. Difference, interconnection, and mutual affirmation are essential to this relationship. This makes the relationship work and facilitates the natural ongoing creative process.

Rules are valuable and useful only insofar as they support and nourish natural relationship. People who live coniquely do not see themselves as living in a cave nor are they against technology. Lifestyle is congruent with natural reality and includes mutual affirmation of the uniqueness and interconnection of both self and other. While our individual uniqueness has its limitations, mutual affirmation in a physically, spiritually and socially enabling environment facilitates the realization of our individual and collective potential. Nature is conique and we are members of its community even if we have perceptions, which bring about estrangement.

The natural sees relationship as a creative developmental process of consciousness in which countless perceptual energy fields (PEF's) collectively form each type of consciousness, which in turn individually and collectively form each aspect of natural reality. It is a reality in which self and other are interdependently interconnected individual and collective uniqueness.

Self cannot be independent, dependent, or indifferent in natural reality except insofar as and to the extent that natural reality is tolerant and able to endure or absorb the estrangement of dualism. However conflicting these models are with natural reality, they are real insofar as we think, act, and organize our lives 'as if' they were accurate; thereby, we impact natural reality.

Mutual affirmation and respect for the natural interdependent interconnected uniqueness of self and other is the basis and focus of the natural model. As rules tend to be the basis and focus of the dualistic models, they are, for the natural, valuable

<p>only insofar as they support and facilitate essential conique relationships.</p> <p>The natural does not see themselves as having to live in a cave nor are they against technology. Lifestyle simply needs to be congruent with natural reality and include, not as mandatory but as essential, mutual affirmation and respect of the natural interdependent interconnected uniqueness of self and other.</p> <p>The natural says yes to natural relationship and no to anything or anyone which purposely or unknowingly acts against the natural. This is not a dualistic perception such as right and wrong, good and bad, or crime and punishment. It is said from a position of respect and affirmation as being essential.</p> <p>For the natural, saying yes or no has the same focus... to facilitate the creative process. To say yes means to live conique and to say no means to work to prevent or heal the wounds of estrangement; not because to do so is right or wrong but because to do so is essential to the creative process of self and other. While no one is valued as worth more or less than another... each has essential: uniqueness, natural rights, purpose, place and meaning. By natural rights, I mean the right to having that which is essential to both individual and community, such as the essential freedom to live according to natural individual and collective uniqueness.</p> <p>The natural does not focus upon perfection or utopia, but rather sees life as an ongoing process of consciousness interacting with consciousness that is ever-changing... ever- shifting, ever-growing. It is a sensual intimate creative relationship process in which our limits and potential change with each breath.</p>
<p>HEALER</p> <p>Sees not only the interconnection of self and other, but works to heal the wounds of estrangement of the natural conique process. Healing is being a justice maker and peacemaker. It is also working to heal any form of mental, physical, social, and spiritual problem.</p>
<p>TEACHER</p> <p>Sees themselves and students as co-participants and co-learners with the purpose of exploring new areas as well as keeping the stories. They are storytellers and guided by wisdom and compassion.</p>
<p>VISIONARY</p> <p>A seer of past, present, and future. Is interconnected and open to seeing beyond the veil of time and space. Shares insight of dreams and visions with others.</p>
<p>LEADER</p> <p>Sees the natural interconnection and creative process as requiring mutual affirmation. Listens to the medicine of each member of the circle, promotes praxis in the Freirian sense of dialogue (reflection) leading to action and action leading to dialogue. Goal is to empower individuals and community as a creative process.</p>
<p>GUARDIAN</p> <p>Sees interconnection of all life. Sees role as taking care of earth not owning it or possessing it or exploiting it. Believes in sustainable growth. Seeks to protect that which cannot protect itself from the estranging behavior of people.</p>
<p>ARTISAN</p> <p>Sees interconnection of life and reflects this and/or it's estrangement back to people through the arts and crafts of every kind. A co-creator of myths, rituals,</p>

ceremony, and expression. A conscience of the people and advocate for liberation.

Figure 15 Relationship Perceptual Paradigm in Detail (Tracy, 1986, 1991, 1995)

OUTLINE OF STATE RECORDS

1. SECTION 1 (1956)
 - a. Background-family history
 - b. Court commitment/approval for Toledo
 - c. Initial physical and psychological evaluation
 - d. Running away record
 - e. Birth certificate
2. SECTION 2 (1956)
 - a. Foster home application and evaluation
3. SECTION 3 (1957)
 - a. Letters and papers regarding Kite's efforts at getting foster children.
 - b. Foster Care placement agreement and physical and psychological evaluation sent to foster parents.
 - c. Supervision reports: 9-30-57, 10-15-57, (clothing voucher), and 12-3-57.
 - d. Christmas letter and card to State Board of Control director from Mrs. Kite.
4. SECTION 4 (1958)
 - a. Letter on purchases
 - b. Supervision 1-22-58
 - c. Letter from SWKR
 - d. Supervision 3-12-58 (to hard to read first page)
 - e. Supervision 4-23-58
 - f. Letter to BOC Director by SWKR about vouchers
 - g. Copy of letter from John's Mother that was not sent to John (censored by SWKR)
 - h. Letter to John's Mother by SWKR without John's knowing.
 - i. Letter from Mrs Kite to SWKR
 - j. Reply to School Principal in thanks for his report on John. By SWKR
 - k. Supervision 7-1-58
 - l. Letter from Mrs Kite to SWKR
 - m. Letter from Mrs Kite to SWKR
 - n. Letter to JC Penny to authorize purchases by SWKR
 - o. Letter from SWKR to Kite's (includes problem of hog waterer)
 - p. Supervision 8-15-58
 - q. Letter about voucher
 - r. Letter to JC Penny
 - s. John's Grades for 1957-58 and achievement tests and basic skills test
 - t. Stanford Achievement scores
 - u. Supervision 9-19-58
 - v. Letter to Kites from SWKR
 - w. Letter to Toledo Superintendent from SWKR about placement contract renewal
 - x. Letter to Kites about new contract and money from SWKR
 - y. New Placement contract
 - z. Supervision 11-19-58 (includes rolling big eyes)
 - aa. Voucher
 - bb. Supervision 12-30-58

5. SECTION 5 (1959)
 - a. Supervision 2-24-59
 - b. Voucher
 - c. Supervision 4-2-59
 - d. Supervision 6-1-59
 - e. Supervision 7-6-59
 - f. Letter to Toledo about John's health from SWKR
 - g. Letter from Toledo setting appointment at Iowa City for John
 - h. Appointment
 - i. Letter to hospital about John from SWKR
 - j. Letter from hospital to SWKR
 - k. Supervision 7-28-59
 - l. Letter to Toledo from hospital
 - m. Letter from Mrs. Kite to State Board of Control
 - n. Letter to Mrs Kite from Board of Control
 - o. Letter to Scott County Welfare Director form Board of Control
 - p. Letter to Kites from Board of Control
 - q. Supervision 10-15-59 (problems following trip to Texas, paddlings, lies, thumb, and school)
 - r. Voucher
 - s. Re voucher
 - t. Re insurance
 - u. Supervision 10-23-59
 - v. Letter to clerk of court about birth dates from Board of Control
 - w. New placement agreement
 - x. About county payments
 - y. County payments
 - z. Voucher
 - aa. About voucher
 - bb. Voucher
 - cc. About children needs voucher
 - dd. Letter about voucher
 - ee. More about money
 - ff. More about money
 - gg. Letter about voucher
 - hh. Voucher
 - ii. Letter to Kites about money
 - jj. Letter to Mrs. Tracy about seeing children from Iowa Annie Wittenmyer Home
 - kk. Letter about visiting Rex
 - ll. Voucher
 - mm. Letter giving approval for visit to Rex
 - nn. Request for birth verifications
 - oo. Letter to Mrs. Tracy from Board of control
 - pp. Supervision summary for December 1959
 - qq. Letter from Glenwood to Board of Control
 - rr. Voucher

- ss. Supervision 12-30-59
- 6. SECTION 6 (1960)
 - tt. Case Summary by SWKR 1960?
 - uu. Letter to Mrs. Tracy from Board of Control
 - vv. Voucher
 - ww. Letter to Mrs. Tracy from Board of Control
 - xx. Letter about voucher
 - yy. Letter to April and John from Board of Control
 - zz. Letter to Mrs. Tracy from Board of Control
 - aaa. Letter to Annie Wittenmyer from Board of Control re: Kite's want another girl
 - bbb. Response letter back about girl
 - ccc. Voucher/bitter sweet?
 - ddd. Letter about voucher
 - eee. Voucher
 - fff. Letter about voucher
 - ggg. Voucher
 - hhh. Letter to Kites re: Rex
 - iii. Letter to Board of Control about Rex from Glenwood
 - jjj. Supervision 11-4-60
 - kkk. Supervision 10-6-60
 - lll. Supervision 4-14-60
 - mmm. Supervision 1-25 to 31-60
- 7. SECTION 7 (1961)
 - a. Letter to Annie Wittenmyer Home from Board of Control about girl
 - b. Supervision 2-3-61
 - c. Letter about voucher and possible girl and John from SWKR
 - d. Voucher letter
 - e. Letter to Mrs. Tracy about Children from Board of Control
 - f. Supervision 5-11-61 (discussion of John doing badly with chores, and well in school, and
 - g. possibly sending him back to Toledo.)
 - h. Supervision 6-2-61 (problems with John...still)
 - i. Letter about a voucher and visit of Grandmother
 - j. Supervision 6-15-61
 - k. Supervision 6-29-61
 - l. Supervision 8-3-61
 - m. Letter about voucher and children to Kites from SWKR (indicates April is no longer with the Kites)
 - n. Kites, but in Toledo?)
 - o. Voucher
 - p. Supervision 10-4-61 April wants out! (No papers on her leaving)
 - q. Letter about voucher
 - r. Supervision 11-28-61 (Oh My, John is now a good boy!!)