Volume 13, Number 3 • August 2006

Organisations & People

Explication

The Quarterly Journal of

AMED
the developers' network

This *Organisations and People* journal was originally published in hard copy bearing the **ISSN 1 350 6269**

Organisations & People

CONTENTS

PROLOGUE: TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF EXPLICATION
Bob MacKenzie & Peter Franklin
An introduction to this special issue on explication, including an overview of the contents of this journal. 3

Some philosophical and theoretical aspects of explication

EXPLICATION AS A PHILOSOPHICAL ENTERPRISE
Peter Franklin
A sustained argument concerning the creation of new explicit knowledge achieved through explication. 6

PROSPECTS FOR THE FLOUNDERING SELF
Peter Abbs
Challenges and prospects for individual identity and self in our postmodern world. 12

EXPLICATION AND CREATIVE WRITING
Graeme Harper
Explication can enhance the creativity that is inherent in 'creative writing' in higher education and in management learning. 17

WORKING WITH EXPLICATION: FASHIONING THE PHILOSOPHER-MANAGER
Peter Franklin
The nature and role of explication in the strategic development of people within and beyond organisations. 22

Explication for personal and professional development

THE EXCITEMENT OF EXPLICATION
Joanna Kozubska
Explication as a personal and professional development tool. 29

STORY-TELLING WITHIN PROJECT TEAMS IN POST-CONFLICT ZONES
Joyce Leech
The uses of story-telling to accelerate and enhance the achievements of multinational and multicultural teams. 32

Organisations & People

CONTENTS

CRITICAL FRIENDS IN EXPLICATION
Bob MacKenzie
How critical friends can help each other to create links between the solitary and social aspects of explication. 40

Perspectives on explication

EXPLICATION—A PERSONAL NARRATIVE
B A Humar
A case study of an incident which alerted the author to aspects of himself that he was beginning to use in his professional work. 49

EXPLICATION AND METHOD IN THEOLOGY 55
Brian Smith, Bishop Of Edinburgh
Explicating actions other than words.

EXPLICATION WITHOUT WORDS—A COMPOSER'S VIEW
Sadie Harrison
Questioning the silent, implicit assumption that musical composers must necessarily explain their art in words. 59

EXPLICATION—A BLACK PERSPECTIVE
Sandi Russell
The nature and importance of explication, known as '*signifyin[g]*', in black American culture. 64

End notes

EPILOGUE: TOWARDS THE FUTURE
Peter Franklin & Bob MacKenzie
Restates the objectives of this special issue, and invites readers to become actively involved in developing our shared understanding of explication. 67

AN INVITATION TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EXPLICATION
Details of a specially designed, interactive event at the Institute of Directors, Pall Mall, London on 16 October 2006 70

Prologue: Towards an Understanding of Explication

BOB MACKENZIE AND PETER FRANKLIN

As executive guest editors, we believe that this anthology of articles, which has been specially written for Organisations and People, is the first collection of work to major on the idea and the practice of explication. This issue is 'special', not only because it is one of an occasional series devoted to particular themes, but also because it brings to our attention the possibilities of introducing a more explicit awareness of how we might use explication to help us to achieve new knowledge, understanding and practices in various contexts.

Explication holds out the prospect of deriving new, incremental, explicit knowledge through a holistic study of implicit knowledge.

The challenge of explication

To set the scene, in his first contribution to this journal (*Explication as a Philosophical Enterprise*), **Peter Franklin** examines some important philosophical properties and credentials of explication. Adopting a postmodern approach, he proposes the necessity of a shared language to promote our understanding of explication, and highlights the complexity of attempting to make implicit knowledge explicit. Finally, in terms that are likely to resonate with many managers and consultants, he discusses the implications of explication for personal and professional development.

Explication and discourse

As you browse the Contents page or read some of the articles, you will see the work that we have selected has its roots in different discourses. This has the valuable effect of offering us different insights into the diverse nature and practices of explication.

However, you will also see in **Peter Franklin's** second paper (*Working with Explication*) that we consider that the process of explication involves a number of key skills and practices which are relevant to any discourse. That is, whatever our discourse, if our purpose is to transform implicit knowledge into explicit knowledge which we want to be regarded and

valued by others, then the explication process must involve some or all of the following:

- Reflection;
- Analysis;
- Scholarship, in the sense of being knowledgeable about past and recent developments;
- Measured experimentation;
- Systems thinking.

With this set of key explication skills and practices in mind, we now go on to highlight some insights and questions that arise from our authors' work.

New insights

The ideas, insights and practices that we have gathered for this anthology cannot and do not tell the whole story. If we had more space and time, and if we had invited people from other disciplines and other professions to contribute to this special edition, then we would undoubtedly have learned from their unique experiences in working with explication too, and we would thus have discovered additional insights.

What we can conclude from the rich variety of work contained in this journal, however, is that explication is widely practised and valued, if not always explicitly at first. Take for example **Sandi Russell**'s description of *signifyin[g]*, which illustrates the vital importance of explication to black American identity and resistance. Then turn to **the Bishop of Edinburgh**'s article, and you'll find a thought provoking article about implicit knowledge which is embedded in religious acts like praying or worship.

New questions

We also learn that explication is not necessarily appropriate or easy to do. **Sadie Harrison**'s paper offers us a tantalising glimpse into the world of composing, and questions the silent, implicit assumption that composers must necessarily explain their art in words. Poet **B. A. Humar** tells and interprets a story of how he has struggled to reconcile a lifetime of being tugged between a professional career (that of a probation officer and an academic) and his personal ambitions to be a writer and poet. From this struggle, which will resonate with others, he explicates some themes and practices that are common to both aspects of his identity. **Bob MacKenzie** proposes how critical friends have an important role to play in helping to create links between the often difficult solitary and social aspects of explication. He argues that, employing a judicious blend of challenge and support, critical friends can help each other in ways that include noticing and facilitating the interpretation of critical incidents.

Within a higher education context, **Graeme Harper** tackles the question of whether explication might inhibit or enhance the creativity that is inherent in 'creative writing'. He concludes that explication is a useful and valid enterprise, and he also makes some telling observations about the relationship between creative writing, explication and management learning. **Joanna Kozubska** summarises the origins and development of the International Management Centre's SEAL D Phil by Explication. Importantly, she also argues that explication takes place within many other contexts beyond award-bearing programmes, and she imagines its potential application as a device for personal development and organisational learning.

Peter Abbs provides a troubling explication of 'the self', where he explores the historical development of the self in western cultures, and conjectures about the future of the self in the light (or darkness) of challenges from postmodern thinking. He raises important issues concerning prospects for the self in a global consumer society, and wonders whether explication

might be a question of becoming who we are. And, in the context of capacity-building in dangerous post-conflict zones such as Kosovo, **Joyce Leech** recounts how she uses storytelling to build understanding and create team spirit among staff who are drawn from different ethnic backgrounds and languages.

Prospects and plans

In the guise of an Epilogue, the last piece in this journal continues our editorial commentary by considering where explication might take us next, and where we might take explication. We know that fewer readers today start at the beginning of a text, and then work their way systematically and sequentially through to the end. However, it was necessary for us to find space somewhere to raise questions and make proposals about the future of explication. So not only have we created this space within the various expressions of explication that are framed in each contribution, but also in the Epilogue itself. We hope that this special issue will encourage the readers of *Organisations and People* to engage in a thoughtful and passionate dialogue with us and with each other and their clients, colleagues and networks about future prospects for explication in their life and work.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Dr Bob MacKenzie is an independent consultant, facilitator and writer, with a particular interest in writing for personal, management and organisational development. In various phases of his career in education, academia, and development projects, Bob has worked and travelled in Africa, India, Europe and the USA. Bob is a Director and Council Member of AMED, and coordinates the AMED Writers' Group. Recently, he completed a D Phil by Explication. He can be contacted by e-mail on bob_mackenzie@btopenworld.com.

Peter Franklin is Emeritus Professor of Strategy and Management at Nottingham Business School, and is on the editorial board of *Strategic Change*. Peter can be contacted by leaving a message with http://support.workingwithstrategy.org.uk

Explication as a Philosophical Enterprise

PETER FRANKLIN

In this essay, taken from a longer paper on explication and philosophy which is in preparation, the case is made that the idea and the practice of explication can be interpreted as a philosophical enterprise concerned with the creation and recognition of new knowledge.

KEYWORDS: Explication, meaning, knowledge, experiential knowledge, philosophy, postmodernism, epistemology, management

Introduction

This essay is organised over five consecutive parts:

- Definitions and meanings of explication.
- The association of explication with literary criticism and knowledge.
- Dealing with implicit knowledge.
- The implications of explication for practice.
- The implications of explication for personal and management development.

The first four parts involve close argumentation. The final part proposes a loose mission statement for explication in personal and management development.

1. REVEALING DEFINITIONS AND MEANINGS

> The linguistic turn is an explicit realization that (1) the primary way human beings know and participate in their world is through language and (2) different linguistic maps bring different senses of reality and claims to truth. The linguistic turn, therefore, is the eruption into human consciousness of the perspectival, contextual, and contingent nature of all truth claims. Language does not represent reality, rather it shapes and constructs it…
> (Best and Kellner, 1997: 260)

> Reading texts is a matter of reading them in the light of other texts, people, obsessions, bits of information, or what have you, and then seeing what happens. (Rorty, 1999: 144).

To begin to understand the idea and practice of explication, it is helpful to get a sense of the etymology of the word. Indeed, by exploring the etymology of the word 'explication' there are three potential gains available to us:

- First, we can try to get a sense of the different contexts where the word 'explication' has been used (cf. Chia, 2004: 23).
- Secondly, etymology gives us the opportunity both to study the historical progress of the word and to discover the sameness and difference of the meanings attributed to the word.
- Thirdly, both these processes give substance to the argument that language is socially constructed and that words have no intrinsic meaning (cf. De Cock and Chia, 2003: 21).

On nouns and verbs

The online *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) makes the distinction between explication as a *noun or adjective* and explication as the *verb* 'to explicate'.

When expressed as a *noun or adjective*, one of six definitions of explication (the first dating back to 1528) speaks of a "detailed statement or description", another is given as "making clear the meaning of (a word, statement, symbol, etc.)", and a third (which we'll discuss later) is defined as "*The process of developing or bringing out what is implicitly contained in a notion, proposition, principle, etc.*" (My italics).

When expressed as the *verb* "to explicate", one of the six definitions (the first of these dating back to 1531) includes "To make clear the meaning of (anything); to remove difficulties or obscurities from; to clear up, explain..", and another reflects the use of the term in literary criticism, "*To develop, bring out what is implicitly contained in (a notion, principle, proposition)*". (My italics).

Careful study of the online OED's twelve definitions of explication, including those given above, suggests that none relates exclusively to a particular human activity, and that none relates exclusively to a particular discipline or field of human activity.

2. LITERARY CRITICISM, EXPLICATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Based on an earlier study (cf. Franklin, Kozubska and MacKenzie, 2005), literary criticism is the discipline which most often uses the term 'explication' as an integral part of its discourse. Indeed literary criticism and explication are intimately connected. In one reference which can be found on the web (Marywood University Library), literary criticism and explication are implicitly accepted as being identical, and in a second reference, which is entitled "Writing a Literary Explication" (Bruckwicki**.** Tyler Junior College), an explication is defined as:

> 'a detailed analysis', which provides a textually accurate and logically luminous reconstruction of the argument (reasons, grounds, support) that the author used to justify a conclusion. (Suber. Earlham College)

According to Baker, online at Kansas State University, these initial definitions conceal the nature and complexity of explication. In a note on the etymology of the words 'explicit' and 'implicit' Baker brings our attention to the problematic that the explication process involves making explicit something that we already 'know' (or are familiar with) in its implicit form.

Baker's argument is consistent with two of the OED definitions of explication that are given

above which refer to explication as, "*The process of developing or bringing out what is implicitly contained in a notion, proposition, principle…*". At first sight this definition has face-validity and appears to present no philosophical difficulty, but on careful reflection this definition seems to suggest that explication can only proceed if there already exists some form of implicit knowledge (cf. Polanyi, 1969, on tacit versus implicit knowledge). This definition of explication therefore entails important philosophical issues relating to the idea of implicit knowledge which we explore in the following paragraphs.

3. DEALING WITH IMPLICIT KNOWLEDGE

If explication can only proceed on the basis that there already exists some form of implicit knowledge, it is sensible to inquire what is meant by implicit knowledge.

According to Baker, implicit knowledge is something which is present but is "not 'out in plain view.' " Like other writers, Baker uses metaphor to illustrate this proposition. He writes:

> If we want a more specific concrete image still to remind us of all this, we can think of a bud on a stem as an example of something that is mostly 'implicit': only the outer leaf is 'explicit.' When the bud blossoms, it performs a kind of 'self-explication.' If we want to see what's inside before this comes about, our 'explication' of it would have to take the form of dissection.

Initially comforting, perhaps, the metaphor and the related analysis cannot be taken at face value because the metaphor holds implicit assumptions about both (a) our prior knowledge of the implicit, and (b) our prior knowledge of what we might expect to discover (and hence attempt to unwrap) inside the bud. Let me explain.

For someone who has no prior knowledge about, or who has no prior experience relating to a flower bud, the only knowledge which that individual can be said to possess is the experience of seeing the bud. As this is the first time the individual has ever seen a flower bud, then the individual has no simple or obvious way of telling herself or others what it is, or what the bud contains. For sure, the individual can (probably) be expected to describe the object, but without obtaining further knowledge (such as appealing for advice) or further experience (such as physically holding, touching, pinching the flower bud), the implicit is not defined by the explicit alone. Rather, the implicit is defined by the explicit in the context of the individual's prior experience and knowledge which, in turn, will shape the questions, hunches and guesses she will make about the nature (and contents) of the implicit.

This argument is consistent with the proposition that meanings are "perspectival, contextual, and contingent" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 260). As implicit knowledge is defined by the explicit in the context of the individual's prior experience and knowledge, and as individuals can be expected to possess different prior experience and knowledge, then it follows that when explicating the same identical object (in this case a bud on a stem), different individuals will end up with different explicit knowledge. And at that stage, from the perspective of each explicant, their new explicit knowledge is as valid as the next person's.

Implicit knowledge, then, is contingent knowledge. Being contingent, an individual's implicit knowledge is, in principle, open to further analysis. For instance, the possible dissection of a bud on a stem (cf. Baker) brings into focus the technologies and techniques available to those who want to reveal more about the implicit. Again we can argue that the application of identical technologies and techniques by individuals will lead to different

outcomes according to the prior knowledge and the technical skills of the explicant. For sure the process of (say) dissection of the implicit is likely to reduce the amount of variation, but unless it is possible to replicate precisely every explication of the implicit, there will always remain some differences in the explicit knowledge derived through explication.

As we embellish this argument, however, we also have to be careful not to make the assumption that everybody will have the same objective when seeking to dissect the implicit. Some may be content with developing an understanding of the relationship between the bud and the stem; others might be concerned only with the charting the changing properties of petals contained in the bud; others might want to get a sense of the chemical changes taking place. The point I am making here is that the implicit knowledge that I possess about the bud on the stem is partly determined by my prior 'will to know'—and by my purpose in wanting to know more about the implicit. As my will to know changes, then I can expect to want to find out more about the bud on the stem. In that process, what was once implicit knowledge has become the base for further discovery; the implicit has become explicit and hence offers the prospect of new implicit knowledge and the opportunity of a new explication.

Based on these arguments, we can deduce that the process of explication has no natural final cut-off point. Every explication generates new explicit knowledge, and as new explicit knowledge is assumed to entail new implicit knowledge, this new knowledge is open to a new explication (now to be undertaken in the light of the experience of having completed prior explications).

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

These arguments, deductions and findings have important implications for those who deal with phenomena that we don't really 'know'; for instance phenomena which we suspect exist (e.g. phlogiston), or about which we have only partial circumstantial evidence, or where, at best, we can only venture an educated guess—such as those hunches and guesses which astronomers use when searching for new planets.

Indeed, when this processual notion of explication is brought into the fields of experiential knowledge or knowledge management, related philosophical questions arise. In knowledge management, for example, much is made of implicit knowledge being surfaced and shared and thence construed as being explicit knowledge. In some instances, however, there may be doubt about the focus, boundaries and content of the implicit and familiar knowledge that we're working with. In these conditions, how is the implicit to be treated?

Similarly, our treatment of experiential knowledge involves some of the same philosophical issues. When accrediting a manager's experiential knowledge, for instance, it is often the case that she has not recognised, or has not respected, the depth and quality of the knowledge (and skills) that she possesses. In these two cases, of knowledge management, and experiential knowledge, it seems to me reasonable to argue that explication is akin to a metaphysical process which often begins with unknown or unrecognised prior implicit knowledge rather than something already in "plain view" waiting to be explicated. In these circumstances, the idea and process of explication is something more than being 'simply' about making the implicit explicit. Rather, in this context, ***the process of explication is concerned with the creation of new meanings and (additional) knowledge***. Thus I conclude that explication is a philosophical enterprise, and like all other philosophical processes which involve claims to new knowledge, must be subjected to the stringent tests of science, including

repeated attempts to disaffirmation.(cf. Franklin, 2004).

5. SO WHAT? IMPLICATIONS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Interpreting explication as a philosophical enterprise shifts attention to the ways that people can contribute both to the development of their own knowledge and theorising, and to the knowledge of the communities of which they are a part. By taking a post-modern approach towards the idea and practice of explication, we gain four other prospective achievements too.

First, as the prime actors in our own development, we are prompted to focus on our own development needs and on our thirst to make contributions to knowledge which enable us to review and alter our contributions to the knowledge communities that we are part of, and to engage with new knowledge communities too.

Secondly, postmodernism gives us a licence to create our own 'localised' knowledge and helps us to reveal the insidious implicit assumption, embedded in modernism, that the only knowledge worth having is 'out there' provided by somebody else.

Third, explication is a process which enables us to create our own knowledge. Further, being based on a seemingly magical interaction between our imagination, our intellect and our experiences, explication has the potential to conjure up new knowledge that is as useful as anyone else's.

Finally, the fruits of explication tell it as it is! —and better. In other words, ask yourself how many managers actually rely entirely on others' knowledge? Few or none, I guess. By contrast, ask yourself how many people learn instinctively to find ways of nurturing their own 'theories' of the world from casual observation, from exchanges with others and, of course, from their past experiences? Countless, I suspect.

To conclude, explication serves a basic human need and serves a social duty too. It places human beings at the centre of knowledge creation (rather than at the periphery), and rightly honours individual wisdom.

Surely, these outcomes are worth having in our uncertain, contested, post-modern world.

REFERENCES

Best, S. & Kellner, D. (1997) *The Postmodern Turn*, London: The Guilford Press.

Bertens, Hans. (1995) *The Idea of the Postmodern. A History*, London: Routledge.

Boniolo, G. (2003) "Kant's Explication and Carnap's Explication: The Redde Rationem", *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 3, ISSU 171, pp. 289-298.

Carnap, R. (1950) *Logical Foundations of Probability*, Illinois: University of Chicago

Chia, R. (2004) "Foundations of Management Knowledge: Assumptions and Limitations", Paper Number 01/04, University of Exeter.

Day, R. E. (2005) "Clearing Up 'Implicit Knowledge': Implications for Knowledge Management, Information Science, Psychology, and Social Epistemology", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, Vol. 56, No.6, pp. 630-635.

De Cock, C. and Chia, R. (2003) "Diversity and Organization: An Essay with Special Reference to the Work of Mikhail Bakhtin", Paper Number 01/03, University of Exeter.

Denzin, N. K. (1994) "Postmodernism and deconstructionism" in D. R. Dickens and A. Fontana (eds) (1994). *Postmodernism and Social Inquiry*, London: UCL Press, pp. 182-202.

Dickens, David R. and Fontana, Andrea. (eds). (1994) *Postmodernism and Social Inquiry*, London: UCL Press.

Franklin, Peter. (1998a) "Thinking of Strategy in a Postmodern Way. Towards an Agreed Paradigm: Part 1", *Strategic Change*, September–October, Vol. 7, No. 6, pp. 313–332.

Franklin, Peter. (1998b) "Thinking of Strategy in a Postmodern Way. Towards an Agreed Paradigm: Part 2", *Strategic Change*, December, Vol. 7, No. 8, pp. 437–448.

Franklin, Peter (2004) "Problematics in management theory and practice", *Strategic Change*, November, Vol. 13, No. 7, pp. 383–404.

Franklin, P. Kozubska, J. & MacKenzie, R. (2005) "Conjectures on explication. Explication as a philosophic enterprise", available online at http://www.explication.org.uk/practice/collection/pjf/explication_as_a_philosophical_endeavour.htm.

Gottdeiner, M. (1994) "Semiotics and Postmodernism", pp. 155-181 in Dickens, David R. and Fontana, Andrea. (eds). *Postmodernism and Social Inquiry*, London: UCL Press.

Johnson G., Melin, L., & Whittington. R. (eds.)(2003) "Micro Strategy and Strategizing: Towards an Activity-Based View", *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 40, No.1, January 2003.

Kuhn, Thomas S. (1970) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, London: The University of Chicago Press.

Online Oxford English Dictionary http://dictionary.oed.com

Polanyi, M. (1969) *Knowing and being: Essays by Michael Polanyi*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rorty, R. (1999) *Philosophy and Social Hope*, London: Penguin Books.

ONLINE RESOURCES IN TEXT REFERENCES

Marywood University Library http://www.marywood.edu/library/findcriticism.htm

Bruckwicki. Tyler Junior College http://english.tyler.cc.tx.us/jbru/1302-SA/explication.htm

Suber. Earlham College http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/courses/explicat.htm

Baker. Kansas State University http://www-personal.ksu.edu/~lyman/english320/cc-explication.htm

Carnap 1950. http://www.lawrence.edu/fast/boardmaw/Carnap_Explica2.html

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Peter Franklin is Emeritus Professor of Strategy and Management at Nottingham Business School and on the editorial board of *Strategic Change*. Peter can be contacted by leaving a message with http://support.workingwithstrategy.org.uk

Prospects for the Floundering Self

PETER ABBS

The concept of self has become deeply problematic. Post-modern thinking tends to deny the existence of any essential self while consumer culture works to homogenize people. And yet if we explicate the historical developments of the self in western culture we can locate three dynamic premises for understanding our sense of individual identity. These relate to the notion of freedom, to the notion of the embodied nature of consciousness, and to the notion of ecology. When these three elements are brought together they may throw further light on the self and its future.

KEYWORDS: Self, freedom, global culture, postmodernism, individuation, explication

Introduction: Explicating the conditions of self

I teach a somewhat heretical Masters course at the University of Sussex called *In Search of Soul*. It is, I have to confess, something of a Big Dipper affair diving and rising through western culture at tremendous speed. We begin with Sappho and Heraclitus and end, ten weeks later, with the present moment—a somewhat fraught and breathless journey. But what I am out to identify are some of the precise moments in which the understanding of the *psyche, soul, self* actively changed, inaugurating a further sense of life's deepest purpose or, if not purpose, open possibility. I often begin with the work of the pre-Socratic philosopher, Heraclitus, and take his distinctive use of the word *psyche* to denote not breath (as in Homer) but a self with infinite depth. It is a good starting point in any historic quest for the individual as it marks a significant semantic and spiritual moment in the story of the self. From there I move to the court-case against Socrates in Athens in 399 BC to examine his main speech where he claims, with an uncharacteristic directness, that his driving philosophical concern was to work on the *psyche*. These two moments register early quantum leaps in the differentiation of the self from epic tribal culture. From there I take our journey of enquiry through the bible and the early Christian theologians, through the Renaissance, through Romanticism, through Modernism up to our present Post Modern dissolution.

By the time the course has reached the twenty first century it is the last week of term. At our last session we gaze at each other with a certain incredulity. It is as if, instead of arriving at a clear destination, we have juddered to a halt in the middle of some unnamed ghetto. Feeling something of the same giddiness and unease as my students I say: "*Well it's really a life time's work, isn't it? So good luck!*" Perhaps I say it lightly—and with a smile—but not without an unfashionable high seriousness. For, indeed, our dominant culture seems profoundly confused, if not incoherent, about the self and offers little guidance beyond the deceptive phantasmagoria of quick money, managerial power and canned celebrity. Has all the historic work on shaping the self culminated in nothing: a denial of identity, a whimper, a scream from the basement, an ironical aside, an advertising slogan? Not exactly. For our cultural situation is much more ambivalent and muddled than that. There have been real gains *and* savage losses. Both sides demand recognition. I am not sure that in my course I bring out fully the conceptual difficulties and latent possibilities.

So in this article I want to try and make more explicit—to explicate—my own rather diffuse thoughts about the condition for the self's true flourishing. I want to jot down better notes, as it were, for my last seminar, so that future students will not leave the journey quite so dazed. I would like them to sense the attraction of further horizons, to have a measured sense of hope and possibility. For the odyssey of self is not over.

A poetics of being in a restless world

The first idea that I would want to stress is this: the status quo need not define us; it is never as authoritative as it appears. The sympathetic study of history—I name what we do *a poetic form of archaeology*—slowly liberates one from the tyranny of fashion. It enables the mind to contemplate other ways of being in the world, other forms of desiring and conceiving. It offers an arena for sustained contemplation, free from the constraining imperatives of the market place. But the study of our long philosophical and literary history also indicates something else: that we live in an intellectually turbulent culture which never stays still. As the philosopher Hegel pointed out, western history is one of *absolute restlessness*. It possesses a protean energy, moving dialectically from one movement to another, each position correcting for a time the defects of the previous position until that, in turn, succumbs to the same inexorable dynamic. If this is true, it means we can bring to our current orthodoxies such destabilising questions as: What is the anti-thesis to Post Modernism? What is the anti-thesis to global capitalism? What is the anti-thesis to hedonistic materialism? Or to phrase the question within the terms set by the course *In Search of Soul*: what further possibilities remain open for the shaping of self? Merely articulating such questions opens the doors and windows of the reflexive house of consciousness.

Three developments in the western story of self

But there are other vivifying notions we can extract from the western story of the self. For me, at least three major developments stand out. These are:

1. An unfolding narrative of freedom
2. Recognition of the embodied nature of consciousness, and
3. A more holistic approach to the self.

An unfolding narrative of freedom

The first relates to freedom. The story of the self in western culture seems to be, above all, an

unfolding narrative of freedom. The place and power of freedom emerged in the classical world with the great speech of Pericles praising the freedom of Athenian citizens and gained a further existential purchase in the rigorous philosophical exercises developed by the Stoics; it burst forth triumphantly in the Renaissance, especially in the *Oration on the Dignity of Man* by Pico della Mirandola. In this inspired treatise God addresses man as follows: "*We have made you neither heavenly nor earthly neither mortal nor immortal, so that, more freely and more honourably the moulder and maker of yourself, you may fashion yourself in whatever form you shall prefer*." The same goal of freedom ignited both the Enlightenment and Romanticism where it found resounding expression in the words of Rousseau: "*Man is born free, and he is everywhere in chains*." And since the time of the French Revolution it has taken political, legal and ethical shape in all the progressive movements (pertaining to class, gender and race) that we can name. For the discerning individual this call for freedom meant, above all, *the freedom for individuation*: the right to think one's own thoughts, to follow one's own conscience and to shape one's life accordingly. Not the summation of work on the self, of course, but, always, the pre-condition for its accomplishment.

Recognition of the embodied nature of consciousness

The second advance concerns a recognition *of the embodied nature of consciousness*. The traditional reading of the self has been overwhelmingly dualistic in nature; it fiercely segregated psyche from soma, soul from body, spirit from matter and judged the second term in the equation as inferior, as generally brute, insatiable and essentially evil. In classical philosophy this dualistic conception of human life, amounting often to a loathing of the senses, was given archetypal formulation in the *Phaedo*, Plato's account of Socrates' reflections before drinking the hemlock. In that document Socrates' hatred of the body is palpable. This negative judgement ran like a dark current through most of Greek and Hellenic philosophy to join the stream of theology in the early centuries of Christianity. Here the notion of the Fall further damned the body, as both corrupt and corrupting. As Kierkegaard was to write: "*the consciousness of sin is the conditio sine qua non of Christianity*." For eighteen centuries human life was thus fundamentally conceived as a preparation for another life in the supernatural realm, finally free from the distorting and distracting energies of the senses and the natural world they disclosed. Since the middle of the nineteenth century this monumental dualism—still so heavy on our collective psyche and embedded in our common language—has been slowly crumbling away. Again and again, it has been seen as offering an untenable account of who, how and where we are. It was Darwin's work to put human life humbly back into the zoological order, back into nature from which it had been wrenched by the twin engines of abstract reason and wish-fulfilment. The theory of evolution, so shocking to the Victorians, has radically changed the landscape of the soul and its genesis.

A more holistic approach to the self

The third advance relates to the second. Our approach to the self now tends to be more holistic, we conceive the soul and body as indivisible, interactive and interdependent. Indeed, in our own time the story of the soul has metamorphosed into another essential story: the story of the body—of its genetic codes, of its sublating instincts, its various sexualities, its own genre of

non-conceptual wisdom. (Behind these changes, of course, lie the seminal influences of psychoanalysis and the biological sciences). To make the case in its broadest shape: *if the true inner theme of our confused century should be individuation, then its outer theme must be ecology*.

Towards a multi-dimensional self

So we are, perhaps, uniquely equipped to understand the promise of identity. We are able now to envisage a multi-dimensional self; a self housed in nature and the body; a self shaped by a multitude of interacting forces—genetic inheritance, society, history, language—and yet itself a locus of freedom; a self which belongs to all that has shaped it, yet which bears also the reflexive power to think beyond the status quo, and to act ethically and imaginatively in ways that can be neither predicted nor described in advance. Such a conception of a polyphonic self (a self creating out of the constraining conditions of its own being) is, then, one of the extraordinary outcomes of the long history of the soul. And yet the warm invitation it throws out to us seems deeply discordant with our daily jangling experience of contemporary life and the world in which we have to survive. It hovers tantalisingly before us, suggesting an image of human wholeness that seems to be in profound opposition to the collective and organisational demands of our age. And it is precisely this contradiction which, I believe, creates the intellectual sensation of bewilderment in my students at the end of the course.

Prospects for the self in a global consumer society

For it would seem that today we inhabit a technological tribal culture, a Brave New World, where, once again, collective goals are defining the limited horizons of millions. Mass-culture, almost by definition, is not a culture of probing inwardness, of subtle nuance, of elected idiom. People happily allow their bodies to carry the brand names of the age—as if to announce their group happiness, their servile membership of the tribe.

Across Medieval Europe it was the Church which dictated the social codes and rituals; today it is the over-arching multi-nationals anxious to secure sales rather than souls, but even more potent in the influence they can exert because of the hypnotic powers of the ever more sophisticated electronic media. Under such formidable collective pressures the individual becomes re-defined not as a citizen of an alert democracy, not as a soul capable of moral growth, but simply as a consumer, a customer with certain contractual rights. All that does not pertain to this one-dimensional role of consumption is simply relegated to the hidden abyss of private distraction.

The only other values given the imprimatur of collective assent are the 'advances' of science and technology, 'advances' which, without the direction of inner wisdom and rooted creativity, merely compound the externalisation of human existence and intensify the manic rhythm of the collective tribal dance. Paradoxically, in such a context the espousal of freedom contributes not to the inner goal of individuation, but to an ever growing alienation of the spirit, which, obviously, nothing in the society is able to address.

Psychological influences of postmodernism

It is passing strange that at the same time as global consumerism has become our social reality, the dominant intellectual fashions in the west propound the absolute relativity of all positions and, consequently, the impossibility of any

kind of definitive understanding. In Post Modern thought even the notion of self has been deconstructed, being conceived as an illusion cast by the spell of language. According to this thinking, the person can possess no true identity, no essence. The "I" is merely a floating noun without a referent. These arguments, many of them dating back to the great destabilising writing of Nietzsche, need close attention. All I can do here is point to their *psychological* influence, their disconcerting synchronicity with the age of hype and shopping, their dissipating influence on personal and creative life. My students' disorientation as we return to our forlorn twenty first century seems, indeed, a fitting response. For have we been studying no more than the history of another illusion—the multiple manifestations of a linguistic deception? In which case, what is left for us? A life of irony, with our speech always in self-conscious quotation marks? A ventriloquism without heart?

Explication: a question of becoming who we are?

It is characteristic of my seminars to end with a series of questions. But the above questions are not exactly neutral; they are meant to be abrasive, dissenting, challenging. For I wonder if another road may be open to us. There may be a fertile way through the Post Modern habits of thought, as there must be a way (if we are to survive) beyond our one-dimensional consumer culture. As I have suggested history is inherently dialectical and things are never quite what they seem. Is it possible that the future may be shaped not by current fashions, but by what they have invariably repressed: the profound need to connect with our long history and to our longer biology; the need to cherish more fully our creativity and our impulse to individuate; the need, in brief, to become who we are?

Our history is one of absolute restlessness. Is it possible that in the unconscious counter energies are already constellating, and that they prefigure the next chapter in the story of the self.

NOTE

The reader may be interested to know I have written a related chapter depicting the story of the self in relationship to the genre of autobiography. It can be found in *Against the Flow: the Arts, Postmodern Culture and Education*, published by RoutledgeFalmer (2005)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Peter Abbs was born and grew up on the North Norfolk coast in England. He has written and lectured widely on the nature of creativity and the poetics of culture. In 2004 he was Writer-in-Residence at Lyon College, Arkansas. He is the Poetry Editor of *Resurgence* and Editor of *Earth Songs*, the first Anglo-American anthology of contemporary eco-verse. He has published six volumes of poetry including *Icons of Time*, *Personae* and most recently *Viva la Vida* (Salt, 2005). He is currently Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Sussex. Peter can be contacted by e-mail at: p.f.abbs@sussex.ac.uk

Explication and Creative Writing

GRAEME HARPER

There is no better way, it has been suggested, to destroy a piece of creative writing than to talk about it while writing it. Yet explication, or the laying bare of process and product, seems as much about discovery and knowledge in the field of creative writing as in any other field. Contemporary developments in teaching and learning in higher education reveal this to be true.

KEYWORDS: Explication, genius, responsiveness, education, knowledge, creative writing

Should the creative writing process be made explicit?

It is a fine chestnut of a notion to say that to talk about Creative Writing is one way to destroy the chance of undertaking it. In other words, to lay it bare, explain or describe it somehow prevents it from happening. Or, at very least, prevents it from happening with the potential for accomplishing something notable. By 'Creative Writing' I mean forms of imaginative writing that are distinguishable in approach, attitude, form and, often, content from generic writing. The full extent of references encompassed by the term 'Creative Writing', however, is often left very open, in order not to restrict the writing possibilities engendered by it. By 'laying bare, explaining or describing', I am speaking of what I consider to be the core activities of 'explication'. The chestnut notion then, is that the creative writer who talks about their work-in-progress, or even overly expounds with regard to their finished work, is a poor creative writer; the creative writer who does not, or will not, reveal much along the way, or even once a work is complete, is far more likely to be producing work of quality. Simply, then, explication could be said to be an act in opposition to producing work of quality.

It would be easy to dismiss this reaction as the result of a Romantic ideal. Essentially, the idea is that creativity is generated from within the self and therefore should be protected from outside influences both during the drafting

process, perhaps the period of its greatest creative intensity (cf. Pope, 2005), and afterwards in the interests of maintaining what might be called, perhaps, 'artistic integrity'. The creative writer seen, then, as solitary genius, or potential solitary genius, keeping ideas, modes and methods to themselves in order not to sully them with the dirt of ordinary human interaction.

Of course, in reality, creative writers are as varied as the works they produce, and their feelings about explication during the process of creation, or even after it, vary considerably. Some writers share their journeys, along the way, and or share their thoughts on completed work; others find the sharing takes away the 'newness', the 'uniqueness', or fear that they might reveal too much and undermine the creative property they have built.

Creative writing in higher education

Reactions to the 'in process' consideration of Creative Writing have truly come to fore with the vast expansion of Creative Writing in universities and colleges over the past half a century, with a particular intensity in the years since the late 1980s. In Higher Education the idea of trying to explore the processes and products of individual acts of Creative Writing links to the notion of assessing or analysing the learning process—both for positive and, some might say, negative reasons.

The case against explication: the Romantic solitary genius

First, let us consider the negative case—that the only reason for attempting to lay bare the practice of Creative Writing is so as to be able to nail it down for the purposes of meeting institutional or governmental criteria. So, for example, if a Higher Education institution wishes to show government, or the representatives of educational authority, that it is 'maintaining quality control' then it needs to be able to reveal the undercurrent of its pedagogic or, more accurately, andragogic processes (cf. Knowles, 1984). It's hard to do this if these are hidden in the Romantic notion of the solitary, self-referencing genius. Therefore it must encourage revelation, description and explanation that seek to commodify the processes and outcomes of Creative Writing, and to lay them bare for the act of quality validation and official confirmation.

This negative take on the impact of the contemporary expansion of Creative Writing in Higher Education is not without validity. In some cases, the mode and method of explication occasionally employed by teachers of Creative Writing in universities and colleges is not that concerned with the epistemologies of Creative Writing but, instead, that concerned with the calculation, comparison and control of Creative Writing within the kind of institutional framework described above. Rarely, anecdotal evidence suggests, is this done maliciously; and, most often, it is done to try and give Creative Writing an equal status in institutional terms to that enjoyed by others subjects within academe. Rarely, similarly, is such a false notion of explication in relation to Creative Writing a very good idea.

The case for explication: holistic engagement with the contemporary world

Now, let us deal with the positive case—that Creative Writing provides access to human experience, human understanding, human nature and human achievement and therefore laying bare its practices and results is a contribution to our pool of knowledge. It assists in building a site of knowledge that others can access. Thus explication in this case is not about institutionalisation; rather, it is about improving our

knowledge generally, improving our sense of the specific activity and outcomes of Creative Writing and how these add to the world around us, and about contributing to the interaction of individual humans with their holistic environments: their cultures, the cultures of others around them, and with society.

There is also a third consideration here, and one worthy of at least a moment's close thought. It is, simply, that the outcomes of Creative Writing have often been examined critically in academe by those who have studied such subjects as literature or theatre or, more recently, film and media. Explication here has not been about process, or rarely has it been about process. But it has often claimed to be laying bare the nature of the artifacts produced by creative writers. There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the idea that critical study of a novel or poem or a script will produce insights into the ways in which that piece of work engages with themes and subjects, its own form and structure, and with its place in the world as cultural artifact—to name just a few things that such critical examination might reveal. However, it must be recognised that such 'after the fact' examination of Creative Writing is not the same as the examination of Creative Writing 'in process'. It is not the same as a creative writer examining and considering their own work during or after its evolution. What the creative writer is seeking can be called *responsive critical understanding*. That is, understanding that responds to the work at hand, but that might also be useful for constructing other Creative Writing in the future. In other words, the creative writer uses explication—if, indeed, the creative writer uses this well at all—as part of their creative survival instinct. It is, in essence, a natural act aimed at improving the writer's chance of accomplishing the work at hand and of being able to go on to produce more work, better work, work more likely to ensure the writer's place in the world. Responsive critical understanding is thus about building Creative Writing's personal, as well as public, knowledge base.

Creative writing is both process and product

Because 'Creative Writing' refers to both a process and a product, thoughts about explication can be approached in two ways: those elements concentrating on the act, and those elements concentrating on the end result. However, Creative Writing is never one or other of these; because of the focus on *responsive critical understanding* it is always both. Similarly, using explication well involves treating Creative Writing as an act, and a subject, in its own right.

Indeed, no one would deny that Creative Writing is a subject with an eclectic knowledge base. But the facts of Creative Writing's multidimensional engagement with the world are not facts against explication in relation to it. Nor can the Romantic solitary genius model hold out against the modes and methods of engagements we see in the contemporary world—even if, at some time, such a model ever had validity. The contemporary world, however, is one of interaction—technologically, in terms of general human movements, economically and environmentally. Creative Writing breathes the air of these things. One of the reasons for its popularity with students and staff in Higher Education today is because it is an empowering subject, linking personal action, allowing the impact of individual disposition, intention and understanding, with the more holistic notions of academe.

Explication's contribution to creative writing in higher education

What role, then, has explication in Creative Writing, particularly in relation to how it the subject is undertaken in Higher Education?

Firstly, its role is related to increasing our knowledge of the processes and products of Creative Writing, showing the ways in which Creative Writing contributes to our understanding of, and engagement with, the world. Secondly, it relates to improving acts and products of individual creative writers, thus assisting them in maintaining and developing their individual careers, chasing their individual ambitions, meeting their personal expectations. Thirdly, it highlights the need for approaching Creative Writing as a specific act/event and specific end result/product, one that can be discussed in relation to its own epistemologies, and shouldn't be considered merely a 'borrower' of the epistemologies from other subjects or fields. The standard epistemological question 'How do we know what we know?' relates in a specific way to Creative Writing, and needs to investigated, explained and modeled with such specific understanding in mind, and the specific outcomes noted in sight. Finally, harnessing explication in this way is not likely to shut down or limit the achievements of creative writers in the world; rather, it is highly likely to allow these to be better recognised, help to feed the work of individual writers more actively, and provide for a development of the Creative Writing pool of knowledge in a way that will benefit both its makers and its receivers.

And finally: creative writing, explication and management learning

What, then, are the implications contained in this discussion for management learning in the 21st Century? Concluding on a personal note: I think these implications relate largely to the nature of human understanding, to our best exploitation of this, and to the heuristic devices that can assist us.

I'm reminded of the results of a Belbin test I once completed, in which my combined strengths were said to be predominantly in the area of the 'Plant' (i.e. a generator of new ideas) and the 'Completer/Finisher' (i.e. a painstaking, conscientious individual delivering on time). Reading the results, I wondered if Dr Meredith Belbin was somewhere there in the wings, laughing, trying to make me a character in one of my own short stories or novels! After all, what about my 'Resource Investigator' (i.e. my enthusiastic explorer) personality? What about my 'Shaper' (i.e. dynamic, overcoming obstacles) tendencies?

Of course, Dr Belbin was there. . . but only by implication. That implication was that a creative writer is never a solitary individual but always a participatory, inter-acting one, whose perception is balanced, paralleled or even (as was proven by my own Belbin test!) contrasted with his or her self-perception—a part of a 'human team', in some key respects.

Such self-knowledge is undoubtedly part of the broader site of knowledge that is Creative Writing, and of management learning too. It relates to a consideration of human personality traits, dispositions and intentions. Whether, as Belbin suggests, there is a finite number of human behaviours is perhaps less certain. However, my notion of responsive critical understanding relates to there being at least a graspable set of personal and public behaviours; behaviours that might best be harnessed to produce the desired results.

Belbin-ed, I was said to have most natural strengths in an 'action-orientated' role (i.e. the Completer/Finisher) and a 'cerebral' role (i.e. the Plant). According to this schema, I was a creative writer who concentrates on process and product, it would seem. However the need to remind myself of my audience, my readers (i.e. to think also in terms of a third, 'people-orientated' role) suggests to me that all types of Creative Writing model, in a heuristic way, the events, actions, thoughts and ideals readers/the

audience experience in 'real life'. That's part of Creative Writing's attraction to its audience, and it's also another implication for management learning, contained in the discussion of Creative Writing and explication. If humans seek creative and critical models, as evidence suggests they do, then management learning might best perhaps consider the question 'How do we know what we know?' as an inter-active and evolving one that produces heuristic devices for learners, based on the meeting of individual and holistic circumstances.

REFERENCES

Knowles, M. (1984) *Andragogy in Action*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pope, R. (2005) *Creativity: Theory, History, Practice*, London: Routledge.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Graeme Harper (who writes under his own name and as Brooke Biaz), is Editor-in-Chief of *New Writing: the International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*. He is the Creative Writing representative on the Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) National Steering Committee on Practice-Led Research and a member of the ACE Consultancy Committee on Creative Writing in Higher Education. He holds doctorates from the University of East Anglia and from the University of Technology, Sydney, and is currently Director of the Institute for Excellence in the Creative Industries (IECI) and Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Wales, Bangor http://www.bangor.ac.uk. His very recent works include *Small Maps of the World* (Parlor, 2006), *Teaching Creative Writing* (Continuum, 2006) and *The Unsilvered Screen: Surrealism and Cinema*, with R. Stone (Wallflower, 2006).

Working with Explication: Fashioning the Philosopher-Manager

PETER FRANKLIN

In this essay I explore the idea and practice of explication as a source of (new) meaning and knowledge for managers in a contested postmodern world.

KEYWORDS: Philosophy, meaning, explication, postmodernism, experiential learning, implicit knowledge, explicit knowledge, management, holism

Working with explication

SOUND BYTES?

A couple of years ago, I was challenged to develop a stand-alone e-book which would reflect some of my thinking, practice and writing on strategy. It seemed easy enough to complete and within a few days I'd created an architecture and begun to populate web pages with relevant content.

In its original form, the e-book (called "Working with strategy"), lasted about a year. Every time I refreshed the site www.working-withstrategy.org.uk I became more and more uneasy; critical of the architecture, and also critical of unjustified assumptions which I had made about the ways visitors would access and read web content.

On reflection and analysis, the main problems with my first edition were that I had:

(a). borrowed the architecture of 'real' books (which have hard covers, and an obvious and sequential beginning, middle and end);

(b). imagined, foolishly, that my visitors would also want to read my e-book 'cover-to-cover', and

(c). failed to take account of the behaviour of users where far less than 50 per cent of people enter a website directly through the index page or home page.

The outcome of my observations was to replace the original architecture of the e-book with navigation aids which reflect the ways that people treat my site. And to enable this to work, my biggest challenge was create an e-book where each individual page (a sound byte) would have its own purpose and meaning, while the sum of all of the pages (which can be read in any order) would offer a systemic view of *working with strategy*.

On explication and personal development

Working with explication has many of the properties of working with strategy. Working with explication involves an iterative process; a process which gives practitioners the freedom to major on those elements of explication which seem most likely to help them achieve their personal development objectives over time. Each of these different elements stands apart from the others, and each is an integral part of an iterative systemic process where (knowledge) gains in one element impact on the objectives and tasks relating to the others.

Whether we are dealing with the individual elements of explication, or dealing with the systemic iterative process as whole, explication helps people to query and to reinterpret the legacies of their experience. The explication process, therefore, offers practitioners the prospect of noticing and refining a personal meanings-system which permits the endless possibility of new meanings being discovered and shared with others. This meanings-system is consistent with the postmodern turn (Best and Kellner, 1997) where thoughtful people crave meaning (Watson 1994:23), recognition and fulfilment through better descriptions (Rorty, 1999a, 2000) of their roles, values, contributions and achievements within their respective (language or knowledge) communities.

The explication cocktail: repeatedly shaken and stirred

SO WHAT DOES EXPLICATION INVOLVE?

The explication cocktail comprises a handful of potent ingredients. These ingredients include:

- *Reflection*: the adoption of a reflective mood where practitioners look back over their experiences to tease out past learnings and ongoing meanings and assumptions with insights drawn from current experiences and conjectures about the future.
- *Implicit knowledge*: searching for and recognising the implicit while assessing the possibilities and consequences of successfully transforming the implicit into new (explicit) knowledge.
- *Action learning*: (controlled) experimentation with new (explicit) knowledge where social and functional feedback have impacts on the survival, longevity and likely colonisation of the new knowledge.
- *Scholarship*: being knowledgeable about relevant past and recent developments which help or hinder the chances of the new (explicit) knowledge being taken seriously.
- *Languaging and narrative*: the skill in being able to re-form meanings for others' use.
- *Analysis and synthesis*: being careful about the appropriate balance between analysis and synthesis so that new (explicit) knowledge is not unduly synthetic (i.e. not unduly detached from its intellectual roots) and is not overly analytical (i.e. not overly processed) and hence falls within the systems of understandings of those who might want to work with the new knowledge.
- *Holism*: being able to recognise and to work with the systemic consequences of explication; noting and exploiting the interdependencies of the process as a whole; studying and experimenting with cause and

effect relationships among individual ingredients.

In the background, as I write about these ingredients, I have in mind a fuzzy distorted picture of Kolb's (1996) experiential learning model where concrete experience, observations and reflections, the formation of abstract concepts and generalisations, and the testing of the implications of concepts in new situations, are repeatedly iterated over time and space.

Similarly, as we stir and shake our cocktail of ingredients, there are echoes of Argyris' work (1994) on double loop learning where individuals learn to learn better, learn to be alert to their experiential learning, and learn to be constructively critical about their explicated knowledge.

As a cocktail of ingredients, the explication process has applicability across a broad canvas of human activity, including science, literature, theology, management, music and dance, and in this light, it seems to me that explication has many of the attributes of a paradigm. This proposition leads me on to consider another strand of thinking about the nature and impact of explication—that of explication and the idea of paradigm.

Explication and the idea of paradigm

Since the early 1960s, the word 'paradigm' has haunted intellectual discussions about scientific progress (cf. Kuhn, 1970). In this essay, I shall take advantage of Brian Loasby's perspectives (1971), and use the term 'paradigm' as a way of envisaging and explaining scientific progress, where scientists agree on the research agenda and concur with "the methods and abstractions to be regarded as legitimate within a particular problem area." (Loasby 1971:866).

Throughout this essay I have brought forward my argument (cf. Franklin, 2006) that explication is a context-specific philosophical process which offers the prospect of (new) knowledge being discovered from the implicit. While the process involves practitioners working artfully with the ingredients we've discussed earlier, there are no rules about the choices, sequences, and timings which users should adopt when undertaking an explication. Thus, in transforming and replacing the implicit, practitioners are free to begin with any ingredient which is likely to provide them with further insight about the focus, boundaries, issues and procedures associated with the explication. Similarly, as the explication proceeds, and new problems and puzzles emerge, practitioners are free to sequence the ingredients in ways which they consider likely to be efficacious.

Whatever the sequences and timings of these activities, we can argue to the proposition that the explication cycle (or spiral: cf. Bruner, 1960) is only complete when all the ingredients of explication have been appropriately exploited and (new) knowledge has been recognised by others. Thus the tests of any explication, like the tests of the products of any science, lie in the integrity, elegance and thoroughness of the process, and in the judgements of others about the robustness of the (new) knowledge in the light of repeated attempts to disaffirm the knowledge claims of the new. In addition, the processes of developing, selling and subscribing to (new) knowledge involve complex ethical issues, where there are implicit duties of care not to mislead and not to overstate the applicability and benefits of the incremental knowledge achieved by explication.

It seems to me that these processes and concerns echo those of any half-decent inductive research process, including interpretative research and ethnography. Where personal and professional development involves a sort of autobiographical process, then additional philosophical issues arise about knowledge and truth. These contested issues are discussed next.

Autobiography, fiction and 'truth'

> the search for the truth can never stop. It cannot be adjourned, it cannot be postponed. It has to be faced, right there, on the spot. (Pinter, 2006).

> [Postmodernism] affirms that whatever we accept as truth and even the way we envision truth are dependent on the community in which we participate . . . There is no absolute truth: rather truth is relative to the community in which we participate. (Grenz, 1995:8).

So far in this essay, I have managed conveniently to skip over the philosophical issues that are embedded in the practice of explication when taken as a process of personal development. These philosophical issues are deeply engrained and essentially problematic because they involve a sort of archaeology—a temporary crafting of a narrative autobiography where the achievements of the historic self are unearthed and analysed by the current and prospective self in the context of one's current discourse. In other words, whether admitted privately or publicly, one's current understandings of oneself are informed by the contents and structures of (socially determined) meanings that we, as members of various communities, are willing to be part of.

Here, at last, we have to acknowledge that one's historical record is myth; an historical narrative open to continuous reinterpretation by oneself, such that each time one returns to the historical record, new interpretations emerge about oneself, to oneself, by oneself. In this autobiographical process, informed by the rubric of explication, we have entered a contested postmodern world where it becomes impossible to distinguish 'fact' from 'fiction'. (cf. Watson, 2000). Each reading of our past, by our self alone, shifts and turns as we seek to imagine how we can and should explain our self to our self in the context of the meanings that we want others to have about *our* meanings. In autobiography very little is fixed: very little is secure against contestation and falsification.

To settle on one view of history rather than any other, however, involves a duty of care to oneself and to others too. At the heart of this duty of care is the troublesome concept of 'truth'—a concept which pervades analytical philosophy. Here, however, given that our focus is on explication, we will look at the way that postmodern discourse treats 'truth'.

In postmodernism, to deal with 'truth' we have to choose a notion of 'truth' which conforms with our own theories of 'truth'. For me, the notions of 'truth' which come nearest to my own preferences and use, are part of my relativism. In other words, I prefer to think and talk about a 'reasonable doubt' rather than some statement or argument or result being absolutely 'true' or 'untrue' (cf. Grint, 1997; Franklin, 2004a). I find comfort in the arguments and ideas of Richard Rorty (cf. Rorty, 1999b:23-46) who argues that 'truth' derives from social and linguistic conventions among those who choose to settle on an agreed (contingent and temporary) meaning of 'truth'. (By comparison, an appeal to the divine, or alternatively, an appeal to a single truth handed down from one elite to another, seems to me to heighten the risk that people will be deterred from disputation and find their ability to think for themselves dulled).

Explication and strategic management

When my obituary comes round to be written, I hope others will say that I have encouraged people to think for themselves. In a couple of my articles (Franklin, 2001, 2004b), I have gone further and have developed an argument urging managers to ditch the comforting recipes and fake descriptions of strategic management theory that populate the shelves of the libraries

and cram most strategy text books. Instead I have encouraged managers to create new theories which are based on their own experiences of *doing* strategy.

In my scholarship of that time, and being ignorant of explication, I failed to use the language of explication. Also, I failed to advocate explication as a process to achieve the objective of new theory. I know better now. I have come to understand something about the power of explication in developing new theory and in supporting the recognition and development of managers' (experiential) knowledge. Nonetheless, looking back on the second of these papers (Franklin, 2004b), under the heading "Shaping the future through informal theory: the leader's new work", I offered the following argument which anticipates some of the ideas we've discussed in this essay (Franklin 2004b:395-396):

> informal theorising [derived from experiential learning] becomes part of a perpetual dialogue and an emergent discourse which reflects, anticipates and shapes the future of an organisation and its multiple relationships with stakeholders. In this postmodern epoch advantage is taken of ambiguity, uncertainty and chaos. Change is to be relished rather than denied and the purposes and processes of the organisation continually reassessed.

Informal theories that emerge in this sort of culture differ from theory in the textbooks because people's passions are engaged in the quest to create a unique and appropriate mindset which defines their ways of thinking and working together successfully. Thus informal theories are created, quarrelled over and owned by those who practice rather than by those who preach. Indeed, these informal theories are formed to meet the particular circumstances, codes and protocols of a particular team or organisation, are shaped by their ontological stance, and thereby claim their uniqueness and legitimacy from the specifics of the individual case rather than from the Grand Claim of Modernism that the specific case offers a General Theory of Management.

Towards a new beginning from the exhibits of our past

> Postmodernism stresses the relativity, instability and indeterminacy of meaning; it abandons all attempts to grasp totalities or construct Grand Theory, in favour of more modest, specific, local and fragmented analyses. (Best 1991:188)

> meaning and understanding are not naturally intrinsic to the world... they have to be constructed. (Cooper and Burrell 1988:99).

LIVING WITH CHAOS AND UNCERTAINTY

This essay is part of a bigger project which values explication as a means to personal and professional development. Those who have practised the arts of explication can speak for themselves, and I have no intention of stealing their thunder. Whatever their experiences, however, the records of their experiences are a sort of explication about their own experience, and as each record is studied and reflected upon, each will be subject to a different lens.

As Charles Handy remarks in *The Empty Raincoat* (1994), we live in confusing times. Uncertainty and ambiguity are recognised and endemic in every discourse (other than in politics where politicians are refusing to admit that they have no clear-cut solutions). The tyranny of paradox deters sensible debate about the possibilities of understanding, enjoying and living in a world which is inherently puzzling and problematic. As a result, management and political discourse lurches, like a drunkard, from one half-cut solution to another; from one fashion-

able theory, model or idea like business process re-engineering (which was never meant to destroy UK businesses), to another, like customer relationship management (which has failed to deliver its arrogant promise to customers). Hence we are stuck with the past rather than thinking radically about what we want the future to look and feel like, and how we are to achieve these ends ethically.

> What prevents companies from creating the future is an installed base of thinking—the unquestioned conventions, the myopic view of opportunities and threats, and the unchallenged precedents that comprise the existing managerial frame. (Hamel and Prahalad 1994:61).

A FUTURE FOR THE PHILOSOPHER-MANAGER

One of Charles Handy's many aphorisms which has stuck in my memory is this one (1994:20-21):

> If anything is to happen… it has to start with us, individually, in our own place and time. To wait for a leader to guide us into the future is to be forever disillusioned.

We human beings seem to have an amazing ability to learn. From the cradle to the grave we seem to have a natural instinctive ability to learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and share these with those who are important to us.

Some of this learning, of course, is acquired deliberately. Our attendances at school and college; those training sessions with our golf-pro; those first challenging moments when learning to drive a motor car or ride a bicycle are representations of deliberate learning. But much of our learning takes place silently, simmering away as a sort of subversive process that we only know about when we are suddenly surprised by our knowledge and skills due to a new unexpected event, like a challenge, an accident or a crisis of some sort.

The processes of explication give us a way into discovering stuff that we never knew that we knew, and that we never claimed that we knew about ourselves. And because this knowledge is about *us*, acquired by *us*, owned by *us*, and used by *us*, it has unique emotional value *and* a convincing personal credibility.

Explication offers each of us the prospect of exploiting knowledge and skills that we and others have not recognised before. Explication offers us the chance to become members of knowledge communities that we've barred ourselves from joining and, in parallel, explication gives us a chance to test our knowledge, exercise and hone our new-found skills, and convince others that we too can play their knowledge games.

Explication is, therefore, a sort-of philosophical affair. Explication reveals the implicit, and when treated tenderly, intelligently and creatively, offers the prospect of 'new' explicit knowledge and skills that we have not noted before. And because explication encourages us to practice the valuable skills of reflection, argumentation, analysis and systemic thinking, it helps us to develop a honed philosophical mindset which can recognise and deal with humbug, uncertainty and ambiguity in a contested postmodern world.

In summary, explication helps to give us, as managers, consultants, and writers, a new role in the strategic development of people in and beyond traditional organisations—a role which is intimately concerned with the surfacing and sharing of new knowledge and skills derived from the contexts of our profession. At last, the possibility of the philosopher-manager is therefore no longer a pipe-dream. No longer do we have "to wait for a leader to guide us into the future." (Handy 1994:21).

REFERENCES

Argyris, C. (1994). *On Organizational Learning*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Best S. (1991). "Chaos and entropy metaphors in postmodern science and social theory", *Science as Culture*, vol. 2, no. 11, pp. 188–226.

Best, S. and Kellner, D. (1997). *The Postmodern Turn*, London: The Guilford Press.

Bruner, J. (1960). *The Process of Education,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press

Chia, R., and Morgan, S. (1996). "Educating the philosopher-manager. De-signing the times", *Management Learning*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 37-64.

Cooper, R. and Burrell, G. (1988). "Modernism, post-modernism and organizational analysis: An introduction", *Organization Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 91-112.

Franklin, Peter. (2001) "From routine recipes to deep strategic thinking: strategy making as an intellectual challenge", *Strategic Change*, November, vol. 10, no. 7, pp. 359-365.

Franklin, Peter. (2004a) "Fuzzy management: from certainty to undecidability", *Strategic Change*, August, vol. 13, no. 5, pp. 231-235.

Franklin, Peter. (2004b) "Problematics in management theory and practice", *Strategic Change*, November, vol.13, no. 7, pp. 383-404.

Franklin, Peter. (2006) "Explication as a philosophical enterprise", available in http://www.explication.org.uk

Grenz, S. J. (1995). *A Primer on Postmodernism*, Grand Rapids: Cambridge University Press.

Johnson G., Melin, L., and Whittington. R. (eds.) (2003). "Micro Strategy and Strategizing: Towards an Activity-Based View", *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 40, no.1, January 2003.

Hamel, Gary and Prahalad, C. K. (1994). *Competing for the Future*, Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press.

Handy, C. (1994). *The Empty Raincoat. Making Sense of the Future*, London: Hutchinson.

Kolb, D. A. (1996). "Management and the learning process", in Ken Starkey (ed), *How Organizations Learn*, London: International Thomson Business Press, pp. 270-287.

Kuhn, Thomas S. (1970). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, London: The University of Chicago Press.

Loasby, B. J. (1971). "Hypothesis and paradigm in the theory of the firm", *Economic Journal*, December, pp. 863-885.

Pinter, Harold. (2005) "Art, Truth and Politics", Nobel Lecture, December. Last retrieved 07 July 2006, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/2005/pinter-lecture-e.html

Rorty, R. (1999a). "A pragmatist view of contemporary analytic philosophy", last retrieved 16 April 2006, http://www.stanford.edu/~rrorty/pragmatistview.htm and also published as Rorty (2003).

Rorty, R. (2003). "A Pragmatist View of Contemporary Analytic Philosophy," in *The Pragmatic Turn in Philosophy*. William Egginton and Mike Sandbothe, (eds.), New York: Suny Press, 2003.

Rorty, R. (1999b). *Philosophy and Social Hope*, London: Penguin Books.

Rorty, R. (2000). "The decline of redemptive truth and the rise of a literary culture", last retrieved 16 April 2006, http://www.stanford.edu/~rrorty/decline.htm

Watson, T. J. (1994*). In Search of Management. Culture, Chaos, and Control in Managerial Work*, London: Routledge.

Watson, T. J. (2000). "Ethnographic Fiction Science: Making Sense of Managerial Work and Organisational Research Processes with Caroline and Terry", *Organization*, vol.7, no. 3, pp. 31-38.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Peter Franklin is Emeritus Professor of Strategy and Management at Nottingham Business School, and on the editorial board of *Strategic Change*. Peter can be contacted by leaving a message with http://support.workingwithstrategy.org.uk

The Excitement of Explication

JOANNA KOZUBSKA

This article describes the rationale behind the International Management Centres' Senior Executive Action Learning Programme leading to the award of a Doctorate, in which experienced practising managers are offered the opportunity to develop their ideas into an original contribution to knowledge through the process of explication. It suggests that, including and beyond institutionalised programmes, explication is a powerful tool for personal development and has the potential to become a bedrock for organisational learning.

KEYWORDS: Explication, experienced senior managers, validating experience, action learning, organisational learning, personal development

The challenges of surfacing and sharing our knowledge

One might be forgiven for thinking that the leaders of thought in management reside solely in the halls of academe—so great is the written evidence, that our book shelves groan with learned tomes. Why is this? Surely not because university and business school faculty have a monopoly in these areas? Rather, most practising managers would probably say that they 'don't have the time' to write articles and books. And anyway, they excuse themselves by saying "It's not what I do".

The irony of this is that practising managers ***do*** have the ideas ***and*** the real live experience to make a contribution to knowledge. Similarly, consultants working in the same arena have the potential to offer additional insights gained from their intimate discussions with the clients they serve. But apart from the major international consulting houses, few consultants regularly go into print.

As a consultant, I venture that most of us would like to validate our experience—to see our 'footprints' and to offer our knowledge and wisdom to others. Looked at from a simple economic perspective it makes little sense to waste our learning, and if we take the concept of the 'learning organisation' seriously, surely it is time we are heard.

Explication is not a new idea

The word explication is derived from the Latin *explicare*—to unfold—hence to explicate—to unfold. The word was first recorded in use around the sixteenth century; philosophers developed the concept further in the late nineteenth century and practitioners in a variety of fields have used the word to describe, illuminate and challenge the received wisdoms of their respective field of knowledge. Today's definitions of explication provide a range of starting points—revelation, analysis, development, clarification, moving from implicit to explicit, making sense of experience, to note just a few.

Using and valuing explication

For many years, universities have recognised the value of explication in fostering the development of new knowledge. As organisations committed to research and to the publication and sharing of new knowledge and best practice, universities, have taken advantage of their award-bearing status to confer the title DLitt on people who have published a coherent body of work which, holistically, makes a significant contribution to knowledge.

The International Management Centres (IMC http://www.i-m-c.org/imc/) has taken this academic model and developed it for practising managers and consultants. This has unleashed exciting opportunities for them as doctoral candidates to use the experience and learning they have gained over their career, developing their ideas and thoughts into original contributions to current knowledge and debate. This process of explication, when undertaken at doctoral level, equips managers, consultants and other professionals working in organisations with sophisticated thinking and research skills, enabling them to express their ideas and conclusions authoritatively, and to enhance their practice further. Their contribution to current debate stands comparison with any other, and has the added credibility which comes from 'having done it' and 'got one's hands dirty'. It's not just 'theory'. Individuals have researched and honed their material for many years. They have used their own experience and often themselves as their material.

The explication process enables them to validate their experience and make sense of it. Managers come to recognise their 'footprints'—and so do other people. They are encouraged to talk about their experience and learning; they are prompted to see it in context, to write about it, to develop models and to present and defend their ideas robustly, knowing that they have rigorously prepared and validated their material. They can, and do, write articles and books!

Different modes of explication

Set the explication process within an action learning context—where a group or set of managers are committed to learning together, with one another and from one another—and the result is the richer for this added diversity and mutual challenge and support.

The explication process is not confined to the written word. Photographs, memorabilia, artefacts, music, story and more are all available material for explication. Expressing ourselves in another medium can release inhibition and remove blocks to development. One of the most exciting revelations for me has been that explication appears to be a natural process for some artists and composers, and we in the business world have much to learn from them.

Explication as a personal and professional development tool

Explication is a very 'grown up' activity. It can not be done effectively without substantial personal experience, because it is a *retrospective*, as well as a prospective, process. We rarely have

the opportunity to look at our own personal journey. We are rarely encouraged to explore the ways in which our ideas and our thinking have developed over our careers, and we rarely have the time to reflect on our emotional, personal and professional development, or on how we wish to proceed on this basis. The explication process demands that we do all of this, but it is not easy and it is not a panacea. Not everyone wants to embrace the process and not everyone is emotionally ready to do so. Explication demands that we live with ambiguity within an amorphous landscape, which can be truly uncomfortable and alarming. (It can be very tough for those facilitating the process too). The reward? Coming to grips with—and making sense of—the complexity we have uncovered moves us along on our path to wisdom and continuous improvement.

Wise people are sorely needed in every enterprise. Explication provides us with a very powerful approach to personal, professional, organisational and artistic development. The outcomes of the process—whether written or not—express and record learning, insights and uniqueness. New knowledge, ideas and theories are captured and become accessible.

Explication does not have to be attached to an institutionalised award-bearing programme, and indeed people in many walks of life may well practice some form of explication without being explicitly aware that they are doing so. If we can help them to reify what they are doing, to give this a specific name (explication), and help them to understand it in terms of intentions, processes and behaviours, then the idea and practice of explication will take on new meanings, value and authority for them personally, which will be different from any institutionalised interpretation.

Explication for the board room

In the context of creating and managing 'the learning organisation', explication could be an immensely valuable approach which has the potential to become one of the bedrocks of organisational learning.

Is explication a way to make available the experience that is so often locked up in the board room? Here are the views of one board member who is currently engaged in the IMC's D Phil by Explication.

> Explication so far has been the start of a journey to new and exciting places that I didn't know existed, with the promise and expectation of more at each of the stops along the way. It is a journey of discovery, enabling structured reflection, recognition for the path already travelled and a great opportunity to grow beyond initial expectations. It has already strengthened my confidence to assess what I want to do now and what I want in terms of the future.
>
> Terry Tucker, Director of Learning and Development, Barchester Healthcare, June 2006

After twenty five years in the business, is it possible that, through explication, I am approaching the Holy Grail for management and leadership development?

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Dr Joanna Kozubska spent the first part of her career in line management positions in the prison and social services. Following this she joined the International Management Centres where she designed and implemented action learning programmes at graduate level for blue chip companies, finally moving into consultancy where she concentrated on interventions designed to increase managerial and leadership effectiveness. Joanna is an Associate Dean, Doctoral Programmes, with IMC and is the UK Director of Studies for the Senior Executive Action Learning (SEAL) Programme. Joanna has a passion for personal development and her particular areas of expertise include leadership development and mentoring at senior level. Joanna can be contacted on joanna@jmkk.co.uk

Story-Telling Within Project Teams in Post-Conflict Zones

JOYCE LEECH

In this paper I adopt a pragmatic approach to explication. I begin by outlining my role as a Team Leader for capacity building in post-conflict zones. Next, I explain how I use storytelling as a way of building and sustaining project teams, and hence as a way of contributing to capacity-building. I then show how I have developed a series of triangulates to illustrate the theory and practice of story, and I conclude that story-telling has great potential as a communications device to support the human relations function.

KEYWORDS: Capacity building, explication, management development, public procurement, story-telling, teamworking

Setting the scene

Not many folk appreciate what a Capacity Builder does, let alone one working in post-conflict aid situations. In the context of reconstruction aid, capacity building is used as a mechanism to support a range of strategies surrounding high-level policy change, and as such is targeted towards regenerating governments and economies in democratic transition. It is arguably one of the central challenges of the day, as much of social change and economic progress will depend on it. Capacity building occurs at three levels; the individual, the institutional and the societal. It is a developmental approach towards raising standards of living in a move to reduce poverty. (See Fukuda—Parr et al, 2002).

When you come to think of it, not many people understand the aid agenda either, particularly in the context of the European Union's Peace Implementation and Poverty Reduction Programmes (PRPs). Let me explain a little.

There are generally held to be three aid levels—Humanitarian (first level, survival), Secondary (e.g. temporary rebuilding of communications, shelter, and medical) and Post-conflict (e.g. economic regeneration through democratic restructuring and the rule of law, together with capacity building). PRPs are developmental approaches towards raising standards of living in a move to eradicate poverty.

International donors, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, national governments and the European Union, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), such as Care International, Oxfam, Save the Children, and Unicef, invest vast sums of money in aid programmes. The EU spent Euro 2.61 billion on Technical Aid for democratic stabilisation in the Western Balkans alone between the years 2000–2004, with a commitment of Euro 4.65 billion to the region between the years 2000–2006. This aid, whether in the form of money, medical supplies, survival kits, or technical services, comes from the public purse by way of taxes or individual donations. So it is up to the donor community to ensure that the projects that it supports and finances give true value for money and benefit those who need the greatest help. This is not an easy task.

The role of the team leader

The team or project leader plays an integral, multi-faceted role in technical aid projects by seeking to ensure that the key aims of the donors, beneficiaries, contracting authorities, team members, and other stakeholders are compatible. Because technical assistance is about capacity building, or closing the knowledge gap within institutions, helper-doer relationships have to be created between the team, the project beneficiaries and the various stakeholders, not all of whom will want to change the status quo. Undoubtedly technical aid workers have a great deal of knowledge and experience. Even so they will themselves need help to understand the organisational environment, share the vision and ensure that everyone with a 'stake' in the programme has bought into it. Thus, helpers need "help" as much as the "doers". When this is recognised, cultural alignment becomes a better prospect.

Often teams meet for the first time "on-the-job", and it is at this point that group cohesion is most at risk. It will fall to the team leader, to knit this multi-cultural, multi-national, interdisciplinary group into a tightly woven team by surfacing and agreeing a vision of the intended achievements of the team as well as the ways of working with one another to achieve these ends. Primarily involved with institutional re-building in transitional economies, technical aid teams often find themselves working in chaos, amidst damaged infrastructures, death, destruction and pollution. The team leader's task here is to facilitate the process of longer-term regeneration, through institutional reforms and law building, which is in step with the work of the resident international community.

Working in this way can make the team both economically vulnerable and politically dangerous. Those Project Leaders who seek to reform rather than support the existing regimes often find themselves under threat—the subject of political gamesmanship at best; victims of the criminally dangerous fraternity at worst.

Using story-telling in the field of operations

Aid workers mostly refer to their workplace as "the field"; this is because they work in a clearly defined geographic location, with specific terms of reference. They usually carry a "country-wide" portfolio for their project. Post-conflict situations often involve the use of peacekeeping and security forces; accommodation and other basic facilities are generally poor. Aid workers expect to live and work in similar conditions to their beneficiaries; they demand no quarter or special treatment.

On international missions my days, and sometimes nights, are crazily hectic. I am situationally based, often with out-dated communication networks or systems, working on the hoof, and lacking the dependability of

sound office practices. Totally unpredictable incidents occur on a daily basis, making nonsense of project plans. I use various innovative and pragmatic methods to help me find quick and workable solutions within the context of poverty and hostility. I find myself locked into getting a job done in resourceful ways to meet project deadlines, despite the difficulties.

My choice of method is often justified by means and ends, which are heavily reliant on the people, the donors, and the government whom the project serves. Triangulation is done mostly by sensory perception—flying by the seat of my pants. We live, walk, talk, smell, hear and see what is going on. Results triangulated in this way often indicate that reality is totally at odds with the written report. Not for us the cosy library or the supreme luxury of reflective dialogue. Most of my project teams don't even have a common native tongue, let alone a common news service, so we resort to the telling of stories about our day-to-day successes, failures, relationships or culture. In this way the barrier of language is overcome, because my teams are noted for love, loyalty and laughter built up from sharing pictures, photographs, songs and plays as we recall our experiences and working life. These universals take us through the difficult times. They are the bonding agents of smart, resilient teams who are committed to the change process whilst respecting a plethora of alternative views and cultures.

Why am I telling you all this? Well, because this is the reality of explication in the workplace. We start off with very clear notions of what we will achieve, we think we know where we are going, the methods we are going to use to get there and the process we are going to adopt to give measurable results. And then, quite literally, the bomb explodes or an earthquake strikes, and we are paralysed. We realise that survival and sustainability cannot be a lone state process. At such moments we really do need the support of others—our critical friends, our mentors, our staff, and yes, our partners, because working through the process of explication is a totally unpredictable, very high-risk personal affair. This is the kind of playing field that many managers would recognise.

Explication as a personal viaticum

From my perspective, explication as a methodology is a viaticum—a personal journey through critical periods of life, which are set into a context of culture. Dictionary.com defines viaticum as: (1) Ecclesiastical. The Eucharist given to a dying person or one in danger of death. (2) Supplies for a journey. Of course, the personal journey can be set into virtually any context, depending on what needs to be done. But for me as a team leader, culture and ethics are the most important features in building implementable laws to fight fraud and corruption in public procurement. So in answering the question of what makes me successful in this role, I needed to understand how my own personal development has occurred. And that, quite simply, is how I came to tell stories about myself (see Figure 1), and about my spiritual, emotional and professional development over time. From these stories clear patterns emerged and I began to see the true value of storytelling in my leadership role.

Personal storytelling is not a haphazard process. In fact, although it starts off as a series of reflections or anecdotes, these have to be written down, selected and classified. I wrote them, talked them through endlessly to myself, told them to groups (which helped me to sort them) then I spent four days in a studio, recording them. The mind map in Figure 1 shows how the whole process was deconstructed.

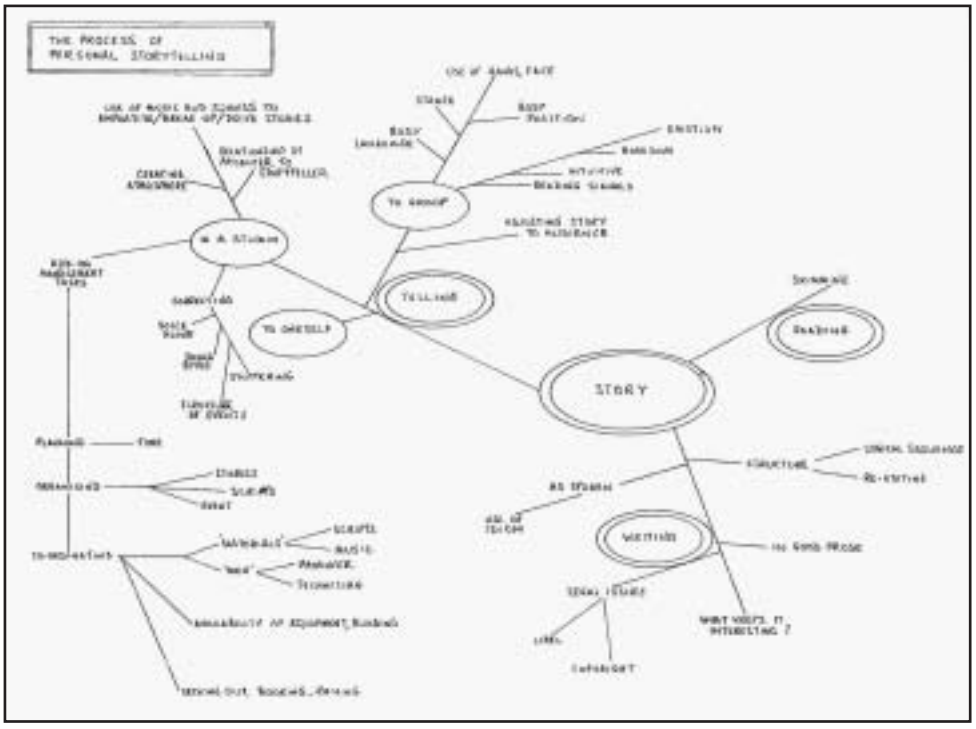

Figure 1: The deconstruction of personal story-telling

The value of stories in management development

Everyone loves a good story. But of what real value are stories in the workplace? What are the characteristics of story? Can we learn management skills from storytelling? Should stories be based on reality? A number of questions spring up when we talk seriously about stories and storytelling in personal development; and that is precisely their strength. They encourage debate and discussion. The idea that everyone has a story to tell, and that every story contains an element of 'truth', can be seen as a useful means of communication which can empower individuals in a non-threatening way.

Storytelling to support the human relations function has gained momentum over the last decade, both in the United States and United Kingdom, where the work of academics such as Boje (2001) and Gabriel (2000) has been enthusiastically received by many organisations, large and small. A post-modern view of management would, for instance, recognise the liberated role of people in the workplace; the need for them to upskill and the importance of continuing education in strengthening individual competences. Simple stories told by senior managers, of their negotiating experiences, cultural gaffes, how they have handled or mishandled difficult personal decisions, can all be forceful drivers in generating new ideas within teams, and have a sense-making power of their own.

Story triangulates

It soon became apparent to me during the process of classifying my stories that a format or set of criteria is required, by which those stories best suited to the aims of explication can be selected. Indeed, I realised that such a model or format would also be a necessary pre-requisite

Figure 2: The purpose of story

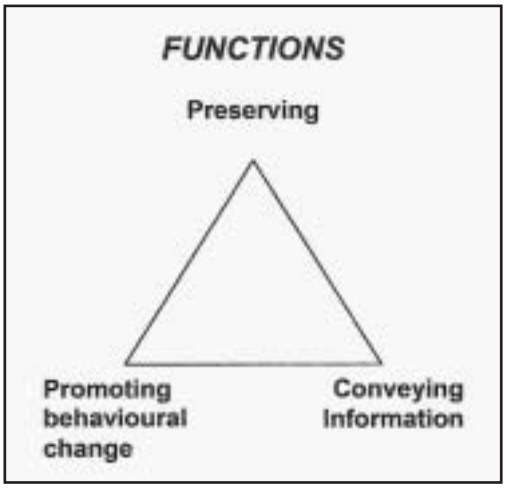

Figure 3: The function of story

when choosing stories for different management purposes.

Producing stories is one requirement, but often other things are implicitly required. Following Lipman (1999), I developed a series of triangulates to explore my experiences from several other perspectives.

When told at an appropriate level and pace by respected role models or colleagues, stories have a high learning value. Sensitively used, a personal story can help individuals to identify their personal strengths and weaknesses as well as their roles within the workplace and their ambitions within the job context. The major attribute of story as a post-modern approach to management development is to use narrative in short and long stories to convey messages in a dramatic and memorable way. A good story has salient persuasive power which makes sense to its audience and endures over time, like the nursery stories and fables you heard as a child, and perhaps now tell as a parent.

I subconsciously find myself using stories as a mechanism for bringing about cultural change in the workplace. Moving from a single state economy, which has been driven by written rules and procedures, is undeniably difficult for some. Staff have to learn to take responsibility for their actions and make decisions based on appropriate criteria rather than on a system of patronage or familial ties. Inevitably stories told in this atmosphere often bring about disclosure, especially during organisational change. When this happens I learn to be most careful not to allow self-effacement during the telling. I find that by being non-judgemental and adopting a sympathetic approach, whether it is a hug or simply a few appropriate words, dignity can be maintained and the underlying messages constructively used in future decision making.

Story time on international missions is not just entertainment. Once we start, everyone joins in with anecdotes and riders of their own. What a lot I learn from these sessions about the social fabric of ethnic diversity, work customs

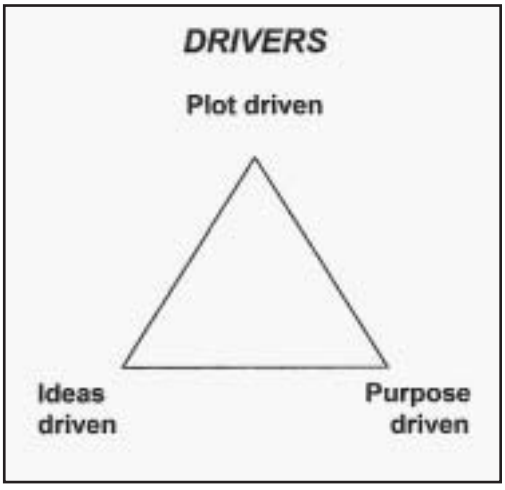

Figure 4: The drivers of story

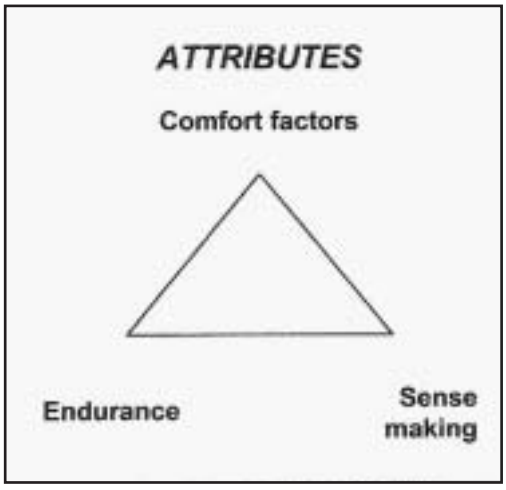

Figure 5: The attributes of story

and practice, and I quickly establish who really influences authority and holds the power. Thus my personal strategies become flexible enough to adapt to a multiplicity of change agents at differing levels of government, without too much disruption of the team effort.

My own input is usually made to reinforce standards or to demonstrate the use of equipment, software or reform procedures using story as a medium. As language is often initially a problem, my interpreter works alongside me, with the whole office involved in making up visuals and storyboards after she (my interpreter) has adapted my story to the local situation to get my point across. (The translator is now a UN worker in Burundi on an HIV Aids Project, and regularly sends me illustrated stories about her work there via the Internet.)

This activity is well received and quickly becomes the norm. High levels of presentation skills are developed within the local backstopping team over a relatively short period of time, building both confidence and capacity. After one such amusing session, the whole office informally adopted a dress code, even though they couldn't really afford it. But, they reasoned, they were "on stage" with me as part of the change process, therefore they should look the part too!

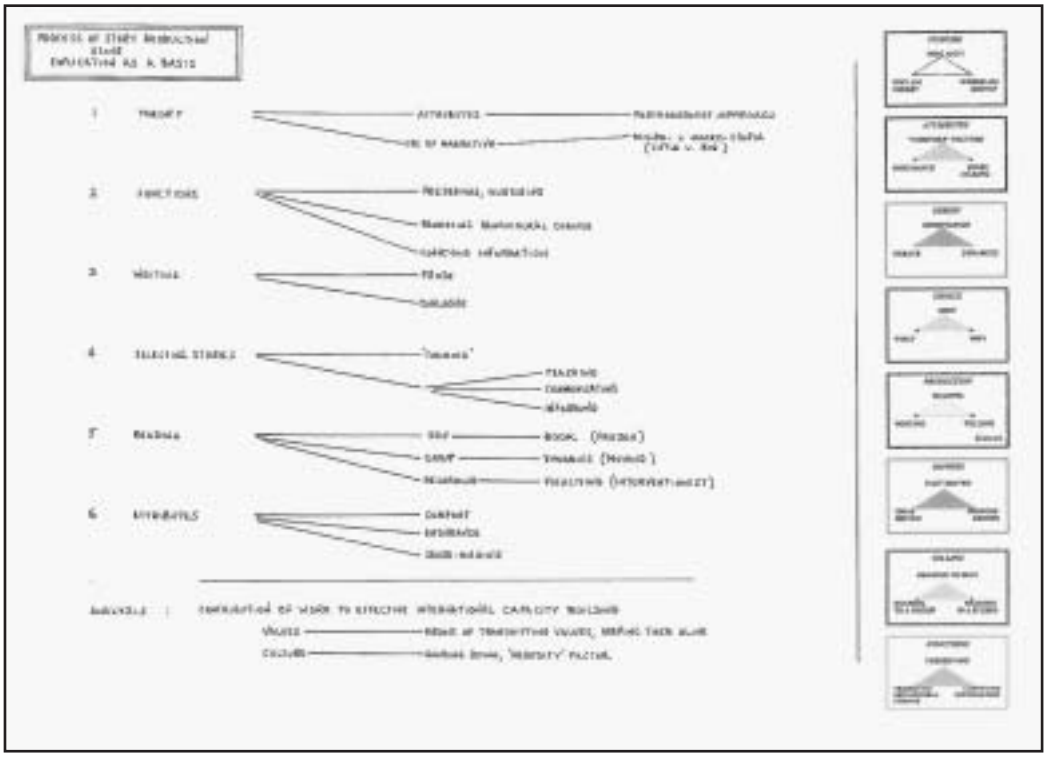

Figure 6: Story production for explication

Story production for explication purposes

Storytelling is not always about having a fun time, especially when it is linked to the serious business of explication for management development. Clients will expect some added-value to the workforce, implying that rigour has to be an inbuilt feature of the exercise. For management development purposes, one needs to have a grasp of the theory of story, identify its purpose and function in relation to its use in the work place, make decisions on whether the story should be written, recorded or told to the group, and ultimately have a clear idea of what eventual impact the story will have on the audience.

Linking the various triangulates (Figures 2–5) with the personal deconstruction (Figure 1), I found that I could demonstrate a robust framework for the whole process by using a simple, but effective, pictorial chart as a reference point. This is shown in Figure 6 above.

Conclusion

Conducting explication through story illustrates its relevance and importance to personal development, not only by building capacity within my teams and the project beneficiaries, but also importantly within me. Carefully chosen stories help me to conceptualise my personal values, management style, special skills and staff relationships (see Figure 6). By consistent interrogation of the stories, I am able to theme and group stories into specific timeframes, thereby tracking my own development. It enables me to identify my own strengths, imperfections and personal value drivers and to gauge their relative impact on the project and team. I have become aware that I regularly use story to build relationships, to illustrate best practice, and to develop critical skills. I use the persuasive power of story to overcome difficulties, and to develop a "can do" culture amongst the group. Ever since I discovered the impact of story across the language barrier, I have encouraged its use to demonstrate respect in teamwork to overcome the ethnic divide. We use stories jointly to explore vision; in workshop games to learn about the administrative reforms; and in discussion during briefing sessions to exchange views on the change agenda.

I have come to realise through Explication how much fun stories can be, even at work. Fun connotes happiness, and happiness is infectious. Leading such teams, who themselves have suffered so much personal pain and loss through war and ethnic strife, is both a very great privilege and a humbling experience. To be able to explicate this has shown how critical this rich experience has been to my own cultural development, enabling me to dance with glee in my own shadow, now that I work in Kosovo.

REFERENCES

Boje, D.M. (2001) *Narrative Methods for Organizational and Communication Research*, London: Sage Publications.

Buchanan, D. and Huczynski, A. (1997) *Organizational Behaviour: an introductory text*, 3rd ed. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice-Hall.

Chandler, G. (2003) *Industry Year 1986: An Attempt to Change a Culture—Its Allies and Obstacles*, London: Royal Society of Arts.

Eade, D. (1997) *Capacity Building: An Approach to People-Centred Development*, Oxford: Oxfam.

Franklin, P. and Kozubska, J. (2005) "Representing and sharing knowledge: a process map as explication", Nottingham: Unpublished, May.

Fukuda-Parr, S., Lopes, C. and Malik, K. (2002) *Capacity for Development: New Solutions to Old Problems*, London: Earthscan Publications.

Gabriel, Y. (2000) Storytelling *in Organizations: Facts, Fictions and Fantasies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Lipman. D. (1999*) Improving Your Storytelling*, Little Rock Arkansas: August House.

Maguire, J. (1998) *The Power of Personal Storytelling*, New York: Tarcher Penguin.

Simmons, A. (2001) *The Story Factor: Secrets of Influence from the Art of Storytelling*, New York: Basic Books.

Swap, W., Leonard, D., Shields, M. and Abrams, L. (2001) "Using mentoring and storytelling to transfer knowledge in the workplace", *Journal of Management Information Systems*, vol. 18, pp: 95-114.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Dr Joyce Leech is an international consultant specialising in capacity building in public procurement. With a background in industrial purchasing, business management and education, her recent work involves the use of story as a means of explication for management development in post-conflict zones such as Bosnia & Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo. Joyce welcomes your comments and can be reached at joyceleech@aol.com.

Critical Friends in Explication

BOB MACKENZIE

Explication has both solitary and social dimensions. Sometimes, we need to be alone with our thoughts. At other times, we need to negotiate and co-create meaning in debate or dialogue with other people. This article explores the argument that good critical friends provide invaluable help to each other in creating links between the solitary and social aspects of their explications. One particular way in which critical friends can help is by noticing and facilitating the interpretation of critical incidents, from which we derive new knowledge and understanding.

KEYWORDS: Communities of practice, critical friends, critical friendship, critical incidents, dialogue, explication, knowledge, writing

Introduction

I am a consultant who uses words, language and writing as a means of facilitating personal and organisational learning. I chose writing as the medium to express and exhibit my doctoral explication, which was about these enhanced skills (MacKenzie 2005). One outcome of this process has been my renewed belief in, and understanding of, the role and value of good critical friends.

My views about the role of critical friends assume that explication is an holistic, interpretive process along the lines outlined by Franklin (2006). In the context within which I am using it, explication involves transforming an earlier, inexact concept into a new, more exact concept, by using knowledge, thinking and technologies that were not available to me previously. Explication renders implicit knowledge and practice more explicit. In this more refined form, this more explicit knowledge can be further honed in practice. In this article, I suggest some criteria for people engaging in explication to identify their own critical friends through a form of conscious or unconscious stakeholder analysis, to support them on their journey. I conclude that there are ways in which we can learn to become more competent and confident as critical friends to each other, to our mutual benefit, for example in our attempts to make sense of critical incidents.

Explication is not easy

For writers like me, explication involves working with our experiences and ideas, often sitting in front of a computer, conducting desk research, and engaging in scholarship and dialogue. However, in whatever context or medium it is conducted, the explication process is not easy. In my own experience, there have been marvellous—even joyful—moments. But there have also been periods of doubt and uncertainty—sometimes protracted—where I have needed to confront and make sense of uncomfortable, difficult or puzzling ideas, experiences and actions. My journey through explication has sometimes been easy and swift, and more often slow and painful. For example, this article is the result of some ten different drafts over several months, each one changing as a result of feedback from, and debate with, critical friends. This fluctuation may be symptomatic of any art or science which aspires to achieve something beyond a relatively easy or immediately obvious increment to knowledge.

Like other forms of art, an explication through writing involves learning-by-doing in both lapsed and real time. It is a process of creation and destruction, as new ideas are formed, and as words and sentences are expressed and then—later in the explication cycle—are seen as inappropriate, to be abandoned and replaced by other expressions which seem to have greater merit. As this physical-textual process stretches out, so techniques of explication are honed and developed in a sort of double loop learning that continually informs the process and provides a framework for subsequent interactions with colleagues, clients and critical friends.

An example of knowledge gain through working with critical friends

A very immediate example of explicated knowledge gained through critical friendship comes from my experience of writing copy for this issue of O&P. My exchanges with other writers and editors have demonstrated to me the opportunity for mutual learning that takes place within the reciprocal nature of good critical friendship. This relationship has had significant implicit knowledge gains for each of us in our editorial-authorial roles, when from time to time we have been at the centre of making meanings for ourselves and with others. As such, this interaction has served as the basis for constructing new explicated knowledge for each of us through a variety of media, such as e-mails, telephone calls, commenting on each other's manuscripts, and occasional face-to-face meetings. In this way, we have worked in both a solitary and a social context, to mutual benefit, and to the potential benefit of a wider community, who in this case include contributors to, and readers of, this journal.

Critical friendship is a particular kind of interpersonal relationship. The difficulties in understanding different types of relationships in business are well recognised, for example in marketing theory, where various hierarchies of customer relationships are sometimes distinguished, each with its associated bonding process. One such typology is that of the so-called 'Ladder of Loyalty' (Macmillan India 2002). In recognition of these difficulties and differences, I now go on to outline my experience and understanding of three key relationship terms—i.e. friendship, critical friendship, and critical friends.

Friendship

I understand that *friendship* and *critical friendship* are problematic concepts, defined by behavioural and social norms of the time, and by the moral purposes and attitudes of those who see critical friendship as a crucial and integral aspect of their learning and practice.

Friendship has always been a central relationship for most human beings. It is normally understood as an interpersonal relationship involving an intellectual and emotional affinity, and as expressing a form of trust and intimacy between certain people which is demonstrated differently in different cultures and contexts.

Critical friendship

The term 'critical' variously means 'key', 'crucial', and 'constructively challenging'. The term 'friendship' denotes the quality of the relationship. Thus critical friendship can be regarded as *'engaging in critical reflection within a friendly climate to support transformation of an individual's or an organisation's practices'.* (Achinstein & Meyer 1997, slightly adapted). In this sense, it is not a hierarchical relationship, but rather one that is based upon trust. Critical friendship is entered into willingly and mutually by peers. It is therefore distinct from one person (a disciple) sitting at the feet of another (a guru)—although on occasions critical friends may negotiate this way of collaborating. As a rule, the content is confidential, although there may be occasions when insights, conclusions and proposals arising from critical friendship need to be brought to wider attention in order for new knowledge to be shared.

Critical friendship is multifaceted, offering authors moments when friends act as readers; moments when they are critical; and moments when they offer interpretations, words, sentences, ideas and challenges which move the author (and his/her script) into new writing.

Critical friendship has the potential to contribute to an individual's aspirations to achieve personal development, insight and mastery. (Further work is needed to confirm my hunch that it can also contribute towards a business's aspiration to become a Learning Organisation). It involves a blend of challenge and critical reflection on the one hand, and the co-creation of a collaborative, friendly, supportive personal or professional learning environment on the other.

I take critical friendship to be expressed and exhibited by a particular set of behaviours where, at first sight, there appear to be two apparently conflicting roles; one being about friendship, and the second being linked to criticism. While critical friendship may seem to be something of an oxymoron, I am keen to rehabilitate the idea of creative, positive criticism in the context of personal artistic development, and in the development of 'schools of thinking', 'communities of practice' and artistic movements. For me, critical friendship is marked by its *intention* always to be mutually constructive and developmental. Moreover, an issue may also 'be critical' to the success of an argument, or to a reader's understanding, in which case a critical friend is an engaged reader or interpreter of another person's work. And to the extent that s/he exchanges words or writing about or occasioned by someone else's 'original' text or performance, a critical friend is in effect a quasi-editor, author or co-creator. Further, 'being critical' is grounded in a desire to sustain a social relationship which goes beyond the functional role of being 'simply' a critical friend.

Critical friends

Within the fields of personal and professional development, the term critical friend or critical colleague is sometimes used for someone who supports action researchers (cf McNiff, Lomax et al. 1997). In relation to peer coaching, Greene cites Peter Makin's use of the term 'support and challenge partner' (Greene 2006, forthcoming). However, I take advantage of the dogma-free use of the term 'critical friend' to apply it to a wide range of processes, each of which is contextualised by a specific discourse, e.g. that of the

learning organisation (Senge 1999) or of communities of practice (Brown and Duguid 1991; Lave and Wenger 1991). In my experience, an *un*critical friend offers *unquestioning support*, whilst a critical friend offers *questioning support*, when given permission to do so. And of course it's perfectly possible for the same person to offer both uncritical and critical friendship at different times, as circumstances dictate. This flexibility suggests the complex dynamics that are implicit or inherent in the relationship.

Critical friends are rare on the ground, so it's important to be alert to the circumstances and opportunities which provide fertile conditions for the development of critical friendships. With this heightened awareness, we are better able to decide when and with whom we can engage as critical friends. And to do this, it helps to know what qualities to offer, look for and nurture in each other as critical friends. It seems to me that these qualities include those listed in Table 1:

I have been extremely fortunate to enjoy the company of several different critical friends from within and beyond my doctoral explication. Examples include members of the AMED Writers' Group, colleagues who have shared two recent weekend Writers' Cottages with me to develop our writing for this journal, a writer who lives in Switzerland, and my former doctoral supervisor. In the latter case, we have been encouraging and critiquing each other's writing and thinking regarding our respective—and shared—intellectual projects, for well over a year. Drawing upon my experience of such mutually beneficial relationships, I now go on to suggest how it is possible to recognise and interact with critical friends. I locate this discussion within the context of engaging in story-telling and dialogue about 'critical incidents' (e.g. Leech 2006).

Critical friends and dialogue

Like the most fertile interactions between doctoral supervisor and supervisee, critical friendship sooner or later becomes a relationship based upon equality of status as well as mutuality of interest. It can be a formalised

Critical friends are:

- Trustworthy and competent, or potentially so.
- Able to lower their defences sufficiently to enable them to receive as well as to give constructive feedback.
- Mutually supportive.
- Reasonably available to each other.
- Intent on helping each other to achieve a critical perspective.
- Able to give the benefit of the doubt to each other's learning, ideas, advice, experience and actions.
- Able to monitor and re-negotiate their respective psychological contracts, e.g. (Guest and Conway 2001).
- Prepared to end their critical friendship at an appropriate point.
- Capable of avoiding collusion, and able to resist being sucked into a counselling or therapy role.

Table 1: Some qualities for critical friends to nurture

process (e.g. within an Action Learning Set), but it is also possible to engage in spontaneous acts of critical friendship. During my own doctoral explication, my encounters with critical friends have been essentially in the form of spoken and written dialogue over issues relating to my growing interest in writing as a facilitative intervention, and as a mode of explication. As friends, they have encouraged me to believe that I have something useful to surface and share, and to explore different ways of expressing it. They have also supported me in the dark days of my writing doldrums. As creatively *critical* friends, they have questioned and challenged my ideas and actions, provided me with prompt and honest feedback, and opened me up to fresh ideas and perspectives to deepen and extend my thinking and practice.

Of the several definitions of dialogue, I find Schein's most relevant to my thinking about critical friends (Schein 1999). For him, dialogue is used in process consultation as:

> a form of conversation that makes it possible, even likely, for participants to become aware of some of the hidden and tacit assumptions that derive from our cultural learning, our language, and our psychological makeup ..... Dialogue as a form of conversation starts with the assumption that every person comes with different assumptions and that mutual understanding is in most cases an illusion ..... In dialogue, the participants explore all the complexities of thinking and language. [Schein 1999: 201-204].

According to Schein, the essential concept underlying dialogue is:

> the discovery of one's own internal process for choice regarding when to speak and what to say. [ibid: 208—209]

What I think Schein means is that we need to listen to ourselves in conversation before we can really understand ourselves and others. Moreover, critical friendships provide a necessary form of *containment*, in which these learning conversations can take place. Schein writes of:

> the need to build a container for dialogue, to create a climate and a set of explicit or implicit norms that permits people to handle 'hot issues' without getting 'burned'. [ibid: 212]

I see critical friendship as just such a container, though admittedly porous. Within such containment, conflict with critical friends can be 'suspended', or otherwise handled constructively, in a trusting, supportive yet challenging relationship.

Critical friendship as a voluntary engagement

Critical friendships come in various guises and have different life spans. A common characteristic, however, appears to be that of voluntary association, and of mutual commitment and responsibility. By this definition, formal coaching, mentoring or tutorial arrangements do not in themselves constitute critical friendships, but they may evolve into them if the chemistry and conditions are right. For me, critical friendship is characterised by a thirst for intellectual and practical excitement, sharing papers and other forms of writing, exchanging gossip and experiences, watching each other perform and engage in meetings, and relishing the sheer fun and pleasure of being in the real or virtual company of other critical friends.

Making critical friendships work

Critical friendships cannot be *imposed*, although their formation can be facilitated. As part of the

explication process, each of us must identify our critical friends for ourselves. This may involve expressing our learning needs or wants to likely candidates, being open to their offers, a period of trial and error at the early stages, and a shifting network of critical friendships as one another's focus, interests and needs gradually emerge and change.

As in any effective relationship, relevant skills and competences for critical friendship develop with practice over time, and these are directly applicable to the process of explication. Table 2, adapted and extended from Greene (op cit), includes some examples of critical friendship competences.

The interaction of all these competences results in a set of higher order cognitive *and* affective skills, framed in some sort of creative endeavour in an environment that is committed to shared critical learning.

Each of these competences merits further discussion. However, I'd like to focus here on how critical friends can help each other to recognise and explicate critical incidents.

Recognising critical incidents

A major exponent of Critical Incident Analysis or Technique (CIT) in the context of education and learning is David Tripp (Tripp 1993). In explication, the purpose of CIT is to enable critical reflection upon specific incidents from personal and professional experiences and practices. Through engaging in the intrapersonal and social dialogue which this process generates, critical friends gain fresh perspectives, and also become more explicitly aware of the learning process.

Some incidents are immediately and obviously significant, such as a major trauma or civil or military emergency. Others may not initially appear to be critical, and perhaps occasionally might even seem trivial:

> The vast majority of critical incidents, however, are not at all dramatic or obvious: they are mostly straightforward accounts of very commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice which are critical in the rather different sense that they are indicative of underlying trends, motives and structures. These incidents appear to be 'typical' rather than 'critical' at first sight, but are rendered critical through analysis. ….. [It could be] an incident which passed entirely unnoticed when it occurred, but which was made into a critical incident by what was subsequently seen in and written about it. [Tripp 1993].

- Building rapport and effective working relationships.
- Negotiation.
- Empowerment.
- Giving and receiving constructive feedback.
- Surfacing and dealing with assumptions and defences.
- Promoting evidence-based dialogue and action learning.
- Managing meetings.
- **Performing or facilitating Critical Incident Analysis or Technique (CIT).**
- Supporting and challenging each other.
- Engaging in advocacy.
- Coaching and developing self and others.
- Skilful and 'fresh' questioning.
- Active listening.
- Critical (self-) reflection.
- Action planning.
- Constructive de-briefing.
- Defining outcomes and setting goals.
- Being friendly.

Table 2: Some critical friendship competences

If explication is possible in every field of human endeavour—especially the artistic—then this definition could be extended to make it clear that an incident can be rendered critical through forms of expression *other* than writing or dialogue. Such forms would include music, painting, sculpture, mime, dance, and other forms of performance.

According to Tripp, there are two main stages in CIT. These are:

Stage 1: The production of an incident (identifying 'the What?'):
First, some phenomenon is observed and noted, which produces a description of what happened.

Stage 2: The creation (I would prefer to say the *social construction*) of a critical incident (explaining 'the Why?'):
The critical incident is created [socially constructed] by seeing the incident as an example of a category of wider, usually social, context. [My qualification of Tripp].

Using this framework, here is an example of how two critical friends worked on a critical incident within a doctoral explication:

> After much persuasion from her doctoral supervisor, Kathleen asked Charles (another doctoral candidate) by e-mail if he'd be prepared to stay behind after a Set meeting and read one or two stories that she'd written about her childhood memories.

Exhibit 1: Critical friends and a critical incident

- Here, the text in the box describes **the Incident** (Stage 1).
- A possible initial explanation and meaning is that Kathleen feels that she has no right to make this request publicly within a doctoral programme.
- An inference is that Kathleen has sensed that personal childhood stories are not regarded as proper material on which to base her doctoral explication.
- To regard this as **a critical incident**, we need to find a more general meaning and classification, or ascribe a wider significance to this incident. (Any critical incident is an ontological construct). In this case, we could read it—one of many possible interpretations—as a particular example of the initial uncertainty that explication frequently causes, or even of the way that an awarding body can unintentionally stifle innovative or creative approaches of working to doctoral standards.
- One of many possible inferences might be that Kathleen must become more assertive in pursuing her unique research theme and interests, and that the awarding body needs to be willing to create a more empowering culture which enables her (and other doctoral candidates) to do so.

In this example, an apparently trivial or commonplace incident has been rendered critical through social construction, analysis and reflection (Stage 2). By engaging in dialogue with a critical friend about her initial diffidence, and about his response to her stories, Kathleen was subsequently in a better position to recognise the importance of this critical incident, and of working with critical friends. It also surfaced some cultural and regulatory barriers to creating a more open and empowered learning environment. This helped faculty to identify actions that they could take in order to change the situation.

How to identify a critical incident when explicating

Ontologically, all incidents or experiences are potentially critical. Hence the identification of

any so-called critical incident is inherently problematic. So how do we choose which one(s) to explore? Tripp suggests that we can make a start by searching for incidents that we have *remembered* and *noticed* afterwards, and then take them through Stages 1 and 2. To initiate this process, I have found the short exercise in Table 3 useful as adapted from Tripp (1993).

Having surfaced some of this raw material, critical friends should be in a better position to explore their chosen incident(s) in greater detail with each other.

A health warning

Of course, we need to be aware of idealising the role of critical friends. We know that not all relationships are healthy or desirable, in that they can consolidate or encourage inappropriate practices, or create unhealthy dependencies. We also know that, in inexpert or inappropriate hands, attempts to offer critical friendship can be detrimental and damaging. It is not an easy role to play, and we need to adapt our practice of critical friendship to suit the specific context or discourse within which it applies. Different critical friends will behave more easily and effectively in some circumstances than in others. So there is a health warning—we should choose our critical friends carefully, and negotiate with them how best to derive mutual benefit from our critical friendship.

Conclusion

Despite this health warning, I have concentrated here on the aspirational aspects of critical friendship within explication, because good critical friends have made such a positive difference to me. Based upon my own experience of explication, it seems to me that, within various forms of overlapping communities of practice, critical friends can enhance the explication process, for example in helping to interpret critical incidents. They have a role to play in enabling each other to make sense of the different artefacts they have examined or created (such as writing), and of their respective experiences, voices and standards, within a mutually sustaining, challenging and supportive relationship that contains them within a state of emotional and intellectual engagement. Critical friends offer yet another dimension to, and resource for, explication. They do this in the context of making an original contribution to personal, artistic, practical, professional, management or organisational knowledge, learning and development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my critical friends—including Alison, Helen, Joyce and especially Peter—who have challenged and supported me at various stages whilst I was incubating and writing this paper.

- Find a quiet spot. In ten minutes, list as many incidents in your professional or personal experience, however seemingly trivial, that you can recall without effort.
- Then go over this list, and classify them as *typical* or *atypical* events.
- Then ask yourself 'Which one of these incidents am I really looking for, in relation to my explication?'
- Then spend 10 minutes writing about your chosen incident in as much detail as you can. (Stream-of-consciousness writing is a very useful technique here).

Table 3: Preparing to discuss critical incident(s) with critical friends

REFERENCES

Achinstein, B. & Meyer, T. (1997). *The Uneasy Marriage Between Friendship And Critique: Dilemmas Of Fostering Critical Friendship In A Novice Teacher Learning Community*. http://www.ilstu.edu/depts/AERADIVK97/y975-28.htm accessed 3.05.06.

Brown, J. and P. Duguid (1991). "Organizational learning and communities-of-practice: Toward a unified view of working, learning, and innovation", *Organization Science.*

Franklin, P. (2006). "Working with Explication: Fashioning the Philosopher-Manager", *Organisations and People,* vol. 13, no. 3.

Greene, M. (2006 (forthcoming)). *Mastering Your Inner Critic: Releasing Your Inner Wisdom,* Kidlington: Grovelands Associates.

Guest, D. and N. Conway (2001). *Organisational Change and the Psychological Contract. Research Report,*. London: CIPD.

Lave, J. and E. Wenger (1991). *Situated learning. Legitimate peripheral participation,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leech, J. (2006). "Story-Telling within project teams in post-conflict zones", *Organisations and People,* vol. 13, no. 3.

MacKenzie, R. (2005) *A Learning Facilitator's Uses of Writing,* Buckingham: International Management Centres.

Macmillan India Ltd. (2002). http://www.develop.emacmillan.com/mdi/material/DirectFreeAccessHPage/CRM/ch2_ladder.html accessed 23.06.06.

McNiff, J., P. Lomax, et al. (1997). *You and Your Action Research Project,* London & New York: Routledge.

Schein, E. (1999). *Process Consultation Revisited: Building the Helping Relationship,* Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

Senge, P. (1999). *The Fifth Discipline,* London: Century Business, Random Century.

Tripp, D. (1993). "Interpretation: Creating Critical Incidents" in David Tripp (ed), *Critical Incidents in Teaching: Developing Professional Judgement,* London: Routledge.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Dr Bob MacKenzie is an independent consultant, facilitator and writer, with a particular interest in writing for personal, management and organisational development. In various phases of his career in education, academia, and development projects, Bob has worked and travelled in Africa, India, Europe and the USA. Bob is a Director and Council Member of AMED, and coordinates the AMED Writers' Group. He recently completed a D Phil by Explication, and can be contacted by e-mail on bob_mackenzie@btopenworld.com.

Explication—A Personal Narrative

B A HUMAR

In this paper, the author describes his attempt to reconcile a professional career with his original ambition to be a writer and poet. Experiencing both frustrations and satisfactions, he also discovers how personal qualities and attributes may be transmuted from one field of activity to another. A case-study from early on in his career provides a reference for what follows.

KEYWORDS: Art, morality, narrative, poetry, power, profession, storytelling, writing

Prologue

Like any other, this explication is incomplete, since there are other ways in which the material I am presenting might be interpreted. And if I tried, I could probably uncover more facts and information which might reveal different meanings. I imagine that an explication must stem from whatever construct one has in mind as a starting point, and mine, I suppose, is essentially about narrative and storytelling. How did it begin? What happened? Where did it go from there? For me, meaning will always lie more in the lived experience (call it a journey if you like) rather than in any subsequent gloss or interpretation. I am not suggesting that this makes my explication more likely to be authentic or truthful; it simply indicates the sort of person I am, and how I have approached the task.

Introduction

I was born in 1926, and had dovetailing careers, extending over thirty years, in Social Work, University Teaching and Adult Education/Development in the third world. Since retirement, I've fulfilled an earlier ambition to write, and I've produced a number of poems, plays and fictional works over the past twenty years or so.

The focus of this narrative is to explore a conflict of aims that I have experienced throughout my career, including the present. Pared

down to its crudest form, this conflict may be stated as a three-way contest involving art, morality and power—but its enactment has been subtle and generally subterranean. I use the terms 'art', 'morality', 'power' to identify certain motivational factors—these are not the only ones—that are inherent in the way people choose and carry out their jobs. My explication is in the form of a narrative, centred on one of my cases from shortly after I began work as a Probation Officer in 1956.

Personal Background

At my otherwise disabling boarding school (from ages 8 to 17) I was considered to have literary and artistic talent. It was assumed that I would go on to read English at University—I had ideas of becoming a writer and a poet, but the war intervened and in 1944, after a brief spell at university, I was called up into the Royal Navy. There followed several years of depression and anxiety—caused mainly by the trauma of a prolonged, institutionalised adolescence. I just hadn't grown up. After demobilisation, I was still in a state of emotional turmoil, and it was only gradually that I began to sort myself out. I was offered a place at the London School of Economics (LSE) where I studied a broad Social Science syllabus. This experience not only gave me intellectual achievement and reassurance, but was also an extended therapy.

After finishing at LSE, I decided to join the Probation Service for three main reasons. First, it provided the possibility of a socially worthwhile job (that was important for me at the time). Secondly, the Probation Service in that distant era encouraged its practitioners to work in an individualistic way. Its official but simply stated aim was: 'To advise, assist and befriend'—just that! The third reason was that I was interested in people and in the forces that affected individual, group and social behaviour.

Throughout these years at LSE, and as a Probation Officer, my literary ambitions were submerged, but never wholly abandoned. Everything I wrote was probably written, I think now, by someone who also thought of himself as a writer. Initially, though, this concern wasn't uppermost in my mind—I was much more conscious of coming alive again after years of atrophy and demoralisation, and felt committed to my new career.

The case of Mrs G

In addition to my official case-load (people on probation and ex-prisoners under supervision), I also had a number of voluntary clients. Mrs G was one of these. I was asked to see her by a solicitor who told me that he could do nothing to help his client since she was unwilling to start legal proceedings against her husband, with whom she lived. But she certainly needed help. I asked if she was willing to see me, and the solicitor said yes. So I gave Mrs G an appointment, and booked her in under the case-file heading 'Matrimonial'.

Mrs G was a slight woman of average height, neatly dressed, with pleasant features, about thirty-five years of age. She was also very timid and frightened. Our first meeting consisted of long silences, interspersed by small bits of factual information that she provided with some reluctance. She was in a state of considerable anxiety, no doubt heightened by coming to see me. I didn't press her.

I started to see Mrs G on a regular basis, and she was gradually able to reveal more about herself. She had been married for eleven years and had two children, a girl of 10 and a boy of 7. She had met her husband—eleven years older than her, at the firm where they had both then worked. Mrs G's parents had died when she was in her late teens, and her nearest relative was an aunt.

She had married her husband, she thought, because he had noticed her, had been nice to her, and she had seen him as a steady older man. Things hadn't been too bad at first, but from the time of her first pregnancy, she had felt increasingly like a prisoner in her home. Her husband had refused to let her return to work after their daughter was born—even though the firm had a well-run crêche for employees—and since then she had been entirely dependent on whatever housekeeping money her husband gave her. He also required her to account for everything she bought. Although he spent most evenings at a local Club, he never took her there or invited her out elsewhere. They never had family outings or holidays—although from time to time Mr G might go away with his Club on some exchange visit.

His word was law in the home, and she and the two children were terrified of him. He was not normally violent, but would chastise the children physically if they did something wrong, and had also hit her once or twice when he thought she had disobeyed him. He behaved towards her in a cold, distant way, and they rarely talked about anything outside family matters. She had been told that he seemed to be on intimate terms with another woman at the Club. Mrs G said she had no affection for her husband, but feared him, and tried to ensure that she and the children didn't displease him in any way.

What had been her purpose in going to the solicitor? This had been her aunt's idea, and she had gone along because she liked her aunt and was grateful for her constant support. The issue had been about money. A year or two ago, her aunt had learnt of the tight housekeeping allowance provided by Mrs G's husband, and had opened up a Post Office Account for Mrs G, into which she put money every month. With this help, Mrs G had been able to buy small extra things and occasional treats for herself and the children. But her husband had recently found out about the aunt's financial support. This led to angry tirades—physical and verbal abuse, with accusations of deceit and disloyalty. He had since reduced his wife's housekeeping money by an equivalent sum to the aunt's monthly contribution. This had infuriated Mrs G's aunt, and she had arranged for them to consult a solicitor. Mrs G, however, against the solicitor's advice, had been unwilling to pursue the matter.

Why had she agreed to see me? She didn't know—probably I was a last resort. She felt trapped and helpless, but was adamant that she did not want me to contact her husband; that, she was sure, would make matters worse. She could not see any solution although, since she had been seeing me, she had felt some relief in being able to speak more openly.

How my professional involvement with Mrs G developed

Although Mrs G, as a voluntary client, should not have been given priority over my official cases, in fact I gave her a good deal of my time. The information above came out slowly over five or six meetings. During this period, she became more confident and articulate, and I could see that she was an intelligent woman, but with a heavy, oppressed sense that she was locked into an unalterable situation. Because she was so deeply unhappy, my initial aim in this case was largely about acceptance and support. I was bringing professional skills to this task, and was enabling her to talk with increasing clarity and courage—working at her speed, with whatever material she introduced. In this way, she began to speak more freely about herself and her past life.

Gaining a more complete picture of Mrs G, I realised that she had a number of personal strengths. Although unassertive, she was intelligent and a good organiser. In spite of the constraints imposed by her husband, she seemed to have a home-life with the children that was loving, orderly and sometimes fun. She

once told me how much she missed a particular friend, a neighbour with two children like herself whose husband had been killed in an accident. They had given one another a lot of support, but some two years ago this woman had decided to move north to Keighley in Yorkshire where the cost of living was cheaper—she had been able to buy a house, find work and was happily settled there.

I had actually forgotten about this when, some time later at one of our more relaxed meetings, I said to Mrs G that, if the good fairy suddenly appeared and granted her just one wish, what would it be? Without hesitation she replied: 'Go to live in Keighley with my children.' I was surprised—it came out so positive and clear-cut. After this, I began to change direction with Mrs G. Until then, I had been working supportively with her, waiting for a break in her depression and despair. I think I had brought insight and skill to this task—and additionally, I believed I was 'doing good', that my intervention was morally sound. Also, looking back (although I could not have expressed this at the time), my impression is that the intellectual and imaginative commitment I brought to the case was in some ways a kind of art. I was working with Mrs G in a unique and creative way that involved not only professional expertise, but a good deal of myself as a person.

Our meetings took on a new tone and, with Mrs G slowly taking more initiative, we began to devise a plan. This required working with Mrs G's strengths (which now included hope) and it was she who had to work out the logistical details. The primary resource need was money, and here she thought her aunt would probably help. She considered Keighley as some kind of Paradise, and knew she would get help from her friend who lived there. She was confident that the children would be happy about the move. Mrs G was beginning to function with a new energy, and she decided to see her aunt as soon as possible. At our next meeting she told me that her aunt would open a bank account for her with sufficient money to get her started in a new life. Her friend in Keighley had found somewhere for her to stay temporarily, and had spoken to her boss about job prospects. It all looked possible.

Mrs G. was clear-headed and efficient about how she would leave home with the children. She would not tell her husband she was going, but would contact him by letter, through a solicitor, when she was settled in Keighley. Taking just clothes and children's toys, she planned to pack up and leave when her husband was on his next Club trip. In the meanwhile, at my suggestion, she arranged interviews with the Bank Manager and the solicitor to explain her intentions, and seek their advice. A month later, I received a letter from Mrs G in Keighley. She had done it.

The case examined

My Senior Supervisor was not happy about my handling of this case, and challenged me on a number of points. Could I justify giving Mrs G so much of my time over three or four months? In matrimonial cases, it was unusual to work with just one partner—was I not getting a one-sided view of the G marriage? How could I be sure that Mrs G's account was correct? In working directly (he may have said 'colluding') with Mrs G and her children to leave husband and home, was I really taking the long-term interests of this family into account? Did I, by any chance, fancy myself as the 'Good Fairy'?

For a recently appointed Probation Officer, this was tough, but not unreasonable questioning. My justification was along the lines that my client was Mrs G—not Mr G, and therefore my obligation was to her; that I had used critical intelligence, skill and judgement in my assessments and could not have helped her otherwise. I thought my handling of the case had both professional and ethical validity. As for being a 'Good Fairy', I actually had no magic wand. I could have done nothing with-

out Mrs G's willing co-operation and capacity to act. (My supervisor confessed that part of his concern was how the Home Office Inspector would react when my cases were reviewed prior to my confirmation in a month or two's time.)

In the event, the Home Office Inspector (a woman) selected three or four of my cases for close study and discussion—including 'Mrs G'. During her detailed examination of the case, she asked why I had proceeded the way I had. Towards the end of my explanation, feeling that I still had to justify myself, I said something like: 'I can see that there were risks, but this is a case that has turned out well, because Mrs G is happily settled in Keighley and her husband now seems to have accepted the situation.' To which the Inspector made this reply: 'Well I see this as a clear case of empowerment, in which a defeated and enfeebled woman was empowered to redefine her situation and herself in such a way that she was able to change her life.'

Reflecting on my use of power

This sounded good at the time, but it raised an issue that caused me to reflect a great deal. The issue was 'power', and the use of power in my work. The Inspector's observation made me realise how much power I had exercised in this case. It consisted not only of professional expertise, but also the use of myself as a person as I engaged with Mrs G. Empowerment was, at the time, a new concept for me—perhaps because, underneath my bright new academic and professional clothes, I was still inclined to see myself as a recovered drop-out rather than a power dealer. In 1956, I had (amazingly) never seriously thought about power or the idea of empowerment. Afterwards I did—quite a lot, not only when I had a senior position in the Probation Service, but also subsequently in my academic career. I would make a point of it: 'In any relationship, social situation, group or organisation, always look to see where power lies, and how it is being expressed.'

Once I had conceptualised this, it became obvious: right from birth, the development and use of personal power becomes an integral part of our identity, and it's important to know this so that we can direct and control our power sensibly. I had to come to terms with the fact that I not only exercised a certain power, but enjoyed doing so. In my case, this was not the power of having authority over others, but in being able to assist them, through discussion, analysis and clarification to better understand—and engage with—the problems and issues that concerned them. And sometimes to change their way of thinking. Similarly, I enjoyed writing academic papers and critical reviews, and knew that in doing so I was trying to influence others. Here, because writing was involved, it also enabled me to believe I was engaged in literary activity. As an academic, I also became interested in Group Work of various kinds, including Group Learning, and I worked with students and colleagues in ways that weren't dissimilar to my involvement with Mrs G.

The latent conflict between my artistic and professional instincts

Although for some while I wasn't too self-conscious about it, I did gradually become aware that, in my work, I was employing a combination of knowledge, power and artistry; and, hopefully, that this process also included a moral dimension. But after a time I began to have a sense of frustration. I sometimes felt that I was allowing myself to be seduced by a gratifying amalgam of professional activities—using creative energy for something that gave me satisfaction, but which was not, deep down, my first choice. If I could still think of myself as a poet, I had to acknowledge that I hadn't written a poem in ten years.

I am now summarising an emerging consciousness over a fairly long period. During

nearly twenty years, I held three, quite different, senior appointments with responsibility for programmes, staff and administration. I was happy in all three, got on well with colleagues, and felt satisfaction with what we achieved. I enjoyed working as the leader of a team (power) which had socially useful goals (moral purpose), and also knowing that to perform my role effectively involved a personalised input of knowledge, skill and judgement (art). And yet, from time to time I would have this feeling that I wasn't doing what was really right for me.

Towards the end of my last appointment (overseas), I had begun to juggle with my work commitments and my artistic impulses, and was beginning to write poetry again. A sense of conflict caused me to be frustrated and sometimes anxious. I would vacillate between feeling that I was wasting my creative resources and, often simultaneously, worrying that I wasn't doing my job. At these times I could easily believe that my administration was sloppy, and that my engagement with my work was not what it should be.

I also began to suspect that my confident use of personal power, even when it was supportive and helpful to others, was taking me away from my true goal—I was beginning to yearn for an austere, dedicated privacy in order to write. I therefore seized the first opportunity that presented to take early retirement—and felt conscious relief that 'I would no longer have power'. I expressed it to myself in this inflated way because I knew I had to choose between the satisfactions of a professional persona—in which I expended a good deal of creative energy—and withdrawing to a private world where I would be able to write.

Epilogue

I now have time to write, and I am more selfish with my time. I can satisfy most moral concerns without too much personal involvement. I am fairly productive, but am still sometimes tempted to stop my own work, if asked, in order to write an article or run a workshop. And although I am busy preparing some poems for a literary event in the near future, here I am trying to write on 'Explication' without even being sure what it means.

I can acknowledge that I was never wholly committed to being an academic, and that, as a senior manager, I was sometimes bored with detail and less than dedicated. That I got by was probably due to an ability to think clearly (usually), listen carefully, value the contributions of others, and to delegate. Whether I would have been a better playwright and poet had I started sooner is unknowable—but I would almost certainly have written more. This causes me some regret but not too much—all living is compromise.

I like to feel that I was able to transmute any innate gifts I had so that they informed the different activities and relationships of my personal and working life. Had I been more obsessional, talented, ruthless, or self-confident, I might have asserted myself into a literary career earlier, but I may not then have had such an interesting life. As a slow developer, I have needed to live long in order to gain the sort of experience and understanding that give me something to write about. All the same, I hope that, throughout my life, I have been able to express the different and conflicting parts of myself, and that something akin to poetry was seeping through, at least intermittently, into whatever I was doing.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

B.A. Humar's paper already provides a good deal of biographical information. He was born in London of Anglo-Welsh parents, and lived and worked in England for a number of years. From the mid-1970s he spent several years in Africa, heading a university department of Adult Education. He is married with three children, seven grandchildren and lives in Switzerland, where he can be contacted by e-mail on brian_hughes@bluewin.ch.

Explication and Method in Theology

BRIAN SMITH

Religious practice is often grounded in beliefs of which the participants may not necessarily be explicitly aware. Hence, in this context, the task of explication is to render such beliefs explicit, so that an overall consistency between a person's practice and other related beliefs that they hold can be achieved.

KEYWORDS: Explication, method, theology, belief

Editorial comment

Drawing upon a theological perspective, in which beliefs are expressed in action, language and text, this essay brings to our attention the proposition that the explication of implicit beliefs embedded in any practice yields two valuable benefits. First, it helps practitioners to develop deeper understandings of the history, principles and ideas which underpin their expressed beliefs. Secondly, it helps to prevent that practice from becoming divorced from other aspects of contemporary life and understanding.

Explication and theology

The task of explication must be seen as that of rendering explicit that which is already contained in what has been set before us. For example, Sir William Hamilton, the Scottish 19th century philosopher, speaks of the discipline mathematics as the evolution of potential knowledge into actual knowledge, and therefore of its procedures as being *merely explicative*. So too Kant can talk of analytic judgments as being *explicative* because the predicate adds nothing new to the subject. In this sense *explication is a task that we can expect to be performed in any*

subject matter. Following Hamilton, we may want to become clear about what any axioms and principles, to which we are already committed, imply in terms of further commitments. Following Kant we may be glad to see the full meanings of terms we are using clarified and expanded.

Explication in theology

Within both these understandings the subject of any explication is a statement, or perhaps an extended text. We are dealing with assertions, and we can ask either about the full meaning of any assertion, or about what is implied by that assertion. However other matters can also be the subject of explication. Within the field of theology and religion, what often requires explication is the use of language, not in order to make such assertions, but to do things such as to pose questions, to make requests, and to perform liturgical actions with words. Indeed, we may also seek explication of actions which do not involve the use of words. This is the focus of the next section.

Explicating actions other than words

However let me make a preliminary point about belief, which for the purpose of this brief article I want to assume rather than discuss. When we talk about a person believing something we must reckon with the possibility that not all our beliefs may be explicit to us. We may be said to have beliefs of which we may not be particularly aware. For example, a person may *look* uncertain if they are formally asked "Do you believe apples are edible?". Yet straightforwardly they may evince to themselves and others their belief that apples are edible by simply picking up an apple and eating it. Alternatively, a person may assert that they believe in racial equality, but by their actions evince strong racist attitudes. Of such a person we might say (despite any personal protestations), that he or she does not in fact believe in racial equality.

Now let us suppose that within a person's religion a person performs a religious action. Let us suppose that they utter a prayer to God for a person who is sick. They may pray in such words as "Almighty God, we hold Tom before you asking that he might be restored to health." *How does explication help us here?* We begin with the assumption that the person praying is acting (or seeking to act) as a rational human being. Thus we can pose the question "What (explicitly or implicitly) must that person believe to be true about the world when they perform that particular action." Clearly an atheist may well believe that some of that person's beliefs are *mistaken*, but at this stage we are simply asking what might be the basic elements in that the person's worldview out of which that action, if it is deemed to be a rational action of a human being, stems.

We might say that the person is committed to a belief in the *existence* of someone (say God) who is being addressed in the prayer. They might be seen as being committed to a belief that it is *appropriate* to address such a God in the way that they did. They might be seen as being committed to a belief that the God thus addressed is somehow *aware* of Tom and his situation. They might be seen as being committed to a belief that God may be deemed to have in some sense a measure of *"responsibility"* for the health of Tom. There may also be "almost" an assumption in the prayer that God would *will the good* of Tom if correct circumstances prevailed.

This is clearly not a full explication, but may be seen as rough notes towards a first attempt at addressing the question—"What explicitly or implicitly might that *person* be seen as believing by their performing that particular *action*."

Explication, theological insight and dialogue

Further reflection, and a more careful examination of the metaphors and analogies used to express the beliefs to which the individual might be seen as committed, can lead us further into expressing the theology that lies behind, and is implicit in, that short prayer.

However, having begun the task of rendering explicit the beliefs implicit in an act of prayer (or indeed any other religious action) what do we do next? Clearly, having opened the matter up in the way we have, it is now open to the *secular critic* of religion to say "Well your action only seems to make sense if we were to assume that such and such a belief is true. However, I cannot believe that your belief is true. Therefore your action makes no sense to me. So I would like you to stop doing it if you still wish me to call you a reasonable person." A debate on the coherence of the religious position can thus begin. The religious believer will respond, seeking to show that the beliefs to which his or her religious practice have committed them can still be expressed in such a way as to address the concerns of the critic. He or she may move to express them in slightly different ways that will meet the legitimate demands of the critic, while still underpinning and keeping faith in his or her particular religious practice.

But another area of debate may also open up. Once the beliefs implicit in any particular religious practice have been made explicit the path is also open for debate with a *religious critic* of a religious practice to take place. Such a religious critic may look at the beliefs that have been drawn by explication from out of a particular religious practice, and argue that they are in fact at variance with some explicit doctrines and traditional beliefs of that same religion. For example it might be argued that the beliefs that were seen to be implicit in some new practices were at variance with biblical or early church teaching. Alternatively the religious critic may be led to praise the practice as exhibiting what they believe to be a true understanding of God as that has been maintained in the tradition.

Common practice and shared meaning

In a religion, where for most people religious practice (such as prayer) is something in which they frequently share, explicating the beliefs involved in any practice is of significant importance. It enables the practice to be understood in relation both to current and unfolding secular and religious world-views.

How far should we believe 'the experts'?

As this stage we should make a distinction between two trajectories of explication as described above might follow. A question can naturally arise as to how far any particular individual, say a member of a church, *needs* to have all the theological justification of their religious actions rendered explicit *to them* and, in explicit form, *accepted by* them. An individual, if asked what beliefs underpinned their performing of an action, may simply say "I do it because Father Jones said I should, and I trust him, for he has proved to be trustworthy in many other matters." However the task of explicating the belief would move then to face the issue of the explication of the beliefs which Father Jones must have, which underpin his making this particular recommendation.

Although this attitude may be problematic for some non-believers, it is found widely elsewhere. If I am prescribed a drug for a medical complaint, I may take it because I trust the doctor. I do not myself expect to have to grasp all the pharmacology lying behind his or her act of

prescribing. I trust the doctor's professional judgment. Implicitly, I would make the assumption that the source of this professional judgement, however contingent, is based on certain assumptions made by that 'expert' about the science of medication. I would also be making my own judgement about the skills and competence of this particular medical practitioner. Moreover, I would expect *the doctor* who performed *the act of prescribing* to have explicit beliefs about the operation of the drug that are sufficient to persuade me to regard it as a rational act to perform!

Conclusion

Whilst remaining grounded in a theological perspective, this essay has argued that the importance of attending to the explication of beliefs that are implicit in *any* practice is that it can prevent that practice from becoming divorced either from other aspects of contemporary life and understanding, or from the religious or other tradition out of which that practice arises.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Brian Smith is currently Bishop of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church. He was born in 1943, read Philosophy at Edinburgh University and Theology at Cambridge. He has held parochial appointments, and posts in theological education and with responsibility for the professional development of clergy. He held office as Archdeacon of Craven (1987-93) and as Bishop of Tonbridge (1993-2001), before returning to his home city of Edinburgh as bishop in 2001

Explication Without Words—A Composer's View

SADIE E. HARRISON

There is a frequent misconception that, as practitioners of a sonically expressive art, composers are good communicators, and that they are best placed to explain (explicate) the process and inspiration of their own works. However, a composer's ability to explicate is often inversely proportionate to the quality of their music. This paper discusses my understanding, as a composer, of both the public and self-reflexive nature of explication, and whether explication is a necessary part of either the creative process or its verbal expression to an audience.

KEYWORDS: Explication, composition, musical analysis, the hermeneutic circle

Introduction: Difficulties in interpreting composition

There is a great misconception that, as practitioners of a sonically expressive art, composers are good communicators. It is also not unreasonable to assume that they are the people best placed to explain their own works, to illuminate process and inspiration and to make tangible through words the mystical relationship between hidden muse and heard music. How rarely this is the case! Pre-concert talks often reveal composer's observations to be rather superficial, their descriptions faltering and their ability to explicate inversely proportionate to the quality of their music.

By the very nature of their occupation many composers are solitary and highly egotistical beings. Even those who collaborate as a means of creating, spend much of their time either physically or intellectually (and often emotionally) locked away. Yet the consumerist machine, built largely on personality, saleability and accessibility, demands that composers adopt a public face. They are required to explain the inexplicable in terms that that are often both insufficient and misleading, diluting an intensely specialist language for a non-specialist audience and in so doing losing much in translation. And herein lies the problem. Effective communication requires a shared language at some level, yet the deep level process of composition defies explanation in any language other than that in which it naturally reveals itself—music.

For this reason composers frequently explain their creative methods exclusively in relation to the extra-musical sources that inform them. This is a perfectly legitimate approach given that composers use an extraordinary range of phenomenon to inspire, formulate and control their music. However this does little more than provide a colourful and engaging explication of a far more complex and multi-layered process—one that composers find hard to explain to themselves, let alone to others.

Over the years I have done my share of both written and spoken interviews and have found enforced explication a difficult and hugely unsatisfying experience. It was not surprising that I found my twelve years of university lecturing in composition equally problematic. The academic and the creative are not easy bedfellows, the latter regarded as something akin to social therapy by certain hard line musicologists. PhDs in Composition consist not just of original musical scores but also a lengthy thesis on the deconstruction of the candidate's creative methods and motivation. The oft-quoted question posed to composers and musicians—'but what's your proper job?'—looms large in academic circles too. Even at the level of a PhD the music just isn't enough—examiners need words—they need to know how you did it, why you did it, what governed your choices—as if only the words can validate an otherwise insufficient product. I consoled myself often with the thought that although music analysts might be able to partially unravel a work by scrutinising its elements (notes, rhythms, structure), placing it in historical context, examining the mental state of its composer and then writing up a glorious explication of how and why the work came in being, that they would never be able to reconstruct the work from this explication alone. In his first Reith Lecture this year (2006) the conductor/performer Daniel Barenboim stated that 'the inexpressible content of music mirrors the inexpressible content of life' and in hindsight I realise that this validating statement could have been an explanation of why I gave up academic life to pursue my composition without the need to justify its existence for others.

So it was with some trepidation that I accepted Dr. Kozubska's invitation to contribute to an article on Explication, because it made me confront two difficult and relevant questions—what part does explication play in the creative relationship between composer and material; *and does explication enable creative development*?

The answer to the first lies partly in an exploration of the infinite! Composition is not about 'being', it is about 'becoming', about searching the infinite for the necessary. By this I mean that a piece of music is not a solution waiting to be found in its completeness. Its elements are scattered in many places; collected and drawn into focus they form and reform in the air as a single heard object—a work's final configuration dependent upon a myriad of elements that on the surface may have nothing to do with sound at all. My own collection of these includes, amongst many, many others, the movement of tectonic plates, falling in love, the folk history of the Lithuanian theatre, becoming a mother, the practicalities of a performance space, a friendship with a conductor, ancient Greek funeral rites, the paulonia leaves (Leaves of Death) dropped on the Japanese by the Americans in WWII and the geometrical proportions of Shah Jahan's gardens in Kabul.

For me, composition is not a gentle contemplative process—battling with the infinite requires huge amounts of emotional and intellectual energy, constant affirmation of the ego and continuous musical analysis where every note is scrutinised for its 'rightness' within the whole. Perhaps the process is something akin to that of the hermeneutic circle, except that in the case of the composer the movement is not between interpreting subject and the interpreted object, but between the silent and the

sonic—an unnervingly subjective search for musical meaning and personal meaningfulness. How far from the received notion of the artist with their inspirational muse in some verdant garden of the imagination!

History and technique as props for explication

Whilst certain composers seem to have burst onto the scene with a radical and extraordinarily unique voice, none has created their music in a vacuum. Through my own explication and understanding of other writer's works I have come to have a sense of my own historical and stylistic context. Intentionally or otherwise, I have allied myself politically and aesthetically with one school then another and by doing so have limited my choices, building up a repertoire of sounds and structures that become identifiable as my own, but within an effectively restricting environment. The internal discourse then moves between creator and context to creator and material and thence to technique. The early twentieth century composer Arnold Schoenberg recognised the terror of the infinite and was known for his controversial dictum 'rules enable freedom'. Through self-referential explication about the details of my own musical material—particular chords, melodic shapes, rhythmic patterns—it is possible to define and construct an personal repertoire of malleable techniques which provide a semi-automatic means of composition at some levels. Thankfully, the composer has two 'crutches' archived away—history and technique.

Explication as internal discourse

Perhaps the best way to illustrate this internal discourse is to explain in outline how I created a recent work. *The Fourteenth Terrace* is the second in a trilogy of works inspired by the ancient culture of Afghanistan, a cycle written in response to the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in 2001. The work is constructed along similar lines to the extraordinary gardens built outside Kabul by Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur in the sixteenth century. Babur's tomb stands on the fourteenth terrace of the garden overlooking Kabul and its surrounding countryside. Typically Persian, the garden was once bordered by marble-edged streams, reservoirs and waterfalls, constructed within strict geometric patterns. Whilst Babur's tomb itself remains basically intact, the surrounding area, said to be the first example of a Mughul 'paradise garden' was destroyed in 2001. A rebuilding programme supported by the Aga Khan Foundation commenced this year, replanting the plane and mulberry trees that had been planted by Babur's grandson, Shah Jahan in 1640.

In Muhammad Amin Kazwini's *Pâdshâhnâma* (a seventeenth century account of Babur's life) the gardens are described in great detail:

> The burial garden was 500 yards (gaz) long; its ground was in fifteen terraces, 30 yards apart…Babur's tomb is on the fourteenth terrace. In accordance with his will, no building was erected over it, but Shah-i-Jahan built a small marble mosque on the terrace below...From the twelfth terrace running-water flows along the line (rasta) of the avenue; but its twelve waterfalls, because not constructed with cemented stone, had crumbled away and their charm was lost; orders were given therefore to renew them entirely and lastingly, to make a small reservoir below each fall, and to finish with Kabul marble the edges of the channel and the waterfalls, and the borders of the reservoirs.—and on the ninth terrace there was to be a reservoir 11x11 yards, bordered with Kabul marble, and on the tenth terrace one 15x15, and at the entrance to the garden another 15x15, also with a marble border.—and there was to be a

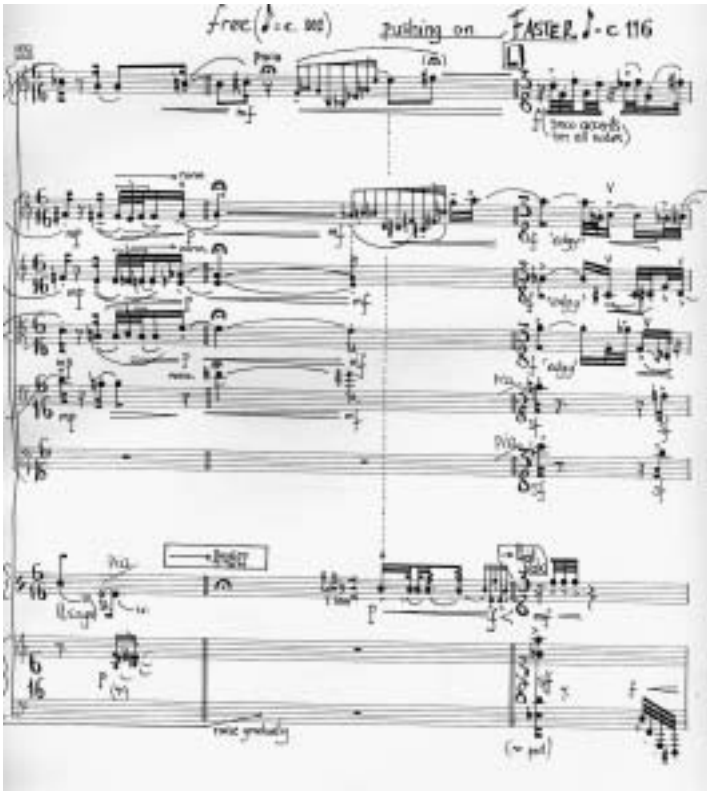

Figure 1: The Fourteenth Terrace: extract © Sadie Harrison 2006

> gateway adorned with gilded cupolas befitting that place, and beyond (pesch) the gateway a square station, one side of which should be the garden-wall and the other three filled with cells; that running-water should pass through the middle of it, so that the destitute and poor people who might gather there should eat their food in those cells, sheltered from the hardship of snow and rain.
>
> Extract from Babur-Nâma (Memoirs of Babur)

So, how to get from this description to a piece of music? Firstly, I mapped out the work's proportions from the dimensions given as if walking from the first terrace to the fifteenth. This gave me a sense of the overall structure, its length and something of the character of each section (inspired by waterfalls, marble borders, gateways, reservoirs—movement or stasis, hardness, softness, ends and beginnings).

But no music yet! From this point the problems start and I turn to the 'technique archive' pushing the dots one way then another, listening, pushing again, back and forth until the result starts to conform to my repertoire of sounds and these in turn dictate a musically driven structure overlaying the initial visual template which is now reconfigured, enveloped and frozen within the music.

Figure 1 is an extract taken from a section depicting the fluidity of water (marked *free*) running through marble channels (either side of the free music and marked *Faster*.) (Reproduced with the kind permission of the University of York Music Publishers)

Friedrich von Schelling's (1802-03) famous quote that 'Music is like frozen architecture' seems relevant here as is the twentieth century retort 'but architecture is not melted music'. It would be poetic to talk about how a musical archaeologist might dig into the work to reveal the architectural plan. But I am sure that no amount of interpretation or explication could reconstruct the work, though it might be possible to uncover the source.

The necessity of creative explication

So, is explication about the generation of the work necessary for an audience to appreciate the work? Is the music enough? For me, creative explication at every level is essential—the work wouldn't exist otherwise. For an audience, almost certainly not, though it might be of intellectual interest. When music is complex, textual explication can become a guide but ultimately, the sensual experience is of paramount importance.

Explication without words

So undoubtedly explication plays a part in the development of musical creativity, though I doubt that any composer would refer to it by such a term. Explication is both a conscious and subconscious act; a fluid appraisal, acceptance and rejection of information manifest as sound; a drawing on past techniques and experiences but not in a way that could be easily expressed to others as a structured process. Whether we call it 'weaving magic', or 'the spark' or 'divine inspiration' or 'the Muse', no amount of explication will illuminate how a work of art suddenly becomes 'right', when the scattered pieces integrate and make sense. And herein lies the joy. The power of music, regardless of its style (and perhaps even its quality), is that it doesn't need to be explained to communicate; it doesn't need to be understood in terms other than its own to have an immediate, shared, developing and lasting impact. I remember a most frustrating afternoon spent with my mother wandering around a gallery of Symbolist and pre-Raphaelite paintings. Her appreciation was deeply sensuous whereas mine was intellectual and probing. It seemed to me at the time that without understanding the artist's hidden messages, she was losing half the picture. However, despite a lengthy exegesis on my part it was soon clear that she understood these works quite as well and perhaps more deeply than I—she simply didn't need any mediation between herself and the art—it spoke directly and emotionally and with great clarity.

Daniel Barenboim's observations that 'music makes sense of life' and that musicians are social and creative 'integrators' is so telling. Composers integrate collaborative experience with individual technique, the known with the new, sound with silence and the disparate with the specific in a constant act of self-reflection and outward projection, creating a universal language that doesn't rely on verbal explication to be expressive. And herein lies the joy!

REFERENCES

Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur Padshah Ghazi, *Babur-Nâma (Memoirs of Babur)* translated by Annette Susannah Beveridge. (1921) London: Low Cost Publications.

Schelling, F. v. (1802-3) *Philosophie der Kunst* (1802-3), cited in The Philosophy of Art (1989). Minnesota, Minnesota University Press.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Dr Sadie Harrison is a freelance composer whose music has been performed and recorded by many of the world's leading ensembles and musicians. Her music has been released to critical acclaim on METIER, NMC, Sargasso, BML and Clarinet Classics and she has been the recipient of many international awards. She has lectured in Composition, Performance and Contemporary Music Studies in both universities and conservatoires but has recently abandoned teaching in search of a new career, currently working towards a Certificate in Archaeology at Southampton University. For further information on Sadie's work, visit *www.metierrecords.co.uk* and *www.uymp.co.uk.*

Explication—A Black Perspective

SANDI RUSSELL

As a black Amencan jazz singer the idea and practice of 'signifyin(g)' are essential and integral parts of my repertoire. This paper briefly explains my understanding of the importance and history of signifyin(g) within black American culture, and shows how signifyin(g) is a profound example of explication.

KEYWORDS: Signifying, Henry Louis Gates Jr, black American culture, music, narrative, oral tradition, song

> *Got one face for the world to see*
> *'Nother for what I know is me,*
> *He don't know,*
> *He don't know my mind.*
> Oakley (1978, p. 15).

Editorial comment

This brief paper provides a tantalising glimpse of a form of explication [known by Sandi Russell and others as signifyin(g)] which has its roots in black American culture. Here, music, literature and song conceal hidden meanings which other, unknowing casual listeners, wrongly interpret as something innocuous. This tradition of languaging, of creating new meanings of existing words, and of creating new words too, are part of the explication process of any linguistic community. Signifying is a particular outcome of the languaging process in black American culture, where words and phrases, in utterances and in writings, reveal the indeterminacy of meaning, the love of humour and irony, and of tropes and metaphors.

For a couple of websites which offer a further brief insight into signifying see:
http://social.chass.ncsu.edu/wyrick/debclass/gates.htm,
and
http://www-english.tamu.edu/pers/fac/myers/signifying.html
(Sites last retrieved 01 July 2006).

Explication—A Black Perspective

African-Americans have their own term for the practice of explication: they call it 'signifyin(g)'. The scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. defines this practice in black speech, writing and music, as 'a mode of formal revision … often characterised by pastiche', and explains that signifyin(g) 'functions as a metaphor for formal revision, or intertextuality, within the Afro-American literary tradition.' (Gates, 1988, pp52, xxi).

I have endeavoured to carry on this tradition in my book, ***Render Me My Song: African-American Women Writers from Slavery to the Present*** (Russell, 2002) and in my one-woman show, based on this book, in order to explicate through drama and song, the multifaceted way black Americans women have contributed to, and enriched American culture. In my performance, I attempt to expand the possibilities inherent in the texts themselves, as well as show how African-American literature is deeply wedded to black American music and how that music has been essential to African-American existence; not only for pleasure, but for survival and political purposes. By bringing all the various components together in this show, I embrace a vast cultural, political and historical expanse in an hour's time.

Render Me My Song was the first book of its kind, as it not only introduced black American women writers to a largely unknowing public, but traced African-American women authors' beginnings to the early 18th century, when most black Americans were enslaved and when, in most parts of the country, it was a crime to teach a black person to read or write. The work was also the first to focus on the full scope of African-American women's writing: fiction, non-fiction, drama, polemic, poetry and song.

1986 was a propitious time to start research for this book, as Henry Louis Gates, Jr., along with many others, was discovering and rediscovering the written work of unheard of and forgotten African-American women of letters. As I researched and read, throughout the nineteenth century, I found that each writer brought more information about the trauma of being a slave, an escaped slave, or a 'free' black, than the one writing before her. These writers also brought to the fore the lives of black women, under the yoke of this 'peculiar institution', each one expanding on the previous one's ordeals and triumphs.

In the twentieth century, we see this pattern continue, with each author signifyin(g) on or explicating another's work that has gone before, therefore taking the lives of black American women to a more complex and richer level. An example of this would be Zora Neale Hurston, who signified/explicated on the work prior to hers by making her 'mulatto'/light-skinned heroine fall happily in love with a dark-hued black man. By contrast, two well-known black women writers before her, Jessie Fauset and Nella Larsen, dealt with their 'mulatto' or light-skinned heroines by having them wrestle with the supposed means of a 'better' life by 'passing' (pretending to be white and marrying into the white world, both literally and figuratively), thereby substantiating the term, 'tragic mulatto'. Tragedy was not Zora's style and her positive and rebellious heroine, Janie, eradicated that stereotype forever.

This kind of deeper and more involved portrayal has, through explication, brought us to such writers as Toni Morrison, who first made known in print the 'interiority' of the black woman's life, when she stated that she wrote her first novel because she hadn't read it yet, meaning she had not seen herself, or many of the women she knew, depicted in any fictional works before. (Russell, 1998, p.92). Thanks to her and many after her, we now have more fully engaging and compelling black female characters, whose sole purpose is to tell their story, and not just be an engine for a sociological tract.

Music and the oral tradition play a large role in African-American literature, as can be seen in my book and show. From slavery's inception, on Virginia's shores, Africans of various tribes found a way to take their master's language and make it their own, thereby improvising and even explicating on what had come before, giving not only new meanings to words, but beginning to meld a new language, allowing them to be at one with the old, while forging the new.

Songs that white southern gentlemen in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century thought were sad songs and dirges about going to heaven, or jubilant ditties that spoke of the joy of finally meeting Jesus, were really created by slaves to give signals to one another, in order to escape or to announce a secret meeting place. Thus began African-Americans' great ingenious ploy: their play on words, inversion of meaning (e.g. good = 'bad'), thus allowing coded speech, or black folks' own explication, just for themselves.

In the oral tradition, this improvisation/explication has always been employed. The most humorous and cutting example, known as 'the dozens', is when verbal badinage is conducted at a furious pace, each speaker trying to outdo the other, each time taking the language and situation discussed to another level. An example is the card game in Richard Wright's novel, ***Lawd Today***:

'Let's go, said Slim.

'One No trump', said Al.

'I ain't got a Gawddamn thing, whined Jake, squirming in his chair.

'Don't confess to me!' said Slim haughtily. 'I ain't no priest.

(Smitherman, 1977, p.122)

In ***Render Me My Song***, both the book and the show, I have only carried on a tradition of signifyin(g)/explicating like those who have gone before me. I am now continuing on my signifyin(g) way by trying to address the relations and inter-relations of African-American and Native-Americans in my next work, which no writer, as yet, has begun to explore. In all the poems, stories, books and movies written about the first encounter of the English and the Native-American, no one has yet addressed the dynamics and repercussions that ensued, when a few years after the first Englishmen landed on Virginia's shores in 1608, the first slave landed on that same soil in 1619. It is my desire to bring this story to the public's attention and to give voice to the space that has stood empty for five centuries.

REFERENCES

Louis Gates, Jr., Henry. (1988) *The Signifying Monkey*, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.

Oakley, G. (1978) *The Devil's Music: A History of the Blues*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Russell, S. (1998; 2002) *Render Me My Song: African-American Writers from Slavery to the Present*, London: Pandora Press/Rivers Oram.

Smitherman, G. (1977) *Talkin' and Testifyin': The Language of Black America*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Sandi Russell grew up in Harlem and studied at Syracuse University, Hunter College, and New York University. She lives in Durham in the north of England. You can find a recent interview with her on
http://www.durham21.co.uk/archive/archive.asp?id=2141,
or visit her website
http://www.sandirussell.co.uk/

Epilogue: Towards the Future

PETER FRANKLIN AND BOB MACKENZIE

Reflection

As far as we know, this anthology is the first collection of articles to major on the idea and practice of explication. In conceiving and planning the anthology, we had a number of key objectives. Among these, three stand out for us. These are:

- The desire to share our experiences of explication with a wider audience.
- The desire to evidence the contextual nature of explication, such that there are different meanings in use—different 'traditions' of explication, each based on the practices of different disciplines and different professions.
- The desire to prompt others to see the potential benefits of explication in personal and organisational development.

The articles that we have selected for publication in this Special Edition of *Organisations and People* achieve these objectives, and provide a sound foundation for further work.

Further work

For us as editors, the publication of this Special Edition represents the end of one project and the beginning of another.

Alongside this Special Edition, our website www.explication.org.uk is a work-in-progress. It

already provides a growing resource base for people interested in the idea and practice of explication, and in the days before we go to print, the articles that we have been unable to fit into *Organisations and People* will be published on the site.

In addition, most of our authors have also said they want to explore their ideas and experiences regarding explication in a longer, more sustained way. In fact one has already identified a co-author for her next article on explication. These conversations encourage us to believe that there is a rich vein of creative talented people who are already *doing* explication, but until now, have not been prompted to talk or write about or share their practice publicly. Another stage in the development of our project, therefore, is to encourage and to involve others in practising, writing about and talking about explication.

In a world dominated by spectacle and celebrity, and in a digital era characterised by rapid communications and round-the-clock sound bytes, the dash for the new serves to deny our heritage and obscure our wisdoms. By contrast, explication takes comfort in our existing explicit knowledge and skills. In this way, it is more likely that our futures will be better understood, that our change agendas will be more firmly grounded, and that our wisdoms will be more carefully cherished and developed.

Getting involved

This special issue of *Organisations and People*, the website and our numerous email exchanges with authors has helped to create a critical mass of people interested in the idea and practice of explication. If the idea of explication appeals to you, or if you want to know more, or if you want to get involved in any of the developments we've outlined here, please leave a message on our website:
http://www.explication.org.uk/contactus.htm .

Due thanks

In concluding, we want to thank AMED for the opportunity to publish the special edition, and in particular to thank Terry Gibson, David Shepherd, Concepta Wayment and Debbie Florence for their unwavering foresight, support and energy. We also want to thank each and all of our authors. Together, they have helped to raise our awareness of explication as a means of personal and professional development. And finally, we want to express our thanks as executive guest editors to our editorial colleagues Joanna Kozubska and Karen Jackson for their inspiration and support.

Introducing Explication

A workshop for advisers, managers and consultants concerned with developing people

Monday 16 October 2006, 11.00 am to 4.00 pm

Institute of Directors, 116 Pall Mall, SW1Y 5ED, London

Focus: In today's knowledge society, explication is capable of transforming people's implicit knowledge into new, incremental, explicit knowledge.

Participants: This event is designed especially for experienced senior people who are involved in helping to develop others. They include consultants and facilitators; management development advisers; people with budgetary accountability for the development of HRD; and coaches and mentors.

Purpose: To introduce, explain and simulate certain aspects of explication in personal and professional development.

Facilitators: Dr Joanna Kozubska and **Dr Bob MacKenzie**, with **Professor Peter Franklin**. Joanna and Bob have themselves practised the process of explication intensively, and now facilitate other people who are engaged in explication. Peter augments this extensive practical experience with a rigorous theoretical perspective.

Indicative programme:

Explication's potential for personal, professional and management development. Sandwich lunch and networking. How to explicate. An activity to provide an experience of explication. Information about online and hard-copy resources, and about other opportunities for practising explication. Review and action planning.

Cost: £160 (£135 for AMED Members)

Booking: Numbers are restricted to ensure maximum interaction. To reserve your place, and to receive further details, please contact the AMED Office *before 5 October*.

AMED Office, 12 Station Road, St Ives Cambs PE27 5BH
Tel: +44 (0) 1480 493253 Fax: +44 (0) 1480 493259
e-mail: amedoffice@amed.org.uk website: www.amed.org.uk.

Another leading-edge AMED event

FAX-BACK BOOKING FORM

Facsimile: 01480 493 259

Introducing Explication

A Workshop for advisers, managers and consultants concerned with developing people

Monday 16 October 2006, 11.00 am to 4.00 pm

Institute of Directors, 116 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5ED

To reserve a place on this AMED leading edge event, please complete and return this form, or e-mail amedoffice@amed.org.uk. *The closing date for applications is Thursday 5 October*, but early booking is strongly advised, as we have limited the number of places to ensure maximum interaction.

To find out more about explication, why not browse through our special Explication website http://www.explication.org.uk/events/October_2006_full.htm

✂ .....

To: Debbie Florence, AMED Membership Manager, **Association for Management Education and Development**, 12 Station Road, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE27 5BH Telephone: 01480 493253

I would like to reserve a place on the AMED special event on Explication.

Name (please print): .....

Signature: .....

How I would like to be identified on my name badge (please print):

.....

.....

I have the following dietary, access or other requirements: .....

.....

Address: .....

.....

Post code: ..... Tel no:..... e-mail : .....

☐ I am not an AMED Member, and I would like to reserve a place @ £160

☐ I am an AMED Member (Membership Number.....), and I would like to reserve a place @ £135

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to 'AMED'

☐ Please contact me to obtain my credit card details

✂