

Storytelling, Appreciative Inquiry, and Tetranormalization

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ABSTRACT In a globalizing economy, companies are facing pressures to report not only on traditional accounting and financial results, but also on indicators focused on social and environmental responsibility. In response to those trends, an international research network, the “Tetranormalization Observatory,” is set up to monitor the impacts of discrepancies and contradictions between the four main clusters of organizational performance norms (Savall & Zardet, 2005: 3-4): 1) finance and accounting norms, 2) social norms, 3) quality-security-environment norms, and 4) regulations regarding trade. I make the radical claim that this interplay across norm “worlds” allows for an uncharted course of Tetranormalization from Being to ethics, most notably a Critical Theory ethics.

In this essay, I would like to suggest that the social and environmental assessment models of norms do not as yet transcend the linear narrative nor are they able to cope with the colonizing corporation. To me, narrative is one of three main genres of ‘storytelling,’ the other two being living story, and antenarrative. The assessor is a storyteller, and my key question is: can this storyteller be smitten by the ethics of answerability?

I would like to begin with a storytelling. Upon learning about the death of Liu Pan, a 17 year old worker in a factory that produces for both Disney and Coca Cola, China Labor Watch produced its own investigation :²

CLW [China Labor Watch] investigated the tragedy and labor conditions at Yiuwah. On the morning of April 5th [2009], Liu Pan went to work on the same familiar machine, like any other day. A few days before, he had noticed the machine acting strangely, but thought little of it. Suddenly, Liu Pan discovered a section of paper clogging the machine. He stopped the machine and put in his hand to pull the paper out. Unexpectedly, the machine began to accelerate rapidly, like the mouth of a fearsome monster, dragging his entire body inside.

¹ My thanks to Professor Grace Ann Rosile for her comments on earlier draft of this essay.

² China Labor Watch emails 5/17/2009 & 5/26/2009 with story and photo http://www.china.org.cn/china/news/2009-05/17/content_17787852.htm CLW's original Yiuwah factory investigation. Click [Here](#) to read Disney's May 21st response to CLW.

Liu Pan was crushed to death ... when clearing jammed machinery and his body remained in the machine until the next evening. He was so mutilated that his parents did not recognize their son when called to the factory. Liu Pan worked on the machine since he was 14 or 15 years old.

Upon seeing what had happened, Liu Pan's fellow workers immediately pressed the button to stop the machine and grabbed Liu Pan out of it, but it was already too late. Upon hearing the news, Liu Pan's parents rushed to the factory, and knelt to the ground without rising, unable to believe that the twisted face before them belonged to their son.



According to the CLW report, workers at Yiuwah get only one or two days off each month, no paid vacation and no labor contract. Each day, workers must labor twelve hours and are paid 66 cents per hour base pay,

making around \$51 for a 72-hour week. Overtime is mandatory and wages for this forced overtime are illegally low at only 71 cents an hour, only around 60% of China's legal minimum for overtime wages.

Globalization assessment models gather dispersed measures of events of corporate experience into a coherent historical narrative. Liu Pan's photo, that of a 14-year old, who worked three years at hard labour, with few hours off each month, and deadly tired, did get pulled into a machine. This is a story of poverty, and its corporate exploitation.

On May 21, [2009] Senior Vice President for Corporate Responsibility at Disney, Jennifer Anopolosky, stated in a letter to CLW that Disney's audits at Yiuwah for the past three years, "all reported conditions that were consistent with our Code of Conduct." After reading CLW's report, Disney sent auditors to investigate and confirmed a number of violations to their Code of Conduct, including machine safety and child labor. Anopolosky stated that Disney is in the process of implementing a remediation plan.

In an open letter to Disney CEO Robert Iger on May 7, CLW Executive Director Li Qiang stated, "CLW strongly suspects that auditor corruption is at the root of the problem that has allowed Yiuwah to pass these inspections and achieve the Disney certification it so proudly displays on its website." Days later, Yiuwah pulled the "Disney Audited Manufacturer" label off of its website. Disney has not announced any changes to its auditing system. Read CLW's letter to Disney CEO.

This Disney letter can be read as a corporate mindset dominated by 'egonomics,' seeking short-term self-interest, and transferring blame to the corrupt auditor, instead of taking acting to insure norms and standards are actualized. Social here refers to poverty that would prompt 14-year old Liu Pan to work 72 hour weeks on an unsafe machine, at 60% of China's legal minimum wage, to the point of exhaustion.

Since the 18th century, the 'social' question is all about the beingness of poverty (Hannah Arendt, 1963: 54). The French Revolution failed to solve the social question of poverty. For the TNC (trans-national corporation), Milton Friedman is a god, and the commandment is written "there is one and only one social responsibility of business--to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud"(Friedman, 1962: 37).

Marxism did not turn the social force of poverty into a drive for freedom, or a force for revolution against the ruling class or its violence. Marx did succeed in making the social into a question of poverty in the political economy. Slaves were liberated from masters after the great Civil War only to go to work for slave wages of multinational corporations. Most of the world's population lives in poverty. It is ironic that

globalization, the latest colonizing force, seeks to distance itself from the social question or social answerability for global poverty.

The globalization assessor, such as the standards auditor of Disney, tells us an apologetic narrative of progress. CLW (China Labor Watch) gives us a counter-narrative history of corporate neglect, a blind Mouse-eye to unsafe conditions, and child labor. Liu Pan's living story got tangled in webs of chaos, and he emergent situations of promise resulted in tragedy. Antenarratives can be either the road to the top (Disney's version of events), or the road to the bottom (CLW's version), depending on one's point of view (Boje, 2007). Globalization is for some, the road to stepping out of poverty, and for Liu Pan, it is one more road into poverty and to what Marx called vampire capitalism.

Capital is dead labour, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks. The time during which the labourer works is the time during which the capitalist consumes the labour-power he has purchased of him (Marx, 1967 [1867]).

Some of the norms are a centrifugal force and others more centripetal (Savall & Zardet, 2005: 3). And the balance of these forces varies between such countries as US, Mexico, France, and elsewhere. If this theory is at all accurate we need to propose an assessment of counterforces that can prevent Vampirism, such as what happened at the Disney supply chain to Liu Pan, and to global catastrophes as yet another Enron, the recent Toxic Asset Relief Program.

We could assess the contest between corporations that misbehave and social movements that seek to make corporations ethically answerable for fair wages, ecological sustainability, and fair trade (Boje, 2008b).

In what follows, I use the three genres of storytelling: narrative, living story, and antenarrative – to explore the question of globalization after Tetranormalization. I view storytelling as a trilogy of interlocking planes.

For me storytelling is a kind of neo-cubism.³ Instead of the one-point perspective of traditional western narrative, I am negotiating a distortion, a multi-centric, a multi-perspectival living story web and a playing with temporality with the fractionating antenarrative. It is a shattering of the monologic narrative in order to negotiate a decomposition and recomposition. The result is a multi-faceted, fractured, and a multi-perceptive juxtaposition. It is an absurd situation to treat narrative as the only manner of storytelling. Living story webs of relationship are far more enchanted. The result of this neo-cubism I do, is a kind of holographic, a multi-facetedness.

³ I first came across the idea that storytelling could be a cubism, in reading Jan Schapper's dissertation, Monash University.

NARRATIVES BEFORE TETRANORMALIZATION

Before *Tetranormalization*, assessment gathered scattered moments of corporate experience into a narrative theme, a monological journey through the diverse worlds of accounting, social, environment and trade, into the promised bliss of corporate social responsibility. Such monologic narrative gives the corporation a thematic unity, a recollection of its existence that is a “dispersal into past, present, and future” (MacDonald, 2005: 189). However instead of the promised corporate citizenship, in many cases it appears that human rights is a legal vacuum, an empty rhetoric, and even worse, a legitimacy for taking even more than before.

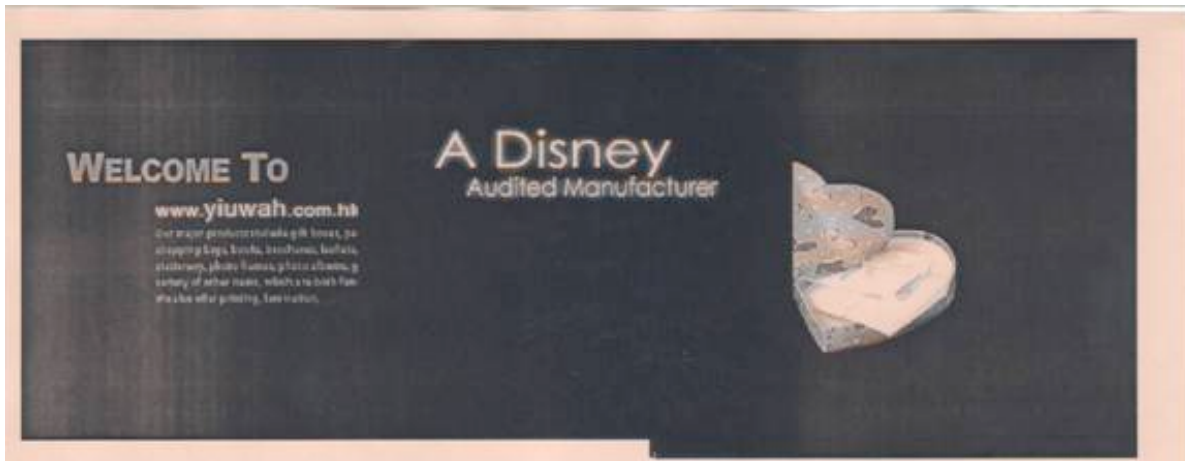
With the trading Empire, we were to see the taming of the multinational corporate appetite by World Bank, United Nations, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and International Labour Organization (WB, UN, WTO, IMF, ILO respectively). With great accounting and audit standards, we were led by transparency rhetoric to expect more accountability, a discovery of ancient virtues. Instead, discussion of ‘social’ avoids use of the word ‘poverty,’ and sustainability has come to mean everything but that awful word, ‘green.’ Empty rhetoric everywhere legitimizes dubious corporate global practice. Disney and other → “TNCs have been able to operate largely in a legal vacuum” (Kinley & Nolan, 2008: 348). This is why Tetranormalization, and this year’s Lyon conference were invented.

Despite the interorganizational alphabet soup, TNCs operating in China, India, Brazil, Mexico, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand and other countries are merciless exploiters of the poor (Kinley & Nolan, 2008: 358). The alphabet soup has become a global governance regime, a hegemonic one. There is more policing of TNC by NGO activists than by the alphabet soup. The rise of TNC hegemonic power in the deteriorated power of the state has left the social (poverty focus) and the environment preservation behind for the suspect rhetoric of sustainability.

Kinley and Nolan (2008) argue that human rights in the global economy, despite all the interorganizational networking of WB, UN, WTO, IMF and ILO, is not bringing about an end to war crimes or resolving the social question of poverty, nor the downfall of nature. Out of the top 100 economies of this world, 51 are corporations, and 49 are states (Kinley & Nolan, 2008: 347). ExxonMobil’s 341 billion dollar economy ranks larger than 125 of 184 countries in the world. Wal-Mart is 19th largest economy, larger than 36 countries (Adler, 2008: 376).

A call for direct ethical answerability and obligation on the part of corporations such as Disney is necessary. In the BME narrative, Disney just puts an end to the scandal by withdrawing its certificate for the supplier. The following item was forcibly removed from the supply chain factory (Yiuwah) website:⁴

⁴ Image source http://en.chinagate.cn/top_news/2009-05/17/content_17788270.htm



The key problem that Kinley and Nolan (2008) identify is that states (in this case USA and China) are not exercising extraterritorial jurisdiction over corporate behaviours. The Human Relations and the Ecological abuses continue. The international legal framework has not kept pace despite the United Declaration of Human Rights. Disney and Nike' codes of ethics are just as ineffective, just as inhuman as they were in 1999. Wal-Mart's ethical code is window dressing. The problem is imposing norms on TNC by individual states has met with active corporate resistance, and an anti-norms lobby group that is well funded by the corporate community (ibid, p. 351).

What is the storytelling result? Removing the Disney Audited Manufacture Certificate, gives Disney a convenient BME narrative, an end to its obligation, and not even a payment by Mickey Mouse to Liu Pan's family for the loss of their son.

The globalizing corporation seeks to master space and time by a monologic narrative that "synchronizes past, present, and future into a "fissureless" present of self-consciousness (ibid, 189). Disney just puts away its self-conscious answerability. When the flow of diverse events is assembled into a (BME) narrative that solidifies, there is for Levinas (1989: 168), a "stupor, a petrification, a fattening, or an indecency" (as cited in MacDonald, 2005: 189). In short, assessment narratives before Tetranormalization help the corporation petrify life into an apologetic narrative escape from ethical complicity.

Let us deconstruct this unbelievable assessment that monologues time, space, movement into narrative plot. Instead of chronotopically dialogic time (Bakhtin, 1981), we get a corporate time overwritten with the progress myth, not a time of becoming, or a time that is fragmented, or even holographic of faceted views (Boje, 2008a). Before Renaissance the ancients (i.e. Heraclitus) believed one could not step into the same river, *even once*. If social, environment, and trade are pure becoming, their reordering into monologic time of narrative petrification is a break with reality.

Global models are the narrative expositions of a journal for the corporation that is stuck in the chronotopic time of historical narrative (Boje, 2008a: 138-154; MacDonald, 2005: 182). Specifically, I assert that retrospective narrative sensemaking models that are oftentimes linear dominate the Tetranormalization spheres of financial/accounting, social,

quality-security-environment, and trade models. My suggestion is to look at the living stories in the death of Liu Pan, and the more nonlinear, prospective antenarrative approaches that leave Disney in ethical answerability for fraudulent audits, for looking the other way, and for rhetoric that is empty. This way ethical-assessment could become a more Homeric epic “voyage of discovery” (MacDonald, 2005: 183) and less an Odysseus-narrative of abstraction and universal reason (we withdrew the Disney certificate, our job is done). When norms seek the language of universality they drain the life out, becoming the “master of ruse, enterprise, and calculation, cunning to the point of ‘malice;’” (ibid, p. 183). One senses a Vampire just at the margin of this page.

In the next section living story is explored as a counterbalance to monologic narrative illusion.

LIVING STORY AS ANECDOTE TO PETRIFIED NARRATIVE

In living story, each moment is a birth disrupting narrative’s fake continuity, its synchronic time, its solidified space, its patching together of select fragments. Living story is emergence refusing closure, spatial extension that one fragment is holographic to the others.

Living story frees history from the homogenizing narrative, the narrative that subjugates the microstoria (Boje, 2001). The univocal, monologic narrative facilitates a corporate takeover of epistemological forces, one that threatens democratic governance, and ethical answerability to social and ecological concerns.

Homi Bhabha (1999) writes about the Antonio Gramsci’s term, *subaltern*, the perspectives of people from spaces and times outside the hegemonic power structure. We can look at globalization as a space and time thoroughly colonized by multinational corporations working in collusion with nation states to craft hegemonic power structures. Many people are without voice (or agency) with globalization. Liu Pan is without voice, without life. Sweatshop workers, like Liu Pan, making Disney products, are essential to the survival of corporations such as Wal-Mart, Nike, Adidas, and Reebok, and yet are predominantly voiceless.

Tetranormalization seeks to explore the social, accounting, and environmental and trade pathologies of multinational corporations. I submit that there is a pathology here. It is one that Tetranormalization can explore and assess the *social marginality* of subalterns, their struggle with the powerful corporations.

The multinational corporations uses all manner of public relation agents to convince us their path is straight and narrow, that it is authentic. Disney’s Senior Vice President of Corporate Social Responsibility is just doing her job. However, in the living presence of the (deceased) subaltern, it’s a crooked path, dispersed widely. Instead of a linear path of Beginning, Middle, and End, what if there is a “wandering proper to ethical thought” (MacDonald, 2005: 192).

A DEPRECIATIVE INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF LIU PAN⁵

Nancy Alder (2008: 377) suggests that we rely on the NGO's photographic skills to tame the errant global TNC pillaging of the environment and its poverty-inducing practices. Photographs taken by the subaltern, can these contain corporate malfeasance? In this essay, I have included Liu Pan's name badge, apparently he never took a photo of himself. Adler reviews the shortcomings of institutional, agency, resource-base, transaction costs, and internationalization theories. None of these, she says, contribute to explaining how TNCs succeed in doing good and doing well (ibid, p. 379). For example, institutional theory is dismissed because organizations are theorized to adapt to become isomorphic with their institutional environment. By this logic, Adler would reduce Tetranormalization, from an institutional theory perspective to normative isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Agency theory, according to Adler, assumes different players have different goals and logics to assign tasks to agents, who in turn have ample opportunity to misrepresent information and divert resources, despite the elaborate incentive schemes.

Adler proposes instead to celebrate *Appreciative Inquiry* (David Cooperrider & colleagues), and the positive psychology movement (Martin Seligman & colleagues). She argues the error of the other theories has been to focus on dysfunctions instead of what is working, and what might support happiness, wisdom, hope, generosity, and love (ibid, p. 384). But in the case of Liu Pan, perhaps a *Depreciative Inquiry* is more helpful.

Appreciative Inquiry (or AI) also poses a direct challenge to yet another theory, the Socioeconomic Approach to Management (SEAM), upon which Tetranormalization is founded. Can SEAM and Tetranormalization shift away from a dysfunction (such as death of Liu Pan), and be less problem-focused (asking Depreciative Inquiry questions) to embrace AI's positive psychology movement and adopt strength-bases approaches? Adler argues that such methods (such as SEAM or Teteranormalization, which she does not name) do not inquire why some TNCs outperform their cohort on Human Relations, Ecology, etc. In other words we should look at all the Disney factories in its supply chain that have not swallowed children into a paper folding machine.

As a solution to world poverty, Adler proposes to invite the mothers of the healthiest poor children to teach the other mothers of each village how to do proper feeding (ibid, p. 386). What can Liu Pan's parents teach other parents? Adler contends the dysfunctions approach does not work because it does ignore positive deviance. The dysfunctions methods make positive deviance totally invisible, attributing its variance to random errors. But, in a Depreiciatve Inquiry, we would certainly ask about withdrawing a Disney Certificate and putting the blame on random errors of errant auditors, or factory management not living up to Disney ethical codes and safety standards.

⁵ The term 'Depreciative Inquiry' was invented by Cliff Oswick, in a side remark, long ago at a conf rence session in Ohio, was he and I chatted while an Appreciative Inquiry was being presented. Cliff said, « what AI needs is a Depreeciative Inquiry ! »

Adler suggests that instead of dysfunctions, global assessors study the poorest that have become a country's successful high-powered entrepreneurs. Then these entrepreneurs can teach the village elders to raise more entrepreneurs. How? By amplifying the positive deviance of the village. Clearly, we need to look more closely at the random errors that resulted in the death of Liu Pan.

Can Tetranormalization (& SEAM) look for AI's positive deviance instead of the DI dysfunctions? If so, this would be an antenarrative that could shape the future of Tetranormalization into one more AI tool. But, would Tetranormalization, without a DI be half a solution, an avoidance of moral ethical obligation?

ANTENARRATIVES SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TETRANORMALIZATION

Antenarrative is a term I invented in 2001, and has led to a number of people attempting this storytelling method, and identifying antenarrative processes shaping the future. (Boje, 2001). There is a shift going on in storytelling circles. It is a shift way from just narrative past analysis to studying the living story processes of emergence and antenarrative processes shaping futures worthy of becoming. Instead of story being a supplement to narrative, the profession of storytelling is taking on the future. Storytelling scholars are heralding an inquiry into the complexity that is beyond the linear models of narrative to comprehend.

Antenarrative will never share a frontier with petrified narrative. Narrative will never conform to a monologic retrospection history. The monologic narrative of multinational corporations is a romantic narrative path of progress. I suggest that an ethical antenarrative can be part of the Tetranormalization assessment, its inquiry, its expectation of corporate practice.

Adler (2008: 389) asks, "How do we study that which could be?" She calls for more "anticipatory scholars" who can "envisage (exceptionally positive) future outcomes" (ibid, p. 389-390). For Adler (2008: 388), a DI-dysfunction analysis with its conventional assumptions is said to be a regression toward the mean, whereas the cultivation of positive deviance is a way to shape the future, in short a sort of AI-antenarrative, one that is a road to the top (Boje, 2007). Adler argues that in anticipatory research we need to develop skills in our students to see new possibilities, and that it often takes a new paradigm to become fashionable before people can see and understand the evidence.

How does this contrast with the approach of Savall and Zardet (2005)? For me, the contrast is between AI and DI. In Tetranormalization both an AI and a DI are needed.

Adler cites Jeffrey Pfeffer's study that business students are only ones at the university that do not seem to become more compassionate toward others (ibid, p. 391). In all the Disney rhetoric, where is there an ounce of compassion to Liu Pan, his parents, to whoever is tending that very same machine today? Instead the business students become

narrower and more self-centered, focused on the bottom line. It is unclear how the positive psychology movement would help business students change their narrow ways. How will business students develop this anticipatory sensemaking, the ability to adopt a new DI paradigm to balance their progress myth, and see anomalies all around them outside the AI orbit, such as the poor getting poorer and the rich getting richer?

In Savall and Zardet's approach, exceptionally positive future outcomes come from an analysis of systemic dysfunctions preventing democratic governance, including the dominant forms of hegemony of power-wielders. In the SEAM and Tetranormalization approaches, progress comes from fixing dysfunctions (read as a type of analytic problem solving), which are seen as psychodynamics of power that is errant. This includes lack of attention of power to democratic decision-making that is unattained because of excluded voices. Where power sees employees as recalcitrant factors of production, SEAM looks at employees as governance-stakeholders that need to be paid for their creativeness. With SEAM there is a strong focus on taking copious notes, on observing the discourse that is present, on developing a mirror effect, on a confrontation to the client with their own discourse and with the discourse of all the stakeholders. Out of this mirroring comes an expected transformation of power, into shared governance, and from this emanates the co-generated (stakeholders' and intervention researchers') intervention projects.

Both prospective sensemaking approaches (Positive Psychology of Appreciative Inquiry & Tetranormalization) are breaks with retrospective narrative history. Both attach an 'ought' to schemes of the future. In Appreciative Inquiry, only the positive narratives are attended, and only the living stories that are positive are acknowledged, and only the positive antenarrative pathways are attended. Tetranormalization, by contrast, assumes the analytic problem is incommensurate norms, and that these norms have stalemated progress by a cynical conformity to power.

Narrative promotes a way of seeing the future through the lens of the past, and makes antenarrative possibility beyond the future-perfect narrative line quite illegitimate, and hegemonically invisible. We, who are indoctrinated and socialized into narrative ways, are not good at predicting an alternative future, other than the one predestined to repeat in the future-perfect.

It would seem that Appreciative Inquiry identifies spectacularly positive outliers, and Tetranormalization identifies exceptionally problematic behaviour preventing positive outliers from emerging. Perhaps these are two sides of the coin, but I would like to suggest something more complex is going on. Creativity comes from a population that is not working in fear, not subsisting in minimum wage.

It is our Aristotelian narrative tradition that has contrived to make seeing antenarratives (Appreciative & Tetranormalization) shaping the future possibilities seem illegitimate vision. Narrative identifies the historical means of what most organizations are being into, and makes it the norm. Both Adler and Savall & Zardet are questioning what organizations are doing and not doing.

I have this radical idea that the complexity dance of narrative, and the web of living story, with antenarrative, will bind multinational corporations. The antenarrative decentres narrative, to shape the futures that are possibilities of infinity. This plethora of futures cannot be overwhelmed by monologic-inspired narrative. As MacDonald (2005: 191) suggests, there is “uncharted future.” The radical approach to Tetranormalization is to not assess to certify nor legitimate, but to ethically justify a corporate outburst beyond Being.

Postmodern Ethical Production of Storytelling Tetranormalization – There is this corporate behaviour in the multiple worlds of norms and standards that Savall and Zardet (2005) call Tetranormalization. These norms are out of alignment making it difficult for the corporate strategists (the dominant coalition of power) to avoid temptation, to turn from the pathologically unethical practices that seem so very commonplace in the post-Enron epoch. In sum, the focus is on analyzing hegemonic discourse that prevents the socioeconomics from being scrutinized. The focus is upgrading citizenship of stakeholder not the corporation so that the citizenship ethics of the corporate citizen changes for the better.

Edward and Willmott (2008: 407) take a more critical approach (than Appreciative Inquiry), in suggesting we pay attention to “ethos that gives voice to the underdog.” We need to investigate Adler’s claim of inclusivity, that the poor are able to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. For critical theorists, such as Edward and Willmott, there are obstructions to such processes, usually an elitism that closes off democratic options, or methods taking the advice of the breast-feeding mother. Edward and Willmott are raising objections to Habermasian deliberative democracy, and proposing instead the more radical democracy of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (ibid, p. 407). Edward and Willmott are suspicious of the intersection of the citizenship and the corporate responsibility discourses, suggesting that an administrative determinacy is their morph, one that evades transparency, and reproduces elite power.

Edward and Willmott’s (2008: 407-9) deliberative democracy critique points can be used to critique Appreciative Inquiry and the Adler’s faith in its efficacy.

1. Appreciative Inquiry, like Deliberative Democracy assumes ideal values operate in ideal-type situations,
2. Both assume that through certain thought experiments the real world can be transposed.
3. Both assume autonomy of identities that can facilitate stable consensus building.
4. Both have an unwarrantable faith in prospective sensemaking.
5. Both value of homogenization that risks exclusion of the underdog and the powerless.
6. Both use basically a retrospective sensemaking narrative that rules the antenarrative, thinking backwards from the (unrealistic) fantasy to (un)realizable circumstances.

The more Radical Democracy assumptions parallel those of Tetranormalization:

1. Both assume that an antagonism of stakeholders makes attainment of consensus a naïve expectation.
2. Both assume a social theory of hegemony
3. Both presume consensus to be partial and always influenced by the constructions of those in power
4. Both value dislocatory heterogeneity
5. Both look for radical participation in the polity to effect change

I believe it is possible to align the four normalization spheres to provoke a more ethical global corporate behaviour. I am not convinced that an Appreciative Inquiry will suffice to reversing centuries of corporate hegemonic and colonizing behaviour. This is because there is hegemonic political processes that change the outcome of positive thinking models. Instead of what Paulo Freire (1970) calls a dialogical theory of action, TNCs operate on antidialogical principals of action to defeat equality of voice or democratic inclusion. Being dialogical is up against what Freire (1970) calls elite leadership that can at times by anti-dialogical (or keeping elites in-voice, & others voiceless). It is in the antidialogical action that oppression resides with actions of ‘divide and rule,’ ‘manipulation,’ and ‘cultural invasion.’ For Friere, the human ability allows us to “tri-dimensionalize the past, the present, and the future” (p. 91). Epochal narrative is a closed system of linear temporality.

Mir, Marens, and Mir (2008) also take a critical perspective, one rooted in postcolonial theory. Corporations have evaded public oversight. The result is the TNC has become a “sovereign geographical and administrative space” with homogenous time (ibid, p. 528).

For me, this homogenization of time-space allows storytelling to be deployed to render corporate malfeasance unremarkable. Storytelling loses its social, its dialogic chronotopicity, and its polyphonic and stylistic dialogism. Storytelling is constructed with a corporate mindset to deterritorializes public space and time, to render it without relationship grounding.

The implication for Tetranormalization is to invert the corporate mindset by greater inclusion of stakeholders to normalize the institutional environment of the TNC. In order for Tetranormalization to be effective, it can become a storytelling that incorporates the concerns of what Mir, Marens, & Mir call the fragments, those put to the margins or the subaltern, and whose interests have been sacrificed on the alter of homogeneity. The hope is that corporate discourse, including storytelling, can decolonize the appropriated spaces, and re-establish more dialogical action.

For me, this means confronting “hegemony-inducing” manoeuvres (Mir, Marens & Mir, 2008: 535), instead of waiting for the impunity of TNC to change its ways due appreciative hope, to find “good” citizenship behaviour (p. 538).

Finally, Schipper and Boje (2008) argue that corporate governance that purports to be engaged in transparency needs to be put to the test of public scrutiny. Visually this is a kind of surveillance, but in terms of voice, it is accomplished with participation.

Transparency is defined as letting light shine through without obstruction, and without leaving stuff in the darkness. Corporate rhetoric socially constructs its 'transparency' in abiding by social, environmental, accounting, and trade norms. Transparency is widely used to establish corporate integrity (Schipper & Boje, 2008: 501).

When transparency becomes a function or an instrument of power, it seriously compromises any claims to integrity, trust or doing what is good. Where all voices are not audible, not listened to seriously, there is convergence to a one-voiced, one-way storytelling. When the voices of the fragments, the plurality, are completely present, then there is transparency. The dialogical transparency, with fully embodied voices, aiming at co-generativity, instead of consensus, has yet to be sighted in TNC behaviour.

CONCLUSIONS

In this essay I sought to give the discipline of storytelling greater depth, by allowing for multiple conceptualizations of narrative, living story, and antenarrative. This move serves to rescue storytelling from being reduced to the silent supplement to narrative. There are retrospective and prospective storytelling methods that aid assessment of social, accounting, environmental and trade incommensurate norms. Without an ethical approach, such as critical theory ethics, there will not be a different, less colonizing, less predatory corporate behaviour.

There is no question that antenarrative scholars have something to contribute to the debate between Appreciative Inquiry and Tetranormalization. Rather than accept the future as predetermined by linear extension of retrospective narrative lines, the future can be seen as wandering, and something shaped by pluralistic processes. Antenarrative is an agency, one cultivating a course of storytelling that brings into being futures. Antenarratives recruit a future through kinds of sensemaking processes that merit our professional investigation.

Antenarrative processes articulate through human agents a future that is control by either hegemonic or democratic participation. It is either elitist hidden agenda or one that has become transparent, or some kind of co-generative dialogic.

Radical democratic storytelling formation that articulate by participation an ethics, and social reflexivity on social practices can be a viable way to change institutions of power and privilege so that they address social poverty, and ecological destruction. Radical storytelling organizations can recognize the vested interests of power differentials, and create situations of reciprocity, such as what Edward and Willmott (2008: 412) advocate.

Tetranormalization, this far, confronts the polity of norms among the state and the transnational corporations and their networks. The focus is breaking through the rhetorical smokescreen to get at the hegemonic practices. This is accomplished by an inclusionary preference participation in a negotiated normative environment.

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