

Exploring Dialogic Social Change

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Abstract

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This dissertation explores a model of social change which I have labeled “dialogic.” Each of the three cases I have chosen for this study has been included because I believe that the *design* of each intervention departs significantly and creatively from traditional, less Other-oriented, social change efforts. Dialogic social change begins with the assumption that human beings cannot be developed, modernized, or empowered by external parties. Instead, this conception of change is guided by the assumption that individuals are autonomous, trustworthy beings who are capable of deciding when to engage with new ideas and opportunities for action. First, I analyze the strategic communication of the “Billionaires for Bush,” a group of playful and ironic protesters, most active in New York City preceding the 2004 U.S. Presidential election. In this case I focus on the ability of the Billionaires to creatively inspire and invite civic participation, which resulted in the self-organization of more than 70 “spin off” Billionaires for Bush chapters. The second case I examine is “Scenarios from Africa,” an HIV/AIDS-related communication process in Senegal centered on a script writing contest for young people implemented voluntarily by a vast network of community based organizations. I discuss how the contest promotes youth agency in Senegal, allowing contest participants to shift from their traditional role as *targets* of information campaigns to instead become *creators* of HIV prevention content. Finally, I present the “invitational” Cultura Ciudadana (civic culture) communication strategy employed by Antanas Mockus, the former mayor of

Bogotá Colombia. In the Bogotá case I explore how the Mockus administration creatively promoted civic education and participation by, for example, distributing soccer referee-type cards to encourage citizens to replace violence and aggression with playful symbols when communicating with fellow citizens. Each of the cases involves a communication strategy designed to invite and inspire *action*, and each case is rooted in the notion that the Other should be respected and is a capable and potentially creative being. I aspire to affect practice by illustrating the process and outcome of three different social change interventions and by suggesting that the dialogic design of these interventions explains their generative potential - their ability to *make action possible*.

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Introduction

This dissertation is an exploration, more than metaphorically. For more than ten years I have been earnestly searching for new models to promote social change. As a Peace Corps volunteer in rural Cameroon in the late 1990s, I taught English classes and promoted HIV/AIDS awareness as a secondary project. During the two years I spent there, my happiest and, I believe, most successful moments as a change agent occurred when I watched my students perform a play about HIV for the school's youth festival. The idea to do a play (i.e., the form) had been my idea, but the content and execution was entirely in the hands of the students. Yet while I was in Cameroon I saw many other, very different, approaches to change. The most ubiquitous were the "Aid project" and the "Awareness campaign." These approaches positioned local people as either needing outside assistance or as under informed and in need of external expertise.

In later years, when I worked for an international development consulting firm, I worked on some of these same "Aid projects." I helped develop training manuals for workers in Kosovo, which were then translated into Albanian by project staff, many of whom were highly skilled and credentialed professionals. Our administrative staff included a licensed physician, an architect and several school teachers. As I walked to work each day in Kosovo I passed through an abandoned soccer field and remarked the high number of school-aged children playing there. One day, I asked my neighbor why the children were not in school. She replied: "They have no teachers to teach them. All of the teachers are working for good money on the development projects." I too was making "good money." And yet I felt hollow and even a bit ashamed of this version of social change, which many in the business call "development." I was unhappy with this model

of social change and yet I was complicit. I am currently exploring alternatives to this model, and I expect to continue doing so over the course of my academic career.

This dissertation is an exploration of a different model of social change, a model I have labeled “dialogic.” In many ways, the results of this two-year inquiry resemble a cubist construction, a series of knowledge-blocks, layers of interpretation and analysis together with supporting literatures, all placed together in attempt to build something new. I am drawn to make a parallel with the cubist-expressionist constructions of Kurt Schwitters, which he called *Merzbau*. His largest and longest standing ongoing construction was the *Hannover Merzbau*, destroyed during World War II.



Figure 1: Kurt Schwitters, Hannover Merzbau.
Source: <http://www.merzbau.org/Schwitters.html>

Merzbau were sculptures, assemblages of fragments, which were often large and porous; they could be entered and explored from inside. Schwitters once wrote to a friend that a *Merzbau* was “big like a sculpture, in which you could walk, as in a cubist picture.”¹ Schwitters created the term by adding Merz (from Kommerz/commerce) to bau, which means building. He writes:

The word Merz had no meaning when I found it. Now it has the meaning that I gave it. The meaning of the concept Merz changes with the change in insight of those who continue to work with it.²

In interpret this statement by Schwitters and an invitation to take Merz and make it my own. I view this dissertation as a construction made of three cases, supported by an overarching theoretical literature on dialogue and several supporting elements consisting of case-specific literature, first-hand inquiry, reviewed archival materials and my own layers of interpretation and analysis. My interpretations and analyses are based on experience and observation, field notes, interviews with intervention designers, interviews with intervention participants and interviews with individuals who knew of, but did not directly participate in, a given intervention.

I attempt to present dialogic social change, and each of the illustrative cases, from several angles. This dissertation is a rendering of dialogic social change constructed partially from pre-existing materials, and in this sense it is similar to a *Merzbau*. I have constructed my vision of dialogic social change using, as a starting point, literature on dialogue, literature on social change, and also existing interpretations of each of the cases I include here. My contribution, I believe, is a novel arrangement of existing materials paired with my own analyses. I apply the lens of dialogue to three communication

interventions that promote social change, each in a different way. I explore the design of each intervention and discuss the elements of each intervention that enable and invite Others to act; that is, the characteristics of each intervention that I interpret as *dialogic* in nature. In my exploration of these cases, I suggest a new way of seeing, a *dialogic* way of seeing, that I believe invites a new way of *doing*.

Chapter 1: What is Dialogic Social Change?

In this chapter I present different characteristics of dialogic social change along with a discussion of the theorists of dialogue who have influenced my thinking on the subject. In my writing I aim to put into practice the dialogic orientation that I am proposing in theory. By this I mean that my writing will favor an open, suggestive and ideally evocative style. It seems futile to advocate for alternatives to persuasion via persuasion. Making unassailable arguments leaves little room for possibility and for creative interpretation on the part of the reader.

Instead, I invite the reader to reflect on the ideas presented here, to agree/disagree, modify, contextualize or enter into dialogue with them. My aim in this dissertation is to present a compelling illustration of dialogic social change by showcasing three communication interventions with different designs, emanating from different contexts and continents. The difference among each dialogic social change intervention demonstrates that while there is no recipe, no one way to pursue social change, there *are* different lessons to help prepare those wishing to blaze their own trail.

In this chapter I engage with theorists and philosophers of dialogue by presenting their ideas alongside my own thoughts and interpretations. I enter an already robust conversation on dialogue to further conceptualize the idea of dialogic social change through an analysis of interventions in applied settings. I use the term “dialogic social change” to describe social change interventions that in my view are *dialogic by design*. There are many ways to promote social change, but very few, I suggest, are dialogic. In

this dissertation I aim to illustrate what makes an intervention dialogic, and what importance a dialogic design has in practice.

Assumptions

Dialogic social change begins with the assumption that human beings cannot be developed, modernized, nor empowered. Instead, this conception of change is guided by the assumption that individuals are autonomous, trustworthy beings who are capable of deciding when to engage with new ideas and opportunities for action. Borrowing a concept from popular culture, I contend that dialogic social change interventions are akin to the “Field of Dreams” built by Kevin Costner’s character in the 1989 Hollywood movie of the same name. “If you build it, they will come,” the character is told by a mysterious voice throughout the movie. Costner razes his corn crops to build a baseball field and then waits, to see who comes. Eventually, as prophesied, legendary players come to the field to play. The premise of the film is that in order for these talented players to play, someone had to believe they would come. This belief fueled the effort to build the field. A dialogic social change intervention is like a Field of Dreams: it is a creation fueled by faith, designed to invite action. Building a “Field of Dreams” does not *guarantee* that Others will come; it merely makes it possible.

An important and distinguishing characteristic of dialogic social change is that it invites rather than requires participation. In their article *Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric*, Foss and Griffin contrast invitation with persuasion, the latter being a form of communication which is used to change others and is embedded in the “desire for control and domination.”³ Invitational rhetoric occurs through the “offering” of perspectives rather the articulation of persuasive arguments.⁴ This vision of

rhetoric is grounded in feminist theory and is positioned in opposition to the “rhetoric of patriarchy,” which values “change, competition and domination.”⁵ Foss and Griffin concur with communication scholar Gregory Shepherd that rhetoric is commonly conflated with persuasion.⁶ Shepherd argues that communication scholars have historically conceptualized communication as social influence and that this focus on influence neglects an alternative perspective, put forth by feminist scholars, which views communication as “relational responsibility.”⁷ According to Shepherd, the consequence of defining communication exclusively as influence is the concomitant definitions of competence along these same lines. Thus, by definition, a good communicator is an influential communicator. Foss and Griffin pick up on Shepherd’s argument and suggest an alternative definition of rhetoric as an invitation to understanding. This definitional difference has practical consequences. To abandon the view that influencing others is *the* goal of communication means substituting a paternalistic view of others with one that respects the integrity and agency of others. Foss and Griffin write:

The act of changing others not only establishes the power of the rhetor over others but also devalues the lives and perspectives of those others. The belief systems and behaviors others have created for living in the world are considered by rhetors to be inadequate or inappropriate and thus in need of change.⁸

Foss and Griffin thus disagree that individuals who do not seek to change others are incompetent. Like Shepherd, Foss and Griffin believe an alternative view of rhetoric is needed. They propose an expansion of the notion of rhetoric in a conciliatory fashion that is consistent with the approach they advocate. They write:

Although we believe that persuasion is often necessary, we believe an alternative exists when changing and controlling others is not the rhetor's goal; we call this rhetoric invitational rhetoric...Invitational rhetoric is an invitation to understanding as a means to create a relationship rooted in equality, immanent value and self-determination.⁹

Foss and Griffin present two different forms that invitational rhetoric can take. The first they call "offering perspectives," a process by which individual perspectives are articulated "as carefully, completely, and passionately as possible to give them full expression and to invite their careful consideration."¹⁰ The articulation of individual perspectives occurs "not through persuasive argument but through offering – the giving of expression to a perspective without advocating its support or seeking its acceptance."¹¹ This vision of invitation as an offering that seeks no adherents differs from my use of invitation as a mode of dialogic social change. Each of the interventions I will discuss in this dissertation does strive for support and adherents, yet in an open, invitational way. Another difference I perceive between Foss and Griffin's "Invitational Rhetoric" and my own embrace of invitation is that while Foss and Griffin focus their attention on the realm of speech and interaction, I aim to take invitation into the realm of *action*. The invitations I discuss, particularly the third case that takes place in Bogotá Colombia, are *invitations to action*. And while the interventions I discuss are designed to garner support and acceptance, they embrace the invitational mode and in alignment with Foss and Griffin's proposal, eschew persuasion and the pursuit of total control.

In lieu of attempting to gain control over the other, invitation appeals to what philosopher Martha Nussbaum calls the “narrative imagination” of the other.¹² Appealing to the narrative imagination of the other, Nussbaum writes, means:

the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person’s story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have.¹³

I concur with Nussbaum when she suggests that a particularly effective mechanism for cultivating narrative imagination is through creative activity, including theater, dance and other forms of entertainment. “Entertainment,” writes Nussbaum, “is crucial to the ability of the arts to offer perception and hope.”¹⁴ Dialogic forms of social change stand in contrast to interventions which aim to *inform* and *persuade*. Dialogic social change interventions are calls to *imagine* and have designs that *inspire*.

An intervention that aims to inspire others employs “pull” rather than “push,” to borrow terminology from web design expert Peter Morville. Morville explains that push and pull are “interdependent opposites” in relation to the flow of information.¹⁵ On the internet, both pull and push are at work simultaneously. Pull is at work when we willingly solicit content of interest and quality. When we log onto a social networking website, for example, we are seeking information about our friends and acquaintances. If we wish to avoid this type of information, we can simply not log on. Push, on the other hand, is evidenced by spam that “invades” our email inboxes; unwanted messages that are thrust upon unwilling.¹⁶

Most forms of advertising are forms of push; they range from very invasive, as with the ads located on the back of stall doors in restrooms, to more subtle, like product

placements in films and television shows. Morville suggests that website designers would do well to consider the ratio of push to pull on web page “real estate,” and advises web designers to “push for more pull.”¹⁷ By this he means that web designers should use more “pull” by increasing the amount of attractive content on the homepage and use less “push” by decreasing flashing banner ads, jarring audio messages and pop-up advertisements.

I aim to demonstrate in this dissertation how designers of communication interventions can employ more pull and less push. The classic “push” format is the mediated information campaign. Whether one is in Los Angeles, Johannesburg or Mexico City, one can see highway billboards urging the use of condoms or seat belts and hear radio or television messages to the same effect. In the field of health communication, new technologies are also employed to push information. On World AIDS Day in 2009, for example, an estimated 2.5 million Ethiopian citizens received this text message from their president Girma Woldegiorgis: “On the occasion of the WORLD AIDS DAY, let us all think of HIV/AIDS to access prevention, treatment, care and support.”¹⁸ Unsolicited text messages have also been used in Botswana to disseminate HIV/AIDS related information and in Norway for delivering information about Diabetes.¹⁹ While this use of push to diffuse information is novel and potentially far-reaching, the information being sent is nonetheless unsolicited and potentially unwanted.

Pull, in contrast, relies on the voluntary engagement of the information-seeker/participant. When we look for mediated content on You Tube, for instance, pull is in action. Creative, artistic and entertaining forms of communication, as described earlier by Nussbaum, employ pull – they aim to attract rather than push themselves upon others.

Social change interventions that are dialogic use pull, rather than push, as will be illustrated with the cases presented in this dissertation. The ironic and playful protest of the Billionaires for Bush in New York City inspired dozens of “copy-cat” groups across the U.S. who, through pull, were drawn to the Billionaires’ website where they were able to download all of the necessary tools to create their own Billionaire chapters. The Scenarios for Africa script-writing contests for young people in Senegal use the pull of the contest mechanism to invite young people to harness their life experience and creativity in the development of HIV/AIDS prevention communication content. Finally, a select number of interventions implemented during the administration of Antanas Mockus, the former Mayor of Bogotá Colombia, exemplify pull via invitation. These interventions were designed to enable and invite voluntary action and by varying degrees, succeeded in doing so.

Peter Morville is not alone in advocating less pushy forms of design. Somewhere between Morville’s notions of pull and push lies “the nudge,” a form of communication proposed by Thaler and Sunstein in their book, “Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth and happiness.”²⁰ Thaler and Sunstein advocate “choice architecture” from a standpoint they call “libertarian paternalism.” Choice architects “organize the context in which people make decisions,”²¹ a paternalistic act in the sense of limiting the choices available and presuming to know which choice people *should* make. The libertarian aspect of the “nudge” is the fact that despite having limited choices, individuals are still “free to choose,” a term the authors borrow from Milton and Rose Friedman.²² Thaler and Sunstein promote interventions that steer people’s choices in what *they* believe is the right direction. The need for nudging, they explain, stems from “well-established findings

in social science” that demonstrate that when individuals are left to their own devices, “[they] make pretty bad decisions.”²³ Nonetheless, Thaler and Sunstein do not believe that change should be legislated or mandated:

A nudge, as we will use the term, is any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people’s behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any option or significantly changing their economic incentives. To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid. Nudges are not mandates. Putting the fruit at eye level counts as a nudge. Banning junk food does not.²⁴

Continuing with this example, the school administrator employing choice architecture would redesign the display of options available to children in the school lunchroom rather than prohibiting junk food altogether.

Ostensibly, the difference between choice architecture and manipulation is a question of having good intentions. The difference between a nudge and a dialogic intervention is slight yet important: both advocate free will, but a nudge, however gentle, is still a form of push. I am suggesting that dialogic approaches are so firmly rooted in faith in the Other that they can gain adherents through pull. Intervention designers with a dialogic orientation know that if their intervention is well designed, interesting and accessible, they do not have to push their ideas on others, the others will come to them. The nudge is rooted in an “I know what is good for you” worldview, whereas dialogic designs convey both conviction and invitation. They say: “This is what we believe in. Here is the intervention we have designed - feel free to join!”

Invitational in approach, dialogic social change interventions are nonetheless *interventions*. As interventions, dialogical social change can be contrasted with Taoism, a

decidedly “hands off” approach to change. The ancient Taoist scholar Lao Tzu proposes many observations on the nature of change. A favorite verse of mine, found in Lao Tzu’s *Tao Teh Ching*, posits that leaders should strive to accomplish tasks in a way that when completed, the people who have participated say “We ourselves have achieved it.”²⁵ While this verse suggests a certain level of intervention, the majority of the *Tao Te Ching* calls for “non interference,”²⁶ “non-striving”²⁷ and the state of “non-ado.”²⁸ While the humility of Lao Tzu is to be commended, dialogic social change, as I conceive of it, differs from Taoism in its encouragement and promotion of engagement and action. The word intervene, from the Latin “intervenire,” to come (venire) between (inter), describes the act of *getting involved*, of attempting to “come between” life as it is and life as we would like it to be. A dialogic social change intervention invites and welcomes *interdependence*.

An interventionist approach is appropriate in a world beleaguered by poverty, inequality, health crises, and violence. This perspective is strongly conveyed by Dwight Conquergood in his essay *Performing as a Moral Act* when he writes that “[t]here is no null hypothesis in the moral universe.”²⁹ For Conquergood, the refusal to take a moral position is a de facto moral position. A refusal to engage with the other by remaining detached, he concludes, “forecloses dialogue,” which forecloses the possibility for action in the world.³⁰ Conquergood applies dialogue to performance to demonstrate the difference an Other-orientation can make:

Dialogic performance is a way of having intimate conversation with other people and cultures. Instead of speaking about them, one speaks to and with them...One does not have to delay entering the conversation until self and other have become

old friends. Indeed, as the metaphor makes clear, one cannot build a friendship without beginning a conversation.³¹

Conquergood encourages engagement with the Other while respecting difference. He notes that we can sing in harmony without singing in unison.³² In other words, we needn't relinquish our individuality - or expect others to do so - in order to engage with one another.

And yet, as noted by Gregory Shepherd, the possibility of community can be threatened by individualism when taken to an extreme. Shepherd argues that if left unchecked, individualism and pessimism can lead to solipsism and nihilism.³³ Pointing out the centrality of communication to the act of building community, Shepherd notes that “[w]e cannot communicate without giving of ourselves; nor can we communicate if not served by the gifts of other selves.”³⁴ If we believe only in the self, and do not give of ourselves, collective action is impossible. When, on the contrary, we believe in the agency of Others, we are more likely to act ourselves. The Pragmatist William James writes that social organisms of all forms exist “because each member proceeds to his own duty with a trust that the other members will simultaneously do theirs.”³⁵ Without this belief, he warns, “not only is nothing achieved, but nothing is even attempted.”³⁶ Thus to intervene, even individually, is a necessary first step on the road to change. The Spanish poet Antonio Machado notes that when no road exists, it is necessary to “make the road by walking.”³⁷ Interventions come into being when someone begins walking. Dialogic interventions result in broad roads, designed for many even when walked alone.

Characteristics of Dialogic Social Change

The best way to define dialogic social change is to present a variety of different forms it can take. Indeed, that is the overarching goal of this dissertation. The three cases in this study represent different forms of dialogic social change and demonstrate what difference a dialogic design can make. Each case has overlapping and also unique characteristics. The characteristics I present here do not comprise a rigid recipe nor are they a complete checklist. These characteristics are a starting point. In attempting to sketch out what dialogic social change looks like and what results it can yield I aim to be as expressive as possible, at the expense of linear consistency if necessary. The reader will note that I began this chapter with a Field of Dreams metaphor and later referred to “a road made by walking.” It might be more logical to choose one metaphor and then stick with it – but different metaphors appeal to different minds, different readers. My goal is to illustrate the inner workings and generative potential of dialogic social change, even if it means sowing an excess of metaphorical and theoretical seeds.

A brief aside on language: In this dissertation I repeatedly refer to the *Other*. I capitalize the word to distinguish the noun from the adverb. Some authors place the words in quotes, the “other.” I choose not to because I believe it connotes distance and an ironic stance, saying one thing and meaning another. When I say she is my “friend” in quotes I am saying I do not really believe she is my friend. When Edward Said uses the word “other” (in quotes) he is describing how the West has positioned the Orient; used in this way, the word signals difference, “hostility and aggression.”³⁸ I seek to clarify *my* use of the term without entering into an extended literature review of how the term “other,” and issues of alterity more generally, have been taken up by writers ranging from

Fanon to Levinas to Benhabib, to name just a few.³⁹ I use the term Other to simply denote people other than ourselves. These Others, as I use the term, can be known or unknown to us. This is an important term for me, because social change interventions designed with the Other in mind are the central concern of this study. In fact, an Other-orientation is one of the defining characteristics of dialogic social change. In the section below, I describe additional characteristics.

Dialogic social change interventions enable and invite *action*. The assumption infusing the design of such interventions is the existence and capability of actional Others. I propose that the designs of our interventions communicate: they announce how we see the world. A campaign to disseminate information about HIV/AIDS presupposes an uninformed, passive Other. The implementation of a scriptwriting contest about HIV/AIDS, on the other hand, presumes a creative, agentic Other.⁴⁰ There is no point in creating a scriptwriting contest if we do not believe that the contest will yield scripts of a certain quality and quantity.

The design of an intervention reflects the role that is anticipated for Others. Our designs reveal how we see Others. Do we trust Others and imagine they have something to contribute or do we see them as passive recipients of our expertise? Do we create opportunities for the unpredictable creativity of the Other or do we tightly hold on to control, because, as William James would put it, we cannot risk “the chance of error”?⁴¹ When we invite Others, when we make it possible for Others to act, when we seek the Other’s contribution knowing that their initiative and creativity may change the very shape and scope of our intervention, we are employing dialogic designs.

I have come to realize the importance of design through communication scholar Amardo Rodriguez whose book, *Communication, Space and Design*, explains how our worldviews shape our spaces and designs, and how these, in turn, impact how we communicate. Rodriguez notes that spaces and designs that promote division do so by “limiting human interaction and communication.”⁴² The inverse is what is needed, he argues.

We need spaces and designs that allow us to move in accord with the natural rhythms of the world, that promote diversity and complexity, that foster hope, openness, and compassion, that make us less afraid of the world and each other, that heal and nourish us, and that lessen the threat of our differences by encouraging us to pay attention to our common humanness and humanity.⁴³

Design does not and should not change *people*, but how we design our communication interventions can change how we communicate. And our chosen forms of communication, Rodriguez reminds us, have material consequences and moral implications. “In other words,” he writes, “some communication practices constitute us better than others and, accordingly, help make for more humane and just worlds than others.”⁴⁴ What I have taken away from Rodriguez’s argument is the idea that we can improve communication interventions through design. We can *design* our communication interventions to be “dialogic.” We do this by always keeping Others in mind and by believing in their agency and creative capacity. A dialogic design is a wager on the generative potential of Others. True, we must relinquish control to place this wager, but the possible dividends are literally unimaginable. We cannot imagine them because they are unpredictable.

This focus on design allows us to examine specific activities and attributes of dialogic interventions. What does an intervention with a dialogic design look like? In my view, there are some key characteristics. *It is porous*: it allows the Other to enter and exit at will. *It enables and invites action*: it provides the tools and/or opportunities for Others to get involved and to interact with one another. In its most generative form, it enables *new action*: it enables the Other to change the intervention itself.

What this means, concretely, will be illustrated in the three cases included in this study. Each case illustrates different forms of dialogic design, with some unique and some overlapping features. What each case shares, however, is the core element of dialogic design which is a strong faith in the Other as a starting point. What sense would it make invite and enable the Other's action if we do not believe their positive contribution is forthcoming? Indeed, it is the contribution of the Other that can convert the road we have decided to make by walking into a lush meadow or a stream or a trampoline. Faith in the Other makes the unpredictable possible.

Primary Influences

My understanding of dialogue and my conceptualization of *dialogic social change* are influenced by three theorists who discuss dialogue in varying contexts. What follows is a contextual/conceptual review of selected writings of Martin Buber, Mikhail Bakhtin and Paulo Freire. Given the enormity of the life's work of each of these thinkers, I do not discuss their respective writings in entirety. Instead, I provide a brief introduction to the context each was working in, and then highlight the concepts present in their work that have influenced my own thinking on dialogue.

Martin Buber and Dialogue

Martin Buber (1878-1965) was born in Vienna, studied philosophy and art in Austria, Switzerland and Germany, and eventually moved to Jerusalem, where he taught philosophy for more than a decade.⁴⁵ Scholars of Buber's work most certainly agree that he was an important and influential philosopher and theologian in the early-mid twentieth century. Buber, as a thinker, has been described in different ways by scholars who have studied his work closely. Walter Kauffmann describes Buber: as a Jewish theologian and scholar of Hasidism.⁴⁶ Maurice Friedman supplements those terms with philosophical anthropologist and philosopher of dialogue.⁴⁷ When Buber left Germany for Jerusalem in 1937, one of his best known books, *I and Thou*, had few readers and little acclaim.⁴⁸

World War II changed that. Walter Kaufmann, in his introduction to *I and Thou*, ascribed Buber's resurgence to the need, after the holocaust, for the public to "love and admire a representative Jew."⁴⁹ I would instead agree with Maurice Friedman who described Buber's *I and Thou* as a text with universal appeal, "neither metaphysics nor theology, but the problem of man's basic attitudes and relationships to what he meets."⁵⁰ A post-holocaust world continues to be one struggling with incomprehensible inhumanity and evil, a world in need of hope that human beings can still relate to one another humanely. Much of Martin Buber's writing was dedicated to exactly that: how individuals can interact with one another in respectful, Other-affirming ways. Buber developed several concepts in his writing which highlight the importance of ethical and humane communication and relation which inform my conception of dialogic social change.

Relation

Buber's text *I and Thou* explores how humans can ethically relate to one another by treating the Other as equal (*thou*), rather than as thing or subordinate (*it*). In his description of the ethical *relation*, Buber offers an abundance of interesting yet paradoxical ideas for the reader to contemplate. For example, Buber suggests that even an "I-it" relation is preferable to no relation at all. He notes: "whoever hates directly is closer to a relation than those who are without love and hate."⁵¹ Thus for Buber, we needn't love or even like others to acknowledge them. Entering into relation requires a willingness to engage, but not necessarily agree, with the Other. In this sense, relation is unpredictable and not always enjoyable. He writes:

Every You in the world is doomed by its nature to become a thing or at least to enter into thinghood again and again. The It is the chrysalis, the You the butterfly. Only it is not always as if these states took turns so neatly; often it is an intricately entangled series of events that is tortuously dual.⁵²

Underlying Buber's philosophy is the recognition that one cannot determine the outcome of relation, but one can indeed choose whether or not to enter into relation. Underlying the notion of relation and treating the other as *thou*, is respect for Others. Acknowledging and respecting Others implies accepting their autonomy. A concrete implication for dialogic social change interventions, if rooted in respect and trust of autonomous others, is the risk of low participation and even failure. In this case, failure is an acceptable outcome – it is an indicator that the intervention was poorly timed, poorly designed, or simply had insufficient appeal or resonance.

In *The Knowledge of Man*, Buber further discusses relation, calling it *encounter* in the “realm of the interhuman.”⁵³ For Buber, the realm of the interhuman can be a casual encounter between two strangers. For the meeting to count as genuine *relation*, the orientation of each individual toward the Other is necessarily one of openness and respect. Buber writes,

The only thing that matters is that for each of the two men the other happens as the particular other, that each becomes aware of the other and is thus related to him in such a way that he does not regard and use him as his object, but as his partner in a living event, even if it is no more than a boxing match.⁵⁴

Here again we see that Buber places more importance on the act of relation than the outcome of that relation. In this sense, I am proposing relation as a shared orientation,, which is performative, in the way this term is used by anthropologist Johannes Fabian, in that it “demands participation...and therefore some degree of mutual recognition.”⁵⁵

Describing his own experience working with psychiatric patients, Buber stresses that he was able to enter into relation with his interlocutors only once he recognized that he must go beyond wanting to change something in the Other - he had to allow *himself* to also be changed.⁵⁶ The lesson here for dialogic social change interventions is that implementers must respect the input of others, they must allow the intervention to remain porous, and allow it, and themselves, to not only change but be changed. In his book, *Dream: Re-imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy*, Stephen Duncombe describes how an organization can be porous (my term) by creating a “menu of scaleable involvement”⁵⁷ (his terms). Scaleable involvement means providing multiple ways for people to participate with varying degrees of commitment, and accepting Others’ right to

propose new ideas and directions. A porous social change intervention is designed to both generate action and collaboration and also to receive input and accept re-design.

Designing an intervention to allow for the input of Others requires accepting the Other and envisioning their potential. Buber calls acknowledgement and acceptance of the Other *confirmation*. Yet his conception of confirming the other is not static. Buber adds:

I meet another – I accept and confirm him as he now is. But confirming a person as he is is only the first step...I must take the other person in his dynamic existence, in his specific potentiality.⁵⁸

Thus to design an intervention in anticipation of the contribution of the Other, we need to envision not only what is but what *can be*. A dialogic, Other-oriented design is infused with generative potential. It cannot guarantee action but it can make it possible. This Other-orientation is a pre-requisite for what Buber calls *relation*.

In two different editions of *I and Thou*, Buber's definition of "Relation" is translated as either "mutual" or "reciprocity."⁵⁹ As translated by Ronald Gregor Smith, Buber writes: "Let no attempt be made to sap the strength from the meaning of the relation: relation is mutual."⁶⁰ Translator Walter Kauffman, who is also a Buber scholar, presents this version: "One should not try to dilute the meaning of the relation: relation is reciprocity."⁶¹ I embrace both translations and I understand relation to imply both mutuality and reciprocity. I interpret mutuality as mutual respect and reciprocity as a *willingness* of two parties to be in relation. In other words, I cannot be in relation with someone I view as inferior nor can I be in relation alone. I can seek relation through

dialogic design, but I, alone, cannot bring it into being. Relation as reciprocity also implies an openness and a willingness to learn and to be changed:

Relation is reciprocity. My You acts on me as I act on it. Our students teach us, our works for us...How we are educated by children, by animals! Inscrutably involved, we live in the currents of universal reciprocity.⁶²

In this sense, the ability to learn from children is an act of relation, a conscious decision to be open.

Accepting reciprocity requires readiness, Buber explains, and an additional quality, rarely seen in literature on social change, which is *tenderness*.⁶³ As I write these lines I recall a recent news item: the story of a man dressed as Santa Claus who rang a door bell in Los Angeles on Christmas Eve and shot an 8-year-old girl in the face when she answered the door.⁶⁴ Can one earnestly advocate *tenderness* in a world such as this? Or in a world where the systematic rape of women is the preferred weapon of war as is the case in the Democratic Republic of Congo?⁶⁵ I propose it is *precisely* because of these types of cruelty and violence that respect, reciprocity and tenderness are urgently necessary.

A violent world calls for more than passivity as espoused by Lao Tzu: it calls for a positive force, humane forms of intervention, to offset the negativity. This call for intervention is undoubtedly and unapologetically prescriptive. And because there is no “magic recipe” for social change, it is action itself, rather than one specific, monolithic form of action which is prescribed. It is a process and not a product I am prescribing when I espouse *dialogic* forms of social change. Across the world, the impulse to intervene, to promote social change, is not new nor is it fading. By suggesting the

adoption of a dialogic orientation toward the Other, I am prescribing humility, respect and openness. I am drawn to Buber's work because he advocates the same. The next concept from Buber's writing that I discuss, genuine dialogue, continues to convey his Other-orientation, which I also favor and find useful for my efforts to theorize dialogic social change.

Genuine Dialogue

Buber develops the concept of *genuine dialogue* in *Between Man and Man*, a volume comprised of five essays written after *I and Thou*, yet very much in the same spirit. In the first essay, "Dialogue," Buber clarifies that dialogue is much more than conversation: dialogue is openness, an orientation toward the other, which can even transpire in silence.⁶⁶ Dialogue occurs during events "which open into a genuine change from communication to communion."⁶⁷ Buber is thus signaling a shift from dialogue as conversation to dialogue as *a way of being* with the Other. Buber also stresses that genuine dialogue requires an abandonment of reserve, "for where unreserve has ruled, even wordlessly, between men, the word of dialogue has happened sacramentally."⁶⁸ Here, I read "unreserve" as referring, once again, to an ontological position, an orientation toward the Other that goes beyond a mere conversation or listenership. I embrace Buber's definition of *genuine dialogue* as it allows me to stress that when I call for *dialogic* social change I am advocating for more than communication; I am advocating a way of seeing and a way of being with Others.

In the second section of his essay on dialogue Buber helpfully defines genuine dialogue by placing it in relation with two other kinds of dialogue:

There is genuine dialogue – no matter whether spoken or silent – where each of the participants really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turns to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between himself and them. There is technical dialogue, which is prompted solely by the need of objective understanding. And there is monologue disguised as dialogue...a *debate* in which the thoughts are not expressed in the way in which they existed in the mind but in the speaking are so pointed that they may strike home in the sharpest way.⁶⁹

It is the orientation toward the Other that prevents interaction that is in reality a series of monologues. Buber reminds us that the “basic movement of the life of dialogue is the turning towards the other.”⁷⁰ Thus for a social change intervention to call itself *dialogic*, must always turn to Others by its very design. As veteran economic justice organizer Mike Prokosch once said, the primary task of a successful organizer is to “set up structures so [that] people can participate.”⁷¹ The designers of social change interventions, in like fashion, can demonstrate a dialogic orientation by creating mechanisms to make possible the action of Others. Buber carefully clarifies that dialogue cannot be demanded: “There is no ordering of dialogue. It is not that you *are* to answer but that you *are able*.”⁷² Accepting and extending this idea, I add that individuals must be free to not join our dialogic interventions. We should nonetheless continue to design interventions that invite and attempt to inspire the action of Others.

Buber’s conception of genuine dialogue directly opposes the push of persuasion and the gentle, paternalistic nudge. He writes:

The chief presupposition for the rise of genuine dialogue is that each should regard his partner as the very one he is. I become aware of him, aware that he is different, essentially different from myself, in the definite, unique way which is peculiar to him, and I accept whom I thus see so that in full earnestness I can direct what I say to him as the person he is.⁷³

Genuine dialogue, then, similar to *Invitational Rhetoric* as proposed by Foss and Griffin, requires accepting Others as they are. Rather than attempting to change the Other, a dialogic social change intervention invites the Other to help change the world – or at least a small corner of it.

In his third essay, on education, Buber puts forth yet another rarely seen word in texts on social change – the word “trust.” Buber writes that the ideal relation between teacher and child in education is one of “pure dialogue.”⁷⁴ Children enter easily into dialogue, Buber posits, because they are trusting – they know they are “unceasingly addressed...they lie preserved and guarded, invulnerable, clad in the silver mail of trust.”⁷⁵ Buber points out that sometimes we trust in Others “without being able to offer sufficient reasons.”⁷⁶ And as we will see in the cases in this study, trusting in the Other to contribute and collaborate was well rewarded. Trust lies behind every invitation put forth to unknown Others to join the action when building a Field of Dreams. Then, one has to trust the people who come, those who have accepted the invitation issued through dialogic design.

Buber’s concepts of relation, encounter and genuine dialogue are, unsurprisingly, complementary in nature. To enter into relation, an encounter must occur, and genuine dialogue is the outcome. Each of these concepts is supported by the corollaries of respect,

lack of reserve, tenderness, and trust. In his writing, Buber even mentions Love, and he capitalizes it for good measure.⁷⁷ A more sorely needed word in the field of social change would be hard to imagine.

I draw from Buber's writing the notion that the best we can hope for in efforts to promote social change is to accept that change is made possible by seeking and investing in our relations with Others. We can begin by ceasing to *push* and instead rely on *pull*. I do believe that if we design interventions from a dialogic standpoint, that is with respect, tenderness, trust - and even Love – we have the greatest chance to create exciting, humane forms of social change.

In my ongoing exploration of what it means to design *dialogic* forms of social change I cross disciplinary boundaries like a well-intentioned bandit. From the theology and anthropological philosophy of Martin Buber I move to the realm of literary criticism to examine the conceptual contribution of Mikhail Bakhtin.

Mikhail Bakhtin

Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) was born in western Russia and raised in Vilnius, Lithuania where he attended high school and studied philology at the local university.⁷⁸ Bakhtin later moved to St. Petersburg, where he continued his studies, focusing on literary criticism along with several friends, who came to be known as “The Bakhtin Circle.” Bakhtin is perhaps best known as a theorist of language and of the novel. His writing has been described by his translator Caryl Emerson as “literary, philosophical, Marxist,” and, when necessary to pass Russian censors, “Stalinist.”⁷⁹ Despite efforts to placate official censors, Bakhtin was arrested in 1929, the same year he published *The Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, and was exiled to Kazakhstan.⁸⁰ Writing about

freedom, even if only in relation to characters in a novel, was subversive enough at that time to warrant persecution by the authorities.

Bakhtin scholar Tzvetan Todorov places Bakhtin's writing in the realm of "theoretical aesthetics and moral philosophy."⁸¹ This last descriptor comes closest to my own interest in Bakhtin's writing. Despite its focus on language and literary works, Bakhtin's writing is full of concepts that can be, and have been, employed outside of literature. In an essay introducing Bakhtin's treatise on Dostoevsky, Wayne Booth stresses the "astonishingly broad enterprise" of Bakhtin's writing.⁸² Bakhtin's ultimate value, Booth writes, is not in having contributed "just one more piece of literary criticism," but rather, it is a "philosophical inquiry into our limited ways of mirroring – and improving – our lives." Bakhtin's work, Booth continues, is a "lifetime inquiry into profound questions about the entire enterprise of thinking about what human life means" Several of Bakhtin's concepts contribute to a vocabulary for describing how to improve our lives and improve how we relate to one another.

Transferring Bakhtin's concepts from the context of literary criticism to the realm of social change gives them more room to fly, and more minds to potentially inhabit. As might be expected, it is Bakhtin's work on dialogue that is of most interest in relation to "dialogic social change." Michael Holquist notes that dialogue is the thread weaving through Bakhtin's life's work. Dialogue, he writes, "is present in one way or another throughout the notebooks he kept from his youth to his death at the age of 80."⁸³

Two of Bakhtin's nearly synonymous concepts, in particular, influenced my thinking on dialogic social change: unfinalizability and openendedness.

Unfinalizability and Openendedness

Bakhtin introduces the concept of unfinalizability in his discussion of characters in Dostoevsky's novels. He contrasts the unfinalizability of Dostoevsky's protagonists with "finalizing secondhand definitions" that are offered, from "monological positions" by other authors, Gogol among them.⁸⁴ What does this mean, concretely? In the context of the novel, the unfinalizability of a character is the result of the author going beyond his or her own experience to reach the "genuine personality" of that character. A character's personality, Bakhtin writes, is "made available only through a *dialogic* penetration of that personality, during which it freely and reciprocally reveals itself."⁸⁵ Thus, according to Bakhtin, the task of the author is to seek and then respect the agency of the novel's protagonists.

The limits of what Bakhtin offers here, conceptually, are the same limits of the static, written page he describes. "How can a character in a novel reveal its own personality?" one might ask. Despite being implausible in literature, the term offers insight for social change practitioners. To be "unfinalizable" is to remain open to contribution and change. A social change intervention designed with these characteristics in mind is *porous*, to return to a term used previously, invitational and ideally participatory. An intervention that does not allow - no, *plan* for - the entry and input of others is not dialogic. Unfinalizability and openendedness make space for the Other and make additional action possible. A billboard, as a means of communication, is finished and closed. It can be "re-opened" by a clever graffiti artist who makes the billboard her canvas, but the billboard is "finalized" in the sense that it was not *designed* for additional input. An example of an "unfinalized" communication mechanism is the

Scenarios from Africa script writing contest. The contest invites Others to participate and relies on the input of the Other, in the form of a submitted script, to create the finalized products in the form of short films.

A dialogic social change intervention, with an Other-orientation and other concepts from Bakhtin in mind, would be an intervention with *generative potential*. Bakhtin writes that the “great dialogue in Dostoevsky is organized as an *unclosed whole* of life itself, life poised *on the threshold*.⁸⁶ A social change intervention is dialogic when it is sufficiently openended to put new, unanticipated action “on the threshold.” To allow for generativity, social change practitioners must relinquish control by designing “unfinalized,” porous interventions.

This Other-orientation is similar, although not synonymous with “reader-response” related theories in literary criticism which acknowledged, for the first time, that readers play an active role in the creation of meaning rather than simply “extracting” (or not) a finalized meaning crafted by the author.⁸⁷ Literary critic Stanley Fish, a major force in reader-response theory, began challenging the notion that the text and the reader are independent from one another and asked the question: “Is the reader or the text the source of meaning?”⁸⁸ For the first time critics had begun to question the authority and static nature of text. The implication of this challenge is that readers became newly recognized as having interpretive agency, as bringing something uniquely their own to every text.

Julio Cortazar’s 1963 novel *Hopscotch*, designed so that the reader can decide various chapter paths to follow, is an example of Other-oriented fiction, much like the “choose your own adventure” children’s books popular during my own childhood.

Hopscotch and the adventure books were Other-oriented because they presupposed an active reader who could not only interpret at will but could also make choices about which chapter sequence to follow within the text. In *The Open Work* Umberto Eco extends the notion of openness to the world of art and poetry. For Eco, an open work of poetry makes possible a multiplicity of meanings. He writes:

The intention is precisely to draw as much poetic meaning as possible out of the very ambiguity of the message: the poet produces emotional tension by suggesting various gestures and emotions from which the reader can choose the ones that, by simulating his own mental associations, best enable him to participate in the emotional situation evoked by the poem.⁸⁹

From the examples Eco provides of “open” works in the visual arts, I interpret Eco’s use of the word “open” to mean something indeterminate, ambiguous and subject to “a large number of perceptive possibilities.”⁹⁰ I agree with that open works allow for multiple interpretations and suggest that open communication designs can allow Others to bring their own meanings and also their own action. My vision of an Other-oriented communication design would allow the other to re-interpret and also re-invent. My vision of openness would allow the Other to read the poem or the painting differently and to also change the work, adding here, erasing there - *acting anew*; putting forth a *new work*.

Examples of Other-oriented designs that enable new action are more notable than numerous. John Cage’s composition *4’33”*, comprised of four minutes and thirty three seconds of silence, resulted in a symphony of sounds made by audience members. Each new presentation of the composition results in an entirely new set of sounds. Performed

in the year it was composed it may have yielded coughs and the sound of rustling dinner jackets whereas today it could result in an irregular chorus of cell phones.⁹¹

Brazilian director Agosto Boal describes an Other-oriented “People’s Theater” in Peru in the 1970s during which the involvement of audience members evolves from passive spectator, to suggesting changes to the script to “sculpting” new behavior for the actors, and finally, becoming actors (spec-actors) themselves.⁹² Boal describes these forms of theater as designed to “demolish the wall that separates actors from spectators,”⁹³ a process also commonly referred to as breaking the ‘fourth wall’ of theater.⁹⁴ The novel *Hopscotch*, the “silent” composition titled 4’33, and the People’s Theater in Peru were all designed with an active Other, a chapter-skipping, coughing, script-changing Other, in mind.

In like fashion, communication interventions are Other-oriented and thus dialogic when they presume the existence of active collaborators and are designed to enable their contribution, re-interpretation and re-invention.

A final theorist of dialogue I want to call upon as I continue to gather vocabulary to use in this study on dialogic forms of social change is Paulo Freire. There is some overlap with the concepts I draw on from Freire and the concepts highlighted by Buber, dialogue and trust foremost among them. But I include Freire because his work contributes more than relevant and helpful vocabulary, his writing reflects an ideological commitment to those suffering from economic inequality, which I admire. Although I do not investigate economic inequality or its root causes in this dissertation, I explore dialogic forms of social change in an explicit attempt to develop potential forms of redress.

Paulo Freire

Educator and activist Paulo Freire (1921-1997), was born in Recife, in northeastern Brazil, to parents who struggled, financially, during his childhood.⁹⁵ In *Letters to Cristina: Reflections on My Life and Work*, Freire acknowledged that the poverty and hunger he experienced during childhood had instilled in him an “active outlook” on life that led him to believe that “the world needed to be changed.”⁹⁶ He writes:

the difficulties I confronted during my childhood and adolescent years caused in me – rather than an accommodating position before challenges – a curious and hopeful openness to the world.”⁹⁷

Freire excelled in school despite his family’s situation and went on to a distinguished, although interrupted, career in public education, which he dedicated to developing a “liberating education” for the working-class.⁹⁸ As a public intellectual who drew extensively on Marxist philosophy and rhetoric, the interruptions to Freire’s career came at the hands of a right wing government who, after coming to power in a military coup, had Freire jailed and later exiled.⁹⁹ Freire’s overt Marxism led to him being branded an “international subversive” who was “spreading foreign ideas throughout the country.”¹⁰⁰ With time and a restored leftist government, Freire’s educational theory, “dialogic pedagogy,” began to gain currency.

While his approach to education, of adults in particular, has been hailed as a successful method, Freire’s life’s work comprises much more than method.¹⁰¹ It was never possible, he writes, “to separate reading words from reading the world...it was also not possible to separate reading the world from writing the world.”¹⁰² Freire’s theorizing

about dialogue informed his pedagogical method, but it also infused and supported his ideological commitment to fighting economic injustice. As Stanley Aronowitz puts it, Freire's conception of dialogue was "never an end in itself but a means to develop a better comprehension about the object of knowledge."¹⁰³ Thus for Freire, as for Buber and Bakhtin, dialogue is much more than method or mere conversation: dialogue is a means, and an orientation toward the Other. It is precisely Freire's orientation to the Other in his writing that is of interest to me as I add texture to the concept of dialogic social change.

Faith, Trust and Hope

In his books, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire offers three terms in association with dialogue that interest me: faith, trust and hope. "Dialogue," he writes, "requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human."¹⁰⁴ Freire believes strongly in the need for faith in others and he is not above repeating himself to drive his point home:

Dialogue further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create...Faith in people is an *a priori* requirement for dialogue; the "dialogical man" believes in others even before he meets them face to face...Whereas faith in humankind is an *a priori* requirement for dialogue, trust is established by dialogue.¹⁰⁵

With trust again cited and posited here as an outgrowth of dialogue, its importance for practitioners becomes clear: a social change intervention, grounded in dialogic principles and fueled by a faith in unseen Others, has the potential to build trust among strangers.

The value of trust among strangers has been theorized by many, among them Robert Putnam and Francis Fukuyama. Putnam describes the benefits of two kinds of trust, “thick trust” formed over years of personal association, and “thin trust” whereupon individuals who do not know one another from direct experience nonetheless give others “the benefit of the doubt.”¹⁰⁶ Fukuyama describes trust in terms of its economic value. High trust societies, he claims, “are able to create large, private business organizations,” whereas low trust societies cannot.¹⁰⁷ For Fukuyama, the greatest disadvantage to the absence of trust is that it keeps people from maximizing economic opportunities. While Fukuyama is obviously making a very different argument than the one Freire is making about the merits of trust, both he and Putnam agree - for hundreds of pages no less - that trust is a crucial ingredient for social change.

Hope is the final dialogue-related term highlighted by Freire that I seek to make use of in this study. For Freire, dialogue and hope, are fundamentally interrelated:

Hope is rooted in men’s incompleteness, from which they move out in constant search – a search which can be carried out only in communion with others.

Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it...Hope, however, does not consist in crossing one’s arms and waiting. As long as I fight, I am moved by hope; and if I fight with hope, then I can wait. As the encounter of women and men seeking to be more fully human, dialogue cannot be carried on in a climate of hopelessness.¹⁰⁸

In a public speech delivered in Argentina, Freire returned to the subject of hope, this time with more positive and also prescriptive language:

As an educator, a politician, and a man who constantly rethinks his educational praxis, I remain profoundly hopeful. I reject immobilization, apathy, and silence...[H]ope is an imperative of human nature. It is not possible to live in plenitude without hope. Conserve the hope.¹⁰⁹

Hope is what can help tide one over while waiting to see if trust in Others bears fruit. Hope also drives design. We design a social change intervention to be dialogic with the hope that the mechanisms we create will succeed in inviting and enabling the action of Others.

Social change interventions are dialogic when guided by respect for and faith in others. In the face of indeterminacy of outcome, hope is the sustaining force while waiting, perhaps futilely, for the invitation to action or reflection to be accepted. “Hope is a natural, possible and necessary impetus in the context of unfinishedness,” Freire writes, now echoing Bakhtin.¹¹⁰ A major thesis of this dissertation is that when we are emboldened by hope, we can *design* unfinishedness. We do so by creating space for Others, by ensuring that they have a role if they want it.

William James and Meliorism

Hope underwrites another term I find useful in my discussion of dialogic social change, which is the “meliorism” of William James. Meliorism, according to James, is midway between optimism and pessimism - a position that views the betterment of society as “neither necessary nor impossible,” but simply *possible*.¹¹¹ James describes a melioristic universe as a “pluralism of independent powers.”¹¹² If intervention designers

embrace meliorism and believe in the possible, they will orient their designs to invite the “independent powers” to collaborate to help bring the possible into being.

Dialogic social change is melioristic in orientation while respecting the individual’s right to choose his/her own course of action. Freire echoes James by acknowledging the importance of believing that change is possible: He describes conviction that change is possible as a type of knowledge. He writes:

the future is seen not as inexorable but as something that is constructed by people engaged together in life, in history. It’s the knowledge that sees history as possibility and not as already determined. The world is not finished. It is always in the process of becoming... My role in the world is not simply that of someone who registers what occurs but of someone who has an input into what happens.¹¹³

Hope is a word not frequently articulated when developing social change interventions.

One would be ill advised to use this word while addressing a financial partner, for example: “We have designed a very inviting intervention and we hope it works.”

Financial contributors want a priori proof or great likelihood of success. I believe that the type of design required for high probabilities of success are so rigid, controlled and closed that it leaves no room for the Other and thus assign the Other to a passive role. This vision of change involves informing, persuading and paternalistically bestowing upon the Other. An insistence on knowing and controlling rather than hoping and trusting has led to forms of change that are uninspiring at best and damaging at worst.

To do for Others when they can do for themselves is paternalistic. To do while making space for the Other to act and create anew, is dialogic. Build the Field of Dreams

with the Other in mind: hope they will come, trust they will come, *make it possible* for them to come.

Why Are “Dialogic” Approaches to Social Change Needed?

While efforts to affect human behavior through communication go back as far as Aristotle, my discussion here will trace communication for social change only as far as “development communication,” its immediate predecessor.¹¹⁴ In *Communication for Development in the Third World* Srinivas Melkote and H.L. Steeves trace the use of communication to improve the living conditions of society, beginning with Post World War II efforts based on theories of modernization which privileged economic development fostered by persuasive, top-down models of communication promoted via mass media and information disseminating “extension agents.”¹¹⁵

This “pro-persuasion” model described by Melkote and Steeves was used extensively by government agencies intervening in the fields of rural agriculture and health and operating under the assumption that the innovation or technique being promoted was beneficial and useful.¹¹⁶ Innovative and “modern” technologies were presumed to “develop” traditional societies. In *Mass Media and National Development*, for example, Wilbur Schramm describes the role of mass media as “bringing what is distant near and making what is strange understandable [in order to] bridge the transition between traditional and modern society.”¹¹⁷ The mass media, he writes, “can contribute substantially to the amount and kinds of information available to the people of a developing country.”¹¹⁸ For Schramm, *information* could lead to national development.

When Melkote and Steeves refer to this model of development as “pro persuasion” and “pro-innovation,” they are pointing out that those who aim to persuade

by disseminating information about technological innovations do so with the belief that they know what is best for Others. And because information is seen as the key to development, rather than, say, access to land or other material and economic indicators, additional biases are embedded in the “pro persuasion” model, which Melkote and Steeves cite as also problematic. The “pro-mass media” bias is based on the assumption that the rapid and widespread dissemination of information is crucial and the “pro-literacy” bias stems from the belief that if only people could read, they could access this information and thus become modern and “developed.”¹¹⁹ These biases are apparent in the work of Schramm, and figure perhaps most prominently in Daniel Lerner’s 1958 book *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*.¹²⁰ Health communication scholar Collins Airhihenbuwa observes that terms like modernization and development are ideologically laden:

Modernization has been nothing more than an attempt at Westernization and ideological containment of Southern nations in the name of development...not all modernization leads to development. For example, nuclear waste dumping and infant formula production continue to lead to increased morbidity and mortality, resulting in societal regression in conditions of living.¹²¹

Airhihenbuwa echoes the criticisms made by Melkote and Steeves and takes them a step further, replacing more benign terms like “bias” with references to subjugation and colonization.¹²² Thus, whether advocating for more information, as with Schramm and Lerner, or promoting mass consumption as the culmination of progress in the case of economist W. W. Rostow, with his “stages of development” model, the modernization paradigm did not go unchallenged.¹²³

Preceding the critiques made by Airhihenbuwa, Melkote and Steeves (among others), was an insightful evaluation issued from within the modernization paradigm itself, by Everett Rogers. Rogers is the author of the classic social science text *Diffusion of Innovations* and his work, namely his aggregation of diffusion studies and related theories, is closely associated with modernization-era thinking. Yet, as early as 1976, Rogers argues against the assumptions and biases implicit in modernization theories. In his article *Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm*, Rogers cautions that the current standard of measuring development by quantifiable economic growth was a mistake with far-reaching consequences. He writes:

Political stability and unity were thought to be necessary for continued economic growth, and authoritarian leadership increasingly emerged, often in the form of military dictatorships... Further, what was quantified about development was usually just growth, measured in the aggregate or on a per capita basis.¹²⁴

Rogers describes the exclusive focus on economic growth as a “growth first and let equality come later” mentality and noted that countries that failed to modernize were blamed for their “traditional” ways by ethnocentric economists and researchers.¹²⁵ In his critique, Rogers observes that communication can play an important role in shifting from “top down” development approaches to community level “self development” approaches by helping to circulate the accomplishments of local groups that have valuable experience to share.¹²⁶ Roger’s critique of the economic-growth-as-development perspective was included in an edited book alongside theorists from Latin America and India, notably Luis Beltrán, Juan Diaz Bordenave and Bella Mody, who made related arguments. This

book was one of the first to challenge the modernization paradigm from a communication perspective.

A report prepared in 1980 for the United Nations by 1974 Nobel laureate Sean MacBride and a team of international colleagues presented an additional challenge. The “MacBride Report,” as the document came to be known, calls for a “New World Information Order” which would involve “more justice, more equity, more reciprocity in information exchange, less dependence in communication flows [and] less downwards diffusion of messages, more self reliance and cultural identity, more benefits for all mankind.”¹²⁷ The report was highly critical of the one way flow of information between “developed and developing” countries, which led to a gap between the “fully informed” who decide what information to make available and the “under-informed” who are powerless to address the imbalance.¹²⁸ The MacBride Commission argued for the “decolonization of information” to reverse the dependence of developing nations on more developed nations for “the collection and diffusion of data necessary for scientific purposes, technological innovations, commercial needs, trade development,” and so on.¹²⁹ In essence, the Report’s authors argued that on top of economic disadvantages, “developing nations” had little or no control over the mass media and were dependent on “developed” nations for access to information.

The word “dependence” became central to critiques of the modernization era’s “communication for development” paradigm. Many scholars, most notably in Latin America, began developing theoretical perspectives to describe dependence as a result of cultural imperialism and thus came to be known as the “dependency school.” One key figure was André Gunder Frank, who described dependency as the result of unequal

relations between the developed “metropolis” and “satellite” nations, who serve mainly as a source of raw materials.¹³⁰

The “World Systems” perspective put forward by Immanuel Wallerstein continued this line of thinking, substituting “core-periphery” for “metropolis-satellite,” but retaining the essential argument of the powerful extracting resources and cheap labor from the powerless.

Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart extended the dependency school’s critique by shifting focus from economics to mass communication. Their 1972 book *How to Read Donald Duck: Mass Communication and Colonialism* outlined how foreign mass media, for which Disney comic books are a stand in, promote their vision of reality through the “cultural colonialism” of Latin America.¹³¹ For Dorfman and Mattelart, to accept Disney’s vision of the world is “to swallow and digest ones exploited condition.”¹³² Mass communication, rather than being a means to progress and development as argued by the likes of Schramm and Lerner, is instead presented here as a form of imperialism and domination. Another voice from Latin America strongly echoing this sentiment is Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano. His 1973 book, *Open Veins of Latin America*, describes development as “a voyage with more shipwrecks than navigators,”¹³³ and had its own “fifteen minutes of fame” in April 2009 when Hugo Chavez gave it as a gift to Barack Obama at the Summit of the Americas.

In his book *Investigation of Latin American Communication*, Bolivian scholar Luis Beltrán notes, however, that the disparity in power between producers and consumers of mass media is not a purely international affair. According to Beltrán, many communication scholars have indicated that even within Latin America there exists an

“oligarchic and monopolistic” mass media structure with ownership of media outlets concentrated in only five Latin American countries. This consolidation, Beltrán argues, resulted in a form of regional media dependency.¹³⁴

Eventually, the pendulum which had swung theoretically from modernization to dependency theories between the 1950s and 1970s began then to swing away from dependency as the defining characteristic of communication for development.

Communication scholar Thomas Jacobson questions the usefulness of dependency theory given that it is “concerned less with outlining directions for progress than with explaining structural imbalances of power.”¹³⁵ Jacobson points out the inadequacy of merely describing inequities in power and access to information flow, and makes a case for the need for “theories of participation.”¹³⁶ Jesús Martín Barbero observes that the move away from theories of modernization and dependency and towards participation was part of a “rediscovery of the popular” in developing nations.¹³⁷ In alignment with this perspective, Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron notes the increasing role of participation in development in his volume documenting grass roots media projects:

discussion on participatory communication has become popular since the 1980s...with the end of authoritarian regimes in Africa and Asia during the past two decades, new experiences of participatory communication for social change have also blossomed in these regions.¹³⁸

The shift in focus from dependency to participation yielded a concomitant shift in terminology from communication for *development* to communication for *social change*. People and societies were no longer referred to as needing to be modernized nor “developed,” but rather to be involved and mobilized. Colombian anthropologist Arturo

Escobar advocates that scholars pay more attention to grassroots movements, focusing not on “development alternatives” but rather “alternatives to development.”¹³⁹ Escobar imagines grassroots movements as part of the slow process of “unmaking development” while working toward a “post development era.”¹⁴⁰

As the importance of participation is increasingly recognized, the term “development” is gradually being replaced, although not in all sectors, with the less linear and evolutionary term “social change.”¹⁴¹ Postcolonial scholar Robert Young credits Escobar and his colleagues with developing Post Development Theory, “people-centered movements” that promote change “from below rather than from above.”¹⁴² Young notes that “Development Studies has been one of the last fields to have become self-conscious as a discipline” and thus has remained mired in “euro-centric assumptions about the universality of progress and modernity in their Western forms.”¹⁴³ Those who have become conscious of the assumptions embedded in the term “development” have, like Escobar, begun searching for new terminology.

Denise Gray-Felder, formerly of the Rockefeller Foundation, established the Communication for Social Change Consortium (CFSC) has been active in this search for a new way of describing and a new way of doing. She refers to the CFSC Consortium as a platform for promoting “the next phase of communication for a cause.”¹⁴⁴ Together with James Deane of the BBC World Service Trust, Gray-Felder authored a position paper defining communication for social change, and differentiating this form of communication from top-down development approaches that view communication as merely a means “to inform and persuade.”¹⁴⁵ They write:

Communication for social change is a distinct way of doing communications – and one of the few approaches that can be sustained. Such sustainability is largely due to the fact that *ownership of both the message and the medium – the content and the process – resides with the individuals or communities affected* (emphasis added).¹⁴⁶

The authors of the CFSC position paper emphasize that communication for social change involves “direct, many-to-many communications which spring from the affected communities.”¹⁴⁷

It is here that my own ideas diverge, albeit slightly, from the *communication for social change* perspective and as a result, I feel the need to propose alternative terminology. My interests, and the cases I have set out to describe in this study, do not necessarily spring from the “affected” communities, and they do not *require* direct participation, although they are greatly enhanced by it. I suggest that dialogic communication interventions are those that have an inviting design, and thus have great participatory *potential*. A dialogic communication intervention need not be designed by the community members it seeks to involve – it *can* come from outside, or “above,” to use the language of hierarchy. A dialogic communication intervention is designed with agentic Others in mind, but in some cases, it can survive without their participation.

The first case I examine in this dissertation, The Billionaires for Bush, is a good example of an intervention that stands alone – that does not need new collaborators – but that nonetheless made collaboration and new action possible. The Billionaires created and made available materials that led to an organic growth from one to seventy chapters in one year. Had they not grown, I would still describe their intervention as dialogic. It was

their offering of material to Others that warranted their inclusion as a case study in this dissertation. The determining factor, as I assess these cases, in whether an intervention is dialogic is not participation itself but rather the act of making participation *possible* and making new, unplanned-for action, *possible*.

Direct participation has been heralded as a necessary correction to models of development and communication that, as previously discussed, view change and innovation as necessarily emanating from the core (or the global North) out to a periphery (or global South). Rural sociologist Robert Chambers has dedicated his professional career to promoting increased participation of the poor in development efforts. In his book, *Whose Reality Counts, Putting the First Last*, he describes the objective of development as “well being for all” and argues that a key component in achieving well being is participation.¹⁴⁸ Sustainable development approaches, he writes, should include: “facilitating participation, with approaches which are bottom up with processes of learning, rather than top-down with blue prints.”¹⁴⁹ Paulo Freire also refers to “top-down” approaches in his discussion of different methods of teaching. The name he gives to vertical, “top-down” teaching approaches is the “banking” method. The banking method limits the role of the “recipient” to that of a passive storage receptacle while the teacher’s task is to “fill’ the students with the contents of his narration.”¹⁵⁰ Participatory approaches attempt to reverse the top-down, core-periphery flow of information and innovation. Chambers states that the most important “reversal” is: “from etic to emic, from the knowledge, categories and values of outsider professionals to those of insider local people.”¹⁵¹

While I agree with Chambers about the importance of facilitating participation in social change efforts, I am not convinced that it matters *who* designs and promotes an intervention. What matters most, in my view, is that people have the opportunity to join and contribute to social change efforts, to act as *agents* in their own communities. Albert Bandura has described agency as “intentionally making things happen by one's actions.”¹⁵² I prefer the word agency because of this focus on *action*, which I see as a better descriptor for what I aim to foster than the word participation. I would characterize attending a meeting as participation, and attending a meeting dressed as a Billionaire in order to sing an ironic song of your own creation an *action*.

The term participation can indeed be used to describe action. However, it is often applied to the most passive forms action, such as simple presence or silent assent. Take, for example, the common practice in business of inviting employees to a meeting at which management presents new ideas and asks for employee “buy in” and “participation.” What passes here for employee participation is in reality just rubber-stamping what has already been decided upon by management. In other words, power dynamics in the workplace often require “participation” but do not invite new, unplanned for action.

Chambers concedes that the popularity of participatory approaches has led to the formalization of participation as a *requirement* by some funding agencies. (We demand an inclusive approach!) Of course, notions of satisfaction and agency are entirely lost when participation is required just as democracy loses meaning and the likelihood of being sustainable when imposed through violent means. Uma Kothari, writing in

Participation: The New Tyranny?, notes that participatory approaches are often used as a means of control. She writes:

Those people who have the greatest reason to challenge and confront power relations and structures are brought, or even bought, through the promise of development assistance, into the development process in ways that disempower them to change the prevailing hierarchies and inequalities in society.¹⁵³

For Kothari, participation can become a form of “inclusionary control” wherein seeking the input and participation of others is designed to induce conformity.¹⁵⁴ Indeed, as early as 1969, civic participation scholar Sherry Arnstein had developed a “Ladder of Citizen Participation,” in order to distinguish between manipulation on one end of the continuum, informing, consulting and placating in the middle, and finally “citizen control” as the zenith of participation.¹⁵⁵

In recognition of the limitations of participation, I offer here the term “dialogic social change” to supplement other participatory and other “post development” social change approaches. The term “dialogic” is put forward to describe a new orientation, which both encompasses and reframes “participation.” In my effort to distinguish dialogic and participatory approaches, I return to William James and his conception of *meliorism*.

Meliorism, you will recall, is the view that a better world is neither necessary nor impossible, but simply *possible*. In like fashion, a dialogic approach is one in which participation is neither necessary nor impossible, but simply made possible. I now briefly introduce the three cases that will be featured in this dissertation, each of which will help illustrate the variety of interesting actions that dialogic interventions make possible. It is

my hope that one day, designers of communication interventions will discuss with one another this question: “How can we design this social change intervention to be more *dialogic*?” I stress, once again, that there is no recipe for social change and dialogic social change is no exception. Yet there are certainly interventions that in their diversity of approaches and contexts, can serve as models. In short, they offer lessons we can learn from – lessons that can be adapted and refashioned to suit our own purpose and ecology. I present here three such models.

The Cases: A Brief Summary

Each of the cases I have chosen for this study has been included because I believe that their *designs* depart significantly and creatively from traditional, less Other-oriented, social change efforts. Each design choice I highlight in the interventions reflect what Gregory Bateson would call a “difference which makes a difference.”¹⁵⁶ These differences in design make a difference because of what they invite and what they make possible, notably, action and innovation. Here I want to bring in another Batesonian concept to propose *how* dialogic interventions make action and innovation possible. They do so by appealing to the *readiness* of the Other. Here the word “appeal” does double duty: to convey *addressing* the Other and also *interesting* the Other.

Bateson describes *readiness* as “uncommitted potentiality for change.”¹⁵⁷ I embrace readiness, and I believe that there are talented Others in the world, who are waiting to commit their potential. True, some may already be acting and creating their own projects. Some may be uninterested or too busy to join a new effort. But some may be ready and willing. And when the right intervention comes along, the right Field of Dreams, they will come. My view is melioristic; I believe that dialogic social change is

possible. Indeed, I have seen a new way of doing in action and on three different continents, no less. I hope to render my conception of dialogic social change attractive, which is a word I use consciously as a replacement for prescriptive. Can one *prescribe* respect and invitation? I think it unwise and likely unsuccessful. The word attractive is useful for its dual meaning as both aesthetically appealing and also functioning by pull. I recognize that what is perceived as attractive, or practical, by one individual may not be to another. For this reason, I provide three intervention-cases, each with a dialogic design involving different actors operating in different contexts. My aim is to demonstrate that dialogic social change is not uniform and I hope to make the approach attractive to readers.

Each intervention (or set of interventions within the “case”) illustrates what happens when an intervention is designed to be *dialogic*, that is, when an intervention is designed with the Other in mind. The cases are contextually and temporally bounded, but the tools and approaches they illustrate, and the communication lessons they offer, might appeal to the readiness of those who learn of them. And what, I wonder, might *the lessons* of these cases make possible? Only you, the reader, can answer.

First, I analyze the strategic communication of the “Billionaires for Bush,” a group of playful and ironic protesters, most active in New York City preceding the 2004 U.S. Presidential election. In this case I focus on the ability of the Billionaires to creatively inspire and invite civic participation, in the form of spontaneously organized “spin off” Billionaires for Bush chapters, across the United States. This case weaves in literature ranging from Pragmatism to theories of social movements and performance.

The second case I examine is “Scenarios from Africa,” an HIV/AIDS-related communication process in Senegal that includes a script writing contest for young people implemented voluntarily by a vast network of community based organizations. In my dissertation I discuss how the contest promotes youth agency in Senegal, allowing contest participants to shift from their traditional role as *targets* of information campaigns to instead become *creators* of HIV prevention content. For this case, I borrow from economics and evolutionary biology to introduce theories of complexity and public health related literature on community mobilization.

Finally, I present the “invitational” Cultura Ciudadana (civic culture) communication strategy employed by Antanas Mockus, the former mayor of Bogotá Colombia. The Bogotá case explores how the Mockus administration creatively promoted civic education and participation by, for example, distributing soccer referee-type cards to encourage citizens to replace violence and aggression with playful symbols when communicating with fellow citizens. This case draws on literature from the fields of political science, rhetoric, performance studies and social capital. The dissertation explores the communication model at the center of each case and puts the three cases into conversation with each other to illustrate and theorize the concept of “dialogic social change,” which I am developing and putting forth as a potential addition to “toolkits” used by policy makers and social change practitioners. Each of the cases involves a communication strategy designed to invite and inspire *action*, and each case is rooted in the notion the Other should be respected and is a capable and potentially creative being.

Chapter 2: The Billionaires for Bush

The setting is New York City during the 2004 Republican National Convention.¹⁵⁸ At Grand Central Station something out of the ordinary is taking place. Men in tuxedos and top hats are waltzing along with women in shiny floor length ball gowns. Grand Central, as usual, is busy – some commuters do not stop to make sense of this outburst of ballroom dancing, others slow down, some linger. The dancing couples are part of a group called Billionaires for Bush, as signaled by the red, white and blue sign propped on one end of the “dance floor.” A few blocks uptown, a group of Billionaires are congregating in front of the Plaza Hotel, where at 12pm sharp the “Million Billionaires March” will begin. Name tags help us identify the Billionaires’ sharpest dressers: “Meg A. Bucks” is the one with the wide brimmed hat and ten inch cigarette holder while “Frida Market” and “Iona Lott” sport pearls and tiaras.



Figure 2: Billionaire with bejeweled tiara.
Photo: Fred Askew, used with permission

Billionaires “Dee Regulation” and “Ollie Garky” distribute to passers-by a flyer, which explains the purpose of the gathering: “We will converge on the streets of New York for a massive Million Billionaire March to celebrate President Bush’s favoritism of the corporate elite.”¹⁵⁹



JOIN BILLIONAIRES FOR BUSH AT THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION!

Formal attire required for all events.



BILLIONAIRE CROQUET IN THE PARK

Sunday, August 29, 10am, Central Park (specific location TBA)

500,000 anti-Bush protesters will be barred from Central Park so that we can play croquet. (Part of our "Keep off the Grass" campaign to privatize Central Park.) Come play!

MILLION BILLIONAIRE MARCH

Sunday, August 29, 12 noon, in front of the Plaza Hotel (SW corner 59th St. & 5th Ave.)

Billionaires for Bush from all across America — from Beverly Hills to Grosse Pointe to Wall Street — will converge on the streets of New York for a massive "Million Billionaire March" to celebrate President Bush's favoritism towards the corporate elite.

BILLIONAIRES ON BROADWAY

Sunday, August 29, 4:30pm, Theater District

Help us welcome Republican delegates to New York's theater district on their first night on the town.

TAUNTING OF THE UNEMPLOYED

Wednesday, September 1, 8am, "The Line"

from Wall Street, up Broadway to 34th St. Roving squads of Billionaires for Bush will taunt the world's longest line of unemployed workers.

VIGIL FOR CORPORATE WELFARE

Monday, August 30, 12 noon, Union Square & again at 4pm, United Nations

Join us as we bear happy witness to the no-bid contracts, tax-abatements, corporate subsidies, and public property giveaways that the Bush administration has bestowed upon us over the last four years.

CORONATION BALL

Wednesday, September 1, 9pm to 4am, The Frying Pan, Pier 63

Billionaire ball extravaganza to re-appoint George Bush. 21+. Sliding scale from \$15 to \$1,000,000.

BILLIONAIRE

FLASHMOBS!

Tuesday, August 31, all day, details TBA (see right)

Only bands of Billionaires will roam the streets of New York, stopping for three-martini lunches, spontaneous outbursts of ballroom dancing and en-masse shining of shoes.



Some details TBA & subject to change. Check www.billionairesforbush.com/rnc and B4B hotline 1-216-803-0990 for latest info.

See other side to find out more...

Figure 3: Billionaire RNC flyer.

Source: www.billionairesforbush.com

When the March begins, a sea of Billionaires carrying red, white and blue signs descend

Fifth Avenue announcing their cause to the masses.

Dick Cheney is Innocent!

Leave no billionaire behind!

Four more wars!

The signs include the address for the Billionaires' website, where interested individuals can find a list of scheduled events, a series of downloadable signs and even a "Be a Billionaire" manual for would be Billionaires interested in joining or starting a Billionaires chapter. Some of the signs bear slogans left over from an earlier Tax Day event, when Billionaires grouped in front their local post office to support tax payers. "Thank you for paying our fair share of taxes!" the signs read.



Figure 4: Sign and bumper sticker with web reference.

Source: www.billionairesforbush.com

Other groups are in view on Fifth Avenue. These groups have hand-made signs and their messages tend toward anger and indignation.

"Bush Lies!"

"No more blood for oil!"

Some of these other groups who are protesting at the Republican National Convention are anti-Bush, others are anti-Republican and some are anti-war, or a combination of all three. There are many more in the "anti" camps than Billionaires, and many of them

were getting arrested as the Billionaires prepared their peaceful march.¹⁶⁰ Once the Billionaires began marching down Fifth Avenue, by-standers and “anti” groups jeer or cheer according to whether they perceive the Billionaires’ political orientation to be in alignment with their own. Some republicans cheer for the Billionaires. Some anti-Bush protesters cheer, some jeer. Others remain silent, uncertain of the appropriate response. Should anyone ask the Billionaires who they are, organizers have suggested the following language for their members:

“We are the 1% who own more than 40% of the wealth in this great land!”

“We are the 10% who give 90% of the campaign contributions!”

“We are a who's who of corporate America and we are organized!”¹⁶¹

The mix of cheers and jeers make one thing apparent: the Billionaires are not going unnoticed. The Billionaires’ activities quickly capture the attention of the press. *National Public Radio* includes them in their “Republican National Convention Diary” and they are featured in includes in a *New Yorker* photo essay titled *Democracy 2004* by renowned photographer Richard Avedon.¹⁶² Other articles appear in *USA Today*, *St. Petersburg Times* and the *New Republic*.



Figure 5: *The Billionaires for Bush* in *The New Yorker*.
Photo: Richard Avedon

Journalist Robert Trigaux of the *St. Petersburg Times* article explains the true purpose of the Billionaires:

[The group] calls itself a national network of corporate lobbyists, decadent heiresses, Halliburton CEOs and other winners under George W. Bush's economic policies. Billionaires for Bush is anything but pro-Bush, of course...It's a national protest group that uses street theater and humor to ridicule how the Bush administration has promoted changes in tax laws and business rules in favor of big corporations and the wealthy at the expense of average Americans.

In his article, Trigaux reveals what some who encounter the Billionaires failed to realize, the ironic nature of the Billionaires. The Billionaires are not really for Bush, but they

pretend to be, so they can highlight what they perceive to be Bush’s loyalties and also call attention to economic inequality, in general. It was the playful nature of the Billionaires and their use of humor that first captured my interest. My interest in the Billionaires began with the 2004 Republication National Convention in New York and has continued to this day. In the next section, I describe how I formalized my inquiry into the Billionaires, progressively, over several years and with some helpful detours into other creative protest interventions. Later in the chapter, I discuss what I learned as a result of my inquiry. In what follows, I outline how I have arrived at my current understanding of the Billionaires.

A Gradual Inquiry

In 2004, an acquaintance of mine in New York City told me about seeing “dancing Billionaires” at Grand Central Station. I was living in New York at the time, but had not come across the group. I searched for them on the internet, found their website, and was able to read about their mission and strategy as well as numerous articles archived in the “Pressroom” section of the website. Two years passed before I returned to the Billionaire in earnest. I had been doing research on the use of humor in HIV prevention messages and I decided to continue studying humor, this time in the political context. I got in touch with the Billionaires via contact information on the website and soon I was corresponding with Billionaire co-founder Andrew Boyd, who agreed to an interview.

I traveled to New York two times to meet with Boyd, spending several hours each visit discussing the Billionaires.¹⁶³ On the second visit, Boyd invited me to observe a training session he was offering for young organizers from the Working Families Party

on various creative techniques for getting messages into the media¹⁶⁴ At this session I learned more about the Billionaires and how they operate and I learned about Boyd's past as an organizer for United for a Fair Economy. Most importantly, the training session taught me that the Billionaires are committed to sharing what they do and how they do it with other organizers. This fact would eventually become central to my investigation although I did not realize it at the time.

Boyd introduced me a whole new world in the form of literature on creative activism. He recommended books written by activists he admires, like Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, and he shared two of his own articles, in which he theorizes the "actions" (his preferred term) of the Billionaires and their potential impact. After my initial meeting with Boyd, I ordered *The Activist Cookbook: Creative Actions for a Fair Economy*, a book he had written in his "pre-Billionaire" days. This book helped me understand that when it comes to organizing, the Billionaires were standing on a lot of creative shoulders. Later in this chapter I will discuss some of these "creative shoulders" in greater detail.

Boyd also suggested that I contact Angelique Haguerud, an Anthropologist at Rutgers University who had done extensive field research on the Billionaires in New York and in Seattle and was writing a book about her experience.¹⁶⁵ Through correspondence and phone interviews with Dr. Haguerud, I gained a much better perspective on the scope of the Billionaires and how they had grown, in number of chapters, during the 2004 election year.¹⁶⁶

As I read and learned more about the Billionaires I came to realize that their use of humor and irony did not make them unique. In fact, thanks to Boyd, I came to learn of

several other playful and ironic protest groups that were currently active: The Yes Men, The Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army, Church Ladies for Choice, Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping, to name just a handful. I also learned of historical precedents informing the work of current groups: The Yippies and the Guerrilla Girls in the United States, the Provos and the Kabouters in the Netherlands.¹⁶⁷ And yet, despite the wealth of examples of playful protest, I kept returning to the Billionaires. I felt that there was something special about the Billionaires from a communication standpoint and so I continued my inquiry. I got in contact with another active Billionaire, Marco Ceglie, who had traveled with the Billionaires in 2004 during the “Get on the Limo” tour of several swing states and conducted a lengthy phone interview.¹⁶⁸ Ceglie suggested that I speak with Megan Kiefer, a filmmaker who made a documentary about the Billionaires’ 2004 travels.¹⁶⁹

My discussions with the Billionaires and the individuals who were studying and documenting their intervention greatly increased and shaped my understanding and supplemented the dozens of articles and book chapters I had read. What I learned in these discussions and readings explain why, over the course of learning about dozens of creative and playful interventions, the Billionaires captured most of my attention. What I had discovered over the course of four years of inquiry was that the *design* of Billionaires intervention made *new action* possible, which is not the case with the other protest groups I studied. As an intervention that is Other-oriented and designed to make new action possible, I interpret the Billionaires as dialogic. I arrived at this interpretation through what I can only describe as a “hermeneutic spiral,”¹⁷⁰ a progressive understanding that evolved (and continues to evolve) as I moved though time and alternated my attention

between documents and interviews, through the lens of my own experience. Here I have paraphrased Ivan Brady who uses the term “progressive hermeneutic,” which he describes as “more of a spiral than the classic “hermeneutic circle,” to accommodate the accretions and shifts of knowledge that occur though time.”¹⁷¹ The remainder of this chapter aims to illustrate my current understanding using concrete examples, references to relevant literature and layers of my own analysis.

A Closer Look at the Billionaires

The Billionaires for Bush describe themselves as a “grassroots media campaign” that employs humor, street theater and other creative actions to draw attention to issues of economic injustice, campaign finance abuses and the favoritism shown by the Bush administration to wealthy elites and corporations.¹⁷² At the peak of their activity in 2004, the Billionaires orchestrated regular appearances in the mainstream media, as amply reflected in the “pressroom” section of their website.¹⁷³ Their ability to creatively use of humor and irony to get press attention has been amply and ably commented upon by Billionaire Andrew Bush,¹⁷⁴ academics¹⁷⁵ and by members of the press themselves.¹⁷⁶ In this chapter, I focus on the design of the Billionaires intervention, which I present here as the “Billionaires for Bush communication model.” I first present the model and then follow with a longer discussion and illustrations of each of its components.

The Billionaires for Bush Communication Model

The communication model of the Billionaires is a circuit comprised of three essential parts: action (A), mediation (M), and remediation (R). Stated briefly, the Billionaires lead with a public action, waltzing in Grand Central Station dressed as Billionaires, for example. The actions (A) are designed to attract media attention (M), and

are usually preceded by a press release to help ensure a media presence.¹⁷⁷ Given their playfulness and clever use of irony, the Billionaires have largely succeeded in smuggling their messages into the media. When articles or photos of their actions receive press coverage, the Billionaires promptly upload links to the coverage to their own website, (www.billionairesforbush.com), thus remediating (R) the news of their actions.

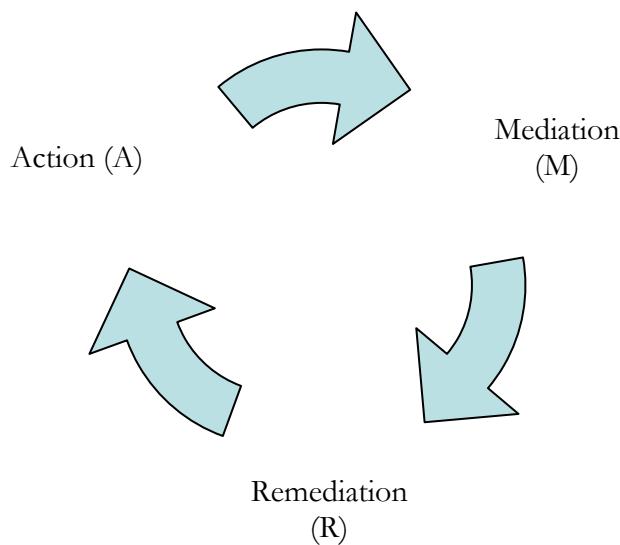


Figure 6: The Billionaires for Bush communication model.

As I discuss the model in detail, I will argue that the communication circuit, comprised of (A)-(M)-(R), has the potential to generate new action (NA), which can then set off a new circulation of communication in a geographic location distinct from the initial circuit. In fact, the “invitational” nature of the Billionaires model is such that any part of the circular model can and has inspired new action. Recalling the terminology used by Foss and Griffin that described “invitational rhetoric” as an “offering” of perspectives, I suggest that the Billionaires model of communication involves an “offering” of different modes

of action. The actions inspire new action, but it is the circulation of the actions via the media and the availability of tools on the website that make the new action possible.

Let us now consider what makes the Billionaires circular model of communication more novel than, say, an outing by Paris Hilton (A) that gets photographed by US Weekly (M) and then uploaded to a third-party gossip website (R). First, the *intent* of the action is obviously quite different: one has a deliberate political purpose and the other does not. Second, the *effect* of the action being mediated is also different: in the case of the Billionaires, the mediation of the action functions as a “meme,” a term first used by Richard Dawkins in his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene*. Dawkins proposed the neologism “meme” (rhymes with dream) as an abbreviation of the Greek word “mimeme,” which for Dawkins conveys “a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of *imitation*” (emphasis in the original).¹⁷⁸ By way of examples, Dawkins cites hit songs, catch-phrases and fashion as “memes.” He adds:

Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation.¹⁷⁹

The Billionaires’ actions function as a meme when they are circulated by the press and have an effect on others, which becomes manifest when the Billionaires actions are imitated. In contrast, a photo of Paris in a magazine is just that – there is no “secondary function” of yet another celebrity photo. Further, the remediation of celebrity gossip rarely inspires new and innovative celebrity “actions.” I belabor this point because I want to signal how the Billionaires’ communication model differs from other forms of

mediation and remediation. This difference stems from the fact that the mediation and remediation of the Billionaires' actions does indeed inspire new action, which is also politic in nature.

The Billionaires for Bush communication model is dialogic in orientation because it invites and enables new creative activism. A Billionaire action in New York is not merely replicated in Tucson; it is taken as a base-line and then tweaked, adorned, repackaged, set to music and acted anew. I am suggesting that this *generative* component of the Billionaires for Bush model is what makes them different, and in fact more instructive than other playful “protesters” or strategic media campaigns. Informed, in part, by Noam Chomsky’s “Generative Grammar,” performance studies scholar Bryant Keith Alexander appropriates the word *generative* to describe “how sentences are actually produced” when writing an autobiography.¹⁸⁰ Applied to the genre of autobiographical performance, the term *generative* also refers to the “audience reflexivity,” the individual audience members’ reflections on “their own lived experiences” that is produced by the performance.¹⁸¹ Victor Turner describes a reflexive audience as “heroes” in their own drama, “at once actor and audience.”¹⁸² This view of the audience acknowledges their ability to generate, to go beyond the passive role of onlooker.

Art historian David Davies chooses the word *generative* to describe how artists actually make art. He describes the act of creation as “generative performance,” a performance which generates a product, the work of art.¹⁸³ My use of the term *generative* differs slightly from the usage just described. I use the term *generative* together with *potential* to describe an act that inspires or enables another related act. An intervention

with *generative potential* is an intervention where action can lead to *new action*. The distinction I am making here is between reflexivity (Alexander) and action in the first instance and self-action (Davies) and the action of Others in the second. I acknowledge that reflexivity can be a transformative process, and for this reason, I propose the term “generative potential” to make possibility of transformation explicit. In the following section, I describe in greater depth what I mean by *generative potential* and where it fits within the Billionaires for Bush communication model.

Action and Mediation

Social and political activists have a long tradition of employing physical tools to get media attention and mobilize public support for their cause. In the 1970s The Yippies distributed leaflets and wrote books with provocative titles like *Revolution for the Hell of it, Steal this Book and Do it! Scenarios of the Revolution*¹⁸⁴ Gran Fury/Act Up commandeered billboards and literally plastered the streets with posters to raise AIDS awareness – to make AIDS *visible* - in the late 1980s.¹⁸⁵ The Civil Rights movement and subsequent organizations like EarthFirst! engaged in non-violent direct action, using their bodies strategically to occupy lunch counters or block bulldozers.¹⁸⁶

Similar to these aforementioned protesters, the Billionaires also use their bodies, but in a different, more playful way. Their top hats, tiaras and carefully crafted messages create cognitive dissonance at protests. Encountering them on the street, one is likely to question what they see. *Billionaires* at a protest? The slogans might sound familiar, but the words have been changed. “Leave no Billionaire behind” recalls the U.S. Department of Education’s “Leave no Child Behind” legislation. “Four more Wars” sounds like the oft-chanted convention slogan: “Four more Years!” The Billionaires aim to cause

confusion at protests, and they are not alone. The Missile Dick Chicks, the Raging Grannies and the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA), to name just a few, have also been known to turn a few perplexed heads as they march alongside more earnest, sometimes angry, “traditional” protesters.¹⁸⁷ Joining these groups in creative action are the Yes Men, who, similar to the Billionaires, take visibility and media coverage as a major objective. The Yes Men are best known for having successfully passed themselves off as World Trade Organization representatives and giving “elaborate and outrageous lectures about WTO policy” at economic policy conferences.¹⁸⁸ When the prank gets replayed in the mainstream media, the Yes Men have achieved their goal of exposing the “institutions doing horrible things at everyone else’s expense.” Also like the Billionaires, the Yes Men remediate their press coverage on their website and have created two humorous documentaries to capture and further disseminate news of their actions.¹⁸⁹

The Billionaires’ efforts to gain media attention are not mere glory seeking. They use their actions, like the Million Billionaire March or waltzing at Grand Central station, as a meme, a form of “cultural transmission” to use Dawkins’ previously cited terminology. Billionaire co-founder Andrew Boyd describes the Billionaire meme as a “humorous, ironic media campaign that would spread via grassroots activists and the mainstream media.”¹⁹⁰ Boyd, (also known under his rich man’s *nom de guerre*, Phil T. Rich), has written several excellent articles and book chapters detailing the Billionaires’ communication strategy. In “Truth is a Virus,” he describes the influence on his thinking of the 1996 book, *Media Virus*, by Douglass Rushkoff, who also uses Dawkins’ term “meme” in his work and acknowledges the lineage¹⁹¹ A media virus, or meme, is a hard-

hitting political message hidden in a non-threatening form; hence use of the term “Trojan Horse” by both Rushkoff and the Billionaires.¹⁹² Rushkoff explains that media viruses spread through the “datasphere” like biological viruses spread through the body:

But instead of traveling along an organic circulatory system, a media virus travels though the networks of the mediaspace. The “protein shell” of a media virus might be an event, invention, technology, system of thought, musical riff, visual image...clothing style or even a pop hero – as long as it can catch our attention.”

Rushkoff proceeds to illustrate his term “media virus” with examples ranging from sound bites from Clinton, Bush and Ross Perot during the lead up to the 1992 U.S. Presidential election to the virus spreading potential of the first music television station, MTV. Of *Media Virus*, Boyd writes:

Ruskoff’s exploration “memes” fascinated me. But rather than viruses of clothing styles and pop heroes, I was interested in viruses of political ideas and action. For several years, as “Minister of Culture” for the social justice group United for a Fair Economy, I experimented with various media viruses, taking on issues of taxation, sweatshops, wage inequality, and corporate welfare. In the spring of 2000, we developed a very virulent strain: Billionaires for Bush (or Gore).¹⁹³

In my exploration of the Billionaire communication model, the “insider theorizing” of Billionaire member Andrew Boyd proved extremely useful. Boyd’s writing has helped me understand that their intervention had a very intentional design. The Billionaire communication model was designed to promote new action. Referring to the Billionaires actions at the 2000 Republican and Democratic National Conventions, when the

Billionaires were still called “Billionaires for Bush (or Gore),” Boyd explains how new action was promoted:

In the weeks after the conventions, we’d get email and calls every day from people across the country, raving about the project and eager to start local Billionaire chapters. “Cheney is flying into town next week,” a young student in Ashland, OR told me in a typical call. “I’ve gotten a bunch of folks together and we’re going to meet him at the airport.” [...] This student had first seen the Billionaires on a late-night mainstream news program. He then went to the “Be a Billionaire” section of our website, downloaded the slogans, posters and sample press releases. The group chose satirical names for themselves, called to give us a heads-up, and went into action. While other participants first heard about the campaign through activist email networks or via word of mouth, penetration of corporate mass media was key to the Billionaires’ success.¹⁹⁴

The Billionaires intervention was designed with the Other in mind: including a “Be a Billionaire” section on the website and creating a “Be a Billionaire” manual demonstrating how new action by Others was anticipated.

When the actions of the Billionaires for Bush are covered in the media, their message, via the very name of their group, enters the media as well. The name of their group and the signs they carry ensure the trans-mission of the most basic of their messages - that Bush is in bed with and beholden to the ultra-rich. The signs in particular facilitate what I call the “auto-captioning” of any photo taken of the Billionaires. With every published photo, the Billionaires for Bush “meme,” along with other messages visible on signs, sneak into the media. Photographs of the Billionaire actions, when

placed on the website, have an increased circulation, rendering emulation of these activities both attractive and possible. An individual who reads about the Billionaires in the newspaper and uses a photograph caption to find the website is suddenly one click away from *becoming* a Billionaire. Thus the *auto-captioned* photos serve a dual function: to ensure accurate attribution and create a signpost that interested would-be-Billionaires can follow to find the Billionaires website and potentially join the action.

The name “Billionaires for Bush” is a meme because of its “viral features”: it is accessible, creative, mobile and easily attached to a range of “carriers,” like signs, stickers, street actions, press releases, and so on.¹⁹⁵ The humor embedded in the messages and their presentation also helped the spread of the meme. Explaining the thinking behind this idea, Boyd writes:

Not only did humor help carry the content (in the way that laughter makes it easier to bear the truth, but if the media wanted the humor (and they did), they had to take the content too).¹⁹⁶

As employed by the Billionaires, humor serves a dual purpose; it renders the sharp content of their message less aggressive and it appeals to the media, who are always on the lookout for novelty.

While the Billionaires are not the only group using humor and street theater, they are one of the few groups consciously embedding their message into their name and thus turning their name/message into a “meme” with potential to penetrate a “hostile and unpredictable” corporate media environment.¹⁹⁷ Media reports on the antics of the Yes Men do not ensure that their anti-WTO and anti-globalization messages will come through in the coverage. Similarly, the names of groups like Code Pink and the Missile

Dick Chicks do not immediately convey that they are feminist, anti-war activists. Their actions are vulnerable to (mis) interpretation or worse, indifference, due to the control they relinquish to the media who can represent or misrepresent their members and messages. According to Billionaire Marco Ceglie (Aka, Money Oliver D'Place), the “Billionaire for Bush” meme was designed to frame the argument of economic inequality and aimed to “brand the opposition.” He explained:

Whenever you can move the argument, or add to the argument or set a new baseline of assumed truths to an argument, it strengthens your position. And if we can reinforce the fact that Bush and his cronies and the GOP are looking out for a very few, 1% of Americans, and then when that 1% blows up Wall Street and it affects everyone, we can say, “look, this was always happening and we always knew it.”¹⁹⁸

The strength of the Billionaires is their ability to embed their message within their actions. In this way, they are able to pack a political punch while ostensibly just “playing” protesters. In addition, each public appearance is an invitation to new participants: “see how much fun we are having?” Spectators can become participants by going to the website and getting information for the next meeting. Readers/watchers of media coverage can follow the same path to find out how to locate the Billionaires at a meeting or their next action. In this way, the Billionaires meme functions by push *and* pull, to return to Peter Morville’s terminology. The media circulates - pushes - the Billionaire meme, which attracts - pulls in - a subset of interested Others who seek to join the Billionaires and create new actions. The experience of Documentary filmmaker Megan Kiefer demonstrates how push and pull can operate simultaneously. Kiefer read

about the Billionaires' impersonation of Karl Rove in an article appearing in the *New York Times*.¹⁹⁹

Kiefer recalls:

I read this article about how these actual activists are taking [the Billionaires] seriously - and I was like ‘My gosh, that is so funny...that these Sierra Club activists (laughs) are getting angry at these obviously staged actions.’²⁰⁰

The Billionaires use of humor resonated with Megan and led her to want to contribute her talents to their cause. “I came to New York,” Megan explains, “because I wanted to work on art that can ignite thought and propel people to act.” Thus even before hearing about the Billionaires, Megan was already in a state of “readiness,” returning to Bateson’s term for “uncommitted potentiality for change.”²⁰¹ Megan had moved to New York wanting to combine art and activism.

After reading about the Billionaires’ Karl Rove impersonation in the *New York Times* Megan looked for scheduled Billionaire events on the website and then started showing up at Billionaires’ actions with a small video camera. Eventually and with the Billionaires permission she then decided to use that footage to begin making a short film. Megan recalls how at one action, she thought: “This would be a perfect setting for a *Mockumentary*. I can take them seriously [present them as true billionaires] and use the medium of film to get the message out.”²⁰² Kiefer followed Billionaire Marco Ceglie and other volunteers on a 13-state tour-by-limousine of swing states and after a period of two years of filming and editing, had a completed “mockumentary” about the tour called “Get

on the Limo”²⁰³ Kiefer’s film was accepted at an international film festival in Norway and was eventually purchased by the Documentary Film Channel in 2007. Kiefer and the Billionaires then toured again, screening the film in the same swing states where she had filmed. When I ask her to comment on the screenings, Kiefer singles out an experience on a conservative college campus:

I showed this film to a group of republicans in Oklahoma and they laughed! And yet the message was still very strong. How great is it when you’re making “the enemy” laugh at themselves? I wanted to do this film because I wanted to change the world in some capacity. And the way I knew to change the word was through humor.²⁰⁴

Megan is not the only one to be inspired by the Billionaires to the extent of wanting to give her talents – and two years of her life – to create something to contribute to the cause. The Billionaires benefited from the skills and experience of a wide range of individuals, from actors and artists to sign makers and graphic designers, many of whom were new to activism.²⁰⁵ This ability to attract individuals who were willing to donate their skills to support protesters, but who were not themselves interested taking to the streets to protest, is a strength of the Billionaires that is worthy of emulation.

Mike Prokosh, a former colleague of Andrew Boyd’s at United for a Fair Economy, offers this advice on fostering participation: “the task of an organizer is to create structures so that people can participate.”²⁰⁶ Thus, facilitating participation can be viewed as a *design* issue: one must *create structures* so that Others can participate. I would add that ideally, these structures would make it possible for Others to also create and act anew. The communication model of the Billionaires is designed to enable a wide

range of contributors. A graphic designer is just as much a Billionaire as those who dress up to protest in public. By creating multiple avenues and modes for action, the Billionaires are facilitating a type of democracy. They are creating opportunities to be democratic citizens that exceed voting on Election Day. In *Democracy and Education*, John Dewey presents a broad view of what constitutes democracy:

A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity.²⁰⁷

I agree with Dewey that democracy it is a way of life, a way of being in the world, as individuals and together as a community. The contribution of the Billionaires' model of communication is that it invites individuals to put their skills to use for the good of the collective and by doing so, to participate in democracy. Returning to the example of the graphic designer, the knowledge that others will be protesting in public inspires the graphic designer to pitch in by creating professional looking signs. Or, as Dewey puts it, the graphic designer considers "the action of others to give point and direction to his own." Even when sitting, alone, at her home computer, the graphic designer-cum-Billionaire is part of a community and a participant in democracy through the contribution of her skills. Her work enables the action of Others; she makes the sign so that Others can carry it.

The Billionaires invited participation on a wider scale by using the internet to remediate their press coverage and “Do it yourself” materials.²⁰⁸ The Billionaires’ use of the internet - not *that* they use it but *how* they use it – is another innovative piece of their communication strategy worthy of discussion and emulation.

Remediation and New Action

Once the Billionaires have staged a public action (A) and received press coverage (M) they do what most successful organizations do, which is to gather the coverage and put it online. By making their press coverage available in a new medium, they are “repurposing” it, to borrow a term from David Bolter and Richard Grusin.²⁰⁹ To repurpose, they write, is to “take ‘property’ from one medium and re-use it in another.”²¹⁰ Another term they provide for the “repurposing” of one form of information by importing it into a new medium is *remediation*. They write:

we call the representation of one medium in another “remediation,” and we will argue that remediation is a defining characteristic of the new digital media...[For example, there are]...numerous web sites that offer pictures or texts for users to download. In these cases, the electronic medium is not set in opposition to painting, photography, or printing; instead, the computer is offered as a new means of gaining access to materials from these older media.²¹¹

The Billionaires use remediation to make press coverage about their actions available to a wider audience, and in doing so, they demonstrate the success they have had in capturing media attention. Witnesses of the Billionaires’ public actions and readers of their press coverage can easily find the Billionaires on the web by either entering “Billionaires for

Bush” in a search engine or jotting down the website address, which is prominently featured on the signs carried by each Billionaire.

The remediated press coverage and corresponding images (R) can then be used to inform a wider public of their actions, invite greater participation in their campaign, and inspire emulation. As a medium that defies geographic limitation, the website of the Billionaires can be accessed by anyone with a web connection, if one knows where to look. Fortuitously for them, the Billionaires for Bush are brilliant at making themselves visible. For an example of this ability to make themselves visible, I return to the Billionaires’ impersonation of Karl Rove, which was written up in the *New York Times*, which in turn inspired new action from Megan Kiefer. The article was accompanied by a photo of two Billionaires clutching dollar bills, one of them holding above her head a sign that reads: “Corporations are People Too.” This article and photo were then remediated by the grassroots organization Common Dreams and featured in the “Headlines” section of their website.²¹²

Another example of making themselves and their cause visible is the “Croquet in Central Park” action. After Mayor Bloomberg prohibited protest groups from congregating on the lawn of Central Park, citing concern for the “expensively renovated Great Lawn,” the Billionaires sent out a press release notifying the media that they would be using the Great Lawn to play croquet.²¹³ The press release carried this title: “500,000 Protesters Barred from Central Park so Billionaires Can Play Croquet.”²¹⁴ The Billionaires’ croquet match was subsequently covered by *The Washington Post* (two articles), *The New York Times*, *The Times (London)* and *The Independent (London)*.²¹⁵ The Billionaires action and press release invitation to the media turned a non-event – the

lack of protesters - into a camera-ready, visible event that was then mediated, through national and international press attention.

The Billionaires for Bush communication model (comprised of action-mediation-remediation) has *generative potential* in that it can serve as a model for other organizations seeking to harness media to promote social change. Each component of the model, from live action to mediated reports and remediated materials has the potential to inform, invite, and inspire Others. One of the most important components of the Billionaires' communication model is a fifty page document called "Be a Billionaire! The Official Billionaires for Bush Do it Yourself Manual," which is available for download on the Billionaires website.

So what does it take to "be a Billionaire"? From the manual we learn that the main Billionaire obligation is to download the signs available in the "campaign materials" section of the website, dress up in fancy clothes (tuxedos and suits for men, evening wear and prominent jewelry for women), and carry the signs to public events where the media await something novel to report.

This manual includes talking points on economic injustice, tips on how to recruit new members and even a section on "how to join Bush-friendly events."²¹⁶ The manual also lists Billionaire "accomplishments," including an Award-winning TV spot, "Leave No Billionaire Behind" (a finalist in MoveOn.org's 2004 "Bush-In-30-Seconds" contest), two music CDs with over 20 original songs, and high-profile Billionaire "appearances," including a "'disruption' of an Arianna Huffington speech at Take Back America conference in Washington D.C., June 2004."²¹⁷

The Billionaires eventually inspired the creation of over 75 chapters across the U.S. with small international off-shoots as far away as Korea and Russia.²¹⁸ The “disruption” described in the manual soon inspired similar disruptions elsewhere, this time enacted by the chapters. A Colorado chapter “barged into the Green Party convention and tired to buy off Ralph Nader.”²¹⁹ Next, a chapter in New Mexico disrupted a speech by “known leftist” Michael Moore in Santa Fe.²²⁰ Chapters also innovated: some contributed slogans that were adopted by the founding chapter in New York City, and others, Tucson and Los Angeles for example, developed their own brand of action replete with marching band, singing choir, and an “offshoot” website, www.billionaires.org.²²¹

Still other chapters improvised on the Billionaires meme, by creating parallel actions to address their local political concerns. The “Billionaires for Closed Debates” and “Billionaires for More Media Mergers” were two “DIY” (Do it yourself) campaigns that emerged without departing too significantly from core Billionaire messages²²²

A communication strategy designed to allow for the organic growth and authentic self-expression of its members inevitably faces the challenge of “message discipline.”²²³ The Hudson Valley Billionaire chapter in Wappingers Falls, New York, for example, was photographed by their local paper, *The Modern Tribune*, on tax day carrying (gasp!) hand-made signs.²²⁴ The Hudson Valley Billionaires managed to stay more or less “on message,” sticking to economic topics and slogans available on the Billionaires’ site, with the exception of one innocuously apocryphal slogan, “We love April 15th. ”



Figure 7: The Wappinger Falls Billionaires.
Photo: Anthony Maresco

I note with interest that while their signs are handmade and somewhat sloppy looking, the Wappinger Falls Billionaires did succeed in smuggling the economic inequality message into what their local “mediascape.” Accompanying the article and photograph in the *Modern Tribune* was the following photo caption: “Billionaires for Bush turned out on April 15th to thank the workers for paying their taxes, while the wealthiest Americans enjoy huge tax cuts.” In achieving coverage with the article, photo and photo caption, the Hudson Valley Billionaires demonstrated that although they did not make use of the available signs, they did understand how to craft a message, dress the part and write an effective press release. The result is that *Modern Tribune* readers were treated to the mediated version of tax day playfulness on April 15th, 2004. The Billionaires, for their part, got their photo, and their message, into their local newspaper without having to pay for it. The new action of the Hudson Valley chapter contributed to the mission of the Billionaires, which has been re-stated since Bush left office: “To

expose politicians who support corporate interests at the expense of everyday Americans.”²²⁵

I now revisit the Billionaires for Bush model, revised to reflect what happens when the remediation (R) of materials results in new action (NA). Below is a rendering of the Billionaires’ communication model when its *generative potential* is realized.

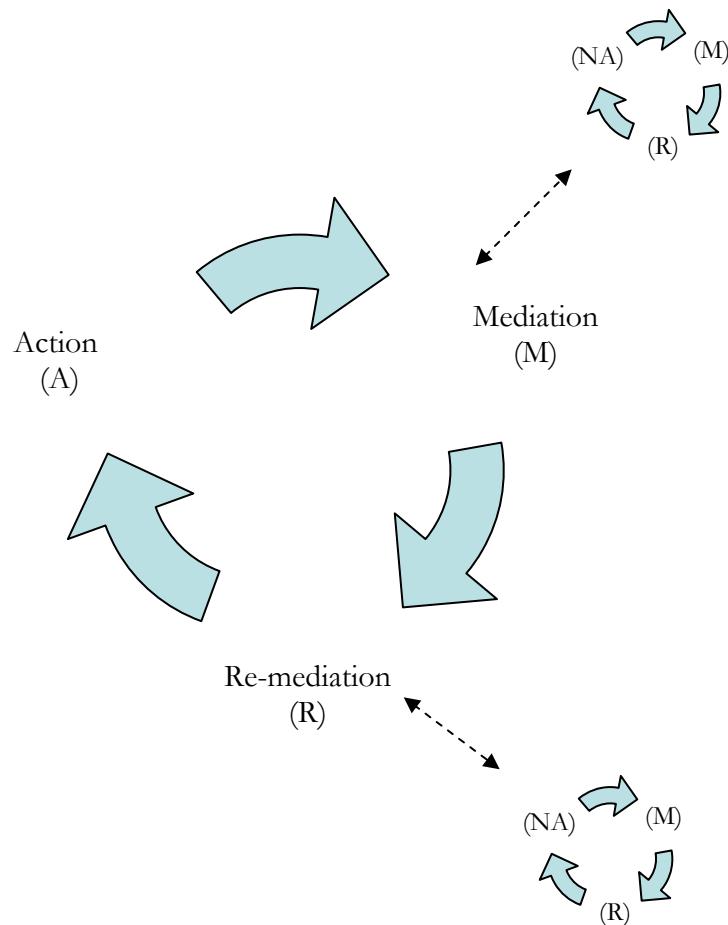


Figure 8: The Billionaires for Bush communication model, with new action (NA).

The Billionaires for Bush actions gain force when they are put into circulation in the form of press coverage. The Billionaires’ actions (A) are expressive and instrumental, when

converted to image via media coverage (M). The actions-as-image (M) are then remediated on the Billionaires website (R) and have the potential to be parlayed into new action (NA), and potentially new mediation and remediation.

New actions can be inspired by articles about the Billionaires in the media, as in the case of Megan Kiefer, and are enabled by making downloadable materials, such as the “Be a Billionaire Manual,” available on the website. Marco Ceglie explains the new action of chapter formation:

For the most part, they [the chapters] emerged organically, but we also had a “field coordinator,” Alice Meeker. When people would email us and say ‘how can I do this,’ she would manage that and nurture that relationship. We developed the “do-it-yourself” manual and we provided signage and things online that people could download. It was an organic thing, but when people came to us, we already had the materials in place that they could easily implement.²²⁶

Describing the replication of New York Billionaire actions and the creation of new actions by affiliate chapters, Billionaire co-founder Andrew Boyd refers to the “hub-node” structure of the Billionaires.²²⁷ An organization following a “hub-node” structure suggests a central source of information that disseminates ideas and innovation outward. In like fashion, the “virus/viral” analogies preferred by writers commenting on the Billionaires and other strategic media campaigns echo the idea of the information or ideology emanating from an original source, a central “carrier,” deliberately designed to be contagious, to spread and “infect” unwilling hosts.²²⁸ Returning once again to the terminology of Morville, the terms “hub-node” and “viral” account only for the push elements of Billionaires model, they neglect the pull. In other words, these terms fail to

account for the generative nature of the Billionaires for Bush chapters. The chapters are not passively infected, but rather *inspired* to be active. Below is a map of Billionaire chapters, appropriately using dollar signs rather than dots to signal each “offshoot” chapter.

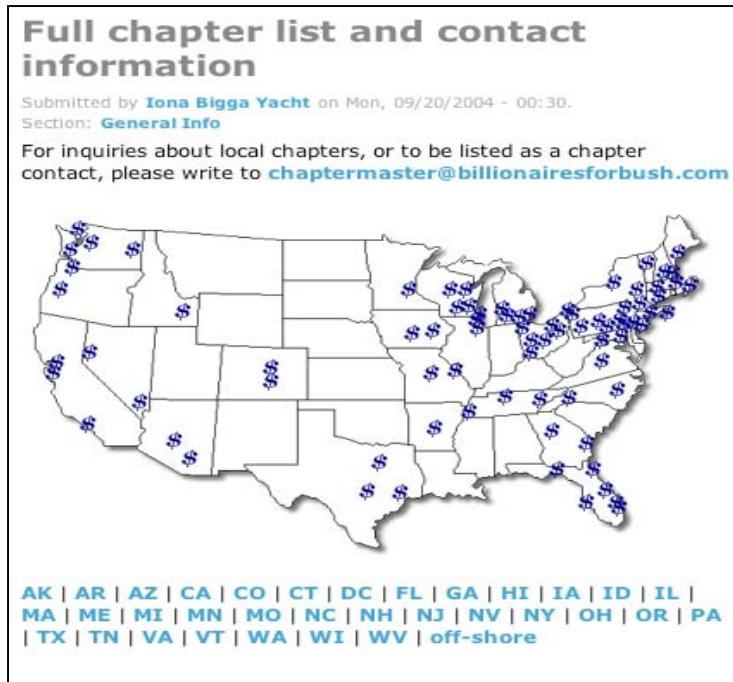


Figure 9: Billionaire chapter map.

Source: Andrew Boyd

The replicable and generative nature of the Billionaires communication strategy is uncommon among peer organizations in the “strategic and creative” category. There is no “Be a Yes Man” manual nor did off-shoot Yes Men chapters emerge.²²⁹ Further, the pranks of the Yes Men are elaborate and hard to replicate. Other groups like Code Pink have managed rapid growth²³⁰, but their humorless presentation (See “Code Pink calls Marines War Criminals” on YouTube, for example), and flagging web presence²³¹ have

not led to new and innovative actions nor a coherent, widely disseminated message. In the case of Code Pink, their choice of message (anti-war) and absence of humor are two stark differences with the Billionaires.

Andrew Boyd explained that the predominance of economic themes in their messages is deliberate. He stressed the importance of avoiding divisive social, religious or cultural issues: “by focusing on financial issues we were hoping that most people would empathize and support us...and we wanted to avoid being the bully.”²³² When I asked Boyd to elaborate on this last comment, he provided a brief overview of the use of historical uses of humor and satire for political ends. He described several social movements he has personally been a part of and how humor and satire were employed. When I prodded him on why he found it important to not be “the bully,” he explained:

You don’t want to be cruel and mean just for the sake of it. But transgression is good. I was rereading an interview with Abbie Hoffman - and he was talking about the Chicago Seven trial - and he talking about his philosophy of humor. He said the churches and the court system are so ripe for the use of humor because they’re so sanctimonious and serious. But he described the judge in the Chicago trial, who ironically was also named Hoffman, and he said how hard it was to use humor, because the judge was a small and old guy...and you couldn’t come out swinging, even in a funny way, it wasn’t going to work. Because then you were being the bully. You have to *make fun* of the bully. Humor works on the powerful...on the bullies and the boasters. When *they* fall, it’s a lot funnier.

The Billionaires' nimble use of humor helps them smuggle their messages into the mainstream media - a harder task for more complex and divisive issues such as globalization and the war in Iraq. The use of humor and the playful nature of their actions allow the Billionaires to attract members who are not interested in shouting angry slogans and getting into confrontations with the police. I am presenting this opposite extreme knowing full well that there exists a "happy medium" between playful and angry protest. But how often does one see photos of the "happy medium" in the mainstream news? For protestors interested in media coverage, two strategies, stated in their extremes, present themselves: the first, which might entail breaking windows, throwing things and getting arrested; the second, putting on a top hat and playing croquet in Central Park. And yet, this is not an either/or choice for most – because these two strategies do not attract the same groups of people. Those who are angry and want to shout and break things will continue doing so, Billionaires or no Billionaires. But for those who want the chance to be artistic *and* political, those who want to create beautiful sings from the comfort of their own home, and those who believe that protest can and should be fun, the Billionaires are waiting. The Billionaires' intervention is designed for exactly these types of people. And thus, by appealing to a group of people who may have shunned protest or politics altogether, the Billionaires have created new ways to participate in democracy.

Activist-academics Benjamin Shepard, Larry Bogad and Stephen Duncombe suggest that activists who design playful interventions are doing more than pulling in folks who want to have a good time in public. They contend that playfulness within social movements can be useful on many levels. Here they list four:

(1)[Play] offers a generally - but not always - non violent way of engaging power, playing with power, rather than replicating oppression patters of power dynamics... (2) It serves as a means for community building. For many, the aim of movement organizing is to create not only an external solution to problems, but to create communities of support and resistance... (3) It effectively supports a coordinated organizing effort... At its most vital, play is at its most useful as part of an effort which includes many traditional components of an organizing campaign. Without such an integration, play is less useful... (4) Yet, at its most vital, play invites people to participate. Between its use of culture and pleasure, it engages and intrigues. Through its low threshold means, it allows new participants into the game of social activism.²³³

The element of playfulness has the potential to change how activists relate with those in power. Playfulness can help build community through the simple act of doing something fun as a group, like playing softball, or bowling. Playfulness can help motivate group members when spirits start to flag. Attending “yet another protest” when it promises to be fun is quite different than when the day will be spent yelling and getting yelled at. Playfulness can support “traditional” organizing in that it can highlight the same causes that are supported by unions and political parties. In 2007 a Florida chapter of the Billionaires “confronted” picketing union members and succeeded in getting coverage of the strike through their “counter protest,” held in front of the picket line.²³⁴



Figure 10: A playful and photogenic Billionaire supporting picketing union members.
Photo: Keisha Rae Witherspoon

Playful tactics can even be taught to unions and political parties, as evidenced by the training session offered by Billionaire Andrew Boyd to organizers from the Working Families Parties. Shepard, Bogad and Duncombe have a long history of personal activism via involvement with organizations ranging from the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA) and Reclaim the Streets, a group who protested, among other things, the privatization of public space by “taking over” public streets by holding impromptu dance parties, thereby “liberating” public space with non-commercial entertainment.²³⁵ Thus when these authors write of the ability of playfulness to create a “low threshold” for participation, they speak from experience. True, not everyone can or wants to dress up like a clown, but many people, I believe, will participate in a “protest” that involves loud music and dancing - and these are exactly the people that may have never engaged in political action.

But as noted earlier, all playful protests are not created equal. The point of earlier comparisons with Code Pink and the Yes Men is to highlight the fact that not all forms of

creative activism operate in the same ways. Some activist groups peak early and fade while others grow exponentially, but lack focus. Some, like the Billionaires, have a communication strategy that makes it possible for them to outlive their target.

The Billionaires for Bush meme has “legs”. That is, it has staying power, albeit in modified form. Although the Billionaires may not have realized it when they created their name, Billionaires for Bush has become what I would call a “modular meme.” Like something made out of Legos, a modular meme can be taken apart and put together in a new way. This modular capacity is what allowed “Billionaires for Bush” to outlive George Bush’s presidency by morphing into its current meme-form, which is “Billionaires for Healthcare.” Billionaires for Healthcare has already brought the issue of the insurance industry’s resistance to health care reform into the mainstream media. On her show on MSNBC, Rachel Maddow covered Billionaires for Healthcare breaking into a song at a health insurance industry conference, which she subtitled: “Guerrillas in their midst.”²³⁶ As seen below, this newly refashioned meme has a whole new set of clever slogans to circulate.



Figure 11: A new generation of Billionaire signs
Source: www.billionairesforwealthcare.com

The Billionaires for Healthcare have appeared in the business section of the *New York Times* and were recently called “Biz Activists” in another article appearing in *Variety*.²³⁷ The modular Billionaires meme has allowed the Billionaires to shift from Bush to healthcare without diluting the core issue of economic disparity.

Also appearing in the mainstream news was a joint action in San Francisco pairing the Raging Grannies and the Billionaires for Healthcare. This collaboration was reported on by the *Guardian* in the United Kingdom by Reporter Mary O’Hara:

Sometimes, the grannies simply march – often four or five times a month. Other times, they perform short comedy skits, adding a dash of whimsy to what are often dry or complicated subjects, such as banking reform. As the healthcare

debate raged in the US in recent months, for instance, the California grannies could be seen outside corporate conferences dressed up as spoof Billionaires for Healthcare, wearing plastic arses to "moon" executives driving away.²³⁸

In this instance, the Raging Grannies were welcomed onto the Billionaires for Healthcare bandwagon in a brilliant "cross promotion" action which led to press coverage for both groups. This coverage was then uploaded to the Billionaires for Healthcare website, thus replicating the Billionaires for Bush Action-Mediation-Remediation model.

The press section of Billionairesforwealthcare.com also features a press release from a Billionaire going by the name "Clay M. Denied," which adds a different building block on the modular Billionaire meme, this group claiming to be in support of the California Republican candidate for Senate, Scott Brown. Their name? "Billionaires for Brown." Here Billionaires are using the same playful tricks with their crisp press releases and ironic slogans, but this time with new clever names and new targets.

To what end, this extensive and evolving news coverage? Performance studies scholar Marcy Chvasta concedes that playful activism is effective at garnering press attention. She also acknowledges that playful activism can be a useful means for building community. Yet she doubts that playful activism can change policy. She writes:

The performance context may demand to make the street a stage - taking it with glee to inform and build community, or taking it with anger to expose a wrong. I know four things for sure: boundary-crossing influences policy-makers, carnival creates community, violence doesn't solve anything, and expressing felt anger mobilizes government more effectively than (gleefully ironic or otherwise) celebration. While festive street performance is a display of communal strength

and a means of educating the public, no policy, or law, or budget will change unless the State feels threatened.²³⁹

According to Chvasta, playful and theatrical forms of activism serve a purpose, they are an alternative to anger, they can foster community and they can raise awareness by inserting their issues into the public agenda. But, she notes, “street theatre is not enough.”²⁴⁰ Chvasta notes that protest-as-street theater model has its detractors. Robert Weissberg, for example, critiques this genre of protest as the work of “rambunctious street theater types.”²⁴¹ Chvasta draws on Weissberg’s book, *The Limits of Activism: Cautionary Tales on the Use of Politics*, without embracing his ideas entirely, to support her claim that street theater-style protest is insufficient and ineffective. Depending on what standards one invokes to measure the “effectiveness” of protest, the Billionaires may indeed fall short. True, they did not prevent George Bush from being re-elected in 2004. But judged by a different standard, the Billionaires, and their model of communication, are, in fact, very successful.

I believe that one of the more significant contributions that the Billionaires bring to social change research is offering new and “invitational” ways to organize. They promote the idea that civic engagement can be fun, even glamorous. They dispel the myth that public activism requires earnestness and anger, which is a good first step toward increasing the number of people seeking to creatively promote social change. For instance, when I asked Megan Kiefer, the director of the Billionaires’ “Get on the Limo” documentary if she could name any other organizations that had the same generative potential of the Billionaires, groups that “got it,” when it came to inviting participation

and allowing for creative self-organizing. She responded: “Groups?” And then she paused to think:

I can’t think of groups...but Obama - Obama got it. He got it *real* good. He pulled people to himself instead of pushing himself on others. I think it is the same thing the Billionaires were doing, attracting people to them and in a non-threatening way.²⁴²

Indeed, it seems that individuals took literally the “we” in Obama’s mantra “Yes we can,” as they were surely meant to. By inviting the participation of unknown, unseen Others, Obama’s campaign, just that of the Billionaires, grew in numerous ways, and benefited from the unsolicited talent and creativity of several in-kind “donors.” One creative contributor to the Obama campaign was Shepard Fairey, the designer who created the stellar “Hope” campaign.



Shepard Fairey put his street-art sensibility to work for his candidate of choice, in hopes of "appealing to a younger, apathetic audience." (By Jonathan Alcorn For The Washington Post)

Figure 12: Photo of Shepard Fairey appearing in The Washington Post.
Photo: Jonathan Alcorn

Will.i.am, singer for the pop music group The Black Eyed Peas, contributed to the Obama campaign by inviting dozens of celebrities to join him in his “Yes we Can” spoken-word music video, which as of early 2010, has been viewed more than 20 million times on YouTube. The Obama campaign, like the Billionaires, reached out to a wide range of communities, from teenagers to artists, and created mechanisms for people contribute. Both made it possible for Others to *act*.

This shared understanding of the importance of participation notwithstanding, what the Billionaires and Obama also have in common is a willingness to wager on the agency and creativity of their fellow citizens. By inviting the participation of Others, the Billionaires and Obama alike engaged in an act of faith in others: and both were amply rewarded in the form of hundreds of creative contributions - contributions of time, skill and creativity.

I believe that the design of the Billionaires for Bush model of communication is dialogic because it invited the collaboration and creative new action of Others. When the Billionaires created the “Be a Billionaire!” manual and made downloadable signs, they did so in anticipation of Others’ action. They may not have known that Tucson would create a marching band or that Los Angeles would contribute a singing choir, but they did trust that Others would make use of the tools provided.

Returning to the issue of measurement, I believe that the some forms of Billionaires success may indeed be very difficult to measure. How does one measure *inspiration*, for example? Activist-scholar Larry Bogad recently shared with me an “inspiration story” that I believe to be an indicator of the generative potential of the Billionaires’ communication model and thus an indicator of their success. Bogad

mentioned that he was advising a “Billionaires for Bush-inspired” graduate student group at UC Berkeley who were protesting budget cuts by creating the “University of California Movement for Efficient Privatization” (UCMEP).



Figure 13: UCMEP “Anti-strike” graphic.

Source: <http://ucmep.wordpress.com/>

Admittedly, the name is not quite as catchy or as “meme-able” as Billionaires for Bush. But the irony is there. The website has been created. The vibrant graphics are present. The street antics are also there, with concomitant press coverage. An article with this title appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*: “Students Sharpen Attack on UC Costs with Satire.”²⁴³ Coverage appearing on the *Inside Higher Ed* website had a similar title: “Using Humor to Criticize U. of California Leaders.”²⁴⁴ The point I want to make is that the Billionaires for Bush had an effect on the UCMEP graduate students: They were the *inspiration* for their new actions. A new generation of activists is learning how to get their issues into the mainstream press. More importantly, a new generation is participating in democracy: they are using “old” Billionaire tools to create new action.

We may never know how many Others have taken inspiration from the Billionaires and their model of communication. Nor can we know if other organizations

will follow the Billionaires lead by moving beyond the limited “click here, sign here, donate here” model of organizing and begin creating tools that make new, independent action possible. Adopting the Billionaires for Bush model of communication does not guarantee similar results. But the Billionaires, with their dialogic, Other-oriented communication design, did demonstrate what the act of “making possible” makes possible. It makes possible marching bands and singing troupes, Billionaires for Healthcare and Billionaires for Brown, it makes possible the creation of the “University of California Movement for Efficient Privatization.” In short, it invites creativity and makes new, vibrant action possible. This is much more than a signed petition; it is democracy in *action*.

Chapter 3: Scenarios from Africa

The setting is a conference room in Dakar Senegal. It is December 1st, 2007 – World AIDS Day.²⁴⁵ Gathered around the table are fifteen individuals representing different non-governmental (NGO) and community based organizations (CBO). These organizations range in size and mission. Save the Children is a large non-governmental organization based in Sweden with offices on five continents. Another organization present, Avenir de l’Enfant (Children’s Future), is a community based orphanage with four staff members. Each has come to contribute to the implementation of the 2007 Scenarios from Africa scriptwriting contest. On a screen at the front of the room, a stylized, black and white video is playing. The film, based on one of the prize winning scripts of the previous contest cycles, is called “Reasons for a Smile.”²⁴⁶ The conference room is silent as the group watches four individuals tell their story.

“I am a wife and a mother, and I am living with HIV.”

“In the beginning, when I got my test results, it was difficult. *Very* difficult.”

Midway through the seven minute film, black and white gives way to sepia. The narratives become more optimistic. The protagonists explain how they began taking medications and began feeling stronger, less afraid. The final minutes of the film are in color. A man in a bright green shirt is smiling. We hear his words on voiceover:

“I am *useful*, and many people need me, and love me.”

“I am looking forward to the future.”

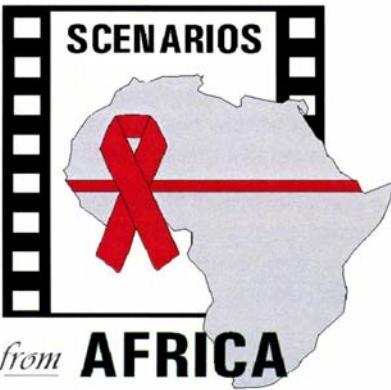
When the film concludes, discussions begin among the group. A “veteran” Scenarios collaborator, Madame Senghor, is the first to speak.

“I am so surprised by this film. This is very different than the films we have seen in the past.”

Madame Senghor represents the Institute for Local Development (ILD), a small CBO on the outskirts of Dakar that provides tutoring and sewing classes for young women. Her organization has participated in all of the Scenarios contests, dating back to 1997. The organization hosting the meeting, Africa Consultants International (ACI) is also facilitating. Cheikh Ndongo Fall, ACI staff member, gets to his feet and addresses the group. He thanks everyone for coming and mentions that the film that was just screened is from the latest batch of films that have just been filmed and copied onto DVDs.

“We are here to discuss the organization of this year’s contest, but I wanted to let you know that these films are now available, so please remember to take sets of DVDs with you when you leave.”

For the next hour, the group discusses preparations for the new contest. Each of the organizations present is a “core member” of the Scenarios team, which means that they have committed to take on a central role in distributing the leaflets that announce the contest, gathering the submissions as they come in, and providing mentorship to young people who need information or writing help.



SCENARIOS FROM AFRICA

Young people against AIDS!

National and International Contest

Fifth Edition

1st December 2007 to 15th March 2008

Come up with a creative idea for a film about AIDS and see your film broadcast on national and international television.

Take part in the contest and help other people learn about HIV/AIDS ... and at the same time, win prizes!

Go for it!

The Scenarios from Africa contest

The contest will take place across Africa from 1st December 2007 to 15th March 2008. The contest is **open to ALL young people who will be under the age of 25 on 15th March 2008**. (If you are older than 24, encourage younger people to take part and give them a hand.)

You are invited to **come up with an original idea (a "scenario") for a short film up to 5 minutes in length**. The best ideas will be adapted by professionals and turned into films by some of Africa's greatest directors.

It's up to you to decide what form your idea will take. It can be a **short story, a comic strip, a song, a poem...** You can even record your idea on an audio or video cassette or CD, complete with music, if you would like! **Anything is possible as long as the text is in English.**

As you create your scenario, please talk to organisations or individuals in your community who can provide you with good information on AIDS.

Figure 14: Scenarios from Africa contest leaflet.

The four-page leaflet explains that young people under the age of 25 are eligible to participate. On page three, there is a list of suggested topics:

As the newly appointed Health Minister of your country, you intend to put an end to the dangerous myths about HIV/AIDS that are so widespread. What are those myths and, as Minister, how will you stop them?²⁴⁷

Among the suggested topics is a note reminding participants that they can write about anything they want – they don't have to choose a suggested topic – but the script they submit should be related to HIV/AIDS.

Many of the “core member” organizations, like ILD, have been helping to implement the contest since the first edition in 1997. Others, like Save the Children, are more recent volunteers. Gabriel Diouf, also present at the meeting, is the only paid staff member from Scenarios from Africa in Senegal. He is the Scenarios “National Coordinator,” a job he does part time while also working for GTZ, the international development agency of the German Government. Gabriel defers to Cheikh, who continues to facilitate the meeting.

The discussion has now shifted from the contest to the distribution of the films. The organizations represented at the meeting have also committed to distributing the films, which are free of charge, to other organizations. Most of the “core group” members use the films in their own organizations. In fact, Amie Atsu David, from Save the Children, remarked that one of the newest films, “Etoffe d'un Chef,” about HIV in the workplace, would be a good film to show in Save the Children offices.

Cheikh reminds the group that the films are available in eight languages, including Wolof, Pulaar and Dioula, three languages widely spoken in Senegal. “And,”

he adds, “we also have a radio version this year.” Madame Senghor from ILD makes a suggestion:

Given that this is an African project, I think we should try to get the films aired on AfriCable (an African cable channel that broadcasts across the continent).

I sit listening to the discussion from my seat at one end of the table. In my notebook, I write and underline Madame Senghors words: “this is an African project.” This remark caught my attention because of the level of ownership it implied. I interpreted this remark to mean: “This is our project.” I perceived this remark to be in direct contrast with “international development” models that frequently position Africans as targets of campaigns or recipient of external aid rather than as agents of change.

My first encounter with Scenarios from Africa was in Dakar, in 2003. I was on a one-month consulting assignment, totally unrelated to Scenarios or HIV/AIDS. I recall walking into a restaurant, and seeing most of the patrons looking up at the television. On the screen a young man at a corner store is buying box after box of crackers. Finally, a very old man enters the store and asks for condoms. “Give me the whole box.” The restaurant patrons are laughing as on the screen the young man finally gets the courage to ask for what he wanted all along, which is also condoms. As he exits the store he sees his girlfriend riding away on a scooter. “Wait!” he shouts. “You took too long!” she shouts in return, and the restaurant patrons are again laughing loudly.

I later learned that what I had seen on that restaurant television was “The Shop,” one of the short films produced by Scenarios from Africa, based on a prize-winning script from a young woman living in Burkina Faso. The company I was working for at the time had volunteered to cover some of the costs for dubbing the films into local languages and

copying them onto DVDs.²⁴⁸ I recounted to my colleagues how I had seen people laughing along with the films. If I had not seen it for myself, I am not sure I would believe how much the restaurant patrons seemed to have enjoyed the condom-buying “lesson.”

Fast forward to 2006: I am presenting a poster at the International AIDS conference in Toronto on the use of humor in condom promotion. I have included “The Shop” in my presentation. In Toronto, I have the opportunity to meet Kate Winkell, who together with her husband Dan Enger, co-founded Global Dialogues, the non-profit organization that has coordinated the Scenarios from Africa process since 1997. I write “process” because Scenarios from Africa is more than a contest: it involves a contest, a jury, script adaptation, film production, distribution and use. I will discuss the process in greater length shortly. Presently, I continue outlining the evolution of my inquiry into Scenarios from Africa.

Kate Winskill is an assistant professor and the Assistant Director for the Center for Health, Culture and Society at Emory University. We had a long discussion in Toronto about Scenarios from Africa (hereafter “Scenarios”), during which I mentioned my inclusion of “The Shop” in my poster on humor and condom promotion. At the end of the conversation I asked Kate if we could keep in touch. What I learned that day from Kate about the Scenarios process and how it is implemented almost entirely by African NGOs, many of whom on a *volunteer* basis, greatly piqued my interest. My experience in West Africa up to that point came from working for two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon and as a consultant for a for-profit international development firm

with a project office in Senegal, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Thus my experience in West Africa was limited to “technical assistance” projects funded and implemented by the United States government. I was eager to learn more about Scenarios because it appeared to me to be a radically different approach to promoting social change. Instead of external agents providing “technical assistance,” Scenarios from Africa was a project implemented primarily by Africans for Africans. Further, Scenarios provided the opportunity for African youth to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS. The design of the Scenarios process positioned young Africans as contributors rather than recipients of aid or targets of informational messages. This approach intrigued me. I wanted to learn more.

The Inquiry Begins in Earnest

When I returned from Toronto, I re-read an article written by Winskell and Enger, “Young Voices Travel Far: A Case Study of *Scenarios from Africa*.²⁴⁹ It is from this article that I learned that the script for “The Shop,” the film I had seen in the restaurant in Dakar, was written by Olga Kiswendsida Ouédraogo, from Burkina Faso. The article begins with Olga witnessing two security guards watching her film and laughing along heartily. My restaurant patrons were not the only ones amused by condom-buying, it seems. Later I would learn that Olga was also responsible for creating the audio version of the films from the 2005 contest cycle. I make note because Olga will become a protagonist in my “story,” an account of what I have learned about Scenarios from Africa through reading, interviews, informal discussions and personal experience.

I read Winskell and Enger's case study on Scenarios from Africa as well as another co-authored unpublished manuscript. This manuscript, "Community Capacity, Empowerment and Symbolic Capital in an HIV/AIDS Communication Process in Africa," supported my initial impression that there was something special about the Scenarios from Africa *process*. The products are clearly special – they are making people laugh across West Africa! The films are special in that they are dubbed into more than a dozen African languages and more than 100,000 DVD sets have been distributed in every country of Africa and 56 other non-African nations.²⁵⁰ Yet Winskell and Enger, in this second publication, focus on *process* and on the notion of "community capacity." I had seen the Scenarios films and perceived them to be quality products which had been widely distributed. After reading Winskell and Enger's second article, I became interested in expanding my understanding by exploring the *process* behind the products.

Winskell and Enger shared with me Scenarios from Africa documents dating back to 1997. I received evaluations, guidelines for jurists, film facilitation guides, graphs depict the geographic distribution of contest participation and internal evaluations about the participation of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) as mentors to young script writers.

In May 2007 I received notification that I had received a grant that would allow me to conduct research in Senegal for five weeks that fall. Subsequently, I conducted two phone interviews with Kate Winskell to get more background information on Scenarios and to begin preparing my trip. In late November 2007 I travelled to Atlanta and spent two days at the home of Scenarios co-founders Kate Winskell and Dan Enger. During this time, we had long discussions, which I digitally recorded, about the history and scope

of the Scenarios process. In Atlanta, I learned more in-depth details about the process described in the Scenarios documents I had already reviewed: how leaflets were distributed and by whom, details of the jury selection process and who served on juries, details of shooting, editing, dubbing and distributing the films.

Kate and Dan helped me to understand how a script written by a team of young people in Kenya could be adapted to include ideas from a script written in Swaziland. The adapted script would be reviewed by several people; most of whom were working in community organizations in different African countries, but also including people living with HIV/AIDS, to ensure the script contained no stigmatizing content. This adapted script might then be filmed in Burkina Faso by a Malian director. And then the film might be dubbed into English and several other languages in Ghana, where the audio editing studios were of the highest quality. As I learned more about the size and scope of this pan-African project, I was grateful that I had limited the scope of my inquiry to one country and to one aspect of the process. Kate and Dan agreed that it would be fruitful to focus my inquiry by examining how Senegalese (and some international) organizations worked and collaborated in support of different aspects of the Scenarios process. Given that so much of the process was supported on a voluntary basis, it was difficult for them to know exactly *how* and *how many* organizations were working and collaborating to support Scenarios.

Kate and Dan also gave me background information about the Scenarios “team” in Senegal, several very committed people who had been working with Kate and Dan since 1997. I write “team” in quotes here because as previously noted; there is technically only *one* paid Scenario staff member in Senegal. Yet, as Kate and Dan

explained to me and I would soon learn firsthand, there is indeed a whole “team” of people diligently to support the Scenarios process.

As I was leaving their home in Atlanta, I thanked Kate and Dan for their hospitality and for sharing their contacts with me. Kate replied: “You are very welcome. And these are more than contacts, these are our *friends*.” This distinction did not fully register with me at the time, but as I later came to understand the importance of *relation* to the Scenarios process, I recalled those words and better grasped their meaning.

The Scenarios Contest in Senegal

In late November 2007, I traveled to Dakar, Senegal, to get a closer look at the Scenarios process. Of the three countries with the longest Scenarios history, Mali, Burkina Faso and Senegal, I chose the latter for logistical reasons; Senegal has the greatest percentage of French and Wolof speakers, two languages I have studied and felt comfortable using for interviews.²⁵¹

At the suggestion of Kate and Dan, I planned my visit to Senegal to coincide with the fifth edition of the Scenarios contest, which was launched on the first of December, World AIDS day. The objective of my five weeks of fieldwork in Senegal was to study the implementation of the contest, focusing largely on the institutions in Senegal who do the majority of the community-level work. In Dakar, I met the Scenarios from Africa National Coordinator, Gabriel Diouf, who provided contact information for Scenarios partners based in and around Dakar.

During my time in the field, I was able to conduct in-depth interviews with over two dozen individuals about their participation in the Scenarios process. For the individuals I interviewed, participation in the Scenarios process ranged from contest

implementation (distribution and collection of leaflets, mentoring participants, etc.), to jury selection, distribution and use of the films, and to a lesser extent, film production). During each interview, I conducted a manual network mapping exercise. For this activity, I asked interviewees to draw, with themselves at the center, a map of the organizations they collaborated with in the Scenarios process.

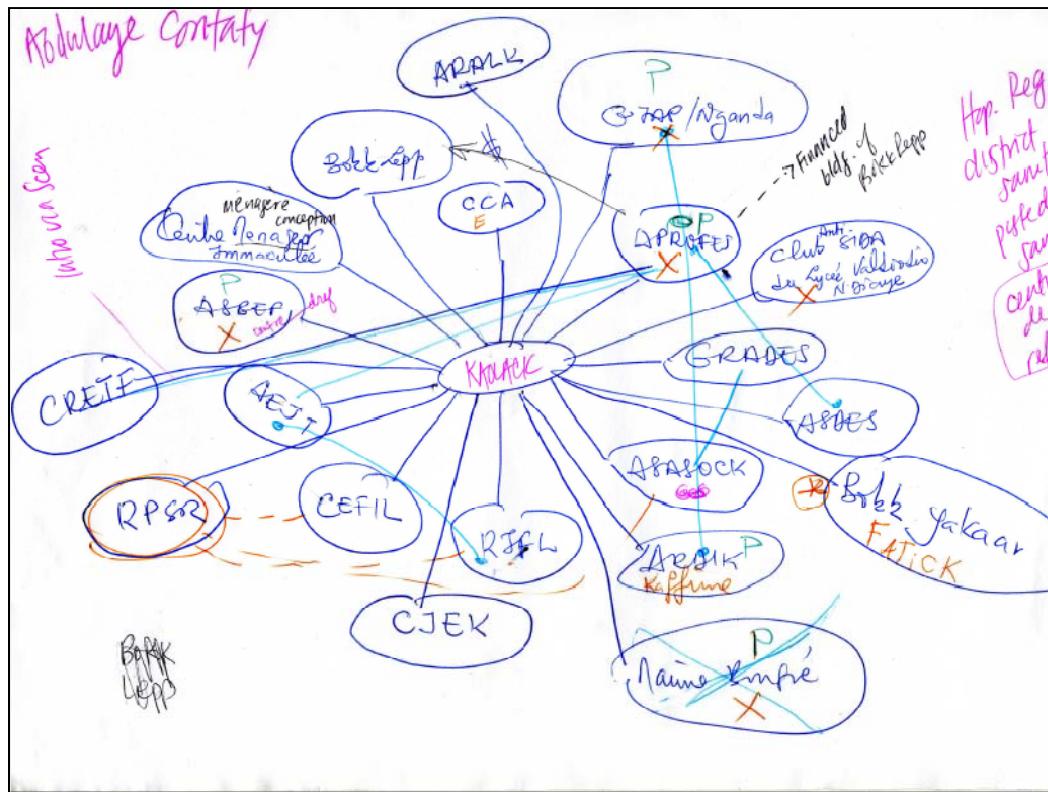


Figure 15: Network map of Scenarios-related contacts, drawn by Abdoulaye Konaté.

These maps were crucial to helping me understand the extent and nature of participation of local organizations in the Scenarios process. The hand drawn maps did tend to get messy, but I had the digital audio recording to help me understand their meaning. This was important given the large number of collaborating associations mentioned during the mapping process, and the fact that associations were commonly

referred to by an acronym, usually in French, and occasionally in Wolof. After the interviewee had drawn his or her map, I kept the map between us and on occasion made notes directly on the map to record relationships. In the map I have used as an example on the preceding page I drew a line between two organizations, with the acronyms “CRETF” and “APROFES” and made this notation: “introduced via Scenarios.” As the interviewee, in this case Abdoulaye Konaté, recounted relationships and collaborations, I made note of them on the map when he did not.

I later entered the names of collaborating organizations mapped during each interview into software called “Smart Network Analyzer,”²⁵² which I used to produce a visual image of “The Scenarios network.” I call the network the “Scenarios network” because the comprehensive map was created based on the answer to question: who do you collaborate with in relation to the Scenarios process? The nature of that collaboration, I would learn, was greatly varied. And as the interviews unfolded, guided by the emerging hand drawn network map, I also learned how other organizations and individuals were collaborating amongst themselves.

Here is an example: El Hadj Malick Seck, Assistant Director of Health Programs for the U.S. Peace Corps drew on his map a small circle for each Peace Corps health volunteer in the field across Senegal. Seck chose to draw his network map in the form of the map of Senegal, so I was able to see the wide geographic distribution of health volunteers. Seck also drew a circle for each of the regional houses maintained by Peace Corps. He explained that for each contest cycle, he drops off leaflets at the regional houses for the volunteers to bring back to their posts and to distribute to other volunteers.

On his map, he also drew a set of circles for each community radio station that works directly with a health volunteer. Seck described this relationship:

Many of the volunteers have a weekly radio show to talk about health issues.

Volunteers will often bring the contest leaflets to the radio station and will announce the new contest cycle on the air.²⁵³

Seck then described the radio stations, and noted the crucial role they play in the more remote regions of Senegal, such as the areas bordering Mauritania and Mali, where several volunteers are posted. My goal in providing this explanation is to illustrate the kinds of activities that were described while mapping out Scenarios-related collaborations. The case of El Hadj Malick Seck is of interest because in our interview, he described not only his own personal collaborations, but also those of his volunteers, which he knew through their quarterly reports, conversation and correspondence.

The mapping exercise I conducted during each interview was also crucial in helping me understand how people were collaborating outside of the Scenarios process. A brief example which I will describe later in greater detail is the case of Madame Ngom, from the teacher's association, who explained to me, as she drew her map, that someone she had met while serving on a Scenarios jury was now helping her create a film, unrelated to the topic of HIV/AIDS. The map served as a visual cue during interviews. Once an interviewee had mentioned a particular person, and drew a corresponding circle on the map, that person might be referred to extensively, which would help me discover the ongoing and extended nature of relationships that began or intensified at a Scenarios event.

The “Smart Network Analyzer” software I used to organize the results of the mapping exercise permitted very sophisticated analyses, including the nature, strength and frequency of the ties between contacts in the network. I chose to use the software more visually and descriptively. In other words, I was more interested in *how* people collaborated than how often. I wanted to understand the extent of the Scenarios network, but I did not ask questions that would help me gauge the centrality or importance of any one member of a given network. Again, the focus was *how* people collaborated rather than who was an opinion leader or the most frequent collaborator.

In addition to interviews and network mapping, I engaged in extensive observation and took field notes at several contest coordination meetings and various outreach activities. These “outreach” activities were rarely Scenarios sponsored events, but rather events that collaborating individuals and organizations were engaged in, and to which they brought with them Scenarios materials. I call this phenomenon the “grafting” of Scenarios activities onto other existing activities and events, and will discuss this in more detail later in the chapter.

To supplement my observations at these encounters, I also conducted several ethnographic “go alongs,” a term used by sociologist Margarethe Kusenbach to describe extended interviews during which the researcher accompanies the interviewee on their daily activities. Part observation, part interview, the ethnographic “go along” is particularly suited for exploring the “stream of experiences and practices [of research participants] as they move through, and interact with, their physical and social environment.”²⁵⁴

The “go along,” much like the network mapping exercise, adds texture to an interview in the sense that there are “uncontrollable inputs,” things outside of prepared questions which can prompt commentary, reaction, and/or further inquiry. With the network map, the interviewee controls who and what they discuss, and in what order. With the “go along” the subjects for discussion often emerge as the interview proceeds through space and time. The mobile nature of the interview allows for unforeseen interactions and encounters with multiple material elements, streets, buildings, modes of transportation, and so on.

One of my “go alongs” consisted of an eleven hour trip in collective transport (a Renault hatchback with six seats) to Ziguinchor, in southern Senegal, with Gabriel Diouf, Scenarios National Coordinator and Moustapha Dieng, an ACI staff member who frequently works in Ziguinchor and who was helping to distribute Scenarios contest leaflets and sets of DVDs. Gabriel was bringing Scenarios contest materials to Kolda, and he parted ways with us somewhere along the highway before we reached the Gambian border. I continued on with Moustapha to Ziguinchor, and I spent the next four days there with him, following him as he worked.

As I walked with Moustapha through the tree-lined streets of Ziguinchor, a city 450 kilometers from Dakar, I gained a better sense of the scope of the Scenarios contest. The eleven-hour car trip was certainly enlightening, especially since Gabriel and Moustapha and I spent most of the trip talking about their work, in general, and also extensively about Scenarios. Even within the city of Ziguinchor, I was able to see that the reach of Scenarios, thanks to Moustapha, was very extensive.

In one afternoon, Moustapha and I made visits to a wide variety of collaborating organizations. We dropped off pamphlets at an orphanage, visited youth centers, and left DVD sets and pamphlets with several foreign aid organizations. After each visit, Moustapha would describe the nature of participation in the contest of each organization. Some partners distributed contest leaflets to young people in the neighborhood schools. Others, teachers with theater experience, for example, mentored contestants in script writing. Organizations with audio-visual equipment screened the films, often in collaboration with other Scenarios partners who had large memberships, and had the films, but lacked equipment to screen them.

After several “go alongs” like the one just described, attendance at several organizational meetings and interviews and network mapping with a wide range of individuals, I felt it necessary to share what I had learned with others to get some feedback and additional input. To this end, I met with members of the Scenarios “core” team to share my emerging understanding of the process and had very productive discussions before leaving the country. As an example, I will describe several meetings of this type. I begin by recounting my meeting with Gary Engelberg, a former Peace Corps volunteer who has lived in Senegal since his service in the 1960s and who is the Co-Founder and Director of Africa Consultants International (ACI).

ACI is a non-profit organization with a stated mission to “promote cross-cultural understanding, social justice and the health and well being of Africa's people through effective communication and transformational training.” Gary Engelberg, as the Director of ACI, has been involved with dozens of projects, many of them health-related, during his 45 years living in Senegal. In addition, ACI has been involved in the Scenarios

process since 1997. Here, “involved in the process,” can range from volunteering their office as a pick-up and drop off point for contest leaflets and completed scripts, hosting and providing members for the jury, using the films in their health outreach activities, and distributing the films to other organizations they collaborate with across Senegal.

One afternoon, I sat down with Gary at the same conference table I had sat at five weeks previously, and began sharing a very messy version of what I had learned during my time in Senegal. I had brought with me a large piece of white flip chart paper, which I placed on the table, and proceeded to populate with various analyses I was working through based on what I had learned about collaborating organizations through reading, interviews, network mapping, “go alongs,” observation and experience. I tried out different metaphors (which I discuss in chapter 5), drawing different corresponding images on the paper while Gary listened patiently. “Scenarios is like a porous sponge, with people entering and exiting the process at will.” At some point during our conversation, Gary picked up a pencil and began drawing his own analyses. And he drew references to individuals and organizations from the past, and described their impact on what I had taken to calling “The Scenarios Network,” which was, I learned, also very much an ACI network.

I had additional conversations where I shared my understanding, which was growing and evolving, with Gabriel Diouf and with Cheikh Ndongo Fall, each of whom had their own perspectives and experiences to offer in exchange. In particular, Gabriel underscored something I had learned in my interviews, which was that many of the people who collaborated with the Scenarios process had several different roles in the community and were affiliated with more than one association. Gabriel himself worked

for the German development agency GTZ²⁵⁵, ACI and was the Scenarios National Coordinator. He called having multiple professional roles the art of “debrouillage,” which means, roughly, “cobbled something together,” with a positive connotation.

“Au Senegal, *on se debrouille*,” he told me on several occasions during my five weeks in Senegal. “In Senegal, we figure it out.” Hanging his hat in many offices was an advantage for Gabriel. His employers were fully aware that he had more than one job and they supported his work because it was in the mutual interest of everyone, since each of his employers was working in the field of social change, in some capacity or another.

During my conversation with Cheikh Ndongo Fall, I again engaged in drawing. I tried to convey to Cheikh something I had frequently heard during interviews, which I will summarize as a willingness, on the part of collaborating organizations, to do more than they were asked to. In response to this Cheikh shared his historical perspective. He described a training session he attended with Dan Enger in the early days of Scenarios:

The workshop was called ‘Fosass,’ which is an acronym I no longer remember.

At this session Dan and I met a lot of incredibly dynamic people. These people were so committed and energetic, that when we meet someone with those characteristics, we say “that person has the “Fosass” spirit (*l'esprit Fosass*).”

Scenarios is very good at attracting people with this same “Fosass spirit.”

The “Fosass spirit,” Cheikh explained, is in evidence when an individual takes the initiative to promote Scenarios and to look for additional collaborators, without anyone having to ask.

I offer these anecdotes to illustrate how these final discussions contributed to my current understanding of the Scenarios process. Gary offered the “big picture,” 45 years

of history and his own set of analytical concepts. Gabriel enthusiastically supported some of my interpretations and others, less so. Cheikh shared several stories, which added, from a different angle, to the historical perspective Gary had provided. I had been concerned about making myself vulnerable by sharing my yet-to-be-organized thoughts, but the experience proved to be worth it. I had unveiled my imperfect understanding and as a result had the opportunity to learn more. These dialogues where I offered my “emerging understanding” up for scrutiny provided another round of perspectives, echoes and sometimes competing interpretations which I would later have to wrestle with.

In his book *The Interpretation of Cultures*, anthropologist and ethnographer Clifford Geertz writes that “it is not necessary to know everything in order to understand something.”²⁵⁶ I try to recall Geertz’s words when my incomplete understanding alarms me. I remind myself: “I do not know *everything* about Scenarios, even Scenarios in Senegal, but I do know *something*.” A portion of that “something” is the subject of this chapter.

Emergent Theoretical Lenses

Once I left Senegal, I continued processing all I had read, heard and witnessed. Having recently read several books and articles on “complexity theory,” and I found that concepts from that body of literature kept coming to mind as I searched for a vocabulary to describe my understanding of the Scenarios process. These concepts, primarily *complex adaptive systems*, *self-organization*, and *perpetual novelty* proved helpful as I began formalizing my interpretations and narrowing my focus when it came time to write up what I had learned in Senegal. The “dialogic” lens only occurred to me later, and yet was equally important. I believe that theories of dialogue have helped me understand the

why behind the Scenarios design. Concepts from Complexity theories have helped me understand the *what* and the *how*. Once I began understanding the what and how of Scenarios, I could begin thinking about the why behind it all.

The “what” and “how” are the ins and outs of the process. Learning about “what” is learning that the contest happens every two years and that NGOs and CBOs collaborate to implement the contest, volunteer to serve on the jury, and help distribute the films. Learning about “how” was accomplished when I accompanied Moustapha to Ziguinchor and saw how he distributes the leaflets, how he explains to people in Ziguinchor what the contest is about and how he arranges to return later to pick up the leaflets. Frankly, I was not wondering about the “why” behind it all when I was in the field.

The “why” question came to the fore when I saw the complete Scenarios network map for the first time using the Smart Network Analysis software. When I saw the map I asked “how did the network get this big?” and then I asked myself “*Why* did the network get this big?” “*Why* did so many individuals and organizations contribute to this process?” And the answer was that the network got that big because the people who designed the Scenarios process trusted that if they created a process that respected and required the capabilities of local actors, people would volunteer and the network would grow. A huge network of individuals and organizations contributed to this process because they were *invited*, and they found the invitation compelling.

The *why* behind the incredibly rich collaboration that makes Scenarios possible is embedded in the design. Every design reveals an orientation toward the Other. The Scenarios design, I believe firmly, reveals a *dialogic* orientation toward the Other. Here, I am using “dialogic orientation” synonymously with having faith in the capacity of

Others. Kate and Dan trusted that when they built the Scenarios field of dreams, hundreds of Others would contribute. I will explain the link between dialogue and the Scenarios design more fully at the conclusion of this chapter.

The second theoretical lens that I have found helpful is what I will call the “complexity lens.” I choose this term because I am unhappy with the alternatives. There is no one theory of complexity, and thus the umbrella term for this body of literature varies: some call it “Complexity Science,” others call it Complexity Theory, despite it not being *one* unified theory. What I have culled out, for the purpose of this chapter, is one key concept, “complex adaptive systems,” (CAS) which has related terms that characterize CAS. Very briefly stated, a complex adaptive system is “a network of many ‘agents’ working in parallel.”²⁵⁷ Two of the characteristics of CAS, which are terms I will refer to again in this chapter, is that they are *self organizing*, and they are sites for *perpetual novelty*.

The interdisciplinary nature of “complexity” can be best explained by referring to several Nobel Prize winners who have contributed to this body of literature. They include Ilya Prigogine (Chemistry, 1977) best known for his work on non-equilibrium thermodynamics and who is credited with the earliest theorizing of self-organization,²⁵⁸ Kenneth Arrow (Economics, 1972), who has theorized economic behavior and uncertainty,²⁵⁹ and Murray Gell-Man (Physics, 1969) who received the Nobel for his work theorizing elementary particles and is credited, among other accomplishments, for discovering the “quark.”²⁶⁰ To this current list of chemistry, economics and physics, other disciplines that have weighed in on issues of complexity include mathematics, computer science and evolutionary biology. To date, there are few examples of social scientists

using complexity terminology, although there are some exceptions, with applications ranging from “development and humanitarian efforts,” healthcare reform, HIV/AIDS and organizational management.²⁶¹

In their discussion of complexity within the context of health care systems, Glouberman and Zimmerman, provide some helpful basic concepts to explain the process. The authors differentiate between processes that are simple, like baking a cake, those that are complicated, which require precision and expertise, like sending a satellite into space, and finally complex phenomena – like raising a child.²⁶² No matter how consistent parents may be, no two children will ever develop in the same way. Interactions between humans, including parents and children, are complex and unpredictable. The linear and precise terminologies that are often used to describe human behavior in the past cannot account for the wide variety of unexpected outcomes that emerge when many humans interact within a dynamic system. For example, it would be very difficult to predict and systematize the activities of a Registered Nurse working in an emergency room given the unpredictable nature of the work and the large number of individuals who interact on a given day, including hospital staff, family members and patients.

The various literatures on “complexity” thus provide a vocabulary for the hundreds of unpredictable interactions involved in implementing the Scenarios process. The advantage of complexity over other theoretical frameworks dealing with community and participation is precisely the focus on self-organizing capacities of agents within the system and *interaction* between agents. The concept of “social capital,” written about by James Coleman, Jane Jacobs and Robert Putnam, among others, I perceive to be a term

used to describe a product of social relations rather than the *process* of relating itself. In the context of my study, complexity literature enables me to better account for how members of the Scenarios network relate to one another and what outcome, beyond increases in social capital, these relationships can engender.

Background

Scenarios is a communication process designed to raise awareness about HIV prevention, testing, treatment and stigma. The process, presented here in its most simplified form, has five essential phases:

- 1) A scriptwriting contest for young people ages 15-25;
- 2) A jury selection during which the winning scripts are chosen;
- 3) Script revision and adaptation, to ensure their sensitivity and accuracy;
- 4) Film production, to convert the winning scripts into short films; and finally
- 5) Film distribution and screenings (via broadcast or DVD in communities).

The entire Scenarios process (contest, jury, film production and distribution) is implemented by hundreds of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community based organizations (CBOs) across sub-Saharan Africa. The process was first developed by Global Dialogues, a British charitable organization founded in 1996, which assists in the coordination of the various Scenarios from Africa contests and takes the lead in securing financing and in-kind donations to support the Scenarios process. Since its inception in 1997, Scenarios has been funded by a variety of organizations,²⁶³ of which the most long-standing and consistent contributors include Comic Relief (UK), the UK Department for International Development, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).²⁶⁴

The first Scenarios contest, originally called “Scenarios from the Sahel,” was held in 1997 in three West African countries, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mali. To date, there have been five completed “editions” of the Scenarios contest (1997, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2007/8), with a cumulative total of 55,000 scripts submitted by young people from 47 different countries. The exact number of young people participating as contestants in the five contests to date is 145, 875.²⁶⁵

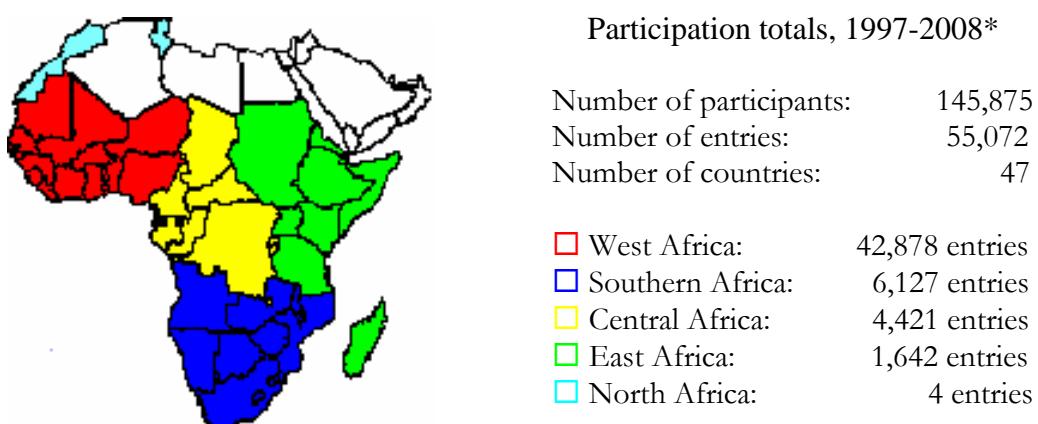


Figure 16: Cumulative participation totals.
Source: Global Dialogues

*Note: These figures include contestants who may have submitted multiple entries of those who may have participated in multiple contests.

The contest component of Scenarios was modeled on a similar HIV/AIDS awareness project developed in France in 1993 called “3,000 scenarios against a virus”²⁶⁶ With the gravity of the HIV/AIDS epidemic just beginning to be understood and long before the era of contest-driven reality television, “3,000 scenarios” was a groundbreaking project that treated young people as creators rather than mere recipients of health-related content. That is, rather than targeting them with pre-fabricated messages urging them to “know their ABCs²⁶⁷, Abstain, Be faithful, and wear a Condom, young

people were instead invited to draw from their own experiences and use their creativity to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS.²⁶⁸ Building on an existing intervention is representative of the asset-based approach adopted by the Scenarios founders. Asset-based approaches start by identifying the strengths of a community rather than seeking their deficits, as is typical with the “needs assessment” mechanism²⁶⁹. Asset-based approaches are “dialogic” to the extent that they pre-suppose existing capacity, creativity and agency in a given community.

The “best practices” approach to social change, for example, is actually a deficit approach in asset-based clothing. Best practices are solutions that are external to the community (or organization) that are imported into a new context and held up as standards to follow. An *invitational* mechanism like the Scenarios scriptwriting contests is an asset-based approach because it depends on the contribution of community members to succeed. The Scenarios contest is invitational by design, it *invites* participation. Yet it only becomes *participatory* when the invitation is accepted and people come forward to participate. I have discussed this process elsewhere in an article that describes the contest as a mechanism that invites an “infusion of innovations,” with young people positioned as innovators and their submitted scripts as infusion.²⁷⁰ I believe that the contest mechanism exemplifies how the design of an intervention reflects the role anticipated for Others. A contest is Other-oriented because it invites others to act. In the case of “community-based” interventions, how “community” is conceived can affect whether the community takes on a passive or active role in promoting change.

Writing in the field of Public Health, McLeroy and colleagues have created a typology of health promotion interventions that are “community based.” They note that

behind the term “community based” there is a wide variation in what, exactly, is the role of the community. They observe: “The term *community based* often refers to community as the *setting* for interventions.”²⁷¹ The community-as-setting is a largely geographical definition. This type of intervention occurs *in* the community, but may not be *of* the community, meaning that the community may have no role in implementing the intervention. The next type of intervention described by McLeroy et al. is community-as-target: “In this model, health status characteristics of the community are the targets of interventions.”²⁷² In this instance, community level health indicators, such as the amount of park space per capita or the community air quality levels, are targeted for improvement. Here, community is a unit of analysis and a target for change. McLeroy and colleagues then describe the final two types of intervention, which are community-as-resource, and community-as-agents. The two types of intervention are both rooted in the understanding that “community ownership and participation is essential for sustained success in population-level health outcomes.”²⁷³ McLeroy et al. note that interventions that approach the community as *agents* for change are the least common of the four types:

Although closely linked to the model just described [community as resource], the emphasis in this model is on respecting and reinforcing the natural adaptive, supportive and developmental capacities of communities...These naturally occurring *units of solution* meet the needs of many, if not most, community members without the benefit of direct professional intervention²⁷⁴ (emphasis in the original).

McLeroy et al. conclude their article by advocating for inclusion of these “naturally occurring units of solution” into public health interventions. Taking this approach requires faith in the community. One has to believe that the community has the capacity to act on its own behalf and interventions should be designed to make the most of the strengths of the community.

Scenarios from Africa, is an intervention with multiple components (contest, jury, film production, distribution and use), each of which depends on the community for realization. Scenarios is designed with a resourceful, agentic community in mind. To use the terminology of Airhihenbuwa and Obregon, Scenarios was not designed under the assumption that Senegalese culture was a “barrier to be overcome” but rather a “cultural strength,” an asset to build upon.²⁷⁵ Here, when I make reference to the asset that is Senegalese “culture,” I refer in this chapter to one cultural aspect in particular, in acknowledgement that no number of dissertations could get at the whole of “Senegalese culture.”

In this chapter, I present the wealth of community associations as one aspect of Senegalese culture. My interviews, and the network mapping exercise in particular, unveiled a world of associations previously unknown to me: professional associations, sport associations, women’s savings and credit groups, associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, cultural associations and associations based on ethnic and/or religious affiliation. During my fieldwork, I explored *how* these associations collaborated with Scenarios from Africa and with one another, both inside and outside the Scenarios context.

Core Organizations

When I attended the Scenarios “kick off” meeting at the ACI office on World AIDS Day Scenarios contest in Senegal I was introduced to representatives from all of the “core” organizations who would play an active role in implementing the contest. A “core” organization is one that either received a small budget from Scenarios National Coordinator in Senegal, Gabriel Diouf, or an organization that would “self-fund,” or use their own operational budget to cover any costs associated with the contest implementation. The United States Peace Corps and the large multinational non-governmental organization Save the Children were two of the “self-funding” organizations in attendance. The other “core” organizations were much smaller, and operated exclusively in Senegal. The group was “self-selected,” each organization attending the initial meeting was there on a volunteer basis.

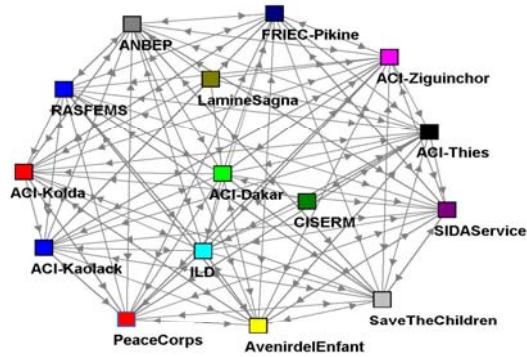


Figure 17: Map of “core” Scenarios collaborators.

Many in the room had been involved with Scenarios since its inception in 1997. The meeting took place at the offices of Africa Consultants International (ACI), a non-profit organization operational in Senegal since 1984 with long track record in HIV/AIDS prevention work and an active regional presence. Understanding the work of ACI, as an example of an organization collaborating with Scenarios, is key to understanding how the Scenarios process can involve hundreds of organizations while having very little organizational capacity in-country.

ACI benefits from a large network of contacts, built over years of outreach and peer-training offered to other community based organizations through its “centers of excellence” program, established in 1997. The “centers of excellence” program was established to continue nurturing and mentoring small organizations that had benefited from support from the United States Agency for International Development in the early 1990s. The program is staffed by five “case workers,” each of whom each has a region of responsibility, which is determined by the familiarity with the region of each caseworker and the languages s/he speaks. When Scenarios from Africa first arrived in Senegal in 1997, they made contact with ACI and were able to benefit from an extensive, pre-established network. The ACI network thus became the foundation of the Scenarios network. The Scenarios national coordinator, Gabriel Diouf, is also an extremely well-connected individual. Gabriel Diouf was chosen as national coordinator because of his “passionate commitment” to fighting the HIV/AIDS, but also because he was already deeply engaged “in the fight” through his part-time employment with both ACI and the German cooperative organization GTZ.²⁷⁶

Whereas many social change programs seek to establish their own offices and hire their own staff, Scenarios from Africa co-founder Dan Enger commented that he prefers not to “decapitate,” well-functioning organizations by hiring away their talent.²⁷⁷ Instead, they take advantage of the existing work of their partners, who collaborate with Scenarios with the permission of their organization’s leaders, and “graft” Scenarios activities to their existing programs. This “grafting” strategy will be discussed at greater length shortly.

The “kick off” meeting held on World AIDS Day at the ACI offices in Dakar served many purposes: it was a social event, allowing longstanding members to greet one another and to also get to know new members. It was a motivational event, the screening of the new films reminded the group that each contest yielded media products that they could use in their work. Finally, the meeting was logistical: each organization present pledged to prepare an “action plan” where they would determine their own strategy for involvement in helping the contest get under way and begin using and distributing the films. It was understood that each organization, as a minimum level of involvement, would be responsible for distributing contest leaflets, and would arrange to gather the completed scripts submitted by young people up until the script submission deadline, which for the 207-2008 contest cycle, was the 15th of March. At the meeting’s close, I collected contact information from each person in attendance and immediately began making appointments for follow up interviews with this “core” group. The map below depicts the size of this “core” group of Scenarios collaborators, all of whom know one another, as evidenced by the connecting lines between them.

I provide the image below to serve as a visual starting point, which we will be able to compare with the larger network map that emerged once I interviewed each representative present at the meeting and entered their hand-drawn network maps into the network analysis software. The map below includes the eleven organizations leading the Scenarios contest implementation process, with one of the organizations, ACI, having an active case-worker presence in four regions. I include each regional caseworker within the map of core group members as their regional network maps would prove to be as extensive as any of the maps drawn by representatives of the other organizations. Also included in the “core” group map is one individual, Lamine Sagna, a previous contest winner (2000) who became an active promoter of the contest and distributor of films at local universities.

The significance of this smaller map only becomes evident when compared with the map I was able to make after asking each core member to map their personal and professional network as related to the Scenarios process. The smaller map represents the “core group.” The larger map represents what the network of contacts that the core group brought with them when they began contributing to the Scenarios process. The larger network map represents the ability of these eleven core group members to reach hundreds of other individuals and organizations. The Scenarios network was established through these core group members. The “Scenarios network,” and the networks mapped by core group members, are one and the same. In other words, there would be no “Scenarios network” without the generous volunteer work and the pre-existing social capital of the core group members. The Scenarios process helps to increase and diversify the network.

As a result of volunteering in the Scenarios process, the core group members' networks also grow. Both the process and the parties involved benefit from this growth.

An intervention that is designed to promote social change but that bypasses the community-as-agent is missing out on tapping into the extended network of committed individuals and organizations that is represented by the larger map. The Scenarios intervention was designed for a community of agents. When the co-founders set the first contest in motion, they put the intervention in the hands of the community. Since its inception in 1997, the Scenarios process has grown from 3 countries to 37 countries across the African continent. None of this happened by push. This growth is the result of many capable communities stepping forward and offering their services as agents of change.

I conducted an initial round of interviews with a representative from each of the "core" Scenarios group members in Senegal. In some cases, I was able to track down additional contacts from the network maps drawn by the first round of interviewees. I asked each interviewee to begin by describing their participation in the Scenarios process. Since I was most interested in learning about how the organizations collaborated with one another as well as the *generative potential* of their interactions, the most interesting responses often came during the network mapping exercise when interviewees described their networks and their relationships with other organizations working with them in Scenarios related activities. I believe that these interviews illustrated examples of what complexity theorist Waldrop refers to as "perpetual novelty" within complex adaptive systems. Perpetual novelty is the result of "the rich web of interactions between multiple agents."²⁷⁸ Perpetual novelty within a complex adaptive system means that:

new opportunities are always being created by the system. And that, in turn, means that it's essentially meaningless to talk about a complex adaptive system being in equilibrium: the system can never get there. It is always unfolding, always in transition.²⁷⁹

If we consider the individuals and organizations that collaborate with Scenarios as the interacting agents within a system, the idea of “perpetual novelty” seems like common sense. Whenever there are interactions between independent agents there will be novelty, because humans are not machines. No two humans will act alike in a situation, as anyone with employees, students, co-workers, siblings, or children will know. There will never be two identical contest cycles. Since each contest involves new actors and hundreds of interactions, the potential for new opportunities, new collaborations, and new interactions is limitless. Nobel Prizing-winning chemist Ilya Prigogine is optimistic about the potential of the unpredictable. He writes: “Nature is indeed related to the creation of unpredictable novelty, where the possible is richer than the real.” Likewise, the design of the Scenarios intervention facilitates emergent (unpredictable) novelty, and by doing so, creates the conditions, as Prigogine notes, of rich *possibility*.

In my conversations with members, I learned about a different form of novelty generated from the interactions between Scenarios team members and collaborators. The Scenarios process brings a wide range of individuals and organizations into contact with one another and the result of these interactions, as I learned in my interviews, went beyond the scope of the original Scenarios process. The “novelties” generated in these interactions took various forms: new relationships, new collaborations, new products, and new depth to existing relationships. Although there were several examples of novelty

often discussed in any one given interview, the illustrative examples I have selected are meant to introduce a diversity of voices.

New Relationships

Mamadou Ba is the Director of a non-profit organization called Avenir de l'Enfant, which serves street children and orphans in Rufisque a small coastal town just south of Dakar. Despite having very few staff members, Avenir de l'Enfant has actively participated in Scenarios since the second edition of the contest, in 1999. Mr. Ba provides food and basic health services to children living on the streets and is a frequent visitor to Rufisque's "Daras," Koranic schools with students who in many cases earn the money for meals and school fees by asking for alms on the street. Avenir de l'Enfant has collected hundreds of scripts from children living on the streets of Rufisque and says he takes advantage of the Scenarios contest to discuss the dangers of HIV/AIDS with contest participants.

I first met Mr. Ba at the "kick off" meeting at the ACI office. When I caught up with him at his office in Rufisque, he mentioned the meeting as an example of the benefit of participating as a core member in Scenarios activities. "At the meeting I got to meet the representative from Save the Children. They are new this year. I asked for contact information for their representative at the meeting." Mr. Ba explained that he intended to query Save the Children regarding a fundraising effort he was leading. As an attendee at the Scenarios "kick off" meeting, Mr. Ba was at the same table with a representative of an organization 100 times larger and with much deeper pockets than his shop, Avenir de l'Enfant, headquartered in Rufisque. At the ACI office that day he was seated at the table as a peer, a volunteer among others on a "level playing field." I do not know if Mr. Ba

was successful in his funding request to Save the Children, but I am encouraged that he had the opportunity and felt confident enough to seize it.

The fostering of new relationships was a subject touched upon by Scenarios co-founder Daniel Enger. He explained that although bringing people together is not the core mission of Scenarios, there is a deliberate “matchmaking” effort, as he called it, particularly at the jury phase of the process:

We bring together people who would normally never get together. People living with HIV have to be present, and to the greatest extent possible we seek a gender balance. We’re looking for diversity and we’re looking for matchmaking. In the jury selection, we might pair a 19 year old mover and shaker who has just started her own NGO, and as it happens, she’ll get paired with someone who deals with funding dossiers.

Dan’s comment brings me back to the idea of *design*. His comment makes it clear that Scenarios was designed to foster new and deeper relationships. In this respect, the Scenarios design is *dialogic* – it fosters relation. It is an unstated mission, but it is part of the design nonetheless.

His observation reflects the fact that the match-making aspect of pairing of jury members into working teams is not formalized or made explicit. “We leave it [matchmaking] to the discretion of the National Coordinators,” he added. In the external report prepared after the 2002 Scenarios contest, evaluations on the process, collected from 113 jury members representing 95 different organizations, described their jury service as an opportunity to meet representatives of other organizations working in the same geographic zone. One Senegalese jury member remarked:

It's been very useful, especially because I've come to know structures and individuals working in the field [of HIV/AIDS]. Now, when our partners ask for assistance that we cannot provide, I'm in a position to refer them to qualified sources of support and information.²⁸⁰

The act of *serving* together, of contributing to a common cause, is an opportunity for relationships to emerge and to grow. The purpose of the jury is to assess the scripts and select prize winners. But the jury also serves as a *unifying event*, an event that brings people from different professional sectors together. Designing an intervention with unifying events such as the Scenarios Jury meetings does not guarantee new relationships will emerge. But it provides *the conditions* for them to emerge. I use the word “emerge” deliberately and in direct reference to complexity literature. Emergence is a characteristic of a complex adaptive system with many interacting agents who *self-organize*. An army of soldiers does not self-organize. An army is not an open system, but rather a closed one. The control in complex adaptive systems is “highly dispersed,” and thus its members “self organize” in lieu of being directed by others.²⁸¹ Emergence is the unpredictable result of self-organization. I recognize that defining the concepts in this manner risks tautology, thus let me provide two extended quotes and then an example. Sociologist Edgar Morin offers this viewpoint on what he calls *emergences*:

The whole is more than the sum of its parts. A system possesses something more than its components considered as separate or juxtaposed: its organization, the global unity itself (the ‘whole’), and the new qualities and properties emerging from organization and from global unity...Emergence is a new quality in respect to the components of a system...The organization of a system is the organization

of difference. *It establishes complementary relations between the different and diverse parts*, as well as between the parts and the whole (emphasis in the original).²⁸²

In other words, the interaction of different components (I prefer “agents”) in a system results in new, emergent behavior. To concretize this example we can associate the Scenarios network as the “whole,” and its members as the parts. No one is telling the parts how to organize their contribution to the Scenarios process, and as a result, Scenarios network members self-organize, they decide what they will do, when, with whom and where. Gabriel Diouf, Scenarios national coordinator is not in control, nor often apprised of what different Scenarios collaborators are doing. The new collaborations, relationships and products that emerge as a result of these interactions cannot be planned for.

Physicist James Crutchfield provides this description of emergence within self-organization:

Some of the most engaging and perplexing natural phenomena are those in which highly structured collective behavior emerges over time from the interaction of simple systems. Flocks of birds flying in lockstep formation and schools of fish swimming in coherent array abruptly turn together with no leader guiding the group...optimal pricing of goods in an economy appears to arise from agents obeying the local rules of commerce.

The coordination of the Scenarios contest is the “structured collective behavior” that emerges from all the diverse parts doing their part to contribute to Scenarios. The “Scenarios network” featured in figure 18 (PAGE 134) is an emergent outcome of

hundreds of self-organized actions. While Abdoulaye Konaté is bringing different individuals and organizations together in the context of Scenarios in Kolda, Moustapha Dieng is doing the same, albeit *differently*, in Ziguinchor. When the contest and jury meetings are over, this network still exists. What will emerge from this network is unpredictable, but rich with possibility.

The Scenarios process, as a collaborative, community endeavor, involves dozens of opportunities for participating organizations to encounter one another, including coordination meetings, jury deliberations, prize ceremonies, and film screenings. One cannot predict the result of these encounters, and thus the value of “new relationships” may seem uncertain, as an outcome. And yet, in repeated interviews following my meeting with Mr. Ba, I heard evidence of new relationships generating new collaborative endeavors. An example of this type of outcome was shared with me by Madame Ngom, an extremely active woman affiliated with several pro-social entities in Dakar.

New Collaborations

Madame Ngom whisked me off to my first ethnographic go-along in Senegal. I had approached her at the closing of the “kick off” meeting to inquire about an appointment for an interview. Madame Ngom was at the meeting representing RASFEMS,²⁸³ a large association of middle and high school teachers who mentor young women. “What are you doing right now,” she asked. Before I could answer she said authoritatively: “You should come with me – I’m headed to a community [HIV] testing event right now.” I got into a taxi with Madame Ngom without knowing our destination.

We arrived several minutes later at the administrative offices of the Mayor of “Grand Dakar,” a large neighborhood in the center of Dakar. There were musicians

entertaining pockets of people who had already secured seats in the shade, under large canopies. Madame Ngom was a featured speaker at the event, which had been organized to publicize the availability of the free HIV testing services being offered by the Mayor. “Are you here representing RASFEMS?” I asked. She explained that while she was indeed the president of RASFEMS, in was in her capacity of community development officer, her full time government position, that she would speaking that afternoon. Madame Ngom, it resulted, was the wearer of many hats: in addition to working full time for the government, she was also the president of RASFEMS and an active member in a women’s association in the region of Thiaroye, just outside of Dakar. Like Scenarios national coordinator Gabriel Diouf, the multiple professional and personal affiliations of Madame Ngom enabled Scenarios to take advantage of an extensive pre-existing network of contacts.

At the Scenarios meeting Madame Ngom represented RASFEMS and left the meeting carrying Scenarios DVDs, which she promptly put to use, now wearing her community development officer hat, in the TV/DVD equipped waiting room at the HIV testing event. After competing, unsuccessfully, with the band entertaining the growing crowds, I stored my recorder and vowed to interview Madame Ngom at a later date. In the calm of her office several days later, Madame Ngom shared with me the story of her collaboration with a fellow jury member that she had met for the first time during a previous Scenarios contest:

I’ve kept in contact with a film maker, Hamet Fall Diagne. Our relationship has not been limited to [our work with] Scenarios. I call him a lot and send him mails and he does the same. He helped us film a documentary for the “Week of the

Child” event that was organized by my service, the office of community development.

Madame Ngom’s account of her collaboration with Hamet Fall Diagne points to the open design of the Scenarios from Africa process. Madame Ngom attends a Scenarios meeting as a RASFEMS representative, leaves the meeting with Scenarios materials which she brings to a different event, this time as a government representative. In like fashion, when she serves on a Scenarios jury, she can use the contacts she has made there to get technical assistance for the creation of a new documentary film through her work at the community development office. This back and forth transfer is a form of *cross pollination*: Scenarios activities are grafted onto Madame Ngom’s existing professional commitments and Madame Ngom is able to extend her existing professional network, which means that when she needs a filmmaker, outside of her Scenarios activities, she has contact information on hand. The benefits of cross-pollination would be mooted by a more rigid organizational structure. By allowing great freedom to the multiple hat-wearing, well-connected individuals who volunteer their time, the Scenarios process helps strengthen existing networks and provides opportunities for relationships and collaboration that continue beyond the Scenarios cycle of activities.

I want to pause, briefly, to provide a visual depiction of the “Scenarios network,” which was created by aggregating the information provided on the individual network maps created by interviewees. This map allows us to put into perspective the generative encounter between Madame Ngom’s and her jury acquaintance: the description of her new film projects is an act of collaboration between just two “squares” out of hundreds depicted in Figure 18.



Figure 18: Network of organizations collaborating with Scenarios in 2007-2008.

This map of organizations involved in the Scenarios process is only a partial view of the network. Absent from the map are most of the individuals and organizations involved in script adaptation, filming, editing, dubbing and subtitling of films, as I did not have access to this set of people during my limited time in the field.

What this larger network represents is the contribution of the “core” group members to the Scenarios process. Starting from a small node of 11 individual, each with their own personal and professional network, this larger network can be accessed. My

interviews also suggest that by collaborating with Scenarios, these networks, in some cases, grow and/or are strengthened. Distributing the contest leaflets and the DVDs is an occasion for individuals and organizations to revisit their existing networks *and* make new contacts. The value one places on the growth and/or strengthening of a community network depends on how much faith one has in the community as agent. If one embraces the view that community members are creative, capable agents then one must believe that the increased interaction of various creative, capable agents is likely to yield positive outcomes. In addition to emergent new collaborations resulting from taking part in the Scenarios process, my inquiry with core Scenarios members reveals the additional outcome in the form of new *products*.

New Products

Another form of long-lasting novelty emerging from the Scenarios process is the creation of new, unplanned-for products that build on the work of Scenarios, Assistant Peace Corps Director (APCD) El Hadj Malick Seck spoke to me about this process. Mr. Seck is the APCD for Peace Corps health program in Senegal. Before joining the Peace Corps staff in 2002 Mr. Seck had already had a long career as a public health officer, serving for 11 years in Podor and Matam, two cities bordering Mauritania and Niger, respectively. He has degrees in Nursing, Health Project Management and is a certified master trainer of health workers.

Currently, Mr. Seck oversees the work of 47 American volunteers working in health related issues, in many cases in remote regions of Senegal. Mr. Seck chose to draw his network map in the shape of Senegal, and because of this I was able to appreciate the geographic distribution of the Peace Corps health volunteers working in Senegal. Mr.

Seck makes regular visits to volunteers across Senegal, and takes advantage of his stops at the Peace Corps regional houses and community training centers to leave Scenarios contest brochures and DVDs for volunteers to pick up and bring back to their service sites. He also uses the Peace Corps newsletter, he said, to disseminate information about the Scenarios contest and available materials.

Many of the health volunteers, he explained, use the Scenarios films in their outreach work and those with access to community radio use this medium to promote the Scenarios contest on the air. Mr. Seck's comments on the importance of community radio of in geographically isolated areas of the country led to a more general discussion about Scenarios from Africa and the format of the final products emerging from the contest process. "In some of the more remote regions, there is very little access to audio-visual equipment," he explained. "After the first Scenarios contest in 1997, we used some of the scripts to create an audio-cassette. It came out in 1998. We called it "The U.S. Peace Corps presents 'Youth against AIDS.' We got funding from USAID to create the cassette."



Figure 19: The Scenarios cassette, an initiative of the U.S. Peace Corps.

Mr. Seck and the Peace Corps volunteers serving in remote regions of Senegal had recognized the need for an audio version of Scenarios stories and took the initiative to seek their own funding to get a cassette produced that could be used in villages and on the radio. Several years later, this type of initiative was replicated by Olga Ouédraogo, a former contest winner who took it upon herself to create a French audio version of several of the Scenarios films that had been made to date.²⁸⁴ The open, decentralized design of the Scenarios process allowed for new initiatives such as those pursued by the U.S. Peace Corps and Olga Ouédraogo to take place. To exert greater control over the creative products would help Scenarios ensure quality and accuracy, but at the cost of innovation and initiative. The best way, then, for Scenarios to try to promote the freedom to innovate with a certain guarantee of quality and accuracy, is to invite the participation of well-trained professionals familiar with the HIV/AIDS epidemic like El Hadj Malick Seck.

The U.S. Peace Corps' efforts to seek funding and create a new product, and audio cassette, were a direct response to the needs of volunteers working in isolated

regions with no access to audio-visual equipment. The decentralized design of Scenarios allowed self-organization by those best equipped to know and address the needs of their particular context. Specialized, local knowledge is also at the root of the next novelty I will discuss. This next case involves the creation of a new, deeper form of relationship between two community based organizations in the Kaolack region of Senegal. This “new depth of relationship” was recounted to me by Abdoulaye Konaté, the Africa Consultants International (ACI) case worker for the region of Kaolack.

New Depth of Relationship

Abdoulaye Konaté is yet another well-connected individual with a long professional history of community-related work. He began working at ACI in 1997 after several years as the leader of a youth organization that was very active in HIV/AIDS prevention. Mr. Konaté recalls: “I was the head of the “Youth Association Liberty IV. We had our own theater troupe and we were very active in raising awareness about HIV/AIDS. We used to travel all over the country and were often called in by the government or NGOs to perform at events, like December 1st, World AIDS day.” After attending a training event where he met several people from ACI, Konaté began working as a caseworker for the Kaolack region, chosen for this position due to his extensive family ties in the region. “In just about every neighborhood in that city I have an aunt, uncle or cousin. I know all of the government authorities, the health workers, and the NGO representatives,” he said. As with the others I interviewed, I asked Mr. Konaté to draw the network of organizations he works with in relation to the Scenarios process. As he drew and narrated his relationships I struggled to keep up with the stream of associations he mentioned, each with their own identifying acronym. As he patiently gave

me the full name behind each acronym, I gained a better understanding of the “associative nature” of Senegal.²⁸⁵

Among the organizations he listed were the “Network of Young Women Leaders,” the “Association of Young Workers,” the “Association for the Well-Being of the Family,” the “Association for the Promotion of Senegalese Women,” and the “Group of Young Farmers and Shepherds of Nganda.” I asked Mr. Konaté if the organizations knew one another and if so, whether they had established relationships outside of their collaboration with Scenarios from Africa. “There are groups working together,” he said. “And many of the organizations have introduced me to other organizations who then also began collaborating with Scenarios.” Most of the collaborations he described involved the sharing of resources, like audio-visual equipment for Scenarios film screenings. Then Konaté described a remarkable outgrowth of a relationship between two organizations who became aware of one another through collaboration on the Scenarios process.

The “Association for the Promotion of Senegalese Women” (APROFES), after getting to know representatives from Bokk Lepp (“Share everything” in Wolof), an association of people living with HIV/AIDS, decided to become their funder – APROFES raised and donated the money to have an office built for Bokk Lepp. The generosity of APROFES toward Bokk Lepp, Mr. Konaté explained, occurred because the two organizations, united by the common cause of their participation in the Scenarios contest, had a greater opportunity to get to know one another, as peers.

Mention of this new depth of relationship only occurred, almost as an afterthought, as Mr. Konaté discussed with me the myriad of associations working together in the context of Scenarios from Africa. At the close of that interview, I left the

ACI office wondering how many relationships of that nature were in existence but unknown, even to the Scenarios organizers. I had not anticipated that one Senegalese association might be bankrolling another. Had my inquiry been in the form of a survey, I would not have known to ask about depth of relationship and would have missed that form of novelty altogether. In a questionnaire, one can only choose among the available choices – such a form of investigation leaves no room for unexpected occurrences.

During my conversations with Mr. Ba of Avenir de L'enfant, Madame Ngom of RASFEMS, Mr. Seck of the U.S. Peace Corps and Mr. Konaté of ACI, I learned many other interesting things about the Scenarios process that are not directly related to emergent “novelties.” I learned about what many referred to as “La Greffe,” which is the “grafting” of Scenarios activities onto pre-existing or complementary activities implemented by Scenarios partners. An example of “La Greffe” is when one organization has an event, unrelated to HIV/AIDS, and they add a viewing of Scenarios films – or when the transport of organizational materials is leveraged to add a package of Scenarios DVDs and contest leaflets. Scenarios National Coordinator Gabriel Diouf described both of these forms of “seizing the occasion” to me, and many more, during several conversations we had over the span of the five weeks I spent in the field.

Another frequent comment I heard was how serving on the Scenarios jury allowed participants to “stay current” with the state of young people’s thoughts about the epidemic. Several interviewees noted that as the nature of HIV/AIDS changed with the advent of anti-retroviral drugs, which are provided free of charge to Senegalese citizens by the government, the scripts submitted by young people also changed. Jury members commented that the more recent scripts submitted by young people reflected a shift from

morbid stories of certain death to issues of stigma and adherence to treatment. If we accept the view of the Scenarios process as a complex adaptive system, the young script submitters, as part of this system, input new perspectives, which are in turn affected by the varied geographic and socio-economic contexts they live in.

The Relationship between Dialogue, Design and Complex Adaptive Systems

Edgar Morin, who has written extensively on complexity, also makes mention of dialogue:

Dialogical means it is impossible to reach a sole principle, or a master word, whatever it is: there will always be something irreducible to a simple principle, be it chance, uncertainty, contradictions, or organization. But at the same time, dialogics, while it contains an intrinsic limitation, also includes the possibility of bringing concepts into play among themselves.”²⁸⁶

A dialogic design is one that allows for and fosters chance, uncertainty and even contradiction by placing great faith in the Other, by creating a role for the Other, and by inviting the Other to act, knowing full well that the Others’ action cannot be controlled or predicted. A dialogic design brings *people*, not just concepts, into play among themselves.

Scenarios from Africa is a complex process involving many parts. It is designed to be complex. It is designed with multiple (nearly all) roles envisioned for Others. It is designed to be porous, to allow many people to enter the process, contribute what they will and what they can, and then exit, if they choose. Each Scenarios contest cycle is different. In each country and in each new cycle the network of collaborating agents reconfigures itself. How does it reconfigure itself? Through self-selection and self-

organization. No one is pushed to participate. Scenarios operates on pull. The process attracts Others who are willing to collaborate because it is an “Other-oriented” intervention. It is an intervention with an inviting design. It is a design that needs capable, willing, and motivated Others to succeed.

A dialogic orientation is a pre-condition for self-organization. If the designers have faith in Others, they can relinquish control, decentralize, and let Others organize themselves. An intervention that is dialogic in orientation is designed to be decentralized, porous, inviting and trusting of Others. An intervention that is dialogic invites independent agents to work together, to become a complex adaptive system rather than independent agents working individually on individual concerns. By inviting people to work together on a common cause, Scenarios has called a CAS into being. The result of this CAS, of interaction between the agents, is a series of novelties: new relationships, new depth of relationship, new products and new collaborations.

Interviewee	Form of novelty	Process outcome
Mamadou Ba Avenir de l'Enfant	New relationships	Became peer with representative from large, well-funded organization, which is also a potential new funding source?
Madame Ngom RASFEMS Community Dev. Office	New collaboration	Was able to call upon fellow jury member to assist with production of new film.
Malick Seck U.S. Peace Corps	New product 1	Created cassette drama using scripts not selected for films.
Daniel Enger Co-founder. Scenarios from Africa	New Product 2	Described the initiative of Olga Kiswendsida Ouédraogo, who created CD-audio version of Scenarios films.
Aboulaye Konate ACI	New depth of relationship	Put into contact two organizations, one of which funded a new building for the other.

Table 1: Emergent novelties.

There are alternative theoretical lenses one could apply to describe the Scenarios from Africa process. I have chosen the lens of dialogue because it allows me to get at the humane, respectful and trusting intention behind the design of the intervention. I cannot imagine designing an intervention as decentralized and Other-dependent unless one has faith in the capacity, creativity and agency of Others. The Scenarios process relies on relation: it is the root and the sustenance of the intervention. The lens of complexity allows me to explore and discuss the Scenarios network as a system of independent agents who, though the Scenarios process, have frequent and often fruitful interactions.

Complexity literature provides a vocabulary for describing the emergence of a series of novelties. I envision the relationship between dialogue and complexity thusly:

dialogue, although I thought of it after, actually comes first. Everything flows from the dialogic orientation of the intervention's designers. Without this dialogic orientation, this strong faith in, and respect for the Other, the Scenarios process simply could not be. It would have a different design, it would be centralized and controlled and thus infinitely more limited. Imagine if the invitation to collaborate stopped at the core group of Scenarios supporters? This would leave us with the small map instead of the big map. By opening up the process – the system – to hundreds of additional individuals and organizations the process grows, in number of collaborators, number of contestants, and numbers of countries involved in the Scenarios process.

The Scenarios design is straightforward, it includes a few simple rules: There will be a contest, a jury, a prize ceremony, a script adaptation process, film shooting, editing and dubbing, and then film distribution, and hopefully, use. The road between the contest as point A and the use of the films as point B is full of holes –full of holes to fill by Others. If you are an English teacher in Kolda and you want to have a writing workshop for contest participants, do it - self organize. If you are a jury member who wants to use the Scenarios DVDs at an HIV testing event, do it - take the initiative. If you are a former contest winner who sees the need for an audio version of the Scenarios films and want to take it on, *act* - make it happen.

Like the Billionaires intervention, Scenarios invites *action*. The Scenarios intervention is designed with a deliberately weak initial structure – it needs many willing hands and minds to make it stronger, and to make it work. The Scenarios intervention is designed to invite Others, to create a role for them, or to provide opportunities for Others to create a role for themselves. To create a design of this nature one *must have faith* in the

Other. The Billionaires had faith in Others, and they created tools that invited and enabled the action of Others. The Scenarios from Africa co-founders had faith in Others, and they created a process that invited, indeed that hinged upon, the action of others.

Where the Scenarios from Africa intervention differs slightly from that of the Billionaires is in its *reliance* upon the Other for success. Whereas the Billionaires could have easily and happily continued their actions as one chapter operating in New York City, Scenarios is a field of dreams in *need* of players. Without community based organizations to distribute leaflets and collect submissions, without young people to write the scripts and juries to judge them, where would Scenarios be? I concede that the Scenarios contest could be implemented with a small, paid, project staff, but it would be a very different and much more limited process. Without the vast Scenarios network, there would be no off-shoot collaboration, no fortuitous encounters at unifying events, no extensive distribution network ensuring the films are used in even the most remote corners of Senegal. Without a dialogic design Scenarios would be just another aid project in search of beneficiaries. The difference between agents and beneficiaries is the *dialogic difference*.

Chapter 4: Cultura Ciudadana

The setting is a busy street corner in Bogotá Colombia.²⁸⁷ Two mimes are shepherding pedestrians across the street, careful to remain within the “la zebra” (the cross-walk). One week ago on this same street corner a member of the dreaded “traffic” branch of the police was issuing citations. Today, there are mimes. Some pedestrians avoid the mimes by jaywalking further down the street. Others seem to enjoy the playful alternative to last week’s traffic police. A large bus screeches to a stop as the traffic light turns red, blocking half of the crosswalk. A mime pulls a rolled up sign from his pocket. Unfurled, it reads, in red block letters: ‘INCORRECTO!’ Pedestrians chuckle as the bus driver shrugs his shoulders in response to the mime.

Meanwhile, in a city office across town, an angry crowd is pushing into an auditorium. Dozens of bar and restaurant owners have come to protest the Mayor’s new ordinance, the “Hora Zanahoria” (the carrot hour). The carrot hour ordinance requires bars and restaurants who serve alcohol to change their closing hour from 3a.m. to 1a.m. The owners are angry: “You’re messing with business!” But the Mayor is not in attendance, he is at the city taxation office. Antanas Mockus, Professor of math and former President of the National University, is at the tax office because he has an idea. The Mayor patiently explains what he wants, once again, to the Director of the tax office.

“I said I want you to include an extra line on this year’s tax form.”

“Si señor.” (Yes sir.) ”

“And I want it to say: ‘Yes, I am willing to pay an extra 10% in taxes this year.’”

“Qué?! (What?!)

The Mayor finally succeeded in convincing the Director that indeed, he was feeling fine and that no, he did not think it was a crazy idea. Or rather, he had conceded:

“It might be a *little* crazy, but you never know what can happen...”

The Mayor was learning about the perks of public office. He could change the tax forms. But he was also quickly learning about the pitfalls. When he returned to his office, the “Hora Zanahoria” protesters were waiting. The Mayor bypassed the crowd through a side entrance. As he sat down in his office chair, he thought to himself: What a busy day I have had. And to think, the Civic Culture campaign had only just begun.

Civic Culture in Bogotá

In this chapter, I examine three communication interventions that together with many other interventions and policies, comprised the “Civic Culture” campaign implemented by Antanas Mockus the twice-elected former Mayor of Bogotá (1993-1995, 2001-2003) during both of his administrations. My initial interest in this case was the playfulness of several of Mockus’s interventions, including the “traffic mimes” introduced above. As I began conducting interviews in Bogotá and as gradually began defining dialogic social change I came to realize that while the mimes were very interesting, and they appealed to me personally, they did not live up to the “dialogic” standard I had set for inclusion in my study.

In truth, if I held each intervention in this case to the standard of whether it enabled and invited new action, I would be left with one intervention. Thus, I have retained the definition of dialogic social change as an intervention that invites and enables *action*. I consider an intervention that results in new action to be *generative*. Interventions that result in a desired and foreseen action I will refer to here as

“invitational.” In the political and historical context of Colombia, and as compared with the communication styles traditionally employed by politicians in Colombia, an “invitational” form of communication is quite extraordinary. To summarize, this case will include three different communication interventions, each of which was a component of Mayor Antanas Mockus’s Cultura Ciudadana (Civic Culture) strategy. Each intervention is dialogic by design; each is designed to enable and invite action. One intervention resulted in new action and the remaining two interventions led to action that was defined and desired by City Hall.

I was first attracted to the Cultura Ciudadana case for its playful elements. I was intrigued, in particular, by the idea that a politician in a historically violent nation would hire mimes to replace traffic police. I soon learned that the mimes were only one small part of a series of policies and communication strategies that comprised Mockus’s Cultura Ciudadana project.

I began a more in-depth inquiry by gathering and reviewing all the accessible written documents I could find about Cultura Ciudadana, written by Dr. Mockus. As I am able to read in both English and Spanish, this proved to be a healthy amount of material. Next, I collected everything available in the U.S. written by others about Cultura Ciudadana., in both English and Spanish. This yielded substantially less material. To supplement what I had found, I conducted archival research at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. and made copies from microfiche of relevant Colombian newspaper articles from 1993 through 2003. In August 2008, I began field research in Bogotá and remained until June 2009.

Throughout the review of documents, the archival research and most of my time in Colombia, the concept of playfulness remained my primary interest. Playfulness appealed to me because I viewed it as open and potentially generative. This changed the day I met a man on the street in Bogotá named Hector. I happened to meet him on the same day I was observing an artistic and playful intervention planned by the current Mayor of Bogotá, Samuel Moreno. Clowns, stilt-walkers, jugglers, musicians and students will small plastic car costumes were a bustling burst of color during 8 a.m. rush hour.



Figure 20: Street performers supporting Mayor Moreno's car pooling initiative.
Photo: Karen Greiner



Figure 21: Mayor Samuel Moreno addressing the press.
Note: Behind him, the sign reads: “Share your car,” in the imperative tense.
Photo: Karen Greiner

Hector came and stood next to me as the plastic mini-cars and musicians swirled about. The presence of the media added to the thickness of the crowd. Hector and I stood silently watching the press film the performers.

“So what do you think?” I asked, taking advantage of the unwritten rule that when there is mass confusion, shared hardship or extreme spectacle, one has special permission to address total strangers.

“It is pretty crazy,” he replied, half smiling (or was it a look of confusion?)

We were silent for a spell.

“But what does it mean?” he asked, still looking at the mini-cars and the clowns.

“I think it has to do with sharing cars,” I said.

“They’re spending all this money...” Hector said softly, his voice trailing off.

As Hector was considering the money spent on this intervention I was noting that Mayor Moreno was advocating car sharing while “in costume” as a single driver in a small, unshared car. I thought to myself: “It would have been a more powerful symbol if it did not contradict the message.”

I then noticed that Hector had with him a thick folder, which he had been carrying tucked under one arm. He opened the folder and began showing me what looked like a photo album, pages of clear sheets with images and also some documents.

“This is me, last summer, with Professor Moncayo,” he said, pointing at one of the pictures.

Professor Moncayo is a school teacher and father of Army corporal Pablo Emilio Moncayo, who was kidnapped by guerrilla group “Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia” (FARC) in 1997, when he was 18 years old. Hector explained that the picture was taken on Professor Moncayo’s walk from his home province to Bogota, a distance of more than 1000km. Moncayo walked to Bogota to draw attention to his son’s 11th year in captivity and to pressure the government to support a prisoner exchange.²⁸⁸

Hector turned a page in the folder and showed me some paperwork he had filled out to register with a city agency as an internally displaced person. He explained that he had been forced off his land in the coffee growing region by right wing paramilitaries.

“With all this money, they should be helping the displaced,” Hector said, returning his gaze to the street performers.

Hector said goodbye and began walking up Seventh Avenue. I stayed behind and watched the Mayor, the media and the performers until they left several hours later. When I could, I asked passers by the same question I had asked Hector:

“What do you think?”

A young woman with an amused look on her face said: “A very good idea. It’s a good message.”

A photographer from the Mayor’s office said:

“Mockus did this better. He was more organized. This is not organized.”

The students in the plastic mini-car costumes continued to cheerfully address motorists who were stopped in traffic.

“Share your car!”

“Don’t you feel lonely in there, all alone?”

I noted that several cyclists rode by, unaddressed, and from what I could tell, unnoticed.

The next day the street performers appeared in a large color photo, above the fold, on the front page of *El Tiempo*. I had seen playfulness in action, and I could not stop thinking about Hector. I think I was overwhelmed by the short interval between Hector recounting the decade-long kidnapping of Moncayo’s son by the FARC²⁸⁹ with his own story of forced displacement from his land. When he said: “They should be helping the displaced,” my interest in play started to recede.

I had rarely queried directly about play in the ten months I spent in Bogotá. I had not wanted to steer interviews and conversations in an obvious and self-serving way. Instead, most of what I learned about Bogota during those ten months came from very open ended questions, asked whenever and wherever I could get answers. I did have several formal interviews, with Antanas Mockus, for instance, and with one of his close associates, Henry Murrain. I also formally interviewed (and recorded) storytellers, graffiti artists, university professors, students, two newspaper editors, and street performers,

including two of the performers that had just made front page news. But most of my conversations occurred casually: in taxis, in the market, on the street. These conversations would usually begin with me being asked, by someone who noticed my accent, “What are you doing here?”

Colombia is not, as of yet, a tourist destination, with the exception of Cartagena, a port city with Spanish Colonial architecture on Colombia’s Atlantic Coast. In the rest of Colombia, foreigners are rare. Foreigners asking questions in fluent Spanish, it seems, were even more rare. I was pleased to find that even people I did not know were generally willing to talk to me. In the course of conversation, when I was asked what I was doing in Colombia, I would respond with a deliberately broad response:

“I’m conducting research about the city - about changes in the city over the past 10-15 years.”

I often would not have to ask questions, people would just begin talking. I had several variations of this response from different taxi drivers: “Oooy! Bogotá? Fifteen years ago? What a mess.” Many people then discussed the transportation situation in Bogota and, in particular, the Transmilenio, which is the bus system implemented during the administration of Mayor Enrique Peñalosa, who was elected when Mockus left office in 1995 to run (unsuccessfully) for President.

Opinion was never uniform. And opinion, unfortunately, fell outside the bounds of my interest in Cultura Ciudadana. I will share what I did manage to learn about Cultura Ciudadana when I enter into the discussion of my inquiry in greater detail. At present, I would like to provide a personalized account of violence in Colombia before providing more general, but still relevant, information to help contextualize this study.

My emerging and imperfect understanding of recent history in Bogota and Colombia more broadly relate directly to the interventions I have selected to examine further in this chapter. This too, I shall explain further in the relevant section.

Learning About Violence in Colombia

One afternoon, while walking along Calle 13, one of Bogotá’s main north-south arteries, I was stopped by a group of five uniformed men, each with a machine gun over his shoulder. It was not clear if they were police or army. They didn’t identify themselves. Two of the five had large dogs on short leashes. “Identification,” said one; it an order, not a question. I handed one man my “Cedula de Extranjeria,” or “Foreigner I.D.” which he began examining. The uniformed men on Calle 13 appeared to be stopping passers-by at random. Most pedestrians walked by those of us being stopped without giving us a second or even first look. Armed men with dogs checking identification was an unremarkable phenomenon on Calle 13, I concluded.

Later that evening I told the story of getting my I.D. checked to Carlos, a friend and life-long Bogotá resident. I explained to him that I was not accustomed to seeing groups of heavily armed men on the streets. I told him it made me feel nervous and unsafe. “It has the opposite effect on me,” he responded. “In Colombia, seeing Army and Police on the streets is a good thing.” When Carlos spoke of safety in Bogotá, his stories usually described ways in which the security situation had improved since the previous decade. “Ten years ago,” he told me, “you could not drive between major cities without worrying about getting stopped by the guerilla and possibly kidnapped.” Like many of the Colombians I met during my 10-month stay in Bogotá, Carlos made frequent reference to violence. He described “burro-bombas,” “bicicleta bombas” and “papa

bombas,” donkeys, bicycles and small potato-shaped vessels armed with explosives and detonated in public places. As he spoke, his tone led me to believe that for him, violence was commonplace. Then, as if to confirm my thoughts, he said: “So many shocking things have happened that one is no longer shocked.”



Figure 22: Police shields and helmets, a sight that caught my attention.
Photo: Karen Greiner

The commonplace nature of violence was evident in many of the conversations I had with Colombians during my ten months of fieldwork in Bogotá. Rather than being the focus of a story initiated by an interlocutor, the mention of violence usually came up in response to something I said in casual conversation. For example, when I mentioned to a journalist a visit to a church high up on a mountain overlooking Bogotá, he responded: “Ah, the church of Guadalupe, I know it well. Ten years ago the surrounding area was a very popular dumping ground for cadavers.” The journalist then spoke to me at length

about the dark past of the area surrounding the church, which was an area that I had associated with pleasant afternoons of sightseeing. Other areas of the country also had violent pasts which I was unaware of. When asking about the length of the drive between two cities on the coast, a friend replied:

Now it takes about two hours. Before you needed a police or military escort so it took much longer. My uncle and brother were kidnapped on that road. But it was an “express kidnapping” – the guerilla released them after two days once we paid the ransom.

Perhaps because of these casual conversations, I began noticing the theme of violence on the painted walls in the city center and near universities. Two young artists I spoke with, Toxicomano and Lesivo, described their work as “street art” rather than “graffiti.” Toxicomano frequently paints Colombia’s most famous drug trafficker, Pablo Escobar. Lesivo’s work often includes skulls and soldiers. The “urban art” of Juega siempre (Always play) is peppered with variations on the machine gun (see figures 24-26 below).



Figure 23: Pablo Escobar, by Toxicomano.
Photo: Karen Greiner



Figure 24: Soldiers and skulls with teddy bears, by Lesivo.
Photos: Karen Greiner



Figure 25: Machine gun imagery, by Juega Siempre.
Photos: Karen Greiner

The themes of violence I was seeing on the street were subtle, and in some cases, not-so-subtle reminders that violence still lingered in Bogotá. It was on the walls, in memories, and in the news on a regular basis. Casual conversations also turned to the topic of violence on occasion, and these occasions reinforced what the streets were telling me.

For example, during one conversation that began benignly about research, a geographer named Alicia clarified for me how right-wing paramilitary groups operated in the city. She was conducting a study in the “Zona de Tolerancia,” a neighborhood where sex work was “tolerated” despite being illegal. Alicia showed me a photo-copied flier signed by the paramilitary group who controlled the prostitution rings in neighborhood that warned that no “street trash” would be tolerated. The flyer announced that the social cleansing process had already begun.

WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

Warning: AIDS-ridden whore garbage, street thieves, apartment thieves, car thieves kidnappers and young people who deal drugs...JUSTICE OR DEATH,
YOU DECIDE. WE ALREADY HAVE A LIST FOR THE INITIAL SWEEP.

Alicia recounted how the sex workers she had spoken with had told her that “social cleansing”—the killing of undesirables—is a common occurrence in the zone. I later learned from Alicia’s blog that a trans-gender sex worker named Wanda Fox, who Alicia knew personally, was shot and killed from a passing taxi. Only four days earlier another sex worker had also been killed in the same neighborhood.²⁹⁰

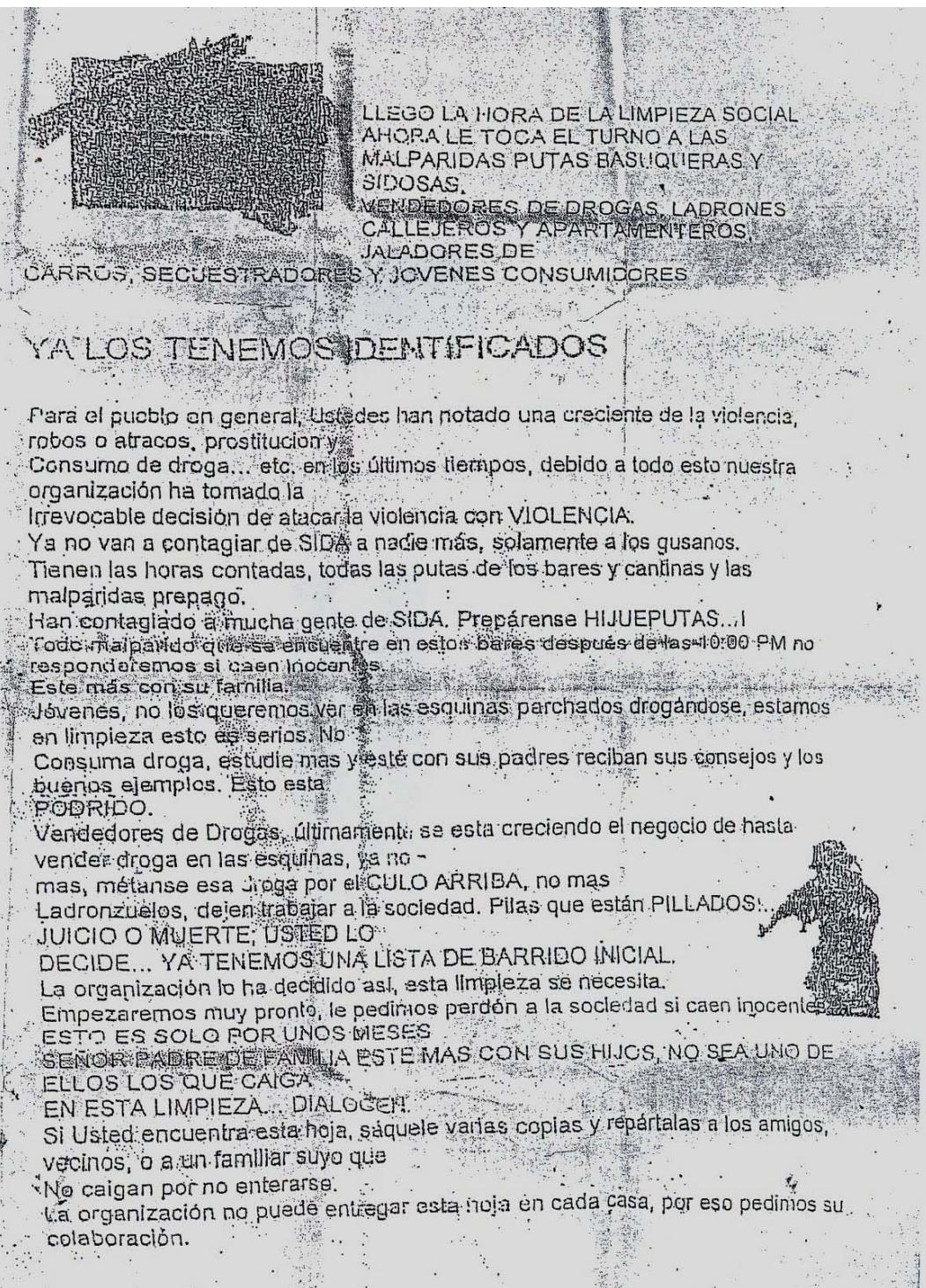


Figure 26: Flyer warning of imminent social cleansing.

Despite the fact that several thousand paramilitaries have formally “de-mobilized” in public, government-sponsored ceremonies, there are still an estimated 4,000-10,000 armed para-military group members operating in Colombia, many of whom now dedicate themselves full-time to organized crime.²⁹¹ Alicia’s account of paramilitary control of the “Zona de Tolerancia” in Bogotá was just one report among many of this type that I heard from friends and acquaintances while conducting research in Bogotá.

Understanding Colombia’s Past and Present

Since its independence from Spain in 1810, Colombia has known four civil wars and a prolonged period of instability known locally as “La Violencia,”²⁹² (roughly 1948-1958) in which an estimated 300,000 Colombians, mostly unarmed civilians, lost their lives.²⁹³ Since the 1980s, Colombia has become known primarily for drug trade related violence.²⁹⁴ This association of Colombia with drugs and violence is also fueled and reinforced by frequent portrayals of the Colombian drug trade in the media and popular culture. The most recent in a long lineage of such portrayals is the 2004 film *Maria Full of Grace* and the 2001 film *Blow*, which fictionalized the real life stories of George Jung, an American cocaine dealer active with the Medellín Drug Cartel in the 1970s. These films portray a world where profit is not only abundant , but also ruthlessly pursued. A recent study reflects that there is violent truth behind Hollywood fiction: Colombia’s annual murder rate has been cited at 30,000, which is just less than twice the amount given for the U.S., a country also known for high rates of violence, but with nearly seven times more people.²⁹⁵

Colombia is also plagued by an active and long-standing guerrilla insurgency, with membership in several different groups numbering over 10,000.²⁹⁶ In the 1990s,

armed paramilitary groups sprang up in response to the guerilla insurgency.²⁹⁷ Several scholars writing on the Colombian political scene argue that the challenge of dealing with guerilla insurgents, drug trafficking and drug-related crime is so great that a number of politicians in Colombia have resorted to trying to beat the guerrilla at its own, brutally violent game by supporting paramilitary groups.²⁹⁸ Political scientist Nazih Richani describes the guerilla insurgency and the government's formal and informal military response to it as a "war-system," in which all parties involved benefit either financially and/or politically.²⁹⁹

Thus the citizens of Colombia often find themselves caught in a violent cycle of insurgency-repression-reprisal emanating from drug traffickers and the guerilla on one side, and the government and paramilitary forces on the other. An acute example of this type of violence was the 1989 assassination of Luis Carlos Galán, an extremely popular presidential candidate for the 1990 election, rumored to have been killed by a hit man hired by the Medellín drug cartel.³⁰⁰ Galán was one of three presidential candidates assassinated during that election period, with a fourth candidate, Cesar Gaviria, nearly assassinated when a flight he chose not to take later exploded in mid-air killing 107 citizens.³⁰¹

The "war-system" described by Nazih Richani is a world where drug dealers engage in politics, politicians support paramilitarism, and everyone from the guerilla to the army fund their activities with drug money. With so many interest groups using violence as a means to various ends, reports of killings and kidnappings were frequent and often hard to attribute. In *News of a Kidnapping*, journalist and Nobel Prize-winning novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez documents the kidnappings of ten individuals in the

year 1990, many of whom spent months in captivity without knowing whether they were being held by the guerrilla or the drug traffickers. Parallel to the kidnapping chronicles is the violent history of their perpetrator, Pablo Escobar and his Medellín-based drug trafficking cartel. Colombia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as described by Garcia Marquez, was a place where journalists, senators, Supreme Court justices and presidential candidates were routinely gunned down on the street. He writes:

The idea prospered: The law is the greatest obstacle to happiness; it is a waste of time learning to read and write; you can live a better, more secure life as a criminal than as a law-abiding citizen – in short, this was the social breakdown typical of all undeclared wars.³⁰²

Bogotá was certainly considered a dangerous city during this time – particularly for political figures and the affluent – it was the city of Medellín that felt the brunt and breadth of the violence. Garcia Marquez reports that in the first two months of 1991, there were 1200 murders, a rate of twenty per day, including 457 police officers.³⁰³ Contributing to this high murder rate, Garcia Marquez explains, was the army of adolescents hired by Pablo Escobar to assassinate police officers in exchange for cash, with a variable rate depending on whether the police were killed or merely wounded.³⁰⁴

This drug-fueled “war system” subsided somewhat after the death of Pablo Escobar in 1993. Nonetheless, tales of drug-related violence and violent reprisals were still being extensively reported in the newspapers I read daily in Bogotá. I initiated a hard-copy press file to collect articles on the complex web of incongruous relationships and violent events, both contemporary and historical. These articles describe topics ranging from “para-politics” linking paramilitary groups to politicians, to “false

positives,” the name given to young civilians dressed up as guerilla insurgents and killed by the Colombian army to demonstrate progress on the Colombian version of the “war on terror.”³⁰⁵ One article detailed an incident just blocks from my Bogotá apartment rental. It reported the arrest of several out-of-uniform Army soldiers who had robbed a church congregation at gunpoint, using a military vehicle as getaway car.³⁰⁶

When my “tales of crime and violence file” outgrew the notebook housing it, I noticed that my own standard for what counted as “shocking” news was slowly changing. At first, I collected any news of guerrilla or paramilitary activity. It soon became clear that following that broad criterion would quickly render my file unmanageable. I decided to narrow my focus to articles illustrating the links between the various groups. I kept notes detailing the web of what, to me, were unthinkable alliances. Notations on articles read: “Army with drug cartels,” “drug cartels with paramilitaries,” “paramilitaries with politicians,” and “politicians with drug cartels.” I was often surprised to find that what seemed to me to be exceptional news buried on page fifteen or relegated to a short text box.³⁰⁷

Before traveling to Colombia for the first time in 2007 I was already well aware of Colombia’s past and continuing violent reputation. The way that violence emerged in conversation, on city walls, and in the news reminded me that Colombia’s “war system” was still active, both in fact and in the popular imagination. And yet, I had also been told on dozens of occasions how much Bogotá had changed for the better in the past decade. Falling homicide rates reflect this impression. In 1993, there were 4,352 recorded homicides in Bogotá. By 2002, the number of homicides was 1,902, less than half the 1993 rate.³⁰⁸ Traffic-related fatalities had also declined. Over a ten year period, from

1992-2002, deaths from traffic accidents declined from 1,284 to 687, a drop approaching 50%.

This ten year span coincides with a series of Mayors who are widely credited with the “transformation” of Bogotá. Jaime Castro (1992-1994) has been recognized for organizing the operations and finances of the city, including doubling the amount of taxes collected from 1993 to 1994³⁰⁹, which is said to have created a platform from which to innovate for the two Mayors who followed him, Antanas Mockus³¹⁰ (1995-1997) and Enrique Peñalosa (1998-2000).³¹¹ Mockus implemented a broad “Civic Culture” program aimed at increasing civic engagement and reducing violence while Peñalosa is credited with modernizing the city’s transportation system with a rapid bus transit system called the “Transmilenio.”

Both the Civic Culture program and the Transmilenio transport system have been widely recognized as having a major positive impact on Bogotá and have greatly improved its reputation.³¹² Reaping the benefits of programs implemented in the 1990s, Bogotá has won several international awards in recent years including the Stockholm Challenge (2000) for innovations in urban mobility, the UNESCO “Cities for Peace” award (2002) for fomenting “the spirit of good neighborliness,” the “Gold Lion for Best City” (2006) for innovative approaches to “mobility, social inclusion, and the use of the public space.”³¹³

After unsuccessfully running for president near the end of his first term as Mayor, Antanas Mockus was re-elected as Mayor of Bogotá in October 2000. In his second term, Mockus continued to develop and implement his brainchild, the Civic Culture program. My goal in this chapter is to provide background information on the Civic Culture

program of both Mockus administrations and then focus on three interventions in particular because of what I call their “invitational” nature.

Each of the Civic Culture interventions I have chosen to highlight invited citizen participation and resulted in different forms of civic action. The “110% with Bogotá” initiative was an invitation, accepted by 63,000 citizens, to voluntarily pay an extra 10% in taxes. The voluntary water savings initiative involved research and various forms of communication that resulted in a dramatic voluntary decrease in water consumption by citizens. Finally, the “Citizens Cards” initiative involved the distribution of 360,000 “thumbs up” and “thumbs down” symbols resembling the cards used by soccer referees, which put a new means of communication into the hands of citizens, who were free to accept or refashion their intended use.

In theorizing the “invitational” nature of these initiatives, I draw on primarily on the concept of “invitational rhetoric” as developed by Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin in their essay influential 1995 essay *Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric*.³¹⁴ I draw from this essay to propose an alternative to interventions that rely on influence and persuasion to promote change. Foss and Griffin, together with Shepherd, in an earlier article, observe that communication is too frequently conflated with influence.³¹⁵ The view of communication as influence stems from the view that communication can and should be used to change and control the other. Foss and Griffin suggest an alternative perspective, which is to invite understanding “as a means to create relationship rooted in equality, immanent value, and self-determination.”³¹⁶ Invitational forms of communication, explain Foss and Griffin, occur through *offering*:

This articulation occurs not through persuasive argument but through offering - the giving of expression to a perspective without advocating its support or seeking its acceptance...In offering, rhetors tell what they currently know or understand; they present their vision of the world and show how it looks and works for them.³¹⁷

Foss and Griffin suggest that offering does not attempt to influence. They stress that rhetors can offer a perspective without aiming to persuade an audience to also adopt this “offered” perspective.

During the Civic Culture campaign, Antanas Mockus used both influence and invitation. He used influence when he changed the closing hour for bars and restaurants that serve alcohol. He also used influence, or more strongly stated, authority, when he outlawed the use of fireworks at Christmas. But he used invitation when he changed the city’s tax forms and invited citizens to voluntarily pay an extra 10% in taxes. I will revisit the notion of invitation when I explore each intervention more carefully. First, I provide a brief history of Civic Culture in Bogotá.

The Cultura Ciudadana Era

Antanas Mockus, promising change during the October 1994 campaign in which he spent less than 5000 dollars, was the first independent candidate in Colombian history to be elected mayor of Bogotá.³¹⁸ Mockus’s success at the polls was predicted in “The hour of the anti-politicians,” an article appearing in a leading Colombian magazine one week before the election. Mockus would win, the article contended, because his irreverent political style was as far as possible that of the Liberals and Conservatives, the two traditional parties of Colombia.³¹⁹ Mockus was an academic and political outsider. At

the time of the election, he was a faculty member in the Physics and Philosophy departments at the prestigious National University in Bogota and had served as Academic Rector (1990-1993), the institution's highest administrative position.

In a televised interview soon after being elected, Mockus appeared on camera dressed as "Super Citizen," his outfit composed of a skin-hugging yellow body suit with a large red "C," and a red cape. On camera, we see Mockus asking passers-by to help him remove illegal advertisements covering the wall next to him. After several citizens eagerly join the mayor in tearing down posters, a reporter asks: "Mr. Mayor: are you crazy? Are you not ashamed to be seen in public dressed like that?" Mockus's response is characteristic of his willingness to take risks to promote social change:

As long as people now understand that this shouldn't be done [pointing to a nearby wall plastered in illegal advertisements], I don't care how I have to dress.³²⁰

For Mockus, dressing up as Super Citizen was a media-friendly way to call attention to the issue of illegal advertising. He was willing to accept that some may find his costume unfitting of the Mayor of a major city.

The backbone of Mockus's administration was the Cultura Ciudadana (Civic Culture) program which was first outlined in the administration's "Development Plan of 1995" as a series of programs designed to increase citizens' adherence to city ordinances, such as respecting traffic, seat belt and anti-littering laws and also to encourage citizens' to learn to co-exist and communicate peacefully with one another.³²¹ Mockus has argued that the peaceful co-existence and communication component was especially important

due to the ubiquity of “aggressive and predatory behavior” in public spaces and public transport in Bogotá:

In public spaces where strangers encounter one another there is the potential, in the absence of police presence, to act in predatory ways because people are protected by anonymity and by the low probability of re-encounter. The goal of Cultura Ciudadano, therefore, was to transform public behavior and was designed to recognize and strengthen the existence of social norms between strangers.³²²

The city allotted 130 million dollars for three years of programming to the Civic Culture initiative, which was 3.7% of the total city budget for that same period.³²³ The Plan defined Civic Culture as:

The set of habits, actions and shared basic rules that generate a sense of belonging, facilitate urban coexistence, and lead to respect for the common patrimony and to the recognition of the rights and duties of citizens.³²⁴

Antanas Mockus has written and spoken extensively on the theoretical rationale underlying the Civic Culture program. Just prior to being elected Mayor in 1994, Mockus outlined the philosophy that would become the basis for Civic Culture in an essay entitled “Cultural amphibians and the schism between law, morality and culture.”³²⁵ He writes:

A starting point is the opposition between two types of society: those where what is morally valid fits within what is also culturally valid and also legally permitted and those, like our society, where there is an abundance of incongruities between those three systems regulating action and interaction.³²⁶

Mockus describes three regulatory systems of human behavior, *the legal system*, governed by the constitution, laws, policies, etc.; *the moral system*, in which one is

governed by one's own conscience and/or religion; and *the cultural system*, which is comprised of the context-specific social norms in any given society. The “schism”³²⁷ between these three systems, Mockus argues, results in widespread illegal behavior and demoralizing levels of legal and social impunity.³²⁸ Mockus gives the example of bribing traffic police as an instance of a commonplace illegal activity that citizens justify because the practice is so widespread that it has become culturally acceptable.³²⁹

The illegal and violent activities of drug traffickers and multiple guerrilla groups, which Mockus calls Colombia’s “endemic violence,” are the primary cause of this “schism” between legal, moral and social norms.³³⁰ “In effect, the clandestine activities on the one hand and illegal economy on the other,” he writes, “result in the adaptation of behavior according to context.”³³¹ Behaving according to context becomes a threat to democracy and the rule of law when the reigning “context” is a culture of violence and when acceptance of violent behavior is required for survival.

Mockus credits Clara Carillo, an undergraduate university student whose thesis he was directing, for first introducing the idea of a schism between the “triad” of legal, moral and social norms. She was also the first, he explained, to suggest a possible solution. [Clara] told me: “If you want to reconcile the law with moral and cultural norms you have to intensify all the forms of interaction - rational, expressive, symbolic and strategic.”³³² In an essay written in 2001, Mockus explained how this early idea of “intensifying interaction” suggested to him by Clara Carillo in 1991 would later become the basis of the Civic Culture strategy.

Why does communication, or what we call “intensified interaction,” help harmonize legal, moral and social norms? We started with two assumptions: that

conflicts arise or get worse because of limitations in communication and that direct, “face to face” contact could help dissuade people from using violence.³³³

The Civic Culture program aimed to foster self regulation and increased interpersonal communication among citizens so that social norms could supplement legal norms in efforts to promote good citizenship.³³⁴ Mockus summarized the Civic Culture program as an attempt to encourage collective action using “positive incentives of a cultural nature.”³³⁵

Mockus cites the efforts of Leoluca Orlando, the former Mayor of Palermo Sicily, as an influence on his views on the need to “harmonize” legal, moral and cultural norms. Mayor Orlando is the author of *Fighting the Mafia and Renewing Sicilian Culture*.³³⁶ Mockus describes her efforts to remove the effects of Mafia stigma from the identity of Palermo’s citizens as building a “culture of legality,” which can only be created if the “wheel of the law” and the “wheel of culture” turn at the same time.³³⁷ In other words, legal measures are strengthened when and if citizens believe in them and are willing to express social disapproval of illegal behavior.

In the second volume of his *Theory of Communicative Action* Jürgen Habermas notes that the authority of the State is strengthened when it is recognized as legitimate by its citizens.³³⁸ In contrast, when citizens do not perceive the authority of the State to be legitimate, the State must resort to “naked repression” to maintain control. Mockus’s Civic Culture strategy is an explicit attempt to gain the approval of citizens and to ask for their assistance in improving the quality of life in the city. In this sense, Mockus would like the average citizen to step forward to denounce behavior such as littering or the violation of traffic laws rather than relying entirely on the presence and action of the

police as a deterrent. As stated by Mockus, “the greater the consensus about the goals being pursued, the less one needs to worry about the freedom of means in their pursuit.”³³⁹ In other words, the greater the number of citizens that agree that littering is bad, the more they can be relied upon to heed the call to participate in anti-littering efforts. Mockus articulated and publicized the goals of the Civic Culture strategy in order to later appeal to citizens to assist in achieving those goals.

The Mockus administration’s efforts to influence social norms and promote voluntary civic action to supplement legal and policy measures can be contrasted with the “law and order” approach of the former mayor of New York City, Rudolph Giuliani.³⁴⁰ In the mid 1990s, while Giuliani was using legal measures, including arrest, to get undesirable citizens “squeegee men,” pan-handlers, and the homeless - off the street, Mockus was adopting a cultural approach that encouraged citizens to occupy and enjoy public spaces in the city. Citizens were not only encouraged to make full use of public space, but they were invited to do so together with their fellow citizens.

“Rock in the Park,” an immensely popular annual music concert held in various venues throughout the city, including lower income neighborhoods, became part of the Civic Culture initiative in 1997 as part of an effort to “intensify interaction” by bringing people together in public spaces.³⁴¹ To seek diversity among concert goers, the city soon broadened its cultural offerings to include “Jazz in the Park,” “Opera in the Park,” “Ballet in the Park” and a mixed genre concert called “Rap and Roll.”³⁴² To further encourage public interaction the city held eight events called “Septimazos,” an impromptu street fair created by closing a section of Carrera Septima (7th avenue), one of Bogotá’s major thoroughfares, and replacing auto traffic with public concerts and street vendors.³⁴³ When

I arrived in Bogotá in August 2008, I noted with interest that after Mockus left office in 2003, successive Mayors of Bogota have decided to continue the community concerts; Rock in the Park, Jazz in the Park and the weekly Septimazo still operate to this day.

The Civic Culture intervention receiving the most media coverage was the temporary replacement of traffic police with 400 “traffic mimes,” who were stationed at the most congested intersections in Bogotá. In a description of his policies written for the Inter-American Bank (IADB), Mockus described the hiring of mimes to direct traffic as means to “promote co-existence between pedestrians and vehicles.”³⁴⁴ The distinguishing characteristic of this approach, Mockus explained, is that play (“la ludica”) rather than “repression” was used to promote the respect of traffic regulations.³⁴⁵ Newspapers in Colombia gave extensive coverage to the mimes. *El Tiempo*, one of Bogotá’s two major newspapers, had no less than ten photos of mimes on its pages in the span of five days.³⁴⁶



Figure 27: Traffic mime.
Source: Screenshot from Hellot & Lemoine

International publications were also smitten with the mimes. Articles on Mockus's policies featuring drawings or photos of the traffic mimes appeared in several international publications, including the *Globe and Daily Mail*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Harvard Gazette*, and *The New York Times*.³⁴⁷ Additional articles highlighted the incongruity of Mockus's playful approach with their perception of reality in the streets of Bogotá. The article discussing the mimes in *Science* magazine was titled "Calming Traffic on Bogotá's Killing Streets."³⁴⁸ The *Christian Science Monitor* featured Mockus and the mimes in a cover story labeled: "Mayor uses shame to soothe murder capital of the world."³⁴⁹

The extremely photogenic mimes were thus successful in garnering mass media attention without the Mockus administration having to pay for it. Using creativity rather than city funds to heighten the visibility of Civic Culture programs was one of the stated goals of the Civic Culture program.³⁵⁰ A survey conducted after the appearance of the first traffic mimes in 1995 reflected that 86% of the city's adults were willing to be taught about traffic laws by mimes.³⁵¹ In February 2009, traffic mimes were back in the news, this time on the streets of Mexico City, distributing lollipops with happy faces to pedestrians using crosswalks.³⁵²

However, the Bogotá mimes were not just "playing" at traffic cop, they actually *were* regulating traffic. Mockus's less-than-serious public appearance and policies obfuscated the very real political and fiscal power lying just under the surface. Rarely mentioned in the glowing international press coverage were the sanction-oriented legal measures silently reinforcing Mockus's more visible, playful policies. Each batch of traffic mimes, it seems, had back up in the form of a police officer who could intervene at

any time. The intervention of transit police, Mockus notes, was designed to occur only when drivers ignored the “friendly and playful invitation” of the mimes to obey the law.³⁵³

Experiments in Trust and Invitation

Perhaps encouraged by the positive press and public reception of the mimes, Mockus designed several other interventions that were not authoritarian, but rather invitational and even experimental in orientation. These interventions employed little persuasion; instead, they were designed to enable and invite the action of Others. The type of approach I am about to describe would have previously appeared to me rather commonplace. However, after spending nearly one year in Bogotá, I came to appreciate how risky, and yet how respectful and ultimately successful, the invitational approach could prove to be. That Mockus opted to invite citizens to act, and trusted that they would do so voluntarily, is of interest given that the authoritarian, top-down option was indeed available to him. In other words, I am more surprised when invitation is employed by someone in power than when it is the tool of the powerless, who may have no other option.

110% with Bogotá

Early in 2002, the Mayor’s office initiated an innovative tax collection effort. A simple design change on the city’s tax forms was at the root of the innovation. A question added to the tax form in 2002 read: “Would you be willing to voluntarily pay an extra 10 percent in taxes?”³⁵⁴ More than 63,000 citizens agreed to pay more than they owed, which contributed an extra 1.178 million Colombian Pesos – just over \$400,000 dollars - to the city’s budget.³⁵⁵ The next year, despite increased tax rates, an additional 46,000 tax

payers agreed to the voluntary 10 percent supplement, bringing in an extra 848 million pesos, or \$304,000 dollars.³⁵⁶ The Mayor's office publicized the amount of extra income contributed by the “110% with Bogotá,” in two separate articles in Bogotá’s largest daily newspaper, *El Tiempo*.³⁵⁷ In one article, titled “Very Generous Bogotanos,” Mockus is quoted describing Bogotá’s citizens as “more and more altruistic...they are helping, unconditionally and impartially, without thinking about what others [taxpayers] are going to do.”³⁵⁸ Mockus was able to use the success of the voluntary tax option as a vehicle to gain media coverage, which he used to announce his belief in the goodness of Bogotá’s citizens. In a summary of his administration’s policies, Mockus shared his optimism regarding the success of “110% with Bogotá”:

I think the voluntary payments of 110% with Bogotá changed the idea many citizens had about obligatory payments. Some will say: ‘since others paid more, it is fair to pay at least what is owed’; others might say: ‘...what I am paying does not seem so much next to what others are paying.’ Others will say: ‘since others paid more, it is fair to pay at least what is owed’; Others will say: ‘it is admirable that so many voluntary spend their money on the city...this is a promising sign.’³⁵⁹

Mockus believed that revenue generated by “110% with Bogotá” would send a message to people who believe that no one can or wants to pay more taxes. Surprisingly, in the 2002 tax collection period, three out of the five precincts with the highest number of citizens paying voluntary extra taxes were in low income areas.³⁶⁰

For Mockus, those who paid the extra 10 percent were “leaders” who were setting the example of a new form of citizenship.³⁶¹ According to Mockus, the strategy was

designed to promote pride and positive recognition, which was “a useful alternative to legal sanction and imposing the duty to pay taxes by coercion.”³⁶² One important feature of the “110% with Bogotá” strategy was asking the “extra 10%” contributors to give input on how their tax dollars would be spent. The administration publicized taxpayer choices to foster increased good will among citizens. Appearing at a home for the elderly and with members of the press summoned for the occasion, Mockus announced that the “110% with Bogotá” tax payers had designated funds for the elderly living in conditions of poverty. An article describing the event in *El Tiempo* included photos of Mockus with residents of the home and graphs depicting the number of citizens who paid extra together with how they chose to allocate the funds.³⁶³

The Mockus administration made additional efforts to promote “110% with Bogotá” by creating opportunities for tax payers to see how their contributions were being used by the city – to “visiblize” as is often said in Spanish – a use of tax payer money that is not as evident as an investment in physical infrastructure would be. One such effort was called the “ChivaTributaria,” a “bus tax tour” that brought members of the press and large corporations to sites where the city had invested tax dollars. The bus stopped at newly built high schools, libraries and revamped neighborhoods, giving tax payers the opportunity to interact with direct beneficiaries of city spending. Mockus called the “bus tax tour” an effort to make tax paying less anonymous by bringing tax payers and “beneficiaries,” many of whom are tax payers themselves, into contact with one another.³⁶⁴ The presence of the press gave the “tax tour” the potential to move from the city streets to the printed page.³⁶⁵

Lastly, the Mockus administration created events to tie in with the “110% with Bogotá” tax strategy and promote greater visibility. One such event was “Bogotá shines 110% at Christmas,” in November of 2002, which featured Christmas lighting in the shape of recognizable city symbols strategically placed throughout the city and two nocturnal community bicycle rides to view the lights.³⁶⁶ The administration astutely publicized that it had received corporate sponsorship for half of the cost of the Christmas lights and associated events.³⁶⁷ In this way, the city was able to prime citizen-tax payers for the 110% message while demonstrating the ability to provide “110%” programming at 50% cost.

The essential component of the “110% with Bogotá” strategy was the re-design of the tax form. Without the question: “Would you be willing to pay an extra 10% in taxes?” there would be no extra revenue and no citizen altruism to publicize. The re-design of the form was an act of faith; there was no guarantee that citizens would agree to pay more. If, in fact, no citizen agreed to pay more, the city would have lost little. Had even a handful of citizens paid extra, this would have been news. Sixty-three *thousand* citizens paying 10% extra was certainly news. And good news, if circulated properly, has the potential to inspire more civic altruism, and thus yet another round of good news.

An article appearing in *El Tiempo* in early 2009 reported that in the most recent tax year, 44,000 people chose to be “110% with Bogotá,” by voluntarily paying an additional 10% in taxes.³⁶⁸ In a public speech given in May 2009, Mockus called the voluntary tax phenomenon one of “the most beautiful” events of his administration. He continued:

Yesterday I met a delegation of Venezuelans and one of the Venezuelans took a taxi and the taxi driver told him with pride that he paid the voluntary extra tax.

Today we have been talking about emotions; well I am going to allow myself to get emotional about this. Human beings need regulation of many varieties given the richness of motivations that drive people.³⁶⁹

In this instance, Civic Culture behaviors appear to have survived beyond the program itself.

I characterize the “110% with Bogotá” strategy as an “invitation” issued to citizens. Citizens were invited to pay extra taxes and they were invited to designate *how* the taxes should be spent. Thousands accepted the invitation. The impact of these acts by altruistic citizens is difficult to measure. In a city with high rates of violence and citizen distrust, news of an altruistic act can be a breath of fresh air. In essence, what the “100% with Bogota” intervention provided was an opportunity for citizens to pleasantly surprise one another. An additional “experiment in invitation” came about by the force of circumstance. A water crisis in Bogotá was the impetus for Mockus’s next instance of placing trust in citizens.

Voluntary Water Saving

In 1997, a break in the tunnel walls of the Chingaza dam outside of Bogotá left the city facing a severe water shortage. In past emergency water situations such as this, the city administration’s response was uniform: water rationing. Mockus describes how his administration tried a different course of action:

We didn’t want to resort to water rationing but rather aimed for the conscious and voluntary saving of water. We achieved this after correcting our very limited

initial instructions. Each day a new idea would emerge about saving water. One of the ideas was that the telephone, rather than emitting a busy signal (beep beep), would say: “thank you for saving water.” The monthly consumption rate per family was reduced more than what we had initially hoped (and then water bills began arriving that were more than proportionately lower). Between pedagogy and dynamic rates, the water consumption in Bogotá fell by 40% between 1996 and 2003.³⁷⁰

The “limited initial instructions” Mockus referred to had been shared with citizens at a press conference held at City Hall.³⁷¹ A report on the press conference in *El Tiempo*, one of Bogotá’s major daily newspapers, gives details about the Mayors message:

Yesterday afternoon in City Hall [Mayor Mockus] asked Bogotanos to save 200 liters of water per day to avoid rationing. With a ruler in this hand, the Mayor signaled that Bogotanos are now only saving 43 liters and they continue to use 100 liters in sewage and 100 in the shower. Moreover, he added, the most waste of water stems from laundry, washing dishes and upkeep of gardens. “I don’t want to treat Bogotanos like children that have to have their water cut off so they won’t waste water,” [the Mayor said], “The idea is that this can work without sanctions.” The Mayor then repeated the advice he has given over the past several days, which were: Only flush the toilet when absolutely necessary, turn off the water when brushing your teeth, and turn off the water in the shower while soaping up.

Henry Murrain, a colleague of Mockus at Corpovisionarios, a consulting firm founded by Mockus after leaving the Mayor’s office, provided me with more information about the

voluntary water saving initiative. He spoke of the difficulties and skepticism that emerged when the Mayor's office proposed to *invite* citizens to save water rather than immediately rationing.

As with any form of collective action, there was a problem with expectations and trust in others. Many people do not cooperate, not because they do not think it is important to cooperate, but rather because they imagine that others will not cooperate. It's the problem of the "free rider."³⁷²

Here, Murrain is invoking a concept associated with the "Tragedy of the Commons" thesis, first introduced in 1968 by Garret Hardin, referencing common field (or commons) shared by many herders who agree equally to maintain the field and not overgraze it.³⁷³ The "free rider" is the herder who doesn't contribute to the maintenance to the field but grazes his cattle on it nonetheless. In the analogy used by Murrain, the free rider citizen is the citizen who seeks to benefit from others saving water, thus avoiding rationing, without contributing to the water-saving effort him/herself. Murrain said that one way the Mockus administration tried to minimize the number of free riders was to give people the benefit of the doubt by assuming their cooperation, as with the "Thank you for saving water" telephone message. To add more appeal to their appeal, the administration recruited popular singer Shakira to record the message. Murrain continues:

Technicians from the city water agents said that no city in the 20th century has voluntarily saved more than 2%. What you are proposing is impossible. There is no precedent for it. The water officials said "you have to ration." Antanas said: "if we explain it to the people, why they need to save water, they will do it." In the first week, the rate did not fall. Instead, it rose by 2%. And everyone was in an

uproar – the newspapers, etc., saying “you have to ration!” We ask people to save water and instead of saving water the rate goes up? This is strange. So [administration member and university professor] Paul Bromberg went out with a team of anthropologists and went door to door asking people about their water consumption habits. People responded: “We are setting aside water, just in case.” Since historically, the usual response to a crisis was to cut off the water. The mayor asks people to save water. No one saves water. And the mayor cuts off the water. People got ahead in the script. So it was a question of breaking that cycle. We realized that people didn’t know how to save water. The message to “save water” was too general. It was necessary to explain *how* to save water.

Once the administration was able to convince citizens that there would be no rationing as long as everyone saved water, and once those who saved water began seeing the difference it made in their first post-savings water bills, the water consumption rate began to drop. In public presentations, Mockus has used the water saving example to illustrate the elements of a successful collective action. He notes that collective action takes time, requires trust, and gains momentum if feedback demonstrates that the collective *is* taking action.³⁷⁴

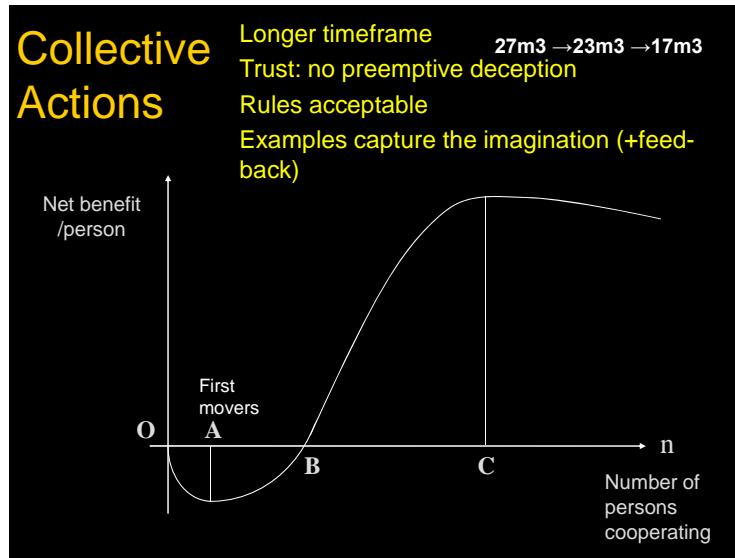


Figure 28: Mockus's description of the water savings collective action.

Source: Antanas Mockus

The citizens of Bogotá who joined the effort to voluntarily save water did so as a result of a combination of trust, information and motivation. The “first movers,” as Mockus refers to them on the slide above, had to trust that as they saved water, others would do the same. Mockus and his administration, with the help of the mass media, provided information about different water saving techniques, and enlisted popular figures like Shakira to help reinforce the water saving message. Publicizing the success of the water saving effort was meant to motivate those who were not “first movers” to join the cause.

Mockus acknowledges the importance of the mass media in a report he prepared for the Inter-American Development Bank. Commenting on the Civic Culture initiative in general, he writes:

An absolutely crucial element of multiplying the effect of Civic Culture was its enormous visibility, achieved for the most part, via mass mediated

communication. There were not paid campaigns, but rather innovative and attractive strategies with a great visual and psychological impact.³⁷⁵

Mockus also notes that an important factor in promoting collective action was gathering data that could be disseminated. The Civic Culture initiative aimed to change collective behavior and an important component of that effort was to make success visible. Mockus writes:

Some of the changes in behavior were supported by regularly updated indicators which allowed us to evaluate outcomes. Our communication was affected by the evolution of those indicators. The case that most stands out in that regard is the water savings.³⁷⁶ He explains the unfolding of the water savings initiative in this way:

We wanted people to take seriously the invitation to save water, instead of making an official announcement only to justify, two days later, that we were going to ration. We had to resist journalistic pressure to focus on framing the news in terms of sanctions that would be instituted if people didn't save, we had to verify that the willingness to save water actually existed, and to reinforce that willingness, we had to distribute information and create methodologies for changing water consumption habits.³⁷⁷

Henry Murrain recalls that Mockus had to “fight with his own advisors” to appeal to the citizens rather than rationing water straight away. “The expectations about the cooperation of the people were zero,” Murrain explains, “And Mockus said: ‘Why won’t they cooperate if they understand why and how to do it?’”

Mockus’s belief that citizens would voluntarily cooperate informed his issuance of an “invitation to save water” rather than an edict. His conviction was challenged by

member of his own staff, by the press, by technical advisors, and even by preliminary data demonstrating a spike in water consumption by citizens who began hoarding water, “just in case.” Mockus returned to his academic roots when he reacted to the spike in consumption with field research instead of knee-jerk rationing. Constant communication with the citizens via the press allowed Mockus to express his trust in the citizens and share the results of the field research and subsequent water savings.

Given the violence and violent repression underway in Colombia in the mid 1990s, it seems understandable that few believed in the idea of “inviting” people to save water or pay voluntary taxes. What mattered, however, is that a decision-making Mayor of a major city did believe that invitations to action could be effective. Without that initial trust, there would be no “surprising” news to disseminate – only reports of yet another tax increase and yet another drought followed by rationing. Instead, the local government demonstrated trust in the citizens by inviting citizens to act. By acting upon invitation, the citizens showed trust in return. Those who paid extra taxes showed trust in and support for the Mockus administration and those who saved water showed trust in their fellow citizens given that many would need to save in order to avoid rationing.

I refer to these invitations to act as experiments, because their outcome was uncertain and they could potentially have failed. When these invitations were accepted, en masse, the city received immediate benefits, in the form of more tax revenue and a solution to the water crisis, and in addition, city administrators and citizens had the immeasurable benefit of learning that somewhere in big bad dangerous Bogotá, altruistic others do exist.

Citizens Cards

An additional “invitational” component of the Civic Culture program was the distribution of 350,000 “tarjetas ciudadanas” (citizen cards) to Bogotá residents. Modeled on the cards used by soccer referees, the cards were red on one side, for those committing infractions, and white on the other, to be shown to those exhibiting good civic behavior. The red side had a “thumbs down” sign, and the white side featured a “thumbs up” sign and the words “Bogotá Coqueta” (Charming Bogotá). Teams of outreach workers were hired by the city to distribute the cards and give instructions as to their ideal use (See figure 31).

Mockus made appearances in the press to further explain the desired use of the cards and invited citizens to pick up their free cards at local supermarkets and gas stations.³⁷⁸ The white thumbs up symbol began making regular appearances in the press. *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá’s two major daily newspapers, incorporated the thumbs up symbol in their coverage of Civic Culture events from 1995-1997.³⁷⁹ Photographs of the symbol and of the Citizens’ Cards being used also appeared in the newspaper, including one photo with four soccer players from one of Bogotá’s home teams and one mime dressed as a soccer player, each holding a card above their heads.³⁸⁰ Due to either inattention or mischief, one of the soccer players in the photograph is seen with the card flipped to the red side, giving the crowd (and the press) a very public “thumbs down.”



Figure 29: Citizens' Cards.

Source: Antanas Mockus

The photographed soccer player's subversion of intended use of the card is one of the most interesting aspects of the invitation to use the cards. City officials distributed the cards and publicized how they were to be used, but they could not control what citizens would do with them. The citizens' cards, once in the hands of the users, could be used as Mockus and his administration intended, but they could also be discarded, repurposed, or used, for example, as decoration. Highlighting this last use, *El Tiempo* published an article in the fall of 1995, titled "Cards decorate, but do not educate."³⁸¹ The article reported the results of a phone survey with more than a thousand residents of Bogotá, which revealed that of the respondents who possessed a citizens card, a slightly higher percentage of people said they kept the card as decoration in their car (38.1%) than said they used the card to approve or disapprove of others' behavior (37.4%). Of the 38% who

kept the card in the window of their car, 19.4% left the white, “Charming Bogotá” side showing while 18.7% had the red thumbs down showing.³⁸²



Figure 30: Outreach worker with Citizens’ Cards.

Source: Screenshot from Hellot & Lemoine

The fact that citizens could recall which side they left showing suggests a conscious decision to display one color over another. Respondents were not asked if displaying the cards, rather than actively using it, was meant as a show of support for the initiative, but the possibility is open to interpretation. Citizens in possession of the cards, whether using it or “merely” displaying it did, however, have the option of refusing the card altogether. Of all the respondents surveyed, with or without cards, a strong majority (71.3%) reported that they were aware of the Civic Culture program and agreed that the cards were useful for educating citizens and improving traffic safety.³⁸³ Thus, while the Citizens’ Cards seemed to be getting a negative review in *El Tiempo*, the statistics reported in the article tell a different story, particularly if one interprets “mere display”

more broadly as citizens' deliberate choice to show the card which could be read as a show of support (the white side) – or at least engagement with the program (the red side).

I spoke with a young optometrist named Angel who shed some light on ways the Citizens' Card was used by residents of Bogotá. His account confirms that citizens often used the cards in ways that were not intended or, perhaps, anticipated. When I told him I was in Bogotá researching Mockus's Civic Culture program and I asked him if he recalled what that was. Angel responded: "Claro!" (Clearly!) and excitedly began telling me about his Citizens' Card:

They gave out these little cards among citizens and they were used especially in traffic. So, when a person did something wrong – he could apologize with one of the little hands to say: "hey, sorry," or, one could also use the same little hand to tell someone they've done something wrong. Or, if you were crossing the street at the wrong place someone could show you it was wrong. It was very interesting. It was a way, for people who are not very calm, to channel their aggression using one of those little hands. It was very educational. Many of us had them. I've lost mine, but I remember that lots of people were using them. Since getting mine, I had it in my car. I would use it to show when people were doing good things. Or, for example, when you were trying to get out into traffic you could show the little hand, and some people would laugh and others wouldn't make any face but everyone would let you pass. It was like having a special police badge or something – with that little hand, everyone would let you into traffic.³⁸⁴

Angel had found an alternate use for the Citizens' Card, the “little hand,” as he called it. He used the white side of the card, occasionally to show his approval, but more often he used it like a “magic badge” to charm his way into traffic.

In my interview with Antanas Mockus I shared the story of the inventive optometrist. He had his own stories to tell about “alternative” use. He said:

When you compare [symbolic communication] with advertising...with advertising, one tries to stay in control of possible negative connotations and interpretations which invert the meaning – and in this case [with symbolic communication] its almost feeding alternate use – there were meetings where the community arrived with red cards 70cm by one meter to show them to me. When we tried to privatize a telecommunications company...and I spoke for about forty minutes before the city council was to vote on the issue, and each time that I spoke about the technical capacity of the company the union members, who were in the back of the room, did like this [showed the big thumbs up], and when I criticized the public ownership of a company, talking about charity and corruption, they did like this [showing the big thumbs down]. Not one whistle, no applause...just a language that has been constructed and shared.³⁸⁵

As he recounted how citizens conveyed their approval and disapproval using the thumbs up and thumbs down symbols, Mockus was smiling. I interpreted his smile to mean that the form of citizens' communication was more important to him than the content.

Mockus shared another story of repurposed symbolism where he was bested by an old man during a public town hall meeting who stood silently below the stage with a single candle. “I had no choice but to give him the microphone,” Mockus explained. “I

was thinking of any which way I could get the candle from him or blow it out but I couldn't think of anything. I felt defeated in my own terrain of symbolism." He continued:

In my bed that night I was tossing and turning for two hours, feeling demoralized, until it occurred to me that the community had come of age. That community had new weapons. Part of my theory about violence in Colombia is that we do not have sufficient symbolic resources...and so we are left without words...and so the theory is explicit, that we should have less physical violence and more symbolic violence.

When discussing the pedagogic potential of symbols, Mockus shared that the incidents with the union members and the candle-wielding old man were not the only occasions he was on the receiving end. "It's very important to let oneself be corrected," he began:

In conferences I like to tell the story of a taxi driver I saw once who when he saw me went like this [giving the thumbs down sign]. I felt bad immediately, but then the taxi driver, who was generous, signaled to me that I didn't have my seat belt on, and I look down, and then I gave him an embarrassed look, and I put on the seat belt and with trepidation I looked back at him and the taxi driver is smiling.

Mockus's colleague Henry Murrain shared with me that when this incident with the taxi driver had first occurred, Mockus told his friends and colleagues that he had thought the thumbs down was a general commentary on his performance as Mayor.³⁸⁶ Mockus was not only relieved but also gratified to learn that the taxi driver was communicating his disapproval symbolically, as this was the original intention behind the cards, symbolic rather than violent communication.

As Mayor and resident of a city plagued with crime and violence, Mockus was operating in a context where conflicts were solved with force, not with words or symbols. Symbolic violence could take the form of citizens showing disapproval of other citizens' actions or mimes using mockery and shame to enforce travel regulation. For those unfamiliar with the context of Bogotá, the notion of *encouraging* citizens to engage in mutual regulation and "symbolic violence" might seem controversial. Indeed, had I written about Civic Culture from afar without having spent nearly a year in Bogotá and other cities in Colombia, I would not have described Mockus's encouragement of "symbolic violence" in a positive light. For this approach to make sense to me, I needed to understand the omnipresence, in the press and public memory, of actual, *non* symbolic violence.

As United States citizen I am the product of a public school system where admonitory novels like Orwell's *1984*, Huxley's *Brave New World* and Atwood's *Handmaid's Tale* were required reading. While still in middle school I had learned of the dangers of social control engineered by governments and enforced by fellow citizens. Yet the choice Mockus was presenting to citizens was not social control versus freedom. The option he tried to provide was symbolic over physical violence, the blood red card over bloodshed. And he provided yet another, never-before-seen in Bogotá, option: spontaneous demonstrations of solidarity and symbolic approval. Commenting broadly on Civic Culture, including the Citizens' Card, Mockus noted:

This idea [of Civic Culture] came out of the Ciclovia of Bogotá , the use of bicycles on Sundays, [where streets are closed to auto traffic] that has existed for 27 years, where people trust one another - The same people that would go out

during the week, walking around distrustful, would go out on Sundays, more trusting. We were looking for people, including those in their cars, to use the cards to signal their approval or disapproval in the moments when they would see appropriate or inappropriate behavior. Nowadays, people use more this sign [thumbs up], whereas in the beginning, what most people did was give each other this sign [thumbs down].³⁸⁷

Whether one agrees or not with Mockus's optimistic perception that citizens more often use the "thumbs up" side of the Citizens' Card, what is undeniable is that the cards are, literally and figuratively, in the Citizens' hands. Citizens are free to not seek or accept a card, they are free to obtain one but then not use it, and they are free to use it or mis-use it according to their whimsy. Residents can use it to apologize for bad behavior, they can decorate their cars with it, they can brandish it, soccer referee style, to symbolically chastise other citizens, or they can use it to playfully ask for the right of way in traffic. Citizens can (and did) replicate the card and increase its size to make it more visible to the Mayor when he speaks in public meetings.

As an invitation to action, the cards clearly had great potential. City administrators in several regions of Colombia recognized this potential and sought to capitalize on it by creating their own version of the card. With financial support from the private sector, the federal government and higher education institutions,³⁸⁸ Citizens' Cards were adapted and distributed in various cities, including: Barranquilla (Buena Movida/Mala Movida), Medellin (Bien Hecho/Mal Hecho), and Bucaramanga (Buena Esa/Mala Esa).³⁸⁹



Figure 31: Round “Poorly done/Well done” signs, Medellin.
Source: Alcaldía Mayor de Medellín

The text above reads: “Are you going to get into a car with someone who has been drinking? [poorly done] “Better to convince them that they should take a taxi. Well done!” The bottom line of the poster reads: “In the street, conduct yourself well.”

I witnessed the use of a Citizen Card in Barranquilla, Colombia. The creation and of Barranquilla’s version of the Citizen Card was sponsored by a private foundation, and local university students were hired to distribute the cards and explain their intended use.³⁹⁰ While driving with Barranquilla resident Elena, a graduate of the local university, we were suddenly stopped in traffic behind a vehicle that was double parked in front of a restaurant. When we finally managed to pass, Elena reached for the card on the dashboard and slowed to show the red side of the card to the driver of the double-parked car. She shouted “Hey!” to get the driver’s attention and was scowling furiously. When the driver saw the card he mouthed the words “Lo siento” (I’m sorry) and started giggling like a small child that has been caught with his hand in the cookie jar. The driver’s jolly

contrition made Elena laugh and soon all three of us were laughing heartily. As we drove away I reflected on the power of playful symbols and imagined how the Elena's communication might have differed without the option of the Citizens' Card.

The symbols of the Citizens' Card have survived over time via their replication and adaption by several cities in Colombia, as noted above. The symbols have also reappeared, in original and also subverted forms, in a variety of places in Bogotá including the campus of Javeriana University and in graffiti on the walls of the city (see figure 32). Most recently, Antanas Mockus is using them himself in his 2010 presidential campaign materials (see figure 33). The symbols on the Citizens' Cards, including the "thumbs up" sign, were not invented in Bogota – people have been showing their approval via this symbol for centuries.³⁹¹ Yet the text accompanying the symbols, as seen in the figures below, signals the direct reference to the Cultura Ciudadana communication strategy. The text under the symbol on the left reads: "To interact and act well." The text above the symbol on the right reads "Charming Bogota," which is the exact text used on the original Citizens' Cards only with the symbol strategically subverted.



Figure 32: Reinvented Citizen Card symbols.



Figure 33: Campaign materials with “thumbs up.”

I interpret the continued use, and the reinvention, of the Citizens’ Card symbols as a result of the dialogic design of the intervention. The Mockus administration put the cards literally into the hands of citizens. Some citizens used the cards as intended by the intervention’s designers; they used the cards to signal their approval or disapproval of other citizens’ behavior without resorting to violence. Other citizens used the cards in unintended ways, as decoration or to playfully ask permission to inch out into traffic.

Several major cities in Colombia and at least one educational institution in Bogotá adopted and adapted the symbols for their own use. Mockus is keeping the “thumbs up” symbol alive in his current Presidential campaign. And finally, street artists have given their perspective on “Charming Bogotá” by giving it the middle finger. I view the Citizens’ Card intervention as dialogic because it enabled and invited action, it invited adoption, adaption and reinvention in other geographic spaces and, perhaps most importantly, it was enabled Citizens to use the cards and symbols in their own way. In other words, the Citizens’ Cards enabled both action and *new action*.

The Mockus administration included a team of eleven individuals, the majority from Academia, which was responsible for creating and implementing the Civic Culture program.³⁹² Mockus’s major contribution to this team, in addition to helping develop innovative, newsworthy strategies, was to trust that citizens would take part in initiatives designed to benefit the city. The design of the three interventions I have focused on in this chapter reflect their dialogic, Other-oriented nature. Mockus had the tax form redesigned and fitted with an invitation to citizens to voluntarily pay more taxes because he had faith that some citizens might accept the invitation. During the water crisis, Mockus eschewed authoritarian measures such as rationing or price increases because he believed it was possible for citizens to save water voluntarily. Finally, Mockus and his administration created and made available 350,000 Citizens Cards knowing full well that individuals were free to not accept them, not use them or could use them in unintended ways. I view these interventions as dialogic because of their respectful and trusting orientation toward the Other. I view them as dialogic because they made space for the

Other, they enabled and invited action, and in the case of the Citizens Cards, made possible *new action*.

My interpretation of the Cultura Ciudadana interventions, as seen through the lens of dialogue, is that they are intentionally designed to invite the unpredictable but potentially positive contribution of the Other. Reflecting on his career during our interview, Mockus said the following:

It is something I have lived in my public life, that people really enjoy completing the story, the message. And on various occasions I have risked constructing the first part of the phrase, without knowing whether or not I had control of the second part of the phrase, without knowing whether my action would be well or poorly received...In other words, it is like a state of grace – your destiny is in the hands of the other.

His words help me to clarify what dialogic social change means for me. It means that social change practitioners should consider giving up total control by designing interventions that require interdependence, interventions that require the Other to succeed and grow.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study is an extended exploration into what I call “dialogic social change.” I have attempted to illustrate that dialogic forms of social change have great potential and that they are not uniform. They are not uniform in the types of opportunities they create nor the types of actions they make possible. They do share one common characteristic: each intervention was designed to enable and invite Others to act. This design reveals a shared faith in the Other as a capable agent. This faith in the Other is evidenced in different ways and to different degrees. This concluding chapter aims to illustrate some of these differences while continuing to suggest that they share a design that is dialogic.

In the preceding chapters I have discussed three interventions designed to promote social change using a variety of communication approaches. I provided background information on the context for each case and discussed elements of each communication intervention in an attempt to flesh out the characteristics and enabling features of each design. In this chapter, I will relate each of these communication interventions back to dialogue. I aim to explain what, in my view, makes each of the cases “dialogic.” In this chapter, I return to the earlier discussion of dialogue and dialogic approaches to social change. Further, I revisit each case to discuss why I included each of the three communication interventions in this dissertation.

In the first chapter I reviewed selected writings by Martin Buber, Paulo Freire and Mikhail Bakhtin and highlighted concepts that guide my exploration of dialogic approaches to social change. Had I only wanted to describe the mechanics of the intervention or the results, I might have been able to steer clear of slippery words like *relation, unreserved, or even dialogic*. I briefly considered whether

“invitation/invitational” might replace dialogue/dialogic, as a simpler stand in. Invitation helps me describe the act of *enabling action*, but it does not, in my opinion, allow me to discuss, as dialogue does, a humane, open, respectful, *loving* orientation toward the Other. If I have a dialogic orientation, I invite. If I have a dialogic orientation, I do not coerce, manipulate or seek to control others. A dialogic orientation precedes and is the impetus for invitation. My conception of dialogic social change extends the concept of dialogue beyond spoken conversation and stresses the importance of trusting the Other and of treating the Other with respect.

In my discussion of dialogic approaches to social change, I have used the words faith and trust nearly synonymously. Faith, from the Latin *fides*, has been defined by as “a firm belief in something for which there is no proof.”³⁹³ Trust, in turn, is from the Old Norse word *traust*, meaning strong, or “the firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something.”³⁹⁴ Paulo Freire writes about faith and trust in his discussion of dialogic approaches to adult education. Here I recall Freire’s belief in the importance of having faith in Others, signaled previously in chapter one:

Dialogue further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human... Faith in people is an *a priori* requirement for dialogue; the “dialogical man” believes in others even before he meets them face to face.³⁹⁵

Freire is writing from the position of someone who experienced poverty as a child and who lived most of his adult life in Brazil, a country with extremely high levels of inequality between rich and poor.³⁹⁶ As an adult-educator, Freire viewed dialogue as

more than a pedagogical process; he conceptualized dialogue as a respectful and humane orientation toward the Other.

Having faith in the Other as a potential partner is a cornerstone of dialogic approaches to change. The design of a social change intervention is where faith in Others (or lack thereof) becomes manifest. Where there is faith in the Other, there is an open, “unfinished” design. An “unfinished” design, a *dialogic* design, is one that makes room for, creates a role for, *invites*, the Other. In his book *Communication, Space and Design*, Amardo Rodriguez writes that “inclusion is the order of organic systems,” and here I interpret organic to mean alive and dynamic. When he writes of design, Rodriguez makes reference to space and place, and he is not optimistic. “We are increasingly heeding the reality,” he writes, “that spaces and places that promote fragmentation and division undermine innovation by limiting human interaction and communication.”³⁹⁷ He suggests that the answer to divisive design is spaces that

promote diversity and complexity, that foster hope, openness and compassion, that make us less afraid of the world and each other, that heal and nourish us, and that lessen the threat of our differences by encouraging us to pay attention to our common humanness and humanity.³⁹⁸

Rodriguez argues that our worldview shapes how we view space and place, how we design spaces and places, which in turn affects our experience of them and how we communicate within them. An office full of tiny, dark cubicles yields division and fragmentation. Rodriguez advocates fewer walls and fences and more curves and sensuality.³⁹⁹ In essence, he suggests that we design our spaces to be less machine-like and more human.

I embrace the suggestion put forth by Rodriguez and extend the meaning of design, for my own purposes, to include not only spaces and places that facilitate communication but also communication interventions themselves. We can design our communication interventions, just as we would design a park or a building, to be more open, more conducive to relation and genuine dialogue, more inviting and inclusive. If we have faith in the Other and their creative capacity, we can design our interventions to invite, enable, and make possible, *new action*.

New action, I have come to realize, is the crowning achievement of a dialogic design. A social change intervention is dialogic if designed to promote, invite, and facilitate new action. New action may not materialize, but intervention designers can work to make it *possible*. A dialogic social change intervention is fueled by faith in Others and is thus designed with capable Others in mind. The tools made available to Others by the Billionaires, the roles created for Others in the Scenarios process and the invitations to act extended the Other in some Cultura Ciudadana interventions – these are all the result of dialogic design.

Returning to the “Field of Dreams” analogy of the first chapter, it is the “building of the field” that renders a social change effort dialogic – it is the creation of space, the invitation, the hope that the other will come that renders an intervention dialogic. If the Other comes, that is a bonus. If the Other comes, creates, innovates and acts, I consider that *success*. But by this same standard, a design can be dialogic *and* still be a failure. The field is built, and no one comes – an unheeded invitation. The field is created, but the builder plays alone.

This is not the case with the interventions I highlight in this dissertation. The design of each intervention was dialogic, the field was built, and people did come, they did create, innovate and act. The *design* of each intervention made new action possible. The interventions are dialogic rather than just “participatory” because each design was underwritten by faith and respect for the Other – to such an extent that unpredictable, unplanned-for, new action was made possible *and* it was welcomed. I hope to clarify how I arrived at these conclusions by revisiting each intervention and its dialogic design.

The Billionaires for Bush

The Billionaires know how to create clever and ironic slogans. They know how to smuggle these slogans into the mainstream media. They know that a strict focus on economic issues, rather than potentially divisive cultural issues. They make good strategic choice designed to rally a maximum of people behind a focused message. The size, color, content and quality of the Billionaires’ materials are carefully designed to bring a hard-hitting message into mainstream media in a non-aggressive way. The Billionaires know how to make the hard work of political organizing look fun, and even glamorous.

The Billionaires’ materials were of high quality because they were created by graphic designers who donated their time and talent. This ability to attract creative professionals and put them to work according to the talents each professional had to offer demonstrates great organizing skill and reflects the Billionaires understanding that there are more ways to contribute to the Billionaire cause than dressing up and taking to the street.

These elements, however, do not fully explain my interest in the Billionaires. Several organizations demonstrate skillful organizing, clever messages and well designed, attention-getting materials that result in extensive press coverage. I am interested in the Billionaires for the “dialogic” design of their social change intervention. I would like to provide a few examples in contrast, before discussing further the dialogic nature of the Billionaires intervention.

The Billionaires are not alone when it comes to using creativity and style to garner media attention. The “missions” organized by the group Improv Everywhere, for example, certainly live up to the group’s motto, which is “we cause scenes.”⁴⁰⁰ Improv Everywhere described their latest event, the 2010 “No Pants Day” subway ride, as a self-described “celebration of silliness,” during which “over 5,000 people took off their pants on subways in 44 cities around the world.”⁴⁰¹ This type of communication intervention is creative, provocative, and absurd - absurdly fun, absurdly pointless, or both, depending on your point of view – but it is not promoting any form of meaningful social change. This is indeed an evaluative assessment on my part. I am placing a greater value on economic justice and democracy, which I believe the Billionaires promote, than on public displays of silliness. Silliness should have its place in the world, but for me, it takes a back seat to the pursuit of justice and the promotion of an inclusive, robust democracy.

Other creative interventions do explicitly promote social change: consider the Yes Men and the Guerrilla Girls, to use two well-known examples. The Yes Men raise awareness about corporate greed and misconduct. In their own words: “Our targets are leaders and big corporations who put profits ahead of everything else.”⁴⁰² They have made two feature-length documentaries and written a book about their work

impersonating “big-time criminals in order to publicly humiliate them.” The Guerrilla Girls made waves in the 1980s era U.S. art-world due to their public appearances wearing Guerrilla masks, mini-skirts and high heels wielding posters designed to expose “individuals and institutions that under-represent or exclude women and artists of color from exhibitions, collections and funding.”⁴⁰³

The Yes Men and the Guerrilla Girls have an agenda. Both seek social change: an end to limitless corporate power⁴⁰⁴ is sought by the former and more equitable representation in the art world is the goal of the latter. These communication interventions are interesting and creative, but they are not “dialogic” in their design, in the way that I am using the term here.⁴⁰⁵ It is the inclusion of the “Be a Billionaire” manual and other downloadable materials into their design that renders the Billionaires’ intervention dialogic. The manual enabled individuals and groups across to the United States to form their own Billionaire Chapters. Between the information in the manual and the materials available on the website the new Billionaire groups were able to plan and execute their own actions in diverse locations across the U.S. By creating and uploading a do-it-yourself manual, the Billionaires demonstrated faith in unknown Others. The Billionaires had no way of knowing that dozens of people across the U.S. would collaborate to create spin-off Billionaire chapters, but making these acts possible required faith. By creating their own chapters, these Others are not objects of a Billionaires intervention, they are, as Buber would say, “partners in a living event.”⁴⁰⁶

As partners, and not merely participants, the unknown Others created their own chapters and designed their own actions: some of these completely new and different from what had been seen before. In Los Angeles, the Billionaires created their own

singing choir while the Tucson chapter formed a marching band. The Billionaire intervention was designed so that Others could creatively contribute and build upon Billionaires' materials to create something new. By facilitating not just collaboration, but also new, unpredictable action, the Billionaires enter into what I am calling *genuine dialogue* with unknown Others. According to Buber, a prerequisite for genuine dialogue is having in mind the Other "in their present and particular being."⁴⁰⁷ Respecting the particularity of the Other, in the case of the Billionaires, meant making tools available and then relinquishing control and accepting the unpredictable nature of Others actions.

Buber writes that genuine dialogue is "continually hidden in all kinds of odd corners and, occasionally in an unseemly way, breaks surface surprisingly and inopportunely."⁴⁰⁸ Faith in the unpredictable capacity of Others paid off for the Billionaires: offshoot chapters created marching bands and singing groups when they could have easily become unhelpfully overzealous, i.e., *naked* Billionaires or exact copy replicators. Yet even replication would still be new action given the change in context, audience and potential press coverage. What is evident from the design of the Billionaires intervention is faith that like-minded, adventurous Others existed.

The Billionaires created downloadable materials, including the "Be a Billionaire" manual, and made them available on their website because they assumed the existence of agentic Others. Because the creative agency of these unknown Others could not be predicted or controlled, the Billionaires took a leap of faith, they entered into *relation* with them, they accepted this newness and allowed the intervention to be expanded and changed. Relation, writes Buber, means not only changing something in the Other, but also allowing oneself to be changed.⁴⁰⁹ Thus a dialogic intervention, which *by design*

allows for genuine dialogue and relation, is an intervention that aims to promote change and also accepts *being* changed. The Billionaires intervention was designed to enable reproduction – the manual and press clippings could be used to replicate the New York City Billionaires’ action. But creative Others, not content to merely replicate, seized the opportunity presented by the open design to produce something new. The *new actions* in Los Angeles and Tucson changed the Billionaires intervention by creatively contributing to it. Sharing this capacity and openness to being changed, the Scenarios from Africa case provides another illustration of what a “dialogic” design makes possible.

Scenarios from Africa

I have included Scenarios from Africa in this dissertation because it is a communication intervention with an Other-oriented dialogic design. The intervention, part of which I experienced, included a series of planned activities: 1) the organization of a script writing contest for young people, 2) the assembly of a jury to assess the scripts and select winning entries, and 3) the creation and distribution of short films about HIV/AIDS to be screened by outreach workers, organizations, educational institutions and broadcasters.

This amount of activity and coordination alone is worthy of an entire dissertation. And yet, it is the unplanned, emergent relationships, new collaborations and new action that are the product of the intervention’s dialogic design that captured my attention and influenced my decision to include Scenarios with the other two cases in this dissertation. Said another way, the Scenarios intervention is remarkable for its planned outcomes: high levels of participation, thousands of creative scripts, well coordinated juries and beautiful, poignant short films about HIV/AIDS. It is even more remarkable, I contend, because of

the *unplanned* outcomes enabled by its dialogic design. I conducted my fieldwork on the Scenarios from Africa intervention in Senegal, a country with an extensive and dynamic civic sector. Coming from this sector are individuals and organizations who bi-annually help implement the Scenarios contest, who serve on the jury and who assist in the distribution of the finalized films.

The dialogic design of the Scenarios intervention creates myriad opportunities for these individuals and organizations to interact, cooperate, coordinate and – most important for my purpose here - to eventually *create*. While conducting my fieldwork in Senegal I witnessed and heard accounts of new relationships resulting from Scenarios activities, new collaborations stemming from existing relationships, and new, unplanned actions, inspired, but not controlled, by the Scenarios intervention.

I have developed several different analogies that have helped me better understand and describe different parts of the Scenarios process. The first is the analogy of the sponge: Scenarios is porous, full of entry and exit points allowing people to come, mingle, contribute, and then go when they please. This accounted for the open, inviting nature of the intervention, but it did not account for the spontaneous, organic outcomes I was seeing during my research. The “porous sponge” analogy did not account for what happened when people gathered together and as a result of their interaction, planned new action. I then considered a potato, past its prime, with new shoots jutting out in all directions. One never knows where a shoot will emerge, how many shoots will spring forth, or how long each one will grow. Yet this image, too, was incomplete. “I cannot liken Scenarios to a *rotting potato*,” I told myself. Besides, when I moved toward the rotting potato to account for unplanned, new growth, I lost the notion of openness, of

porosity. And neither the porous sponge nor the sprouting potato reflected the time-bound, sequential nature of the Scenarios intervention. The Scenarios process does not float along, it does not lay static, awaiting shoots – it is an intervention with deadlines and a purpose.

Finally, I have developed a transportation analogy. Scenarios is like a moving train. It follows a schedule and moves in one direction, from contest, to jury to film production and then distribution. But it is a train with many doors that makes a lot of stops. The open doors allow people to jump onboard, travel a while, meet and mingle with the other passengers, and then jump off the train when they choose. When passengers jump off the train, they sometimes do in pairs or groups, and proceed to build on these nascent relationships, move in a new direction, and collaborate on new projects. The multiple stops are akin to meetings or events in different neighborhoods, cities and regions. While a contest kick off meeting is held in Dakar, bringing together individuals from community based organizations from across the capital, another meeting unites health workers in the southern city of Ziguinchor, hundreds of miles away.

Stopping in disparate geographical locations while ostensibly moving “in one direction” makes it obvious why the “moving train” is an imperfect analogy. But what this particular analogy offers is the idea that an intervention can be designed to include specific, planned activities with measurable outcomes (e.g., How many contestants? How many entries? How many films made and/or broadcast?) – this is the steady track the train follows – while simultaneously creating spaces and events where talented, motivated individuals can gather, enter into relation, seek inspiration, and initiate new, *unplanned* action.

I believe that as an intervention, Scenarios would merit attention even if it were a one-way train with few doors and stops. That is, it would merit attention even if the intervention were implemented by a handful of paid staff members who organize the contest, serve as jury members, and distribute the films themselves. The contest mechanism, for example, has successfully involved over 100,000 young people across the African continent. Another measure of success is the fact that the contest, which began in three countries in 1997, is now in 47 countries.

Although the Scenarios intervention *could* be implemented entirely by paid, full-time staff, the *dialogic* quality of Scenarios has been its ability to create myriad and sustained opportunities for individuals and organizations to contribute their talents. The Scenarios intervention is dialogic in that it is designed to be self *insufficient*. Here I am reminded of Paulo Freire's observation, "Self sufficiency is incompatible with dialogue."⁴¹⁰ In this sense, Scenarios is dialogic precisely because it is not self-sufficient. The intervention is designed with the Other in mind, it requires the Other to thrive.

The Scenarios intervention relies on the voluntary collaboration of hundreds of individuals and organizations across the African continent. In Senegal, paid Scenarios staff members are few – in fact, in Senegal, there was only one, Gabriel Diouf. Gabriel worked for Scenarios on a part time basis and he was deliberately and proudly reliant on Others. Gabriel told me numerous stories about chains of encounters – both planned and unplanned – which lead to increasing amounts of participation and collaboration. These stories began with the encounter and ended with an ever-growing network. "I saw Moussa at the World AIDS Day Event," he would begin, "and he introduced me to the Minister and then both volunteered for the Jury and asked for films to use in the

workplace.” After speaking with and learning from Gabriel during the five weeks I spent in Senegal, it seemed to me that every meeting he described to me ended with someone new becoming involved, or “mobilized” as Gabriel would put it, with Scenarios in some fashion.

Could the Scenarios intervention function with less participation? It certainly could, although the contest would be smaller and the films would not be used as extensively. If we define efficiency as the ratio of output to input of a given system, the Scenarios intervention-as-system is *highly* inefficient. There are many people involved in the Scenarios intervention, some doing just a small part and others contributing extensive time and resources. Rather than trying to do more with less, Scenarios tries to involve as many people as it can to do as much as it can. The intervention is dialogic, because it is designed to invite more participation, more collaboration and more relation. Scenarios is dialogic because it makes *more* possible.

Indeed, if Robert Putnam were to shift his attention from Northern Italy and the bowling alleys of middle-America he would, I think, be delighted with the vibrancy of the community that constitutes the Scenarios network. Before Scenarios existed, individuals and organizations had their own networks, to be sure, but the contribution of the Scenarios process, for the past ten years in Senegal and other countries, to a varying length of time, has been the creation of unifying activities and events. These activities and events bring *people* together, which brings *networks* together. These networks are organic; they grow and are strengthened as a result of the Scenarios process. Indeed, as I learned from interviewing Scenarios collaborators, these networks have grown and continue to operate beyond and outside of the Scenarios process.

The “agenda for social capitalists” that Robert Putnam outlines in the concluding chapter of *Bowling Alone*, reads, to me, like a summary of the Scenarios values and accomplishments. Putnam invokes civic engagement among young people, which Scenarios fostered in contest participants and young contest organizers and jury members. Putnam advocates community congeniality, public sociability and the use of “the arts as a vehicle for convening a diverse group of fellow citizens.”⁴¹¹ These three items on Putnams agenda are exactly what Scenarios is and what Scenarios does. The Scenarios intervention began in 1997 fueled by what Putnam would call “thin trust.” Thin trust is the act of “giving most people - even those whom one does not know from direct experience - the benefit of the doubt.”⁴¹² This “thin trust,” over time and as a result of ongoing interaction, became, in many instances “thick trust,” earned trust, the trust that exists between friends. When I left Atlanta, Kate Winskell corrected me when I thanked her for sharing with me her “contacts.”

“They are not contacts, they are our *friends*.”

In all my years working in “development,” I never heard this word. In Peace Corps my colleagues were called “Host Country Nationals” by Peace Corps staff. As a consultant working on international development contracts, the Other was “client,” “trainee,” “target” or ”field office staff.” The Other as *friend*? Those are the words of someone with a *dialogic* orientation toward the Other. They are the words of someone who would design an intervention that relies almost entirely on Others.

Cultura Ciudadana

The Cultura Ciudadana intervention spearheaded by Mayor Antanas Mockus (1993-1995, 2001-2003) is credited with significant reductions in homicide and traffic-

related death rates in Bogotá. In the period between 1993 and 2002 homicides dropped by more than half, from 4,452 to 1,903 and traffic related deaths decreased from 1,284 to 697.⁴¹³ Cultura Ciudadana, which I have called an “intervention” for the sake of facility, is actually a wide array of policies and communication strategies implemented successively and in some cases in parallel. Some of these strategies were far from dialogic.

Even though he is well known for his playful and innovative communication strategies, Antanas Mockus, the former Mayor of Bogotá, implemented several restrictive policies aimed at promoting positive social change in the city. The “hora zanahoria” policy for example, required bars and clubs to change the hour they stopped serving alcohol from 3a.m to 1a.m. Mockus also imposed tight restrictions on the possession of fire arms and outlawed the sale and use of fireworks, a common source of accidents, involving children in particular, during holiday periods.⁴¹⁴ These restrictive policies were implemented at the same time as more playful and artistic interventions designed to promote “civic culture,” a term used to describe civic behaviors ranging from the respect of traffic regulations to engaging in non-violent interpersonal communication with fellow citizens. Mockus replaced traffic police with mimes in severely congested intersections to playfully “enforce” traffic regulations and artistically chastise lawbreakers rather than fining them. Theater troupes were hired to model pro-civic behavior such as the use of trashcans in lieu of littering. The city held cultural events, such as “Rock in the Park,” and periodically closed streets to traffic to hold mini-carnivals, the “Septimazos,” which served to bring citizens together in safe, public spaces.

These less restrictive interventions were a creative alternative to the “zero tolerance” law enforcement crackdown approach popularized by Mayor Giuliani in New York City in the 1990s⁴¹⁵ and to Mockus’s own attempts to use legislation to reduce violence and crime in the city. Creative or not, the mimes, theater troupes, concerts and carnivals are not dialogic. To be dialogic, as I have defined the term here, these interventions needed to involve citizens beyond passive spectatorship. Dialogic approaches to social change create space, means and opportunity for the Other to contribute to the social change effort at hand. Examples of interventions with dialogic designs include the distribution of Citizens Cards, the Bogota 110% voluntary tax campaign and the voluntary water savings effort. The designs of these interventions are dialogic because each is based on faith in the Other - faith that when invited, the Other would and could contribute.

The Mockus administration produced 350,000 “Citizens Cards,” each featuring a white “thumbs up” side, meant to be used to signal approval, and a red “thumbs down” side, resembling a soccer referees red card, to show disapproval. The cards were made available at several locations in the city and citizens could take them, free of charge, to use how they wished. Of course, the administration hoped citizens would use the cards to promote “civic culture” – and many did just that. Mockus himself was shown the thumbs down side of a card for not wearing his seat belt while driving. But many used the cards for their own purposes – to inch their way into traffic or to decorate their car. Should this intervention be viewed as a failure, given that people used the cards in ways they were not designed for? I would answer this with a “no.” An intervention designed to invite the Other to act knowing full well that there can be no control, underwritten by faith and

fueled by hope, is an excellent illustration of a dialogic approach to social change. If we truly respect the Other, we must accept his or her autonomy, accept unpredictable action, and accept the possibility of failure. Dialogic interventions are not designed to fail, but failure is certainly a possibility given their reliance on the Other.

Let me restate this last point, a bit differently, to clarify my meaning. An intervention can be dialogic and nonetheless a failure. How so? A dialogic design invites the collaboration of unknown Others. This collaboration is not controlled and thus unpredictable and even unwanted outcomes may occur. Citizens Cards could have been used as kindling for fires, they could have been used to insulate shanties, or as was the case in many instances, as decoration. Dialogic designs are risky because they are supremely respectful of the autonomy of the Other. A tax form designed to invite citizens to voluntarily pay an extra 10% in taxes is a dialogic intervention – the outcome relies upon the Other. Mockus’s redesign of the tax form was akin to building a “Field of Dreams.” He built it, and they came. This intervention was dialogic because Mockus had faith that citizens would heed his invitation. They might have stayed away, and the intervention would nonetheless still be dialogic. It would have been a dialogic failure.

The same goes for the voluntary water savings effort. Mockus’s faith in citizens led him to seek voluntary collaboration rather than resorting to rationing. The mere act of *asking* citizens to collaborate was dialogic in nature. When citizens did not at first collaborate, he sent out teams of researchers to ask new questions, to ask why there were not collaborating. Armed with the research results he continued to have faith in citizens, made his faith public, and asked again for collaboration. This intervention succeeded; citizens voluntary saved water and Mockus did not resort to rationing. Adopting the

dialogic approach was risky but not without reward. The first reward was the water savings – it helped avert a water shortage. The second reward was the public relations windfall resulting from the voluntary collaboration of citizens. Seeking an alternative to rationing was a first in Bogotá’s history. Citizens voluntarily saved water and Mockus was able to commend and congratulate them for their actions. The Bogota 110% voluntary tax payment also involved risk and levels of reward. The primary risk was that the invitation would be ignored. The primary reward was the additional income generated when the invitation was indeed accepted. A secondary reward was, again, the public relations dividend. When 63,000 citizens voluntarily paid an extra 10% in taxes, Mockus was able to announce this surprising fact to Bogota’s citizens. For citizens accustomed to violence and thus inclined to mistrust, this news of altruism might be cause to reconsider the trustworthiness of fellow citizens.

The water and tax interventions demonstrate that trust-based and trust-generating acts of invitation are viable options for policy makers. In a public speech at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government Mockus recounted conversations he had just after being elected Mayor. “I remember a lot of taxi drivers saying, ‘I voted for you; we will see.’ And I remember saying, ‘Help. Don’t be a spectator.’”⁴¹⁶ Mockus designed the three interventions I highlight in this dissertation in the spirit of those words. Each design says to unknown Others: “Help. Don’t be a spectator.”

Can a design communicate? In agreement with Rodriguez, I say yes. Rodriguez highlights physical design and how design can affect communication while I am interested in the design of communication interventions. We share the belief that a *design communicates a worldview*. Further, we agree that how we communicate and relate with

Others has practical consequences. Rodriguez observes that “some communication practices constitute us better than others and, accordingly, help make for more humane and just worlds than others.”⁴¹⁷ Rodriguez, unsurprisingly, shares my interest in the writings of Martin Buber and Buber’s conception of genuine dialogue. He cites a passage by Buber, from *Genuine Dialogues and the Possibility of Peace*, which I also embrace:

I believe, despite all, that the peoples in this hour can enter into dialogue, into a genuine dialogue with one another. In a genuine dialogue each of the partners, even when he stands in opposition to the other, heeds, affirms, and confirms his opponent as an existing other. Only so can conflict certainly not be eliminated from the world, but be humanly arbitrated and led towards its overcoming.⁴¹⁸

These words are from a speech Buber gave when awarded a Peace Prize by the German Book Trade in 1953. Buber, an observant Jew and scholar of orthodox Hasidism, delivered these words, to an audience of Germans just after World War II. In his speech he makes reference to the German people “of the days of Auschwitz and Treblinka,” and yet, the speech is, astonishingly, a call to dialogue. Through his speech Buber made manifest his own dialogic orientation to the Other. That Buber could publicly prescribe dialogue in the aftermath of the Holocaust to an audience of Germans humbles and inspires me. I too, want to prescribe this way of being, this way of seeing the Other. In this era, I believe a call to dialogue still needed. A dialogic orientation toward the Other can perhaps help protect against future tragedy. It is *possible* that a dialogic orientation, and dialogic designs, can make a difference.

The designs of our interventions demonstrate how much faith we have in Others: we imagine a role for the Other when we view Others as creative, agentic collaborators.

Where there is no faith there are interventions that place Others in the role of passive target, spectator, or beneficiary of *our* expertise and resources. When we presume to know what is best for the Other our designs reflect this attitude. Lacking faith, we disseminate information, diffuse innovation and seek adherence to or acceptance of finalized, didactic messages and prescriptions. What do our designs look like when we have faith that the Other can act with autonomy and according to their own conscience? These designs seek to inspire rather than persuade. They invite. They build relation. They accept failure as a possible risk.

Dialogic approaches to social change can fail because they rely on the active collaboration of autonomous, unknown Others. This approach is too uncertain, too risky to be advisable for all situations. There are times when “top-down” mandates and authority decisions are necessary. Health epidemics and natural disasters are two instances when a dialogic approach is inappropriate. Unpredictable creativity and the risk of unheeded invitations are unacceptable in crisis situations. Social change efforts requiring strict adherence, such as polio eradication campaigns that demand consistent and timely vaccinations, are equally ill suited for dialogic approaches.

In sum, dialogic approaches to social change are not always recommended nor do they always succeed. When they are employed, however, they have the potential to make action, and new action, possible. I now revisit how action, and occasionally new action, was made possible in each of the cases I have included in this dissertation. I envision this summary as a possible starting point for designers of social change interventions. Each section can be considered as an illustration of different ways to design for dialogic social change.

Creating Tools

The Billionaires for Bush made new action possible with tools. The Billionaires created downloadable materials, including the “Be a Billionaire” how-to manual, because they had faith in the capacity of unknown Others, and thus made possible a role for them. These materials, these *tools*, are a key component of the Billionaire intervention. Recall the three elements of the Billionaires intervention: playful public action (A) designed to attract media attention (M), which is then remediated (R) on the Billionaires website, where individuals can find the tools they need to plan new action (NA). The web-based tools enabled Others to become Billionaires.

The Cultura Ciudadana intervention also involved tools. The Mockus administration designed the “thumbs up”/ “thumbs down” cards to encourage citizens to become involved in promoting “cultura ciudadana.” Citizens who sought them out used the cards as intended, in some cases. In other cases, people used the cards for their own purposes - purposes unintended by the administration. Tools made available in a dialogic design enable action, albeit action that cannot be controlled. When the Other is respected, their contribution genuinely sought, however they act, or if they choose not to act, must also be respected. The Other is unpredictable. An intervention that is dialogic invites the Other to act. Use of this approach requires acceptance that the outcome cannot be controlled – that Others cannot be controlled. Future designers of social change interventions can render them more dialogic by including tools that will enable Others to act on their own.

Fostering Interaction and Relation

In the Scenarios from Africa intervention, new action, new collaborations and new relationships were the result of people gathering, to contribute to the Scenarios intervention, at various events. The intervention was designed with multiple roles that needed to be filled. Each event involved the individuals and organizations that stepped forward to fill those roles.

The script writing contest is the major Scenarios event that involved thousands of young people and brought hundreds of organizations into collaboration with one another. Other Scenarios-related events included kick off celebrations, planning meetings, jury sessions, video screenings, and prizing ceremonies. These events were numerous and essential components of the Scenarios intervention. In Senegal, these events brought together individuals from a wide range of institutions, individuals who may not have come into contact if not collaborating together on the Scenarios intervention. Including events that serve as spaces of interaction in the design of social change interventions is a way to create opportunities for forming new relationships, planning new actions and collaboration. Events do not guarantee specific outcomes. If, however, one has a dialogic orientation toward the Other, and thus faith in the agency and creativity of the Other, creating potentially generative spaces of interaction is consistent with a dialogic approach to social change. The results of interaction are very hard to measure, which is why faith and hope are necessary. As with the Field of Dreams, once you have created spaces of interaction, and they have come, you must have faith in the Other's ability to make something happen. Buber said: "In the beginning is relation." As a corollary, I venture that relation *is the beginning*.

Experimenting with Invitation

Antanas Mockus had faith in the citizens of Bogotá. His faith led him to eschew sanction to adopt an invitational, dialogic approach in several circumstances. Mockus invited citizens to pay an extra 10% in taxes and 63,000 of them did. Mockus invited citizens to save water, and after an initial increase in consumption because the citizens had no faith that water would not be rationed, they began saving water of their own accord. I like to think that faith breeds faith. This is particularly the case if one is savvy about making visible the dividends of faith. When citizens voluntarily paid extra taxes and saved water, Mockus did not rest on these accomplishments. He promptly circulated this information to the media, and received press coverage extolling these voluntary acts. What was the impact of such press coverage? This is hard to say. As a meliorist, someone who believes that good things are neither impossible nor inevitable, but simply *possible*, I am satisfied believing in the possible impact of press coverage.

I imagine a citizen, perhaps one who commutes to work daily on public transport, one who sees firsthand the incivilities of daily life in the capital. Sitting on the bus, this citizen keeps her possessions in sight at all times, purse firmly on her lap, clutching tightly. Walking the streets at dusk, the citizen avoids eye contact with strangers. Such is life in a big city. And then, one morning, the front page of the daily newspaper announces that people are voluntarily contributing to the city. They are paying extra taxes and heeding the call to save water. Who are these altruistic citizens mentioned in the newspaper? Most likely, the citizen will still clutch her bag tightly on the bus. But perhaps she will look upon the Other, the unknown stranger, with new eyes – eyes that want to believe in the goodness of Others. Did *that* person pay extra taxes? Did *this*

young man next to me stop hoarding water and start saving? The citizen cannot know for certain, but she can believe heretofore that goodness is possible. Thus invitation works on two levels: the level of action, when the invitation is heeded and people act voluntarily for the public good, and the level of mediation, when acts of goodness become public and impact other citizens in unknown ways. Heeded invitations have the potential to inspire others, if they are well publicized. The first step, as was the case with Mockus, is to have faith in Others. Second, invite Others to act. If the Other heeds the invitation and acts in the desired way, pass to the third step, which is to publicize the altruistic action of Others and thus make it known to the general public.

Inviting the Other to act is a form of experiment: the experiment might succeed and it might also fail. It fails when the Other does not act, or acts in undesired ways, as is always a possible outcome with dialogic interventions. Yet we needn't publicize the results of a failed experiment. One can start anew, by designing a new invitation, one that might be accepted. We must also be aware that when an invitation goes unheeded, it may be our requests that need adjustment rather than the population we are addressing them to. The key is to find ways to help people collaborate, to meet them where they are, and to design interesting, open and potentially inspiring mechanisms to make *new action* possible.

What designers can take away from the Billionaires, Scenarios and Cultura Ciudadana interventions is the over-arching message that dialogic approaches can yield interesting results. Tools can enable new action. Fostering interaction and relation can lead to new collaborations and new action. Invitation can also lead to new action, which

when made visible via the media, can lead to increased faith in unknown Others, which is itself the basis of dialogic approaches to social change.

The three interventions discussed in this study function on a primary level and, potentially, on secondary levels. The Billionaires intervention restricted to only the New York City chapter would still be noteworthy. But the dialogic design of the Billionaires intervention, notably the web-based tools, led to the organic growth of the intervention to 70+ chapters. The Scenarios intervention, if it only involved contest, jury and film production components, all organized by a small, centralized staff, would still be a success, if measured only by the youth participation it generated. The dialogic design of the Scenarios intervention enabled the voluntary collaboration of hundreds of organizations that formed new relationships at dozens of Scenarios events, which in turn led to new collaborations and new action, which I was able to document in only a limited fashion. The Cultura Ciudadana intervention involved several approaches and the dialogic among them was the focus of this dissertation. I demonstrated that a city administration can achieve results with restrictive policies and sanctions, but that dialogic approaches lead to *voluntary* citizen action, and that this voluntary action can yield additional dividends when made public. Voluntary action, when made visible, can lead to a renewed faith in Others, which may inspire additional voluntary action.

A dialogic design does not yield outcomes that are easy to measure. How do you measure inspiration? What is the value of a good idea, taken up by others? What is the value of action itself, to those who act? In this dissertation we have nonetheless seen some “countable” outcomes.

We can count the increase in Billionaire chapters, the number of people involved in organizing the Scenarios intervention and the number of young people submitting scripts. We can count the number of people voluntarily paying extra taxes in Bogota and we can measure the decrease in water consumption over the span of the Cultura Ciudadana intervention. We can measure the reduction in homicides and traffic-related deaths in Bogota, although exact causality is much harder to determine.

But what about possible outcomes that are more difficult to measure? For instance, have Scenarios organizers collaborated on new projects or acted in new ways that I was not able to document during my time in Senegal? Have any of the Billionaires, beyond the ones I was able to speak with, continued to be politically active? Has the woman who learned of the altruistic actions of her fellow citizens begun having more faith in Others? And if so, what is result of her increased faith in Others? What is the value of these harder to measure outcomes?

On the issue of trust and faith in Others, Francis Fukuyama directs us to the bottom line; there are financial rewards for increased trust:

Social capital is a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society or in certain parts of it...If people who have to work together in an enterprise trust one another because they are all operating according to a common set of ethical norms, doing business costs less...The implications of differing endowments of social capital are potentially enormous for the global division of labor.⁴¹⁹

Trust, Fukuyama explains, makes doing business easier. He claims that the existence of trust at the society-level can be beneficial at the macro-economic level. More trusting

societies are able to create larger corporations which, he argues, allows for more innovation, greater diversification and more resources for marketing.

Supporting Fukuyama's argument that "trust is good for business," is Nobel prize-winning economist Kenneth Arrow. For Arrow, the value of trust is primarily social, but this social value, he argues, can be converted into economic value:

Now trust has a very important pragmatic value, if nothing else. Trust is an important lubricant of a social system. It is extremely efficient; it saves a lot of trouble to have a fair degree of reliance on other people's word.⁴²⁰

The economic value comes from the efficiency, and presumably the time, gained in being able to trust others rather than having to enter into bureaucratic contracts for each economic transaction. Trust, in this instance, provides freedom, which Arrow argues, enables the production of more goods or more of whatever values you hold in high esteem."⁴²¹ This last observation suggests that the freedom trust provides can be used for more than economic goods. Sociologist Niklas Luhmann concurs: "Where there is trust, there are increased possibilities for experience and action."⁴²² Trust frees us to act. An extreme form of absent trust is fear. When we fear, we stay inside. If we must go out, we do not talk to strangers on the street. We avoid eye contact. We clutch our bags tightly on the bus. We look at Others with suspicion and they resent our fear. Fear breeds resentment, while trust creates freedom. Luhman refers to trust as a "mechanism for the reduction of social complexity."⁴²³ In other words, trust not only frees, it simplifies. When we trust, we spend less time and energy worrying.

Putnam puts some qualifiers on the value of trust. He argues that trust loses value if not earned or reciprocated:

Social trust is a valuable community asset if - but only if – it is warranted. You and I will be better off if we are honest with one another than if – each fearing betrayal – we decline to cooperate...*Generalized reciprocity is a community asset, but generalized gullibility is not.* Trustworthiness, not simply trust, is the key ingredient⁴²⁴ (emphasis in the original).

I believe that Putnam is using polar opposites in order to make his point, which is that *relationships* are what lead to trust and are also the foundation of social capital. In my view, there is a lot distance on the continuum between trust and “generalized gullibility” I believe that we can learn to trust, especially if Others are given the opportunity to demonstrate their trustworthiness, which is where experiments come in.

My own experience with reciprocity leads me to want to err on the side of trust. I recall being nearly flattened on a New York City sidewalk by someone who I was getting ready to shout at.

“Oh my! I am terribly sorry,” the would-be flattener suddenly said, with an apologetic smile.

“It’s fine. I’m fine,” I replied, with a smile.

On a different day, a different street, I didn’t pause before shouting. Unsurprisingly, a shouting match ensued. I do not believe blind trust is always warranted or wise. But I do believe that acts of trust can be rewarded. And my discovery of the successful trust-based “experiments” of Antanas Mockus in Bogotá strengthened this conviction.

I also believe that the value of these unknown but possible outcomes depends on ones worldview. If you have faith in the creativity and agency of Others, even the *possible* has great value. Given that there are no recipes for social change and no

guarantees that it will occur, the possible has to suffice. A dialogic orientation toward the Other necessitates embracing the possible. We cannot know, absolutely, what is good for Others. We should not frighten people into adopting behaviors we deem beneficial or progressive or modern. We cannot develop Others nor can we empower them.

We can act. We can invite Others to join us, and we can hope to inspire. We can create tools, roles, events and invitations and hope Others find them useful. But if we commit to building a field of dreams, we might find ourselves alone. And maybe we will have learned how to build a better field, a more inviting field, or perhaps create a bicycle path instead, just to see what happens. I turn to William James when I need the courage to be wildly optimistic. His writing moves me and inspires me to dream. Recall that James described *meliorism* as the belief that a better world is neither impossible nor inevitable but rather *possible*. James describes a melioristic universe as having a destiny that hangs on an *if*, or on a lot of *ifs*. These “ifs” are the possible, they are, in *my* universe, the invited and hoped for action of the Other. In the universe of the possible, what is most important is doing ones best:

We can *create* the conclusion, then. We can and we may, as it were, jump with both feet off the ground into or towards a world of which we trust the other parts to meet our jump – and *only so* can the *making* of a perfected world of the pluralistic pattern ever take place. Only though our precursive trust in it can it come into being.⁴²⁵

The idea of jumping into the void, of acting and hoping Others join in, is one vision of how social change can be pursued. This vision of social change can be contrasted with

models of social change that are designed to be controllable, predictable and as a necessary prerequisite for implementation, measureable.

Dialogic social change can be compared with philosophically aligned models of social change that view Others as agents and decision makers. I believe that the participatory models espoused by the “Communication for Social Change Consortium” (and many others) are very similar to what I call *dialogic* models, at least in spirit if not always in execution. In saying this I acknowledge that interventions which are designed to be dialogic may not always succeed in garnering participation; in this sense dialogic social change differs from participatory models. At the same time, the goal of a dialogic intervention is to enable and invite *action* and *new action*, which I believe surpasses forms of participation when participation is limited to attendance or acting in prescribed ways within established, unchangeable interventions.

I believe that the Positive Deviance model of social change is another “kindred spirit” philosophically aligned with the dialogic approach I am espousing. Positive Deviance interventions position community members as agents and assets; as “indigenous sources of change.”⁴²⁶ This is quite different from “development” models that view community members as needing to be *developed*; as having a set of deficiencies that require external aid and expertise to correct.

I also acknowledge that I am not alone in promoting a “dialogic” approach. Nicholas Burbules has fruitfully applied dialogue in the realm of education.⁴²⁷ Sociologist Arthur Frank has called for dialogic approaches to research.⁴²⁸ In his book, *On Dialogue*, Physicist David Bohm describes at length the virtues of dialogue as a means for seeking harmony in situations of conflict.⁴²⁹ In the field of communication, scholars Ronald

Arnett, Robert Anderson and Kenneth Cissna have written extensively on dialogue and the creation and strengthening of community.⁴³⁰ With this dissertation, I aim to contribute to this rich, ongoing conversation on dialogue. To do this, I have applied the lens of dialogue to communication interventions on three different continents. I have explored these cases in an effort to identify how the designs of these interventions can inform future interventions. I aspire to affect practice by illustrating the process and outcome of three different social change interventions and by suggesting that the dialogic design of these interventions explains their generative nature - their ability to *make action possible*. I conclude this dissertation with a challenge in the form of a question: I ask social change practitioners to review their current interventions and ask themselves: "How can we render our designs more *dialogic*?" A dialogic design does not guarantee positive social change, but it does invite a greater and more diverse contribution to the effort.

Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approvals



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08E161

Office of Research Compliance
Research and Technology
Center 137
Athens OH 45701-2979

T: 740.593.0664
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www.research.ohio.edu

A determination has been made that the following research study is exempt from IRB review because it involves:

Category 2 - research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior

Project Title: Creative Communication

Project Director: Karen Greiner

Department: Communication Studies

Advisor: Devika Chawla

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robin Stack".

Robin Stack, C.I.P., Human Subjects Research Coordinator
Office of Research Compliance

Date

A handwritten date in blue ink that reads "7/11/08".

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as described in your application for review. Any additions or modifications to the project must be approved by the IRB (as an amendment) prior to implementation.



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A determination has been made that the following research study is exempt from IRB review because it involves:

Category 2 - research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior

Project Title: A Portrait of "Community Mobilization": The Case of Scenarios from Africa

Project Director: Karen Greiner

Department: School of Communication Studies

Advisor: Devika Chawla

Robin Stack

Robin Stack, C.I.P., Human Subjects Research Coordinator
Office of Research Compliance

10/22/07

Date

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as described in your application for review. Any additions or modifications to the project must be approved by the IRB (as an amendment) prior to implementation.

Notes

Introduction, 1-4

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- ⁷⁴ Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, 98.
- ⁷⁵ Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, 98.
- ⁷⁶ Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), 7.
- ⁷⁷ Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, 98.
- ⁷⁸ These biographical details are from Michael Holquist's introduction to Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 1981), xv-xxxiii.
- ⁷⁹ Caryl Emerson, Editor's Preface to Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxxi.
- ⁸⁰ Caryl Emerson, *Editor's Preface*, xxix.
- ⁸¹ Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogic Principle*, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 94.
- ⁸² This quote and the ones that follow come from Wayne Booth, Introduction to Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiv-xxv.
- ⁸³ Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World*. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 15.
- ⁸⁴ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 59.
- ⁸⁵ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 59, emphasis in the original.
- ⁸⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 63, emphasis in the original.
- ⁸⁷ For an overview of an evolution of reader-related literary criticism see Jane P. Tompkins, *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).
- ⁸⁸ Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980/2007), 1.
- ⁸⁹ Umberto Eco, *The Open Work* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 61.
- ⁹⁰ Eco, *The Open Work*, 82,
- ⁹¹ John Cage, *Silence* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), iv.
- ⁹² See the descriptions of "Simultaneous Dramaturgy, Image Theater and Invisible Theater in Agosto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed* (New York: Theater Communications Group, 1985), 132-147.
- ⁹³ Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed*, 134.
- ⁹⁴ An early reference can be found in the 1922 book by William Aubrey Darlington, *Through the Fourth Wall* (Freeport, N.Y., Books for Libraries Press, 1968).
- ⁹⁵ Donaldo Macedo, Introduction to Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (New York: Continuum, 1993), 11-26.
- ⁹⁶ Paulo Freire, *Letters to Cristina: Reflections on My Life and Work* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 13.
- ⁹⁷ Freire, *Letters to Cristina*, 13.
- ⁹⁸ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 35.
- ⁹⁹ Brenda Bell, John Gaventa and John Peters, Introduction to Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1990), xxvii.
- ¹⁰⁰ Bell, Gaventa and Peters, *Introduction*, xxviii.
- ¹⁰¹ On the misinterpretation of Freire's ideas only as methodology see Stanley Aronowitz, Introduction, Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 8.

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- ¹⁰² Paulo Freire, “A Response,” in *Mentoring the Mentor: A Critical Dialogue with Paulo Freire*, ed. [Paulo Freire, James W. Fraser, Donaldo Macedo, Tanya McKinnon](#) and [William T. Stokes](#) (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1997), 304.
- ¹⁰³ Stanley Aronowitz, Introduction, Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 18.
- ¹⁰⁴ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 90.
- ¹⁰⁵ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 90-91 (emphases in the original).
- ¹⁰⁶ Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 136; In this section on trust, Putnam makes reference to Wendy M. Rahn and John E. Transue, “Social Trust and Value Change: The Decline of Social Capital in American Youth, 1976-1995,” *Political Psychology* 19 (1998): 545-565.
- ¹⁰⁷ Francis Fukuyama, *Trust Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 30.
- ¹⁰⁸ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 91-92
- ¹⁰⁹ Remarks made by Paulo Freire in 1996 at the University of San Luis in Argentina, cited in Carlos Alberto Torres, “The Legacy of Paulo Freire,” in *Utopian Pedagogy: Radical Experiments Against Neoliberal Globalization*, ed. Mark Coté, Richard J.F. Day and Greig de Peuter (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 246.
- ¹¹⁰ Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom*, 69.
- ¹¹¹ William James, *Pragmatism* (New York: Barnes & Noble Inc., 2003), 126, emphasis added.
- ¹¹² William James, “Faith and the Right to Believe,” in *The Writings of William James* ed. John J. McDermott (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 739.
- ¹¹³ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 72-73.
- ¹¹⁴ For an overview of the principal theories and figures in the history of communication see Everett Rogers’s 1997 study *A History of Communication Study: A Biographical Approach* and the less recent overview, *Communication Research: A Half-Century Appraisal* (1977) edited by Daniel Lerner and Lyle M. Nelson.
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- ¹¹⁶ Melkote and Steeves, *Communication for Development*, 56.
- ¹¹⁷ Wilbur Schramm, *Mass Media and National Development: The Role of Information in the Developing Countries* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1964), 129.
- ¹¹⁸ Schramm, *Mass Media*, 131.
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- ¹²⁰ Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1958)
- ¹²¹ Collins Airhihenbuwa, *Health and Culture: Beyond the Western Paradigm* (Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications, 1995), 5.
- ¹²² Airhihenbuwa, *Health and Culture*, 12, 22.
- ¹²³ See Walt Whitman Rostow, “The Takeoff into Self-Sustained Growth,” in *Social Change*, ed. Amitai Etzioni and Eva Etzioni (New York: Basic Books, 1964), 285-300.
- ¹²⁴ Everett Rogers, “Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm,” *Communication Research* 3.2 (1976): 217.
- ¹²⁵ Rogers, “Communication and Development,” 217-218..
- ¹²⁶ Rogers, “Communication and Development,” 233.
- ¹²⁷ The MacBride Commission, *Many Voices One World: Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World information and Communication Order* (Paris. Unesco, 1980), xviii.
- ¹²⁸ MacBride Commission, *Many Voices, One World*, 36-37.
- ¹²⁹ MacBride Commission, *Many Voices, One World*, 36.
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- ¹³¹ Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, *Para Leer al Pato Donald: Comunicacion de Masa y Colonialismo*, 34th Edition (Mexico, DF: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1998), 7.

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- ¹³³ Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997), 171. For coverage of Chavez's gift see Andrew Clark, "Chávez Creates Overnight Bestseller with Book Gift to Obama," *The Guardian* (April 19, 2009). <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/apr/19/obama-chavez-book-gift-latin-america>
- ¹³⁴ Luis Ramiro Beltrán,. *Investigación Sobre Comunicación En Latinoamérica: Inicio, Trascendencia y Proyección* (La Paz: Universidad Católica Boliviana, 2000), 38.
- ¹³⁵ Thomas Jacobson, "Conclusion: Prospects for Theoretical Development," in *Participatory Communication for Social Change*, ed. Jan Servaes, Thomas Jacobson and Shirley White (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), 269.
- ¹³⁶ Jacobson, "Conclusion," 268.
- ¹³⁷ Jesús. Martín Barbero, *De Los Medios a Las Mediaciones* (Bogota: Convenio Andres Bello, 2003), 287.
- ¹³⁸ Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron,. *Making Waves: Stories of Participatory Communication for Social Change* (New York: The Rockefeller Foundation, 2001), 7-9.
- ¹³⁹ Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1994), 215.
- ¹⁴⁰ Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 217.
- ¹⁴¹ For example, see Michael J. Papa, Arvind Singhal, and Wendy H. Papa, *Organizing for Social Change: A Dialectic Journey of Theory and Praxis* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 109-148.
- ¹⁴² Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 55.
- ¹⁴³ Young, *Postcolonialism*, 56.
- ¹⁴⁴ Denise Gray-Felder and James Deane. *Communication for Social Change: A Position Paper and Conference Report*. (New York: Rockefeller Foundation, 1999), 2. See <http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/pdf/positionpaper.pdf>
- ¹⁴⁵ Gray-Felder and Deane, *Communication for Social Change*, 6.
- ¹⁴⁶ Gray-Felder and Deane, *Communication for Social Change*, 4.
- ¹⁴⁷ Gray-Felder and Deane, *Communication for Social Change*, 7.
- ¹⁴⁸ Robert Chambers, *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last* (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1999), 9.
- ¹⁴⁹ Chambers, *Putting the Last First*, 11.
- ¹⁵⁰ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 71.
- ¹⁵¹ Robert Chambers, "Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA): Analysis of Experience," *World Development* 22.9: 1994, 1263.
- ¹⁵² Albert Bandura, "Social Cognitive Theory: An Agentic Perspective," *Annual Review of Psychology* 52.1 (2001), 2.
- ¹⁵³ Uma Kothari, "Power, Knowledge and Social Control in Participatory Development," in *Participation: The New Tyranny?* ed. Bill Cook and Uma Kothari (London: Zed Books, 2001), 143.
- ¹⁵⁴ Kothari, "Power, Knowledge and Social Control," 143.
- ¹⁵⁵ Sherry Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," *Journal of American Planners* 35.4 (1969): 217.
- ¹⁵⁶ Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 318.
- ¹⁵⁷ Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 401.

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- ¹⁵⁸ What follows is an illustrative anecdote - a plausible composite - based on interviews, reviewed articles and materials on the Billionaire website.
- ¹⁵⁹ Republican National Convention activities leaflet, downloaded from the Billionaires for Bush website, www.billionairesforbush.com, see also St. Petersburg Times coverage of the event, Robert Trigaux, "Satire in the Streets," St. Petersburg Times, (August 31, 2004), http://www.sptimes.com/2004/08/31/news_pf/Columns/Satire_in_the_streets.shtml

¹⁶⁰ In total, 1,781 “protesters” were arrested during the RNC. I put “protesters” in quotes because many of the arrests were contested in court. See Jim Dwyer, “City Arrest Tactics, Used on Protesters, Face Test in Court,” *New York Times*, September, 17, 2004, Late edition, A1.

¹⁶¹ Be a Billionaire! The Official Billionaires for Bush Do-It-Yourself Manual, 2004, 22. See http://billionairesforbush.com/diy_v1_contents.php.

¹⁶² Nancy Solomon, “Billionaires’ and Grannies Bring Humor to Protests,” *NPR Republican Convention: Diary from New York, August 29, 2004*. Accessed Jan. 5, 2010, <http://www.npr.org/politics/convention2004/diary.html>; Richard Avedon, Democracy 2004, *The New Yorker*, November 1, 2004. See http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/11/01/slideshow_041101#slide=14

¹⁶³ I interviewed Boyd on November 6, 2006 and July 15, 2008 and corresponded via email between these dates.

¹⁶⁴ Session held on July 15, 2008 at the New York offices of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

¹⁶⁵ This book has not yet been published, but Haguerud suggested I read two of her articles, which I cite below in note 17.

¹⁶⁶ We began corresponding via email in October, 2006 and continued on and off through June 2008. Phone interview: June 21, 2008.

¹⁶⁷ For an in-depth examination of the Kabouters and their predecessors the Provos, see Larry Bogad, *Electoral Guerrilla Theater* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 43-120.

¹⁶⁸ Phone interview with Marco Ceglie, March 13, 2009.

¹⁶⁹ Phone interview with Megan Kiefer, March 12, 2009. Her 2006 documentary, *Get on the Limo*, was selected for screening at the Bergen and Memphis International Film Festivals and was purchased by the Documentary Film Channel in 2007.

¹⁷⁰ Ivan Brady, “Poetics for a Planet: Discourse on Some Problems of Being-in-Place,” in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research 3rd Edition*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonne S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2000), 1006, n8.

¹⁷¹ Brady, “Poetics for a Planet,” n8.

¹⁷² Billionaires for Bush, *Be a Billionaire Manual*, (Unpublished, 2004), 4, accessed from the Billionaire website: http://billionairesforbush.com/diy_v1_contents.php; See also Andrew Boyd, “Truth is a Virus: Meme Warfare and the Billionaires for Bush (or Gore),” in *Cultural Resistance Reader*, ed. Stephen Duncombe (London: Verso, 2002), 370.

¹⁷³ See: <http://www.billionairesforbush.com/press.php>

¹⁷⁴ See Boyd, “Truth is a Virus: Meme Warfare and the Billionaires for Bush (or Gore),” in *The Cultural Resistance Reader*, ed. Steven Duncombe (London: Verso, 2002), 369-379; Andrew Boyd, “Irony, Meme Warfare and the Extreme Costume Ball,” in *From ACT UP to the WTO: Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization*, ed. Benjamin Shepard and Ronald Hayduk (London: Verso, 2002); 245-254.

¹⁷⁵ Angelique Haugerud, “The Art of Protest,” *Anthropology News* 45.8 (2004), 4-5; Angelique Haugerud, “Leave No Billionaire Behind: Political Dissent as Performance Parody,” *Princeton Report on Knowledge* 1.1 (2005), unpaginated; Angelique Haugerud, “Neoliberalism, Satirical Protest, and the 2004 U.S. Presidential Campaign,” in *Ethnographies of Neoliberalism*, ed. Carol G. Greenhouse (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 112-127; Stephen Duncombe, *Dream: Re-imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy* (New York: The New Press, 2007); 43-47; Margaret E. Farrar and Jamie L. Warner “Spectacular Resistance: The Billionaires for Bush and the Art of Political Culture Jamming,” *Polity* 40.3 (2008), 273-296; Larry Bogad, “A Place for Protest: The Billionaires for Bush Interrupt the Hegemonologue” *Performance and Place*, ed. Leslie Hill and Helen Paris (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 170-178.

¹⁷⁶ Michael Slackman and Colin Moynihan, “Now in Previews, Political Theater in the Street,” *New York Times*, February 19, 2004, Late edition, A18; Michael Slackman, “To Greet G.O.P., Protests of Varying Volume,” *New York Times*, February 24, 2004, Late edition, B1; Clyde Haberman, “Dressed to the nines for the 1040.” *New York Times*, August 16, 2004, B1; Clyde Haberman, “In Defense of Privilege, With a Wink,” *New York Times*, November 9, 2004, B1; Jim Dwyer, “Is Satire in a Slump? Yes and No,” *New*

York Times, February 16, 2008, B1; Clyde Haberman, “Bush’s Exit Leaves Satire at Wit’s End.” *New York Times*, February 17, 2009, A27.

¹⁷⁷ For examples of Billionaires’ press releases, see the “sample materials” section of the “Billionaires for Bush Do it Yourself Manual,” http://billionairesforbush.com/diy_v1_ch5.php

¹⁷⁸ Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 30th anniversary edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 192.

¹⁷⁹ Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 192.

¹⁸⁰ Bryant Keith Alexander, “Skin Flint (rr, The Garbage Man’s Kid): A Generative Autobiographical Performance Based on Tami Spri’s *Tatoo Stories*,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 20.1 (2000); 98; see also Noam Chomsky, *Topics in the Theory of Generative Grammar* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966).

¹⁸¹ Alexander, “Skin Flint,” 101.

¹⁸² Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1988), 42.

¹⁸³ David Davies, *Art as Performance* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 83.

¹⁸⁴ Abbie Hoffman, *Steal this Book* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2002); Jerry Rubin *Do it: Scenarios of the Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970).

¹⁸⁵ See Douglas Crimp and Adam Rolston. *AIDS DemoGraphics*, Seattle: Bay Press, 1990.); and Richard Meyer, *Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 265-270.

¹⁸⁶ George McKay, *DiY Culture: Party & Protest in Nineties Britain* (London, Verso, 1998).

¹⁸⁷ See Rachel Kutz- Flamenbaum, “Code Pink, Raging Grannies, and the Missile Dick Chicks: Feminist Performance Activism in the Contemporary Anti-War Movement,” *NWSA Journal* 19.1 (2007), 89-105; and re CIRCA, Benjamin Shepard, L. M. Bogad, & Stephen Duncombe, “Performing vs. the Insurmountable: Theatrics, Activism, and Social Movements,” *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 4.3 (2008), 1-30.

¹⁸⁸ The Yes Men, *The Yes Men: The True Story of the End of the World Trade Organization* (New York: The Disinformation Company, 2004), 7.

¹⁸⁹ Maria Hynes, Scott Sharp and Bob Fagan, “Laughing with the Yes Men: the Politics of Affirmation,” *Continuum* 21.1 (2007), 115; The Yes Men, *The Yes Men*, 11.

¹⁹⁰ Boyd, “Truth is a Virus,” 370.

¹⁹¹ Douglas Rushkoff, *Media Virus: Hidden Agendas in Popular Culture* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996), 10; Boyd, “Truth is a Virus, 431 n3.

¹⁹² Rushkoff, *Media Virus*, 9; “Be a Billionaire!” manual, 20.

¹⁹³ Boyd, “Truth is a Virus,” 370.

¹⁹⁴ Boyd, “Truth is a Virus,” 371-372.

¹⁹⁵ Boyd, “Irony, Meme Warfare and the Extreme Costume Ball,” 253.

¹⁹⁶ Boyd, “Truth is a Virus,” 373.

¹⁹⁷ Boyd, “Truth is a Virus,” 372.

¹⁹⁸ Phone interview with Marco Ceglie, March 13, 2009.

¹⁹⁹ Slackman and Moynihan, “Now in Previews,” A18.

²⁰⁰ Phone interview with Megan Kiefer, March 12, 2009.

²⁰¹ Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 401.

²⁰² Phone interview with Megan Kiefer, March 12, 2009.

²⁰³ The film can be seen on The Documentary Channel and is available for purchase on the Billionaires website and Amazon.com

²⁰⁴ Phone interview with Megan Kiefer, March 12, 2009.

²⁰⁵ This aspect was elaborated upon by Marco Ceglie during our phone interview, March 13, 2009.

²⁰⁶ Andrew Boyd, “Truth is a Virus,” 373, with attribution clarified during a personal interview, November 6, 2006.

²⁰⁷ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), 101.

²⁰⁸ Boyd, “Irony, Meme Warfare and the Extreme Costume Ball,” 253.

²⁰⁹ Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin. *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), viii.

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- ²¹⁰ Bolter and Grusin. *Remediation*, 45.
- ²¹¹ Bolter and Grusin. *Remediation*, 45.
- ²¹² See <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines04/0219-01.htm>
- ²¹³ Bloomberg's decision was later the subject of civil litigation. See Diane Cardwell, "In Court Papers, a Political Note on '04 Protests," *New York Times*, July 31, 2006, B1.
- ²¹⁴ Billionaires for Bush Press Release, August 24, 2004. See http://billionairesforbush.com/release_082404.php
- ²¹⁵ Robin Givhan, "Electoral Collage: The Politics of Protest Makes for Some Strange Bedfellows, Too" *The Washington Post*, August 31, 2004, Style, C1; James Bone, "Bush Protesters Bring Carnival to New York Streets," *The Times* (London), September 3, 2004, overseas news, 18; Michael Powell and Dale Russakoff, "200,000 in N.Y. Protest Bush: President and GOP Convention Unwelcome, Demonstrators Say," *The Washington Post*, August 30, 2004, A01 and Johann Hari, "Why Would a Wal-Mart Shelf Stacker Vote Republication? The Most Enthusiastic Bushies are not Preppy College Kids but Poor," *The Independent* (London), September 3, 2004, 39; Andy Newman, "Park Grass Survives, Unsmoked and Mildly Trodden," *The New York Times*, August 30, 2004, P14.
- ²¹⁶ "Be a Billionaire!" manual, 12.
- ²¹⁷ "Be a Billionaire!" manual, 5.
- ²¹⁸ Phone interview with Megan Kiefer, March 12, 2009.
- ²¹⁹ Boyd, "Irony, Meme Warfare and the Extreme Costume Ball," 253.
- ²²⁰ Phone interview with Marco Ceglie, March 13, 2009.
- ²²¹ Phone interview with Marco Ceglie, March 13, 2009; www.billionaires.org is an "offshoot" website created by the Los Angeles Billionaire chapter.
- ²²² Boyd, "Truth is a Virus," 374; also mentioned by Ceglie, phone interview, March 13, 2009.
- ²²³ Personal interview with Andrew Boyd, November 6, 2006'; see also McKay, *DiY Culture*, 11.
- ²²⁴ Lee Leffler, "'Billionaires for Bush' Celebrate Tax Day," *The Modern Tribune*, April 16, 2004; see http://www.themoderntribune.com/billionaires_for_bush_celebrate_tax_day.htm
- ²²⁵ From the "About the Billionaires" section of the website: <http://billionairesforbush.com/overview.php>
- ²²⁶ Phone interview with Marco Ceglie, March 13, 2009.
- ²²⁷ Boyd, "Truth is a Virus," 378; Boyd, "Irony, Meme Warfare and the Extreme Costume Ball," 253.
- ²²⁸ Rushkoff, *Media Virus*; Boyd, "Truth is a Virus,"; Boyd, "Irony, Meme Warfare and the Extreme Costume Ball."
- ²²⁹ There is, however, a Yes Man book ("The Yes Men: The True Story of the End of the World Trade Organization") as well as a documentary on DVD (The Yes Men: Changing the World One Prank at a Time.)
- ²³⁰ One social activism scholar reports a growth from 25 members present at a rally in 2001 to 11,000 two months later (Kutz-Flamenbaum, 2007: 101).
- ²³¹ The presumed national website, <http://www.codepinkalert.org/>, is currently inactive.
- ²³² Personal interview with Andrew Boyd, November 6, 2006.
- ²³³ Benjamin Shepard, L.M. Bogad and Stephen Duncombe, "Performing vs. the Insurmountable: Theatrics, Activism and Social Movements," *Liminalities* 4.3 (2008), 3-4.
- ²³⁴ Jason Jeffers, "A Tale of Two Protests," *Miami Sun Post*, September 8, 2007. [Note: this newspaper is now defunct and the article is inaccessible. I have cited this article from a printout I made of the unpaginated online version of the article.]
- ²³⁵ Duncombe, *Dream*, 68-69.
- ²³⁶ See the video of the Billionaires October 23, 2009 coverage by Rachel Maddow on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=troDD8VMxg> and the Billionaires reference to this coverage in the Press section of their new website: www. Billionairesforwealthcare.com <http://www.billionairesforwealthcare.com/2009/10/23/the-public-options-rising-tide/>
- ²³⁷ John Schwartz, "When Your Country Calls, Spend Wildly," *Business*, January 10, 2010, 13; Ted Johnson, Biz Activists Tread Lightly," *Variety*, November 2-November 9, 2009, News, 1.
- ²³⁸ Mary O'Hara, "Raging Grannies Light up the Age with Rage," *The Guardian*, January 13, 2010. See: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/joepublic/2010/jan/13/raging-grannies-older-people-activism>

²³⁹ Marcyrose Chvasta, “Anger, Irony, and Protest: Confronting the Issue of Efficacy, Again,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26.1 (2006) 13.

²⁴⁰ Chvasta, “Anger, Irony and Protest,” 12.

²⁴¹ Robert Weisberg, *The Limits of Civic Activism: Cautionary Tales on the Use of Politics* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2005), 251.

²⁴² Phone interview with Megan Kiefer, March 12, 2009.

²⁴³ Nanette Asimov, “Students Sharpen Attack on UC Costs with Satire,” *San Francisco Chronicle*,

February 16, 2010. See <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=c/a/2010/02/15/BA6A1BUGLU.DTL>

²⁴⁴“Using Humor to Criticize U. of California Leaders,” *Inside Higher Ed*, February 17, 2010. See: <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/02/17/qt#220439>

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²⁴⁵ This account is based on my field notes from the first Scenarios from Africa meeting I attended, December 1, 2007, at the ACI office in Dakar.

²⁴⁶ Reasons for a Smile, DVD, directed by Fanta Nacro (Scenarios from Africa, 2006); See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1s1LMHPu6_M&feature=channel

²⁴⁷ Contest leaflet for 2007-2008 contest edition.

²⁴⁸ I was working for Chemonics International, and our Dakar-based project, Dyna-Entreprise, had taken the initiative to partner with Scenarios from Africa, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

²⁴⁹ Kate Winskell and Daniel Enger, “Young Voices Travel Far: a case study of *Scenarios from Africa*,” in *Media & Glocal Change Rethinking Communication for Development*, ed. Oscar Hemer and Thomas Tufte (Buenos Aires: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales/CLASCO, 2005), 403-416.

²⁵⁰ This information is from the Scenarios from Africa website, “Film Distribution” page. See: <http://www.globaldialogues.org/Distribution.htm>

²⁵¹ I am fluent in French and speak Wolof well enough to establish rapport and get a conversation going.

²⁵² I used “Smart Network Analyzer Network Mapping Software” which was developed by Valdis Krebs. This software is not commercially available and I thank “network weaver” June Holley of Athens Ohio for sharing it with me and instructing me on its use.

²⁵³ Personal interview with El Hadj Malick Seck, December 7, 2007.

²⁵⁴ Margarethe Kusenbach, “Street Phenomenology: The Go Along as Ethnographic Research Tool,” *Ethnography* 4 (2003): 463.

²⁵⁵ GTZ is the acronym for Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, the international development agency of the German government.

²⁵⁶ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 20; Cited in Harry Wolcott, *Writing up Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2001),

²⁵⁷ M. Mitchell Waldrop, *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Chaos or Disorder* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 145.

²⁵⁸ Ilya Prigogine, *Order out of Chaos* (New York: Bantam, 1985); see also Waldrop, *Complexity*, 1992, 32.

²⁵⁹ Kenneth Arrow, “Functions of a theory of behaviour under uncertainty,” *Metroeconomica* 11 (1959):12-20; see also Philip Anderson, Philip, Kenneth J. Arrow and David Pines, ed., *The Economy as an Evolving Complex System*. (Redwood City California, Addison Wesley, 1988).

²⁶⁰ Murray Gell-Mann, *The Quark and the Jaguar: Adventures in the Simple and the Complex* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994).

²⁶¹ What follows is meant as a representative, not exhaustive, list: Ben Ramalingam, Harry Jones, Toussaint Reba and John Young, “Exploring the Science of Complexity: Ideas and Implications for Development and Humanitarian Efforts,” unpublished report (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2008); see <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/583.pdf>; Sholom Glouberman and Brenda Zimmerman,

“Complicated and Complex Systems: What Would Successful Reform of Medicare Look Like?”

(Commission on the Future of Healthcare in Canada, 2002); see http://www.changeability.ca/Health_Care_Commission_DP8.pdf; Thomas Scalway, “Technical Update On Social Change

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- Communication" (Geneva: UNAIDS, 2009) , unpublished report; Ralph D. Stacey, *Complexity and Creativity in Organizations* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1996)
- ²⁶² Sholom Glouberman and Brenda Zimmerman, "Complicated and Complex Systems: What Would Successful Reform of Medicare Look Like?" (Commission on the Future of Healthcare in Canada, 2002), 2.
- ²⁶³ Other donors and sponsors include: UK National Lottery's Charity Board, the Pfizer Foundation, Futures Group International (Mali), PLAN International (Senegal), Peace Corps/USAID (USA) and the World Health Organization, Swatch (Switzerland), Rainbow of California (USA), CRIPS, Newcastle Sporting Club (UK), the Edward Thompson Group (UK), PLAN/Burkina Faso, Groupe Accor, Air France, DHL International, Radio France Internationale (RFI), TV5Monde and Africa Consultants International (Winskill & Enger, 1999: 12; personal interviews with K. Winsell and D. Enger, Nov., 2007).
- ²⁶⁴ Winskill and Enger, "Young Voices," 450 n5.
- ²⁶⁵ Global Dialogues, "Contest Participation, 1997-2008," internal document (Global Dialogues, 2008).
- ²⁶⁶ Phone interview, Kate Winskill, November 2, 2007. The project, originally titled in French "3,000 Scenarios Contre un Virus," was implemented by the French government via the regional HIV/AIDS information and prevention center, "Centre Régional d'Information et de Prévention du Sida" (CRIPS).
- ²⁶⁷ The ABC approach has been used extensively in HIV/AIDS prevention and has also been widely criticized. See Sylvie Cohen, "Beyond Slogans: Lessons From Uganda's Experience With ABC and HIV/AIDS," *The Guttmacher Report on Public Policy*, (November, 2003): 1-3; see also Shanti A. Parikh, "The Political Economy of Marriage and HIV: The ABC Approach, "Safe" Infidelity, and Managing Moral Risk in Uganda," *American Journal of Public Health* 97.7 (2007): 1198-1208
- ²⁶⁸ Dana Rudelic-Fernandez, *Jeunes, Sida et Langage* (Paris: Harmattan. 1997).
- ²⁶⁹ For an extended discussion of one "asset-based" approach called "positive deviance" see: Richard Tanner Pascale and Jerry Sternin, "Your Company's Secret Change Agents." *Harvard Business Review* (May 2005)73-81.
- ²⁷⁰ Karen Greiner, "Participatory communication processes as 'infusions of innovation': The case of Scenarios from Africa," In *Teens Engaging with the World: Media, Communication and Social Change*. (Gothenburg, Sweden: NORDICOM, 2009), 267-282; See also Karen Greiner and Arvind Singhal, "Communication and Invitational Social Change" *Journal of Development Communication* 20.2 (2009), 31-44.
- ²⁷¹ McLeroy et al., "Community-based interventions," 530.
- ²⁷² McLeroy et al., "Community-based Interventions," 530.
- ²⁷³ McLeroy et al., "Community-based Interventions," 530.
- ²⁷⁴ McLeroy et al., "Community-based Interventions," 530.
- ²⁷⁵ Collins O. Airihenbuwa and Rafael Obregon, "A Critical Assessment of Theories/Models Used in Health Communication for HIV/AIDS," *Journal of Health Communication* 5 (2000), 10.
- ²⁷⁶ Personal interview with Dan Enger, November 25, 2007.
- ²⁷⁷ Personal interview with Dan Enger, November 25, 2007.
- ²⁷⁸ Waldrop, *Complexity*, 147.
- ²⁷⁹ Waldrop, Complexity, 147. Waldrop is paraphrasing an explanation of CAS given John H. Holland, of the University of Michigan, at a conference at the Santa Fe institute in September, 1987. The title of Holland's presentation was :"The Global Economy as an Adaptive Process."
- ²⁸⁰ "Scenarios 2002 full contest report," internal document (Global Dialogues, 2002), 34.
- ²⁸¹ Waldrop, *Complexity*, 145.
- ²⁸² Edgar Morin, Method: Towards a Study of Humankind, Volume I (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1992), 103, 113-114.
- ²⁸³ RASFEMS is an acronym for "Reseau de Assistance et Suivie de Filles dans le Enseignement Moyenne et Secondaire."
- ²⁸⁴ Personal interview with Dan Enger, November 25, 2007.
- ²⁸⁵ Personal interview with Aboulaye Konate, December 10, 2007; This point was reinforced in another interview with Gary Engelberg, December 10, 2007.

²⁸⁶ Edgar Morin, “On the Definition of Complexity” in *The Science and Praxis of Complexity: Contributions to the Symposium held at Montpellier, France, 9-11 May, 1984*, ed. Shuhe Aida (New York: The United Nations University, 1985), 65-66.

Chapter 4, 145-196

²⁸⁷ The following description is “plausible fiction,” a story I have invented based on a composite of documented events with minor fictional details, such as Mockus’s conversations and thoughts. .

²⁸⁸ “Día 26: Padre de Soldado Secuestrado que Camina por la Libertad Cruzó de Pereira a Armenia,” *El Tiempo*, July 14, 2007. See: <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-3638433>

²⁸⁹ I am happy to report that Sergeant Pablo Emilio Moncayo was released by the FARC on Tuesday, March 30, 2010. See “Colombian Rebels Free Soldier Held for 12 Years, The New York Times (March 30, 2010), accessed Apr. 2 http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2010/03/30/world/AP-LT-Colombia-Hostages.html?_r=1&ref=world

²⁹⁰ “Wanda: No More Hate Killings!” Procrear Foundation Website, http://fundacionprocrear.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogsection&id=39&Itemid=81

²⁹¹ *Colombia’s New Armed Groups*, 6.

²⁹² The period of “La Violencia” is reported with slight differences depending on the source. Forrest Hylton lists 1946-1957. Forrest Hylton *Evil hour in Colombia*. (New York: Verso, 2006), 39.

and Marco Palacios lists the period as 1948-1958, coinciding with the official state of siege. Marco Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, (2006): 170.

²⁹³ Marco Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006): 13; Reinhard Skinner, “City Profile: Bogotá.” *Cities* 21 (2004): 73.

²⁹⁴ For recent scholarship on this topic see Craigin & Hoffman (2003), Coghlan (2004), Dudley (2004), Rojas & Meltzer, Coghlan (2004) and Hylton (2006).

²⁹⁵ Kim Craigin Bruce Hoffman, *Arms Trafficking in Colombia*. (RAND National Defense Institute, 2003); p. 8. Accessed on 2/10/08 from http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1468/MR1468.pdf.

²⁹⁶ Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas (FARC), Ejercito de Liberación Nacional (ELN) and Ejercito Popular de Liberación (EPL). Greater detail on these groups can be found in Nazih Richani, “The Political Economy of Violence: The War-System in Colombia,” *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 39.2 (1997), 37-81 (1997) and Norman Offstein, “An Historical Review and Analysis of Colombian Guerilla Movements: FARC, ELN and EPL,” *Desarrollo y Sociedad* 52, (2003): 99-142.

²⁹⁷ The “United Self-Defense of Colombia” (Auto-defensas Unidas de Colombia, or AUC) is the largest of the para-military groups, numbering 12,000 members in 2002. See: International Crisis Group, *Colombia’s New Armed Groups: Latin American Report No. 20*, (2007): 4.

²⁹⁸ Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*; Forrest Hylton, *Evil Hour in Colombia*. (New York: Verso, 2006); International Crisis Group, *Colombia’s New Armed Groups*, Latin America Report N°20, May 10, 2007, 5.

²⁹⁹ Nazih Richlani, “The Political Economy of Violence: The War-System in Colombia.” *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 39, 1997): 37-81.

³⁰⁰ John C. Dugas, “The Origin, Impact and Demise of the 1989-1990 Colombian Student Movement: Insights from Social Movement Theory.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 33 (2001): 808; Palacios, *Between Legitimacy and Violence*, 212.

³⁰¹ Most notably, Carlos Pizarro, Luis Carlos Galán and Bernardo Jaramillo, during the 1990 presidential election. See Ana María Bejarano and Eduardo Pizarro, “From ‘Restricted’ to ‘Besieged’: The Changing Nature of the Limits to Democracy in Colombia,” in *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America: Advances and Setbacks*, ed. Frances Hagopian and Scott P. Mainwaring, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 257, n36.

³⁰² Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *News of a Kidnapping*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), 130.

³⁰³ Garcia Marquez, *News of a Kidnapping*, 178.

³⁰⁴ Garcia Marquez, *News of a Kidnapping*, 178.

³⁰⁵ “Los Pactos Siniestros de Chaux,” *El Espectador*, May 21, 2009, 5; Jorge Ivan Cuero, “El Estado Contra Los Jovenes,” *El Espectador*, November 14, 2008, 30; Gustavo Duncan, “De Nuevo los Falsos Positivos,” *El Espectador*, January 21, 2009, 20.

³⁰⁶ John William Montaño, “Investigan posible presencia de seis militares en atraco,” *El Tiempo*, November 24, 2008, 1-15.

³⁰⁷ An example of this is a short article, appearing in a small text box in the newspaper *El Tiempo* noting the issuance of an arrest warrant for Oscar López Cadavid, a regional governor who had purchased a farm a paramilitary leader who had obtained it by force from a farmer (March 17, 2009, 4).

³⁰⁸ Ismael Ortiz, “Changing Social Behavior: Public Policies in Bogotá Colombia, 1995-2003.” (Bogotá, Colombia: Urban Observatory, Alcalde Mayor: 2003).

³⁰⁹ Arturo Ardila-Gómez, “Bogotá,” *ReVista Harvard Review of Latin America*, Winter 2003.

<http://www.drclas.harvard.edu/revista/articles/view/561>

³¹⁰ In 1997 Mockus resigned as Mayor and became a candidate for the presidential elections, which he did not win. He assigned as his successor Dr. Paul Bromberg, a Professor at the National University, who governed for the final year of the administration.

³¹¹ See: Lariza Pizano Rojas, “Reflexiones Sobre Las Decisiones Electorales de los Bogotanos,” *Analisis Politico* 45, January/April 2002, 44; Cristina Rojas, “Forging Civic Culture in Bogotá,” paper presentation, *Citizen Participation In the Context of Fiscal Decentralization Conference*, Kobe, Japan, September 5, 2002.

www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2002/Citizen.../Colombia.pdf; Reinhard Skinner, “City Profile: Bogotá,” *Cities* 21, (2004): 74; Rocio Londoño, La Cultura Ciudadana como Estrategia Integral para Fortalecer la Convivencia Urbana: Las Experiencias de Bogotá,” *Urbe et Lus* 3 (2005): 47-60;

Doris Sommer, *Cultural Agency in the Americas*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Jon Cohen, “Calming Traffic on Bogotá’s Killing Streets,” *Science*, February 8, 2008, 742.

³¹² Lariza Pizano Rojas, *Bogotá y el Cambio: Percepciones Sobre la Ciudad y la Ciudadania*. (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2003); Charles Montgomery “Bogotá’s Urban Happiness Movement,” *Globe & Mail*, June 25, 2007 <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/article766908.ece>; Javier Sáenz Obregón, *Desconfianza, Civilidad y Estética: Las Prácticas Formativas Estatales por Fuera de la Escuela en Bogotá, 1994-2003*. Bogotá: Centro de Estudios Sociales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2007; Oscar Pocasangre, “‘Super-Mayors’ in Bogotá: From Anarchy and Violence to Civic Respect, the Legacy of Bogotá’s Most Eccentric Mayors,” *The Yale Globalist*, December 13, 2007.

Thursday, 13 December 2007.

³¹³ Invest in Bogotá, accessed 12/1/08. <http://www.investinbogota.org/english/index.php?m=nodo/37>

³¹⁴ Sonja K. Foss and Cindy L. Griffin, Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric,” *Communication Monographs* 2 (1995): 2-18.

³¹⁵ Gregory Shepherd, “Communication as Influence,” Definitional Exclusion,” *Communication Studies* 43 (1992), 204-206.

³¹⁶ Foss and Griffin, “*Beyond Persuasion*,” 5.

³¹⁷ Foss and Griffin, “*Beyond Persuasion*,” 5.

³¹⁸ Liliana Lopez Borbon, “Políticas Culturales Orientadas al Plano de la Vida Cotidiana: Evaluación de las Estrategias de Comunicación del Programa de Cultural Ciudadana.” (Bogotá: Informe final del concurso: Programa Regional de Becas CLACSO, 2001)

<http://bibliotecavirtual.clacso.org.ar/ar/libros/becas/2000/lopez.pdf>; Rojas puts the figure at \$10,000. See Cristina Rojas, “Forging Civic Culture in Bogotá,” paper presentation, *Citizen Participation In the Context of Fiscal Decentralization Conference*, Kobe, Japan, September 5, 2002, 8.

³¹⁹ Semana “La Hora de los Antipolíticos,” November 21, 1994.

http://www.semana.com/wf_imprimirarticulo.aspx?idart=54977

³²⁰ Antanas Mockus: *Civisme Contre Cynisme*, DVD, directed by Aubin Hellot and Lizette Lemoine (Paris: l’Harmattan video, 2006).

³²¹ Antanas Mockus. “Bogotá, Para Vivir 2001-2003.” (Alcalde Mayor de Bogotá, 2004), 59. See also: Antanas Mockus, “Convivencia como Armonización de Ley, Moral y Cultura,” *Perpectivas* 32 (2002): 24.

³²² Antanas Mockus, “Políticas de Redefinición del Espacio Público: Construcción del Sentido de lo Público e Innovación Urbana,” in *Redefinición del Espacio Público: Eslabonamiento Conceptual y*

Seguimiento de las Políticas Públicas en Colombia, eds. Gabriel Murillo and Victoria Gomez, (Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad de Los Andes, 2005): 40.

³²³ Antanas Mockus, “Armonizar Ley, Moral y Cultura: Cultura Ciudadana, Prioridad de Gobierno con Resultados en Prevención y Control de Violencia en Bogotá, 1995-1997.” (Report written for the Inter-American Development Bank for the Conference on Municipal Programs to Prevent Violence. 1999): 11. <http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=362225>

³²⁴ Ibid., 60. In Spanish, the definition reads: “El conjunto de costumbres, acciones y reglas mínimas compartidas que generan sentido de pertenencia, facilitan la convivencia urbana y conducen al respeto del patrimonio común y al reconocimiento de los derechos y deberes ciudadanos.” Translation by the author.

³²⁵ Antanas Mockus, “Anfibios Culturales y Divorcio Entre Ley, Moral y Cultura, *Análisis Político* 21 (1994): 37-48, <http://www.lablaa.org/blaavirtual/revistas/analisispolitico/ap21.pdf>

³²⁶ Mockus, Anfibios Culturales, 4.

³²⁷ The original Spanish term “Divorcio” would be more faithfully translated as “divorce,” but I have chosen to use “schism” as “divorce” implies a split between two rather than three things.

³²⁸ Antanas Mockus, “Imaginon que....” Discours de Réception de Honoris Causa due Paris 8, June 24, 2004. www.ynternet.org/move/antanas-mockus.../allocution-antanas-mockus.pdf

³²⁹ Mockus, Anfibios Culturales, 4 n68.

³³⁰ Mockus, Anfibios Culturales, 4.

³³¹ Mockus, Anfibios Culturales, 6-7.

³³² This quote and the preceding two sentences are from a personal interview, March 19, 2009.

³³³ Antanas Mockus, “Cultura Ciudadana Programa Contra la Violencia en Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia, 1995-1997,” (Inter-American Development Bank Report, No. SOC-127, 2001), 3. <http://www6.iadb.org/sds/doc/Culturaciudadana.pdf>

³³⁴ Antanas Mockus, “American Latina, Consenso y Paz Social.” (Keynote address, 34th International Congress of Conindustria, June 30, 2004).

³³⁵ Antanas Mockus, “Una Revision de Logros y Retos de Bogotá desde Conceptos de Jon Elster.” Reflexiones sobre la Investigación en Ciencias Sociales y Estudios Políticos. (Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2003): 67.

³³⁶ Leoluca Orlando, *Fighting the Mafia and Renewing Sicilian Culture* (San Francisco, CA: Encounter Books, 2001).

³³⁷ Antanas Mockus, *Seguridad y Convivencia Ciudadana: La Pedagogías del Estado de Derecho*. (Alcalde Mayor de Bogotá, undated): 7.

³³⁸ Jügen Habermas, *The Theory of Reasoned Action, Volume 2. Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1987), 188.

³³⁹ Personal interview with Antanas Mockus, March 19, 2009.

³⁴⁰ For a summary (and critique) of Giuliani’s “law and order” approach See Peter A. Barta, “Guiliani, Broken Windows and the Right to Beg,” *Georgetown Journal on Poverty, Law and Policy* 6 (2): 1999.

³⁴¹ Rock al Parque was established in 1995 by Mario Duarte, the lead singer of the rock group “La Derecha” with support from Julio Correal and Berta Quintero from the District Office of Culture and Tourism (Instituto Distrital de Cultura y Turismo). In 1997, Rock al Parque became part of the Mayor’s Civic Culture program during the first Mockus administration. For a year by year history of Rock al Parque, see <http://www.rockalparque.gov.co/historia/1995.htm>.

³⁴² Javier Sáenz Obregón, *Desconfianza, Civilidad y Estética: Las Prácticas Formativas Estatales por Fuera de la Escuela en Bogotá, 1994-2003*. Bogotá: Centro de Estudios Sociales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2007, 95-96.

³⁴³ Liliana López Borbón, *Construir Ciudadanía desde la Cultura: Aproximaciones comunicativas al Programa de Cultura Ciudadana, Bogotá, 1995-1997*. (Bogotá, Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá, 2003).

³⁴⁴ Mockus, “Armonizar Ley, Moral y Cultura,” 14.

³⁴⁵ Mockus, “Armonizar Ley, Moral y Cultura,” 15.

³⁴⁶ “Mimos se Toman la 19 Hoy,” *El Tiempo*, March 8, 1995, 1C; “Catedra Muda,” *El Tiempo*, March 9, 1995, front page; “Los Mimos Hicieron que Todo se Viera,” *El Tiempo*, March 9, 1995, 2D; 4A; 2D; “Y Para que Sirve Jugar?” *El Tiempo*, March 12, 1995, 1E.

³⁴⁷Charles Montgomery, “Bogotá’s Urban Happiness Movement,” *Globe and Daily Mail*, June 25, 2007; Mark Schapiro, “All the City’s a Stage.” *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2001: 29-32; Maria Cristina Caballero, “Academic Turns City into a Social Experiment: Mayor Mockus of Bogotá and his Spectacularly Applied Theory.” *Harvard Gazette*, March 11, 2004, <http://www.hnq.harvard.edu/gazette/2004/03.11/01-mockus.html>; John Rockwell, “Where Mimes Patrolled the Streets and the Mayor was Superman,” *New York Times*, July 9, 2004, E3.

³⁴⁸ Jon Cohen, “Calming Traffic on Bogotá’s Killing Streets,” *Science*, February 8, 2008, 742.

³⁴⁹ Mary Metheson, “Where Seeing Red Means ‘Cool It.’ Mayor Uses Shame to Soothe Murder Capital of the World.” September 14, 1995, 1.

³⁵⁰ Antanas Mockus, “Convivencia como Armonizacion de Ley, Moral y Cultura,” *Perpectivas* 32 (2002): 25.

³⁵¹ Antanas Mockus “Advancing Against Violence in Bogotá, Creating Civic Energy and ‘Cultural Change’: The Case of Bogotá.” Unpublished mimeo, 2004. <http://www.paho.org/English/AD/FCH/CA/BogotaViolence.pdf>

³⁵² José Antonio Sanchez, “Mockus Exporta Cultura Ciudadana,” *El Tiempo*, Febraruay 8, 2009, 2-4. The article reports that the administration of Mexico City mayor Marcelo Ebrard has awarded a \$300,000 contract to the not-for-profit consulting firm headed by Mockus to assist Ebrard in adapting and implementing “civic culture.”

³⁵³ Antanas Mockus, “Armonizar Ley, Moral y Cultura: Cultura Ciudadana, Prioridad de Gobierno con Resultados en Prevención y Control de Violencia en Bogotá, 1995-1997.” (Report written for the Inter-American Development Bank for the Conference on Municipal Programs to Prevent Violence. 1999): 14.

³⁵⁴ Antanas Mockus, “American Latina, Consenso y Paz Social.” (Keynote address, 34th International Congress of Conindustria, June 30, 2004).

³⁵⁵ Antanas Mockus, “Bogotá para Vivir: Memorias de la Administración Distrital 2001-2003,” (District Administration of Bogotá, 2004), 33. Dollar figure arrived at using a 2002 calculation rate at www.oanda.com. (1,177 million Colombian Pesos = 401,481 US Dollars).

³⁵⁶ Mockus, “Bogotá para Vivir,” 33. Dollar figure arrived at using a 2002 calculation rate at www.oanda.com. (848 million Colombian Pesos = 304, 795 US Dollars).

³⁵⁷ *El Tiempo*, “La Ciudad Pasa, Yo Me Rajo: Antanas Mockus,” July 12, 2002.

<http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1317858>

³⁵⁸ “Bogotanos Muy Generosos,” *El Tiempo*, September 20, 2002.

³⁵⁹ Antanas Mockus, *Bogotá para Vivir*, 33-34.

³⁶⁰ Javier Sáenz Obregón, *Desconfianza, Civilidad y Estética: Las Prácticas Formativas Estatales por Fuera de la Escuela en Bogotá, 1994-2003*. Bogotá: Centro de Estudios Sociales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2007, 172, n 33.

³⁶¹ Antanas Mockus, *Bogotá para Vivir*, 34.

³⁶² Antanas Mockus, *Bogotá para Vivir*, 34.

³⁶³ “Bogotanos Muy Generosos,” *El Tiempo*, September 20, 2002.

³⁶⁴ Antanas Mockus, *Bogotá para Vivir*, 32.

³⁶⁵ I should note that I did not find mention of the “Chiva Tributaria” in the archives of the major newspapers of Bogotá, making the bus tours *reportable* but not necessarily *reported*.

³⁶⁶ *El Tiempo*, “Iluminación al 110 Por Ciento,” November 30, 2002.

<http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1328075>

³⁶⁷ *El Tiempo*, “Iluminación al 110 Por Ciento,” November 30, 2002.

³⁶⁸ *El Tiempo*, “Cultura Ciudadana en Ahorro de Agua, la Major Calificacion de Bogotá.” January 27, 2009. <http://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/bogota/cultura-ciudadana-en-ahorro-de-agua-la-mejor-calificacion-de-bogota- 4777785-1>

³⁶⁹ This quote and the previous were recorded at Los Andes University in Bogotá where Mockus was invited to speak at the forum sponsored by the School of Government titled: “Collaboration Between Academics and Public Servants,” May 6, 2009.

³⁷⁰ Unpublished interview with Antanas Mockus by Maria Laura Pacheco, January 15, 2007. I obtained a copy of the interview transcript from Monica Delgado, one of Mockus’ employees.

³⁷¹ Here I am using the word “City Hall” for the Spanish term “Alcaldía Mayor,” which has no equivalent in English. Both terms are words for where the mayor of a city has his/her office and conducts business.

³⁷² This quote and the quotes below are from an interview with Henry Murrain in Bogotá on May 6, 2009.

³⁷³ Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162, 1243-1248.

³⁷⁴ Antanas Mockus, “Participation, Citizenship and Inclusion,” presentation given at Nuffield College Socius UK, Oxford, June 12-16, 2005. www.britishcouncil.org/seminars-society-0555-presentations-mockus.ppt See also: Antanas Mockus, “Bogotá: ¿Cohesión Social vía Innovación? Cultura Ciudadana y Espacio Público: Motivaciones y Regulaciones,” presentation given to the Meeting of Representatives of Sub-National Governments of the European Union and Latin America, in Rosario, Argentina, July 3, 2007. www.centrourbal.com/redes/docs/rosario/pres_mockus.ppt

³⁷⁵ Antanas Mockus, “Cultura Ciudadana, Programa Contra la Violencia en Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia, 1995-1997,” (Inter-American Development Bank Report, No. SOC-127, 2001), 7.

³⁷⁶ Mockus, “Cultura Ciudadana, Programa Contra la Violencia,” 8.

³⁷⁷ Mockus, “Cultura Ciudadana, Programa Contra la Violencia,” 8 n6.

³⁷⁸ “Tarjetas, Otra Carta de Mockus,” *El Tiempo*, May 4, 1995, 1.

³⁷⁹ *El Espectador*, January 17, 1995, 1C; *El Espectador*, January 23, 1995, 1F; *El Espectador*, January 25, 1995, 3D; *El Tiempo*, January 27, 1995, 3E; *El Espectador*, February 23, 1995, 3E; *El Espectador*, December 20, 1995, 3D; *El Espectador*, August 4, 1996 1F; *El Espectador*, December 10, 1996 2D; *El Espectador*, March 22, 1997

³⁸⁰ “La fe, Santa y Coqueta,” *El Espectador*, December 6, 1996, 2E.

³⁸¹ “Cards decorate, but do not educate. *El Tiempo*, August 8, 1995, 1F-2F.

³⁸² “Cards decorate, but do not educate. *El Tiempo*, August 8, 1995, 1F.

³⁸³ “Cards decorate, but do not educate. *El Tiempo*, August 8, 1995, 1F.

³⁸⁴ I first had a casual conversation with the optometrist and after he mentioned having a Citizens’ Card, I asked if I could return later that day with my digital recorder to have a more in-depth conversation that I could record. Person interview with Juan Manuel, August 24, 2008.

³⁸⁵ Personal interview with Antanas Mockus, March 19, 2009.

³⁸⁶ Personal interview with Henry Murrain, May 6, 2009.

³⁸⁷ Doris Sommer, “Interview with Antanas Mockus,” (Hemispheric Institute Performing Heritage Conference, Belo Horizonte Brazil, March 18, 2005), 22 min. 58 sec.; digital video, in Spanish.

<http://hidvl.nyu.edu/video/000505630.html>

³⁸⁸ “Movida Urbana: Plan Estrategica de Movilidad” Alcaldia Mayor de Medellin, April 24, 2008, <http://www.medellin.gov.co/alcaldia/jsp/modulos/anexos/img/pdf/PLAN%20DE%20MOVILIDADpre.pdf>

“Fundación Terpel premió a las Instituciones Educativas con las Mejores Movidas de Convivencia para Barranquilla,” Colombian Ministry of Education, June 9, 2008. <http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/article-170310.html>; “Ganadores del Concurso Buena Esa,” Colombian Ministry of Education, June 25, 2008, <http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/article-170319.html>; Other cities implementing some form of Civic Culture (but not necessarily Citizens’ Cards) include: Pereira, Tulúa, Aguazul and Santa Marta For a full list of the partnerships, see “Diagnóstico De La Movilidad y La Cultura Ciudadana en Ciudades con SITM Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Bucaramanga y Pereira,” Fondo de Prevención Vial August, 2006. <http://www.bvsde.paho.org/bvsacd/cd63/diagnostico.pdf>; and Santiago Montenegro Trujillo (ed.), “Fomentar la Cultura Ciudadana,” Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2006, http://www.dnp.gov.co/archivos/documentos/2019_Documentos_documento_cultura_ciudadana.pdf

³⁸⁹ Barranquilla (Good move/Bad move), Medellin (Well done/Poorly done), and Bucaramanga (That’s a good one/That’s a bad one).

³⁹⁰ Personal interview with Jesus Arroyave, Director of the Communication and Social Change Masters program at the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla, November 13, 2009. The cards were financed by the Fundacion Terpel.

³⁹¹ Beginning, perhaps, with the Roman citizens who showed approval or disapproval of gladiators using their thumbs.

³⁹² Liliana López Borbón, *Construir Ciudadanía desde la Cultura, Aproximaciones comunicativas al Programa de Cultura Ciudadana, Bogotá, 1995-1997*. (Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá, 2003), 66 n62.

³⁹³ See Merriam Webster dictionary: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/faith>

³⁹⁴ See Oxford English Dictionary: http://www.askoxford.com/concise_oed/trust?view=uk

³⁹⁵ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 90-91.

³⁹⁶ Tatyana P. Soubbotina, “Beyond Economic Growth: Meeting the Challenges of Global Development,” (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2000), 30; see http://www.worldbank.org/depweb/beyond/beyondco/beg_05.pdf

³⁹⁷ Amardo Rodriguez, *Communication, Space and Design* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2005), 67.

³⁹⁸ Rodriguez, *Communication, Space and Design*, 68

³⁹⁹ Rodriguez cites the example of Frank Gehry’s design of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, which he describes as “voluptuous and sensuous.” See Rodriguez, *Communication, Space and Design*, 84.

⁴⁰⁰ See <http://improveeverywhere.com/>

⁴⁰¹ See <http://improveeverywhere.com/2010/01/18/no-pants-subway-ride-2010/#more-1585>

⁴⁰² This quote and the one following it are from the Yes Men website <http://theyesmen.org/>.

⁴⁰³ Whitney Chadwick, “Women Who Run with Brushes and Glue” in *Confessions of the Guerilla Girls*, ed. The Guerrilla Girls (New York: Harper Perennial), 7.

⁴⁰⁴ The *Yes Men Fix the World* (documentary) press kit, p. 3. See:

http://theyesmen.org/pub/The_Yes_Men-EPK.pdf

⁴⁰⁵ With the release of their most recent documentary, the Yes Men have put more effort into promoting new action by including a “take action” section on their website and creating list of “Fix the World” challenges to inspire participation and action. See: http://theyesmenfixtheworld.com/take_action.php and <http://challenge.theyesmen.org/challenges>.

⁴⁰⁶ Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, 74.

⁴⁰⁷ Buber, *Between Man and Man*, 19.

⁴⁰⁸ Buber, *Between Man and Man*, 19.

⁴⁰⁹ Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 168.

⁴¹⁰ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 90.

⁴¹¹ Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 406, 408, 411.

⁴¹² Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 136.

⁴¹³ Hugo AceroVelásquez, “The City and Public Policies on Safety and Congruous Living,” (Bogota, Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá, 2002), 6-7.

⁴¹⁴ Ricardo Montezuma, “Promoting Active Lifestyles and Healthy Urban Spaces: The Cultural and Spatial Transformation of Bogota, Colombia” in Wilma Freire (ed.) *Nutrition and an Active Life: From Knowledge to Action* (New York: Pan American Health Organization, 2005), 171. See <http://www.bvsde.paho.org/bvsacd/cd51/montezuma.pdf>

⁴¹⁵ For an excellent overview and comparison of the Giuliani and Mockus approaches, see Katherine Becket and Angelina Godoy, “A Tale of Two Cities: A Comparative Analysis of Quality of Life Initiatives in New York and Bogota” *Urban Studies* 47 (2): 277-301.

⁴¹⁶ Elizabeth Gehrman “Dream Works: How Two Mayors Broke the Mold to Rejuvenate their Cities” (January 26, 2010) *Harvard Gazette*, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2010/01/dream-works/>

⁴¹⁷ Rodriguez, *Communication, Space and Design*, 17.

⁴¹⁸ Martin Buber, “Genuine Dialogue and the Possibilities of Peace,” in *Pointing the Way: Collected Essays* by Martin Buber, ed. Maurice Friedman (New York: Harper & Brother, 1957), 238; Also cited in Rodriguez, *Communication, Space and Design*, 17.

⁴¹⁹ I have taken some liberties by condensing several pages into a few lines. I did this in order to cull out direct references to trust and to establish the link Fukuyama was making between trust and social capital and then between social capital and economic reward. Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues of Creation and Prosperity* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 26-31.

⁴²⁰ Kenneth Arrow, *The Limits of Organization* (New York: Norton, 1974) 23.

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- ⁴²¹ Arrow, *The Limits of Organization*, 23.
- ⁴²² Niklas Luhmann, *Trust and Power*, (New York: Wiley, 1980), 8.
- ⁴²³ Luhmann, Trust and Power, 8.
- ⁴²⁴ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 136.
- ⁴²⁵ William James, The Writings of William James: A Comprehensive Edition, ed. John J. McDermott (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1977), 740.
- ⁴²⁶ Richard Tanner Pascale and Jerry Sternin, "Your Company's Secret Change Agents." *Harvard Business Review* (May 2005): 74.
- ⁴²⁷ Nicholas C. Burbules, ,*Dialogue in Teaching: Theory and Practice* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993)
- ⁴²⁸ Arthur W. Frank "What Is Dialogical Research, and Why Should We Do It?" *Qualitative Health Research* 15.7 (2005), 964-974.
- ⁴²⁹ David Bohm, *On Dialogue* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
- ⁴³⁰ Rob Anderson, Kenneth Cissna and Ronald C. Arnett, *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice and Community* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1994); Rob Anderson and Kenneth N. Cissna, *The Martin Buber, Carl Rogers Dialogue* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1997); Ronald C. Arnett, *Communication and Community*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986).