COMMUNICATION IN CONFLICT AND PROBLEM-SOLVING: 
A STUDY OF DIALOGUE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

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Abstract

This dissertation provides a theoretical framework for a multi-disciplinary approach to communication in conflict and problem-solving. It sheds light on best practices of communication, with a focus on dialogue in multi-party decision-making, conflict intervention, policy-making and organizational process design situations. It is undertaken as action research to aid mediators, conflict interveners and facilitators in design of deliberative decision-making processes involving groups with diverse backgrounds, who are sometimes in disagreement.

The investigator gained privileged access to three different groups of dialogue-based events in Western Canada: one on Canadian involvement in war and economic development policy in Afghanistan, one on development of organizational conflict resolution policy, one on drug policy consultation in the City of Vancouver, British Columbia. Analysis of events is grounded in theories of interpretation and dialogue, and considers the historical context of mediation as an emerging field of professional practice.

This dissertation’s concept of the everyday life context of events draws on anthropology of urban life, critical studies of power and discourse, conflict studies, the notion of interpretive flexibility from science and technology studies, and the constructivist philosophy of technology. This dissertation’s theoretical framework is based on a conflict intervention model that illuminates interpersonal and mass media communication studies. Analysis of dialogue events considers the role of professional expertise in dialogue process design. It considers the inter-relationship of content of discourse, of the process of communication, and of social and cultural effects of conflict and problem-solving in dialogue situations. It concludes that dialogue, debate and diffusion are interdependent ‘options’ of communication in conflict and problem-solving. Though a broad definition of dialogue is used, dialogue is found to comprise a small fraction of any of the three groups of events. These findings support a method that better connects problems that people discuss in dialogue events, problems of dialogue-making which are inherent to such events, and perceived success or failure of these encounters. Finally, this dissertation considers various historical case studies to argue that egalitarian, transformative discourse can be planned, but not without timely recognition of the specific and often transitory conditions that lead to “moments of opportunity” for dialogue.

Keywords:
dialogue; communication in conflict; everyday life; mediation; organizational decision-making; epistemic communities
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Lucie McKiernan of the Community Living Society endorsed me and my project to the CLS community, and provided the managerial support for my work there. She has also been an invaluable source of information, feedback and inspiration about values-based leadership.

Erin Brown-John used my observation protocol at one of the Afghanistan dialogues as part of her undergraduate program in the School Communication at Simon Fraser University.
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<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADR</td>
<td>alternative dispute resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARHC</td>
<td>Atlantic Region of Health Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDS</td>
<td>Canada’s Drug Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLS</td>
<td>Community Living Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ePP</td>
<td>existing policies and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOTE</td>
<td>full open truthful exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOL</td>
<td>Government on-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIBC</td>
<td>Justice Institute of British Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nPP</td>
<td>new policies and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PON</td>
<td>Program on Negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POTE</td>
<td>partial open truthful exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAV</td>
<td>Richmond-Airport-Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAVCO</td>
<td>Richmond-Airport-Vancouver Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFU</td>
<td>Simon Fraser University</td>
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Preface

This dissertation examines communication in conflict and problem-solving, with a special focus on dialogue. In it, I will examine the scholarly literature and three actual dialogue situations. My theoretical contribution is a framework for analyzing communication in conflict and problem-solving, one which synthesizes Stuart Hall’s mass communication studies, conflict resolution and problem-solving models, and Paul Ricœur’s phenomenology and hermeneutics. It frames conversation as a set of three communicative options: *dialogue*, *debate* and *diffusion*. This framework illuminates the distinction between *process*, *content* and *effect* of communication in dialogue-based events. Applying this framework in a qualitative analysis leads finally to my practical recommendation about planning and facilitating communication in conflict and problem-solving. I will argue that mediators, interveners, facilitators and planners of dialogue-based processes should strive to minimize, and thus optimize, the use of prepared presentations and expert speakers in public or private consultation. Instead, they should seek and exploit opportunities for dialogue that directly engage the lay public and experts as equal participants.

The three situations studied in this dissertation were comprised of many organized events. In these events were focused, group conversations, at which people met to share their diverse perspectives and increase mutual understanding about the situations that brought them together. The intent of the events’ planners and participants was to influence decision-making in the resolution of problems or conflicts. The events were framed as dialogues. However, their designs were influenced by the dialogic methods and reasoning of different disciplines and traditions. The events were ordinary, in the sense that they took place in the spaces and timeframes of everyday life. However, they were also connected to extraordinary situations. My dissertation examines how people engaged in dialogue as they convened in meeting rooms, drank coffee, and worked through their experiences of systemic suffering and oppression. The situations discussed in this dissertation exemplify conflicts and problems at the international level (i.e., the war in Afghanistan), at the regional level (i.e., community consultation on drug policy), and at the local group level (i.e., organizational conflict...
Regardless of the scope of the problem, all these conversations took place among individuals, suggesting that dialogue is primarily personal. The study of dialogue thus gives us insight into the resolution of conflicts and problems in the extreme and in the more personal, even mundane situations of everyday life.

As a framework for focused conversation, dialogue is in demand. It is planned and practiced as part of everyday negotiation, political discourse, policy consultation, justice, and organizational decision-making. However, it is not well defined as an everyday communicative or social practice. This presents the researcher with a two-fold challenge. The study of dialogue needs a working definition of dialogue in relation to its use in different disciplines and traditions. It also needs a definition of the practice of dialogue in relation to its use among other forms of conversation. I develop such definitions in this dissertation in order to synthesize established approaches from a range of fields for the purpose of advancing the study of dialogue. I do not mean to imply that my definitions, framework and methods comprise the only true way to approach dialogue. If dialogue is a fusion of perspectives, then the study of dialogue can be, too. There should be other ways. There may be no “only true way.”

Dialogue is not the only way to frame a conversation. For example, there are debates, public and private forums, tribunals, diplomacy, and broadcast talk shows. Each has its uses and its drawbacks. If dialogue is to be used appropriately and effectively, it must be better understood in light of this range of possible ways of communicating, and in light of the social conditions and problems that lend context to everyday discourse. The title of this dissertation therefore puts communication before dialogue. For research purposes, I divide communication into three options: dialogue, debate and diffusion. My intent is not to imply that this method is the only way, or the best way to study conversation.

My framework for the study of communication is based on an interdisciplinary approach. This includes studies with a singular focus from various disciplines, such as communication, culture, dialogue and hermeneutics. This dissertation draws on key works from Canadian communication studies by Carey (1989) and Innis (1951), from sociology by Goffman (1956) and Latour (1986), and from popular works about modern dialogue, including Bohm (2004) and Isaacs (1999). The hermeneutic and analytical
aspects of this framework come from a variety of sources, including Palmer (1969), Etshalom (2006), Eco (2001) and Bakhtin (1981). I integrate those studies with well-known sources that bridge the main disciplines. The framework thus becomes cross-disciplinary via established routes. For example, communication is connected to social and cultural studies via Tannen (1998), S. Hall (1980), Habermas (1984, 1987) and Kellner (2006).


The common thread in the linkages of these frames is this dissertation’s notion of everyday life. This thread also connects these frames to the dialogue events that I examine. Here, I draw on the works of de Certeau (1984), E. T. Hall (1989, 1990, 1992), Lefebvre (1991) and Freud (1899, 1901). These works are about everyday life, though none explicitly define it. Like a definition for dialogue in the key works on dialogue, the definition of everyday life in these key works seems to be assumed. However, there are sources—including Foucault (1995), Ricœur (1965), Feenberg (1995; 1999), and Lyotard (1984)—that illuminate how the historical, theoretical and philosophical aspects of everyday life converge. Collectively, these sources argue for a critically interpretive, phenomenological approach to the study of various aspects of everyday life. In particular, Ricœur combines phenomenology (i.e., reflective inquiry on consciousness and conscious experience) with hermeneutics (i.e., a systematic method of interpretation). This holistic approach is grounded in the evolution of Western philosophy and science from ancient Greece, through the Enlightenment, to the so-called postmodern society of today.

In this dissertation, everyday life is defined as the broad space of one’s normal personal experiences. I define what lies beyond this space as that which involves vast resources to sustain relatively small numbers of people for short periods of time, under
extraordinary circumstances. For example, one of the themes of this dissertation is science and technology studies. In everyday life, large populations commonly interact with one another, in public space, via complex technological systems. Thus, ‘surfing’ the Internet is part of everyday life. On the other hand, a moon landing or space shuttle mission—which is as scientifically complex as the Internet— involves massive resources to support a few astronauts in a remote situation that can only be sustained for a few days, weeks or months. Walking on the moon is not part of everyday life. Likewise, in conflict, the day-to-day job of soldiering or supplying military hardware is part of everyday life, while, being in combat, under fire, is not.

There is a tendency in the literature and in the professional communities to see dialogue and problem solving as techniques. Various experts offer templates and protocols that prescribe steps, questions, interventions, criteria, and decision-making mechanisms for various kinds of conflicts and problems. These staged techniques reduce or avoid much guesswork and fighting over process management. Processes for conflict resolution and problem-solving can thus be managed in certain ways more efficiently than they would be without such techniques. Speed dating can do this dispassionately. Computer-aided negotiation can do this computationally. Scholarly peer review can do this credibly. When used with discretion, staging can thus anticipate and deal with certain imbalances of group process. Intervention via staged interaction thus achieves a measure of what is meant by the expression “levelling the playing field.”

The problem with techniques that operate on groups is that they need to be staged. Dialogue is not like a decisive negotiation for dating, business deals, or approving publications. It is a negotiation of meaning. The more such conversation is structured and managed, the less likely it is that there will be the kind of negotiated meaning that comes from dialogue. Technique is of interest here, but it is not the key to dialogue. Dialogue, by nature, must accommodate the uniqueness of its participants as they give shared meaning to that which previously had separate, un-reconciled meanings. Dialogue’s values come from its care and completeness. Speed, efficiency and economy—the scientifically privileged measures of modern Western life—are not essential to those values. To optimize dialogue is to focus on exploring what must be explored to achieve understanding. Dialogue favours conversations that are less staged
by experts, and more brought about by those who have little or no experience with dialogue.¹ This dissertation focuses on those experiences of dialogue that are carried out by participants.

Epilogue

Communication as a form of intervention is a key concept in this dissertation. Intervention work regularly reminds me of the many ways in which today’s conflicts and problems are related to earlier ones. Often the closure of a given situation is not possible until a later situation is in progress. Often, intervention can elicit the telling of a story. The story is given as the epilogue to an earlier situation. In the telling, it comes to frame the present situation. It causes a shift from seeing the situation at hand as isolated in the present, to experiencing the present in the context of the past.

Studying the connection between an earlier situation and the present one can illuminate both the problem and the solution. For example, one of the last interviews I conducted for this paper turned out to be one man’s epilogue to his survival in Auschwitz. The interview began with a focus on how people are educated in communities of practice. However, the man I interviewed asked me to take his testimony about how he survived in Auschwitz. The content of our conversation had led him to make a connection between how he used private communication in the concentration camp and how people use private communication to share subversive knowledge in everyday life. Recognizing such connections between past and present can thus comprise moments of opportunity for conflict resolution and problem-solving.

This dissertation itself is also part of an epilogue. It stems from the story of the professionalization of conflict intervention in British Columbia. Conflict intervention is in demand; mediation has been growing worldwide since the 1980s. Dialogue is often an important part of addressing conflicts and controversies in mediation. However, conflict intervention can be a controversial field in and of itself when different methods and

¹ There is also the possibility that the participants are experts at dialogue-making, and able to balance their self-interests in the situation with their interest in group process. As this is rarely the case, I will regard it for now as exceptional.
philosophies of practitioners and participants clash. In particular, the approach favoured by mediators and regulators in the field of law—which is the predominant field in mediation in much of the world—is often at odds with approaches favoured by practitioners from other fields. There is much opportunity to be found in this area of conflict. Because dialogue is shaped by complex practices of communication and language-use, these practices shape one’s total experience of everyday life in important ways.

In the Introduction I will discuss how the situation in British Columbia exemplifies the salient issues of communication in conflict and problem-solving that are discussed throughout my dissertation. This case is also important because my research and findings are intended partly for the purpose of improving the practice of intervention. Though mediation is an important area of intervention practice, regulatory bodies have not yet resolved how they will distinguish between what they seek to regulate—which is called mediation—and other forms of intervention. Much of value can be learned from how this situation frames the study of communication in conflict and problem-solving. The mediation issue is thus both an archetypal example, and a raison d’être for this dissertation.

Each dialogue event studied in this dissertation was planned as a communicative intervention, with the intent of changing the situation in an area of conflict. Every event has a background story. This is where epilogues come into play. When dialogue is the intervention of choice, it creates unique opportunities for diverse people and communities to share their pasts by constructively creating in the present a shared version of history. Dialogue thus has the potential to create pathways across clashing boundaries of intervention practice. In other words, the study of dialogue as a special form of communication—grounded in everyday life situations—has practical applications for conflict and problem-solving.
1. **Introduction**

In this chapter, I introduce the general question, the research focus and the theoretical framework of this dissertation. This dissertation is a theoretical work and a reflective enquiry of professional practice. It begins with the following general question.

*What can be learned about dialogue as a form of communication in conflict and in problem-solving, based on a synthesis of communication studies and my privileged access to specific and everyday conflict intervention situations?*

The focus is on dialogue as a planned form of communication in situations of conflict, and in problem-solving. The framework draws on theories of communication, conflict and culture. These theories cover the range of everyday life experiences from intimate personal communication to societal mass communication. My synthesis of these theories concludes that dialogue is one of three overlapping and interdependent ways of communicating in conflict and problem-solving. My theoretical argument also draws on my vocational experience. My early career—as a materials scientist in the US defence industry—has given me broad exposure to prevalent modes of scientific reasoning, experimentation and problem-solving. My later career—as a mediator in Western Canada and the US—has given me direct access to many public and private situations involving dialogue and other forms of conversation. My reflective analysis of dialogue events will reveal that dialogue event planning must strive to keep prepared speaking to a minimum. Though dialogue may be planned, it should not be contrived or staged.

Some readers might hold that a dissertation should be in essence either theoretical (i.e., philosophical), or practical (i.e., experimental), but not both. However, the connection between theory and practice is the essence of the notion of dialogue that unfolded through my research. It is grounded in the evolution of interpretation theory (i.e., hermeneutics, from the simple interpretation of texts, to modern critical theory). It is also grounded in the development of communication studies as a hybrid of critical
culture studies and social science. My intent is to draw on each of these scholarly traditions with synergy, and without contradiction. My goal is to show how theory and practice often inform each other.

This dissertation’s qualitative study focuses on the following three situations—each of which was comprised of individual meetings, or dialogue events:

- the dialogues of the City of Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program Office,
- the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Wosk Centre’s Afghanistan Dialogues, and
- the dialogues of the “Resolving Our Differences” initiative of Burnaby’s Community Living Society (CLS).

These situations are used as illustrations. They are not meant to serve as statistical samples for an empirical, double-blind population study. These particular situations were chosen because they allowed me an unusual degree of access to information and actors. They are representative of the many in which I have participated as a mediator or consultant in Western Canada and the US over the past 17 years. I sought and got special permission to study, participate in, and report on these three dialogue-based situations for this dissertation. I then used my privileged knowledge as an intervener and consultant to debrief planners, experts, lay participants, and observers about their experiences of dialogue. This approach gave me a wide variety of perspectives, inside the situations, outside of them, and around the life cycle of dialogue events.

Though the analysis was mainly qualitative, one area of focus was to identify how much dialogue was achieved in dialogue-themed events. The planners’ goal for each event examined in my study was to achieve sustained dialogue. If a dialogue event lasted eight hours, how much of that time was actually spent in dialogue? My strategy was to use the broadest definition of dialogue. This allowed me to arrive at an estimate of what is theoretically, or arguably the optimum yield of dialogue. Though the actual time spent in dialogue might be arguably less, it would not be more. If dialogue is desired, this method gives a best-case estimate of the effectiveness of dialogue event planning. In other words, I am developing here a benchmarking method for dialogue planning in situations of conflict and problem-solving.
This dissertation’s theoretical framework draws on the field of communication studies to show how my chosen dialogue-based situations are comparable with each other. It also draws on a variety of phenomenology-based frameworks for everyday life. It will do so by synthesizing de Certeau’s notion of resistance to oppressive social structures, Foucault’s concept of the carceral state, Althusser’s concepts of “Repressive” and “Ideological State Apparatuses” (1970/2008), Waitzkin’s critical theory of medical discourse and Weber’s notion of disenchantment to support my notions of an emotionally violent state apparatus, of a shift from moral to ethical discourse in the so-called postmodern era, and of a working definition of conflict that bridges the predominant schools of both theory and practice in communication studies. The synthesis of these frameworks grounds my characterization of Western society’s culture of communication in conflict and problem-solving. Everyday life serves as the context for the examples presented in this dissertation’s study of communication in conflict and problem-solving. This theoretical framework will be defined mainly in the Literature Review chapter, and will be refined throughout the rest of the dissertation.

This dissertation is undertaken as action research. In particular, it examines how one kind of action (i.e., conversation) can lead to other actions. As Deacon (1999) notes in Researching Communications, “In any discussion of talk…the interest is in language in its complex mundane usages not only as means of enabling social interaction between people, but also as constitutive of that interaction, so that talk is understood as action, as ways of doing” (304). To study how dialogue is used, is thus to acknowledge it as a unique, practical connection between being and doing. There is surely value to be found in understanding how dialogue works, and how it might be made to work better. This dissertation uses communication studies to reconcile what makes talk complex, and what makes it mundane (i.e., everyday) in the special case of dialogue. In other words, this dissertation builds on the canon of communication studies by examining how dialogue can be used better than it commonly is among all modes of communication in conflict and problem-solving in everyday life.

There is a relationship between concepts of communication, conflict and problem-solving, and words about communication, conflict and problem-solving. This relationship is essential to this dissertation’s framework. I will begin to examine this
relationship in the next two sections of this Introduction, by discussing two situations that illustrate a problem of language about conflict intervention. These illustrations help to define key terms of the dissertation. They also provide important background information about the conceptual environment in which the Vancouver Drug Policy Program, Afghanistan Dialogues, CLS dialogues took place.

The two situations I examine in the next section represent complementary aspects of the correspondence between a given word and the concepts represented by that word. They are two different views of the same general relationship. In the first situation, when a simple model for communication in conflict was used, it became a site of conflict. Different presentations of this model used different words to describe what was assumed to be the same concept. However, people with different biases interpreted the concept differently. This turned out to be a source of disagreement and conflict among those who used the model as a teaching aid. In the second situation, different interpretations of one word led to a clash in an organization’s internal problem-solving situation. Here, mediation was at first assumed to have one meaning, but was interpreted differently by people with different biases. This eventually led to conflict as people defended their clashing interpretations.

**A Triangle Model for Communication in Conflict and Problem-solving**

In my negotiation and mediation training at the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC), I was exposed to two versions of a conflict ‘triangle’ model—which I will develop more fully throughout this dissertation. The model emphasized that the content and process of communication in conflict were balanced by a third dimension. version looked like the same model, but some trainers labelled the third dimension

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1 In this context biases represent the ways people frame things differently, based on their different educational and vocational experiences. Those differences, in turn, influence how they understand their interests differently.

2 According to M. Burdine, the originator of the JIBC curriculum (via an email to the author on November, 21, 2003) this model “was inspired by Sheila Kessler from California who was one of the founders of family mediation in the US along with Googler.”
relationship and others labelled it emotion. Both versions are shown in Figure 1. In either version, all three dimensions are of equal importance; they can appear in any order around the triangle. The linguistic distinction between “relationship” and “emotion” sheds light on the influence of one’s educational and vocational orientation. The “relationship” version of the model was presented to me by practitioners who identified themselves as counselling psychologists or self-described “recovering” lawyers. The “emotion” version was presented by people with backgrounds in technical fields like medicine and corrections.

Figure 1. The Original Conflict Triangle Model

The effect of these differences in orientation was subtle; one focuses on interpersonal relations and the other on intra-personal relations. Though the triangle model was not a prominent one in the training program—it was a teaching aid—the different orientations became a site of conflict. Because the triangle model was not a core part of the JIBC curriculum, instructors were free to use either set of terms. This mitigated the conflicts between users of different forms of the model. Iconic terms from the core concepts were more controversial. For example, I’ve seen several heated exchanges between conflict resolution practitioners and trainers from different backgrounds over the
meaning of “agenda” vs. “items for discussion” or over the meaning of “interests” vs. “rights.”

It occurred to me that the solution to this problem was not to be arbitrated according to the definitions in any kind of dictionary, by majority rule, or won by debate, but rather by exposing the underlying factors of the disagreement and seeking a more universal expression of the dimensions of conflict. The triangle model caught my attention in this regard. As a student, I found it illuminating. As an instructor, many of my students commented that they found it helpful. As a practitioner, I found it useful. I also saw that the model itself was a conflict and problem-solving opportunity of potentially high value and relatively low risk.

Having different words for a single concept presents a problem and an opportunity. The problem is lack of clarity. If the problem is recognized, exposed and addressed, there is an opportunity to clarify (i.e., to improve on the understanding and application of the concept). Clarifying is a familiar part of the job for mediators, though the process (i.e., recognizing, exposing and addressing) applies to dialogue with or without a mediator. In mediation and intervention, the mediator is sometimes the one best able to see, and to help the participants exploit these opportunities. Sometimes, a participant is best able to do this. As I discussed in the Preface, dialogue favours conversation that is less prescribed by experts and more self-facilitated (i.e., brought about by those who have little or no experience with dialogue). In dialogue without self-facilitation, the situation is perhaps more tenuous. In any case, clarification is a function of language, and language is essential to framing conflicts and problems.

This is an example of how education and work experience can have a significant influence on one’s framing of the practices and language of conflict and problem-solving. Lawyers are trained to act as advocates for their clients in an adversarial process; they commonly associate interests with the adversarial aspects of rights and justice. Therapists are trained to help people to develop coping mechanisms in support of their social relations; they commonly associate interests with individualistic aspects of personal agency and autonomy. Practitioners of the sciences (e.g., physicians, engineers) are trained to apply testable laws and theories of nature to human problems; they associate interests with objective criteria of biological and physical efficiency,
durability and dominance over nature. However, regardless of a practitioner’s vocational emphasis, the work of mediation is essentially the same; it is a conversational and communicative intervention. In this work, the use of language can be a source of conflict when people from different fields emphasize different meanings of commonly used terms in everyday discourses of conflict and problem solving. This is of general interest in dialogue, as I will discuss in relation to the term mediation in this chapter’s next section.

**Language Across Communities of Practice & Professional Boundaries**

Some of this dissertation’s keywords have taken on more than one meaning in everyday use. In researching, writing and revising this dissertation, I have found that the differences can be significant. For example, dialogue can be found as an equivalent term for informal social conversation, or for structured political discourse. It can be used to describe an intimate conversation among people who are not normally on intimate terms, or it can be used as a metaphor for a communicative kind of healing. Because individual words have multiple uses, language can be flexible. Language can also be confusing for the same reason. Consider the following.

We are in a meeting discussing the importance of the shapes of things, and someone mentions an apple. You hear apple and recall the red one that you ate for lunch yesterday. I hear apple and recall the green ones I saw in the cafeteria on my way to the meeting. This is a low risk situation; the colour discrepancy passes unnoticed because we are discussing shapes. The danger inherent to such low-risk situations is that they are very common; people come to assume from repeated experience that their own interpretations of words or notions are the natural or default interpretations. However, if the colour of apple becomes important later, and was not acknowledged at the outset, a clash might erupt. You claim that we agreed to the terms of red apples, based on the precedent-setting, historic apple of yesterday. I argue that we agreed on green apples, because there are no red apples in evidence, green is the colour they are today and we discussed apple today. Take this scenario and substitute for apple the language of “land for peace” in the Oslo accords, or “standard accounting practices” in
the recent US financial institution bailouts and the roots of intractable or cyclic conflict emerge.

In high-risk situations, small differences in the meanings of terms that are meant to be equivalent can generate conflict. The term *mediator*—meant to denote one who intervenes in a situation impartially on behalf of all parties at all times—is a case in point.

I was hired by a federal agency as an external facilitator for a group of representatives of the federal authority and some regional managers. They were under pressure to get results and were not of one mind on how to proceed. At stake were millions of dollars in funding and potential layoffs and forced retirements. Regional-level government employees and their federal-level counterparts often see each other as adversaries. In this case, the federal Minister in charge had decided that cuts were required, and that all levels of management were to be “empowered” in the decision-making process. The federal-level Human Resources manager who hired me—and who meant to provide me with a professional status in the conversation—introduced me as a *mediator* from the Justice Institute (i.e., JIBC) and SFU. By this, she was recalling her training in collaborative intervention at the JIBC, my expertise and the work of others from the JIBC and SFU in collaborative problem-solving, communication and conflict resolution. In short, she was emphasizing that I was there to help. However, one of the managers heard *mediator*, and recalled Vince Ready and Brian Foley, and openly refused to cooperate, accusing me of being there to meddle. We discussed this briefly in front of the group.

The manager’s refusal to cooperate was based on the following. Mr Ready and Mr. Foley are labour mediators and arbitrators in British Columbia, and are widely known for settling high-profile labour disputes. Their process involves positional bargaining, in which each side states a position, and the mediator evaluates the offers and makes counter proposals to both sides. For example, if a union wants a 7% pay increase, and management offers 4%, the mediator might tell the union that they should lower their demand and tell management that they will have to raise their offer. If the parties give equally credible arguments to justify their positions, the mediator is in a position to

3 This scenario is both an actual description of two separate, otherwise unrelated incidents and a composite of several situations, representative of my consulting work in the public and private sectors.
evaluate the evidence and recommend to the parties that they split the difference; the mediator then declares publicly that 5.5% is a fair compromise. The parties must agree, or risk looking unreasonable. Most of the process is done with the parties in separate locations, giving the mediator a chance to frame the discourse differently for each side and thus persuade the parties to accept counter-offers. On some issues, labour mediators side more with the union. On others, their recommendations favour management’s position. Over many years and many contracts, their decisions balance out such that at any given time they are biased in favour of one side, but on average are seen to be ‘neutral’. This process relies on memory—the data bank in which this averaging takes place—and illuminates memory’s role in different cultural contexts of meaning-making. I will return to the importance of memory when I develop my theoretical framework in the next chapter. For now, I will continue to discuss the situation at the federal agency.

The rationality of decision-making in labour bargaining culture is that of the mediator. It is hidden from the parties; otherwise, they would not need the mediator. One key to this process is the mediator’s role in the framing, construction and presentation of memory. In this case, memory is made concrete in the mediator’s written record of the binding agreement. All the private discussions with individual parties—which are needed to make sense of the agreement—remain hidden. Over time, the parties come to trust these mediators because they favour each side equally often, and are therefore seen to be even-handed. However, the parties never develop confidence in the bargaining process. Rather, they must believe that direct negotiation is inherently biased against them. They need a trustworthy mediator to even the score. If the other side wins a round, they will need the mediator to remind the other side next time that it is their turn to compromise. This is the predominant process of BC’s government-sanctioned labour bargaining culture.

The work that I was hired to do with the federal agency is the antithesis of labour bargaining. My goal was to get everyone talking to each other, making the information-sharing and decision-making as openly shared as possible. Rather than interpret for each of them as a separate party in isolation, my role was to help them define terms and test assumptions, and to assist the federal and regional managers to think and act
coherently. In other words, I intended to start a dialogue. Because of her experience with the longstanding history of government-sanctioned adversarial labour relations in BC, and because the federal government was paying my fees, the manager who resisted this process at the outset refused to accept that I was anything other than one more in a series of consultants planted by her management to secure—at her department’s expense—what management wanted in the first place. No promise, rational argument or gesture of confidence building would change her mind. Throughout the process that followed, she complied with the group’s requests, but never initiated anything constructive. Her communication was limited to disseminating information, and validating or rebutting the information that others presented. The group process flowed around her, never through her. She left her job a few months later.

The Role of Language in the Construction of Communities of Practice

The case of my intervention in the federal agency is an example of a small-scale clash of vocational boundaries. Here, people with different backgrounds (e.g., the HR manager who hired me, the regional manager who resisted my facilitation openly, and me) interpreted my role as an intervener differently. Each comes from a different group of people who share the knowledge, practices, culture and language of their vocation (i.e., a community of practice). The confusion about what mediators do stems, in part, from how interveners present to their clients what defines mediation. This is true for different kinds of interveners, consultants and experts who work in multi-disciplinary situations. Communities of practice define and stake out their own boundaries. Where boundaries overlap, confusion and conflict can arise. Boundaries must be managed.

Boundary management is important to consider in the study of communication in conflict and problem-solving, and in focusing on dialogue. First, there is the intervention and mediation aspect, which I have discussed so far. Second, there is the reasoning aspect. Reasoning frames conflicts and problems in complex and varied ways. The process of reasoning is influenced by logic. The content of reasoning (i.e., facts, history and information) is organized by one’s exposure to education, work, literature, the media, and one’s social networks. In Chapter 2, I will explore how the predominant
processes of reasoning in everyday life influence and frame communication in conflict and problem-solving. One salient aspect of modern, Western reasoning is the power relationship it affects between experts and lay people. This is an issue in dialogue-themed events, because experts are often the featured speakers. This puts the emphasis on technical content, and technical expertise. It creates a hierarchy in which members of professional communities have more power than others. They are said to be “qualified to speak.”

Professional communities are a special case of communities of practice in general. Like other vocational groups, professions define for themselves their logic, language and practices. However, professional boundaries are legally sanctioned and legislatively protected. Physicians define and regulate the practice of medicine via medical associations. Lawyers have law societies. Consumers of health care or legal services have a single-point source of information about those services. The same is not true of problem-solving and conflict intervention across all practices of everyday life. Non-professional vocations have evolved like professions, but without legally enforced borders. Since ancient times, people who have practiced mediation and intervention have come from many fields of learning and vocational experience. The branding or marketing of problem-solving and conflict consulting as mediation is a recent phenomenon.

Herein lies a major conflict and problem that this dissertation considers. People who act as experts and interveners in the practice of conflict resolution and problem solving, and those who teach them theory and method, have been involved in an unresolved competition for ownership of an activity (i.e., the vocational complex of problem solving and conflict intervention) that goes beyond the current self-constructed bounds of any one field. This is happening in a society that often relies on the so-called court of public opinion, the marketplace of ideas and an increasingly globalized, technology-oriented free-market economic system, to determine the processes that dominate various practices of everyday life.

Often, the competition for ownership of a given practice is played out via a competition for ownership of the words and phrases that define the practice. This is not obviously the case for the practice of dialogue. However, it is the case for mediation and
conflict resolution—which are both key practices in the vocational world of dialogue. In the next section, I will examine how the language of conflict and problem-solving interacts with the practices of intervention and dialogue-making. I will introduce some of the literature ahead of the literature survey chapter. I do this in the interest of making a case for the approach, relevance and timeliness of my dissertation.

**Language and Professional Boundaries**

Like the third dimension of the triangle model and the word *mediator*, most of the terms that are essential to my dissertation are common concepts and words from everyday life that have taken on different, special meanings for people from different vocations. For example, the predominant view of what is *mediation* differs between the fields of law and social work. As a result, the predominant view of what defines a particular method of communication that can be used in mediation (e.g., dialogue, debate) varies from one vocation to another. The same holds true for a given practice (e.g., problem-solving, negotiation) of everyday work life. Lawyers and social workers use different approaches that reflect the differences of culture, training and rationality between their vocations. I found in my research that people tend to not think about these differences; when pressed, they do not even offer opinions or guesses about how vocational differences matter. One effect of this lack of awareness is unrecognized miscommunication that can lead to confusion and clashes, like the one involving the regional department manager, the HR manager and me that I described earlier in this chapter. This is partly rooted in the ambiguity of terms that describe practices that are familiar to many and generally taken for granted by people who see themselves to be in the same situation.

The more common a term is, the less likely it seems that most people will be aware that it can carry different meanings for different groups of people, and that the differences matter. For example, where I live in Canada, it rains much of the time, people are familiar with umbrellas, and the term *umbrella* is not controversial. People take for granted that everyone agrees on the language and everyday practices of *umbrella*. On the other hand, most people in Canada get legally married at least once in a lifetime, yet, the term *marriage* is controversial. This is because Canada is one of
several countries in which the notion of marriage, and therefore the use of the term *marriage*, has been at the centre of a clash between groups that support legally sanctioning same-sex unions and groups that oppose it. Fifty years ago, the term *marriage* was uncontroversial, as *umbrella* is today. However, in this generation, public discourse (e.g., media attention, referendums) has made many people aware that *marriage* (i.e., the word and the concept it represents) has gone from being a private issue to a public issue. Using umbrellas and getting legally married are both everyday practices that are associated with commonly used words, yet umbrellas are not controversial and marriage is. All words and the everyday practices associated with them lie somewhere on a spectrum between these two positions.

The terms *conflict, dispute, resolution, problem-solving, negotiation*, and *dialogue* are also in common use, and each means different things to different people. However, the everyday practices associated with these terms are often interrelated, and sometimes overlapping. These practices are sometimes placed in the context of clashes like the one surrounding the discourse of *marriage*. They also take place in the context of situations that are not controversial, like the collaborative efforts of people who work together to design a product (e.g., an umbrella) for everyday use. In both cases these practices involve the same sets of activities, and it is not always apparent when the people involved are in opposition to each other and when they are united in search of a solution. This difference is sometimes described in the fields of negotiation and conflict resolution as a distinction between “us versus them,” and “us versus the problem.” This dissertation focuses on the language and practices of resolving conflicts and solving problems about the language and practices of conflict resolution and problem-solving.

Conflict resolution and problem solving can be thought of as different strategies for approaching the task of improving human relations and practices. Either might be seen as the normal approach, or primary framework, that defines a situation. In some cases, a stable relationship with ordinary problems and ordinary problem-solving gives rise to conflict. Resolving such conflicts results in new practices that re-define the relationship. Other cases begin with an acknowledged conflict, and use problem-solving as an interim or final step toward resolution. In either case, some approaches are incremental or ad hoc, and others are radical or transformative. Incremental approaches
leave intact the existing network of processes, relationships and ideologies. Transformative approaches change the framework of everyday practices. Electing into government a new political party is incremental. Negotiating a new system of government is transformative. However, electing a new party could lead to a change in the system of government. One cannot know the nature of a change, or of its effects, until after the fact. Georg Simmel (1955) described this as the cyclic nature of conflict in the relationship of any group to any other.

A similar connection exists in the relationship between problem-solving and negotiation. Situations change, giving rise to new understandings and the need to change existing agreements and processes. Situations framed as problem-solving focus on identifying cause and effect relationships, and identifying and making decisions about options. During problem-solving, there is always some negotiation. Situations framed as negotiation focus on arriving at an agreement for an exchange, or for a new understanding in a relationship. During negotiation, there is always some problem-solving. Regardless of which is viewed as the framework of a situation, or of where one might draw the line that differentiates decision-making from negotiation, both are deliberative communication processes in cycles of change. The situations discussed in this dissertation examine how intervention as an occupational practice and dialogue as a deliberative practice can be mutually supportive in this regard. This is the case for ad hoc decision-making, and for the case of transformative dialogue-making.

The Present Conflict of Professional Boundaries

The divide between mediation’s dominant community of law and the others became salient after Bush and Folger’s introduction of “transformative” mediation (2005b)—a concept based on Bush’s research in law and Folger’s in organizational

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4 A negotiated exchange of tangibles (e.g., goods, services) and/or intangibles (e.g., rights, assurances) is called bargaining in some fields. Arriving by consensus at a new understanding is called a negotiation, or negotiation of meaning, in other fields. These are different ways of framing the same process.

5 In British Columbia the so-called ‘evaluative’ style of mediation favoured by lawyers also dominates the practices of labour mediation, and in employment and insurance claims mediation. These areas of practice fall under a broad system of government administration. I found a similar situation when I practiced mediation in California in the 1990s.
development. Drawing from social construction theory, J. F. Handler’s notion of *dialogism* (2005b, p. 253), and a broad range of sources from law, conflict and intervention theory, gender and feminist studies, and social and political theory, Bush and Folger make a distinction between legal, settlement-focused mediation and transformative mediation—which is oriented to “relational values” (p. 2). Winslade (2006) makes similar distinctions in the context of social construction theory, M. M. Bakhtin’s notion of *dialogism*, and Foucault’s notions of discourse. He emphasizes the centrality of language and “discursive positioning” (p. 505) to frame mediation as an essentially narrative, ethical process, as opposed to a professional one. In studying the terms that mediators use to define their methods, Picard (2002) concludes “policymakers must be careful not to (intentionally or unintentionally) align themselves with a single ideology of practice” (p. 265). However, the existing government-run mediator referral rosters are all aligned narrowly with the ideologies of the institutions of justice and provincial or state government (e.g., the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Ministry for Children and Family Development in BC). They can only be considered ideologically neutral if one accepts that each government ministry is neutral, regardless of being run by political appointees, and administered by people who are bound to uphold the standards of various professions.

Both the literature and my experience in the field indicate that the predominant view of conflict intervention frames rights-based intervention as something separate from, and superior to, relationship-oriented “transformative” intervention. However, a few mediators frame mediation as the same dichotomy, but take the opposite position. In either case, the tendency to favour any orientation or framework can be predictably traced to the professional, occupational or vocational identity of the person who privileges it. This is evident in how interveners describe themselves. For example, most of the mediators I interviewed or observed who have a legal background identify

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6 This was the year that I completed my mediation training at the Justice Institute of British Columbia and went into private practice as a mediator and trainer. Dichotomies of interest-based mediation versus positional mediation, settlement-focused versus transformational, and lawyers versus non-lawyers were prominent in my training. I have continued to encounter them since then in the literature, at conferences and society meetings, and in training courses. From time to time, I get calls from lawyers who are shopping for a mediator who is a lawyer and who does ‘evaluative’ mediation, and who sympathizes with their client’s status (e.g., union, as opposed to management, or plaintiff, as opposed to defendant). I also get calls on occasion from prospective clients who specify that they want a mediator who is neither a lawyer nor evaluative.
themselves according to one of two paradigms: as rights-based lawyer-mediators who practice alternative dispute resolution (ADR), or as “recovering” lawyers who no longer practice law and who use an interest-based form of conflict management (i.e., an alternative to ADR). As the field grew and more multi-disciplinary theory emerged, I noticed an increased tendency for mediators to make distinctions, take sides and label themselves and others according to these dichotomies. This is an example of how language is instrumental in the construction of professional boundaries.

Underlying the language-based turns of the business of mediation is a professional bias that frames matters of everyday life that could fall under the purview of the justice system as falling necessarily under the purview of the justice system. First, the resolution of public and private problems was said to fall under a category of procedures denoted as “dispute resolution.” Without a clear definition of what constituted “dispute resolution,” it then became to many a privileged term of the legal profession. Nor was there a distinction made between mediation that was purely in the context of the institutional practices of justice, and mediation in the context of other practices of everyday life. It was not until 2002 that the American Bar Association took a position that mediation, per se, is not the practice of law. In Canada a similar situation has prevailed, resulting in increased involvement of provincial justice systems in sanctioning mediators (e.g., British Columbia Office of Attorney General’s Mediator Roster Society; Saskatchewan Justice Dispute Resolution Office; and Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General’s Rosters of Mediators in Toronto, Windsor and Ottawa).

In 2009, the Law Society of British Columbia began to define regulatory standards and limits of practice with respect to document preparation in mediation, and to make recommendations about what aspect of mediation practice to address next. Depending on the outcome of this process, British Columbia might become the first jurisdiction in the world to ban non-lawyers from some part of the practice of conflict intervention. This process does not set out to claim control of the field of intervention for the Law Society. However, the process brings under the Law Society’s purview the

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7 The more narrowly self-identified they were, the less flexible they proved to be about using a variety of approaches in problem solving. I found family law to be the specialty of practice that was overall the least flexible. However, I found a few family law lawyers who were among the most flexible of all lawyers in all areas of practice.
practices of mediation, and by extension, the mediators themselves. This is complicated by the fact that there is still no statutory or legal definition of what constitutes mediation, other than being paid to intervene in the resolution of disputes. There is also no official definition of what constitutes dispute resolution, even though the term is in common use in the field of Law. The case of the law society thus works on two levels; it is an example of the kinds of dialogue I examine, and it is a case of conflict and problem-solving in the vocational practices of conflict and problem-solving.

Perhaps the competition for ownership of mediation is nearly over. However, mediation is probably still far from becoming a regulated profession, or a designated specialty of one. It would take a long time for the Law Society to work out a coherent, enforceable regime to regulate all the core practices of mediation. Mediators themselves have tried for years without success. If the Law Society does take the position that any form of mediating is the practice of law, my hunch is that the only thing that would prevent non-lawyers from successfully overruiling them would be the enormous expense and effort involved in suing a law society. In any case, now is an important time to study this field; it is mature enough to be examined as an identifiable set of practices, but not fully settled as a closed design for the regulated practice of intervention in everyday situations. There is still opportunity to influence its development and influence how its practices and methods can be framed and applied. What is learned from this can be applied to communication in conflict and problem-solving in general.

The situation that I have presented here to set the context for my dissertation is the current state of the practice of mediation and the word mediation. I focused on mediation because it is one of the broadest, most diverse fields of practice. Mediation often demonstrates the use of dialogue under the most challenging conditions. It also involves various elements of intervention, negotiation, and decision-making—all of which are instrumental to communication in conflict and problem-solving. Mediation therefore has served as an entry point for my dissertation’s examination of the role of dialogue in discourses of conflict and problem-solving in general. With this context in mind, I will now discuss the strategy and plan of my dissertation.
Dialogue in the Conflict Triangle Model

So far, I have introduced some key issues of communication in conflict and problem solving that lend context to the questions of this dissertation. These issues correspond to the three dimensions of the simple conflict “triangle” model (see Figure 1) of communication as follows.

- The content of communication (i.e., words and what they represent) is instrumental in framing conflicts and problems. Language is subject to differences of interpretation. In practice, this can be a site of conflict.

- The process of communication in conflict and problem-solving is a form of intervention in everyday life. Different communities of practice frame and interpret conflicts and problems differently. These differences are sites of conflict.

- The relationship between content and process is complex. It is influenced by relations of power between experts and lay people, and among communities of practice. The nature of this relationship is described differently among communities of practice; a more comprehensive, or unifying term for relationship and emotion would improve the “triangle” model. The control of language is a factor in the clash of communities of practice. Content-based conflicts of interpretation and process-based conflicts of practice reinforce one another.

This original “triangle” model is certainly not enough on which to base a research framework. To begin with, there are two forms of the model. They reflect the biases of different communities of practice. Also, communities of practice are only parts of a larger societal system of science, commerce, administration, arts, leisure, and so on.

My strategy for dealing with these issues was to refine the model. This took into account the larger framework of the historical, social and technical contexts of the society in which dialogue events take place. In this larger framework, there can be other terms for the third dimension that enfold emotion from the behavioural sciences and relationship from the social sciences. One of the tasks common to conflict intervention
and problem-solving is to consolidate terms in this way. For example, if a couple goes to counselling and one partner says that they are there to discuss their divorce, and the other partner says they are there to discuss their reconciliation, the mediator would likely summarize this by saying that they are there to discuss their relationship.

To settle the conflict triangle issue, I chose the term *effect*. I noted that the term “effect” came up often in various contexts in dialogues on drug use and drug policy. Then, while surveying a number of published models of communication, I noted German scholar Gerhard Maletzke’s model of mass communication from 1963 (Watson, 2003 p. 162). While Maletzke’s model is now considered to be out-dated, I was impressed with its attention to issues of self-image in communication, its definition of “experience of content” as “effect” and its emphasis on a recursive, two-way influence between sender and receiver. This dynamic, phenomenological emphasis seemed a more apt description than other candidate terms (e.g., outcomes, structures, networks, artefacts). These other terms fit, but not as comprehensively as *effect*. Later, I will trace how I refined my understanding and conception of the triangle model to its current, more detailed form. The refined triangle model is shown in Figure 2.

*Figure 2. The Refined Conflict Triangle Model*

Having a refined triangle model was only one of the prerequisites for the dissertation’s research process. I needed working definitions of the key terms and
practices of communication in conflict and problem-solving. I also needed working definitions of the terms for different forms of communication that are found in everyday life, including dialogue. The terms and definitions would have to be flexible to accommodate the ambiguity of language, and would have to comprehensive to cover the range of ways that people communicate. I developed working definitions based on theories of mass communication, interpersonal communication, and intra-personal communication. My starting point was Stuart Hall’s mass communication theory, which I found to be consistent with the triangle model. I will discuss this theoretical framework in more detail in Chapter 2, in the literature review. What follows here is a summary of the key terms, which were used as coding categories in my conversation analysis of dialogue events.

**A Working Definition of Communicative Options**

Everyday discourse is a social interaction in which the participants must continuously decide how to respond to each other. One might take the lead in conversation, or one might choose to wait and respond. One might ask questions to better understand and appreciate what others are saying, or one might make clarifying or persuasive statements to be better understood. At any given moment in discourse, one can choose how to communicate from among many possibilities (e.g., storytelling, negotiating, emoting, joke telling). In my framework for analyzing dialogue in discourse, I categorize these many possibilities according to the following three groupings: *dialogue*, *debate*, and *diffusion*. Because they comprise the choices that one might take in the course of action in discourse, I call them *options*. Because this framework of options is integral to the combined theoretical and qualitative approach that I discussed at the beginning of this chapter, I ask you to keep in check any scepticism that you might have about this framework until I have finished developing my thesis of *three options*.

At this stage in the dissertation, and as a first approximation of its framework, the three options are defined as follows.

- **Dialogue** is conversation in which people discuss their perspectives openly and equally, and are not bound by predetermined procedural rules
for the flow of conversation or its outcome. Dialogue emphasizes the participation of everyone present, a “sharing of common content” (Bohm, 2004, pp. 30-31), and an “intention… to reach new understanding and, in doing so, to form a totally new basis from which to think and act” (Isaacs, p. 19).

- **Debate** is conversation in which people argue for the adoption and/or implementation of their pre-conceived positions on an issue, and against the arguments made by others. Debate emphasizes rational argumentation, reciprocity (e.g., equal “air time”) in the flow of conversation, and the settlement of an opposition of positions which are treated as incommensurable.

- **Diffusion** is the dissemination of information, arguments and position statements, via which people make their ideas and positions known to others. Receivers are not bound by procedure regarding how they receive and respond to what is disseminated. Diffusion involves movement, both as scattering and as mixing of information and ideas across time and space.

These terms are further defined and compared in Appendix A, p. 283.

In this framework, each option has a unique orientation, and each has features that are shared with other options. The orientations (e.g., being open to procedural change in dialogue, being committed to reason over emotion in debate, and the privileging of the autonomy of communicators in diffusion) define the options’ essential, unique features. The features that the options have in common (e.g., communicative practices such as asking questions, rhetoric, thought experiments) define moments of communication that can support any option. For example, a researcher might ask a colleague the question, “do you trust my data?” Such a question is ambiguous; it might be a genuine request for feedback, or it might be used indirectly as a rhetorical, argumentative statement, intended to defend the researcher’s integrity, and/or to put the colleague on the defensive. A skilled practitioner in debate, litigation, or examination would not ask such a question if it could undermine his or her own argument, case or
authority. Most likely, such a question is a conscious or unconscious move to pressure the colleague into truthfully disclosing his or her position, or to tell a lie. The colleague would tell such a lie to save face or avoid conflict. However, lying would also entrap the colleague into publicly claiming a position counter to her or his truthful one. Or, if the researcher asks the colleague during a heated debate, “why don’t you trust my data?” the answer might amplify the debate, or it might bring to light any number of issues that shift the exchange to a dialogue about trust in the relationship of the colleagues. Here, the researcher creates a potential bridge from one mode of discourse to another by offering options. In both cases, the form of the question and strategic timing of its use has the potential to shift the discourse from one option to another.8

What I have discussed so far about language, vocational communities, professional boundaries applies here. Identifying the salient differences among the three options entails an examination of commonly used terms and notions (e.g., conflict, mediation, everyday life) that mean different things to people from different fields. These differences in meaning shape, and are shaped by, differences in the cultures of different fields of work and scholarship. Such vocational culture differences sometimes underlie interpersonal and inter-vocational clashes. For example, in drug policy discourse—which is one of the dialogue studies of this dissertation—the term prevention is controversial. Law enforcement experts emphasize crime prevention. Drug user advocates emphasize prevention of the social conditions that contribute to addiction. Many claim these conditions stem from current legislation that focuses on law enforcement and prison terms for drug users. In this case, the politics of prevention is a social issue. This is analogous to the case of the Law Society and mediation. Here, the controversy of prevention is a professional issue, and the socially constructed meaning of prevention is a language issue. This is a more complex situation. Because there are a few professions involved (e.g., law enforcement, justice, public health), this disagreement has wide-ranging consequences in everyday life.

8 In my experience, closed questions (i.e., those that can be answered ‘yes’ or ‘no’) tend to dampen dialogue and amplify debate, and open-ended questions (i.e., those that cannot be answered ‘yes’ or ‘no”) tend to facilitate dialogue and put one at a disadvantage in debate. In dissemination/diffusion, closed questions tend to be more efficient, open questions more productive.
Now that I have defined the general problem, and the key terms, I will give an overview of this paper. In it, I will outline the chapters, following the general development of my theoretical arguments and reflections on the dialogue events. I will also discuss how the dialogue events that I use as illustrations are representative of dialogue in general.

Overview of the Dissertation

In this chapter, I have discussed the relationship between the technical terms and technical practices of conflict and problem-solving. I examined this relationship in general, and specifically in a situation that lends context to this dissertation’s research. I have argued that this relationship presents both a problem and an opportunity to improve dialogue design and practice.

In Chapter 2, I will review the literature and lay out my theoretical framework for the study of communication in conflict and problem-solving. The first section will examine the literature on dialogue design. The second section will show that key works on everyday life argue for a phenomenological and interpretive approach to the study of situations such as those examined in this dissertation. There is much in common between modern designs and ancient forms of dialogue. However, in modern Western society dialogue is grounded in the philosophy and science of the Enlightenment. It is also fragmented by so-called postmodern ethics and conflict. I will discuss this in relation to works on philosophy, critical culture studies and anthropology. The third section of Chapter 2 will examine conflict and problem-solving. It will identify approaches to conflict at the societal level, the interpersonal level, and the intra-personal level. I will discuss how widely disseminated models and methods of problem-solving are consistent with this dissertation’s notions of everyday life and dialogue. In the fourth section, I will discuss how communication studies can be applied to this dissertation’s research framework. Here, I will integrate Canadian communication studies with this dissertation’s notions of everyday life, dialogue, problem-solving and conflict. I will begin with Stuart Hall’s structure of social processes, and arrive at my theoretical contribution, the communicative options.
In Chapter 3, I will focus on the City of Vancouver Drug Policy Program dialogues. In these dialogues, I acted partly as an insider in a team, and partly as an observer. I had a role in process design for some of the dialogues, though not all. The focus of these dialogues was on policy and social change—which are aspects of the effect dimension of the conflict triangle model. In this chapter I will also introduce my qualitative research method, and the observation protocol that I developed for dialogue events. I will discuss how I used open questions in the debriefing interviews with dialogue event planners and participants. My analysis and interpretation of dialogue conversations and processes will focus on the research question that I posed at the beginning of this chapter. This question (i.e., how much time was spent in dialogue?) requires a simple quantitative analysis. However, the essence of this analysis is not in its quantitative method, but rather, in the more complex method of interpretation. The interpretation of the events and interviews is grounded in the dissertation’s theoretical framework and in the communication models I develop, beginning in the Preface, through Chapter 2.

Beginning in this chapter, and following through Chapter 5, I apply this framework to specific dialogue situations. In Chapter 4, I will examine dialogue as process, by focusing on the CLS “Resolving Our Differences” intervention. Here, I examine the life cycle of dialogue design from the inside out. I was the consultant on this intervention. Rather than advise the organization on how to design their process, I facilitated a consensus decision on dialogue design. This dialogue, in turn, was used to design a process for communication in conflict and problem-solving. In Chapter 5, I will focus on dialogue as content in the SFU Wosk Centre Afghanistan Dialogues. I acted solely as an observer, tracking how the content of dialogue emerges and evolves. Here we see how information, facts and narratives are negotiated via dialogue. Each chapter of the three qualitative analyses focuses on one of the three dimensions of the conflict “triangle” model. However, the focus of each serves mainly as a point of entry for each analysis. All three analyses are three-dimensional in content, process and effect.

These dialogues are comparable on many levels. They all involved negotiation, conflict and problem solving. They all involved planning, informed by principles of dialogue, conflict intervention and expert-guided problem-solving. They all involved
diverse groups. Following a phenomenological philosophy, I approach them as texts, rather than as evidence-based case studies. On one hand, each was unique in its purpose, content and specific process design. On the other hand, each was entirely typical of a diverse, multi-party, multi-disciplinary group dialogue situation. I will describe in each chapter how the dialogue situations, and their individual dialogue events, are representative of the timeless aspects of dialogic interaction, though they had settings that were particular to their topics and participants.

The main feature of the three situations that holds them together as a research study is their everyday nature. Time and space are important in this regard. The groups and events were diverse socially, ethnically, educationally, vocationally, geographically, culturally, and so on. These events involved relationship and confidence building, with a fluid cast of characters. They cannot be simulated in a laboratory study to isolate some aspect of everyday life, or of their participants. For example, one could not examine if interaction at an event was uniquely affected by the time of day (e.g., people being tired after a day’s work, compared with a morning event, when people might be more refreshed). The settings were too diverse in each situation for such an analysis to hold relevance. Each took place in a span of places and timeframes, and involved people in a full range of phases of their everyday routines and life experience. The everyday-ness of these events, and the diversity of their settings make them representative of the conditions of dialogue per se. As such, the interpretation of these events defies the empirical tests of the kinds of studies that to seek to find a pathological or clinical cause and effect relationship.

In Chapter 6, I will summarize and compare the results of my qualitative studies. I will also begin to synthesize those findings with my theoretical analysis. My analysis of the dialogue events will reflect on Lewin’s field theory, Kolb’s experiential learning model, mathematical combinatorics and Gadamer’s (2004) notion of a “fusion of horizons” (pp. 306 – 307, 374 - 375). In this thread of the dissertation, I use Gadamer’s fusion of horizons and the conflict “triangle” model to refine my model of communication in conflict. I synthesize this with Freud’s work and Lewin’s notion of identity spaces to refine my own notions of specific background and coherent groups. Collectively, these notions support my modified triangle model of content-process-effect in communication.
In the final chapter of this dissertation, I will extend my analysis to consider how the culture of everyday life frames dialogue and conversations in conflict and problem solving under the influence Western scientific rationality. Here, I will build on Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia, Weber's critique of scientific culture, Habermas' notion of interests, a critical theory of humour, Tannen's notion of an “argument culture” and my own notion of heteroscopia and my critique of so-called black-box thinking to illuminate certain conditions that go largely unnoticed and unchallenged in everyday life. The cumulative results of these theoretical and qualitative studies will converge here, as I make my case for three communicative options that can be navigated via moments of opportunity in pursuit of constructivist processes of dialogue and conversations in conflict and problem solving in everyday life.

**Overview of the Methodology**

This dissertation uses a grounded theory approach. Grounded theory originated in the qualitative methods work of Glaser and Strauss (1967). It is based on the idea that theory emerges from data. The data in question are observable facts that the researcher encounters; data need not be scientifically defined. The process involves observing situations with a research question in mind, and looking at data for patterns. The patterns become coding categories for further research. The categories are refined in a process of axial coding. The refined (i.e., axial) coding categories can be compared to explore how various factors of interest relate to one another. Such comparisons are called cross-cutting. Conclusions are thus grounded in what has been observed, without delimiting what might or should be observed.

In this dissertation, I begin with an analytical framework based on communication and conflict resolution theory. I apply mass communication theories from German Maletzke and from Stuart Hall, Rogers and Farson's theory of active listening, and the conflict theory ‘triangle’ model. The starting point for coding and data analysis is what I call the ‘yield’ of dialogue. ‘Yield’ in this case is the measure of how much of the communication in a dialogue event is dialogue, compared to all other forms of communication. The refinements and ‘cross-cutting’ extend the simple data analysis of ‘yield’ by applying interpretation theory (i.e., hermeneutics). This is where much of the
theoretical and historical work of the dissertation is applied. For example, Ricœur’s work on hermeneutics (1970), Habermas’s conception of ethical communication in public settings (1990), and Foucault and Gordon’s (1980) critique of power relations argue that the settings for any communicative event in modern, Western society have non-communicative backgrounds. These non-communicative contexts might limit the use of dialogue. My application of grounded theory thus seeks a nuanced reading of the texts of dialogue events through a critical, interpretive framework. This framework grounds my interpretation of the observed, coded data.

Because grounded theory is an iterative process, I will reveal my methods in an iterative way. I do so for two reasons. Firstly, this is the simplest way I have found to organize my reporting. I tried various ways, but could not find a better way than this to illuminate dialogues in relation to one another. Secondly, this iterative presentation of my method is intended to give the reader a sense of how the research process unfolds in relation to the dialogue processes that I study. This relationship between research on dialogue and dialogue per se is an example of what is shown in Figure 6 as the process dimension of communication in conflict and problem-solving. According to the ‘triangle’ model, the method of doing something and the ways that people communicate while doing that something exist in a feedback loop. In this loop, theory and practice inform one another. By presenting my methods as an iterative process, this dissertation shows how my conclusions develop.

My primary framework for a critical interpretive method is based on Ricœur’s *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation* (1970), and *History and Truth* (1965). Though this interpretive framework is critical of the social and political contexts of the dialogue situations, it is not intended to argue for or against any type of dialogue process. I do not treat dialogue as inherently good or bad. Rather, I acknowledge that it is desired by dialogue event planners. Some planners adhere to a notion of dialogue as a form of philosophical group inquiry about the relationship between thought processes and ideas. The Afghanistan Dialogues follow this path. Others use a more task-oriented notion of dialogue, in which groups solve problems that are specific to their community or organization. The CLS dialogues follow this path. In this dissertation, I apply critical
interpretive methods to all kinds of dialogue situations and events to assist practitioners who follow either notion.
2. Literature Review

In this chapter, I will review the literature on the theories and history that contribute to my theoretical framework for dialogue. There is relatively little scholarly work from which to draw theoretically or historically on the study of dialogue design per se. I will therefore focus on a few important works to show how current practice compares with ancient dialogue. I will then focus on each of the key terms in the dissertation’s title, beginning with everyday life. Theories of various aspects of everyday life establish the hermeneutic, or interpretive, approach of this dissertation. This area of scholarship—particularly in the writings of Freud, de Certeau, Bateson and Gadamer—argues for a critical, phenomenological approach to the study of dialogue. The literature on conflict and on problem-solving will place what I discussed in the Introduction about the current state of mediation in British Columbia in the larger context of Western, technological, democratic society. I will complete the development of my dissertation’s framework for studying communication by synthesizing the scholarly literature on the key terms (i.e., everyday life, dialogue, problem-solving, and conflict), with Stuart Hall’s structure of social practices in mass communication. The result of this synthesis is my model of three communicative options, applied via the conflict “triangle” model that I introduced in Chapter 1.

Dialogue Past and Present

The earliest Western tradition of dialogue for which there is still a record comes from Ancient Greece. Much of what is known of this tradition is found in the philosophical conversations of Socrates’ dialogues. However, the reliability of the account of those conversations is uncertain. One problem is the passage of time between the events and
the earliest surviving written records. Another problem is reporter bias. The original record of Socrates’ dialogues is that of his disciple, Plato, who advocates for his teacher’s method. It is therefore not an impartial account of the process. If there were alternative approaches to dialogue, neither written nor oral accounts of them survived. All that remains is Plato’s version of Socratic dialogue, which is characterized by the dramatic storyline and narrative form of the dialogue, and by the didactic style by which Plato records it for posterity. He renders the events and the literary form of his account of them inseparable. Socratic dialogue thus unfolds as both a history of the formation of Western knowledge and as a lesson in how to communicate persuasively and memorably.

Ancient Greece’s most noted alternative to dialogue for persuasive, memorable communication was sophism. There is no surviving record of sophist discourse; there are only select criticisms of the method and acknowledgment that it was popular. The sophists focused on style and memorization. Their vocation was the ancient equivalent of the modern practice of personal coaching. Sophist instruction provided wealthy politicians and traders with methods that today are commonly called solutions. I mean solutions in the everyday sense of technical products and protocol-based, pre-determined methods for doing things. Such methods are staged, by procedure, or via software—which often requires a consultant to install. Solutions are black boxes. Their designs are proprietary, and their procedures are said to be “user-friendly.” In sophist rhetoric, arguments, proofs and lessons were worded in rhythms and tropes that were designed to be easy to remember and to apply in various combinations to any variety of situations. In business today, solutions abound. My Google search turns up over 50 million results for “software” and “solutions.” A search for the phrase “software solutions” turns up over 30 million results. Solutions are thus as mystical and popular today as sophist speeches and tropes were in Ancient Greece.

The main critique of the sophist method—a criticism that survives in Plato’s work—is that it puts style over substance. Sophist solutions appeal to the masses, but cannot actually prove anything. Plato’s student Aristotle builds on Plato’s critique,

9 The Faculty of the Bodleian Philosophy Faculty Library of the University of Oxford claim to have the oldest surviving manuscript of Platonic dialogue, written in 895CE.
defining logical, dialectic proof as the essence of knowledge formation. The process of logical proof through dialogue is thus founded in the Academy and handed down through generations of practice. This establishes the Western tradition of the fusion of scientific logic and knowing—i.e., \textit{episteme}. Western knowledge is constructed in language, and transmitted via a community of practice—i.e., an \textit{epistemic community}.

The irony of sophist education is that it focused on being memorable and effective, and ultimately became forgotten and associated with disingenuous, specious rhetoric. Philosphic dialogue would go on to give birth to Enlightenment science and modern epistemology. \textit{Sophistry} ceased to be an art, and became an insult in academic life. Rhetoric survives in everyday life, but not as the predominant mode of knowledge formation. If there is a modern remnant of the ancient application of sophism, it is perhaps to be found in the rhetoric of sales and marketing of products and ‘solutions’. Marketing per se is not bad; promoting ethical, decent, and just ideas and things benefits society. The problem with marketing—which I propose was likely one critique of ancient sophistry—is that the same techniques can be used to successfully sell unethical, indecent and corrupt ideas and things. Sophism, or marketing, can thus be said to be effective, but ethically ambiguous.

This ethical ambiguity brings us again to the issue of staged technique—which I introduced in the Preface, beginning on page XIV. Staging makes use of interventions and arguments that are prepared in advance. It is based on an expert approach to cause and effect relationships. Such an approach might work for certain kinds of mathematical, chemical and physical applications, but not for problems and conflicts of a social nature. This was a problem for ancient dialogue and it is still for modern discourse. The staged quest for consumer or participant “buy-in” raises the suspicion that someone is trying to “sell” something with more regard for the seller’s interests than for the buyer’s. Dialogue, by contrast, seeks transparency. It involves all its participants in identifying and resolving doubt and controversy. This applies to the content and process of conversation. By questioning assumptions, dialogue intends to make practical use of scepticism, not to give cause for suspicion. In other words, a key historical distinction between dialogue and its alternatives is the role of the actors in process design. In dialogue, meaning and
process are transparent and *participant-negotiated*. In the alternatives, meaning and process are black-box and *expert-designed*.

In modern dialogue, Isaacs (1999) emphasizes the role of actors in process design. Dialogue requires attention to how one approaches it, how it “join[s] each person differently,” and how its participants “create the container” (p. 293). Modern dialogue is distinguished from its alternatives by what ‘powers’ modern, expert-driven ‘solutions’.\(^\text{10}\)

The core question for the modern scientific and management model is What is efficient and effective? This is clearly a valid concern. And yet, of itself, it is also utterly inadequate. The Greeks had a different question, one that sought to integrate the Good, the True and the Beautiful. They asked, What is the good life? (p. 312)

Isaacs argues that modern scientific and technological reasoning has limited the Western tradition of dialogue. We have lost the substance of the ancient Greek “line of thinking, in part because of the successes of modern science. [However,] human beings must invent their own meaning if they are to have any” (p. 313). What Isaacs describes as *invention* in the new practice of dialogue design is what I describe throughout this dissertation as a *negotiation* of meaning. Isaacs rejects the technocratic “quest for power, for what is effective, divorced from any larger sense of meaning of purpose or aesthetic” (p. 313). He advocates for a return to the ethos of Platonic dialogue.

### Designing Dialogue – from Plato to Bohm

The new school of dialogue design has much in common with what is known of the ancient Greek form of dialogue. An event or conversation might be scheduled or planned, but there is negotiation in, and about, the process. For example, the dialogue event recorded in *The Symposium* is preceded with a negotiation of process design. There is to be a dinner party at the home of Agathon—a popular Athenian poet—in his honour. It is an important social event, with a theme, attended by prominent guests. Apollodorus of Phaleron narrates. On their way to the event, the participants consider dialogue and its alternatives. Plato’s brother Glaucon asks Apollodorus, “is not the road

\(^{10}\) In current marketing jargon, “powered by” is the action phrase of choice for “solutions.” My Google search of the phrase “powered by” yielded 5.09 billion results.
to Athens made for conversation?” This is a rhetorical statement; the road to Athens is also metaphor for the discourses of meaning-making. Apollodorus tells Glaucon, and the others present, the following.

“I love to speak or to hear others speak of philosophy; there is the greatest pleasure in that, to say nothing of the profit. But when I hear any other discourses, especially those of you rich men and traders, they are irksome to me…” (Plato and Jowett, 1993, p 2.)

They are opting for philosophy and dialogue over sophistry and speechmaking. This leads to an exchange between Apollodorus and Companion about attendance. Apollodorus explains that Aristodemus had earlier met Socrates, “fresh from the bath and sandalled; and as the sight of the sandals was unusual, he asked whither he was going that he was so fine” (p. 3). He recounts Socrates’ reply as follows.

To a banquet at Agathon’s, he replied, whom I refused yesterday, fearing the crowd that there would be at his sacrifice, but promising that I would come to-day instead; and I have put on my finery because he is a fine creature. What say you to going with me unbidden? (p. 3)

There follows a brief negotiation about this; it focuses on humility. They know that Agathon will welcome the humble Aristodemus, “who, like Menelaus in Homer, to the feasts of the wise unbidden goes” (p. 3). On the surface it might appear inconsiderate for Socrates to invite an unbidden guest. However, this is shown in the conversation to be part of the ethos of what Isaacs would term ‘approaching’, ‘joining each person differently’, and ‘creating the container’. Plato indicates that in dialogue all are welcomed; Apollodorus reports that the unbidden guest arrives to an 'open door'. Agathon welcomes him warmly.

As Agathon’s dinner party unfolds, there is more negotiation over ‘approaching’, ‘joining’ and ‘creating the container’. The host and guests reach consensus on hospitality, drinking, entertainment and seating. The host takes care to create conditions that will result in democratic dialogue by instructing the servants to “imagine that you are our hosts, and that I and the company are your guests; treat us well, and then we shall commend you” (p. 4). When the guests finish eating and get to the business of focused

11 There will be rhetoric and speechmaking, but they will be held to the higher standard of dialogue.
conversation, they agree to be sensitive to those who will not, or who cannot, drink alcohol. Lastly, they agree that the ‘flute girl’ will be a distraction; she is sent to entertain elsewhere. With dinner, entertainment, social bonding and negotiations now resolved, the host and guests begin their conversation on the theme of Love.

As Agathon’s dialogue event unfolds, each member of the party is invited to speak as an expert in praise of Love. The host has chosen the topic, but the guests speak from their own experiences, each in their own voice. There is much questioning and clarifying along the way. There are no time limits, no Robert’s Rules of Order, no Parliamentary procedures. The conversation ends as the guests grow tired and a group of drunken revellers interrupts the party. The story, though, does not end with the end of conversation. Apollodorus takes care to point out that the last to leave is Socrates, who takes a bath at the Lyceum, goes to work for the day and retires to his home that night. Ancient dialogue thus begins and ends—is grounded—in the mundane, routine activity of everyday life.

_The Symposium_, like other ancient dialogue texts, documents content (e.g., the philosophical definition of love) and the process (i.e., dialogue event design and Socratic method). It serves as both a textbook on a particular subject and as a user manual for the community of practice of Plato’s Academy. Modern dialogue does not have a community of practice—i.e., a recognized discipline. However, there are practitioners in different fields who work from shared notions of dialogue as a special form of communication. They also disseminate their own texts on dialogue design and practice. Three influential dialogue advocates generated interest in dialogue in the 1990s: physicist David Bohm, management consultant William Isaacs, and organizational development scholar Edgar Schein (1985; 1991; 2000). Each builds on the ancient notions of dialogue in the context of modern, everyday political and business life.

Bohm’s notion of dialogue emerged from his reflections on group communication. He began to formalize his thoughts in the 1980s in collaboration with facilitators Donald Factor and Peter Garrett. Their process involved groups of twenty to forty people who met regularly to explore ideas, values and assumptions. The groups did not have task-oriented agendas. Like Plato’s dialogues, they began with a theme and gave participants
an opportunity for self-reflection. Topics evolved in their ongoing dialogue events.\textsuperscript{12} The unifying philosophical theme was the relationship between societal problems and human consciousness. Unlike \textit{The Symposium}—which had six guests for an evening—Bohm’s dialogues did not end in one meeting. Accommodating twenty or more people required an ongoing series of events. The events were facilitated to keep a focus on process and reflection. In \textit{On Dialogue} (1996), Bohm describes the main principles and goals of dialogue groups, including the following.

“Dialogue is really aimed at going into the whole thought process and changing the way the thought process occurs collectively” (p. 10).

“A group of twenty to forty people is almost a microcosm of the whole society” (p. 14).

“A basic notion for a dialogue would be for people to sit in a circle...in the dialogue, people should talk directly to one another, across the circle” (pp. 17 - 18).

“In the dialogue group we are not going to decide what to do about anything” (p. 19). “\textit{We are not trying to change anything, but just being aware of it. And you can notice the similarity of the difficulties within a group to the conflicts and incoherent thoughts within an individual}” (p. 24).

“People in any group will bring to it their assumptions...what is called for is to suspend those assumptions, so that you neither carry them out nor suppress them” (pp. 22 - 23).

If we can see what all of our opinions mean, then we are sharing a common content, even if we don’t agree entirely” (p. 30).

William Isaacs applies Bohm’s vision of dialogue to action research in his consulting and facilitation work. In \textit{Dialogue and the art of thinking together} (1999), he defines Bohmian dialogue “as a sustained collective inquiry into the processes, assumptions and certainties that compose everyday experience” (25). He also emphasizes a distinction between dialogue and consensus; dialogue focuses on self-reflective group learning and shared meaning, whereas consensus focuses on finding “a view that reflects what most people in a group ‘can live with for now’” (26). To achieve dialogue, Isaacs focuses on building individual and group capacity. He defines the practice of dialogue according to four key behaviours: active listening (see Rogers, 1987), respecting (i.e., seeing others as legitimate, and honouring boundaries),

\textsuperscript{12} In the sense that I use the terms in this dissertation, Bohm, Factor and Garrett’s ongoing group relationships are \textit{situations}, and each group meeting is an \textit{event}. 
suspending (i.e., Bohm’s notion of suspending assumptions, described above), and voicing (i.e., “speaking to the common pool of meaning being created by all the people together and not to each other as individuals” (p. 174)).

Edgar Schein takes a more application-oriented approach to dialogue than Bohm. In “On Organization, Culture, and Organizational Learning” (1993) he argues that dialogue is essential to the culture of group and organizational problem-solving. Schein retains Bohm’s notion of suspension, but applies it as a “problem-formulation and problem-solving philosophy and technology” (p. 40). He argues, “if problem solving and conflict resolution in groups is increasingly important in our complex world, then the skill of dialogue becomes one of the most fundamental of human skills” (p. 41). He supports Bohm’s and Isaacs’ notion that listening is as much about introspection as about gathering information. He thus makes the following distinction between dialogue and structured active listening (e.g., sensitivity training).

Dialogue focuses on getting in touch with underlying assumptions...

Schein applies the principles of conversation as Bohm does (i.e., equality of members, “guaranteed ‘air time’,” sitting in a circle, exploring the process to gain understanding rather than to solve external problems, drawing on personal experiences (p. 45)). However, his interventions are with groups that have specific mandates to produce things. From this we find that the purpose of Schein’s dialogue is organizational learning, but its ethos is the same as that of Isaacs, Bohm and Plato.

**Dialogue Past and Present Summarized**

According to the literature, dialogue has thus evolved from the pure philosophy of ancient Greek aristocrats and artists, to the “philosophy and technology” of modern Western corporate workers and consultants. In either case, the ethos of dialogue is timeless. Dialogue is inclusive; everyone gets to speak, to share perspectives. Dialogue is reflective; it challenges individuals to suspend their assumptions and to better understand their own experiences, and it challenges groups to clarify assumptions and create a common story. Dialogue is respectful; people participate as equals, relationships are important, there is genuine concern for dignity, physical and emotional
comfort. Other elements of dialogue—the details of practice—might vary over time and place. Apollodorus tells of groups of six having one-off dinner parties and dialogue. The modern dialogue makers tell of larger professional and corporate work teams having dedicated, ongoing meetings. The ancient Greeks reclined on cushions. Modern Americans and Europeans sit on chairs in circles. The ongoing relationships in all forms of dialogue revolve around a series of encounters. Such a series is what I call a situation, while each conversation is convened at a dialogue event. Regardless of the situation or event, the people involved come from—and return to—the larger space and timeframe of public and private life. This is the space of everyday life. In the next section, I will review the literature that discusses how this space sets the context for the dialogue situations and events discussed in this dissertation.

A Range of Definitions of Everyday Life

Various works have approached the topic of everyday life via studies of philosophy, culture, or communication. They range from being societal in scope, to framing everyday life as one’s experience of one’s body. The former lends itself to the application of theories from politics and economics, particularly Marxism. The latter lends itself to the use of analytic methods from natural science, particularly Freudian psychoanalysis. This dissertation accepts the range of what can be everyday life, rather than what most would agree it is, or only what experts in a particular field would agree it is. From this perspective, anything that is part of one’s lived experience in the modern, industrialized, Western world therefore qualifies as being part of one’s everyday life.

As a setting for everyday life, the industrialized world of the 21st Century is very much an evolved product of the so-called Project of the Enlightenment. The aspects of everyday life that influence people’s thoughts and activities—what they do ‘for a living’, what they believe about the world and what they hope for in their lives—have been largely framed and shaped by developments that took root in the Enlightenment. In particular, the influence on Western philosophy of Cartesian dualism has been a theme common to various current, philosophical and interdisciplinary perspectives on what is everyday life. Most of these perspectives have rejected outright Descartes’ separation of the subject and object, and focused instead on a phenomenological approach.
Henri Lefebvre is arguably an exception among such philosophers who explore what is ‘everyday’ in life. In *Critique of Everyday Life*, Lefebvre (1991) finds Cartesianism alone to be inadequate for conceptualizing everyday life. However, he embraces the synthesis of his self-described “Cartesian background” and critical Marxism as an indispensable dialectic in which, “everything is contradictory and…we only move ahead in and through contradictions” (p. 55). In this conception of ‘everyday life’, contradictions are not merely tolerated, they are essential to change and evolution.

The scope of everyday life has been defined in the literature over a range of everyday experiences from societal to personal. For example, in *The Phenomenology of Everyday Life*, Pollio, Henley and Thompson (1997) regard everyday life broadly as the whole realm of “human activities and experiences” (p. vii). Their approach is grounded in the phenomenological work of Merleau-Ponty, which “is meant to provide a way of overcoming Cartesian dualism…” (p. 5). In *The Body and Everyday Life*, Nettleton and Watson (1998)—who are also grounded in the work of Merleau-Ponty—assert that, “everyday life is…fundamentally about the production and reproduction of bodies” by human beings “who both have and are bodies” (p. 2). The distinction between have and are, and the need to consider them in relation to each other in an explicitly non-Cartesian way is also central to their phenomenological approach to culture and what is everyday life. Both approaches to phenomenology (i.e., the macro- and the micro-personal) also hold that a sociology of everyday life must consider more than that which can be observed by the researcher. In particular, one must consider intent. This includes the philosophical understanding of *intentionality*, such as Heidegger’s (1962) notion of care or concern (i.e., *besorgen*). It also includes the commonly understood notion of *intention*, in the sense that researchers have studied in the context of how people make decisions in the face of uncertainty, flawed reasoning or limited data (e.g., Kahneman, Slovic, & Tversky, 2005).

Whether focused on the macroscopic or on the personal level, writings on everyday life reveal complex relationships among different levels of organization in society. These levels range from the isolated experiences of individuals to the largely shared experience of all members of society. The levels interact, or inform each other, but not always visibly. For example, in *The Everyday Life Reader*, Ben Highmore directs
readers’ attention to Trotsky’s view of “a cultural politics located at the level of the
everyday, alongside a recognition of everyday life’s invisibility” (86). According to
Trotsky, “in the study of life it is particularly manifest to what extent individual man is the
product of environment rather than its creator. Daily life, i.e., conditions and customs,
are, more than economics, ‘evolved behind men’s backs’, in the words of Marx” (Trotsky,
quoted in Highmore, 2002, p. 86). In this conception of everyday life, the broadest
societal influences dominate lives down to the personal level. It also implies that such
influences are both hidden and of a suspicious nature.

Exposing society’s hidden—and typically oppressive—dominant forces is a
common theme in contemporary social, economic and philosophical thought. In The
Practice of Everyday Life, Michel de Certeau (1984) examines the ripple effect of such
forces acting at the level of ordinary individuals and at the level of those in power. He,
too, is concerned with the Cartesian problem of the subject-object relation. However, for
de Certeau, the subject-object relation is equivalently a “discourse-object” relation. He
characterizes Western culture as a commerce-dominated, social-communicative system
in which consumers are not necessarily bound by the intended uses or meanings of the
products available to them. The producers of these products have encoded their
intentions into the practices implied by their use as “an ensemble of procedures [which
are] schemas of operations and of technical manipulations” (p. 43). However, consumers
find ways to re-interpret ‘products’ and devise alternate methods for their use. A critical
examination of everyday life therefore becomes an exercise in identifying potential
opportunities for subverting the status quo.

De Certeau’s thought experiment for this is “Walking in the City”—which is
Chapter VII of The Practice of Everyday Life. His city is Manhattan, as built by its
“ministers of knowledge” and inhabited by ordinary people who are blind to “the illness
afflicting both the rationality that founded it and its professionals” (p. 95). He makes a
distinction between the practices of the ‘professionals’ who run the city to serve their
own interests, and the practices of ordinary people who inhabit it. ‘Professionals’ are
those who have the power to act strategically. The strategy of their design is to create a
space that is unaffected by the movement of its inhabitants in time (i.e., a time-neutral
dimension of “nowhen”) and through space (i.e., an omni-dimensional “everywhere”). The resulting stability resists the forces of the city dwellers’ routines, practices and traditions that would oppose the agendas of the professionals. This renders the city a “universal and anonymous subject” (p. 94). It also causes the inhabitants to conform to its homogeneity and anonymity according to the strategy of the professionals who “seek to enclose the people in the ‘panic’ of their discourses” (p. 96).

De Certeau’s city is an archetype for all society. Here, the inhabitants are positioned to act tactically; they walk—literally and metaphorically—via diagonal shortcuts, rather than along the perpendicular lines of the grid of the city’s spaces. They can also do the equivalent in their other everyday life practices, in ways “that are foreign to the ‘geometrical’ or ‘geographical’ space of visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions” (p. 93). In this way, inhabitants are able—tactically—to negotiate alternative uses for that which the designers produced with strategic intention. They exploit the features intended to limit their autonomy in order to enhance it. De Certeau’s critical theory thus suggests that there is a feedback loop that operates on the form and function of any design for human practices.

The relationship between form and function is not inherently repressive or emancipatory, nor is it neutral. In de Certeau’s metaphorical city, it is negotiable. There is not built into the design of human social organization a Cartesian, ‘one-way sign’ that limits communication between subjects who are all powerful and objects who are at their disposal. Nor is there necessarily a socially constructed boundary line between elites and inhabitants, as some critical theories and ideologies have suggested about Western society. However, notions of boundaries and borders are an important part of the analysis of conflict and problem solving in everyday life. A non-Cartesian, phenomenological approach needs a more fluid, borderless notion of social relations at all levels of everyday life. In such an approach, different fields of knowledge and their

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13 This is a timescape, analogous to a landscape, which is designed to privilege the system over its inhabitants. Examples include: the situation and ‘text’ involved in being ‘on hold’ while waiting to speak over the phone with a phone company help desk technician; the rhythms of waiting for a medical exam or procedure (e.g., the presence of a timeless assortment of dated reading material); the absence of clocks in casinos.
communities of practice come together, and (e)merge true to their original forms, and equally true to each other’s.

In *An Anthropology of Everyday Life*, Edward T. Hall (1992) makes a multi-levelled case for such an approach. On one level, he notes how his work on *proxemics* is informed by consulting with a linguist friend, and by the work of Maurice Grosser—who studied how artists depicted what today would be called ‘personal space’.

On another level, he notes a transformational, historical “metacommunication” (p. 60) that transfers ideas between different disciplines. On yet another level, he notes how his personal experience working for the US government, supervising Navajo and Hopi construction workers on Indian reservations taught him that time and space are more liveable as zones of negotiation, and less constrained by boundaries than Western culture recognizes. This is easy to see when different cultures interact, as in Hall’s example of obvious, mainstream vs. aboriginal, culture differences. It is also true in the more subtle culture differences between people who live in the mainstream culture, but have different occupations. This presents an important challenge; how can conflict intervention theory integrate the dimensions of form (i.e., use of space and organization of people and resources), function (i.e., social and occupational practices) and feedback (i.e., communication in all its varieties of negotiation, dialogue and other such forms)? To understand better how this can be applied to analyzing communication in conflict and problem-solving, I turn to the work of Gregory Bateson.

**Everyday Life and the Map-Territory Relation**

The form-function-feedback loop is essential to the phenomena of cultural, social, technological and communicative change in everyday life. It can also be understood as an extension of the problem of the ‘map-territory relation’ that Gregory Bateson (2000) discusses in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Bateson notes a relationship between the primary process of interpreting a term or action literally, and the secondary process of distinguishing between a word—which is a kind of map—and the act or thing it

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14 Bateson’s example was the influence of scientific discoveries on Impressionist painters and the later influence of painters on areas of scientific interest in the 20th Century.
represents—which is the territory depicted by the map. The map and territory are separate—like Descartes’ subject and object—and also connected. One must perform both of the seemingly contradictory processes of framing and reflecting. Bateson calls this frame of simultaneous representation and interpretation “play” (p. 185).

“Play” is an essential part of the encoding and decoding at work in negotiation, dialogue and problem-solving. However, as Bateson (2000) notes, an approach to ‘play’ that depends on a Cartesian dualism (i.e., a separation between the map-maker/user, and the territory depicted by the map) represents both a limitation of his hypothesis, and implies the following warning to humanity.

If we continue to operate in terms of Cartesian dualism of mind versus matter, we shall probably also continue to see the world in terms of G-d versus man; elite versus people; chosen race versus others; nation versus nation; and man versus environment. It is doubtful whether a species having both an advanced technology and this strange way of looking at its world can endure. (p. 337)

Bateson (2000) discusses a partial solution to the problem of Cartesian dualism in the “Effects of Conscious Purpose on Human Adaptation,” an essay in Steps to an Ecology of Mind. Purpose, intention, mutation and learning represent future-focused pathways of a higher, unifying process of mind. Ultimately, they lead to a better society, one in which it is possible to achieve deep interpersonal connections based on Martin Buber’s (1970) “I-Thou” relations, one in which humans are in harmony with animals and the ecosystem and one in which the arts are a transcendent human force in the world (pp. 452-453).

For Bateson (2000), future-focused pathways do not resolve entirely the problem of map-territory and subject-object (or mind-body) relations. Such pathways must work coherently with interpretations of past events for social transformation to occur. The map-territory relation thus presents the following problem of intentionality. “What is on the paper map is a representation of what was in the retinal representation of the man who made the map; and as you push the question back, what you find is an infinite regress, an infinite series of maps” (p. 460). According to Bateson, pushing the question forward, so to speak, results in the same problem of infinite regression, unless one considers emotions and [interpersonal] relationships as operations that “bridge” mind
and body (p. 470). “Ecology of mind” therefore has three dimensions: cognition (i.e., mind), action (i.e., body) and their bridge (i.e., “effects of conscious purpose on human adaptation”). These three dimensions thus emerge as essential elements of conversations in conflict and problem solving.

If everyday life is the terrain of individual conversations in conflict and problem solving, then group discourse is its existential mapping. Storytelling and narratives are the past-oriented maps of the territories of people’s personal and collective activities. The same holds for future-oriented maps. Plans, designs and contracts are subject to the same ‘ecology of mind’. The ‘map’ of discourse, therefore, is not merely an after-the-fact representation of some reality; it is a mediator between an idea and the reality intended by that idea. This feature of discourse is omni-directional in space and time; it applies everywhere, both forward and backward in time. It therefore has the potential to unify people, anywhere, anytime to affirm their collective strategic ideals and intentions to bring about change.

**Social Resistance and Critical Theories of Everyday Life**

The bridge between terrain and map is also where innovators, revolutionaries and dissenters can collaborate and act radically to transform social structures and relations. In ‘walking the city streets’ of everyday life, map-territory relations are mediated tactically at every level of social status. Even at the level of the most elite, one must answer to a higher level of power and knowledge (e.g., science, faith, an ideology of production) than one’s own. One’s own level is never completely revealed. Everyone therefore has a unique map that represents only part of the full picture, and is interpreted according to the bias of one’s experience—including one’s education—one’s interests, and power relations.

Everyone brings to the communal time and space of everyday life a unique map of their view of the terrain of each situation in which they coexist with others. It might seem natural to believe that another who shared one’s experience would have a similar view of the so-called reality of the situation. However, separate representations that cover the same terrain do not agree; the interpretive flexibility required for ‘play’ results
Reconciling the differences requires a level of interpretation that considers all aspects of the situation, not only the facts. The whole map of the terrain of one’s everyday life represents what H. G. Gadamer (2004) describes as one’s *horizon*. The construction by two or more of a new, shared map of the terrain of everyday life is a *fusion of horizons* (*Truth and Method*, pp. 306-307). Their communication is a map-making process, and their discourse must cover a changed, changing and changeable terrain. In this case, people can—and must—act intentionally, tactically and strategically by disclosing, comparing and synthesizing the maps of their ‘horizons’. The changes and refinements that they make consensually to their own maps can result in new narratives and action plans for radical change. When they engage in dialogue to reach consensus on a narrative, they have achieved what Bohm calls “common content” (see pg. 33).

In de Certeau’s theoretical notion of the metaphorical city, strategic practices belong to the elite. However, in the real world of everyday life they are available to those at any level, under the right conditions. This is due, in part, to the experience that the ‘inhabitants’ have of the actual workings of their communities, institutions and organizations. The same combination of skills and system-knowledge that aids slackers and malingerers can be used by various others to work around faulty and oppressive systems. For them, such bending and breaking of the rules is often the only way to meet the demands imposed by the designers. In other words, the practices that they are forced to develop to meet the demands of the system also equip them to beat the system. As long as quotas and milestones are met, and unauthorized behaviour goes unseen, the authorities do not know that their rules and specifications do not work as planned. The higher-ups develop an unwarranted confidence in their expertise and a false trust in the systems they have designed.

Critical theories frame the experience of everyday life in Western society as increasingly constrained by the rationality of Western science. Beginning with the Age of
Enlightenment, and more rapidly since the Industrial Revolution, conventional social change has been defined by empirically based reason. Various writers have noted how such conventional change has led to increasing levels of scientific rationalization and a corresponding loss of human freedom. Weber (2001) writes of *disenchantment*. Heidegger (1977) writes of the problem of society becoming subservient to technology by trying to master it. Marcuse (1991) writes of the problem of false needs in an industrialized society. Foucault (1995) writes of the problem of disciplinary punishment in the modern ‘carceral’ society. Lyotard (1984) writes of a so-called ‘postmodern’ breakdown of science and progress as grand, unifying narratives of Western society. Habermas (1971) critiques the technical rationalization of markets, administration and government institutions. Each of these critiques calls for a radical shift in society to prevent a total loss of individual freedom.

Both the past-focused part of creating common content and the future-focused work of socially constructing a new order are done through discourse. Some—such as Bohm (2004) and Isaacs (1999)—have proposed that the work can best be done through pure dialogue. Others, like Jürgen Habermas (1984/1981; 1987/1981), have proposed that the work can best be done through a rationally based dialogue. Others, like Raiffa (1996, 2002), have treated the problem of decision-making and change primarily as a function of negotiation. For them, conversation is a means to the end of a rationally based, empirically sound, optimized, efficient outcome; dialogue and negotiation are sometimes distinct, sometimes overlapping parts of problem solving and conflict management. If there is a distinction to be made between the two, it is in the non-Cartesian notion of intent. Negotiation ideally seeks to do something. Dialogue ideally seeks to be something. Dialogue is partly a means toward problem solving and conflict management, and partly it is an end in itself.

*Everyday Life and Culture*

Everyday life is also found where and when intra-cultural and intercultural interaction takes place. In other words, it is found where and when societal (i.e., cultural, political, religious/secular, professional/occupational) and personal (i.e., family, vocational) experiences inform and influence one’s ordinary experience of any or all of
one’s private activities and public activities. Everyday life is therefore the space and timeframe of potential cultural change. Sometimes, the change is evolutionary and subtle, like the way workplace dress codes change from one decade to the next. Other times, the changes are striking and radical, like the sudden appearance of women and people of colour in the American workforce during the Second World War.

The characteristic pattern of how a particular group of people interacts socially is one definition of group (e.g., national, regional, or professional) culture. The method for identifying such a characteristic pattern can come from any of a number of different fields of study. For example, culture has been widely treated in sociological studies as a measure of change in the evolution of an organization or group (Hesselbein, 1997, 2009; Weisbord, 1987; Deming, 1986). Culture has also been defined in communication studies as the language, values, traditions, beliefs and customs that people share and learn (Samovar & Porter, 2001).

Culture can also be related to those aspects of life from which one believes one derives one’s sense of identity. Kurt Lewin (2000b) studied how people form their identities as a combination of various aspects of their life experience. Some of one’s life experience is built on one’s sense of self, some on one’s family identity, some on one’s vocational life, and so on. Each aspect represents a cultural influence. Dominant influences across a population are what are generally understood to be a culture or culture group. Non-dominant influences, or other influences that affect a culture but do not lead it, are what are generally understood to be sub-cultures. The special case of a sub-culture that opposes the dominant or mainstream culture is what has been termed counterculture. Everyone mediates a set of cultural identities anchored to their identity factors (e.g., languages, physical characteristics, national and cultural roots, and occupation). These identities interact and combine to define one’s unique worldview, or ‘horizon’.

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15 Here, I make a distinction between professional/occupational experience as the public part of everyday work life, and vocational experience as the private part of everyday work life.
**Everyday Life Summarized**

*Everyday life* is the total environment of space and time in which people coexist in their ordinary family, work and community activities. In the dominant Western culture, perceptions of human interaction are framed in terms of the cause and effect principles of modern science. These principles are grounded in the Cartesian rationality of the Enlightenment. However, modern and so-called postmodern philosophy, ‘new science’, sociology and critical theory look beyond the Cartesian framework of subject-object relations. The non-Cartesian framework approaches everyday interactions with an interpretive—i.e., phenomenological—process of systematic reflection. Because people interpret situations through the filters of their experience, the researcher is neither neutral, nor detached from the situation being studied. In a critical non-Cartesian framework, social resistance and diverse narratives are not merely possible; they are essential. Communication in everyday life thus emerges as a personal and cultural *dialogue*. Here, discourse challenges the assumption that Western scientific reasoning is value-neutral. Instead, individuals and groups seek negotiated meanings and shared narratives based on their everyday life experiences.

**Conflict and Problem Solving**

Conflict management and problem solving are interwoven, organic, and essential to the work of social change. Radical change runs counter to a tendency of socially constructed models and theories to impose structures that are deterministic, predictable, bounded and linear. In phenomenology and in the so-called new science—unlike the predominant, linear, Cartesian, Newtonian conceptions of cause and effect—one finds that the natural evolution of social experience more closely resembles phenomena like crystal growth, biological evolution and colour. On one hand, everyday life is shaped by some randomness, arbitrariness and mystery; it is here that one finds love, trust and a sense of play. On the other hand, people seek rational and social order; it is here that one finds justice, confidence and a sense of control. The tension between these two sets of needs is felt deeply when there is a discrepancy between what one gets out of a relationship or transaction, and what one expects or hopes to get. I will refer to the personal emotional experience of this tension as *dissonance*. The personal social
experience of dissonance, as one interacts with others, is my working definition of conflict.

**Simmel and Global Conflict**

Like the word *conflict* in its common usage, the social concept of ‘conflict’ in the English-speaking world ranges from what is clearly in the public sphere on the largest scale (e.g., war) to what is clearly in the private sphere on an intrapersonal scale (e.g., self-deception). People often regard or use the concepts of *clash* and *conflict* interchangeably, and with an emphasis on the adversarial aspects. However, there is an important distinction to be made between what is conflict per se (i.e., the general case) and what is merely a clash (i.e., a specific kind of conflict involving opposing positions, actions and attitudes). In conflict, people do not necessarily think, act or feel in direct, conscious or observable opposition to one another.\(^{16}\) For a conflict intervener to claim that two or more people are not in conflict because they do not feel like they are, or because there are no observable signs of them clashing with each other, is to misunderstand the nature of conflict entirely.

As Simmel (1955) notes, conflict and peace are:

…so interwoven that in every state of peace the conditions of future conflict, and in every state of conflict the conditions of future peace, are formed… In historical reality, each of the two conditions uninterruptedly relates itself to the other. (p.107)

The conditions of conflict originate before one realizes it during times of peace, just as the conditions of peace originate—at first unrecognized—in times of conflict. In that sense, there is no clear borderline between war and peace. When one speaks of being in conflict, one is taking a linguistic turn that is as much a matter of interpretation as it is anything real. Such interpretations are influenced by one’s preferences, goals and biases to such an extent that they feel like foregone conclusions. By the time one

\(^{16}\) Here, I invoke two variations of a content/process/effect triad, namely positions/actions/attitudes and thinking/acting/feeling. Positions and thoughts that frame one’s perceptions are the content element of one’s experience in the moment of conflict. Actions are the process element. The resulting feelings and attitudes frame or define the content on a ‘go-forward’ basis. This cycle of intent-action-effect is defined fractally for this case in Hall’s model above.
communicates such a thing as falling in love, stubbing one's toe, or making an oral contract in business, it has already all but 'happened'. Therefore, conflict is grounded partly in the contexts of one's social interactions and discourses, and tied to the fulfilment of one's needs-based aspirations and interests.

Conflict in everyday life is a social transaction that often happens via language. Because what one says is a partial disclosure of what one thinks, communication in conflict is both personal and public. Even if one's personal life is kept secret, one's personal experiences will frame and influence one's public interactions. Likewise, seemingly unrelated situations in different parts of the public sphere can be influenced by one person's experience of them. Three important—and diverse—sources bear this out: Georg Simmel (1955), Kurt Lewin (2000b) and Paul Ricœur (1970). They use different approaches to interpret the phenomena of everyday life. However, these approaches work together to create a coherent framework for contextualizing and analyzing the everyday situations that I have researched for this dissertation. My focus in developing this framework will go from the macro level of society to the micro level of personality, first with Simmel, then with Lewin, and finally with Ricœur's work on Freud.

Simmel (1955) emphasizes what he calls “man's need for accentuation.” He ties this to the transitions between states of war and peace in which the following holds at the societal level.

Peace does not follow conflict with the same directness [that conflict follows peace]. The ending of conflict is always a specific enterprise. It belongs neither to war nor to peace, just as a bridge is different from either bank it connects. The sociology of conflict thus requires, at least as an appendix, an analysis of the forms in which a fight terminates. These forms constitute interactions not to be observed under any other circumstances. (p. 107)

Following on this, one's interpretation of the moment at hand is the determiner of where one sees oneself in the cycle of conflict. A corollary of this is that when someone throws the first punch, they have in a sense falsified any claim that a state of peace exists. However, the reverse cannot happen; one cannot prove that the most recent blow will turn out to be the last punch. Because hostilities could break out, no current state of peace proves that there is no war. Peace can be ‘falsified’, but not war. Because of this
indeterminacy of transitions, the boundaries between war and peace are not borders; they are zones or regions in both time and space. They are only known with certainty in hindsight.

**Lewin and Social Conflict**

Kurt Lewin (2000a), too, is concerned with boundaries, but at the interpersonal level. He introduces the concept of a life-space map, in which different components of one's identity are in relation either as discrete elements, or as overlapping regions. These regions are not merely spaces on a diagram; they represent real, physical, individual and multi-party groupings and their spatial domains. A simple example is shown in Figure 3. In this example, an individual is influenced by four categories of identity, two of which are determined by education and vocational experience. An important part of Lewin's research focused on the role of education in shaping one's identity and everyday life activities. In the example, this individual is more heavily influenced in his vocational life by his college education, than he is in his sense of being a citizen of Canada, or in his sense of gender identity.

*Figure 3. Identity Spaces*
Lewin also finds that cultural differences in education between two countries result in “regions of very different degrees of freedom and sharply determined boundaries of these regions” (Lewin, 2000a, p. 19). For example, he found in the 1930s that the American practice of giving students exams twice per year resulted in American students being less independent and less flexible overall than their counterparts in Germany who were not subjected to exams. This can also be applied to professional differences. For example, Foucault (1995) argues that the overseers of disciplines make use of examination and the partitioning of space in order to limit the ability of people to act in their own interests.

It follows from Simmel and Lewin that patterns of conflict stem simultaneously from the ordering of systems at the societal level and at the intra-personal level. A model of conflict based on the patterns of order at either extreme, or any level between them would be too narrow. Human problems and conflicts in everyday life follow an order that is better modelled with respect to fractal geometry and stochastic systems. Fractal geometry, based on the work of mathematician Benoît Mandelbrot, was introduced in the 1970s. It departs from the practices of modelling nature according to linear cause-effect relationships that gained prominence, beginning 300 years earlier with the Enlightenment. In studying how conflicts and problem-solving evolve, one can find common themes of iteration, feedback and recursion—which are the basis for fractal forms. Because of dissonance—as I defined it at the beginning of this chapter—there is a human tendency to embrace both the known and predictable, and to seek out the random and unknown. The former is the basis for the dominance of Western empirical science, and the latter is the basis for the so-called “new science” of stochastic systems and processes (Wheatley, 1994).

**Freud and Intrapersonal Conflict, Memory & Dissonance**

In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901/2001) Freud makes an important connection between memory and the interplay of language, and culture. He begins by discussing the relationship between preserved memories and repressed memories in the individual. There is no simple forgetfulness. Instead, there are levels of “interfering complexes” that come from different aspects of “personal reference (i.e., the personal, family and professional complexes) [which] prove to have the greatest effect” (p. 40).
Different aspects of one’s identity interact in various combinations to intervene in one’s memory processes. The repression of memory serves mainly to shield one from the discomforts brought on by the recollection of things that are painful or unpleasant. However, what is repressed is sometimes revealed via slips of the tongue, or parapraxes. Freud cites the work of Meringer and Mayer in locating such “contaminations” of trains of words in the “floating” or “wandering” movement of “speech images” (p. 57). In this wandering movement, the boundary between the recalled and the repressed is made fuzzy (i.e., overlapping and/or shifting), rather than fixed like roads and borderlines on a map. The imprecision of the boundaries is partly based in the imprecision of language.

Memories reside in the repressed zone when they are too difficult to bear in the conscious, preserved zone. They move from the repressed zone to the preserved zone by being altered enough to become tolerable. Freud regards the movement of memory from the conscious to the repressed as both an unconscious and an intentional act. He states that, “if a survey is made of cases of mislaying [memories], it in fact becomes hard to believe that anything is ever mislaid except as result of an unconscious intention” (p141). Freud then connects this purposefulness back to aspects of ‘personal reference’ as follows.

It may be surmised that the architectonic principle of the mental apparatus lies in a stratification—a building up of superimposed agencies; it is quite possible that this defensive endeavour belongs to a lower psychical agency and is inhibited by higher agencies. (p. 147)

One consequence of this is that nothing is personal, familial or professional in isolation. These different aspects of personality interact at the subconscious (i.e. ‘lower psychical’) level. Moreover, ‘stratification’ is not a hierarchy; these aspects can interact at any level. In The Interpretation of Dreams (1999), Freud makes the case for how this is possible, and why it is important to open the path between the ‘lower’ and ‘higher’ levels. His goal is to demonstrate that, “if one has been able to trace a pathological idea… back to the elements of the patient’s inner life which produced it, then it will disintegrate and the patient will be freed from it” (p. 80). Freud introduces to the world what his patient ‘Anna O’ calls the “talking cure,” by introducing the individual to her or his subconscious.
Although Freud did not discover the subconscious, he was the most influential among those who first located it in the psychical territory of everyday life. The contiguous pathway between higher, conscious levels and lower, subconscious levels of memory presents both a problem (i.e., self-deception, distortion, confusion) and an opportunity (i.e., self-revelation, creativity). Paul Ricœur (1970) notes that psychotherapy is a revolutionary concept, in part, because “Freudianism aims at being a realism of the unconscious,” without which we are doomed to “a humiliation of our narcissism” (p. 431 - 432). More importantly, as Ricœur argues throughout *Freud & Philosophy*, Freud provides something better than a mere relational index of dreams, memories, or fantasies and their meanings; he opens up interpretation itself as a “discipline of reflection” (p. 420). He expands interpretation into a more complete theory of psychology, guided by both orthodox and critical orientations.

The Freudian approach of interpretive reflection is useful to reveal the deeper meanings of discourse on the intra-personal level, and on the social and societal levels. Integrating this approach with other critical approaches (e.g., Marxian political economy) is Ricœur’s contribution to the “discipline of reflection.” In Chapter 7, I will discuss more fully the application of Ricœur’s work, following what I learned from observing dialogue events. For now, I will focus on language and culture, particularly on work life culture, in the discourses of conflict and problem-solving in everyday life.

Ricœur locates in language evidence of the shifting nature of a psycho-social, intra-personal zone of consciousness. This is what I described earlier as a zone, or fuzzy boundary. He is concerned with ‘distortions’ and confusions as follows.

For my part I would characterize this distortion as the confusion or blending of the infra- and supralinguistic. On the one hand, the dream mechanism borders on the supralinguistic when it mobilizes stereotyped symbols parallel to those ethnology finds in the great unities of meaning known as fables, legends, myths; a good part of the “pictorial representation” in dreams is located on this level, which is already beyond that of the phonemic and semantic articulations of language.

On the other hand, displacement and condensation belong to the infralinguistic order, in the sense that what they achieve is less a distinct relating than a confusion of relations. One might say that dreams arise from the short-circuiting of the infra- and the supralinguistic. This jumbling
of the infra- and the supralinguistic is perhaps the most notable language achievement of the Freudian unconscious.

In conclusion, the linguistic interpretation has the merit of raising all the phenomena of the primary process and of repression to the rank of language; the very fact that the analytic cure itself is language attests to the mixture of the quasi language of the unconscious and ordinary language. (pp. 404 – 405)

The movement of consciousness between interpersonal boundaries works the same way as the movement between intrapersonal boundaries (i.e., from the secondary, via infralinguistic ordering, to the primary via supralinguistic ordering). Both movements are facilitated by language—which often depends on the use of equivalent or synonymous wording to explain, clarify, illuminate and sometimes negotiate the meaning of a memory. Differences in the exact interpretation of a synonymous or equivalent term can also be confusing. Such confusion is to the infra- and supra-linguistic interpretation of meaning, as the game broken telephone is to the mechanical processing of sound.\(^{18}\)

**Two Orientations of Disenchantment: Competition and Accommodation**

Over the course of the last 12 or 13 generations, predominant Western thinking and culture have turned away from beliefs that stood for thousands of years. Traditional notions that formerly gave meaning to everyday life—e.g., cyclic time, ecological holism and creationism—have been rejected in favour of evidence-based science. However, the inherent human need to live a life that is meaningful in a more traditional sense has not

\(^{18}\) In broken telephone, players form a line and the first player whispers a word into the ear of the second player, and so on, until the message has moved to the last player in the line. Normally, not much changes from one player to the next. However, following a series of minor confusions and distortions, the word changes, often with comical results. Sometimes, there is a radical change from one player to the next, demonstrating how easily meaning can be muddled. I have used this game dozens of times in communication courses to demonstrate the problems of transmission. Occasionally, a student will intentionally change the word to sabotage the game, thus giving me an opportunity to demonstrate language’s potential for resistance and subversion. In one of my classes, a group of ten SFU students—including two or three ESL students—managed to accurately pass the word *constabulary* all the way down the line—demonstrating that undistorted transmission is possible. My application of this concept to the transmission of meaning among all levels of intra- and interpersonal zones of consciousness is intended to reflect all the possible outcomes: unintended distortion, intended distortion, and undistorted transmission of message *content*. Transmission of *meaning*, on the other hand, is a different issue.
changed. There has been a resulting disenchantment with the Enlightenment ‘project’ (Smart, 1993; Lyotard, 1984; Weber, 2001/1989), which has led people toward either of two orientations: competition between the dominant order of the Enlightenment project and those traditions it was intended to supersede, or accommodation between the old and new orders. What makes these two paths important is that they both influence how people engage in discourse in public life. This is seen in conflicts over ethical issues. For example, Tannen (1998) argues that the Western news media tend to frame controversial issues as dichotomies of secular fundamentalism versus religious fundamentalism, whereas “Asian philosophy and culture suggest alternatives to the polarization that typifies Western culture” (p. 221).

One effect of the orientation I have termed ‘competition’ is described by Habermas (1987) as a “colonization” of the “lifeworld” by the “system,” resulting in “structural violence,” fractured communication and suppression of social integration (Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2, p. 196).\(^{19}\) To the proponents of scientific, technological rationality this is not catastrophic; the system will ultimately prevail for the good. As a case in point, Milton Friedman sincerely believed that capitalism would optimize charitable giving; he was eulogized not only as the greatest proponent of markets, but also as a great enabler of philanthropy (Meyerson, 2006). To many who do not share Friedman’s point of view, the dominance of the market system means that everyday life—in the so-called “lifeworld”—is being defeated by scientific/capitalistic determinism. Here, the Western competition between secular and religious discourses is conducted as a zero-sum game.

Accommodation—the other orientation—is a kind of détente between scientific determinism and non-scientific (as opposed to unscientific) tradition. In this case, each side seeks to protect its turf while striving to build a better world on its own terms. Some seek radical change and a new order that can embrace the best of what society has. Some seek an entirely new order, while others seek some level of return to earlier ways of being. The détente path varies, for example, from the so-called ‘green’ movements to

\(^{19}\) The ‘competition’ I have in mind here is analogous to Herbert Spencer’s (1864) notion—commonly miscredited to Charles Darwin—of “survival of the fittest.” However, unlike the environments theorized in natural selection, “lifeworld” and “system” are social constructs. Thus, Spencer’s or Darwin’s rules of order do not necessarily apply. ‘Selection’ is not ‘natural’, it is *negotiated.*
Heidegger’s (1977) call for a “free relationship to technology” in “The Question Concerning Technology.” On this path, secular and traditional discourses have the potential to focus on tolerance and synthesis. For example, Heidegger’s “free relationship to technology” resonates equally well with critical theories of technology and with the Sufi saying, “to be in the world, not of it.” One finds relatively few proponents of this path in the academic world, but more in other walks of life.

The bias against accommodation stems from the rejection of traditional, holistic notions of space-time by the majority of Western academic disciplines since the Enlightenment. However, in contemporary academic thinking, a holistic approach has experienced a revival in some areas. It has gained the support of renowned people from a range of disciplines, including physics (e.g., David Bohm), chemistry (e.g., Ilya Prigogine), psychology (e.g., Clare W. Graves and Ken Wilber), organizational development (e.g., Margaret Wheatley and Marvin Weisbord) and economics (e.g., Michael Polanyi). These proponents of a more holistic notion of space-time have educational backgrounds in science and are involved in other fields in a significant way. Bohm, for example, was a physicist and was highly involved in the philosophy of dialogue; Polanyi was a chemist and Fellow of the Royal Society and was involved in political and social action against the Nazi and Soviet regimes. These are people who have found themselves wearing multiple hats, and have learned from necessity to struggle with the question of how all their hats could rest on one head.

Space-Time and the Scientific Rationality of Everyday Life

In an earlier section, I discussed how phenomenology and sociologies of everyday life are based on holistic notions of space-time. Space-time is also in the most general, theoretical sense, a universal scientific concept. This is as much a philosophical matter as a numerical conclusion. The scientific relationship between different points in space and time is a complicated coordinate system; navigating it requires a mathematical conversion developed by Hendrik Lorentz and applied most notably by Albert Einstein as a thought experiment in *Relativity* (1961). Karl Popper uses statements about space and time to demonstrate universal statements of scientific logic.
Likewise, Einstein uses relations of space and time in a talk on religious beliefs to argue that “the aim of science is to establish general rules” (Science and Religion, 1982, p. 47). In each case, we find the rationality (i.e., reason and logic) of science used to define the rationality of everyday life.

There might be better examples to support the claim that the rationality of Western science is the rationality of all of Western everyday life. However, the case of Popper and Einstein is important to the discussion at hand because the two were prominent in an indirect dialogue, a kind of virtual negotiation about the philosophy of science involving the likes of Alfred North Whitehead, Bertrand Russell and Kurt Gödel, which dominated the first half of the last century. Had Popper succeeded in his effort in their ‘dialogue’ to “persuade [Einstein] to give up determinism,” Einstein would have resolved his famous debate with Niels Bohr and left behind a more coherent, more ‘correct’ theory of Relativity (von Mettenheim, 1998, p. 2).

These examples highlight how modern science and rationality have achieved coherence. The rationality of science has become rationality per se in Western life, including the special case of communication in conflict and problem-solving. The predominant notion of space-time can thus be related to this dissertation’s triangle model in all three of its dimension. In the process dimension, there is coherence between the space-time of physics, and the space-time of James Carey’s (1989) modes of transmission (i.e., space-oriented communication) and ritual (i.e., time-oriented communication). In the effect dimension, scientific discourse facilitates socio-cultural, communicative change (e.g., Bohm’s dialogue work, Polanyi’s activism). In the content dimension, the scientific rationality influences many discourses of everyday life. This has been noted with respect to various disciplines. For example, the evolution of post-Romantic painting, beginning in the 19th Century (i.e., impressionism, post-impressionism and ‘pointillism’) has been directly connected to the influence of ‘scientific treatises’ by French chemist Michel Chevreul [1786-1889] and American Physicist

Composer/musician Phil Lesh (2005) describes how musicians draw from new scientific theory in an effort to achieve coherence between art and multiple disciplines of science. This is a phenomenological approach, “designed to bring a larger sense of reality back into human consciousness” (p. 36). In this case, the lyricist, composers and performers draw on “tools that had been in use for thousands of years” (p. 36), recent advances in astronomy (p. 114), academic research on [and involving] ‘consciousness-expanding drugs’ (p. 35) and ESP (pp. 192-193), and research on applied solid-state physics and acoustics (p. 215).

Some of the most important reflections on the hegemony of Western science are found in literature. Mary Shelley’s (1818) Frankenstein, or the Modern prometheus, and H. G. Wells’ (1895) The Time Machine use realism and conventional literary forms to provoke in readers a critical reflection on the effects of science. In the 20th Century, beginning with Yevgeny Zamyatin’s (2006) influential 1927 novel We, more speculative

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20 There is some disagreement between Rewald and Hartt on the timing of this; Hartt claims that Chevreul’s earliest influence was on Post-Impressionists, and that Impressionists were more likely influenced by the lighting and urban lines of Paris. Rewald claims that Impressionists were either exposed to Chevreul’s work, or were influenced by the work of others who were familiar with Chevreul’s ideas. Either way, there is evidence to support my proposition that science influences art, and vice versa, and that there is some level of dialogue and negotiation at work associated with an important form of communication in everyday life (i.e., visual art).

21 In 1784, the English natural philosopher John Michell theorized in a letter to the Royal Society that if a star were as dense as our Sun, and 500 times the Sun’s diameter, the gravitational force of its mass would be strong enough to keep light from escaping. Thus was born the concept of a “dark star.” In December of 1967, the concept was brought out of obscurity when the American physicist John Wheeler (b. 1911), first used the term “black hole” to describe a modern empirical basis for this phenomenon, in a lecture at NASA Goddard Space Center, entitled “Our Universe: the Known and Unknown.” That same month, Robert Hunter’s lyrics for the song “Dark Star,” were first performed by the Grateful Dead at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, CA, and later recorded live (Grateful Dead, 1969, track 1). The Grateful Dead (1972) also inspired the Epilogue→Prelude sections of this essay.

22 Based on the Harvard University research of Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert.

23 In 1971 composer/bassist Phil Lesh worked with Ned Largin, who was then doing experimental work on digital signal processing at MIT. Largin’s poster of Mr. Lesh playing his modified Alembic bass guitar could be seen prominently through the door of Largin’s lab throughout the 1970s when I worked in the materials science lab down the hall. Ned Largin graduated from MIT with a degree in Humanities, and went on to collaborate musically with the Grateful Dead, the Jefferson Airplane, and Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.
treatments of science use conventional literary techniques to depict dystopian societies in which science and scientists play a central role [e.g., Ayn Rand’s (1938) *Anthem*, and George Orwell’s (1949) *1984*]. Later novels such as Joseph Heller’s (1961) *Catch-22*, and works from the so-called ‘postmodern’ era like Kurt Vonnegut’s (1969) *Slaughterhouse-Five*, and Neal Stephenson’s (1995) *The Diamond Age* make use of more self-reflective writing and fractured, shifting perspectives. By making ironic use of abstraction, these works—ironically—establish a more concrete connection between the process of communication in the novel and the process of communication in the story told by the novel. In the so-called ‘postmodern’ era, “an unprecedented split is taking place. Those who refuse to re-examine the rules of art pursue successful careers in mass conformism by communicating, by means of the ‘correct rule’ the endemic desire for reality with objects and situations capable of gratifying it” (Lyotard, 1984, pp. 74-75).

Lyotard (1984) is concerned about more than mere artistic banality. He exposes an emerging crisis located at the intersection of the processes of everyday life that are described by popular art forms and the processes per se of those art forms. Critical reflection on society and culture must thus go hand in hand with critical reflection on language and on processes of communication. The story that we tell defining who and what we take ourselves to be as a society is connected to how we tell it. Lyotard proposes that the ‘grand narrative’ of Western civilization “has lost its credibility… [this] decline can be seen as an effect of the blossoming of techniques and technologies since the Second World War” (p. 37). This combination of the ‘techniques’ of capitalism and the ‘technologies’ of science lies at the base of Lyotard’s call for a new kind of critical reflection.

One answer to Lyotard’s challenge can be found in Eco’s (1989) proposition that “work which is calling into question its own forms and assumptions has a valuable function—it teaches us how to operate with agency within a highly mediated world” (*The Open Work*, p. 83). This is one way of arguing that the rationality of science has come to dominate the rationality of everyday life. Eco sees the role of art in creating the Western grand narrative as both historical and natural, because “in every century, the way that artistic forms are structured reflects the way in which science or contemporary culture views reality” (p. 13). Eco also claims, “contemporary art makes the new scientific
paradigm seem normal by expressing it in culture” (p. 90). Whether or not this is good depends on how good or bad science-based reasoning is for Western society.

From a narrow reading of Antonio Gramsci’s widely disseminated notion of hegemony and Lyotard’s notion of the breakdown of grand narratives, it might seem that Eco is confirming that art is instrumental in helping science facilitate what Lyotard terms “an internal erosion of the legitimacy principle of knowledge” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 39). However, Eco regards the art-science nexus as more of an opportunity than a problem (Farronato, 2003, p. 144). This sentiment appears in Eco’s semiotics work where he claims that it is no ‘accident’ that emergence of “poetic systems” in modern music coincided with the articulation of Heisenberg’s complementarity principle in physics (Open Work, pp. 15-16). His message is—among other things—that there is at least as much potential for science to be a socially ‘curative’ or emancipatory force, as there is for it to be the dark force of so many dystopian visions of the future.

Eco’s dialectic of faith and rationality is not bound to the spirit of any particular age, or to the ethos of any particular group. This is a theme in Eco’s *The Name of the Rose* (1983). Clarke and Kubric (1968) take the same position in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and Stephenson echoes this sentiment in his cycle of novels situated in Baroque times and in the futuristic *Anathem* (2008). There has always been optimism about the potential for what we now call ‘science’, in opposition to its ideological, faith-based detractors. By showing how science and technology work in everyday discourse, they advocate for a more optimistic view of science and technology than is found in various non-literary works of contemporary critical theory.

However, any such optimism must be based on the potential for people in their everyday lives to negotiate in ways that are both *pragmatic* and *constructivist*. For that potential to be realized, decision-making in the public sphere must be rational, have achievable goals and processes, and have the kind of participation that results in commitment and confidence. Such results would be emancipatory for individuals and groups of all kinds. They would produce and reproduce the conditions necessary and sufficient for the kind of social evolution that has been envisioned throughout history.
Epistemic Communities and Conflict

One significant social and cultural effect of this process of production and reproduction is the formation of epistemic communities—i.e., communities of practice that share a coherent system of beliefs, knowledge, methods of interpreting information, and conventions of problem-solving. The creation and transmission of memory-based information helps epistemic communities to define the boundaries of their knowledge, culture and power. Such information is the basis for the policies and procedures that frame their practices and processes. The role of intent in this process is illuminated by Stanley Fish’s (1976) notion of interpretive communities. Fish describes interpretive communities as “those who share interpretive strategies not for reading (in the conventional sense) but for writing texts, for constituting their properties and assigning their intentions” (p. 483). Texts inform and persuade because they are written to be interpreted in a particular way. Meanings are not to be “extracted,” because they are “encoded, and the code is assumed to be in the world independently of the individuals who are obliged to attach themselves to it” (p. 485). According to Fish, the directions for interpreting texts “will only be directions to those who already have the interpretive strategies in place. Rather than producing interpretive acts, they are the product of one” (p. 485). It is thus its social nature that makes a community epistemic.

Foucault (1980) takes the opposite approach to illuminate the role of effect in meaning-making. He begins with the notion of episteme as the “strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the statements which are possible those that will be acceptable…and which it is possible to say are true or false” (p. 197). Episteme is characteristic of its time. For example, in Discipline and Punish (1995) he argues that the discourses and practices of everyday life are subtly framed by the sciences of medicine and criminology.24 Foss and Gill (1987) cite Foucault to argue that epistemic, discursive practices are rhetorical. In other words, the framing and transmission of knowledge is not merely rational, it is persuasive. They use Disneyland as an example. In the theme park environment, the architecture, assigned roles of the visitors and the de-sexualized sameness of the employees combine to define one’s

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24 I will discuss this in relation to the CLS situation in Chapter 5.
whole experience of the park. Thus, “the form that fun assumes...is clearly specified and leads to a particular knowledge or truth about what fun is...Particular roles are created and constrained by the discursive practices and their rules.” (p. 396). This is different from Fish’s epistemic community—which is formed by individuals attaining a sense of belonging. Foucault’s epistemic community results directly from the architecture, via the encoded discourse of modern scientific reason. The overall effect, then, is what Foss and Gill describe as “a powerful discursive system that succeeds at making people accept as normal what they generally would not, enjoy what they ordinarily would not, repress aspects of themselves that they generally would not, and not question what they generally would” (p. 397).

Fish’s and Foucault’s notions of epistemic communities are radically different. Fish (1976) claims to have made “the text,” (and, by extension, any artefacts of discourse) “disappear” (p. 485) behind the intentions of individuals who seek to find meaning as a community. Foucault claims that intentions are irrelevant; the individual has, in effect, disappeared in the dominant architecture of power and control. However, Fish and Foucault each have something to offer to the analysis of this dissertation’s case studies. Between intent and effect, there is action. One can consider epistemic communities as unique collections of individuals who act together, and who also belong to other communities. One can thus approach the problems of decision-making, policy-making and conflict more broadly—and more optimistically—than either Fish or Foucault. In other words, epistemic communities differ in how they construct knowledge and how they apply their knowledge. We can learn from these differences.

According to Sebenius (1992), “from a policy standpoint, awareness of the potential existence and functions of epistemic communities can strengthen assessments of the prospects for a given policy change” (p. 361). In evaluating organizational practices of policy-making, planning and decision-making, Sebenius argues as follows.

An interesting analogy can be found in the concept of “organizational culture.” While one long-standing approach to organization focuses on the arenas of conflict and bargaining, an alternative approach focuses on the extent to which the members share outlooks and purposes. These perspectives need not be mutually exclusive... (p. 362).
The key to understanding epistemic communities and conflict begins with examining how an epistemic community constructs knowledge, maintains its practices and protects its rational framework for problem-solving. This can be found in the characteristic way its members simultaneously apply logic and use language.

**Logic and Language for Problem-Solving**

Literature on the logic of problem solving has been informed by philosophers like Karl Popper (1959) and John Dewey (1981), and by scholars from the physical and social sciences. In particular, Dewey sought in the 1930s to identify a program of knowledge construction based on logic as a theory of inquiry. Dewey’s inquiry into inquiry begins with the following disclaimer that formal, symbolic logic without regard for language is not enough for such a program.

In the present state of logic, the absence of any attempt at a symbolic formulation will doubtless cause serious objection in the minds of many readers… I am convinced that acceptance of the general principles set forth will enable a more complete and consistent set of symbolizations than now exists to be made. The absence of symbolization is due, first to… the need for development of a general theory of language in which form and matter are not separated. (Dewey, in Dewey & Boydston, p. 4)

Here, Dewey sets the stage for a thorough examination of how language is instrumental in inquiry as not merely that which uncovers the logical, scientific ways of nature, but that which produces or constructs human knowledge. After laying out his program, Dewey concludes that failure to apply logic based on “operations of inquiry has enormous cultural consequences” including the “cultural waste, confusion and distortion that results from the failure to use these methods, in all fields…in connection with all problems” (p. 527). Dewey’s logic serves a kind of inquiry that is multi-disciplinary, deliberative, language-based, pragmatic and democratic.

In the 1940s, mathematics teacher G. Polya popularized an approach to logical problem solving that sought to demystify the relationship between logic and method. He used experiential learning to teach elementary and college students how to master problem-solving in general. Rather than limit their approach to the application of proofs by rote, Polya’s process shows students how to follow the heuristic method—which had
fallen out of fashion in modern times. Heuristic, in contrast to Dewey’s systematic logic, is the application of individualized learning to form a so-called “rule of thumb.” It is logically sound in that the result must work for everyone, and it is democratic in that the exact approach used need work only for those involved in solving the problem at hand. In *How To Solve It* (1945) Polya thus exposes the formerly closed system of problem solving like a magician revealing how a magic trick works. The growth of heuristics in Western educational curricula has been a quiet revolution with “manifold connections; mathematicians, logicians, psychologists, educationalists, even philosophers may claim various parts of it as belonging to their special domains” (p. vii). Polya also notes in introducing the method that an essential part of it is based on the use of dialogue. Thus, heuristic, like Dewey’s formal logic is dialogic, multi-disciplinary, deliberative, language-based, pragmatic and democratic.

Theoretical psychologist Dietrich Dörner has been working since the 1970s on the problems of applying logic to everyday situations. His work focuses on decision-making and planning—both of which are essential to the situations examined in this dissertation. As a complement to Polya’s work, Dörner’s demystifies how people fail to apply logic correctly. In particular, he locates the “logic of failure” (1996) in unclear goals and natural human limitations in dealing with the time dimension of space-time. The problem of unclear goals is a language issue. For example, Dörner points out as follows that goal-descriptive terms like ‘user-friendly’ or ‘ensuring the peace’ are sources of logical un-clarity that must be “deconstructed.”

These are all conceptualizations, and when we have a concept, we are inclined to think that there must be something that underlies the concept, some one thing. But the concepts above do not denote one thing… They are complex creations… A user-friendly library… can have any of a long list of “user-friendly” characteristics. “Ensuring the peace” can mean several things: an arms buildup, or disarmament, or a bit [of both]… depending on the situation. (p. 54)

Terms that are to be used to describe goals require precise, operational definitions. They are frames of specification; once the specifications of a goal are satisfied, one

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25 Physicist Percy Williams Bridgman, who wrote on operationalism, the philosophy of science and the logic of physics has been credited with originating the term operational definition. The term and concept are used widely in engineering and business management.
expects to go no further in problem/conflict resolution. Part of any clash between fields of expertise is based in the confusion that results from the use of terms that define practices too imprecisely to be used to resolve multidisciplinary issues. In this confusion, one party feels that interests have been met based on one interpretation of the goals, while another does not, based on another interpretation.

The problem of space-time that Dörner raises is also simple in concept, but complex in practice. Dörner notes that we live in four-dimensions: three of space and one of time. It is easy for people to imagine things in space, and to grasp how spatial dimensions are arranged.

We rarely have trouble dealing with configurations in space...We normally look at forms in space again and again and in this way precisely determine their particular configuration. This is not true of configurations in time. A time configuration is only available for examination in retrospect...But life forces us to try to understand patterns in time... the list of people functioning more or less successfully as prognosticators or even prophets is long. Their challenge is to recognize time configurations as they unfold. (p. 107)

This implies that the nearer in time one is to an event, the more accurately and precisely one can identify what is going on in both time and space. I do not mean this in the limited sense of memory—which can be faulty and/or deceptive. I mean this in the sense of meaning-making—which is both past- and future-focused.

Recognizing time configurations as they unfold is the challenge of perception, and acting in response to those configurations is the opportunity of meaning-making. For example, Bakhtin (2004) uses the *chronotope* (literally, *time-space*) as a framework for language analysis in which *speech genres* define different ways of organizing and interpreting texts. The potential for simultaneously organizing and interpreting events in different directions of time and space gives dialogue what Bakhtin calls “functional heterogeneity” (p. 61). There are moments in dialogic meaning-making that allow people to reframe an event or text both logically and experientially, or heuristically. As Bakhtin’s dialogism and Deweys’ logic suggest, such moments can be defined flexibly in language. However, as people from different epistemic communities interact, this flexibility is in tension with the tendency for each community to adhere to its culture and
Communication in Conflict and Problem-solving

Conflict and Problem-solving Summarized

In everyday life, conflicts are interwoven across space, and through time. According to Simmel, conflicts are cyclic. According to Lewin, one’s membership in different groups defines one’s sense of personal identity; clashes between one’s sense of group and one’s sense of self contribute to social conflicts. According to Freud, interpretive reflection uncovers the intrapersonal source of interpersonal conflict. One’s intrapersonal experience of unmet needs and expectations is defined in this dissertation as dissonance. Dissonance (i.e., internal, personal conflict) contributes to social (i.e., group) conflict as it is transmitted across space via social interaction and through time via memory. Interpretation theory is key to understanding the problems that cause dissonance and how those problems give meaning to conflict as a social problem.

The notion of space-time is essential to the Western scientific framework of knowledge and problem-solving. Space-time is also essential to the phenomenological approach to communication in conflict and problem-solving. These two different notions of space-time come from different epistemic communities. However, they can be reconciled via an approach to discourse that is constructivist and pragmatic. By combining Fish’s and Foucault’s notions of interpretive communities, we can understand conflicts in the content of knowledge production from both the scientific and phenomenological frameworks. Dewey’s pragmatic method of inquiry and Bakhtin’s dialogic inquiry illuminate how one can use interpretation to achieve a pragmatic, constructivist process of communication in conflict and problem-solving.

Communication Theory, Space-Time and Stuart Hall’s Structure of Social Practices

Communication theory can be used to apply notions of space-time to a cultural understanding of communication in conflict and problem-solving. It addresses space and time as separate, but related phenomena in James Carey’s (1989) chapter on “Space, Time and Communications [a tribute to Harold Innis]” in which Carey makes a distinction...
between transmission (i.e., written) and ritual (i.e., oral) communication (pp. 142-172). Building on the work of Harold Innis, he treats each as a potentially dominant cultural mode. Some cultures are dominated by written communication; e.g., print is most influential because it is transmits well across space. Other cultures are dominated by oral communication; orality preserves the nuance, inflection and physicality of communication over time. Carey focuses on the importance of dominant modes; Western modernity favours documented words and images to codify knowledge and concentrate the strategic power of society’s elites (e.g., those whom de Certeau labels “designers”). Other societies—generally portrayed as less modern—favour oral transmission to preserve their knowledge and lines of authority. In either case, it is the effect on the public of the predominant modes of discourse and corresponding modes of authority that are of interest.

To fully consider the influence of space-time relations, one must take into account how and where communication theory locates the ‘public’. In that regard, Carey (1989) traces the predominant notion of the ‘public’ in its modern sense (e.g., existing in a public sphere) to the Chicago School.

As Alvin Gouldner (1977) has re-emphasized, the idea of the public is a central notion in [the Chicago School’s] thought, and although they agreed with Gabriel Tarde that the public is something brought into existence by the printing press, they went beyond him in trying to work through the considerations under which the public sphere gives rise to rational and critical discourse and action. (pp. 144-145)

Carey holds that there are two modes communication: transmission, and ritual. These modes are epistemic and they interact. They are epistemic because they transfer beliefs, ideologies and interpretations along with facts and information. Transfer is accomplished, in part, by technology—which unites the masses via what I described in Chapter 1 as “common content” by replicating texts through space. Transfer also happens via ritual—which is a form of mass memory. For example, Carey’s position sees reading a newspaper as being part transmission—because new content is widely distributed—and part ritual—because the act of reading and discussing the news preserves myths, stories and themes of interest through time. Mass media can therefore
influence what is accepted as “common content” by how they select and frame what is presented to the public as traditional, newsworthy and entertaining.

The ‘public’—which embraces both modernity and tradition—can be understood in this context. People are dependent on the books, videos, policy documents, legal codes, passports, owner’s manuals and technical specifications of everyday life. However, the life cycles of those same ‘texts’ are dependent in a less obvious—but equally essential—way on the discussions, negotiations, interventions and other oral communication of the actors in any everyday situation. The ‘text’ of everyday life is thus situated at the intersection of language-in-use and culture. Treating technological and traditional modes of communication as a dichotomy—i.e., as separate, even competing forces—looks less like a philosophical imperative and more like a politically motivated attempt to accommodate Cartesianism. The literature I have discussed has argued beyond the Cartesian notion of everyday life, in favour of a phenomenological approach that treats written and oral communication, and social interaction as a unified ‘text’.

One form of a ‘text’, in the sense that I use the term, has been described in communication and cultural studies as the *communicative event* (Hall, 1980 p. 167). There is a combination of social and linguistic interactions that leads to such an event. Before a ‘news’ event can be reported in a broadcast, it must be transformed, subject to the ‘rules of language’ through a process of encoding and decoding. Hall’s conception of encoding and decoding as transmission in mass media works well with Carey’s conception of communication as culture in everyday life. Hall describes it schematically, beginning with “frameworks of knowledge,” “relations of production,” and “technical infrastructure” as a group, leading to encoding, which leads to “programme as ‘meaningful’ discourse,” which leads to decoding, which leads to new “frameworks of knowledge,” “relations of production,” and “technical infrastructure”—which work together as a group (p. 168).

I propose that such a grouping can also be conceptualized in terms of content/process/effect, as shown in Figure 4. Here, ‘frameworks of knowledge’ account

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26 This is in the sense of Ferdinand de Saussure’s distinction between the system of language (i.e., *langue*) and language in use (i.e., *parole*)—which has dimensions of space and time.
for the content aspect of discourse, relations of production account for the effect of earlier-mediated discourse, and technical infrastructure provides the process to determine what is encoded. Likewise, Hall’s sequence of encoding $\rightarrow$ programme $\rightarrow$ decoding replicates this structure congruently. In the larger frame the encoding is the content element, the programme is the process element and decoding is the effect element. Hall focuses on the effect, stating, “it is the set of decoded meanings which ‘have an effect’, influence, entertain, instruct or persuade, with very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behavioural consequences” (p. 168).

Figure 4. Hall’s Structure of Social Practices, Modified

Hall (1980) has something particular in mind about the influence of mass media toward a “dominant cultural order” in society (p. 172). He is working within a particular context. It is not my intent to frame all communication in the same way that Hall might consider a news and reporting event. Rather, I propose that the way Hall’s model works is consistent with the workings of a larger theoretical frame; it focuses on the connection
between a particular social level of discourse and the dominant level of mass culture of a society. Carey’s theory of communication (1989) does the same thing. However, it works in a different context. I propose that each approach has the potential to encompass all kinds of communication in everyday life. Hall’s (1980) presentation of his model applies to a single news event, to news events in general, to media routines, and so on. However, the architecture of Hall’s theoretical structure can be reproduced at various levels of social order. Carey’s and Hall’s approaches are thus complementary. They complement one another the way that Lewin’s and Freud’s theories relate identity and conflict on a spectrum from the intrapersonal to the societal.

Ultimately, Hall makes a critical observation about society as a whole; he opens up discourses of the news to reveal the media’s hegemonic effect on society. He identifies three possible ‘positions’ of discourse. In the first, the media achieve a “dominant-hegemonic position” that reproduces without room for negotiation the ideology of society’s elites. In the second, there is negotiation between media and audiences of the code and its possible meanings. In the third, audiences are free to interpret and use media representations independent of the intended, hegemonic meanings. Ideally, in this third position, audiences are able to take diagonal ‘shortcuts’ across the grid while ‘walking in the city’ of the lifeworld. However, such freedom rarely comes without consequences. When everyone is free to negotiate the interpretation of a map, conflicts will arise over the territory depicted by the map. Thus, communication in conflict and problem-solving takes place, via dialogue, in everyday life.

**Conclusions of the Literature Review**

Hall’s notion of three positions defines a progression of ‘possible positions’ for mass communication. However, the three positions can also be understood as distinct, concurrent, qualitatively different process options inherent to any everyday discourse in the public sphere. They relate to the definitions of the three options that I introduced in Chapter 1 as follows.

- Position 1, sender-dominant hegemonic → Debate (i.e., a competition between the sender’s dominant corporate or
oranzional interest and what the sender believes to be the receiver’s potential, conflicting, autonomous interest),

- Position 2, negotiated meaning → Dialogue (i.e., an exchange of possible interpretations), and

- Position 3, sender-receiver independent → Diffusion (i.e., a new cycle of sending and receiving, possibly involving other actors).

Hall’s model reflects an extreme case of my three options model—i.e., a case of public sphere communication in which there is negligible direct interaction between a few senders and many receivers. In such a case, control of the discourse shifts in one direction from culture industry producer, to audience, and back again. The situations I will examine in the next few chapters are the general case. They involve various levels of interaction (e.g., group discussions, policy document distribution, experts giving seminar-style lectures). In the more general case of this dissertation’s dialogue situations, there is ongoing interaction, the sender-receiver positions are distinguishable, and they shift back and forth in the back-and-forth of communication.

Understanding the three options for everyday discourse is important in this context because Western culture privileges—to a high degree—choice and personal agency, and because Western rationality demands that a comprehensive process for knowledge formation and decision-making must be rational, coherent and comprised of the necessary and sufficient means for social action. We are taught what to think, how to think and why to think according to these established patterns. We not only derive answers this way, we derive what kinds of questions are legitimate and what kinds are not. The three options framework breaks down how people communicate in ways that examine these social, cultural, technical, and ideological aspects of conflict and problem-solving.
Research Plan Summary and Introduction to Chapters 3, 4 and 5

The City of Vancouver drug policy dialogues, the CLS dialogues and the Afghanistan Dialogues are conflict and problem-solving situations that were addressed by government or organizational mediation. These situations illuminate historical, sociological, ideological, epistemological aspects of controversies that are addressed in mediated discourse. They reflect different forms of mediated communication that are instrumental to dialogue in general, and to conflict resolution and problem solving in ordinary public and organizational settings. In the drug policy dialogues, the City of Vancouver acted as mediator between government and the public in the policy process, and I acted as mediator of the main dialogue event. In the CLS “Resolving Our Differences” project, I acted as mediator of the process design and dialogue events. In the Afghanistan Dialogue series, the Wosk Centre designed the process and acted as mediator of the situation and events, and I observed. All of these situations and events are representative of communication in everyday life. I approach them from different perspectives to emphasize different ways of learning from them.

I began researching all three of the dialogue situations in 2003. The research plan included the following interventions and observations on my part.

- **Vancouver Drug Policy Dialogues**
  - Observed the planning sessions and interviewed the (7) planning session participants as a group.
  - Facilitated dialogue session with 140 participants and provided summary notes and feedback for the organizers to use in preparing their final report of the event.
  - Conducted post-dialogue session interviews with the primary planners and analyzed facilitators’ notes from six follow-up dialogue events.

- **CLS “Resolving Our Differences” dialogues**
  - Facilitated the planning process and dialogue events.
Interviewed over 200 people\textsuperscript{27}, some individually and some in groups.

Facilitated two dialogue events that were attended by a total of approximately 80 people.

Solicited input from, and circulated results for feedback to the entire CLS community of over 1000 people. Interviewed the management team of 12, before and after the dialogue process.

- The Afghanistan Dialogues

  Observed six dialogue events, attended by 463 participants. Interviewed six event planners and facilitators before and after the events.

  Other Wosk dialogue events. Attended two dialogue events (one on community building, one on art and homelessness) and noted processes. Interviewed one planner. Participated in planning and facilitated dialogue breakout sessions at a third event on economic sustainability. Total attendance for the three events was 420 participants.

In all, I observed approximately one thousand people in over thirty meetings and dialogue events, interviewed directly 26 people—twice each—on the planning and organization of those events, and facilitated summary consensus reports, based on feedback from over one thousand people in the CLS dialogues, from 140 people in the Vancouver Drug Policy dialogues, and 3 event planners in the Afghanistan Dialogues. This was done in overlapping sequences over a period of several years. The first dialogue process to begin was the CLS case in 2003. The first to conclude was the drug policy dialogue phase of the Wosk Centre cases in 2004. The last observation took place at an Afghanistan dialogue in the Spring of 2009. The final interviews for this project took place in the Spring of 2009.

\textsuperscript{27} This is an estimate. Precise numbers are not available. Sessions were confidential; no attendance data was taken that could be used to identify participants.
My framework for analyzing and interpreting the situations and the individual events will use a phenomenological, critical application of the conflict ‘triangle’ and the three options.

- In Chapter 3, I will discuss the situation that had the first event, the City of Vancouver drug policy dialogues. Here, I will introduce my observation methods and discuss the effect of dialogue planning on policy consultation.

- In Chapter 4, I will discuss the situation that began next of the three, the CLS “Resolving Our Differences” dialogues. Here, I will focus on dialogue as process in an organizational setting.

- In Chapter 5, I will discuss the third situation, The Afghanistan Dialogues, with a focus on how dialogue seeks what Bohm terms “sharing of common content” in a multi-cultural, public setting.

Collectively, these situations reveal that dialogue is shaped by complex practices of communication and language-use. They demonstrate how dialogue creates pathways across clashing boundaries of ideology and culture. These practices shape in important ways one’s total experience of everyday life.
3. Dialogue as Effect: The Vancouver Drug Policy Dialogues

In this chapter I will examine the effects of dialogue in conflict and problem-solving. Effects, according to the ‘triangle’ model, include emotions, relationships, outcomes, structures, networks, and artefacts that result from conflict, and problem-solving situations. I will focus on one type of artefact—i.e., policy. As I argued at the beginning of this dissertation, situations can be both an epilogue to one situation and a prelude to another. A policy is seen in this chapter as an artefact of conflict and problem-solving. Specifically, I will discuss the City of Vancouver drug prevention policy. Prevention is part of Vancouver’s Four Pillars Drug Strategy, adopted in 2001 to deal comprehensively with issues of problematic drug use and addiction. The goal of the Four Pillars project is to create and implement a drug strategy that carries the legitimacy of government and meets the needs of all parties in the community. Broad-based consultation, involving the public and a diverse group of experts, is central to the city’s process for developing and implementing their strategy.

In 2003, I worked with Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program office on their symposium entitled “Visioning the Future for Prevention: A Local Perspective.” This symposium, and a series of follow-up focus sessions used dialogue as an essential element of communicative action in the public sphere. The prevention dialogues and focus sessions are a form of research, gathering qualitative data from the public. The City of Vancouver, in taking a broad-based approach to prevention, seeks to combine hard scientific evidence from health and medical science with the kind of personal, experiential evidence that comes out in public consultation. Harmonizing quantitative scientific discourse with qualitative public discourse is not easy. Scientific experts and the lay public have very different ways of establishing knowledge. In this chapter I will take a critical look at how Vancouver used dialogue to seek that harmony by mobilizing a diverse group of citizens to help them create a policy implementation plan.
If this analysis is to be of use to both the academic community and the lay public, it cannot be based on a theoretical approach that is only understood by either the academics, or the lay public. What is needed is a meta-theoretical approach, that is, one based on a theory about theories from evidence-based ‘hard’ science, and from qualitative social studies. Such an approach can create a framework for analysis that facilitates the bridging of theories. I will begin forming such a framework out of the conflict ‘triangle’ and other concepts discussed in Chapter 2, by focusing on the area of policy.

This first phase of my fieldwork served as the pilot project for my dissertation research methods. By investigating how Vancouver’s dialogue process works, I set out to refine and validate the meta-theoretical approach described above. My discussion of research method will touch on the following areas: policy, methodology and the use of public consultation dialogue as a research tool for solving the problem of how to put policy into action. This will frame a critical analysis of the dialogue sessions undertaken by the City of Vancouver.

The Drug Policy Events

This research project began for me in November 2003, when I was negotiating with the Wosk Centre, the City of Vancouver and CLS to include their dialogue projects in my doctoral research.\(^{28}\) I had been contracted by CLS to work with them on a policy issue,\(^ {29}\) and by the City of Vancouver to facilitate the dialogue on drug prevention at the SFU Wosk Centre.

The first drug policy dialogues and the first Afghanistan Dialogue were held in the Wosk Centre’s Asia Pacific Hall. This venue is unique. It is the best-configured, best-equipped space I have worked in with groups of 100 or more people. The audio-visual facilities make it possible for everyone in attendance to hear and see everyone who makes presentations, to ask questions and participate in open dialogue. Everything

\(^{28}\) I also considered other situations; some proved unsuitable for direct comparison, and one proved too difficult to report in my dissertation because the organization wished to remain anonymous.

\(^{29}\) I will discuss my research negotiations with CLS in Chapter 4.
audible was recorded. The facility makes it physically possible to create and observe dialogue events that are comparable, in the sense that participants can interact in a large group setting in much the same way a small group interacts in a more intimate setting. The ease of hearing, viewing and talking is thus comparable for a drug policy event with 150 people, a CLS event with 50 people, an Afghanistan Dialogue with 150 people in the Asia Pacific Hall, or one with 30 people at SFU Harbour Centre, next door.

The "Visioning a Future for Prevention" symposium began on Thursday, 20 November 2003, with a night session moderated by Kathryn Gret singen from CBC Radio. That session included lectures by guest speakers, and self-introductions by various participants who were chosen by the symposium organizers ahead of time to reflect the diversity of the audience. The bulk of the symposium took place all day on Friday, 21 November 2003. The morning session included lectures by experts on drug policy. Each lecturer gave a PowerPoint presentation, followed by a facilitated question and answer period (approximately 15 minutes), and some facilitated dialogue (approximately 15 minutes). The afternoon session was all facilitated dialogue. The entire symposium was recorded, and the lecturers’ prepared notes were posted on the city’s web site. The Drug Policy Program office also issued a summary report of the symposium, which included highlights of the guest lectures.

One of the outcomes of the dialogue portion on Friday afternoon was a commitment from the city to conduct follow-up focus sessions with various key stakeholder groups. Those sessions were held over the following six months. City employees, who took notes, facilitated each session. There were no standards for note keeping; the content and scope of each session’s notes varied considerably. Copies of those notes were also provided to me for analysis.

I met with Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program coordinator, Donald McPherson, in December 2003 to debrief on the symposium and to discuss next steps. We agreed to meet again after the follow-up focus sessions to assess what to do next concerning any further analysis of the notes, PowerPoint presentations and sound recordings. I interviewed him briefly twice during the last half of 2004, and negotiated a plan to analyze the symposium materials in early 2005. The Drug Policy Program office released the audio recordings and focus session notes to me in February 2005. I began
analyzing the focus session notes in March 2005. I began transcribing the audio recordings in May 2005, and began analyzing them in July 2005.

**Dialogue Planning & Dialogue Yield**

The dialogue event, “Visioning a Future for Prevention: A Local Perspective” took place in two sessions. Each session was actually a separate event. The first event was a Thursday night session, moderated by Kathryn Getsinger, then host of the CBC Radio Afternoon Show. This session was scheduled to go from 6:30 pm to 9 pm. The agenda included the following (taken from the program distributed at the symposium).

**Thursday, November 20, 2003**

**Moderator:** Kathryn Getsinger, CBC

6:30 p.m.  Prayer, Emily Stogan, Elder, Musqueam First Nations.

6:35 p.m.  Opening Remarks: [Vancouver] Mayor Larry Campbell.

6:45 p.m.  [PowerPoint presentation on] “Prevention in a Historical Context,” Neil Boyd, Professor of Criminology, Simon Fraser University.

7:00 p.m.  [PowerPoint presentation on] “A Vision for Prevention in British Columbia” Perry Kendall, BC Provincial Health Officer.

7:15 p.m.  **A Local Visioning: Beginning the Discussion.** Local perspectives in the round featuring a diversity of prevention audiences i.e. youth, seniors, multicultural, labour, the workplace, parents etc. We will ask six individuals to give their perspective on what prevention has meant to them and what prevention could be in their context.

7:35 p.m.  Response panel: **Robin Room**, Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs; **Rodney Skager**, University of California, Los Angeles; **Lorraine Greaves**, Director British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women’s Health.

8 - 8:45 p.m.  Open dialogue
8:45 - 9 p.m. Wrap-up and next day events, Kathryn Gretsinger.

In the planning meeting for this session, the event organizers discussed space-time management. The planners included staff from the City of Vancouver and from the Wosk Centre. The moderator and speakers were not involved in the planning. I was invited to observe the planning for the first day session, and to advise on the planning for the second (i.e., the all-day Friday) session—which I would facilitate.

The planners agreed to place the experts in “separate quadrants” of the Asia Pacific Hall, in order to “use movement” to encourage a sense of inclusiveness. They decided to limit speakers to 15 minutes each, leaving additional time for “remaining points in questions and answers.” One planner proposed that 15-minute speaking times was reasonable for this event, citing as a benchmark that “the Dalai Lama gets 30 minutes.” The planners also decided to use a “rigid queue system” to enforce strict first-come, first-served access to a microphone. Seating included “desktop communication technologies” (i.e., microphones with switches that allow one to signal a desire to speak) “for each participant.” The technician who controlled the audio-visual equipment, including the microphones, was directed to enforce a three-minute rule for people asking questions. If a questioner began to make a speech, they would be cut off from the unseen control booth.

The plan for the full day session followed a similar design of experts speaking, followed by questions and answers and dialogue. The schedule included the following.

Friday, November 21, 2003

Facilitator: Terry Neiman, Neiman and Associates

8:30 a.m. Coffee and refreshments.

9 a.m. Welcome: Ida Goodreau – CEO Vancouver Coastal Health.

9:10 a.m. [remarks by] Barbara Kennedy, manager, Health Promotion, Drug Strategy and Controlled Substances, Health Canada.

9:25 a.m. Framing the Day – Dan Reist, President, Kaiser Foundation.
9:40 a.m. “Reconstructing Drug Education to Meet the Needs of Youth”
    Rodney Skager, Professor Emeritus, University of California, Los Angeles.

10:10 a.m. Open Dialogue – Dan Reist, President, Kaiser Foundation.

10:45 a.m. Break (15 minutes)

11 a.m. Thinking About Strategies to Prevent Substance Misuse,
    Robin Room, Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs, Sweden.

11:30 a.m. Open dialogue.

12:15 p.m. Lunch (one hour)

1:30 p.m. Facilitated session: What are the key questions we have to consider in developing a prevention strategy for Vancouver?

2:30 p.m. Break (15 minutes)

2:45 p.m. Facilitated session: Planning for the Future – Components of a Vancouver Strategy

3:45 p.m. Wrap-up and next steps

4 p.m. Closing remarks

Anatomy of a Dialogue Event

The events of the 20 November session did not keep to the schedule. After the opening remarks, the featured speakers were supposed to speak for 15 minutes each. This portion was intended to give the featured speakers a chance to introduce themselves and the symposium topic. Each spoke for slightly less than 30 minutes. This put the session 30 minutes behind schedule, without any attempt at dialogue.

The six ‘local’ individuals who were to give “local perspectives” had been selected by the organizers to represent a cross-section of the public. Each was invited to give a three minute self-introduction. The planners’ intent here was to put a human face
on the symposium, via what Isaacs would term ‘approaching’, ‘joining each person differently’, and ‘creating the container’. The planned introductions were to symbolize everyone—i.e., the lay public—coming together for dialogue with experts, the media and politicians during the “response panel” portion of the program. The actual introductions ranged from two minutes to 11 minutes each, with an average of six minutes and 20 seconds. Only the fourth person—who spoke for two-minutes—actually gave an introduction in the sense of one describing one’s background or affiliations. The others were rhetorical speeches about politics and drug addiction. By the end of the introductions, the program was 45 minutes behind schedule.

The next part of the evening was to be a moderated dialogue involving the symposium’s expert speakers and the lay public. The three experts were invited to first give a ten-minute response to the keynote addresses. They spoke in turn. The first panellist spoke for eight minutes; the second spoke for ten; the third spoke for 13 minutes. The symposium was now an hour behind schedule, and no dialogue had occurred. The final scheduled part of the first session, “open dialogue,” began at the scheduled time of the moderator’s symposium session “wrap-up.” It lasted half an hour, and consisted of questions and answers, statements and rebuttals between the experts and the audience. The moderator stopped calling on people to speak and gave her closing remarks, ending the session at 10 p.m.

The Friday session held to the schedule. Dan Reist spoke for approximately 15 minutes; the transcript of this is 3.5 pages long. Professor Skager spoke for a full 30 minutes; the transcript of this is 8 pages long. Robin Room spoke for 30 minutes; the transcript of this is 8 pages long. The scheduled “open dialogue” that followed the speakers and “facilitated sessions” throughout the day involved having people converse in groups of approximately twenty people. The planners had dispersed experts, people from government and from various drug community groups evenly around the hall. This enhanced the interaction. Dialogue groups were thus likely to mix some people who knew each other, some strangers, some experts, some lay people, and so on. I directed people to have small group conversations for about half the time, and facilitated a plenary discussion for the rest. This was partly people reporting out what their groups had discussed and partly individuals speaking on their own behalf.
The afternoon sessions followed this format. In the 1:30 p.m. session, I directed the participants to discuss in their groups the question, “what are the key questions we have to consider in developing a prevention strategy for Vancouver?” In the plenary reporting, I recorded the comments, which were displayed on an overhead projector. This involved some paraphrasing and clarifying on my part. We took a break at 2:30 p.m.

During the 2:30 p.m. break, I suggested to Don McPherson that it would improve the dialogue if he transcribed the notes on the overhead projector, while I did the facilitating and moderating. This was not part of the plan, but I felt that it would help the Drug Policy Program office to be seen as actively involved in putting the results of the dialogue on record. I explained that this would also allow me to clarify what people said through Don McPherson. They would thus see that he was actively listening to them. At 2:45, we began the final session, which went until 4 p.m. While Mr. McPherson took notes using the overhead projector, I mediated the discussion of options and actions for the future of the program. This was partly a compilation of questions and issues raised in dialogue, and partly a plenary negotiation of next steps for the program. As Don McPherson recorded next steps, he also negotiated and made commitments. His transcription, then, worked like a real-time contract negotiation and drafting session.

At 4 p.m., Mayor Campbell returned to the symposium and gave five minutes of closing remarks. Donald McPherson thanked everyone for attending and the symposium ended at 4:10 p.m. People were still present and talking in pairs and small groups when I left at 4:30 p.m. This concludes my account of the symposium. In the next section, I will discuss the symposium’s dialogue ‘yield’.

The “Visioning a Future for Prevention” Symposium Yield: How Much Dialogue Was Achieved?

There was nothing in the opening session that could be distinguished as dialogue, according to the ideal or historical forms of dialogue I discussed in the first two chapters. One could argue that this session was needed to ‘create the container’ for dialogue to follow in the next day’s session. However, the next day’s session had a different set of participants. It was designed to follow the same format of introductions, followed by expert speakers, followed by dialogue. In theory, though, there would be
enough people from the Thursday session in the Friday session to build ‘the container’ faster and better than would otherwise be possible.

The Friday sessions had speakers and a break from 9 a.m., through 10:10 a.m. The “open dialogue” session at 10:10 provided 35 minutes of potential dialogue time. It is possible that some participants did not use the time for dialogue, but as I moved about the hall and sat in on conversations, the majority appeared to be doing so. The same was true for the other sessions. The “open dialogue” at 11:30 accounted for another 45 minutes of dialogue, and the final session for 60 minutes. The total potential time for dialogue, then, was 140 minutes, out of symposium that lasted 645 minutes. The best-case estimate for the ‘yield’ is thus 21%.

The 21% ‘yield’ was not evenly distributed across the symposium. Most of the potential dialogue time was concentrated in the last third of the symposium. No one attempted to examine the extent to which expert and guest speakers influenced the content or quality of the dialogue time. As I discussed in Chapter 1, this method of best-case estimates is not intended to be statistical scientific analysis; it is a qualitative interpretation of communication under the special circumstances of planned dialogue.

In this example, I have examined the “Visioning a Future for Prevention” drug policy event. In the next few sections, I will discuss what I learned about the drug policy dialogue situation. I will first discuss the context and historical factors that define the drug dialogue situation and events, and then give my analysis of them. This will begin with a discussion of policy and research. There is a policy regime in Canada that promotes dialogue for public consultation. Dialogue situations allow policy-makers to consult with the public to gather information needed for better policy. Policy-making thus has a role in research, and research has a role in policy-making. The way this works is key to my analysis. After I have discussed this interrelationship, I will conclude my analysis of the drug policy dialogue events and situation. Following that, I will discuss the CLS situation in Chapter 4, and the Afghanistan Dialogues in Chapter 5, each in a similar order.
The Role of Policy in the Research Process

The policy regime that drives government-facilitated public consultation is important to this study because policy is both a driving force for, and a goal of, public consultation in Canada. Policy is epistemic: it often is used as an instrument to generate new policies and processes. The Vancouver drug prevention dialogues were driven by policies in place at various levels of government (i.e., federal, provincial and municipal). These policies influenced the culture of government participation in decision-making on social issues. Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program reflected the highest intent of Canada’s top-level policy on involving the public in government decision-making. However, the overall policy regime in government at all levels is not well enough developed in the area of public involvement. As a result, there are gaps between the research data gathering process of consultation and the best practices of qualitative research design.

Modelling the System of Policy and Process

One of the stated goals of the Vancouver prevention dialogues is to involve the public directly in policy development (Campbell, 2004). The decision to take this approach has legitimacy partly because it stems from policy. Legitimacy, though, is only part of the total picture. Policy and process are a system. The ultimate test of consultation is whether or not it results in a workable outcome (i.e., it satisfies the city’s goal of meeting the needs of all parties). To verify that both policy and outcome have integrity, one must audit the system, comparing the outcome of its process with the policy that drives it. This comparison can be viewed through problem-solving and conflict resolution theory as both the beginning and end of an evolutionary cycle of intent, action and outcome. This is shown in Figure 5 as a linear process.

Consider how a simple conflict might proceed as described in the top layer (A) of Figure 5. For example, one might wish to express sympathy (i.e., wish = intent) for another person’s misfortune by sharing a story of one’s own similar experience (i.e., storytelling = action), but instead of the desired effect of empathy, one is perceived as being insensitive (i.e., emotional reaction = outcome). The sender means well, but the receiver—who needs empathy and expects to be the centre of attention—thinks the
gesture is self-focused on the part of the sender. A miscommunication has occurred here on a very deep level. The interaction involving the federal department manager, the HR director and me—which I discussed in the Introduction—is an example of this.

**Figure 5. Problem Solving/Conflict Model (A) and Policy Cycle (B)**

Miscommunication about intent is a common occurrence in conflict-laden dialogues. In such situations, conflicts are often resolved when parties clarify their intentions and agree on actions to reach mutually acceptable outcomes. If the parties do not resolve their conflicts in this way, they most often retreat to defending their positions, which leads to more miscommunication. Miscommunication has direct consequences in the area of policy because some people historically associate the regime of government policy with a regime of manipulation and control. For example, using the model shown in the top layer (A) of Figure 5, a government organization might wish to secure so-called ‘buy-in’ from the public (intent) by consulting with the community (action), but instead meets with resistance or apathy (outcome). If the government's agents intend to use consultation only to persuade or convince the public of a rational, expert-generated plan, the public will understand the gesture as being self-serving for the government and insensitive of their needs. In such a case, there is no miscommunication; an erosion of the public's trust in government is inevitable.

The problem solving/conflict model corresponds to the policy cycle as illustrated by comparing layers A and B in Figure 5. Using the prevention dialogue process as an example, the lower layer (B) represents Vancouver’s policy cycle. Vancouver has a policy that requires public involvement; this reflects their intent. The city implements this by facilitating dialogues on prevention; this is the action, as deemed appropriate according to the Drug Policy Program office’s interpretation of policy. The dialogues result in various elements of the city’s drug policy and implementation plan; this is the
outcome, as influenced by public consultation. Therefore, in theory, the dialogue process works to implement policy.

**Issues of Trust in Policy Research**

I believe that it is a common perception in areas of controversy (e.g., drug policy) that consultation is more often than not a form of government or corporate manipulation and control. In my work experience in government and organizational processes, it is sometimes the case that policy had been previously generated via a manipulative form of consultation and used as an instrument of control. In the case involving the regional manager of the federal department that I discussed in the introduction, memories of such experiences led to resistance against legitimate consultation. People who had such memories have openly challenged me in interventions. I have seen people challenge other interveners in public meetings on planning and policy issues. What is important to this study is that, whether it is generally the case or not, if the public does not trust a consultation process, they will not provide the needed input for sound decision making.

The Vancouver prevention program situation raises a number of questions about how well policy and process interact. What can we learn from Vancouver’s prevention program dialogue experience that sheds light on how well the city is doing in accomplishing its goal of meeting the needs of all parties in the community? What can we learn from the results of the dialogue events that shed light on how well policy is working? If consultation is needed to give legitimacy to a government’s actions, what can we learn from Vancouver’s dialogue experience that sheds light on how to make and implement policy so that it is both effective and trusted? I will begin to address these questions by surveying the regime of policies relevant to Vancouver’s drug policy program, beginning at the federal level and ending at the municipal level.

**Consultation Practice in Canada**

In terms of the language and policy culture of the federal government, dialogue in the public sphere falls under the category of ‘consultation’. Policy on consultation addresses a diverse set of agendas, both internal to government, and external, via its
interactions with the public. There are federal-level consultation policies based in a variety of areas, including general administration, justice, public health and environmental assessment. The highest-level policy, covering federal ministers, the Privy Council Office and Treasury Board Secretariat, is the “Consultation Guidelines for Managers in the Federal Public Service” (the “Guidelines for Managers”). In this section I will explore the scope and implementation of all policies that flow down from the Guidelines for Managers, and will also focus on benchmarks in policy implementation and in drug policy in particular.

Lower level federal consultation policies determine how much of a government organization’s work is subject to public input. The limits vary. For example, Section 21 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act provides narrowly for consultation with the public on defining the scope of an assessment to determine the environmental impact resulting from any construction project. However, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act is very detailed in describing how to implement the policy. In contrast to that, the Guidelines for Managers sets out principles for broad implementation of public input in decision-making in all of government’s business. However, it is not prescriptive about implementation. In terms of the model illustrated in Figure 5, consultation policy on environmental assessments is an example of a federal policy that is narrowly focused in intent and broadly well defined in prescriptive action; whereas the highest level policy of federal government—the Guidelines for Managers—is broadly focused in intent and vague in prescriptive action. In this balance between intent and action, federal departmental and agency policies tend to be more like the environmental assessment example than the Guidelines for Managers.

Though public involvement plays some role in most areas of government policy, consultation is more developed in intra-governmental affairs than it is between government and the public.30 The Public Policy Forum, (http://ppforum.ca)—which promotes dialogue in the civil service—discusses the Government on Line (GOL) initiative—which focuses more on intra-government data dissemination than on

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collecting public input. The Department of Justice takes the position that Canadians want input individually in the policy process rather than via interest groups, and do not want to “impose their views on the leaders they have elected to represent them” (p. 4).\textsuperscript{31} Technically, their policy provisions meet the letter, if not the spirit, of Guidelines for Managers. However, given the highly technical nature of the arcane field of Justice, it is not surprising that the Department of Justice policy limits public input to such an extent.

In summary, there is a hierarchy of policies in Canada that translates down organizationally the intent to involve the public as much as possible in policy development and implementation. At the highest level, no limit is set on what is possible; limits are set by each organization. At lower levels, the scope of public involvement varies, with a tendency to being limited narrowly and defined prescriptively. This is the general case for all organizations and functions of government. Next, I will discuss how this policy hierarchy is applied by the City of Vancouver in its drug policy program.

**Vancouver’s Consultation Policy Regime**

There is little evidence of organizations in Canada that are as inclusive of the public as Vancouver has been in its drug policy program. Vancouver’s public involvement policy system was crystallized in an initiative begun in 1996, called “Better City Government.” Over a three-year period, Council developed a set of recommendations, resulting in a 1999 report that identified guiding principles for public involvement, including the following.

Everyone potentially interested in or impacted by a process has an opportunity to become involved…Efforts are made to include under-represented and hard-to-reach communities in all public involvement processes…Any barriers to access are recognized and overcome, including physical, communication, economic, language, ethnic and social constraints. (City of Vancouver, 1999, ¶3)

These principles were incorporated into an overarching municipal policy entitled “City Plan.”

Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program had no policy on public involvement per se. However, the culture of inclusion reflected in City Plan was part of the culture that has informed the Four Pillars approach since its inception as the Coalition for Crime Prevention and Drug Treatment in October of 1997. According to Donald McPherson, the principles of City Plan were, in any case, the essential, de-facto guidelines for the Drug Policy Program. Public consultation “emerged from the European experience with safe injection rooms” and was built into the early stages of policy making in the Four Pillars approach (City of Vancouver, 2001, p. 63).

Vancouver’s policy regime thus treated consultation as both a right of the public and a responsibility of the municipality. The public was invited to participate in planning and decision-making, and the city required its programs to seek out interested parties and bring them to the table. The Four Pillars approach, as administered by the Drug Policy Program adhered to a standard of public consultation consistent with the federal Guidelines for Managers, as codified in the municipality’s City Plan.

**Consultation in Drug Policy, Canada-wide**

In this section I will discuss Canada’s top-level drug policy and how it compared with Vancouver’s policy regime at the time of the city’s drug policy dialogues. I will also discuss an example of a program contemporary with, and as far advanced as Vancouver’s in a field closely related to drug policy (i.e., Health Care). I will compare them with an example of another program in British Columbia, not under the city’s jurisdiction, that was less advanced in public consultation: the Richmond-Airport-Vancouver rapid transit project (RAV). Here, I use the term ‘advanced’ in relation to the principles contained in the Guidelines for Managers. The scale of advancement, then, runs from lowest (i.e., consultation only in the form of communicating to secure ‘buy-in’), to highest (i.e., having the central use of dialogue in the public sphere as a research tool, and having fully articulated policies and procedures that integrate the research results and policy making). My goal in this section is to identify the Vancouver drug program’s

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32 Donald MacPherson (City of Vancouver, Drug Program Coordinator), personal interview, February 10, 2005.
place on this scale. I will begin by describing its point of comparison, Canada’s Drug
Strategy (CDS)—which guided the highest-level drug program in Canada during the
period in question.

CDS dates back to 1987. According to the “Interim Report of the Special
Committee on Non-medical Use of Drugs,” there was a lack of coordination and inter-
organizational planning during the first phases of CDS from 1987 through 2002 (House
of Commons Canada, 2002, Ch. 3). Early phases of CDS emphasized involvement of
key stakeholder groups, and did not include the public. However, in 2002, a policy
review, chaired by Paddy Torsney, M.P., noted that “research priorities for evidence-
based policy development” were needed that would include “key stakeholders, including
users of substances” (pp. 59-60). Of over a dozen references to consultation in the
report, three referred to members of the public who use drugs for non-medical purposes,
and none referred to consultation with the general public. CDS, then, was largely
focused on obtaining input from government personnel and the professional consulting
sector.

On the scale of advancement offered above, CDS is near the low end. However,
any lack of public participation is not necessarily an indication that CDS failed to follow
the Guidelines for Managers. Rather, it reflects the mandate of CDS, which was tied to
the concerns and agendas of health professionals (e.g., treatment, harm reduction) and
the justice system (i.e., enforcement). Considering the issue of intent, CDS was not a
good benchmark to evaluate the Vancouver drug program. A better candidate would be
a program that is high on the scale of advancement (relative to an organization like the
Department of Justice) and in a field similar to drug policy.

A better model for public participation in drug policy can be found in the literature
of the Population and Public Health Branch of the Atlantic Region of Health Canada
(ARHC). The stated intent of ARHC’s mission was to “maintain a commitment to involve
the public in program and policy development through partnerships and public education
initiatives and by facilitating capacity building” (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2009).
They provided programs and literature in support of that mission. One such publication
was a 2003 guidebook entitled “Public Policy and Public Participation Engaging Citizens
and Community in the Development of Public Policy.” It covered the three elements of
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the model shown in Figure 5. It used a facilitative, rather than formulaic, workbook format. By this I mean that its method was to promote user awareness and inclusion of parties on a project, rather than prescribe a process or formula. The outcome of such an approach is consistent with a mission to facilitate capacity building.

One important aspect of ARHC’s approach was its emphasis on “the development of crosscutting or ‘horizontal’ policy and on an increased inclusion of stakeholders and the policy community” (Smith, 2003, p. 1). This is important because it supports integration of diverse sets of issues among diverse groups. Integration is essential to enabling the appropriate use of information that comes from the kind of dialogue that is truly a process of action-oriented, qualitative research. I will discuss the importance of this more in the section on research methodology. First, I turn to issues of trust and resistance.

**Public Issues of Trust and Resistance**

The more the public trusts an organization’s policy system, the less that system must rely on enforcement or “buy-in” secured through persuasion or manipulation to maintain policy system integrity. So far, I have focused on how documented policy (i.e., policy-on-paper) is one measure of system integrity. One can look to the policy-on-paper to determine an organization’s intent. For example, to what extent is the text of a policy constructed rhetorically by its designers to “sell” a rationale for compliance, or to what extent is it instead a confirmation of goals and principles arrived at by consensus of its stakeholders? In either case, what is on paper, and what actually happens in implementation (i.e., policy-in-practice) can be very different. How can one measure this gap?

In terms of the problem solving/conflict model in Figure 5, one can most directly measure gaps in drug policy-in-practice by observing the ‘action’ step. If drug policy intends to provide public consultation, then one would expect to find evidence of consultation in practice. However, the mere existence of consultation or dialogue events in policy development and planning might not tell the whole story. For the bigger picture, one must also look at the ‘outcome’ step. If the public’s response is to resist new policies
and plans, or if interested parties do not participate in the ‘action’ step, then the quality of the outcome will suffer.

Interested parties are not only those parties who take an active interest in a situation; they are all who have a stake in, or are affected by a situation. This is a crucial issue in drug policy because some interested parties (e.g., various groups within the drug user community) have limited exposure to, or access to the policy process modelled in Figure 5. A drug policy system that seeks participation from drug users, such as CDS, clearly meets at least part of the intent of federal policy, which states, “Whenever possible, consultation should involve all parties who can contribute to or are affected by the outcome of consultation” (Government of Canada, Privy Council Office, 1992, ¶5). Thus, if the intent of an organization’s policy is to involve the drug user community only as a means to study them—scientifically and at arm’s length—then the drug user community is not really a partner in the process. In considering how to include them as partners, a problem arises as follows.

If the Canadian ideal of a policy system is a process supportive of capacity building, then what happens to groups that have low levels of skill, power or organization to participate equally? For example, one might have concerns that the community of drug users lacks the capacity to participate on an equal level with law enforcement in a public policy process. Here, I do not pose this as a problem only in the sense that individual drug users are not to be relied on to engage in productive dialogue just as, for example, people who are legally drunk cannot be trusted to drive. I mean this in the sense that drug user communities must have the capacity to be kept informed and represent their interests in the policy process. Otherwise, drug policy consultation might generally exclude groups the way I discussed federal justice policy excludes groups in favour of individuals (see the section, “Consultation Policy in Canada”). From a policy theory standpoint a drug policy system must therefore achieve the highest (i.e., most inclusive and egalitarian) level of capacity building. If not, it will remain ineffective, at the low end of the advancement scale.

The problem, then, is in determining how exactly the drug user community, or any potentially disenfranchised group, should be involved. At one extreme, a group is excluded or only brought into consultation at arm’s length as the object of data
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gathering. At the other extreme, a group has full participation and autonomous representation at the table. In the drug policy situation, there was mixed acceptance of full stakeholder participation. The City of Vancouver and some of the government, academic and enforcement community stakeholders regarded drug addicts as humans with equal rights in the dialogue, whereas the other stakeholders in the decision-making process dealt with drug addicts in a more scientific way, as disenfranchised research subjects. The greater is the extent of stakeholder inclusion, the smaller will be the gap between official policy and actual practice.

**Comparing Vancouver’s Drug Policy and Rapid Transit Consultations**

The Vancouver Drug Program’s continued commitment to full public participation places it high on the scale of advancement. History confirms this. In the Fall of 2003, the program was developing relationships and using dialogue to invite public participation in the policy process. In the spring of 2005, the Four Pillars prevention plan was still in development. Through 2009, Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program office continued to involve government, the public and the consulting expert community in the policy process. This included a series of lively dialogues involving various groups of interested parties. As I proposed earlier in this chapter, this is part of the data collection process in action research. Debate about drug policy continues, but the policy process itself is firmly established. This is consistent with the Habermasian ideals of the public sphere as a place for open inquiry and holding government accountable.33

By comparison, the RAV project took a more conventional, one-sided approach. RAV was not a project of the City of Vancouver; it is not subject to City Plan. The RAV transit line (now in operation and renamed the “Canada Line”) bisects Vancouver’s North-South axis, but the project was managed by RAVCO, a subsidiary of the regional transit authority. RAV’s policy-on-paper called for public consultation; RAVCO solicited proposals in an open bid process to engage consultants to coordinate public

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33 See, for example, Habermas (1984, Chapter I and Chapter III) on communicative action, and Calhoun (1992) on Habermasian discourse ethics.
consultation in each of the project’s three zones. However the process used by RAVCO was more consistent with a ‘buy-in’, or ‘solutions’ approach that I discussed in Chapter 1. Rather than use a locally-coordinated consultation process, RAVCO engaged an Ontario-based public relations firm to manage the external communication process in the Vancouver portion of RAV transit line. The clash between citizens and the project authority has outlived the construction project, as lawsuits continue to work their way through the courts.

RAVCO’s process of soliciting input and providing information met with modest, but persistent resistance. One area of contention in the project was the Cambie Street business district, where merchants joined forces with the Do RAV Right Coalition. In various turns of project development, RAVCO and their opponents have been at odds over the fairness and inclusiveness of the consultation process. Do RAV Right challenged the use of ‘cut-and-cover’ tunnel construction in the business zone. They claimed that during the environmental assessment phase, RAVCO abandoned the original plan, which would have been less disruptive to businesses on Cambie Street.

RAVCO has taken the position that they consulted with the public by posting the information on the Internet before the close of the public comment phase of the project. Do RAV Right filed a lawsuit against RAVCO in 2005. It has been working its way through the justice system through the BC Supreme Court, the BC Court of Appeal and up to the Supreme Court of Canada. In the meantime, one merchant affected by the Cambie Street construction work managed by RAVCO won an individual $600,000 settlement in a similar suit against the City, the Canada Line and the BC’s transit authority. This matter continues to go through appeals. In spite of resistance from the outset, the environmental assessment went ahead and RAVCO approved the contested change of plan. What is important here in comparison with Vancouver’s drug program is that posting plans on the Internet and inciting lawsuits is not indicative of an adequately advanced consultation process.

The RAV plan, then, had the force of government and pressure of project schedule deadlines behind it, but not the consent of the public. Unlike the Vancouver drug policy dialogues, where disagreement was limited to issues of drug policy, opponents in the RAV project disagreed on both project policy and the government’s
management of the consultation process. Joyce Thayer, legal counsel for the Do RAV Right Coalition, was quoted in 2005 as saying, “The public consultation process is entirely flawed and the decision is just appalling” (Bridge, 2005, B5). RAVCO’s CEO at the time, Jane Bird, took the position that the decision was fair. However, RAVCO agreed to spend $1 million for a business liaison program. The program consisted of distributing flyers to homes along the Cambie corridor, reminding area residents that local businesses were still open and accepting customers. Of approximately 400 businesses on Cambie, approximately 100 went bankrupt or were forced to move by the time the Canada Line opened in August 2009.

A more modest investment would have sufficed earlier in the project had RAVCO used an approach like the one used by the City of Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program Office. This would have required more than asking for input on minor design decisions and disseminating official information. It would have required a proactive effort to bring interested parties to the table. If this is true for RAV, a one-time construction project, it is all the more so true for an ongoing social policy project like the Four Pillars Strategy. These projects were concurrent, and co-located. Both embraced technical expertise. However, the drug policy dialogues, following the highest levels of Canadian federal, regional and local government policy, embraced open dialogue, which resulted in a consensus decision and further dialogue. The RAV project used dissemination of technical expertise and persuasion techniques, which resulted in conflicts and litigation.

The Effect of Vancouver’s Drug Policy

In summary, Vancouver’s drug policy program meets the criteria for serving the public’s interests at an advanced level in its use of policy. In this case, the conditions are created, in part, by taking a Habermasian approach to the public sphere. Through dialogue, they have been asking for the public’s input. Using the model in Figure 5, they have an implied obligation to use the information to inform their decision-making. If they can do this on an ongoing basis, they are, in effect doing qualitative action-research in partnership with the public. Policy and intent foster trust in institutions and their agents. Consultation and transparency foster confidence in policy-making and policy-makers. Policy thus is the foundation for good consultation, and consultation is the path to good policy.
Next, I will focus on research methods, and what an organization can and must do to use dialogue as a research method in carrying out consultation policy. As I did in assessing policy regimes, I will begin at the most general level and finally apply the analysis to the Vancouver drug policy situation. This will set the stage for the remaining dialogue discussions in Chapters 4 and 5.

**Constructivism and Discourse**

The comparison of different approaches to public consultation in the last section focused on policy—which is an indication of intent—and process. With the Vancouver drug policy program situation in mind, I now return to the development of a theoretical approach to dialogue. This begins by looking at the distinction between the epistemological positions of *positivism* and *constructivism*. Positivism stems from the work of 18th Century philosopher Auguste Comte and his “Law of Three Stages” of the evolution of knowledge. The first stage was theocratic, the second was metaphysical and the final stage—beginning with the Enlightenment—was the scientific, or positive stage, based on the predominance of empiricism and scientific method. This approach to knowledge formation is essentially deterministic. Constructivism, in contrast, frames knowledge-formation as a learning process in which there is room for a more contextual—and possibly democratic—understanding of the things, systems and ideas that people create.

Positivism is based on a belief that nature and science are absolute. Positivism defines knowledge as the unique truth that is uncovered through rational fact finding. Positivism is the *raison d'être* for the scientific, evidence-based approach of modern, Western science, commerce and administration. In the public sphere, empirical evidence is the justification for decision-making, and renders invalid any opposition that is based on non-scientific rationality. The rationality that designed and administrated the RAV process described above falls largely in this category. Here, scientific and engineering expertise, in concert with conventional business and financial administration practice combine to determine that ‘cut-and-cover’ is both safe and sound. The same rationality determines that public input should be limited to aesthetic decisions, like what colour to paint transit station exteriors.
In the traditional concept of the public sphere, there is a hierarchical relationship between experts and the public. Even if public input is sought, the technically expert opinion does not just inform other opinions; it overpowers and negates them. Therefore, the opposition loses the debate and is shut out. In effect, such absolutism narrows the membership of the public sphere to those who possess technologically rationalized and/or administrative power. M. E. Hawkesworth (1992) argues, “Failure to recognize the grave deficiencies of positivist conceptions of science poses a number of dangers for policy inquiry” (p. 324). Ultimately, politics, social justice, and other empirical concerns must also be considered in the policy process.

Constructivism offers such a wider-ranging approach. It is more consistent with the broader definition of a public sphere that earlier I described is essential to action research in drug policy. It frames knowledge as being something that is constructed through discourse and interaction. In the public sphere, constructivism is the democratic practice of negotiation, dialogue, and conversations in conflict and problem solving. Scholarship on this approach is relatively recent. It has gained popularity in a variety of fields (e.g., education, technology studies and philosophy) and can be found in various forms at the heart of the influential work of such diverse thinkers as John Dewey (1922; 1927), Andrew Feenberg (1999), Carol Gilligan (1993), Thomas Kuhn (1962), Jean Piaget (Blickhard, in Matthews, 1998) and Ken Wilbur (2000), to name a few.

From a conflict theory standpoint, a constructivist approach has the advantage of allowing decision makers to heed the voice of science, without compromise, while allowing other important voices to be influential. The criteria for decision-making can thus be freed from the narrow embrace of secular ethics, physics and economics, to address the social, cultural, metaphysical, religious and social justice issues that are at play in the public sphere, but often suppressed.

Dialogue as a Research Methodology

In the introduction to this chapter, I discussed my intention to use the example of the Vancouver Drug Policy Program to develop a meta-theoretical approach for creating policy. This approach involves using public consultation to develop and implement policy
to fulfil the Four Pillars strategy. Here, Vancouver’s Drug Policy Program, the public and other parties act as partners in a kind of action research project. The goal of the project is to create and implement a drug strategy that carries the legitimacy of government and meets the needs of all parties in the community. An important part of this data gathering takes place as people from government, technical experts and members of the public engage in dialogue at events such as the “Visioning a Future for Prevention Symposium.”

In their work on a meta-theory of policy design, Stephen Linder and B. Guy Peters connect the work of Habermas to policy design through a “critical theory approach to policy analysis” (in Dunn & Kelley, 1992, p. 213). They situate this approach within a meta-theory that considers four “theoretical backings” of policy theory (i.e., process, choice, learning and entrepreneurship). They argue that a critical theory-based approach must go beyond cost-benefit analyses, “so that ‘better’ policies—meaning primarily policies in tune with the sentiments of the community for which they are being made—can be produced” (Dunn & Kelley, 1992, pp. 213-217). How does one attain this goal?

Frank Fisher—a political scientist and policy expert from Rutgers—asks the above question as follows, “Is it possible to more directly confront the hierarchical relationship that typically structures expert-client collaboration?” (Dunn & Kelley, 1992, p. 360). He concludes that collaboration, in the form of action research, is essential to policy formation. The expert must act, not as the oracle of scientific truth, but as a facilitator who can “enlarge the clients’ abilities to pose the problems and questions that interest and concern them and to help connect them to the kinds of information and resources needed to help them find answers” (p. 366). Expertise, then, becomes facilitation, and facilitation becomes, firstly a matter of ‘problem-posing’.

Fisher (1992) proposes that the most challenging problem facing a facilitator in participatory research is that of client participation. He asks, “How much do we actually know about the ability of clients to intelligently collaborate in technical decision making?” (Dunn & Kelley, 1992, p. 371). Qualitative research design theory can help deal with this problem by shifting one’s view of the challenge facing the facilitator focusing on answers and solutions to focusing on questions, as follows.
Open Questions

Instead of focusing on the issue of technical competence, the challenge facing the facilitator is to focus on the task of facilitating 'problem-posing' without any particular solutions in mind. Susan Paterno (2000) argues that open questions are essential to information gathering. She cites the work of John Sawatsky, who trains journalists on an open question-based method of inquiry. According to Paterno,

[Sawatsky’s] “method is based on asking questions beginning with what, how, why and to a lesser degree, who, when and where. Not exactly a novel concept. But what Sawatsky succeeds in showing is how even the best-constructed questions will fall flat if laden with the interviewer’s attitude. He shows various videos of Larry King grilling guests: "Are you bitter?" "No." "Angry?" "No." "Were you surprised?" "No." "Did you feel guilty?" "No." "Were you disappointed?" "Oh yeah, I guess I was disappointed." King "takes a stab in the dark and finally he hits one. This," he says, "is where the coercion comes in." Leave the values out, he says, and problems solve themselves. (American Journalism Review, 2000 http://ajr.org)

Sawatsky claims that his research shows that closed questions—those that can be answered with a yes or no—will get confirmation or denial 98% of the time. Nowhere is there room in the dichotomies and competition of closed questions for middle ground. Sawatsky is interested in journalism, not in mediation or public consultation. However, if the concepts of open-ness apply to the often adversarial work of journalists, they certainly will apply to the normally adversarial work of mediated conflict resolution and problem-solving. As Tannen (1998) concludes about the ‘argument culture’ of journalism, “If you limit your view of a problem to choosing between two sides, you inevitably reject much that is true."(p. 290). Closed questions boil everything down to two sides: yes and no. A process that meets all the criteria discussed so far for good policy must therefore be the result of a set of open questions. The more open the questions, the more constructive will be the framework for inquiry.

In other words, if one asks for the public’s input and then asks “how does this fit with established theory?” one has limited the possible outcomes to that which is already believed or predicted. In the case of drug policy, if anyone already knew how to solve problems of addiction, then there would be no need for new policy. However, a unique
A positivistic solution to a given problem never exists. The policy-making arena becomes a stage for a choreographed negotiation over a pre-determined ‘solution’ (see Chapter 2). Here the lay public—otherwise irrelevant in determining evidence-based scientific outcomes—is no more involved than voters who are given only one party on their ballot forms.

**The ‘Problem of Unpacking’**

Asking questions for policy, or for process design involves accessing and unpacking information that has been stored in people’s memories. One problem here is that people pack and unpack information differently. This situation is analogous to a problem I encountered when moving to a new home. One of my tasks was to pack and organize all the boxes for moving day. In order to minimize disruption to our family routines, I packed boxes by emptying the contents of rooms, one room at a time. However, I filled the boxes according to like items (e.g., books in one size of box, small appliances in another, and so on) in order to accommodate the movers and the available kinds of boxes. As a result, each box contained things that were similar for different reasons (e.g., alike in size, alike in use, alike in density) from different rooms in the old house.

After the move, it came time to unpack. Hoping to again minimize disruption to our family routines, my wife attempted to negotiate with me an order for unpacking. Noting that I had first packed the living room, she asked which rooms I intended to unpack first. This is when I ran up against that which I will call the problem of unpacking. The problem is that in packing I had to alter the organization of our belongings from the everyday practice of living to the everyday practice of moving. Things were now organized to optimize moving them. The problem was compounded by the fact that the number and types of rooms were different in the new house. The old arrangement, the move, and the new arrangement were not merely different; each had a different framework and system of classification. I needed a different entry point to unpack than I used to pack.
Likewise, in using dialogue data for qualitative inquiry, the expert-facilitator encounters a problem of unpacking. The data get ‘packed’ according to the people and events of the situation at hand, and get unpacked according to the researcher’s intervention—which is a different situation. The events that give rise to the data are ‘packed’ according processes of natural growth—which are fractal—and processes of social construction—which are epistemic. Fractal and epistemic growth—as I discussed in Chapter 2—are similar in form and evolution. For example, Margaret Wheatley (1994) shows how fractal growth models can be used to model existing organizational systems, and to serve as templates for facilitating radical organizational change with a “much more diverse and richer sense of what is going on and what needs to be done” (p. 65).

Likewise, in my materials science research I used a thermodynamic model of epitaxial growth—which is a solid-state equivalent of fractal and epistemic evolution—to model and predict crystallization kinetics and growth in glass-forming systems. Glass might appear to be amorphous and structurally chaotic, but it has a molecular local order that can be exploited to ‘grow’ structures that provide coherence and functionality for such diverse processes as high-speed data transmission and shatter-resistant, microwaveable tableware. One common feature here is that fractal growth is always dynamic and expansive; it does not contract or reverse sequence. Another is that the design of a process and the process that is designed are significantly interrelated, but are not one and the same. Just as the map is not the same as the territory depicted by the map, the journey guided by the map is not the same as the territory of the map.

In the Vancouver drug policy research project, my goal was to identify the most promising entry point into the deliberative process of the drug policy community. A viable entry point would offer a path to solving the facilitator’s problem posed by Frank Fisher, i.e., the imbalance in hierarchical, expert-client relationships. The focus of problem-posing was fragmented between the public in general, the drug user community in particular, the expert community and the policy stewards (i.e., the Drug Policy Program

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34 Epitaxial growth behaviour is an arcane and complex scientific concept. However, this is not introduced here as mere metaphor. It is introduced here as an extension of the Marxist approach to dialectics. For example, in “On Contradiction,” Mao (1952) cites Engels’ and Lenin’s use of simple mechanics and chemistry to explain the inherent connection between physical behaviours and social behaviours. All three were interested in the macro-temporal [i.e., historical] aspect of contradiction; I am equally interested in the micro-temporal aspect.
Office). The available data consisted of audio tapes of the dialogue from the “Visioning a Future” symposium and facilitators’ notes of the results of a series of follow-up dialogue sessions with diverse groups of interested parties. What was needed was a way to organize the data from diverse groups in interconnecting categories along the lines of ARHC’s approach, as described above.

Creswell (1998) divides qualitative inquiry and research methods into five categories, or traditions. The traditions are: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study (pp. 7-8). They can be approached as entry points into a research process, rather than as exclusive, self-enclosed systems. In this dissertation, packing requires forming categories, and unpacking requires (re)assembling the data in new ways. This fits exactly Creswell’s description of the process of data analysis used in the grounded theory tradition (pp. 55-58, pp. 150-152). On the basis of Creswell’s traditions and data analysis methods, I settled on a grounded theory method as the most appropriate way to find my entry point.

**Research Methodology & the Drug Policy Program**

Fulfilling the intent of policy, and realizing the potential for public involvement involved using consultation as a form of action research. The Vancouver drug policy process demonstrated a constructivist approach, coupled with a way to achieve ‘cross-cutting’ and horizontal policy. Good policy cannot result from merely fitting available data to theory. In the case of drug program policy, input from dialogue events constitutes constructivist inquiry. A grounded theory approach presented itself as the most promising entry point for this kind of action research. It was consistent with the Vancouver Drug Policy program’s intent, as embodied in the existing policy regime (e.g., Guidelines for Managers, City Plan). Grounded theory is designed to deal with the ‘problem of unpacking’ in a way that addresses both the technical and non-technical aspects of the drug program’s task.

The Vancouver Drug Policy Program was uniquely positioned to create new solutions to a difficult problem. The constructivist, Four Pillars approach and the dialogue process stand in contrast to examples of many organizational approaches that are mired
in conflict over process and unable to secure ‘buy in’ from an untrusting public. I do not propose that action research will solve the drug problem. However, continuing the dialogue process and analyzing data with qualitative methods can provide a path to creating better drug program policy. Dialogue serves the needs of consensus-making, so that people do not have to be “sold” on expert-generated outcomes. Qualitative methods serve the needs of those aspects of policy which are relevant to policy, but fall beyond the narrow, rationalized, “evidence-based” criteria of technical solutions.

The Vancouver Drug Policy Program office is not an academic research organization. However, a lack of academic expertise should not be at issue here. The Four Pillars program had the benefit of having people who are capable of providing the needed research expertise within their existing network. The greater challenge to realizing success from their unique position is to be found in the following issues.

1. Collaborative work in the public sphere is an iterative process. Vancouver’s drug policy program requires an ongoing dialogue process. Without support for this, the drug policy process cannot obtain the kind of data needed to implement the mandates of the government’s policy regime.35

2. Any ongoing effort would benefit greatly if future dialogue events were designed with a qualitative research methodology in mind. The cost difference, compared with dialogue events to date, would be minimal. This would in no way clash with existing, traditional, evidence-based methodologies.

Interpretive Analysis of the Pilot Study

After the Drug Policy Program office gave me access to all prevention project audio tapes and notes, I decided to begin my analysis by interviewing people who organized and/or participated in the symposium. Later, I analyzed notes and transcripts, and began the process of ‘coding’ and ‘memo-ing’. In a sense, this data analysis was really the second step in my inquiry. The first step was my facilitation of the symposium.

35 In 2010, Donald McPherson left the City of Vancouver to work nationally as an independent advocate. This leaves Vancouver’s drug policy office in a more custodial, less active role.
Although I did not intend to conduct a research study until after I was hired, my facilitation method and dialogue process, as I described earlier, would have been the same in any case. For this study, I reviewed transcripts of the entire symposium and the facilitators’ notes from the follow-up sessions. As a general rule, reviewing tapes of interviews is not encouraged in grounded theory. However, that guideline is based on the principle that it is better to be conducting more interviews, than to be reviewing old ones. In this case, the dialogue was recorded anyway; failure to use the transcripts seemed to me to be a wasted opportunity.

Another reason given for the guideline against using audio recordings is that they place the researcher too far from the experience of the moment. In this case, however, I take exception. The use of transcripts helped me to identify primary axial codes and focus on one particular property (i.e., effect, or 'yield'). Being able to focus on one primary axial coding category, and mute the others, allows me to isolate various details that I would otherwise miss. This, in effect, improved the resolution of my observations. I discovered this phenomenon as a result of early attempts at axial coding, before I had the full transcript. Had I not analyzed the partial transcript early on, I might have missed this. I came to identify this axial property phenomenon as the three dimensional triangle model.

The initial reason I took exception to the guideline about recordings and transcriptions was because the transcripts also allowed me to focus, with less distraction, on the content category. This not only helped me in the early stages of data analysis, but it changed my own way of theorizing and teaching multiparty problem solving. Beginning with a focus on content, I proceeded to analyze the entire set of audiocassette tape transcript data in July 2005. There were six audiocassette tapes in all, covering roughly 12 hours of material. I transcribed the tapes of the first parts of the symposium, and paid a secretary to transcribe the last four hours of the Friday session. I transcribed my portion by listening to the tapes through a set of headphones, and simultaneously repeating everything into a dictation program on my computer. While the computer transcribed the text, I followed along and corrected errors manually.
My analysis of the data yielded more than just the Content-Process-Effect axial coding frame. I was particularly taken by the differences in my experiences of the following three different methods.

1. listening to tapes to transcribe, and then analyze them,
2. reading someone else’s transcription of the tapes, and
3. listening to the recollections of participants whom I interviewed.

One of the conditions imposed by the supervisor of my pilot project process was that I personally do at least half of the audio recording transcription used for analysis. I found that each method had a strength corresponding to the three primary axial codes. Method 1 above provided me with an enhanced perspective on effect. Method 2 above provided me with an enhanced perspective on content, and Method 3 with an enhanced perspective on process. I would not have predicted this; before using grounded theory methods, I would have predicted that Method 1 above would have been more conducive to focusing on process and Method 3 on effect.

Some other notable results of my analysis reflect on the dialogue process itself. The open dialogue portions of the prevention symposium contained content shifts that revolved around the recurring use of a metaphor that I introduced early in the day; that of a bus ride. Another recurring theme was the appearance of various dichotomies (e.g., “what we do” vs. “what works”) and pairings (e.g., aboriginal & queer) that were raised by participants. These dialogical turns got me thinking about the issue of identity (i.e., how often do people describe themselves in relation to a particular profession, ideology, orientation?). This question resonates with the themes of my dissertation. It emerges from the transcripts as an interesting candidate for a new line of inquiry, following Creswell’s (1998) “image for data collection in a grounded theory study [as] a ‘zigzag’ process—out to the field to gather…more information, analyze the data, and so forth” (pp. 56-57).

Another finding that emerges from my limited analysis of the transcripts relates to the dialogue event design process of the Vancouver Drug Policy Program office and the organizers of the various dialogue events. My findings from the pilot project suggest that—considering the drug policy dialogue sessions in the context of doing qualitative...
action research—the demographic breakdown of dialogue groups engaged to date might be skewed. The composition of dialogue groups determines how representative will be the information gathered for purposes of public policy. If the information is to be truly representative, further analysis is needed to determine how to achieve a truly representative sampling of public opinion.

**Conclusions of the Drug Policy Dialogue Study**

What I have reported here is based on a first reading of the records. I intended for this to be an iterative process, involving participants from the drug policy events on an ongoing basis. However, some follow-up events in the Vancouver drug policy consultation program did not yield usable information for this study. The events were designed and coordinated by the City of Vancouver, using a focus group format. The notes from those session—which were transcribed from the facilitators’ flip charts—were not consistent enough in format, focus or level of detail to be of use here. However, the overall process followed a course consistent with what is described in the literature on qualitative research. Of equal importance, the pilot project supported the integration of several diverse areas of theory, philosophy and practice that proved essential to my research concept, including policy, hermeneutics, communication theory, and conflict intervention. Grounded theory proved to be useful for work in other parts of my dissertation research.

One result of the pilot study was my revision of the conflict triangle model, which proved to be the key first step in a series of refinements. In the next two chapters, I will trace the development of ideas that followed the basic premise that “effect” describes the third dimension of outcomes (e.g., relationships, emotions, artefacts). This framework guided my observations in the field and informed my analysis of the field data.
4. Dialogue as Process: The Community Living Society

This chapter reflects on the Community Living Society situation and dialogue as process. I discussed in the Preface that a hermeneutic and analytical approach to research must be cross-disciplinary and cross-linked. In Chapter 3, I argued that the Vancouver drug policy program was successful, partly because it “demonstrated a constructivist approach, coupled with a way to achieve ‘cross-cutting’ and horizontal policy.” Grounded theory uses ‘cross-cutting’—i.e., draws on methods and information from different disciplines—to create what Bohmian dialogue calls “common content.” In Chapter 3, my analysis cut the drug policy situation across different perspectives of effect. The focus there was on policy as an artefact of communication in conflict and problem-solving. In this chapter, I will cut the theory and facts across different perspectives of process.

The process dimension of my theoretical framework represents how practices are performed. The model can be used to make a distinction between two aspects of process: how people do the things that result in conflicts and problems, and how people communicate about those things (e.g., argue, negotiate, disseminate information). There is a feedback loop between these two aspects. Contentious ways of doing things foster contentious communication. Collaborative processes foster collaborative communication. This is shown in Figure 6.

CLS was founded by activists in response to the harsh conditions of government-run institutions for the developmentally disabled. They successfully lobbied for a radical change in the provincial social service system. Years later, the activist ways that earned them independence from institutionalization no longer served them well. They had reached what Bohm would describe as a state of incoherence in how they did things and how they communicated about those things.
The CLS community is diverse; they are a cross-section of Canada’s many educational, vocational, cultural and ideological orientations. The single factor that ‘cross-links’ CLS as a community of practice is its history of advocacy for radical change. The challenge in my intervention was to build on a paradox: a community united in the cause of independent living. CLS needed new ways to resolve their differences, but did not know how to come to an agreement on a policy and procedure for communication in conflict and problem-solving. My work with them involved facilitating dialogue events in which CLS staff, the individuals they support, and the families of those individuals reflected on the many ways they experienced conflict.

CLS employs over 500 people and provides basic social services to a diverse group of developmentally disabled individuals in the Greater Vancouver area. CLS came into being in the 1980s as a result of an activist movement that ended the general practice of incarcerating the developmentally disabled in British Columbia. The driving force behind the activist movement was a group of parents of patient-inmates of the Woodlands School, which grew out of institutions such as the Riverview Mental Hospital, and the Provincial Hospital for the Insane, in New Westminster B.C. in the 1950s. When I was introduced to the CLS community in 2003, they had a decades-long history of
communication in conflict. They had conflicts with outsiders, such as provincial health authorities, dating back to the activist movement. Internally, they were experiencing conflict in communication dealing with the challenges of a diverse, growing organization. My job was to help them communicate with one another so that they could construct a shared story of their experiences. From that “common content” they would negotiate a new process for resolving conflicts.

Many parents of individuals supported by CLS talk about their experiences of the mental health system using the language of their working-class backgrounds and levels of education. However, their stories reveal insights that support a philosophically complex, academically arcane critique of state-administered mental health care in the service of capitalist efficiency. In the stories of their everyday experiences, one hears of people reduced to things, and of people embedded in a technologically rational nightmare network of bureaucratic efficiency. One parent described how her son came to be administratively constrained (via scheduled routines) and physically restrained (via tethers) in order to regulate his meals and bowel movements to accommodate the routines of Woodlands. Well into adulthood, he had never had a private, unobserved bowel movement until he was living independently with CLS. In a society in which privacy is taken as an entitlement, such treatment of a ‘normal’ citizen would be considered an act of emotional violence by an oppressive State.

The State that facilitates such treatment does so via a coordinated complex of organization, administration, surveillance, and technology. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault describes some of its mechanisms, using terms such as “the art of distributions,” “control of activity,” “organization of genoses” and the “composition of forces.” Through planning and coordination, they served the requirements of British Columbia’s psychiatric hospitals and its staffs, such that the whole system worked as what I will call an *emotionally violent State apparatus*. In other words, individuals who were unable to resist, or even to merely give voice to their suffering were forced to endure a kind of emotional cruelty. Firstly, this was due to their living conditions. Secondly, this was due to the restricted access granted to those outside the institution—family and other advocates—who cared about their emotional well-being. The result was
a denial of the human interests of the actors, in favour of the rationally derived imperatives of the institution that held them.

Foucault regards this type of institution as the archetype for all of Western modernity’s institutions. The conditions that shaped the specific character of Riverview, and then later, Woodlands, also shaped the other public and private institutions of everyday life in British Columbia. It follows that even after British Columbia’s hospitals for the developmentally disabled were closed down, there would still be socially superimposed patterns of governmental and professional control, and a tension between the needs of the institutions that replaced the hospitals and the needs of the individuals formerly held in them. Even though these individuals now have a radically different living situation, the medically mandated standards of care and governmentally mandated standards of caregiving remain essentially the same.

Here, one finds what I discussed earlier about the fractal nature of change and growth. New institutions grow in relation to their evolving situations. They grow in reaction to the old institutions and in response to the emerging forms of the new system. The emotionally violent State apparatus’s designs were encoded with the scientific rationality of hospitals and prisons. Where there is a past, there is never a clean slate for new designs. New growth is both radical (i.e., something is completely discarded) and epitaxial (i.e., directed by the orientation of the original form). In the CLS situation, people entered the new order shaped by a life in total subjection to the old system, without rights or opportunities to act on their own behalf.

In reflecting on people’s accounts of having been marginalized by the provincial medical system, I am reminded of Jean François Lyotard’s (1984) warning about Western culture and its economic system that “On the one hand… can only function by reducing complexity, and on the other…must induce the adaptation of individual aspirations to its own ends” (p. 61). This was the case in British Columbia, where the tax-funded health care system had to run economically and efficiently. Though their absolute numbers were quite small, the needs of individuals were subordinated to the

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36 The distinction between ‘reaction’ and ‘response’ is as follows. Reaction is an oppositional force, motivated by a perceived threat, and ‘response’ is a cooperative force, motivated by one’s desire to achieve a goal.
requirements of standardized treatment protocols. The standard of treatment was determined by sound, evidence-based medical practice, and administered according to the empirically-based standard business practices of medical and penal institutions. The ‘adaptations’ and coping mechanisms that people developed to survive within, and ultimately to overcome, the old system comprised the salient part of the skill set that they brought to the new system. However, the skill set needed to deal with the old authority was not ideally suited to the task of living in a new one.

The price CLS paid for their freedom from the conflicts imposed on them by the old institution was the ability to impose conflicts on each other in the new one. Thus, in their post-institutionalized world, members of the CLS community had to learn to balance their historical suspicion of organizational authority with their need to have some level of organizational order and control. While learning to live and work with one another, they also had to find harmony with the outside world. They needed to balance the individual's interests of privacy and dignity with the public's needs for institutional transparency and fiduciary accountability. They also needed to develop a new skill set and a radically different design for their own system. To appreciate what that requires, one must take stock of the system in which CLS was formed.

**CLS in Context:**

The *Medicalization* of Developmental Disability

Western society’s historical pattern for dealing with abnormal or unacceptable behaviours—including the impulsive behaviours of developmentally disabled individuals—has been to regard the aberrant individual as ill, or criminal, or both. Hundreds of years ago, no one made much of a distinction between ill and criminal behaviours. Both the medical profession and the criminal justice system now recognize that developmental disability is neither an illness nor a tendency to do harm. It helps to have language that makes a distinction between foolishness and significantly low learning ability. The linguistic evolution from regarding a broad class of people as ‘idiots’ or ‘imbeciles’ to regarding a special class of people as developmentally disabled or ‘retarded’ [according to the standard terms of the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*] began in the Middle Ages and
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came to fruition in the early 20th Century (Cloud et al., 1998, p. 508). However, the origin of the institutions that deal with developmental disability or criminality pre-dates these linguistic or professional distinctions.

The CLS began at a time when providing for society’s needs with respect to developmental disability was already considered to be primarily a medical problem, rather than a criminal one. However, the larger social issue of the public’s ignorance of the nature of developmental disability was never a concern of either the medical community or the penal system. Developmentally disabled people were thus kept ‘out of sight, out of mind’ from the general public by well-intentioned professionals whose status gave them the authority to have people committed involuntarily. If developmentally disabled individuals had regarded themselves as ill, and had they and their families shared the predominant, expert view of how to deal with their condition, there is evidence that some might have consented to institutionalization. However, the majority would not have. The same individuals who now live the community were once held without their consent in state-run institutions for the developmentally disabled.

Historically, the similarities between those state-run institutions and penal or psychiatric institutions have been significant. The distinction between being deprived of freedom by the justice system or by the medical system is subtle. It can be easily lost on the one so deprived, whether or not one is competent to give consent. Society’s predominant view was that the developmentally disabled were hospitalized for their own good. Riverview and Woodlands thus operated openly as state-sanctioned medium-security, or ‘closed custody’ facilities.

Michel Foucault (1995) focuses on the idealized prison system as the institutional model for medical prisons, and by extension, for all of Western society’s relations of power. In Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, he traces the evolution of Western ways of dealing with extreme and aberrant behaviours from the pre-industrial spectacle of public executions to the ‘carceral’ structure of modern cities. He ends the

37 Here, I mean ‘condition’ both in the medical sense and the social, or circumstantial, sense.

38 According to a May 7, 2009 report by Lora Grindlay in The Vancouver Province, only 9 of the 175 patients currently in the province’s mental health and addiction services facility that remains at the old Riverview site were admitted voluntarily.
book as follows. “At this point I end a book that must serve as a historical background to various studies of the power of normalization and the formation of knowledge in modern society” (p. 308). My reflection here on the CLS intervention is one such study.

CLS was formed in the context of a society shaped by the historical forces illuminated by Foucault. It struggled through years of complex decision-making and negotiation in conflict. It went through a small, but significant transformation in the “Resolving Our Differences” project and its aftermath. The next part of this chapter will review the history and theories of domination and power exemplified by Foucault’s (1995) ‘carceral’ structure and Althusser’s (2008/1971) notions of repressive state apparatuses. Then I will review the history and theories of negotiation, dialogue and conflict resolution that evolved in this society and were in effect throughout the CLS intervention. Finally, I will address the results of my CLS intervention and research.

The Medical Institutional Roots of the Emotionally Violent State Apparatus

People with developmental disabilities stand out because they do not behave according to the predominant notion of ‘normal’ and because they have special needs. Fortunately, in places like Canada, such people are not currently treated as if evil spirits possess them, nor are they left to die in the wilderness. Modern society deals with the challenges of developmental disability according to the rationality of science. Within Western science, there is a hierarchy of disciplines, or sub-systems that determine the process for dealing with the presence of the disabled in society. Under the umbrella of general science, there is medicine—which deals with all aspects of the individual’s body and psyche. Within medicine, there is the discipline of psychiatry—which deals with mental and personality disorders and serious learning disabilities. The perspective of psychiatry has a negative bias; it focuses on what is considered to be wrong with people.

Before community living took hold, most developmentally disabled individuals were forced to live in institutions. They were the responsibility of medical professionals. While Western science frames medical intervention as a technical issue, the organization of medical intervention in everyday life is equally a social issue—one that is not openly acknowledged in our culture. This is also a communication issue. For
example, by routinely conducting patient interviews as interrogations, doctors maintain patients' level of control of understanding of their treatment (Waitzkin, 1989). Thus, medical practice is able to manage patient behaviour in much the same way that subjects are managed in the justice system, a penal institution or a military boot camp. Elliot Mishler describes this power imbalance as a clash between the doctor—who speaks in the “voice of medicine”—and the patient—who speaks in the “voice of the life-world”—which leads to “objectification of the patient, to a stripping away of the life-world contexts of patient problems” (cited in Waitzkin, 1989, pp. 231-232).

This is the nature of asymmetrical communication—in which one person has the dominant position and is granted the privilege of determining the meaning of the other person’s discourse. Harold Innis observes in *The Bias of Communication*, that such “monopolies of knowledge”—which are language-based—lead to monopolies of power. For example, doctors support the ideology of capitalism both by determining whether patients are fit to work, and by telling patients that they will heal faster if they go back to work as soon as possible. The systematic use of closed questions and interruptions in the everyday discourses of medical encounters supports the dominance of Western scientific rationality in matters of health and wellness. People with frequent exposure to the Western medical system—such as members of the CLS community—are sensitive to asymmetrical communication.

Therapeutic intervention is a special case of medical intervention: one that also has social implications and implications in everyday language. It is grounded in medicine through the specialty of psychiatry. However, therapeutic discourse is also an everyday discourse because non-medical disciplines use therapeutic interventions. Historically, many people who exhibited behaviours that were considered to be indicative of psychiatric or mental illness were institutionalized. Today, under the increasing influence of free market economics and privatization, the state and the private sector form more of a mental health care partnership than ever before. As I will explain, this partnership is more embedded in Western culture than one might guess. One must look at how a society is organized to deal with mental health issues, and identify which aspects of a society’s institutions are *emancipatory* and which are *repressive*.
Western medicine, in general, treats problems with drugs or therapy, rather than addressing social or contextual issues. This, in effect, places emphasis on the patient’s compliance with doctor’s orders. However, in therapeutic discourse, where drugs or surgery are not used, the tendency is to assign most of the responsibility for problem-solving to the patients themselves. Patients are thus forced to take action within their limited personal sphere of control. Therapeutic discourse positions people to develop coping mechanisms to live with the status quo if there are no drugs or medical interventions that can be used to otherwise help them cope. People accept this uncritically, because many everyday discourses—like criminology and advertising—work the same way. They condition people to accept and live within the system. In the CLS case, the conditions became intolerable. Rather than cope, people changed the system.

Residents of Riverview and Woodlands were diagnosed with a medical and psychiatric problem. However, the main critique of psychiatry in Western culture is that the mental health system does not treat a medical problem. Rather, it’s function is to work as a form of social control. Psychiatry, according to its critics, operates as an institution and practice that aims at “correcting” deviant behaviours, and incarcerating those who cannot be corrected. Correction can normally be accomplished physically—with surgery or drugs—or psychologically—with psychotherapy or behaviour modification. In the special case of the developmentally disabled, physical means would also necessarily include physical restraint. Likewise, psychological means would require behaviour modification, or in vulgar terms, “carrot and stick” methods.

One of the most famous critics of conventional psychiatry is Thomas Szasz, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry, State University of New York. He holds that everyone is entitled to ownership of his or her body, and that the State should not be empowered to make decisions for one in that regard. In his well-known book *The Myth of Mental Illness*, he argues that, “psychiatrists cannot expect to solve ethical problems by medical methods” (1974, p. 8). He holds that “two general types of rules are especially significant in the genesis of behaviour which has been variously labelled “witchcraft,” “hysteria,” and “mental illness.” They are first, “the essential helplessness of children… and help giving activity of the parent…” and second, the internal conflicts caused by the teachings and practices of religions, and the New Testament in particular (p. 13).
Szasz also argues that all behaviours make sense. If one acts against a law or social code, one should be held accountable for one’s actions, rather than be allowed to plead insanity. Otherwise, people become involuntarily incarcerated—which renders them defenceless against various forms of abuse. Szasz cites in this regard the example of the Soviet Gulag system, and its network of psychiatric hospitals.

Anne Applebaum (2003), of the Washington Post, describes the Soviet psychiatric system as a repressive and ideological state apparatus in her book *Gulag: A History*. She writes, “to explain the phenomenon of dissidence, they came up with the definition of ‘sluggish schizophrenia’ or ‘creeping schizophrenia’…[which] could encompass nearly any form of behaviour deemed asocial or abnormal” (p. 548). She quotes two Soviet professors of the Serbsky Institute who wrote, “Most frequently, ideas about ‘struggle for truth and justice’ are formed by personalities with a paranoid structure” (p. 548). By that definition, Applebaum notes, all dissidents could be identified as mentally ill.

Due to the secrecy of the political prison system, no one knows how many people were incarcerated and abused in this way. However, a study published in 1977 listed 365 sane people in the Soviet Union who were known to have been treated in State mental hospitals (p. 550). An international movement to stop this practice was dismissed by the Soviet government as plot organized by the Royal College of Psychiatrists under the influence of Zionists. The Soviet Ministry of Health responded by giving select Western psychiatrists a tour of model psychiatric hospitals (p. 551).

Another example of therapeutic state apparatuses can be found in the Magdalene Asylums of Ireland and the US. The Magdalene Asylums began in the 1830s as a project of the Catholic Church to rescue and rehabilitate “fallen women.” At first, they focused on identifying women as sexual misfits. By the 1900s, had become workhouses for unmarried mothers, developmentally challenged women and promiscuous and abused girls. At the outset, women were only accepted by the asylum system if they were demonstrably “of advanced sinful life” (Stearns, 1983, p. 66). By the late 1800s, the Society’s mandate shifted from moral rehabilitation to socio-economic rehabilitation. Work ethics, marriage and family life were promoted through “concerts and poetry readings…as well as lectures on such secular topics as travel, microscopy,
and physiology” (p. 67). The inmates did unpaid laundry work—which was hard physical labour. The Irish called the asylums Magdalene Laundries. This early form of public-private partnership provided a public service with a fringe benefit of delivering occupational therapy to ‘fallen’ women. It is estimated that 30,000 women were admitted during the 160-year history of the institutions. The last one closed in 1996.

How did a project with a noble intent become a private sector version of the Soviet prison system? One might blame the Church and Christian ideology. However, that would not explain the Gulags—which were a project of an atheist ideological system. James M. Smith credits the transformation to a convergence of government, Church, and the family. Smith argues that the Magdalene organization’s “architecture of containment encompassed an assortment of interconnected institutions,” about which there was “nothing essentially Irish or Catholic” (Smith, 2007, p. xiii-xiv). The insight needed to trace Western society’s transformation from ideology to oppression can be found in the history of Western prisons as traced by French philosopher Michel Foucault.

Foucault, The Mind-Body Problem and the Condition of Knowledge Formation

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1995) describes how prisons are more than merely a humane way to remove criminals from society and rehabilitate them. According to Foucault’s analysis, prisons and criminology are the paradigm for all Western society’s network of institutions and disciplines. The aim of this network is to control the individual’s freedom, thought and behaviour. The title in French uses the root for the word *surveillance*, but Foucault explicitly intends to imply both meanings of the terms *discipline* (i.e., regulated conduct, and a special field of study) and *surveillance*. *Discipline and Punish* explains how the growth of government institutions like the Gulag system, and private institutions like the Magdalene Asylums are not the product of a single ideology or repressive group.

According to Foucault, pre-modern punishment consisted of public humiliation, torture and slow, violent death. *Discipline and Punish* begins with a description of a public execution in Paris in 1757. It is gruesome. The condemned man’s flesh is torn off with hot pincers; molten metal is poured on his open wounds; his hips and shoulders are
loosened at the joints; horses pull off his partially-severed limbs; finally, his living torso is
thrown into a fire. Foucault notes that such public punishment was no longer in use by
the end of the 1800s. The laws of ‘modern’ punishment abolished public execution as
spectacle throughout Europe beginning by the early 1800s (p. 7).

The disappearance of execution as public spectacle denoted a shift from a focus on
the body to a focus on the mind, consciousness and soul. As a result, the methods of
punishment shifted from constraints on the body to “constraints and privations,
obligations and prohibitions,” as “an economy of suspended rights” (p. 11). The agents
of this process shifted accordingly from executioners, to “doctors, chaplains,
psychiatrists and educationists” (p. 11). Their agenda was to rehabilitate, making it
necessary to distinguish the cause of the crime in question: Was it a crime of insanity, or
a crime of perversion, or maybe a crime of passion? (p. 19). Beginning in 1832, the
French Penal Code began allowing for special circumstances according to degrees of
illness (p. 20). Once the type and severity of illness were determined, so the theory
went, it became possible to re-educate the offender.

Foucault introduces the idea that possessing the body came to be seen as a
condition of knowledge formation. He claims that the Enlightenment philosophy that
regards knowledge as something that requires a suspension of power and force became
obsolete. One must “regard power and knowledge as directly implying each other” (p.
27). Pre-modern torture and execution attempted to make a link between power and
knowledge, but failed because of an unintended consequence. Instead scaring the
public into submission, public executions ultimately backfired on the government. The
crowds at public executions grew to sympathize with the man being drawn and
quartered. He became a martyr.

In response to the public’s distaste for extreme spectacle, governments opted for
milder forms of punishment. Methods were found to make executions faster and more
humane. The public spectacle of punishment shifted in emphasis from the condemned,
to the living. Most convicts and prisoners were now being used as objects of education,

39 This is embodied in a famous saying attributed to various Americans—including John Wayne, Richard
Nixon, Lyndon Johnson and an anonymous Green Beret officer—about the masses that “When you’ve
got them by the balls, their hearts and minds will follow.”
seen in public performing hard labour, wearing distinctive clothes and wearing chains to both restrict movement and call attention to their status. This was a conspicuous reminder that crime did not pay. It had the added benefit that it could be seen on an ongoing basis, instead of being limited to the few hours it took to hack someone to death or hang them. Punishment evolved from the spectacular, to the everyday.

According to Foucault, punishment's shift to a more humane, everyday occurrence represented an important ideological shift. Punishment thus became aimed equally at the convict and "the potentially guilty" (p. 108). The convict's body thus evolved from being the property of the State to being the property of the public. The public thereby became enlisted in the functions of discipline and surveillance and punishment (p. 109). This form of discipline implies the use of force to break down the individual and deliver her or him to the state as an obedient member of society. It requires the use of the "art of distributions" (p. 141). They include concentrations of production, specialized use of space devoted to functions such as administration or therapy, and ranking the inhabitants—e.g., according to class, or function, or diagnosis.

Under a system of discipline, there must also be "control of activity" (p. 149). Tasks are managed according to timetables. Procedures are coordinated according to sequences of steps in a "temporal elaboration of act" (p. 151). Individual movements are prescribed for "correlation of body and gesture"—e.g., good handwriting, good marching form (p. 152). "Body-object articulation" (i.e., relation between parts of the body and the objects being manipulated, such as the arm and the rifle) (p. 152), defines a body/machine complex. The system aspires to achieve "exhaustive use" (p. 154) of people and tools, representing a shift from non-idleness to ever-increasing productivity.

Foucault also emphasizes the need for "group coordination" which requires that the individual functions as a movable part among many parts. These parts are all coordinated in time, under a precise system of command. The command system uses training to make the routines epistemic and to assure that all the parts of the system are integrated. Finally, coordination depends on a formal, systemic use of examination to reinforce the structure, movement and ideology of the system as a whole.
Distribution, control and coordination come together in Panopticism. Foucault cites Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon as the architectural embodiment of Panopticism. Panopticism combines three criteria for assuring social order; power is enforced at the lowest cost; power is achieved via all disciplines of coercion; formation of knowledge and the increase of power reinforce one another in a circular process (p. 222). This last criterion is seen in in Figure 6 as the feedback loop in process. The function of controlling and regulating the public is now accomplished by a circular process of power and knowledge that enlists every individual in society as both a prisoner who submits to control and examination, and as an observer who participates in the enforcement of the rules.

There are many examples of the regime of surveillance in everyday life. One can dial 9-1-1 to report a crime, join a neighbourhood watch patrol, or watch reality television and go on-line to cast a vote for which contestant to eliminate next from the show. One can watch “America’s Most Wanted” and phone in a tip, or dial 713-921-HERO in the State of Washington to report High Occupancy Vehicle Lane violators; operators are standing by. Even if one is not actually participating in the regime of surveillance, one still participates in the cycle of knowledge and power by following the news or watching television—consider how many shows make popular entertainment out of law enforcement and medicine. This seemingly natural symbiosis of law and medicine brings us back to the notion of a therapeutic state apparatus.

Government and media sources provide a constant barrage of messages that define for us the language of the normal, and distinguish it in subtle ways from the language of the abnormal. The regime of surveillance provides us with the framework and organizes the information that guides people generally to make the distinctions between normal and abnormal, but it relies on each of us to act individually to make the meaningful connection between the language of normal and social construction of normality. To understand what conditions must prevail for one to make such distinctions, one needs a critical theory of medical psychiatry.

Scottish psychiatrist R. D. Laing, like Thomas Szasz, is an outspoken critic of medical psychiatry. His critique is based on the premise that medical psychiatry ignores the context underlying various symptoms, and thus fails to consider the underlying
meaning of such behaviours. The problem is that political issues are submerged in the rhetoric of individualism. Laing takes the position that the schizophrenic might be "abnormal" but it does not follow that she is necessarily unhealthier than "normal" individuals. There is a big difference, in other words, between describing someone’s conduct as being outside of the norm, and ascribing to that person’s behaviour an underlying pathology that requires intervention on the part of the state.

This culture depends on new discourses that combine ideology and repression [i.e., Ideologic State Apparatus + Repressive State Apparatus = Therapeutic State Apparatus]. Thomas Szasz argues in Heresies (1976) that Western society privileges the ideology and perspective of the power elite over those of individuals. As Foucault also argues, we have been trained and conditioned to construct ourselves as subjects who serve the interests of the State. The State is the de-personified expression of the interests of those in power. Panoptic society values docile, compliant subjects. This explains the increasing use of drugs and medical intervention in everyday life. For example, critics have pointed to the widespread administration of drugs, like Ritalen, to modify the undesired behaviour of children who do not sit still and listen in class. Other critics have pointed to the widespread use of tranquillizers in homes for the elderly. The drug use has been connected to the administrative rhythms of care facilities. Putting care facility residents to sleep clears the halls for cleanup and reduces the load on caregivers. This helps explain why young ‘patients’ were tethered, or otherwise constrained according to the administrative rhythms of Woodlands (Community Living Society, 1994). One can think of this as a political economy of medical discourse.

The language of therapeutic medicine operates on two levels; it is an individualistic discourse of personal responsibility for social problems, and a prescriptive discourse of treatment using medical therapies. In “normal” people, the origin of blame is personal (i.e., subjective), and the origin of treatment is external (i.e., objective). This ultimately supports the status quo, because it suppresses radical perspectives. However, there is collateral damage to those who are classified as “abnormal,” because they are not in a position to be personally responsible.

The main structure of the critique that therapy has become a tool of the status quo is that it reduces social problems to individual problems. For example, advertising
takes problems of a social character and reduces them to problems of individual disposition. In the political economy of therapeutic medicine, advertising provides the external discourse of treatment. Leiss, Kline & Jhally (1990) argue in *Social Communication in Advertising*, that creating and maintaining one’s selfhood has become an externally-driven lifelong activity, characterized by “an endless series of exercises in self-improvement...continuing down to the present outpouring of manuals on such subjects as ‘power lunching’ for teaching aggressive...self assertion” (p. 58).

One sees in advertising an ideology of therapeutic consumerism. Products and services are offered as the solution to help people overcome their deficiencies and achieve higher states of wellbeing. In essence, advertising in the modern era has as one of its traits a language of positive, personal development that comes from the language of therapy. Early advertising focused on product descriptions. Later advertising focused on lifestyle and product image and the mass consumer. Modern advertising focuses on self-identity via what Leiss, Klein and Jhally (1990) call *market segmentation*. In this phase, people strive to achieve personal fulfilment by conforming to an externally defined image.

My point here is that this is the same social process, and the same process of discourse as is found in the penal system of social control described by Foucault. In such a panoptic world, the personal becomes public and the public becomes personal. This, then, explains how the spectacle of public executions eventually evolved over two centuries into modern therapeutic discourse. In her essay *Off the Shelf Salvation: A Feminist Critique of Self-Help* (*Women's Studies in Communication*), Maureen Ebben (1995) wrote that self-help books offer their readers self-transformation and personal growth. However, the language that they use is part medical rhetoric and part religious discourse, in which “women’s activities… previously considered women’s personal business … are pathologized” (p. 114).

This critique of advertising and self-help books draws attention to the whole business of self help, with its special jargon and therapeutic orientation. In *Codependents’ Guide to the Twelve Steps*, Melodie Beattie (1990) cited a number of therapeutic terms that have made their way into everyday life, such as ‘codependency’, ‘boundaries’, and ‘addiction’. One problem with terms like these is that they are
ambiguous. People mistakenly think they have a common meaning, because they have passed into everyday use. For example, *codependency* originally referred to the relational problems faced by the spouse of an alcoholic. This term was created to give a specific concept a privileged status in medical discourse. However, it became popularized, and used by self-help authors so much, that it became synonymous with—as Beattie put it—any “person who lets another person’s behavior affect him or her, and who is obsessed with controlling that person’s behavior” (p. 115).

Like the Soviet definition of schizophrenia, the problem with the vagueness of the new-age definition of codependency is that it can be applied to anybody. This is one of the chief complaints made against all the jargon of popular, therapeutic discourse. The resulting confusion of language, whether intentional or not, provides the linguistic path for the circular relationship between knowledge and power. For example, addiction is a technical term. However, its use in the self-help, therapeutic discourse of “shopping addiction” singles out a particular part of the economic life of capitalist culture—one normally attributed to women—and leaves out the other aspects of production.

Consumption is not indicted in the language of self-help, because that would call capitalism itself into question. Instead, the individual (i.e., the woman-as-shopper) is pathologized, and defined as the problem. So, questions about capitalism are off the table, because the external force of the power elite wants it that way. The individual, on the other hand, *willingly* accepts the burden of conforming to this system, thanks to a long evolution of therapeutic discourse that began partly with the slow, painful, deliberate, gruesome spectacle of public executions. The legacy of the panoptic, carceral society is a system that identifies people with undesirable behaviours as ‘abnormal’, marginalizes them socially, isolates them without full rights and places the burden on all its members to adapt and fend for themselves. It is also a system that forces those who are marginalized to fend for themselves. This is the environment into which CLS was born, and in which they and I worked to achieve change.
The CLS Design Framework

The CLS conflict resolution design process began with an extensive preparation phase involving one-to-one and small group dialogue sessions. Next came a process design phase involving groups that represent different “coherent” aspects of CLS’s community and service delivery system. For example, one “coherent” design group might consist of staff from different geographical areas, all of whom have the same job category, while another group might consist of representatives of each job category involved in a particular service. In the final phase, there was an iterative process in which the results of the design groups were communicated back to everyone associated with the organization and a consensus decision was reached. This chapter discusses the first two phases.

My discussion will focus on the application of a variety of theories and models: a 4-stage model of communication in conflict, David A. Kolb’s (Kolb and Fry, 1975) experiential learning model, an inter-organizational model of trust and Lewin’s (2000a) Field Theory of social change, the “Rashomon Effect” mathematical combinatorics, and Raiffa’s (Raiffa, Richardson and Metcalfe, 2002) negotiation analysis approach. The analysis in this chapter is not intended to involve an exhaustive treatment of any of these concepts. Rather, these diverse concepts form a thread that runs through a varied network of people and events; taken together they shed light on a complex, organic communication process.

A 4-stage Model for Communication in Conflict

In this section I will discuss the 4-stage communication model for negotiation and mediation. This is the model commonly used for teaching conflict resolution and for designing the type of intervention involved in the CLS project. This model had been adopted by CLS for its supervisor training, based on the continuing education programs that senior managers from CLS had taken at the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC). I will discuss the shortcomings of applying this model to the practice of conflict resolution and look at other conceptualizations that strengthen my approach.
I was engaged to work with CLS by one of its managers, who was at the time one of my students in the Negotiation Certificate Program in the Centre for Conflict Resolution at the JIBC. This is a skills-based program, reflective of the approach of the Harvard Law School’s Program on Negotiation (PON). The JIBC curriculum presented a 4-stage process for negotiating or mediating disputes as shown in Figure 7, in comparison with other problem-solving and decision-making models.

**Figure 7. 4-stage Model for Negotiation Compared with Other Process Models**

**Interest-Based Negotiation (1980’s)**

- Stage 1: Set the Tone
- Stage 2: Define Issues and Agenda
- Stage 3: Explore Interests and Issues
- Stage 4: Identify Solutions and Form an Agreement

**Quality Management (1950’s - 1970’s)**

- Remove Barriers
- Form Teams & Empower Workers
- Identify Customer Needs and Issues
- Explore Issues & Characterize Processes
- Identify Solutions & Form Group Objectives

**Industrial Engineering Model (1940’s)**

- Commit To Change
- Identify Issues and Problems
- Identify Order for Addressing Issues
- Characterize Processes, Metrics & Problems
- Change the Processes and Measure Outcomes

**Heuristic Mathematical Method (1940’s)**

- Identify the Problem
- Devise a New Plan or Strategy
- Identify the Important Data, Relate Data to the Problem
- Simplify the Problem or Relate it to One You Know
- Solve the simpler or familiar problem & check result

The 4-stage model was presented to students as a linear process. Instructors identified the stages as sequential (e.g., “Explore Interests” is “Stage 3”). This model has worked its way into the culture of many organizations in British Columbia; thousands of JIBC students have applied their training at their work places. Anecdotal evidence

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40 According to M. Burdine, the originator of the JIBC curriculum (via an email to the author on November, 21, 2003) this model “was inspired by Sheila Kessler from California who was one of the founders of family mediation in the US along with Coogler.”
The 4-stage model is simple, and consistent with other widely accepted approaches to negotiation, including the PON process and various methods advanced in the fields of Law (e.g., Alternative Dispute Resolution) and Psychology (e.g., group critical incident stress therapy). However, the value of applying the 4-stage concept is debatable. One of its chief limitations is its most defining feature: its sequential nature. For example, when students get to “stage three” in practice negotiations, they typically encounter new issues. They express confusion about how to handle such a development. They often ask what to do at this point, or ask if it is necessary to resolve issues sequentially (i.e., run through all four stages with one issue, and then move on to identifying and resolving the next) or if they should resolve issues in parallel (e.g., identify all the issues on one agenda before moving on to an exploration of any interests).

In response to this confusion, students are instructed that it is often necessary to shift back and forth between stages to resolve unfinished business. This new information helps most students to continue negotiating without having to let go of the 4-stage framework. These accommodations to the model are offered at all levels of the program. The process thus becomes subservient to the model; many students still attempt to facilitate a linear, step-by-step process when they are assessed at the end of their two-year program. Sticking to this script is often a failing course of action; watching students attempt to hold rigidly to the process gives one a perfect view of entrapment in action.

What this model lacks, certainly for more advanced-level students, is greater dimensionality and freedom of movement. For example, the CLS intervention would be seriously limited if the intervener had to stick to a process script while dealing with hundreds of people’s emerging issues and concerns. It also lacks any kind of reflective, iterative element that takes the lessons learned from completing the sequence, and applies them—as a heuristic—to future situations. Conflict, as Simmel (1955) modelled it, is a cyclic, iterative process. A communication process (i.e., dialogue) aimed at

41 Based on the author’s informal interviews with hundreds of students and graduates of the program.
creating a communication artefact (i.e., the policy) about conflict, would certainly have to progress in an iterative way.

Progress in conflict intervention can be thought of as a kind of energy that flows through a system. In thermodynamic terms, this energy is defined as a state property, that is, the flow of energy within the system is independent of the path chosen. By analogy, group communications have characteristic negotiation elements: the negotiators, shifting alliances, conflicts and other interactions as issues emerge and develop. It is therefore important for interveners to become engaged with groups, their cultures and their organizations via the energetic pathways of their negotiations. The individual stages of the 4-stage model then can be thought of as elements of a negotiation; they are required materials, but not the only configurations or components in the state system.

In an ideal world, individual negotiators could perform in a static 4-stage model. They would simply present their list of issues, in terms that are understood by all and accepted as impartially framed. Then they would define their underlying interests and brainstorm solutions without distractions or detours. Finally, all parties in the negotiation would act rationally to optimize their agreement in a utilitarian, shared version of reality. However, in real situations, negotiators need to sort through their experiences and come to a feasible outcome, working against the dynamic, opposing forces of other people’s separate, often conflicting versions of reality. In the next section, I discuss how experiential learning theory illuminated and guided my work with CLS to compensate for the shortfalls of the static, 4-stage model.

Dialogue as a Negotiated Learning Experience

In the static, 4-stage model, beginning a negotiation by stating one’s position is held as counter-productive behaviour. Proponents of interest-based negotiation have vilified positional bargaining as an adversarial, counter-productive way to negotiate. In this section I discuss how people learn, and make decisions based on their perceptions of reality, using a cyclic experiential learning process. According to this model, some
people have an easier time negotiating if they can begin from a self-oriented bargaining position and work to an understanding of a jointly held solution.

Kolb’s experiential learning model highlights both the value and complexity of the learning component of dialogue in a process as complicated as the CLS project (Kolb & Fry, 1975). Kolb characterizes learning as a four-part cycle of experience and thought as shown in Figure 8 (Baker, Jensen, & Kolb, 2002). According to this model, people have preferred modes of learning, which determine where they tend to begin their cycle. For example, a person who tends to learn by doing, will best access the cycle of learning by starting at “experimentation.” From there, they can have experiences that will ultimately lead to formation of a theory or rule. This would be the preferred style of one who tends to approach the setup and use of a new appliance by taking it out of the box, assembling it and operating the controls until the need arises to consult the manual. In contrast, one who tends to relate to the abstract will learn best by being presented with a theory and using a thought experiment to imagine how it will play out. This would be the preferred style of one who reads the manual before unwrapping the appliance.

In dialogue, people simultaneously can learn from each other and teach each other. For example, it is common for some people in group settings to tell long, narrative stories that reflect their self-construction of identity. They are reflective, and their storytelling is a way of teaching. It is equally common to find people who are frustrated by listening to these storytellers. Regardless of what the literature says, or what conventional wisdom might dictate, my experience has been that facilitators routinely mishandle this situation. Far too many opportunities for transformative communication are missed because the facilitator/mediator enforces pre-determined rules of order, or focuses on the content of the discourse at the expense of the process, or vice versa. Kolb’s theory suggests that, in facilitating dialogue for designing an organizational communication process, one must be careful to clarify the things people say and the choices they make about how to communicate, in order to compensate for the confusion that can arise as people experience simultaneously different parts of the learning cycle.
According to Kolb & Fry’s (1975) model, learning happens when one has completed the cycle. An intervener’s challenge is to facilitate dialogue involving a diverse group of people who each tend to enter and exit the cycle at different points. The conflict is not resolved, nor should a decision be made until everyone has completed the learning cycle. The static, 4-stage negotiation model would work best for people who access the cycle at “Observation & Reflection.” Those negotiators could have a reflective dialogue about the history of their situation, reach an abstract conclusion and act out their agreement. For anyone else, though, the static model requires people to work against their natural way of being.

The orthodoxy of interest-based negotiation—shifting from positions to interests—comes from the PON, and is popularized in the bestselling book *Getting to Yes* (Fisher & Ury, 1987). There are compelling arguments that this approach is too simple (Funken, 2003; Bush & Folger, 2005b). In light of experiential learning—such arguments have merit, and ‘getting to yes’ works well. One can work with ‘getting to yes’ and the process models, by recognizing that some people must start with positions as a way of working through the learning cycle. An effective intervener thus works with people to shift from opening positions to interests because that is their path, not against them because they are failing to live up to a particular standard of interest-based negotiation that demands that people move from interests to closing positions. This is an iterative process; first one learns about one’s own interests—some of which are hidden from oneself in conflict—and then one communicates one’s interests to others. In this way,
interests can be said to develop organically, from the intrapersonal level to the interpersonal level.

There can be an important symbiosis here. The storytellers in dialogue, described above, provide a needed focus on content and effect. Likewise, the position-takers in a negotiation provide a needed focus, and an opportunity, to reflect on process and effect. Rather than cause a clash of personalities, this meeting of different styles can fuel a fusion of horizons.

This is a communication issue for an intervener. Interest-based mediation students have been advised to help parties in conflict to ‘shift from positions to interests’ by ‘reframing’ position statements into statements of interests. However, the notion of ‘interests’ must be defined more broadly than it has been in conflict courses. In “Further Reflections on the Public Sphere,” (Calhoun, 1992) Habermas argues for a “universalization of interests” (p. 447) in public discourse, in which interests are defined and resolved by rational arguments that enfold the public’s diverse, often conflicting range of ethical and moral norms. Bush and Folger (2005b) focus on a “relational connection” that shifts the emphasis of mediation from settlement-oriented criteria, to interests (i.e., defined as what is “valuable or needed”) of “empowerment and recognition” (pp. 23-24). A sufficiently broad range of “interests” must embrace the concerns of Habermas’ discourse ethics, and of Bush and Folger’s relational vision.

This sheds light on a long-running debate between those who favour positional bargaining methods and those who favour an interest-based type of approach, such as the 4-stage model. This is the debate underlying the competition between different communities of practice that I discussed in the Preface. Bargaining proponents argue that their method is most efficient and that interest-based methods are “touchy feely.” Interest-based methods proponents argue that their method is more durable, and that bargaining is inflexible to a fault. Interest-based methods also allow an intervener to accomplish what Fisher and Ury (1987) claim they have in mind in their approach. However, Fisher and Ury distance their approach from the broader moral and ethical issues that Habermas and Bush and Folger argue are imperatives. Kolb & Fry’s model allows an intervener to work with the larger frame of interests by providing a practical
connection between communication (i.e., the exchange of information) and learning (i.e., the synthesis of information).

The Experiential Learning Cycle at CLS

The interplay between dialogue and experiential learning was an essential part of the CLS project. The goal of the project was to formulate a policy and procedure for conflict resolution. “Resolving Our Differences” took CLS collectively through the learning cycle. Kolb’s model illuminated and guided the dialogic approach by providing a flexible guide to how the individual players operate in their worlds, rather than prescribing how one type of person might negotiate ideally. In practical terms, this means that one must constantly seek a balance in the three dimensions of content, process and effect of what is going on in any given moment of engagement with a group (Neiman, 2004; 2005). This can be challenging, in part, because at any given moment one of these dimensions can dominate the process. For example, when there is strong movement toward generating ideas—which are needed for the content dimension—it is tempting to press on, rather than check in with people about their feelings and reactions. It is especially tempting to press on when everyone claims to be in agreement about solutions. However, people will sometimes agree for conflicting reasons. Good facilitation requires enough care to make sure that one dimension does not dominate such that the interests of the other dimensions are left unaddressed.

What remains to be seen is how the diverse groups of individuals in CLS might have been willing to work together, given that they approached the world in different ways. Although the problems of dialogue and negotiation are basically problems of communication, there are psychological and epistemological aspects to be considered, too. Therefore, in the next sections I examine how psychology, organizational development, the Rashomon Effect and mathematics can shed light on the CLS process.
Kurt Lewin’s (2000a) Field Theory provides a framework for understanding how an intervener can act with sensitivity in encouraging meaningful dialogue. Multiparty trust models build on this framework by suggesting to the intervener paths that help a group move from dialogue-based learning to shared commitment.

CLS set out to change its dispute resolution system, and therefore to transform its corporate culture. As I argued earlier in this chapter, therapeutic discourse puts the onus for change on the individual. However, Lewin (2000b) argues that individuals derive much of their identity from the groups to which they belong. According to Lewin’s model of identity, when enough individuals in a group change, the essential characteristics of the group change. That, in turn, has a ripple effect on society as each individual transformation alters the quality of each one’s interactions in the other groups to which they belong. In the case of mediation, Bush and Folger (2005b) refer to this kind of change as *transformative* (p. 13). For CLS to transform successfully, a critical number of individuals had to experience significant change.

CLS’s historical system evolved gradually into the set of existing policies and procedures (ePP) at the time the project began. The new policies and procedures (nPP) were the result of group decision-making. However, the long-term viability of a new system always depends on individuals making the transition from the old culture to the new one. Thus, there are two kinds of transformation process: one is procedural; the other is environmental and cultural. These are shown in Figure 7 on the conflict ‘triangle’ as two dimensions of process—i.e., the practices of communication in and about conflict, and the practices of everyday life that are addressed by such communication.

In the 1930s and 1940s, Lewin (2000a) studied how people relate to changes in their cultural environment by modelling the personality structure of individuals. Every individual has a personality structure that can be mapped as a space. Within this space, there is a public part and a private part. Figure 9a shows a simple comparison of the personality spaces of two people, A and B. In this example, person B has a larger private space (the centre area of the circle), compared with the total personality boundary of person A. Person B is therefore more introverted than A.
When A and B engage in dialogue, they engage in a process of learning about each other. As they share information, their zones overlap. Each will remain within their personal comfort and safety zone as long as their inner, private zone remains untouched. If they intrude far enough into each other’s “space,” they will reach a point at which one is still in their comfort zone, but the other is not. This is shown in Figure 9b.

Participants in dialogue who feel that their ‘space’ has been violated would be inclined to protect themselves in a fight or flight reaction. This would either end the conversation or increase the conflict. An intervener must therefore take care to facilitate dialogue with this in mind. This is not easy to do; many of my client organizations have adopted ‘open door’ policies that expect employees to openly share feedback that often cuts into the inner zone. Sometimes this is called “giving feedback,” “speaking one’s truth” or “sharing data.” It is expected to be a reciprocal arrangement, and rarely considers cultural, gender or historical factors. However, as Lewin’s model demonstrates

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42 Also examples of the New Age jargon of self-help, these terms are in use in some organizations. Regardless of what it is called, the practice is in widespread use.
with simple, geometric elegance, it is a formula for defensiveness, confrontation and aggression.

As an outsider to the organization, an intervener can use private, confidential dialogue sessions with individuals and groups to learn what is in their inner zones—that which they will not share openly with others in the group. Using this information, the intervener can safely bring delicate issues, and hidden interests to the table when the group engages in dialogue. The intervener supports dialogue by bringing these issues up without attaching them to individuals who would feel violated by their disclosure. From a pragmatic and constructivist stance, these issues become framed as hypothetical problems that emerge from ‘the table’ rather than from any individual. The focus can more easily shift from grievances and blame, to values and action for change.

Lewin’s model is an important guide for working with groups, like CLS, as they define their core values and belief-based rules. It emphasizes the whole person, not just individual interests, and the relationship between individuals and their group. In this regard Lewin argues, “acceptance of [a] new set of values and beliefs cannot usually be brought about item by item” (p. 54). This can make the management of collective expectations a challenge for those who rely on quick, easily gotten gains (i.e., “low hanging fruit”) to catalyze or attain transformative changes.

Lewin expands on his model of individual personality spaces to consider how whole groups change. In his earlier work on social conflict resolution, he states, “the individual accepts [a] new system of values and beliefs by accepting belongingness to a group” (p. 55). In his later work, Lewin models group dynamics as the resolution of forces in a force field (2000b, pp. 352-358). He compares changing a group to changing the level of a river; several variables can be manipulated to get the desired result. To change the level of a river, one might narrow it, widen it, or increase the flow of water. Likewise, in a group, one must consider “the sub-groups, their relations, their value systems, etc.”

Individuals will only be willing to make a transformative shift if the forces that support change (e.g., belief that nPP is more wise, efficient, fair and durable than ePP) exceed the forces that oppose change (e.g., lack of faith in the process, insufficient trust
of others). This is shown as a force field in Figure 10. In Lewin’s conception of group change, this movement from a steady state PP to a new steady state PP’ is referred to as “unfreezing, moving and freezing” (p. 330).

Figure 10. Force Field Analysis: Implementation of New Policy and Procedures Takes Hold when Forces Driving Change are Greater than Forces Resisting Change

Trust and CLS

The “Resolving Our Differences” project sought to create a new method for resolving conflicts that works for everyone at CLS. The literature on trust in organizations makes a distinction between inter-organizational trust and intra-organizational trust (Lane & Bachmann, 1998). In the case of a single organization like CLS, logic might suggest following a model for intra-organizational trust building and group learning. However, the first phase interviews revealed a complicated sub-organizational structure. Some of the sub-units operated more like independent groups. My approach was thus illuminated and guided by referring also to an inter-organizational model.

People in CLS are often involved in close relationships for years. Many staff and clients share housing, social, recreational and vocational activities. To an outside observer, the management, staff, clients and client families might seem so tightly knit as to appear to be a single organization. However, to insiders, each of these groups is different; each is felt to exist as a distinct organization. For example, staff often view families and management as being aligned against them, while families often express frustration that a staff-management alliance is evidenced by management’s protection of incompetent staff. To fully appreciate the insider and outsider’s perspectives it is therefore useful to consider issues of trust both within organizations and between organizations.
Lewicki and Bunker (1996) characterize interpersonal trust and working relationships (excluding romantic involvements) as developing in three ways: Knowledge-Based, Calculus-Based, and Identification-Based (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). Similarly, Sydow (1998) characterizes personal and system trust in three categories: Process-based, Characteristics-based and Institutional-based. While these models differ in precisely how they divide the elements of trust, either offers the intervener valuable insight into the nature of trust. In these models there is one type of trust based on proven experience that assures a high level of predictability (i.e., knowledge-based or process-based). The second type is based on having institutions or outside authorities that guarantee compliance (calculus-based or institutional-based). The last type of trust is based on faith in shared values or affiliations (identification-based or characteristics-based).

In organizational conflict, the boundary-spanning roles are crucial to holding the trust network together. The intervener has the opportunity to act in a boundary-spanning role at any and all boundary interfaces. One of the primary places this can happen is in a meeting or session that focuses on process design. Here, the facilitator/intervener can paraphrase the stories told in dialogue by “lifting” them from the individual teller’s context and “restructuring” them in terms of the group’s perspective. This is commonly referred to in interest-based, 4-stage model conflict resolution as “reframing.”

How does an intervener know when to make the shift from open dialogue (and, hence, storytelling) to problem solving (and, hence, reframing), or from the content of the discourse to the process of the discursive relationship? In the next section I examine the combinatorics of networks and the consequences of the Rashomon Effect in facilitated dialogue sessions. I will argue that it is impossible to answer this question by using a fact-finding approach in large-group situations.

**Combinatorics and the “Rashomon Effect”**

In this section, I discuss how multi-party negotiations are complicated by two factors: the number of combinations of sub-groups that may act independently to
advance various agendas, and the danger to interveners of becoming trapped by trying to reconcile conflicting accounts of the same situation (i.e., the Rashomon Effect).

An intervener in organizational conflict becomes privy to a unique world of deeply felt critical incidents. Here, any given situation is witnessed in a number of different ways, and told through the filter of each participant’s ego. Hashimoto and Kurosawa (1989) depicts this phenomenon in the film, *Rashomon*. Like a viewer of *Rashomon*, the challenge facing an intervener is to extract the meaning of the collective story and not get distracted by discrepancies in the individual accounts. The intervener must identify and follow the paths that connect various actors in essential ways, without getting lost on the pathways that connect them superficially.

In *Rashomon* (Akutagawa, 2006; Hashimoto & Kurosawa, 1989), the viewer watches a court investigation about a murder and rape in 11th Century Japan. Various versions of the events are given to the viewer through each witness’s storytelling. The film begins at the dilapidated *Rashomon* gate in Kyoto during a symbolically chaotic rainstorm. The storytelling opens with the ambiguous line “I don’t understand it.” What doesn’t the character understand: the truth of who committed the crimes, the senselessness of the crimes, the meaning of truth, of life?

In the succession of stories, each witness gives an account that is internally consistent. However, when taken together, the stories begin to fall apart like the *Rashomon* gate. Each witness’s account gives a version of “truth” in support of his or her own agenda. At the same time, each version casts doubt on the testimony of the others. Taken together, the stories do not add up to a consistent whole. This is the Rashomon Effect.

Take any combination of the testimonies in *Rashomon*, and a different reality becomes possible. For example, the woodcutter’s story (as told at the gate, not in court) taken with the Samurai’s story suggests that the Samurai killed himself and the woodcutter stole the suicide weapon. The woodcutter does not admit to taking the weapon, but we see it in his face as the dead Samurai testifies through a medium. Or, do we just think we see it? Do we understand? Their combined stories reveal an alliance of interests—or “interest-groupings”—that influences the viewer’s judgment.
In *Rashomon*, each character negotiates with the world around them in seemingly endless, concentric circles of deception. Kurosawa (1989) describes the characters as people “who cannot survive without lies to make them feel they are better people than they really are” (Kurosawa, 1982, p. 183). They go so far as to admit to murder—clearly they cannot all be the perpetrator—in order to limit the damage to their conceptions of self. In the end, one cannot be sure that anything happened as reported; there is only a dead Samurai. We see in each testimony each character’s capacity to use deception in negotiation. We see the bandit negotiate for his version of glory through the use of imagery (e.g., his stylized account of swordplay). We see the wife’s tactical use of passion in recounting her victimization to the court (“a poor helpless woman like me”) and in various versions of how she survives in the aftermath of her rape. We see bystanders, on the edge of the radius of conflict (the priest, the woodcutter, the policeman) using storytelling to advance their own agendas.

The Rashomon Effect can be a significant trap for an intervener in conflict. The reframing example given above describes how this trap can be avoided in the case of one person and one intervener. However, in a group negotiation the permutations of parties that can form alliances or interest-pairings add up quickly. An intervener must zero in on the important alliances and interest groupings. Alliances define the flow and critical paths of energy in the conflict. Interest groupings are the points where interveners can help “unfreeze” or “lift” situations by reframing the stories told in dialogue.

A mathematical analysis of alliances in multi-party conflict offers valuable insight into the complexity of group negotiations. I am not aware of such an analysis in the literature on negotiation, and have yet to meet a practitioner who has done such an analysis. I therefore offer my own. A combinatoric approach for determining the complexity of multiparty negotiations is shown in Figures 11 and 12. Table 1 demonstrates how the complexity of alliances and interest groupings increases geometrically as the number of negotiators increases. In a 3-party mediation, the intervener must be able to identify and keep track of four critical paths. In a 5-party mediation there are 26 potential critical paths. Add one more party (the equivalent of the *Rashomon* scenario) and the number of paths goes up to 57—which is probably more than most people can track while trying to follow open dialogue in real time.
The geometric complexity of alliances, combined with the *Rashomon Effect*, demonstrates how important it is for an intervener to avoid the fact-finding approach. The mathematics also demonstrates that there is an abundance of interest groupings that provide points where interveners can help negotiators by reframing. Each grouping is a network within the larger group that is defined by a common conflict, alliance or interest (in the larger sense discussed above). Many of these groupings will be unknown to the actors within their network. For example, at CLS there can be said to be a network of people who speak English as a second language (ESL). Their concerns emerged in different ‘coherent’ group dialogues, and led to the identification of a network that overlaps many other networks (e.g., employees, people in a particular suburb of Vancouver, and families of supported people from a particular generation). The resolution of their concerns led to identification of communication interests that supported other networks and interests that various ESL actors also inhabited.

*Figure 11. Unique Combinations of 3-party Situations (4)*

*Figure 12. The 11 Unique Combinations in a 4-party Situation*

2-party combinations in a population of four (6)

3-party combinations in a population of four (4)

4-party combination in a population of four (1)
Table 1. Combinatoric Data for Small and Large Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Parties</th>
<th>Relative Complexity\textsuperscript{a} Compared to a 2-party Negotiation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>&gt;10\textsuperscript{158}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a} number of unique groupings of two or more negotiators.

I now turn to the final area of theory in my CLS inquiry: a discussion of negotiation analysis, drawing on game theory. Game theory illuminates the analysis, because even when actors and networks do not see themselves in conflict with each other, their interests might be in conflict. On some level, as conflict resolution models and experiential learning theory imply, people will use game-playing behaviour as they engage in dialogue and decision-making. The theories and models I have described thus far guided me, or helped me to understand and refine the relationship building and information gathering needed for the project. However, at the end of the dialogue and its subsequent “reframing” into a draft policy, the policy and procedure had to be accepted on paper, and in practice, by everyone.

Raiffa’s Negotiation Analysis

Historically, much of negotiation analysis in the literature has been based on game theory. Raiffa (1996) takes a relatively broad view of negotiation analysis that embraces both the quantitative methods of game theory and the qualitative methods of problem solving (Raiffa, Richardson, & Metcalf, 2002). He sums up game theory with the following “assumptions that game theory makes in structuring situations for analysis”:

- One must act. (Doing nothing is an act.)
- One’s payoff depends both on what one does and what other designated players do.
One does not know what others will do—but one knows what others could do.

Others do not know what one will do. (p. 54)

This seems to force players to work in a vacuum, only making moves in response to other moves. In the real world, players can interact and act in parallel. However, as an analytical tool, the above characteristics relate well to an analysis of Rashomon, or to the CLS situation. In both cases players can negotiate independently (i.e., not communicate with each other), and form strategies based on assumptions and interests. In Rashomon, the assumptions are heavily steeped in cultural norms and influenced by self-perceptions. At CLS, alliances form because actors see themselves as being members of independent groups within the larger community.

Negotiation analysis offers several theories and tools for managing information to help negotiators reach conclusions and make decisions (e.g., decision trees, utility curves). In the CLS project such tools aided the way calculators can help people manage their financial accounts; they provided a faster, more accurate way to collect and use data to make a decision. For example, if a group had collectively completed a learning cycle and was in agreement on their goals, I used a decision tree to help them decide on a plan of action faster than facilitated dialogue alone could have. Such tools, however, only help the communication that leads to a proposed solution; they do not determine an outcome or ‘close the deal’.

For ‘closing the deal’, Raiffa, Richardson & Metcalfe (2002) offer a more powerful model than the above tools. They began by introducing a problem; the tactics negotiators use to “expand the pie” may conflict with tactics designed to claim a slice of the pie, because “in every negotiation, value creation is inextricably linked to value claiming—this is the negotiator’s dilemma” (p. 85). For example, Pat and Nicky are unable to negotiate a satisfactory distribution of 10 umbrellas and 5 fancy hats that they wish to buy as a lot, wholesale and sell separately in their retail stores. This odd number of items cannot be divided. Each claims 5 umbrellas and 3 hats, not wanting to get the lesser part of the deal. Pat suggests that they “expand the pie” by adding three underpriced bottles of single-malt scotch to the negotiation. Now there are 18 items—an even number—but still no way to divide them evenly. However, the problem has
changed from one of how to divide an odd number of hats, to one of how to divide two sets of odd numbers of things. Their solution to the negotiators' dilemma is for parties to adopt Full, or Partial, Open, Truthful, Exchange (FOTE or POTE). They begin to disclose their interests in and valuation of umbrellas, hats and bottles of scotch. If one values hats more than scotch and vice versa, then they might each end up with five umbrellas, and one will get three hats and one bottle of scotch. Or, they might end up with one claiming six umbrellas and three bottles of scotch. In each case, the ‘fullness’ of the disclosure depends on how much information must be shared to balance the needs of the individual or group to protect their hidden spaces (see Figure 9a), without unnecessarily violating those spaces (see Figure 9b). The relationship and stakes would determine whether either of them might disclose information about profit margins, moral or health issues regarding alcohol, or the existence of silent partners.

The CLS community has a high level of shared values related to the service it provides. This creates a high level of identification-based trust, which provides a strong driving force in the force field of CLS’s social conflict. People tend to want to work collaboratively when such trust is present. However, a critical number of staff had bad experiences—which they recounted in dialogue sessions as stories of “betrayal at the hands of management.” These created an almost equal countering force of negative, process-based distrust. This, then, is what Raiffa, Richardson & Metcalfe (2002) describe as one of a rare group of cases in which “the parties would like to conduct their negotiations in a FOTE manner, but they can’t take the risk of confiding fully to the other side” (p. 306). Here, the negotiation analysis model advocates using an intervener to tip the scales in favour of the collaborative driving force. At CLS, I was that intervener.

While dialogue could help to facilitate ‘truthful exchanges’ in the CLS project, there is still a potentially catastrophic problem. Large groups do not readily make consensus decisions. In discussing the implications of this for multi-party negotiations, Raiffa notes the following.

From a pragmatic point of view, when dealing with large numbers of people who deserve to have a voice in the outcome, we are stuck with variants of majority rule, and unfortunately, this invites strategic game-theoretic behavior. It also engenders problems in designing processes for multiparty negotiations… (Raiffa, Richardson & Metcalfe 2002, p. 460)
This echoes the concern raised by Susskind and Cruickshank (2006) about the use of Robert’s Rules of Order; majority rule might seem fair, but it leads to instability in the long run and puts minorities at a disadvantage (p. 11). The solution to the majority rule problem at CLS was to require unanimous approval of the policy and procedure. This was an ambitious goal, and one that created unusually high expectations.

At that point in the project, it was too early to predict what problems might arise in applying a FOTE/POTE strategy all the way to the end. In the past, I had successfully used a POTE strategy with groups of approximately 100 people. In the CLS case, a combinatoric analysis suggested that no reliable predictions could be made there by extrapolation. Rather than try to develop an outcome-predictive planning model, I decided to focus on open exchanges for indications of where there were alliances and where there were conflicts. This concludes my theoretical analysis.

The CLS Design Intervention

I began having meetings about conflict system design with employees and clients of CLS in August 2003. However, my work with CLS began more than a month earlier. During June and July I met individually with six senior managers and members of the Board of Directors of CLS. In the sense of the Four Stage Conflict Resolution Model, we were engaged in Stage One (setting the tone).

The “tone” I set out to establish was one of confidence building and project efficiency. I established before each interview that I would hold all meetings in confidence, and would assume that no one else would hold anything said in meetings with me in confidence. I also set a condition that all my billable time, including the initial interviews, would have to be directly applicable to the conflict process design. In that way I let them know that even information gathered in the interviews and my experience of negotiating with them would “inform the design process.”

This approach to confidentiality allows an intervener to do crucial information gathering. In confidential meetings, people tell me things that they would not themselves say to others, for fear of reprisal or concern about being seen as a troublemaker. Sometimes they simply want to avoid the discomfort of confrontation and conflict. I let
my clients know that part of my role is to bring issues to the table in a way that does not identify who raised any issue. This confidentiality builds confidence for Full Open Truthful Exchange. I extract from what people tell me only the parts of the disclosure that others need to know. I can later relate sensitive information through a Partial Open Truthful Exchange, without compromising those who wish to remain anonymous.

I began the intervention at CLS as soon as I began interviewing for the contract. These preliminary meetings were individual interviews in which CLS’s decision-makers determined whether or not I was a suitable consultant, and I determined whether or not CLS would be a committed client. CLS’s leaders had to be sure I would deliver what they needed, and I had to satisfy myself that CLS’s decision makers were willing to support my consultative process. The interview phase was also a multiparty negotiation because I had to settle on terms of engagement with a group of people who had different ideas about what CLS needed.

Early in the negotiations, CLS and I agreed on a general description of my consulting task as developing a policy and procedure for conflict resolution involving:

- staff-staff conflict,
- staff-client/family conflict, and
- client/family-client/family conflict.

During these interviews I began to hear of critical issues that later required my ‘expressing, explaining and translating’. Line managers, Human Resources managers and board members each felt vulnerable under CLS’s existing open door policy of complaint handling. I heard various versions of a long history of each having been besieged by people with complaints. Board members were approached directly by families who had complaints against staff. Line managers were approached directly by staff with complaints about how Human Resources handled their conflicts with families. These were not simple differences of perspective. Reconciling these different accounts would entail working through core issues of identity, ideology and organizational ethics.

Hearing these different versions of conflict resolution was my first encounter at CLS with the Rashomon Effect. In the Rashomon Effect there is a demand for closure; people in a conflict want to have the facts resolved and the conflict settled. Managers
and board members felt obligated to solve problems; they held positions of responsibility because they were seen as good problem solvers. They became entrapped by the demand for closure, and by a belief that, because they were asked, they were therefore obligated to resolve a problem. It is no wonder that they felt unfairly blamed when the conflicts were not resolved to everyone’s satisfaction.

A corollary of interest-based conflict resolution, experiential learning and Lewin’s (2000a) field theory is that the formulation of a problem and its solutions must be seen as ‘true’ or ‘correct’ to all parties. Often, groups have to go through iterations of analysis and action—as is the case for experiential learning—or they will have to interact in various sub-groups—as is the case for Lewin’s fields—before conflict is resolved. The rationality of problem and solution then becomes harmonized and can be applied symmetrically across the groups and sub-groups involved in the conflict. That which cannot be harmonized or symmetrically rationalized can be considered unsolvable. No one at CLS apparently considered that some of their organization-specific problems might be unsolvable. I will return to this later, when I discuss “wicked problems.”

CLS’s leaders wanted me to develop a policy that would reduce the burden on those who felt compelled to resolve conflicts. In the existing organizational structure, this would necessarily shift more of the burden from managers and board members onto others. In terms of game theory, each was hoping to re-distribute some of their share of the ‘pie’ of loss. In this case, rather than seek to optimize gain, they were hoping to minimize their disadvantage and contain as much as possible the zone of conflict that was unsolvable.

My challenge in negotiating a contract with CLS was to reframe this task and manage expectations. In the end, we defined my role as one of facilitation and mediation. This was crucial because CLS was agreeing to participate in a hybrid-type of negotiation: an equivalent of models described to me by Tony Penikett43 for both labour negotiations—which historically have an “active role for mediators,” and treaty negotiations—which historically do not (2003a). In this case, the design process would

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43 T. Penikett, personal conversation, October 21, 2003.
be a negotiation among CLS’s 500 employees and hundreds of other interested individuals to form a complex agreement on how to handle conflicts and complaints.

The design process was structured like a labour negotiation because management intended to reach a consensus decision with staff about certain terms of their employment. The issues to be resolved here would be economic and social. Any changes to the existing system would have associated costs and elements of fairness. For example, to meet the goal of more employee involvement in resolving their conflicts (an element of fairness) the company would have to consider processes that take staff out of their regular job activities (an overhead budget wage expense). The resulting “collective agreement” would be a procedure that details how parties must act and interact to make decisions for conflict resolution.

The design process was consistent with Pennikett’s (2003) model, because it was structured like a treaty negotiation in that four parties (management, staff, families and the Board) would make a new contract in which the governing authority (i.e., management and/or the Executive Board, depending on whom one asks) recognized the need for social change by making concessions (i.e., giving up some of its authority to control the conflict resolution process). The resulting “treaty” would be a policy that describes the rights and responsibilities of parties in conflict.

CLS and I settled on a process that combined elements of negotiation and mediation. They agreed to my proposed project process as shown in Figure 13.

*Figure 13. The CLS Negotiation / Dialogue Process*
The CLS Board, Human Resources and I agreed that I could get confidential input from anyone affiliated with CLS, that CLS would allow all employees to meet with me on work time or compensate them for any after-hours time, and that the policy and procedure would be subject to review and approval by consensus of all employees and client families. In this case consensus is not unanimity, but an agreement that all concerns have been communicated to others, understood, considered and dealt with to the greatest extent possible.

CLS took a risk in this; they could not afford it if all 500 employees asked to meet with me. This is a feasibility issue. Any limits set by management on my availability would be seen by staff as a violation of their contract. This would erode organizational trust and reduce confidence in the final agreement. Based on experience with other organizations, I felt that it was highly unlikely that too many employees would ask for meetings with me. I was more concerned about the possibility of collecting too little data if too few would want to meet with me. Given the unique nature of the approach, there was no way to know how likely it was that cooperation would be low. This weighed heavily on my thought process in project planning.

**Project Development:**

*Planned Dialogue and “Moments of Opportunity”*

To address my concern that few would elect to meet with me one-on-one, I added another element to the negotiation-mediation hybrid: dialogue. I engaged “coherent” groups in dialogue sessions as described earlier. The same kinds of questions were posed in these sessions as in my one-on-one interviews. The sessions took place in natural work settings: regularly scheduled staff and work team meetings.

Joanna Ashworth (n.d.) of the Simon Fraser University Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue describes the conditions needed for dialogue.

> For genuine dialogue to occur, particular conditions must be present. Participants are asked to suspend their assumptions, to view each other as colleagues or peers, and to let go of job titles and organizational hierarchies. In the early stages, it may be necessary to count on a skilled facilitator to “hold the context” of dialogue. (p. 2)
Meeting these conditions at CLS would be impossible. For example, at the outset, employees were not prepared to engage willingly or intentionally in dialogue. It was not reasonable to ask them to suspend their assumptions or judgments. It was therefore necessary in the early stages for me to meet with groups that all had the same job title or place in the organizational hierarchy.

For CLS employees, these meetings were informal encounters with me. However, the apparent informality of these meetings belies the level of intention, preparation and planning required to achieve project efficiency. A pre-defined project plan for meetings and dialogue sessions would not work here; the combinatoric possibilities were too formidable. Also, once the project began, new issues emerged and old issues would re-emerge in new ways as people were asked to put conflict on the agenda. That is because in dialogue people tell stories, and stories bring past conflicts back to life.

I believe that it takes much first-hand experience to appreciate the complexity and difficulty of facilitating group process design or decision-making in conflict. One colleague refers to this kind of intervention as “hard-hat work.” People will often ask for some assurance of “safety” before they will talk about conflict in a group setting. The irony of this is that even the act of talking about creating a safe environment moves a critical number of people out of their Lewin personality space comfort zones (see Figures 9a and 9b). I must therefore act in ways that generate conflict in order to set the stage for conflict resolution. I have to anticipate this unintended consequence and be prepared to balance the resulting tension. Consider the following example.

One of my first CLS group encounters was an impromptu meeting with the staff at a daytime service facility. I was invited by the area manager to introduce myself to the staff and answer their questions about me and about the project. The resulting dialogue lasted over two hours. At the outset, some challenged me to explain how any meaningful changes could be made when most people were afraid to speak out for fear of reprisals by management or co-workers. Some challenged others to explain how any changes could happen if they did not speak out. The nature of their challenges indicated that some valued institution-based trust (i.e., confidence in the values of the organization and
the integrity of its management system) more, and others valued affiliation-based trust (i.e., confidence in relationships built over time with co-workers) more.

As these important questions were addressed, I had an opportunity to demonstrate to them how dialogue works. The more they expressed doubt about the process, the more I engaged them in deep listening, and encouraged them to listen to each other. Following the spirit of Ashworth’s (n.d.) model of dialogue planning, I invited them to express their assumptions and pay tribute to their place in the organizational hierarchy. Once this was done, I offered anyone who was interested the opportunity to engage with management and families in a similar manner. According to the interest-based negotiation model, I was at this point identifying and building on common ground. I was also acting with intention to identify which kinds of trust were essential to building confidence among individuals and groups.

After that first meeting ended, several people asked me to schedule time with them individually and in small groups. I had uncovered—or flushed—those who were willing to expand the dialogue-based process. This would be the pattern of future meetings at other CLS locations. The nature of the issues would vary, as would the types of interested people. Therefore, I could not—prior to a group session—plan which meetings would follow, or with whom. However, I could always count on a few interested people for follow up.

All that I needed to get a critical number of people to begin the system design was to seek and find enough moments of opportunity, similar to those when people were ‘flushed out’ in the first session. The pattern described above continued throughout August, sometimes with staff and sometimes with client families.44 By September I had established in each region of CLS a similar entrée, based on my introductory sessions and—later—on word of mouth among members of the CLS community. In this way, the level of involvement in follow-up meetings and dialogue sessions grew organically to include about one quarter of CLS and about 50 family members by mid-October.

44 Client families were organized primarily into two groups: the Board of Directors of CLS and a client family support group.
In early October I began to plan process design sessions. I worked with the Human Resources team to schedule “coherent” group design sessions, and prepared them to be involved in the facilitation of the sessions. This was—in the sense of Ashworth’s (n.d.) notion of planning—the greatest extent to which I actually planned CLS dialogue events.

The model I used for event planning was based on a process I have used on a smaller scale with many clients. It involves having the entire “coherent” group meet in a plenary session to tell their stories. I use the storytelling to frame an agenda (Stages 1 and 2 of the 4-stage model), and then break the plenary into smaller groups. These groups look at certain areas of interest (Stage 3) and then return to the plenary, where everyone engages in a dialogue about actions on all the issues (Stage 4). This division of labour is more efficient than trying to tackle all issues in plenary. It is also easier to facilitate smaller groups.

The plan at CLS was for me to facilitate the plenary (and ‘set the context’ according to Ashworth’s model; n.d.) and then have Human Resources team members facilitate small groups, while I “floated” from group to group to intervene as needed. We would then return to plenary, where I would facilitate a brainstorming session of ideas for the policy and procedure. As it later turned out, these plans were never realized in action.

**System Design Sessions and Emerging Conflicts**

Various system design efforts with “coherent” groups began in mid-October of 2003. Most were characterized by concurrent flare-ups of clashes involving employees and/or family members. The following story—which describes my experience with the first “coherent” session group—is a typical example.

The first “coherent” group was front line staff at a facility (Site A) that provided one of CLS’s key services. The staff declined to meet with anyone outside of their own group (e.g. Human Resource facilitators) other than me. The session lasted two and a half hours. Most of the early dialogue focused on the low level of trust staff had in management, and among themselves. The later dialogue resulted (with much ‘re-
framing’ on my part) in an extensive list of values and principles relevant to conflict resolution at CLS. This process was analogous to the thermodynamic state function I discussed in Chapter 1. In this case, the fulfillment of values and principles was the energetically-favoured state. The list we had begun generating contained the essential elements of policy. We had just begun to talk about the policy development task when time ran out.

In an act that I interpreted to be a test of management’s trustworthiness, the staff in this session asked for a follow-up meeting. They had been told that management would allow them enough time to meet with me to get their issues on the table. In our dialogue on trust, most expressed doubts that management would make good on this promise. They challenged me to get their supervisor to agree to schedule a second session with me to complete the discussion about policy development. I asked their shift supervisor, who agreed immediately.

Later, the shift supervisor’s area manager called me to say that most of the Site A staff had told her that they did not want to meet with me again. She decided to make meeting with me optional; at the next scheduled meeting, staff could meet with me or attend their regularly held Site A staff information session.

One week later, I returned to facilitate the follow-up session. No one else came. As I left the building, six staff members approached me, each separately, to say that they had been led to believe that my meeting had been cancelled. The meeting notice had been posted in an obscure place and was confusing to them. They each requested private follow-up meetings with me. Their shift supervisor greeted me on my way out and told me that she had tried to get word out about the meeting, but that her area manager had instructed her specifically on how to word the announcement and where to place it. In an individual meeting later that week, one of the staff from Site A told me that the area manager had visited the site the day after the first dialogue session; she asked each employee if they felt that meeting with me was going to be a waste of time.

A few days later the same area manager invited me to meet with her to discuss how I might help in resolving a conflict that had arisen at another facility (Site B) that shared some staff with Site A. The entire staff at Site B had confronted the area
manager about their problems working for their shift supervisor. That supervisor was on vacation at the time. The staff had demanded that she be removed. The area manager asked me to intervene because staff said that they trusted me.

Earlier, it would have been reasonable to conclude that the manager was trying to subvert the dialogue project. However, she was arguably ‘taking a shortcut’, ‘walking in the city’ of this process, to do some reframing of her own in protection of the interests of her part of the organization. Until then, I was focused on CLS and its subset, Site A. She was focused on CLS and the subset of her Region (i.e., Site A and Site B). Her late disclosure of the Site B issue was probably a tactical error with respect to the dialogue process of CLS as a whole, but it made sense within the frame of her zone of influence in the organization. The timing of her disclosure notwithstanding, it created an opportunity. By adding Site B to the intervention, she had in effect “expanded the pie” in the CLS policy negotiation process. As I discussed earlier in the section *Discourse as a Learning Experience in Dialogue and Negotiation*, the more my continued intervention used Kolb’s learning cycle to attend to the interests of Habermas’ discourse ethics and Bush and Folger’s “relational connection,” the more CLS would benefit as a whole.

I agreed to intervene at Site B subject to the conditions set in original contract negotiations; I would not mediate\(^{45}\) any individual disputes, but would facilitate dialogue to identify issues and determine what could be learned from the conflict at hand that would “inform” the conflict system design effort. The group would have to reach their own decisions about the conflict at hand. This allowed a small group at Site B to design and test a candidate method of conflict intervention for the final policy and procedure, using a real situation. This trip through an entire cycle of problem solving (or conflict) within a larger process is a key feature of successful dialogue and an example of a fractal form of micro/macro process alignment. I will return to this in the conclusions of this dissertation.

The area manager and I settled on a plan whereby I would meet separately with the Site B supervisor, the area manager, and the staff to prepare them to negotiate a

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\(^{45}\) In this and many other labour environments in this region, “mediation” is commonly understood to mean that an intervener conducts an investigation-like the court in *Rashomon*—and hands down an opinion or binding decision.
settlement. The area manager would moderate the negotiation meeting and I would de-brief everyone on lessons learned. The process was followed; the shift supervisor negotiated a return to Site B and the parties agreed that the process they used was worthy of inclusion in the new policy.

Other “coherent” group efforts at CLS followed a similar path to similar results. A few ad hoc interventions involved conflicts between families and staff at various facilities. One involved a trust issue between two managers. One involved conflict between staffs at two facilities in the same area. In every case, it seemed, my intervention—and my invitation for people to engage in dialogue—brought long-standing issues into the open. In many cases, these issues were recognized openly and confronted collaboratively.

In some cases, various parties involved in the issues denied that there was a problem. This was particularly true of issues related to trust; some managers repeatedly insisted to me that trust was not a big issue and that my impression was the result of having spoken to a disproportionate number of “chronic complainers.” In contrast, managers in the field and most staff consistently claimed that I underestimated the trust problem.

Whether or not they were resolved during the project, bringing up in dialogue specific conflicts put them on the organization’s agenda in a productive way. This is where my role as an intervener was most critical in using the negotiation/dialogue process to fulfill my consulting task (see task description above). The content of the communication in meetings provided the raw material for the system design. By listening for interests and summarizing them, and by reframing the conflict elements of storytelling into statements of values and needs, I was able to gather much of the material needed for the draft policy.

However, individual conflicts do not tell the whole story of conflict in an organization. The fractal nature of structural change might explain how macro- and micro-structures and processes are to a large extent coherent, but it does not explain how any particular decision is made at any particular time. In the next section I examine how “coherent” group work contributed to a better understanding of the problem of how to resolve conflicts at CLS.
“Wicked Problems” and Emerging Consensus

In this section I discuss the “coherent” group dialogue sessions that involved a representative mix of people from throughout the CLS community (staff, supervisors, managers, senior managers, family members, board members and clients). In these sessions I posed a question that, by virtue of it being unanswerable shed the most light on my central research question at CLS.

In November 2003, I facilitated two “coherent” group dialogue events comprised of a cross-section of people in the CLS community. They were held at Site A, after work hours. A total of 55 people attended the two sessions. At each event, an informal dinner—pizza and salad—was provided. This proved to be an important part of the dialogue process; during the dinner break people held mini-dialogues in various informal, self-selected breakout groups. In terms of combinatorics theory, mealtime catalyzed the dissociation of the whole into various ‘interest sub-groupings’. Break times, during which formal, facilitated dialogue is suspended in favour of such informal communication are a crucial element of negotiations. They provide moments of opportunity (i.e., timely openings for experiential learning that result in constructive change, or opportunities to create opportunities) for self-organized ‘bridges’ and ‘tunnels’ to form as I described earlier. This is a well-known phenomenon in labour negotiations, politics and some ethnic/national cultures.

The original plan for each session was to have Human Resources act as breakout group facilitators. We began the first dialogue event according to plan in plenary, with me setting the context by asking people to describe a set of values and interests that are at the heart of the entire CLS community. Some people described their values, others told stories about their good or bad experiences at CLS.

Within the first half hour, differences began to emerge in how people defined some of the basic values (e.g., “respect,” “individuality,” and “inclusion”). At this point I introduced a question that was intended to help the group converge on a shared perspective of the task at hand. The question was complicated, and required an illustration on a flipchart easel. Rather than converge the group, in that moment, it had
the opposite effect; people felt more divergent as conflicting views of reality emerged in their answers.

The question was inspired by an individual interview that I had with a family member a few weeks earlier. That family member was one of the founders of CLS and the family support group. She claimed that family members were victims, first of the provincial medical system, then forced by fate to depend on places like CLS to care for their disenfranchised loved ones. Never-ending feelings of guilt, helplessness and lack of choice caused them great emotional pain. The impossibility of escaping this predicament was an ever-increasing source of anxiety for victims. Under such conditions, family of people in the care of CLS should have the right to treat anyone working with their disenfranchised loved ones with less restraint and civility than they would use in dealing with ordinary people on ordinary matters. Family members, she told me, have the right to expect that care workers in this area of social service will accept being subjected to rudeness, personal attacks and controlling behaviours. As a consequence, if a social worker and a client or family member in this milieu have a personality clash, it would be appropriate to remove that social worker from their employment rather than ask the client or family member to modify their own behaviour. This is an extreme rejection of the self-help ethos of therapeutic discourse; rather than rely on coping mechanisms to adapt to organizational structural violence, these family members attempted to force the workers in the organization to absorb it and rely on their own coping strategies. In later interviews, I found that others shared this view to varying degrees.

I described this perspective to the dialogue group. I also described a counter-perspective. That perspective was drawn from an interview I had with a coherent group of CLS employees who had concerns about a lack of certain union protections for staff. Their perspective was that all people in the work place have basic human rights and specific work place and employment rights. People in the care of CLS depended on workers such as them to “level the playing field” in all significant aspects of everyday life. They felt that employees should expect a certain level of physical and emotional discomfort in working with clients. However, family members of those in the care of CLS have no right to be disrespectful intentionally to employees or to get involved in issues of
employment. Intentional disrespect is harassment; there should be “zero tolerance” for harassment in the work place. They saw some family members as being united—sometimes with CLS management—to pursue their self-interests at the expense of employees’ human rights.

I described to the dialogue group how these two perspectives were extremes on the spectrum of representative viewpoints across the CLS community. A fundamental problem in the design of the conflict resolution policy was to decide where to draw the line between the two extremes. This was further complicated by the fact that everyone interpreted differently the terms they used to describe core values (e.g., ‘respect’, ‘trust’). In spite of these problems, the CLS community needed to reach a shared understanding of where employee rights end and family member rights begin. Only then it would be possible to come to a shared definition of their conflicts and how to resolve them.

I illustrated this problem on a flip chart as shown in Figure 14. I challenged the group to find a point of shared understanding of this problem. For example, if the line rests all the way to the side of the family member victim perspective, then there would be no need for the policy to address options for resolving complaints about family members who use racial epithets against employees.

*Figure 14. Question:* If there is a values gap, where does CLS “draw the line” between these extremes?

As dialogue on this question progressed, people began to converse more with each other than through me. We had not yet moved into facilitated breakout groups when the pizza arrived. During the pizza break, one of the Human Resources facilitators suggested that it would be best to keep the group in plenary. She felt strongly that
people were “connecting” and learning about each other and their conflicts better in plenary. After the break we stayed in plenary and continued to talk about “where to draw the line.” By the end of the evening, they were no closer to answering my question. However, everyone in attendance agreed that the dialogue helped increase their understanding of each other and the challenges they shared in dealing with conflicts. The Human Resources facilitator’s intuition was good; the group needed to collectively define this issue before they would be ready break it down and brainstorm it in parallel from many sides.

The next day I attended a lecture about “Multiparty Situations and ‘Wicked’ Problems.” The speaker, Sylvia Holland, spoke of the work of the CogNexus Institute in the US. They promote a software-based process called Issue Based Information System (IBIS), which is used to create dialogue maps. Dialogue mapping is a graphical tool for “creating a shared map of a meeting conversation” (Conklin, 2005, p. 1). It can be used to identify unsolvable dilemmas in group planning and problem solving.

The term, “wicked problem” was originated by Horst Rittel in the 1970s. It describes the type of unsolvable dilemmas that IBIS identifies. According to the CogNexus Institute (Conklin, 2005):

A wicked problem has four defining characteristics:

(1) One does not understand the problem until one has formulated and perhaps even fielded a solution;

(2) The stakeholders (those who have a stake in the outcome) have radically differing world views, and thus differing linguistic frames;

(3) The constraints on the problem solving process—deadlines, budgets, who is on the team, the organizational structure—change over time; and

(4) The problem is never “solved” in the traditional sense, one simply runs out of resources (i.e. time or money). (p. 1)

This definition struck me as a good one to characterize my challenge to CLS to identify “where they should draw the line.” With that in mind, I posed the same question at the second “coherent/mixed” group dialogue event. I included in my presentation of
the question that an earlier group had not come up with an answer, and that the question might not be answerable. I also displayed the lists of values and concerns from the earlier group.

The second group’s dialogue covered some new issues and expanded on some of the earlier group’s issues. They shared many stories revealing conflicting versions of events. They asked to remain in plenary, rather than separate into breakout groups. My comment that the central question of the event might not be answerable seemed to strengthen their resolve to find a solution. Perhaps they were fuelled by their conflicting versions of reality and felt the pressure for closure in the manner of the Rashomon Effect.

Reflecting on what she had heard from others in the dialogue, one CLS employee said that what I asked them to identify was not a line, but rather, a zone. We illustrated this on a flip chart as shown in Figure 15. This led to my revised statement of CLS’s problem: If there is a values gap, where is the zone between these extremes in which CLS experiences conflict?

**Figure 15. The “Zone” Between CLS’s Human Value Extremes**

![Diagram showing the zone between CLS's human value extremes]

Even re-formulated, the central question of CLS’s conflict culture is still unanswerable. As long as people have value systems that cannot be reconciled, resolving the culture gap between some families and some employees will be a “wicked problem.” However, the CLS conflict resolution system was never intended to end conflict per se. It was only intended to address conflict in the best way possible.
As people in the CLS dialogue events learned first-hand, in some areas the “zone” gap narrows when people engage in dialogue. The second dialogue event group got to the point of brainstorming policy and procedure options (Stage 4 in the 4-stage model). They concluded that some conflicts will be “wicked problems” that require mediation. Due to the richness of their dialogue, they concluded that CLS needs multiple avenues of mediation, depending on where the disputants are on the spectrum of Figures 14 and 15. For example, some disputants will need to be mediated by Human Resources, thus satisfying their unique needs for calculus-based or institutional-based trust as I described earlier, in the section on Lewin’s field theory. Other disputants will need a mediator from outside the organization to satisfy the same interests of trust. The preference for a particular kind of trust indicates how evolved a group is in their approach to dealing with conflicts. However, dialogue can be both an achievement of a higher level—as Bohm’s ideal suggests—and a path to building capacity for more evolved relations—as the situation at the CLS Site A demonstrated.

The second dialogue event group’s results were consistent with those of other “coherent” groups that got to ‘stage 4’. This group was a representative cross-section of the entire CLS community; in a combinatoric sense, they were the super-group. Their results encompassed and exceeded the sets of options suggested by the combinatoric sub-groups. Every option recommended by this group was either also recommended by another “coherent” group, or was a new option, geared to the unique “wicked problems” of the community.  

The “zone” of conflict is the area within the spectrum of values where everyone in CLS agrees that conflict is a “wicked problem.” If there was a line, rather than a “zone” separating individual value systems, the organization could enact a set of policies and procedures that would anticipate most kinds of conflict and guide people to resolution. In my consulting practice I have seen that such systems work in more homogenous systems (e.g., military organizations, and organizations that administer legal or justice  

46 For example, if sub-group 1 recommended options A, B and F, and sub-group 2 recommended options G, L and P, the community group recommended A, B, E, F, G, H, L and P. There were no conflicting options, only agreement with other groups, or new unique solutions.
The conflict “zone” approach is more appropriate for CLS because they are so highly diverse.

If their diversity presents CLS with a greater challenge than most organizations face, it also presents them with more options. In this case the thermodynamic analogy I discussed earlier applies. The energy of conflict resolution—a state property—flows independent of the path chosen. Therefore, all paths are energetically equal. That is good news for the framers of a conflict resolution system; the theoretical number of paths leading to resolution is as large as the number of combinatoric sub-groupings. In an organization of 500 employees and an equal number of clients and family members, that is a very large number indeed.

Conclusions of the CLS Intervention

My initial experience at CLS showed that an intervener in a complex, diverse organization could use negotiation and dialogue to effectively facilitate the design of a negotiation and dialogue-based conflict resolution system. This appeared to work in a manner consistent with the theories and models described in the first part of this chapter. The use of dialogue brought new levels of awareness to individuals in the organization, and created important new group perspectives on the problems that must be solved.

An intervener can achieve the effect of negotiation and dialogue with hundreds of people by investing relatively large amounts of effort in trust building; this allows the intervener to gather critical, confidential information. Some critical information enters the negotiation and dialogue of the super-group only through the intervener’s hermeneutical interpretation (or re-framing) of stories told in confidence. The design process develops organically. Dialogue planning is of limited value, but the process of planning is essential in relationship building with the client organization. Thus, interveners must facilitate what unfolds, rather than what they think or what others predict should happen. They make progress best by making use of “moments of opportunity.” They regard emerging conflicts as events that “inform the design” and conform to the patterns of change as situations evolve, rather than as separate problems to be solved.
The critical elements of self-perception, storytelling and perspective in dialogue that influence the design process are found in the Rashomon Effect, in “wicked problems” and most of all in the careful reflection on the use and meaning of language itself. As one client at a dialogue event commented while reviewing a wall covered with our flip charts, “terminology is important.” To that I would add that time is a critical element. Dialogue takes more time than most people expect. Successful engagement in conflict and problem-solving is thus not merely a matter of technique. Dialogue provides a base, in space and time, from which to build capacity.
5. Dialogue as Content: The Afghanistan Dialogues

This chapter focuses on how content is developed in dialogue. It will examine in general how conversation can be analyzed, how communication is encoded and decoded, and in particular what can be learned from content about dialogue planning and design in the Afghanistan Dialogues. As was the case for my examinations of the drug policy program and the CLS “Resolving Our Differences” project dialogues, all three dimensions of the conflict triangle apply to my examination of the Afghanistan Dialogues. However, I focus on content in this example, because the events emphasized content—just as the drug policy dialogues emphasized effect, and the CLS dialogues emphasized process. These differences in emphasis illuminate how my dissertation ‘cross-cuts’ the three situations, as I described of my methodology earlier. This chapter provides the third dimension of the triad.

The City of Vancouver, CLS and Wosk Centre situations are comparable for several reasons. The Afghanistan Dialogues were not philosophical dialogues like Plato’s Symposium, or Bohm’s seminars. Plato’s dialogues took reflections on life, and built from them general ideas about the world. Bohm’s dialogues took everyday life experiences and connected them to general ideas about thought and society. The Afghanistan Dialogues, by comparison, focused specifically on political, social and economic options for Afghans and Afghanistan. However, the three situations are comparable because they were intended to help their groups increase individual awareness and arrive at a shared perspective.

The Afghanistan Dialogues were not deliberative like the City of Vancouver Drug Policy Program dialogues or the CLS “Resolving Our Differences” dialogues. The drug policy and organizational conflict dialogues were held with specific organizational policies and implementation plans in mind. The Afghanistan Dialogues, by comparison, were intended to give participants information and insights that might be used in any
organization or community with a connection to the situation in Afghanistan. However, these dialogues are comparable because each was intended to create ‘common content’, where doing so was otherwise hindered by personal and political conflicts. The Afghanistan dialogues are thus comparable with the other situations discussed in this dissertation because they share an everyday life context and they build capacity for action through increased understanding.

Discourse Analysis for Dialogue

Discourse analysis usually begins with an analysis of the words in a text or spoken communication. However, discourse is more than content; it is also a form of action. If one is to focus on discourse content, one must also recognize the discourse as action. According to van Dijk (2007), “the study of discourse as action may focus on the interactive details of talk (or text) itself, but also take a broader perspective, and show social political, and cultural functions of discourse within institutions, groups or society and culture at large” (p. 5). He identifies four categories of discourse that define the act, action and interaction of conversation: “intentionality,” “perspective,” “implication, consequences and components,” and “interaction” (p. 11). These categories correspond to the three dimensions of the ‘triangle’ model as follows.

- Perspective is a representation of content. The difference between one perspective and another is in how content is interpreted by different senders and receivers.
- Interaction is a representation of the dynamic, social aspects of process. Processes can be observed, described, mapped.
- Intentionality, and implication, consequences and components represent the physical and temporal aspects of effect. Intentions represent how past experiences are projected into the present. Implication represents how the present is interpreted in light of what happens in the present. Consequences are affects from the past and present as they are projected into the future. Components are artefacts.

The ‘triangle’ model can thus be used to interpret conversation analytically (i.e., as content) and contextually (i.e., in relation to action, among other factors).
The original notion of the ‘triangle’ model was simple, but not precise because one version emphasized emotion and another emphasized relationship. I refined that model in the beginning of the dissertation to make it more generally applicable. My more complicated version of it—which I use for ‘text’ analysis in this research—relates concepts from diverse fields in a particular and complicated way. I have thus taken someone’s learning aid and co-opted it for an alternative use, reading into it more than its originator(s) intended. This deviation is an example of how one can—metaphorically—take a diagonal path while ‘walking in the city’. Here, I have ‘cross-cut’ two avenues (i.e., emotion and relationship) and merged them into one (i.e. effect). I have added levels of complexity to the model throughout the dissertation as I described stages of the development of my analytical framework and research results. The effect dimension now has a list of factors (e.g., emotions, relationships, policies, artefacts). The process dimension now has a feedback process loop (see Figure 6).

In this chapter I add the condition that the content must reflect an interpretation that is acceptable from all possible perspectives. When one makes a statement, one might mainly intend to convey information, or to cause action, or to influence the feelings of others. When one receives a statement, one might mainly interpret it as information, as action-oriented, or as emotive. However, in dialogue, the sender’s intention and the receiver’s interpretation do not necessarily match. The triangle model therefore looks at the interrelationship of the three dimensions. The refined communication in conflict and problem-solving triangle model represents the following axiom.

*When two or more people are engaged in communication in conflict or problem-solving, there are three dimensions of the situation at hand about which one must be consciously aware and which one must at all times seek to keep in balance: the content, the process and the effect.*

Balance is key here. The analysis of discourse must consider all three dimensions and seek a coherent interpretation—i.e., an interpretation that works independently for each of process, content and effect, and that works simultaneously for all three of these dimensions.
Applying the Triangle Model to Conversation Analysis

The content dimension of the ‘triangle’ model addresses what is contained in a text. In dialogue, the challenge of working with content is not in defining what is simply denoted by the text. Nor is the challenge limited to uncovering the deeper connotations of the content per se; the challenge is to also arrive at a shared understanding of what is said or written. Ideally, this interpretation of the content would be acceptable to everyone who took part in the event: speakers, listeners, observers, and interveners. This is analogous to the scenario that I described in Chapter 1, in which a couple goes to counselling and one partner says that they are there to discuss their divorce, and the other partner says they are there to discuss their reconciliation. When the mediator summarizes this by saying that they are there to discuss their relationship, the issues are re-framed. Two competing perspectives have been framed according to one term that is acceptable, rational and practical to all parties. The parties have created common content.

In content analysis, the task of acquiring the meaning of a text is essentially the same as the task of re-framing in conversation. However, the dynamics of the processes of analysis and interpretation are not the same. In the divorce mediation example, the mediator gets feedback from the couple and from the process. If the ‘re-framing’ were not acceptable to someone, there would likely be signs. Here, the triangle model can guide an intervener to analyze and interpret what is happening as it happens. The mediator checks for reactions and responses (i.e., incoherence in the effect dimension).47 The mediator looks for ongoing signs of procedural problems, negotiation deadlocks (i.e., incoherence in the process dimension). The mediator also takes note of apparent confusions and misunderstandings (i.e., incoherence in content) as the conversation builds on what was said in the ‘re-framing’.

In dialogue research, such feedback is not so readily available. The researcher can check for signs of incoherence while observing the dialogue event. This normally must be done without the ability to intervene and check in with the participants. In

47 As I defined them in the last chapter: ‘reaction’ is an oppositional force, motivated by a perceived threat, and ‘response’ is a cooperative force, motivated by one’s desire to achieve a goal.
reviewing recordings, transcript or notes of an event, the researcher has a limited perspective. Here, notes made during the event can help. Following up with the participants after the event to review the researcher’s findings can help. However, the passage of time can get in the way. People forget what they saw and heard. They re-interpret what was said in light of what happened after the event. The researcher cannot prevent or resolve these problems. However, the researcher can improve the analysis and interpretation by anticipating these problems and factoring them into the process of observing, recording, analyzing and interpreting.

To demonstrate how to apply the conflict triangle model to content analysis, I will give two examples: a simple example, and a complex example. The simple example will show how framing and re-framing work in content analysis. The complex example will demonstrate how all the dimensions of the ‘triangle’ model might work in a multi-party situation. Both involve observation, analysis and interpretation.

**A Simple Example**

To demonstrate how to apply the triangle model for decoding a text, I offer a thought experiment. I will consider how to apply framing to encode a text. The model classifies three possible options for encoding a statement. For example, there are many ways that one might describe the road conditions on a wintery day. The ‘triangle’ model would classify any description as content-framed, process-framed, or effect-framed. Content framing would report the facts of the matter as they are, frozen in space-time. Process framing would report the dynamics of the situation in terms of practices and procedures. Effect framing would reflect the intentions, implications, or consequences in non-physical terms. Each framing option reads an experience as a text, decodes the experience, and reassembles it as a statement.

For this thought experiment, I offer the following three statements:

- The road is icy.
- The road is slippery.
- The road is treacherous.
The first description—the road is icy—is framed in terms of content. This is an empirical framework. Staying with the content frame, one might state other facts—e.g., the temperature is below freezing; there will be black patches where the road is not salted. The second description—the road is slippery—is process-framed. Its emphasis is on how one interacts with others and with the environment. This is a pragmatic and technological frame. One might add to this description other process-oriented information, instructions and directives—e.g., drive in low gear; avoid the steep grade at the base of Oak Street. The third description—the road is treacherous—is effect-framed. This is a phenomenological frame. It reveals what cannot be described objectively. One might add to this description other warnings—e.g., be alert; adjust your expectations about getting to work on time.

In this example, the choice of frames reveals something about the situation at hand, and about the person doing the framing. Why does the framer choose one frame rather than another? Perhaps this choice reflects how the framer sees things. Perhaps that choice reflects how the framer believes the recipient might or must receive the information. Here, the framer and receiver of the statement both encounter the problem of unpacking.

This is the same problem that I discussed in Chapter 3, regarding dialogue as a research method. In that chapter, I discussed how dialogue might be used to gather information for action research. In this chapter, I am reflecting on how a researcher might study this kind of dialogue using the ‘triangle’ model. In all three examples of framing, packing and unpacking require pragmatic competence—i.e., an ability to understand the framer’s intended meaning. In all three cases, packing and unpacking also require pragmatic awareness—i.e., an ability to shift between frames of content, process and effect. Finally, in all three cases, packing and unpacking require cooperation between framer and interpreter.

Here again, all three dimensions are in play. Competence deals with content (i.e., it operates in a semiotic framework). Cooperation deals with process (i.e., it operates in a dynamic framework). Awareness deals with effect (i.e., it constitutes a phenomenological framework). What I refer to in the axiom of the conflict triangle as ‘balance’ is the integration of pragmatic competence, pragmatic awareness and
engagement with the 'text'. Here, 'text' is broadly defined as a communicative event in the sense that Stuart Hall (1980) uses it (please see page 66). In this context, 'engagement' is a kind of cooperation involving the researcher, the people, the things and the situations of the 'text'.

This is a phenomenological approach in the sense that the researcher or observer is part of the text. There is no Cartesian subject-object relationship here. Interpreting according to the model works like electro-magnetic induction, where a shift in one field can induce a change in another. The process of interpretation involves 'cross-cutting' the three dimensions. One dimension might suggest a shift to, or a change in, another dimension. For example, in my thought experiment, "adjust your expectations" might suggest, "take the bus, instead of driving." In this case, the effect frame generates a process response. The people and things represented by the text, and the text itself, are thus parts of one whole. When the three dimensions are in balance, the act of interpretation illuminates the situation at hand, induces action, and gives meaning to the 'text'.

**The Observer as Witness and Participant**

The role of the witness is an important aspect of framing. I have discussed this in relation to Foucault’s work (i.e., the Panopticon, surveillance, and carceral society) and how it illuminates the CLS situation. The feature of this performer-witness relationship that is important at this stage of this discussion is the problem of the map-territory relation and open space of interpretation created by cognitive dissonance. Because the map cannot equate exactly with the territory, and because the witness is ultimately bound to make a judgment about the intent behind what is said, and because the teller needs the witness to complete the act of interpretation, meaning-making is initially in the control of the listener/witness. This lends credence to the adage, "it's not what you said that counts, it is what she/he heard (and remembered)." In dialogue, where there is a negotiation of meaning, the speaker gets to create a frame of transmission of the message, but the listener/witness gets to create a frame of interpretation of its meaning.
This means that *listening* is the primary point of entry for an act of intervention. The mediator/intervener, in effect, intercepts the message that would otherwise go directly from A to B, and re-frames the message so that B might hear it differently than B would have without the intervention. This has been described as an essentially social process of meaning making inherent to such diverse areas of interest as courtroom procedure (Stroll, 2002), stand-up comedy (Kosiski, in Boskin, 1997) and modern rabbinic biblical exegesis (Etshalom, 2006). The triangle model works in these examples as follows.

- In courtroom procedure, the translator must also interpret what is spoken, such that the *content* analysis of discourse is necessarily *affected* by unseen aspects of the *process* at hand.
- In stand-up comedy, the comic’s mediation of the normally unspoken *content* of everyday discourse creates the *effect* of a critical, therapeutic intervention *process*.
- In modern rabbinic biblical exegesis, the interpretation of *content* is used to mediate between the *process-in-use* and the *process* that takes places in the narrative of the text in order to uncover the hidden intended *effect* of the text’s message.

In all three cases, the trigger is dissonance, and listening is where an intervener’s, or mediator’s horizon comes into play. For example, if the mediator’s bias is to privilege A and B’s relationship, the re-framing might be relationship focused. The tendency to focus on content, process or effect in any given moment will be influenced by the mediator’s bias (e.g., training, experiential knowledge base, strengths and weaknesses as a facilitator). The stronger one’s bias, the more likely one will be to impose a particular order (or disruption of order) on the discourse.

A corollary of the re-framing/bias phenomenon is the following. The stronger one’s bias, the more likely one will be to view the actions of others that clash with one’s own actions as being hostile to one’s own interests, ideology or moral position. For example, Canadian and American mediators have long made distinctions between so-called “transformative” mediators, legal or rights-based mediators, and interest-based mediators. These distinctions are at the heart of the current discourses on the future of mediation education and practice in North America, and therefore at the heart of much conflict over who will frame (i.e., control, and stand as ‘exnominated’) in the field. Many
mediators have been caught up in this clash of biases. However, in my experience, some mediators who have backgrounds that are not aligned with the dominant legal or therapeutic vocations, seem to do well adopting a variety of approaches, according to the needs of their clients. The key to this more general form of intervention practice is in being able to facilitate a fusion of horizons that takes into account the many aspects of the personality spaces of the parties to the conflict. This is done through discourse.

Even without an intervener, and even when only one person does all the talking, discourse is a complex social process. Kurt Lewin’s (2000a) theory of personality spaces helps to explain how humour works on a more complex social level of witnesses than does the theory proposed by Freud (1905). Freud’s characterization of personality has a narrower focus than Lewin’s; the Freudian ego looks after itself and regards all else in a Cartesian subject-object relationship. For example, Freud acknowledges gender as one of the ego’s few personality space factors, but only using what today would be considered the stereotyping of women as objects.\(^{48}\) In contrast, in Lewin’s theory, personality spaces of any individual provide different streams of influence in the ego’s mediation of the cycle of intent-action-effect. Each space provides an opportunity for a shift of perspective. The interplay of these spaces provides an internal negotiation about how to respond to an ambiguous situation.

The internal negotiation is key here. When an ambiguous situation (i.e., dissonance) arises, one can rely on a number of different interpretations that suggest how to frame and act on what is said.\(^{49}\) The similarities and differences between two people’s personality maps allow for a complex (re-)interpretation of their shared ‘texts’, based on their unique combination of similarities and differences. For example, person A might say something that could be interpreted in person B’s professional personality space as threatening or offensive, but in person B’s gender space as reasonable. Person B’s political affiliation space might mediate this, weigh the options and alliances with A’s known spaces and decide how to interpret what A said. That interpretation leads

\(^{48}\) In the Psychopathology of Everyday Life (Freud, Strachey, Freud, & Tyson, 2001, original work published in 1901), Freud characterizes women as unconsciously welcoming sexual assault (p. 181, n. 1).

\(^{49}\) This is a decision-making process, taken under the pressure and uncertainty of dissonance.
to a judgment. *When such a judgment is made based on an assessment of interests between like personality spaces (e.g., person A and person B have the same vocation, or went to the same college, or support the same football team), the two can be said to be having an interest-based negotiation.* This can also be thought of as a shadow negotiation.\(^{50}\) It allows one to simultaneously look out for oneself and care for others—which is the intent, if not the purpose of an ‘I-less’ fusion of horizons between I and Thou.

The notion of mixed voices within the individual is not farfetched. M. M. Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of *heteroglossia* imagines the same phenomenon between individuals engaged in discourses of art and culture. The transmission and structure of discourse is similar for intra-personal and inter-personal communication. Different identity spaces live together in an individual, partially in discrete areas of one’s total being, but these silos overlap as parts of a community of one. A similar order exists at all levels of inter-personal, social organization, ranging from groups to nations.

In the last section, I described a thought experiment to demonstrate simple interpretation. That example involved only an observer and a text. The next section looks at how interpretation works in the more complex situation of people interacting and negotiating. It also demonstrates the role of the intervener/researcher. In this example, I am the intervener/researcher. This will lay the last part of the foundation needed to describe fully the method of discourse analysis in the Afghanistan Dialogues.

**A More Complex Example**

“*imw at*” [*Ta Sh’m*]a—come and hear—a story about making decisions and solving problems. The story is related to a question that launched this dissertation. In the telling, this story is a ‘text’ from everyday life. Drawing from such ‘texts’ (e.g., books, news reports, negotiations, dialogues and reflections on one’s various experiences), one takes in, analyzes and frames one’s interpretations of the experiences of everyday life. In this example the larger ‘text’ is the incident described below, and is made up of

\(^{50}\) Here, I am expanding on Kolb and Williams’ (2000) notion of a “Shadow Negotiation.” They used this term to describe a historical, socially entrenched clash of genders. I propose that this same process of discourse can be based on clashes or alliances, and can involve all kinds of personality spaces.
smaller ‘texts’—such as books, conversations, and in this case iTunes—that define how the story’s characters interpret the larger ‘text’. The story has meaning; even at a superficial level it yields useful information. However, a fully meaningful interpretation of this ‘text’ will require one to read between—and outside of—the lines of its narrative.

I was on the living room sofa, reading about an experiment done by Dan Ariely, who is a professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management and the MIT Media Laboratory. The experiment is reported in Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces that Shape Our Decisions. Offering his own contribution to the canon of conventional wisdom that advises that nothing comes for free, Ariely (2008) says the following.

OK. Here’s a quiz. Suppose I offered you a choice between a free $10 Amazon gift certificate and $20 gift certificate for seven dollars. Think quickly. Which would you take?

If you jumped for the FREE! certificate, you would have been like most of the people we tested at one of the malls in Boston. But look again: a $20 gift certificate for seven dollars delivers $13 profit. That’s clearly better than getting a $10 certificate free (earning $10). Can you see the irrational behavior in action? (p. 58)

As I finished reading this story, my son and four of his friends entered the house, having just returned from the park. In the moment, five energetic teenage boys, whose resistance to dealing with abstractions was slightly worn down, seemed to me to be good test subjects. I decided to see if I could replicate Ariely’s results. I made one change to Ariely’s quiz; instead of Amazon certificates, I asked my subjects to evaluate options of iTunes certificates, because I knew that all the boys were regular users of iTunes, but not regular patrons of Amazon. I wanted to be sure that they were bargaining for something they truly valued. There would seem to be negligible variation among them regarding the inherent value they would attribute to iTunes cards. They should readily be able frame the offer based on exchange values. However, in real bargaining situations, people are often willing to pay more for something than it is worth on the open market (e.g., a comic book or trading card that completes a set).

The new version of the quiz went as follows. “Hey, guys. If you had the choice, would you rather get a $10 iTunes card for free, or a $20 iTunes card for seven dollars?” Four of the boys answered after a thoughtful pause of only a few seconds. Three said
they would take the $20 option, one opted for the $10 card, and the fifth one was unable
to decide. I asked each of them to explain their reasoning. The three who acted
‘rationally’ each pointed out correctly [according to the econometric calculus of Ariely]
that spending $7 to get $20 worth of iTunes yielded a better return than spending
nothing to get $10.

The one who opted for the free $10 certificate had a different way of analyzing
the problem. He reasoned that the offer was equivalent to a choice between one free
$10 certificate, or two, $10 certificates that each cost $3.50. From that perspective, he
argued, it is better to choose the free $10 certificate deal than to choose two deals that
require one to pay more than 1/3 of the face value each for $10 certificates.

After hearing from each of his friends, the boy who could not decide initially,
remained undecided. He said he was unable to figure out the relative values of the offer
in the first place, and could not understand the rationale of either option as presented by
his friends. When I asked him what difference—if any—he thought it might make if the
certificates were for books on Amazon, he and the other boys agreed immediately that
no one would be willing to spend any money on Amazon—even if more value could be
claimed (e.g., a $25 certificate for $8). In other words, for books they would all opt for the
free $10 certificate, and use it if the need arose. Nothing ventured, nothing lost, end of
story.

The story above cannot be interpreted only through the filter of its teller’s (i.e.,
my) language, framing and emphasis. If one were to watch a video of only the quiz, it
would be coherent and cohesive. That is, it would yield meaning, and it would hold
together. However, the part of the larger ‘text’ about what I was reading (i.e., the lesson
of Ariely’s research), and the debriefing of my own research subjects add levels of
understanding outside the lines of the story as told. These contextual details, not seen in
the video, add indispensable layers of meaning to an interpretation of the incident. If, as
Umberto Eco (2001) claimed, “a text is a machine conceived for eliciting interpretations”
(p. 6), then even one’s thought experiments are texts. Ideally, true meaning can only
come from a full interpretation. Full interpretation of a text—such as the iTunes quiz
incident text—requires the use of all of its relevant, constitutive perspectives. However,
there is no easy way to define criteria for what constitutes relevance. One must consider
a range of communicative events, including public forums, business meetings and private conversations. Then one must consider how these events are understood according to the various participants’ criteria of relevance. When we take pause to reflect with others on a situation, to invest meaning in it, we create a text.

To interpret fully the gift certificate story’s larger text, one must consider the communicative cycles of three narrative threads. The first narrative thread involves Ariely’s (2008) book: he wrote it, I read it, and I acted on it. The second thread involves my replication of Ariely’s experiment: I gave the boys a quiz, we debriefed, I drew conclusions from their feedback and acted on them. The third thread involves my writing about the other two threads here: I summarize the events, put them into a particular context and leave it to you the reader to draw conclusions and act on it accordingly.

The triangle model works in this more complex case as an interpretive filter through which the text can be understood. Each of these three narratives can be evaluated, and ‘cross-cut’ to give the text its coherence and cohesion. The three narratives collectively are related as part of one structure, in the same way that fractal forms recursively mirror their own macro- and micro-structures.

I introduced the fractal concept of ‘texts’ in Chapter 1 as a model for feedback and recursion in conflict. There, the model applied to one dimension of the triangle—recursion and feedback are processes. In Chapter 3, I applied the fractal model to the ‘problem of unpacking’ to analyze dialogue at CLS. There, I applied the fractal model to show how one dimension of the model can be related to another—packing involves process and converts content. In this chapter, my complex thought experiment applies the fractal model to three dimensions simultaneously. Here, a three-dimensional structure that is replicated in the three threads as follows. The Ariely (2008) book’s thread is characterized by three dimensions: its content (i.e., the text of Predictably Irrational), its process of communication (i.e., the publishing, and my reading of Predictably Irrational) and its effect (i.e., my use of its lesson to design and conduct an experiment of my own). The event of my experiment is characterized by the same three dimensions: content (i.e., the questions), process (i.e., administering the quiz and reflecting on the boys’ answers) and effect (i.e., the debrief—in which the boys’ reflections on their processes of reasoning resulted in a new understanding of the
problem). The third thread—what you are reading—is likewise characterized by content (i.e., the words on this page), process (i.e., my writing it and your reading it), and effect (i.e., your interpretation and reaction to what is written). Taken together, these three threads contain the same pattern: content (i.e., Ariely’s phenomenon of irrational decision-making), process (i.e. my experiment, based on his phenomenon), and effect (i.e., the resulting text, which is a component of this dissertation).

**Intent, Action and Effect**

A key feature of discourse that guides my inquiry is the way in which meaning is derived from how *intent, action and effect* are revealed to people in their everyday social interactions. When two or more people interact, they create a collective version of their experience—which is a kind of text—comprised of artefacts (e.g., documents and recordings), speech acts and memories. They create the text together, by reflecting on their shared experiences, revealing private information such as intent, and negotiating textual form and content as they go along. They can be in agreement about some parts of the text, and be in disagreement about others. Sometimes they are aware that their respective versions are in agreement, and sometimes they are not aware. Sometimes they are aware that their respective versions are not in agreement, and sometimes they are not aware. In all these cases, ultimately, such texts are accessed from, and therefore based in, memories.

Klein, et. al. (2002) find that memory, learning, decision-making and biological evolution work together as “multiple systems, multiple functions.” Just as the biological function of memory has evolved in humans, individual memories evolve in one’s experience. For example, Klein et. al.’s research shows that people form opinions about others based on “decision rules” which are “recruited” from “two distinct types of memory: an *episodic* store, which represents specific events and behaviours involving the target, and a *semantic* store, which includes summaries of the target’s personality traits abstracted from a particular set of events that served as input to the procedures that generated the trait summary” (p. 322). Here, the episodic store is one’s memory of specific things and events, and the semantic store is one’s memory of what those things and events mean. In other words, the *process* of memory mediates between one store—
which forms the content of memory—and another store—which provides the rules that determine the output (i.e., the effect) of memory. Klein et. al., and many studies that they cite, find that these two memory stores work partly independently and partly interdependently with respect to “many domains” beyond character trait judgment (p. 323).

Because memory stores are partially interdependent, meaning-making is an evolutionary process; once memory-based texts are created, they serve as the memories on which future texts are built. This is part of the cycle of intent-action-effect. However, memories can also be unreliable, due to their partial independence. In the process of experiencing events, storing them in memory, recalling them and forming new memories, the information contained in episodic memory-based texts can become altered via the mediation of semantic memory-based texts. Sometimes this happens in response to new information that illuminates what was earlier committed to memory. Sometimes non-episodic influences (e.g., ideology, fear, wishful thinking) change how the semantic store organizes and interprets what is in the episodic store, and old data becomes forgotten, distorted, or suppressed. The evolution of memory that begins in one’s mind at the intrapersonal level, thus continues to evolve via language at the interpersonal level in discourse.

**Dialogue, and The Processes of Encoding & Decoding**

There have been many technological changes in the everyday life processes of communication since the 1930s, when Dewey was publishing his last work and Bakhtin was writing his first work. Radio and television networks, cable TV, cellular networks and the Internet have changed the speed, distribution and quantity of transmission. However, these technological inventions have not changed the essential dialogic, rhetorical or logical nature of communication in everyday life. New modes of transmission (i.e., media) are only extensions of how people have always communicated with each other across time and space. The subject matter of discourse (i.e. the message) also changes and evolves, but the dialogical, rhetorical and logical elements of discourse remain the same. To fully understand events, one must analyze them over time, as unfolding texts.
Communicative events (e.g., dialogue events, work team meetings, town hall meetings, symposiums) are texts as much as any document, in part, because they are participatory (i.e., authored, co-authored, edited), observed (i.e., read, viewed, reviewed, reported) and recorded (i.e., on paper, in human or electronic memory). Some of the participation and some of the observation take place in real time, and some take place before and after the event. Over time, meaning of a memory forms, evolves and sometimes is negotiated, resulting in texts that are generally accepted as the true or final narratives of the events they describe. Dewey’s work on logic frames the content dimension of such texts; he is concerned with how a message becomes precisely the one that inhabits the text. Bakhtin’s work on dialogism frames the process dimension of such texts; he is concerned with how a message both resides in, and moves between two realms: the realm of time-space inhabited by people who communicate with each other (i.e., the text of the conscious gestalt), and the realm of time-space that exists between and beyond those people (i.e., the liminal time-space of the text). What remains to complete the analysis of a text is an examination of the effect dimension. For this I turn in this section to Stuart Hall’s work on ‘encoding’ and ‘decoding’.

Hall (1980) shows how audiences influence mass media as much as mass media producers seek to influence audiences. The process of mass communication is punctuated by “differentiated moments” of production, transmission and reception. The result is information that flows both forward—from the initial sender to the initial audience—and backward at the same time. Hall describes this feedback loop as, “a set of decoded meanings which ‘have an effect’, influence, entertain, instruct or persuade, with very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behavioural consequences” (p. 168, in Kellner).

Dialogue between texts is such a feedback loop. This process is omni-directional. At any given moment, texts influence one’s reading of future texts, and influence one’s interpretation of earlier texts. People convey meaning to one another via texts, and texts convey meaning through people to other texts. The dialogue situations of this

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51 For example, Holquist (2002) applies Bakhtin’s dialogism to The Great Gatsby. Here he finds a storyline with a "pastness" and "thereness" (p. 168). The novel’s story connects Gatsby’s past to the storyline’s present in which all the characters live, as does the novel’s story-within-a-story told in Nick Carraway’s “narrative voice,” as does the novel itself, being written by Fitzgerald and read by real people, etc..
dissertation can thus be treated as extended texts. Their parts extend in time and space, overlapping, evolving and diffusing their contents to other texts. For example, the Afghanistan Dialogues took place in Vancouver, but the situation began in Afghanistan long before the dialogue events took place in Vancouver. Although the dialogue events observed the situation in Afghanistan, they also became part of the situation in Afghanistan; an audience’s response to a text feeds back via the mass-media, events on the ground in Afghanistan, and via individual relationships. This is negotiation and dialogue across time and space. The CLS case is similar. Although the events took place in Burnaby, Surrey and North Vancouver, BC, much of what makes up that ‘text’ originated far away in time and throughout BC, when the provincial health care system set in motion many of the factors that led to conflicts at CLS in the 21st Century.

Hall’s theory of encoding and decoding models a large number of similar, albeit weak, interactions. His critical cultural analysis reveals the cumulative effect of very many small forces of back-pressure (i.e., ‘decoding’ from individual audience members) against a relatively strong cultural force (i.e., the ‘encoding’ of mass-media texts with the predominant values of cultural and economic production). The result is a dialogue where and when there was intended to be a one-way process of dissemination. This might happen because a critical number of people oppose the message being disseminated, or because a critical number of people support it. In either case, dialogue becomes possible if there is a channel that allows a free exchange of communication for everyone involved. This happens most efficiently when people are together in one place and time. However, slower, virtual dialogue can take place in print, and in electronically mediated communication (i.e., texting). For example, an op/ed article in a newspaper begins as transmission, and can evolve into a dialogue as readers and editors respond. Such a process can later evolve into a face-to-face dialogue as an issue gains momentum.

Once transmission becomes a dialogue, there is potential for the meaning of the text to be negotiated directly. Knowing how this process works for something as widespread and pervasive as mass-media communication makes it easier to find this feedback phenomenon in smaller, more subtle interactions like a dialogue event. Such cases represent a force that is congruent with the force uncovered by Hall in the mass-media case. In these situations, there are fewer individual weak forces at play, but they
are working with an equally small and weak set of forces. Here, too, is found the potential for negotiation in meaning-making. Part of the challenge in making dialogue more effective is in knowing where/when to find potential points of entry for negotiations of meaning.

In *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world*, Holquist (2002) discusses how Bakhtin locates in language the source of such meaning-making. In a *chronotope*, the time of meaning-making is the shared moment of dialogue, and the space is an interconnected one, comprised of different aspects of an individual and of different individuals. As I argued about Freud’s notion of “personal, family and professional complexes” at the beginning of this chapter, these are the zones of personality that interact, often outside of one’s awareness. Freud focuses on the opacity of these zones, and argues that their contents are revealed indirectly, often via *parapraxes*. Bakhtin locates their contents in language, out in the open, and argues that they are revealed if we look beyond the ordinary notion of the subject/object.

It has always been recognized that language can work only if it exists between subjects, only if it belongs to more than one speaker. But this has usually reflected itself in little more than a mere subject/object distinction, as reflected in the gross features of most grammars which deploy nominative, accusative, and dative cases as if one speaker were an active sender and the other no more than a passive receiver. Bakhtin goes further: he insists that language can work only if it belongs to more than one aspect of self *within* the subject. By making language the framing condition for Kant’s a prioris of perception, Bakhtin was impelled to double the forms of intuition: there is one time/space organizing perception of the subject by the subject; and there is another time/space that shapes the subject’s perception of others. Bakhtin called this model of intuition an “architectonics of responsibility,” because it is the algorithm that structures responses made from the site where subjectivity is addressed. (Holquist, pp. 169-170)

Language thus organizes (i.e., frames in a particular way) one’s perception of the relationship between the subject and the object.

Hofstadter (2007) describes how this organizing feature of language results in “shared perception [and] shared control” between two people. For example, in a tennis game, there is a space between two people, each of whom experiences *self* as subject and *other* as object. However, one’s arms respond to the signals of one’s mind to act,
and each player partially and indirectly controls the other player’s arms, which react. Such control accounts for the workings of the weak forces that I described in relation to Hall’s encoding/decoding interaction as follows.

[This] type of external control…does not create a profound blurring of two people’s identities… but things get more complicated when language enters the show. It is through language most of all that our brains can exert a fair measure of indirect control over other humans’ bodies… My brain is attached to your body via channels of communication that are much slower and more indirect than those linking it to my body, so the control is much less efficient. (p. 213)

This is the invisible, but felt, presence in the shared space between people who take part in conversation or dialogue. It is the space described by Bakhtin where dialogue resides simultaneously then/now and here/there.

The total space of dialogue and conversations of conflict and problem solving in everyday life lies between the small-scale intra-personal space of the human psyche that was the focus of Freud’s work, and the large-scale space of mass media culture that was the focus of Hall’s work. In dialogue, as in psychotherapy, knowing that the opportunity exists to expose what is hidden, and knowing generally where to find it, makes it possible to extend Freud’s notion of the “talking cure” from the level of intra-personal conflict to that of inter-personal conflict. This is not group therapy; it is more an extension of the kinds of processes and relations of meaning-making that are at work in mass communication. The aspect of dialogue’s chronotope that is not directly revealed in content or process is the seemingly void, liminal, space of effects. Liminal space is revealed only indirectly, the way the subconscious can be revealed via parapraxes.

‘Triangle’ model-based interpretation examines texts in two directions at the same time. It combines Freud’s orientation of interpreting what goes on at the micro level, with Hall’s orientation of interpreting what goes on at the macro level. So far, I have focused my discussion on personal processes of language and logic and personal identity spaces and on the extension of “personal, family and professional complexes” to large group processes and interactions. In considering how systems, processes and actions are revealed in language, Freud’s approach uses extreme cases (e.g., neuroses) to reveal similar effects that most people experience to a much lesser degree. In
considering how the meaning of language can be revealed in large systems and processes, Hall’s approach uses a largest-scale case analysis (e.g., ‘culture’ vs. “Culture”) to reveal large-scale social effects of which most people experience only small parts.

These phenomena all relate to the problems of the individual, as exemplified by extreme cases. Where does an individual’s experience of conflict cross over the invisible subject/object gap to become a group experience? A full exploration of conflict and problem-solving in any given situation must also consider the special problems of groups, as opposed to only the problems particular to one’s status as an individual. The Afghanistan Dialogue analysis explores the case of conflict at the societal level, using the same tack that Freud and Hall take (i.e., extrapolating from the extreme to the subtle).

The Afghanistan Dialogue Observations

In the Fall of 2003, I had begun gathering data for the CLS policy design, and had completed my review of the policy system for public consultation in the City of Vancouver drug policy case. Both projects were consistent with the notions of action research and grounded theory. I presented these findings to the Board of Directors of CLS and to the City of Vancouver’s Drug Policy office, and was given permission by both to study their projects as part of this research. Since the drug policy dialogues were planned in consultation with the SFU Wosk Centre, I also had to get their permission to study the drug policy event held at the Wosk Centre. This established the precedent for me to study other kinds of dialogue events at the Wosk Centre.

The Afghanistan Dialogues at the SFU Wosk Centre offered a rare opportunity to evaluate a public forum that addressed a politically charged, high-conflict topic that is global in scope, with diverse participants. This series originated in the work of a network of SFU faculty in 2005, with ongoing participation from faculty from the University of British Columbia, media professionals from the Vancouver Sun, researchers from the Asia Pacific Foundation and students in the SFU Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue.
The dialogue events brought together government representatives and interested citizens from North America, Europe and Asia. As Canadian troops became more engaged in combat, the public’s appetite for dialogue about Afghanistan appeared to grow.

The Afghanistan Dialogue events were planned and facilitated by professionals from the Wosk Centre. The series was organized with an emphasis on diversity in planning input and participation, the use of open-ended questions, opportunities for storytelling, engagement of participants (as opposed to the presentation of information), and above all, openness to emerging ideas and opportunities. Table 2 lists the Afghanistan-related events, all of which were included in this study. Each event had a facilitator and one or more guest panellist(s).

The 27 September 2007 event was held in the Asia Pacific Hall at the SFU Wosk Centre—a room designed for large-group dialogue events. It consists of five concentric circles of seats with specialized audiovisual equipment. The other events were held in amphitheatre-style rooms at SFU’s Harbour Centre. The standard format consisted of opening remarks by panellists, open dialogue and reflective closing remarks by the facilitators. There were also open-invitation meal gatherings (lunches during all-day events, and post-event dinners for participants to continue their interactions). I attended all but one of these events, and took notes on the content, timing and flow of speakers and process. For comparison, I attended other dialogue events at the Asia Pacific Hall that were concurrent with, but not part of, the Afghanistan Dialogue series.

The Afghanistan Dialogue series was designed to focus on both content (i.e., issues related to Canada’s involvement in the situation in Afghanistan) and on process (i.e., the practice of dialogue per se). In theory, the outcomes of this series could thus benefit Afghan-Canadian relations among government organizations, non-government organizations, academics and citizens with social and business interests in Afghanistan. The outcomes of this series could also benefit other groups or organizations interested in using dialogue for capacity-building in other areas of content. However, the panellists and featured speakers at these events were primarily content experts on Afghanistan. This presented a number of challenges for the planners and facilitators who were experts on Afghanistan and on dialogue-making.
### Table 2. The Afghanistan Dialogues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Panelist(s)</th>
<th>Approximate number in attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 Dec 2006</td>
<td>“Rural Development”</td>
<td>Hon. Ehsan Zia, Afghan Minister of Rural Development</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Jan 2007</td>
<td>“Voices with Experience in Afghanistan”</td>
<td>John Harriss (Dir., SFU School for International Studies),</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Lindsay (Dir., Inst. For Media, Policy &amp; Civil Society),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jonathan Manthorpe (Journalist, Vancouver Sun)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Feb 2007</td>
<td>“Comparative Perspectives on the War”</td>
<td>Consuls General of France, UK, Netherlands, USA, Germany, with unscheduled participation</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>by the Consul General of Pakistan and members of the media.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Jun 2007</td>
<td>“Conflicts and Development”</td>
<td>Gordon Smith (Dir., UVic Centre for Global Studies),</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lauryn Oates (VP, Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Col. Mike Capstick (Canadian Forces, Ret.),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Toor Wesa (Development Specialist, Kandahar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Sep 2007</td>
<td>“Weighing the Options in Afghanistan”</td>
<td>Researchers, NGO analysts, and consultants</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Mar 2009</td>
<td>“Perspectives on the Conflicts in Afghanistan”</td>
<td>Samuel Miller (Director of Peace and Security Policy,</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CIDA Afghanistan Task Force)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Jun 2009</td>
<td>“Communicating in the Afghanistan War”</td>
<td>Lucas Robinson (Advisor to the Provincial Reconstruction Team, Kandahar)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One challenge in the planning of the Afghanistan Dialogues was in getting the featured panellists to avoid lecturing and presenting (i.e., *diffusion*) in favour of dialogue. According to Bob Anderson—who was involved in planning the series and facilitating the events—panellists from higher levels of government tended to adhere to a cultural norm of sticking to carefully drafted statements. However, he notes the following.52

All but one of the dialogues...involved experts brought to Vancouver at the expense and timing of their employers (e.g., Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Privy Council, Department of Defence, Canadian International Development Agency. One involved Vancouver-based consuls general of NATO countries, some of whom were (co-incidentally) high level experts on Afghanistan and who allowed me to coach them about what we intended and how we expected to achieve that. The multi-voiced success of that evening is remarked upon occasionally.

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52 Robert Anderson, 8 October 2010, personal communication to Terry Neiman.
The other guests were from Ottawa and [were more influenced by the performance expectations of their superiors in] Ottawa. The tone, title, and timing of their appearance in our dialogues was set first by their offices, then negotiated... Some of their offices were unused to having anyone explain our framework, and/or reminding them of what we expected. The very senior people made little accommodation to our approach and format (though to them it might have seemed a considerable accommodation), but the mid-career (and younger) officials genuinely listened and tried. Audience feedback on these mid-career performances varied. There were two unambiguous successes. But some officials are by nature ill prepared and ill-suited for this role. They were not invited because they cared about dialogue but because they know about Afghanistan.

Here is found a clash between the prevailing formal conventions of expert speaking, and the more informal culture of dialogue-making. The negotiation which Anderson refers to above would have involved senior visitors (or their staffs) bargaining for slightly longer speaking times. They would do so to make the most of what little time was afforded by their tight schedules. However, they bargained for more time without an appreciation for what they were bargaining away. Anderson notes that “because they were given so little real time on stage (before being drawn away by their already tight schedules) they presented their voices and projected their power-points more or less as they planned” (i.e., regardless of the re-negotiated agenda).

Anderson argues that, in spite of these challenges, there were breakthroughs. In one case, Minister of Foreign Affairs Bill Graham “contravened his staff’s script...decided to stay later in the evening than planned, went downstairs to the overflow room, and [for] two hours gave a good account of his situation.” This is, perhaps, the exception proving the rule. Graham had the authority to do this unilaterally, unlike anyone lower than him in Foreign Affairs. Anderson concludes from this that there is a “political economy of dialogue-making.” When the timing is right, and when certain topics and certain experts are in demand, the payoffs in event content and dialogue-making are high. This also holds true for low-level experts whose time is less expensive, and therefore more available. The opportunity of dialogue planning comes from creating the best possible conditions for these breakthroughs. I have factored into my analysis of the events this low-yield/high-value aspect of dialogue.
Analyzing the Afghanistan Dialogues

The evaluation of dialogue events, like the events themselves, entailed careful planning. Throughout this phase of the research, I drew on my earlier experience in the drug policy pilot project and as a practitioner/researcher to apply the revised content, process and effect analysis framework from conflict resolution theory. Doing so helped me to be mindful of two influences that set the context for the events: the events and discourse of the situation in Afghanistan, and the factors that defined the dialogue event series itself. I saw a tension between these two contexts. On the one hand, the planners were bringing together people who held strong, conflicting positions on matters about which some were willing to fight. On the other hand, the planners needed to organize a safe space for civilized communication that could bring forth new horizons and open up possibilities for alternate endings. Using data from this ongoing forum, I will explore the tension between this need for structure and the desired condition of spontaneity.

The dialogue events were planned to create the best possible conditions for sustained, open dialogue. My goal was partly to determine how much dialogue took place at each event, compared with other forms of discourse, such as presentation, debate or administrative communication. Like the Vancouver drug policy dialogue events, the Afghanistan dialogues were designed to begin with presentations by expert panellists, whose comments were intended to raise questions that would contribute to a focussed, open discussion of the themes or topics that framed each event. The guest speakers were invited to make opening statements, and keep their remarks as brief as possible. However, almost all the speakers at all the events took up more time presenting than was desired by the planners. Little time or opportunity remained for people who attended the events to engage in the kind of discourse that the dialogue-expert planners considered to be dialogue. This happened in spite of the fact that the organizers were aware of the tendency of speakers to use up the available dialogue time, and against the organizers’ best efforts to avoid this outcome.

I propose that a significant factor contributing to this outcome was the lack of a definition of dialogue that is both commonly known and precise. Regardless of the definitions I discuss in this dissertation, the term dialogue is used widely, and loosely in everyday life. Few who attend a ‘dialogue’ are likely to know much of the ancient Greek
notion of dialogue, or of the predominant modern academic notions. Fewer would be aware of or appreciate the differences between the old and new notions (e.g., how Plato and David Bohm might approach differently the design of a dialogue series) or the differences between various modern notions of dialogue (e.g., how Al Gore and David Bohm might approach differently the finer points of organizing a dialogue event).

Dialogue is mostly framed broadly in everyday life discourse as purposeful conversation. However, that description could apply to any number of processes that do not fit either classical or modern notions of dialogue held by learned theorist-practitioners of discourse. Regardless of the coaching they received, guest speakers at the Afghanistan Dialogues tended to act according to a looser definition of dialogue. The term dialogue—perfect for what the organizers had in mind for their process—has been made all but meaningless in everyday usage. Perhaps a new term that means exactly the same thing is needed to replace it in this context.

My observation of Afghanistan dialogue events involved arriving early, placing myself at a corner of the seating area in order to observe as much of the room as possible, and taking notes on the content and process of the events according to a method that I developed from my customary way of taking notes when mediating and facilitating professionally. I tracked what was said and the developments in process using my own shorthand symbols, and kept track of the time by referring to either a wristwatch that was adjusted on my wrist to be used discreetly while I took notes, or by referring to a pocket watch that was placed discreetly so as not to be noticed by others. I made timekeeping notations irregularly—often triggered by a change of speaker/questioner, or to note when there was a transformational turn in the discourse. I transcribed the notes later. A few of the transcriptions were done by professionals, directly from my original notes.

A summary of the transcripts, including a sample of my handmade field notes, and a transcription of another set of notes are given in Appendix B. My transcriptions of the dialogue events were not verbatim. Though I recorded in longhand as much of the word for word content as possible, my focus was on tracking the process of conversations and presentations, and the general development of content. This involved identifying who was speaking, what the speaker talked about, the start and stop times of
each speaking turn in the discourse, and notes about anything that seemed remarkable (e.g., people’s reactions, interventions by facilitators).

My primary analysis of dialogue events looked at the distribution of time spent on various forms of communication. Some of the time was administrative, focusing on instructing participants on event processes (e.g., how to use facilities, assumption of the Chatham House Rule of confidentiality\textsuperscript{53}, and break schedules). Some of the time was devoted to experts lecturing or making position statements on the issues, followed by questions from the audience to clarify their statements. Some of the time was devoted to open-forum discussion. It was during those times that most of what I counted as dialogue took place. The basic features of dialogue—which I discussed in Chapter 1—that I looked for in determining whether or not there was dialogue included the following.

1) Dialogue seeks to uncover understanding of multiple perspectives;
2) It has a practical standpoint;
3) It has an ethical standpoint in the pursuit of truth; and
4) It uses open inquiry, and a “without prejudice” approach to the offering of ideas.

According to these criteria, a simple text or transcript analysis would not suffice. For example, the reading of a prepared rhetorical question would normally not qualify as a moment of dialogue. However, the tone and delivery of a rhetorical question could reveal an atypical way to open up a deep channel of communication. This would be the case even if the rhetorical question were not offered in the spirit of dialogue. Analysis of the data, therefore, required attention to what was said, how it was said, and a sensitivity to how it was received in the room. Here again, the triangle model was useful.

**Coding the Afghanistan Dialogue Field Notes**

The coding categories I used for event analysis are described in Table 3. In the field notes I also indicated if PowerPoint presentations were used, and how many people

\textsuperscript{53} “When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed” (Chatham House, n.d., ¶1).
attended the events. I used one minute as the minimum time increment. For example, if it took someone less than one minute to ask a question, that specific act of asking a question was counted as one minute of “question” time. Many questions came in at well under a minute. However, other speech acts on the record went long enough over minute-long increments to warrant rounding the data this way.

Table 3. Event Analysis Coding Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Welcoming those in attendance to the event, introductory remarks about the event, remarks about the rules and intention of dialogue, logistical and ‘housekeeping’ information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Any questions posed by anyone in attendance about the substance of the discourse (i.e., not questions about housekeeping).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>Any responses to questions. Does not include responses to statements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>Follow-up questions and responses to follow-up questions. Responses to statements. Some rhetorical questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Speaking/</td>
<td>Prepared statements and presentation of slides by featured speakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Interventions, clarifying questions, process and content reframes and reflective statements made by the event facilitator.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While observing the dialogue events, I saw when there were moments of inquiry, disclosure and negotiated meaning. These, according to the criteria set out above, were clearly moments of dialogue. I also noted, and included in the coding of the data, moments of communication that could be considered dialogue, or could be considered something else like the rhetorical questions discussed above, but which had the potential to be exploited for the purpose of achieving dialogue. If there was any doubt or reasonable ambiguity, the benefit of the doubt went to classifying a communicative moment as dialogue. My intent was not to use data to privilege the placement of dialogue in the events. My intent—my bias in the data interpretation—was to work from the premise that any communicative act that might support a moment of dialogue would if the right conditions were to arise contribute to the evolution of dialogue in a communicative event, regardless of the intent of the speaker. Such moments can be thought of as either direct or indirect, and as either intentional or unintentional dialogic turns. The coding of the data was designed to test a best-case scenario of dialogue.
event planning (i.e., creating the conditions for dialogue), and to provide a measure of
the potential for dialogue.

**Interpreting the Afghanistan Dialogues**

Watching a dialogue event for moments of dialogue is like watching a team
sports event for moments of elegantly skilful play. Most of the overall cycle time (i.e., the
elapsed time from the beginning of the event, including all activities and ‘down time’)
consists of play that is non-eventful. Most of the process time (i.e., when the game clock
is running) is non-consequential, but is sometimes punctuated by transformative acts.
The transformative turns are what business experts and industrial engineers in a
different context have called “value-added.” The Afghanistan Dialogues unfolded like any
of the many dialogue-focused events that I have ever attended; there was very little
“value-added” time, overall. However, like sport, there were occasional, transformational
moments. These were ‘moments’ of dialogue—according to the definition of dialogue
above—that could be neither predicted nor induced by intervention. They happen when
the conditions are right.

According to the data, conditions are not often right. This is summarized in Table
4 (see Chapter 6). The dialogue “yields” of the events as measured by the ratio of
moments that nominally qualified as dialogue vs. the length of an entire event (i.e., cycle
time), ranged from 2% to 22%. The average for the series was 11%. I experimented with
many different ways of relating variables, but found no statistically interesting
correlations. For example, I looked at the ratio of guest speaker presentation time to
participant question, comment and exchange times (i.e., a kind of transactional
discourse time), and found that dialogue happened during 5% to 20% of the total speech
act time. I also found that invited/featured speakers spoke between 3.5 and 6.02 times
as much as all other participants combined at an event. However, there was no apparent
pattern in the data that would suggest any cause and effect relationship between
planning, intervention, or facilitation factors and the “yield” of dialogue. For example, the
ratios of (guest speaker “air time”)/(audience “air time”) did not correlate with the ratios of
(discourse time)/(non-discourse time). I propose that I have exhausted the possibilities for
extracting, teasing or gleaning meaning from the data. Drawing any further conclusions would be a matter of statistics abuse.

These findings suggest that merely limiting guest speaker time and mandating more time for questions and answers will not increase the incidence of interactive, dialogic communication. Otherwise, the events that had proportionally more question and answer time would have “yielded” more dialogue. A sample coding and analysis form is given with its corresponding field notes in Appendix B. According to the data, some did and some did not. Question and answer time, when preceded by expert speaker time, tends to reinforce the process’s lecture format. This constitutes a positive feedback loop in the discourse process.

This is consistent with the fractal form hypothesis. The dialogue events’ plans called for experts to provide a ‘seed’ from which to ‘grow’ the content aspects of events. However, the expert speaker’s prepared remarks set in motion a culturally familiar process of diffusion. In this process, feedback focuses on clarification and argumentation, like in a university lecture or a press conference. This is evidence that there is in dialogue and conversations of conflict and problem solving, a supremacy of process over content. The planners might have intended to send the message “let’s focus on this particular way of framing such-and-such in Afghanistan,” but it was buried under the message “let’s engage in a speaker-listener mode of discourse in this room today.”

The level of dialogue in the Afghanistan Dialogues was similar to other dialogue events using this format, regardless of venues, planners or topics. For example, during the period of this research, I also attended dialogue events on regional sustainability, being Canadian, mediation and the Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation in 2007. Although I did not track precisely the activities at all of these events, they were generally consistent with each other and with the Afghanistan Dialogues. By comparison, the events that used planned participant interaction had different outcomes. I will address this in relation to all three of this dissertation’s three primary dialogue situations (i.e., the City of Vancouver drug policy dialogues, the CLS dialogues and the Afghanistan Dialogues) in the next chapter.
6. Conclusions

The previous three chapters each focused on a different dialogue situation. This chapter focuses on the three situations collectively—first in practice, then in theory. In particular, it examines the question of ‘yield’ that I posed in the Introduction. ‘Yield’ is my measure of the time spent in dialogue—rather than in debate or diffusion—in a dialogue event. Introductions, facilitator or moderator instructions, presentations and speeches are coded for analysis as something other than dialogue. Questions and answers can be part of any of the three options. What I call “exchange” time is all dialogue—i.e., when people are in a conversation that meets the criteria for dialogue as one of the communicative options set out in Chapter 1, pages 20-21. What—in light of this analysis—can be learned from my privileged perspective of these three situations and their individual events as a whole?

I interpreted the notes, transcripts and recordings of the dialogue events to estimate the dialogue ‘yields’. This was guided by the working definitions of the three options. I also compared the planning processes and intended outcomes of the three situations. The drug policy dialogues were planned by staff from the City of Vancouver, in consultation with dialogue experts. These dialogues sought input for drug policy development and implementation. The CLS dialogues were planned by consensus, using negotiation and facilitation. These dialogues were designed to use the planning process itself and the dialogue events to generate an organizational process for communication in conflict and problem-solving. The Afghanistan Dialogues series was planned by dialogue experts from the Wosk Centre. Measurements and comparisons are offered here for broad, qualitative insight; they are not intended to serve as precise scientific, statistical or predictive data. *On that basis, I found that dialogue comprised a small fraction of any of the three situations, or groups of events. I also found that planning could be used to yield more dialogue in a given event by minimizing the opportunities for experts to speak to groups in plenary sessions.*
Dialogue In Practice

Each of the three situations involved planning, consultation, one or more events, and follow-up. Each situation had a cycle time of many months, starting with the first planning meeting, and ending with a final planners’ meeting or an action that was a result of the dialogue process (e.g., release of the CLS policy document). Within the total cycle time, each situation had an elapsed process time. Elapsed process times were not the cumulative efforts of individuals (i.e., ”man-hours”); they were total event and meeting hours. For example, for a two-hour planning meeting attended by five people on December 1, followed by an eight-hour dialogue event attended by 36 people on December 22 (e.g., a CLS dialogue)—the cycle time would be three weeks, and the process time would be ten hours. By comparison, if there were a three hour planning meeting attended by 6 people on January 15, followed by a four-hour event on May 15 and an eight hour event on May 16 attended by 150 people (e.g., a drug policy dialogue), then the cycle time would be four months, and the process time would be 15 hours. Cycle times indicate how long it takes to get a final result. Process times are independent of how many people participate. Given the comparably long cycle times, each situation was therefore equally strategic in nature. Like Socratic and Bohmian dialogue, the City of Vancouver drug policy dialogues, CLS’s “Resolving Our Differences” and the Afghanistan Dialogues attended to relationships (i.e., effect), “sharing of common content” (Bohm, 2004, pp. 30-31), and a planned method of meaning-making (i.e., process). They therefore are also comparable as conflict and problem-solving situations with respect to my triangle model.

In keeping with the qualitative nature of my method, I am not focusing on so-called economies of scale, or efficiency. For example, one might argue that a very large group would be harder than a small group to facilitate and to make efficient. It might thus be inherently harder to achieve as much dialogue per event than is possible with a small group. However, one might also argue that a larger group has more potential for individual interactions. It only takes one breakthrough interaction to change the course of a group’s thinking, regardless of the size of the group. The combinatorics are more favourable, and thus there is more potential dialogue ‘yield’ in a large group. I therefore limit my use of yield estimates to serve the qualitative interpretation of the events. In
other words, I am approaching the question of yield from the framework I discussed in Chapter 2—i.e., a non-Cartesian, phenomenological, and interpretive perspective. The inherent value of dialogue is in its capacity building and meaning-making. Its value is not limited to the particular outcome of any given moment of dialogue.

**What the Drug Policy, CLS, and Afghanistan Dialogues Have in Common and How they Differ**

One of the main purposes of dialogue in each of the three situations was to help people arrive at a shared sense of meaning. The different goals and interests of their unique situations drove their agendas. Their planning processes reflected those differences. My analysis seeks to make useful comparisons based on the similarities and differences of their agendas. My working definition of three options places meaning-making mainly in dialogue, rather than in the other two options. Disseminated information might contribute to a group’s ability to reach a shared sense of meaning, if new information is given and received. A debate might help people to communicate their positions efficiently. However, only dialogue contains the kind of exchange that generates shared perspectives. Dialogue is, in effect, the option in which a successful negotiation of meaning occurs in discourse. This ‘fusion of horizons’ is the common ground where the situations are comparable (e.g., please see Chapter 1, page 42; Chapter 4, page 127; and Chapter 5, page 167-8).

**“Visioning A Future for Prevention”**

The City of Vancouver drug policy dialogues consisted largely of presentations. The opening evening session and the morning of the day session were all presentations and dissemination of information. The event’s dialogue took place in the second half of the full day session. The follow-up events in 2004 did not take advantage of the main symposium event to build on the dialogue process. Planning for the series of events focused only on the main event. The follow-up events were conducted as ad-hoc focus sessions. City staff was used to disseminate information from the symposium—the results of which then had the status of being a “solution” (please see the discussion of “solutions” in Chapter 1). In terms of Canadian and municipal consultation policy,
Vancouver drug policy staff accomplished more in the last half day of the symposium than all other interveners did collectively through the rest of the cycle time of this situation. This is reflected in the notes from the follow-up sessions, which did not generate anything new in terms of content, process or effect to the November 2003 symposium. The ‘moment’ of opportunity, therefore, was when a large, diverse, representative group of drug policy stakeholders was assembled in the Asia Pacific Hall, and was engaged in facilitated, small-group and plenary conversation, under the guidance of the City of Vancouver’s Drug Policy Coordinator. A relatively high yield of dialogue was achieved there and then. Direct interaction of everyone in the room was essential to a meaningful and useful outcome.

“Resolving Our Differences”

The CLS dialogues involved much planning, negotiation and design work. Dialogue only occurred during about 7% of the total process time in the entire cycle. However, the planning was a two-stage process. First, the CLS community was engaged in 32.5 hours of consensus decision-making on how to design the policy. Little, if any of the planning was dialogue. Early planning focused on capacity building for the next phase of design. This next phase was similar in intent to the “local perspectives” part of the first night of the City of Vancouver drug policy dialogues—i.e., ‘approaching’, ‘joining each person differently’, and ‘creating the container’ (see page 31). This stage took many weeks and involved little dialogue. However, it was needed to mobilize the commitment of a group of over 1000 people.

The CLS situation and the drug policy situation differ in that CLS was a closed community whose members had more in common at the outset. The negotiation and planning period was focused on “unpacking” who they were and what they were there to do. In the next phase, CLS used dialogue in stages to consult with the entire community on the design of the policy and procedure for “Resolving Our Differences.”

The first stage involved “coherent” groups (see Chapter 4) to achieve what I described

54 This was the part of the program, scheduled for 7:15pm, in which six people introduced themselves.

55 See, The Problem of Unpacking, page 98. In contrast, the drug policy introductions were about ‘packing’, to bring strangers together.
as 'cross-cutting' in the discussion of my qualitative method. In this stage, there was mostly dialogue and debate. I did all the facilitation in this stage. I often used reframing (see, for example, the discussion of Bakhtin on page 62, and the CLS dialogues on page 143) to shift moments of debate to moments of dialogue. Because I was focused on facilitating, I did not keep records of the timeframes for these shifts. I estimate that a typical session was about one-third dialogue. In the next stage, the design consultations consisted of a few large-group meetings that were almost entirely dialogue. The ‘yields’ for those meetings were nearly 100%. The final stage—i.e., feedback and completing the policy document—was conducted as a virtual dialogue; time is not a meaningful measure of content, process or effect at this stage.

What unfolded at CLS, then, was a process of capacity building for both policy development and for dialogue-making. Capacity increased, as evidenced by the increasing dialogue ‘yields’ and increased participation, as the process developed. “Resolving Our Differences” demonstrates that focused, sustained dialogue is possible in a community organizational situation. In other words, what Plato and Bohm achieved as a philosophical exercise can be applied to practical everyday life situations. “Resolving Our Differences” also demonstrates how people with no expertise in communication, planning, conflict or problem-solving can be productively involved in the design of a successful dialogue process.

“The Afghanistan Dialogues”

The Afghanistan Dialogues were similar to the drug policy dialogues in planning, and similar to the CLS dialogues in how the participants were engaged. Like the drug policy situation, planning was concentrated in a few sessions. However, the key difference between this situation and the drug policy situation was that its planning was process-focused. Experts in dialogue planning guided it. The City of Vancouver’s drug policy dialogue planning, in contrast, was content-focused. Drug policy experts led planning here. Participant engagement in these two cases was not the same. The Afghanistan Dialogues had a rotation of topics and guest speakers. However, the series had a core of participants who attended more than one event. These participants were as much a part of the ongoing situation as season ticket holders are in a season of professional sports. They define (i.e., ‘create the container’ for) a Canadian-Afghan
community of dialogue about Afghanistan. This community preserves a common
memory, and co-created meaning of their dialogue over an extended period of time. In
this respect the Afghanistan Dialogue situation was similar to the CLS situation, and
consistent with the Platonic and Bohmian ideal of relationship-building in dialogue.

The drug policy dialogues, in contrast, had a series of similar-themed events,
which were each attended by different groups. The common thread in the drug policy
dialogues was the theme, and a few City of Vancouver staff facilitators. The main benefit
of using dialogue in this situation was the transparency it gave to the decision-making
process in implementing the city’s Four Pillars prevention strategy. Though this is not an
ideal process, it is better than conventional public consultations, which involve little in the
way of negotiated meaning. For example—as I discussed in Chapter 3—the Vancouver
drug policy process did not generate the kind of organized resistance and litigation that
resulted from the Vancouver RAVCO consultations. Therefore, the Afghanistan
Dialogues and the drug policy dialogues are comparable in planning, in their
transparency and in the public's acceptance of the outcomes.

**Yields Interpreted: what can be learned from the comparisons**

In the previous section of this chapter I discussed how each dialogue situation
was similar to the others, and how no two were entirely alike for comparative purposes.
This is as it should be. Dialogue is inherently emergent, situational, contextual and
resistant to conformity. As I discussed in the Preface, dialogue is the antithesis of
“solutions” and contrived, staged techniques for communication in conflict and problem-
solving. Characterizing dialogue in situ is like characterizing the form of snow;
snowflakes are similar, regardless of the uniqueness of each one’s pattern. To
understand snow in bulk, one can examine its composition and behaviour. Likewise, to
understand dialogue in situ, I will examine dialogue’s composition and behaviour.
Specifically, I will examine this dissertation’s dialogue events and compare their yields to
see what can be learned from such a ‘cross-cutting’ analysis.

Table 4 shows the results of my ‘yield’ analysis of the entire Afghanistan
Dialogue series. It gives a breakdown of timeframes for each of the coding categories.
This information can be compared with Table 2, to examine the effect of speaker time on dialogue yields. For example, the first event had one speaker who spoke and gave extensive answers to a few questions. The speaker used 44 minutes of an event that yielded 2% dialogue. By comparison, the second event had three speakers who averaged six minutes of ‘air time’ in an event that yielded 22% dialogue. In general, events in which the speakers averaged less ‘air time’ had higher yields. There is one exception: the 30 March 2009 event had one speaker who had 68 minutes of ‘air time’. However, this was a two hour event with one speaker who generated relatively few questions and who gave the most brief responses to questions of all the guests at all the events. In other words, the event was long enough to allow for dialogue to occur. By comparison, the 11 June 2007 event—which lasted 109 minutes—would have to have been 8 hours long to leave as much room for dialogue with its 4 speakers.

The key to the numbers here is found in the dialogue event planning process. The guest speakers were directed, or requested, to keep their prepared remarks brief. Those who stayed within a 5 – 10 minute range were able to generate discussion and accommodate more dialogue. The only way to accommodate longer speaker ‘air time’ was to add more time to the event than the speakers used in going over the 5 – 10 minute mark. If an expert spoke for ten minutes more than the optimal time of ten minutes, then the event needed 30 minutes or more additional event time for dialogue. In a 90-minute event, there is not enough available time to accommodate a speaker who uses 45 minutes for prepared remarks. Groups need time to shift from diffusion to dialogue. The longer the diffusion, the more time they need to shift into dialogue. If the intent is to have dialogue, to share perspectives and information, and to build confidence in the discourse with participants, speakers are advised to limit their remarks to 5 – 10 minutes.

56 Here, I use the term diffusion according to my working definition of the three options. In this case, the speaker is disseminating information. However, the audience interacts with the speaker in ways that influence the discourse. The speaker might take cues from audience reactions, or might adjust the message based on questions. This is consistent with Stuart Hall’s notion of audience effects in mass communication—which I will explore further in the next chapter.
Another way to assess the potential for dialogue ‘yield’ is to focus on the parts of a situation that are not staged. If staging is part of the common culture of public meetings, then one function of dialogue planning would be to facilitate the development of process from staged discourse, to a steady state of dialogue. The goal would be to change the culture of communication from a framework of presentations and debates to one of dialogue. Here, we examine the ‘yield’ of a mature consultation process—i.e., after it has developed into its steady state. For example, the second day of the “Visioning a Future For Prevention” symposium had a different framework and process than the opening evening. It was facilitated based on a different plan. Other than some PowerPoint-type content—which could have been provided to participants in advance—

Table 4. The Afghanistan Dialogues: Event Time Breakdown, by Coding Category*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Total Introduction Time</th>
<th>Total Question Time</th>
<th>Total Answer Time</th>
<th>Total Exchange Time</th>
<th>Total Expert Speaker Time</th>
<th>Total Facilitator Time</th>
<th>Potential of total time in dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 Dec 06</td>
<td>&quot;Rural Development&quot;</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Jan 07</td>
<td>&quot;Voices with Experience in Afghanistan&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Feb 07</td>
<td>&quot;Comparative Perspectives on the War&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Jun 07</td>
<td>&quot;Conflicts and Development&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Sep 07</td>
<td>&quot;Weighing the Options in Afghanistan&quot;</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Mar 09</td>
<td>&quot;Perspectives on the Conflicts in Afghanistan&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Jun 09</td>
<td>&quot;Communicating in the Afghanistan War&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See coding categories, Table 3. All times in minutes.
the opening night event did not contribute to the process or content of the dialogue part of the event. If we consider the second day as a stand-alone event, then a dialogue ‘yield’ is much higher. Likewise, the CLS process had stand-alone dialogue events that benefitted from other forms of communication in earlier events. Here too, the ‘yield’ was significantly higher when adjusted for the maturation of the process. Finally, the Afghanistan Dialogues can be assessed in this way by looking at the ‘yield’ of an event that took place later in the series, again adjusting for differences in practice. This is consistent with the Platonic and Bohmian ideal of dialogue. Both place a higher value on relationships and continuity than on content.

Comparing dialogue events with such an adjustment for process maturity reveals the true potential for dialogue. Table 5 compares the ‘yields’ for the three situations overall with three specific events that represent mature dialogue process for each situation. Each of the individual dialogue events shown in Table 5 is also the longest dialogue event and the one with the largest attendance among all events in its series. In other words, each of these events represents a mature, steady-state version of dialogue practice. Because each has the largest group assembled at one time in its community, each is also a demonstration of how robust the process is. Based on this analysis, dialogue ‘yield’ for these events ranges from 11%—for a presentation-intensive event—to 96% for an event that had no presentations.

The analysis shown in Table 5 indicates that dialogue planning and preparation are an investment. Once the ‘container’ has been ‘created’—according to Bohm’s vision of dialogue—it is possible to go quickly and meaningfully into dialogue for extended periods. This is possible even if some of the participants leave or join the group. Once people have a little experience with the practice of dialogue, and once they have some shared information to prepare them for dialogue, dialogue can be achieved in groups as large as 155 people. The Wosk Centre’s Canadian ‘container’ of 155 people is thus comparable to The Symposium’s dinner party of six in ancient Greece, and to Bohm’s dialogue groups of 20 or more in modern America.
Table 5. Comparison of Dialogue Situations and Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Category</th>
<th>Situation (aka, group of events)</th>
<th>Hours and Type of Planning</th>
<th>Situation Process Time (hours)</th>
<th>Total Event Process Time (hours)</th>
<th>Total Dialogue Time (minutes)</th>
<th>Situation Dialogue “Yield”</th>
<th>Process Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City of Vancouver Drug Policy Dialogues</td>
<td>Program managers with consultant input 8 hours</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Plan Input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CLS “Resolving Our Differences”</td>
<td>Consensus 32.5 hours</td>
<td>142.5</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>Policy and Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Afghanistan Dialogues</td>
<td>Dialogue consultants 8 hours (estimate)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Longest Event – Most Participants</th>
<th>Event Process Time (minutes)</th>
<th>Event Dialogue Time</th>
<th>Event Dialogue Yield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Visioning a Future for Prevention”: Second Day</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLS Dialogue Session: 17 November 03</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan Dialogue: 27 September 07</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is one crucial difference in process design and planning between the larger group situations of this dissertation, and the smaller groups of Plato and Bohm—i.e., small groups, or breakout groups. In a large group, dialogue can be achieved in stages by having small-group conversation, followed by plenary discussion of what happens in the small group conversations. In a single event, such as one in the Asia Pacific Hall, this can be accomplished by having people talk in eight groups of approximately 18 people. Everyone stays in the main hall in eight clusters, or each group of 18 goes to a separate, smaller break-out room. After these smaller groups have
talked, the entire group meets in plenary and de-briefs with the help of the facilitator or moderator.

This process was used in the CLS dialogues, though differently. There, the breakout or small group work was done on different dates and sometimes at different locations than the two November 2003 plenary sessions. I provided the link between these small group sessions and the plenary sessions by explaining to the small group participants how their work was going to be used in the plenary sessions. Participants understood that their meeting notes would be summarized and used in the November events. This allowed a large number of people to provide the same kind of input that expert speakers provided in other situations. Participants got to provide their input in advance of large group dialogue. This, in effect democratized the generation of content. In other words, everyone got to contribute to the content of the dialogue at CLS in a way that was restricted to experts in other situations. In the next section, I will discuss how this worked.

**Comparing Plenary Plus Small Group Events with Plenary-Only Events**

Events at the Wosk Centre with planned participant interaction used breakout groups and small group brainstorming exercises to facilitate dialogue. Examples of this type of event during the period of this study included the Vancouver drug policy events in 2003-2004, one on sustainability in 2003, one about “finding home” (about immigration, homelessness, environmental and poverty issues) in 2007. These events were all-day, or multi-day, allowing time for all the elements found in the Afghanistan Dialogues, plus planned opportunities for small groups of participants to engage in the kind of open exchange that takes place in ideal dialogue. Synthesizing the results of the small group work, via facilitation in plenary session, allowed groups as large as 155 to create the effect of large group dialogue. This was similar to what happened at CLS with over 1000 people, but on a smaller scale, and in real time.

The use of breakout groups increased the exposure of participants to dialogue and resulted in a variety of ideas and perspectives in the discourses at the Wosk Centre. However, there were trade-offs in outcomes, and an insurmountable challenge to
observing the event for this study. At CLS the deliberate assembling of coherent groups achieved a cross-cutting effect. Correlating (i.e., ‘packing’) the information gathered in all the sessions resulted in the virtual dialogue of everyone in the CLS community. Since I facilitated all the sessions, I was able to observe the entire process. In the Wosk dialogue events, breakout groups increased dialogue, but the lack of facilitation of the breakout groups made the quality of the interaction variable. Since I could only observe one breakout group at a time, I was not able to track most of the dialogue at those breakout events. I would have needed a very much larger set of small samples from many more events, or a team of trained observers using an unwieldy single-form protocol to make observations comparable to what I observed in the CLS or Afghanistan Dialogue situations.

All that I could conclude from direct observation was that the use of breakout groups was a big improvement in the event planning process if the goal was to have more dialogue than the Afghanistan Dialogues. Here, one can only estimate upper and lower limits to make a comparison. Typically, an event with breakout groups had two hours of small group work in an 8-hour day. Thus, one quarter of the day was potentially pure dialogue. If the rest of the day had a ‘yield’ of 11.7% (i.e., the average for the Afghanistan Dialogues), then the limits of dialogue ‘yield’ for a day with breakout groups would in theory range between a maximum of 6 hours at 11.7% plus 2 hours at 100% (i.e., 33% for an entire day) and a minimum of 11.7% for a day.

It is not my intention to turn the observation of dialogue into a reductionist study in the industrial efficiencies of discourse management. The importance of ‘yields’ and measuring time spent in dialogue is to shed light on the useful, purposeful—or teleological—aspect of dialogue, and to emphasize the problem of defining dialogue in relation to other modes of conversation. If one wants to generate dialogue, one needs to have a sense of what is uniquely dialogic, and when discourse becomes dialogue or ceases to be dialogue. The lay observer might categorize all of a ‘dialogue event’ as dialogue, because it was called a ‘dialogue’ and presented as one. However, as my analysis shows, much of any typical ‘dialogue’ event is indistinguishable from a lecture series, a conference program or a radio talk show. Based on that, the lay observer might not think very highly of dialogue. Nonetheless, ‘moments of dialogue’ are very special
indeed. To get the attention they warrant, we still need a comprehensive model of
dialogue. For that, I will summarize in the next section my practical recommendations for
dialogue planning. Following that, I will discuss what I learned about dialogue theory
from my analysis of this dissertation’s dialogue situations and events.

**Recommendations for Dialogue Planning**

The following are my recommendations for dialogue and conversations in conflict
and problem-solving in everyday life. They are based on my observations in the field,
and the reflections of those with whom I worked. They are based on the qualitative and
quantitative findings of the research of this dissertation, and are consistent with all the
theories, models and historical perspectives I have discussed here.

1. Dialogue, debate and dissemination (or diffusion) are equally ever-
present. They are not events. They are the options for the process of
communication in all discourses of everyday life. There is no inherent
harm in framing a communicative event as a dialogue, a debate or a
speech. However, in planning any such event, if one wants meaning-
aking to emerge or change to occur, one must plan the event to allow
for all three options to be used at any given moment.

2. The Content-Process-Effect relationship is a valuable frame through
which to assess dialogue and conversations in conflict and problem-
solving.

3. Constructive, egalitarian discourse requires having all those who are
interested at the table. The more they interact directly with each other,
the more meaningful and useful dialogue will occur. One way to
accomplish this is to minimize the use of static presentations by guest,
or expert speakers, no matter how much it might seem that their
discourse will better frame or inform the discourse.

4. In large group situations, breakout discussion groups, tended by
trained facilitators, accomplish more than presentations given by
experts. Multiple sessions of breakout discussion, composed of
different configurations of coherent groups are required for a full, open
exchange of information. Varying the configurations of breakout groups
facilitates the interaction of experts and non-experts better than
question-and-answer sessions that follow presentations given by
experts. This ‘cross-cutting’ of also allows individuals to share their
perspectives on the diverse areas of their life experience. This is true
for one-off events and for ongoing or extended processes of decision-
making, policy formation and social action.
5. Facilitators, mediators and interveners can provide no better service to a group than holding up to them a mirror that reflects the content, process and effects of their discourse. Each member of a stakeholder group will see the situation at hand differently. This is heteroscopia—the clash of perspectives that drives heteroglossia. There is nothing wrong with this; it is the product of an earlier fusion of horizons, and the substrate upon which will be built any future fusions of horizons.

6. The combinatoric possibilities for conflict or resolution grow exponentially with the size of a group. No matter how intelligent, persuasive or forceful a participant, facilitator, mediator or intervener is, no group is manageable for long enough to accomplish anything both meaningful and lasting. Fair, efficient, wise and enduring outcomes result from facilitating an ongoing negotiation of discourse process, rather than holding people to an expert-generated event plan. Point 2 applies here; seek to maximize the inclusion of participants in the planning and flexible implementation of the process.

Dialogue In Theory

The rest of this chapter examines the theoretical and historical aspects of my dissertation in light of my analysis of the drug policy dialogues, CLS and the Afghanistan Dialogues. These are the aspects that contribute to the full development of my framework and research methodology. Here, different approaches to discourses of conflict and problem-solving place my findings within a coherent definition of dialogue. This definition of dialogue will introduce the final chapter. In the final chapter I will synthesize what I learned from the dialogue events, with the scholarly work I discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, to develop my notion of “three options.”

My earliest understanding of dialogue was based on Plato and later on the writings of David Bohm. Platonic dialogue is anecdotal in that it shows what a particular type of dialogue (i.e. didactic) looks like, rather than prescribing how dialogue should be designed. Bohm’s work is mostly prescriptive and treats dialogue as a very positive force; in “Participatory Thought and the Unlimited”—the final chapter of On Dialogue—Bohm elevates dialogue to the level of a world-changing re-establishment of a “crucial” connection between humans and the cosmos. Bohms’ approach is to reflect on his experience of dialogue, without giving the reader a transcript-like account as, for example, Plato does in the Socratic Dialogues. Each in its way promotes dialogue.
Not all accounts are as supportive of the process of dialogue. Some critics of dialogue argue that it has evolved into something either too broad, or too narrow to be of much practical use for modern egalitarian discourse. For example, Frédéric Cossutta writes that the process of philosophical dialogue closes “the doctrinal space upon itself, by producing an imitated, figurative, and static controversy, operated for the sole benefit of its author” (Cossutta, 1996, 2001a, as cited by Cossutta in “Philosophy as Self-Constituting Discourse” p.184). Here, Cossutta is discussing Descartes, and he reminds us that such ‘dialogue’—even though it has been accepted as the faithful reproduction of actual, seminal conversations—is a carefully orchestrated, self-serving discourse. Such discourse follows the form of dialogue, but lacks the intent.

In another case against dialogue, Frank Roach—a member of the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto—is critical of dialogue between courts and legislatures. Roach (2007) gives reasons that are related more to the politics of legislation than to the communicative process of dialogue per se. He argues that dialogue is needed to coordinate justice and lawmaking, but is only viable if judges—who are above politics—control the discourse. Relying on the credibility of an individual (i.e., Ethos) to legitimize the discourse might be a good thing for classical rhetoric, but in dialogue it privileges one party to the dialogue over others. One problem with this is that parties, and leaders in particular, represent their occupational or professional fields as much as they represent the individuals of their group. In the discourse of law, this is especially bound up in the metonymy of terms like “the Crown” and “the Bench.” By setting preconditions that privilege one party over another, Roach’s ideal dialogue privileges one discourse over another (e.g., law/justice over lawmaking/legislating). Thus, there is an issue of where and how dialogue crosses equally between one domain in the public sphere and another.

There is also the issue of where and how one crosses between the public and private domains in dialogue. Michael Schudson (1997) acknowledges Habermas’ position that “a portion of the public sphere comes into being in every [private] conversation” (from Habermas, 1974, “The Public Sphere,” New German Critique, 1, p. 49-55, in Schudson, 1997). Schudson argues that Dewey agreed with this position, and cites Dewey’s The Public and Its Problems as both a source of inspiration and of
concern for a model of conversation in democratic life. He also cites “The Cult of ‘Conversation’” by David Simpson (1997), which characterizes the trendiness of modern notions of dialogue. Simpson is concerned about the overconfidence people have invested in conversation and its potential for “self-deception,” and the exclusion of those who lose the right to participate because they do not follow the rules set out by those who organize public communication events (e.g., town hall meetings, public forums). Schudson is concerned that people in dialogue can be culturally equal to such an extent that they take too much for granted about what they mean. Without challenging the basic assumptions of so-called cultural capital, “the more that talk is among equals, the more it fails to make assumptions clear, fails to state premises, fails to be accessible to all, lapses even into silence” (p. 298). There is a paradox in this: the more dialogue facilitates an intimate kind of familiarity that puts people on an equal level, the more it facilitates the conditions that cause people to stop asking the kinds of questions that are essential to dialogue.

For Bohm, paradox is as essential to dialogue as it is to quantum theory. He addresses this problem in his vision of dialogue (2005); he anticipates the kind of problem Schudson raises and advocates for the introduction of a facilitator in the early stages of dialogue, both in the ‘sociable’ situation (p. 17) and in the ‘problem-solving’ situation (p. 51). Adding a layer of facilitation gives everyone a chance to develop “cultural capital” in the group, but I suspect that that might create problems for Habermas, Roach or Cossutta. Facilitation, as Bohm frames it, mediates between showing and telling by reminding people of what they are doing, and by directing them to be transparent in their interactions.

Early in my work experience in facilitation, mediation and conflict intervention, I learned that asking for clarification of what seemed obvious often exposed confusions and misunderstandings between my clients. This can be a challenge for a facilitator; several of my colleagues have discussed with me their desire to inspire confidence in client groups and in their processes by demonstrating empathy, understanding and cultural competence. However, this desire to “get it right”—as a demonstration of the power of dialogue—only satisfies the tell aspect of dialogue. Sometimes, the show aspect requires a genuine willingness to risk being as lost and vulnerable as everyone
else in the discourse by saying, in effect, “though I do this for a living and know as much as anyone here about how to communicate, I, too, am subject to misunderstandings and false assumptions about even the most basic things.”

I began this dissertation with both the theoretical and practical aspects of dialogue in mind. My definition of dialogue in this dissertation has evolved with my research. It has reflected various aspects of showing, telling and negotiating meaning as they occurred in the dialogue situations of this dissertation (i.e., drug policy, CLS and Afghanistan Dialogues). It has also evolved with my application of theory; in Plato and Bohm, there are negotiated meanings, but process is relatively fixed. In the dialogue situations of this dissertation there is as much negotiation of process as there is of meaning. So far, I have developed this aspect of my dissertation as follows.

I began with a working definition of dialogue—in conjunction with definitions of diffusion and debate—in Chapter 1. That definition is supplemented by the ‘features’ listed in the bulleted points in Chapter 5 and in Appendix A. In Chapter 2, I discussed the everyday life context of my dialogue studies and argued that one of the most important aspects of the effect dimension of the revised “triangle” model is the potential for a “fusion of horizons.”

In Chapter 3, I discussed the role of consultation as a matter of policy and trust-building for decision-making in the public sphere. I argued that such policy and attention to issues of trust are intended to support a social constructivist approach to decision-making at all levels of public life in Canadian society. I further argued that dialogue is ideal for gathering the data needed for decision-making. People in dialogue events act as consultants for action research. Action research is not often the purpose of dialogue, but it is a valuable side effect. In the pilot study, I applied this dialogic approach to social research in the Vancouver Drug Policy situation. I concluded that the method was helpful, but that the demographics of that dialogue group were limited; a broader base of ‘consultants’ was needed to test the full range of dialogue’s potential. Following the pilot study, I modified the “triangle” model to consider effect as the measure of outcomes in a conflict and problem-solving process. The effect dimension includes relationships, emotions, and artefacts (e.g., policy documents, contracts, technological devices).
In Chapter 4, I applied the modified framework of content, process and effect to a situation with a broad range of ‘consultants’ in the CLS situation. I discussed how power relations are illuminated in this case via the modified framework. I also discussed how many problem-solving processes from different epistemic traditions are similar (see Figure 6). I discussed the Rashomon Effect, and how the bias of the personal perspective tends to fracture different accounts of content in fact finding, even though all the participants are working in a single process. There is a tension between the tendency to use the same steps in problem-solving and storytelling, and the tendency to frame the facts and data differently at each step. Horizons are thus formed independently from existing memories, and are fused interdependently in what will later become memories. This is a challenge for a facilitator or intervener; from a combinatoric analysis, even small group interactions become unwieldy to manage in ‘real time’. However, Raiffa’s negotiation analysis offers a kind of filter to help one identify key pathways to negotiated meanings via open, truthful exchanges. Based on the CLS situation, I proposed that dialogue is an ideal framework for such exchange. In Chapter 5, I discussed how this is also the case for the Afghanistan Dialogues.

I have thus come to define dialogue as inherently challenging, but not necessarily good or bad in any given situation. However, when it is desired or preferred, it can be hard to achieve. In situations which are framed as dialogue, and which intend to achieve sustained dialogue, my analysis shows that dialogue by even the broadest of definitions is sporadic and fragile. In the CLS example, dialogue was useful for helping people to let go of individual perspectives that sustained intractable conflicts, and to come to new, individually-formed, and collectively accepted positions that resolved differences. There were times in the “Resolving Our Differences” project when adversarial processes—like the conflicts before and after the mini-mediations at “Site A” and “Site B” formed the critical path to constructive change. Dialogue gave rise to both conflict resolution and to conflict. However, the conflict that came from dialogue led to conflict resolution, following the cycle of conflict proposed by Simmel. Dialogue might seem to be for the good, or it might seem to be bad for a situation. The only way to know if dialogue is a good intervention or not, is to assess it after the fact. In the three dialogue situations of this dissertation, dialogue turned out to be an inherently good intervention.
Dialogue is defined by its power and inherent ability to enable the kind of change that benefits all parties in a situation. By defining dialogue in this way, I have come to propose that moments of dialogue are pathways of empowerment—like de Certeau’s (1984) metaphorical diagonal pathways for “walking in the city”—and they exist in symbiotic, non-Cartesian tension—like Lefebvre’s (1991) political-economic dialectics, Edward Hall’s (1992) coexisting cultures and Bateson’s (2000) paradox of map-territory relations. These are fluid, flexible pathways within a field of discourse that presents many options in any given ‘moment’. These pathways define an essential feature of a general model of discourse. This general model is the “three options” model that I earlier proposed is suggested by Stuart Hall’s specific case of media texts. In the next section, I will discuss how these three options work interdependently—i.e., in symbiosis.

The Symbiosis of Three Communicative Options

Everything on the scale of public sphere discourse, from the most intimate meetings of neighbours, to national elections, needs safeguards that protect the equal rights and privileges of the participants. Neither theory nor legislation has yet produced such safeguards. People can manipulate any public process to their own ends. Such manipulations are at the heart of the worst kind of unethical behaviours (i.e., “strategic action”) considered in Habermas’ discourse ethics. His theory offers no solution, only caution and a framework for bringing such behaviour to light. Likewise, parliamentary procedure [aka, Robert’s Rule of Order]—one of the most widely accepted meeting methods in Western public life—has proven to be appropriate for the implementation of martial law and control of unruly crowds in meeting halls, but not helpful for fair, wise, enduring and efficient public communication in thoughtful, consensus decision-making.

The use of parliamentary procedure for small and large meetings is based on the premise of “restraining the individual” in a way that “can get in the way of effective problem solving” (Susskind & Cruikshank, 2006, p. 11). In other words, imposed structures—and parliamentary structure in particular—provide neither fairness for participants nor solutions to their problems. Anarchy—the other end of the process spectrum—is neither the solution to oppressive rule nor is it solved by oppression. What is needed for good communication and good decision-making is a process in the middle
of the spectrum between them. Such a process must be co-constructed by its participants; equal participation is the interest that ultimately drives anarchy. Public discourse must also be organically orderly in space-time, such that it conforms to the topography and rhythms of its participants in their production of truth, knowledge and everyday life practices. However, as Foucault (2006) notes, order—the interest that drives externally imposed procedural rules—when imposed within a hierarchy of power is “a relationship of domination and victory, and so not a relationship of knowledge…” (Psychiatric Power, p. 237). The three communicative options are essential to the balance of power in this regard.

This formulation of dialogue relative to three communicative options is based on what I have observed and on people’s real, reported experiences of dialogue. “Good” dialogue can and must be, by definition, something that is achieved by real people in everyday life situations. It is not an unattainable ideal, theoretical limit, or a ‘straw man’ to be knocked down in order to promote an alternative method of discourse. The critiques of Cossutta, Roach and Schudson were directed against the stances that some have taken about the merits of narrowly defined notions of dialogue. They were not directed at the method of dialogue that I saw in the field in use in actual dialogue events.

Reconciling the ideal with what is observed helps to put dialogue in perspective. It shifts the concerns dialogue’s critics have raised from issues about dialogue per se, to issues about discourse in general. In the model I have proposed, dialogue, diffusion and debate are the general forms of what Stuart Hall described as ‘positions’ in the specific example of mass media texts (see Figure 4). Hall’s structure of social practices puts encoding, programme, and decoding in sequential order. I do not place that restriction on the structure of discourse as a social practice in everyday life. If social practices work in relation to mass media in that particular sequence, it is a response to (i.e., an evolution of) the vocational routines and culture of mass media. In the general case, as in ‘walking in the city’, people are free to vary the order.

In everyday life, the ‘positions’ of discourse run in cycles that draw from these options, but not necessarily in a particular order. For example, consider the case of Hall’s mass media discourse—shown in Figure 4. Before a text is ‘encoded’ for distribution as ‘programme’, marketing, advertising or entertainment producers develop
it. That creative process involves negotiations, dialogue, direction from the company and the customer, input from research staff, and so on. There will also be much debate, rework and editing in the creative process. The final product—the 'encoding'—is actually a combination of all the positions. It only looks like a hegemonic or rhetorical text at completion. This is another example of the fractal nature of the evolution of socially constructed phenomena—in this case of texts. All the elements come together in a particular form that stems from past forms. The particular form and sequence of Hall's 'positions' reflect, so to speak, the accent of the language of mass media communication.

The general case for the options of discourse is shown in Table 6. Any given act of discourse can be identified as one of these three options. The three options apply, whether the parties are engaged in cooperation or competition. Thus, a cooperative debate—which would be truth-seeking, and qualify as what Habermas termed *communicative action*—and a competitive debate—which would be a clash of people in conflict who could have little or no regard for the rights or feelings of their opponents, and which would qualify as strategic action—would both be considered debates in this model. Likewise, a dialogue—in which the parties are honestly disclosing information and seeking the intended meaning of each other's discourse, regardless of their motivations for doing so—would be a dialogue. This, then, is key to the essence of what I propose, compared to other models of discourse; process is in relationship with the underlying context or conflict. Process does not determine them, nor do they determine process.

*Table 6. Converting Hall's Three Positions to Three Options*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hall's “Position”</th>
<th>General ‘Position’</th>
<th>Public Perspective</th>
<th>Private Perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Decoding Meaning Structures”</td>
<td>Texts negotiated directly</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Sender and Receiver agree on a shared code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Programme as ‘meaningful discourse”</td>
<td>Texts mediated by a public mode of transmission, Interpreted Unilaterally</td>
<td>Diffusion</td>
<td>Neither Sender nor Receiver bound by the dominant code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Encoding Meaning Structures”</td>
<td>Texts hegemonic, rhetorical</td>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Sender and Receiver inside the dominant code</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One's choice of a particular communicative option—as seen from the public perspective—is not bound to its surrounding contexts or conflicts.\(^57\) However, one's use of a given option might be bound to the dominant ideology or technical code of the discourse.\(^58\) This is particularly true of debate—in which the rationality of the dominant discourse behind the debate frames the outcome. For example, in a debate about medical practice, the rationality and routines of medicine frame the debate and determine the criteria that decide the debate. In dialogue, the parties are in constant negotiation of the rules and criteria. In diffusion, each holds one’s own code. Debate privileges the dominant system or code, dialogue privileges relationships and community, and diffusion privileges the individual. However, privileging one frame does not eliminate the others. In a debate based in medical discourse, there might be negotiation (e.g., about non-medical matters) and/or diffusion (e.g., of information regarding non-medical matters).

I propose that dialogue, diffusion and debate work symbiotically, always in relation to each other. No problem can be solved, no conflict can be managed and no decision can be made without moving through some measure of all three positions. In making these distinctions about three terms that are commonly understood to describe independent processes, I intend to clarify—as opposed to redefine—the notions of dialogue, diffusion and debate. This has special ramifications for everyday discourses that involve some element of conflict, problem-solving or decision-making. According to this model, one ‘option’ will dominate the others at any given time. However, the dominant ‘option’ does not eliminate the other options; it is always possible to shift between options. For example, in the Afghanistan Dialogues, a rhetorical question from the audience—which was the dissemination of a point of view—used diffusion to make what was primarily a debating point against something said via diffusion by a presenter. This is a choice point; an empathic response by the presenter or an empathic intervention by the facilitator could move such an exchange into dialogue.

\(^57\) This is consistent with de Certeau’s (1984) notion of one’s choice to take a shortcut “walking in city.”

\(^58\) This is consistent with Lefebvre’s (1991) notion that there is a dialectic of ideology (e.g., Marxism) and process (e.g., Cartesian logic).
The ability to move between options in this way defines each of the three options as distinct, yet interdependent. So far, I have discussed how this phenomenon works in relation to specific dialogue events and situations. In the next, and final, chapter of this dissertation, I will discuss how this model works in general. I will also discuss how it can be applied to other situations, such as the one involving the Law Society.
7. Discussion: A Case for Three Communicative Options

In this final chapter of my dissertation, I will combine what I have discussed about established models and theories, and my analysis of dialogue situations and events. I will apply this synthesis of theory and practice to some cases of conflict and problem-solving. This will complete the development of my model of communicative ‘options’. I reiterate here that it has not been my intent to argue that the theoretical and historical facts alone justify my analysis of the dialogue situations. Nor has it been my intent to argue that the dialogue analyses of this dissertation alone justify its theoretical conclusions. As I argued at the outset of this dissertation, theory and practice are interdependent. Dialogue process is socially constructed; theory and practice inform one another. I will re-visit the Law Society situation in light of this, and in light of the dissertation’s findings and conclusions. The Law Society situation exemplifies the relevance and timeliness of this dissertation. I introduced it as an epilogue to a conflict of professional boundaries at the beginning of this dissertation. Completing this case study will serve as an epilogue to the dissertation and a prelude for what might follow.

This chapter returns to my earlier discussion of dialogue past and present. In Chapter 2, I discussed the dialogues of ancient Greece and the dialogues of modern Western society. Elite members of political and economic life dominated ancient Greek dialogue. In contrast, modern Bohmian dialogue is open to people from nearly all walks of life. Indeed, the Vancouver drug policy dialogues and the CLS dialogues included some of society’s most socially, economically and politically disadvantaged people. Between the birth of democracy in ancient Greece, and the global public sphere of the late Twentieth Century, much changed in Western everyday life. To complete the historical arc, I will examine an important dialogue from a place and time in between Plato and Bohm—i.e., *The Kuzari*, by the medieval Spanish philosopher, poet and physician Yehuda Halevi. That discussion will introduce the key themes of this chapter. I
will argue that Western notions of social equality democratize dialogue, and that the
democratic system of Western everyday life is based on the privileged role of Western,
empirical science. The evolution of reasoning, knowledge and democracy from Ancient
Greece to the present has resulted in an ethical-moral shift in everyday life. This shift
has occurred under the influence of three dominant discourses—i.e., empiricism,
Capitalism and Christianity. The tension of these three frameworks has resulted in a shift
in everyday discourse from an ancient emphasis on morality to a modern emphasis on
ethics. This shift has fractured everyday social relations and practices. The key to
making the modern social practice of dialogue whole is in balancing the moral and
ethical aspects of communication in conflict and problem-solving.

**Dialogue as Mediation: From Plato’s *Symposium* to Halevi’s *The Kuzari***

In Chapter 2, I discussed the clash between dialogue and sophism in Ancient
Greece. This clash was rooted in the opposing positions of dialogue and sophistry.
Dialogue actively tests assumptions and negotiates meaning. Sophistry relies on staged,
predetermined interventions, based on critically unchallenged ‘solutions’. In *The
Phaedrus*, Plato argues that writing is one such ‘solution’. Here, Plato recalls Socrates’
debate with Phaedrus. The scene is a shady spot under a tree by the banks of the
Ilissus, “a long while” after dawn—i.e., the hottest part of the day. The subject is the
Egyptian god Theuth’s gift to the Egyptian King Thamus of the “invention” of writing.
They talk about the “utility or inutility” of writing (1993, p. 86), which Socrates argues,
“will create forgetfulness in the learners’ souls, because they will not use their memories”
(pp. 86-87). In other words, writing will make people intellectually lazy. There are
questions and answers, challenges and solutions that must be resolved according to the
strengths and weaknesses of giver and receiver. Writing does not address such issues
conclusively. Writing is a guarantor of content, but the transmission of memory is the
 guarantor of meaning. It is the basis of Platonic learning.

Platonic learning is epistemic. It emphasizes interaction, and the preservation—
via memory—of a particular interpretation of a given ‘text’. It is an interactive passage of
knowledge from giver to receiver. Socrates uses the metaphor of farming to illustrate this
point. He asks Phaedrus, “would the husbandman, who is a man of sense, take the seeds, which he values and which he wishes to be fruitful, and in earnest plant them during the heat of summer, in some garden of Adonis?” (p. 89). The transfer of knowledge from one person to another requires “fitting soil and...husbandry” (p. 89).

Until a man knows the truth of the several particulars of which he is writing or speaking, and is able to define them as they are...and until he is able to ...discover different modes of discourse which are adapted to different natures...he will be unable to handle arguments according to rules of art, as far as their nature allows them to be subjected to art, either for the purpose of teaching or persuading. (p. 90)

Discourse becomes meaningful when it is epistemic—i.e., when it is transferred from person to person, with all the safeguards in place to preserve the context, wisdom and memory of the knowledge it imparts. Phaedrus is convinced of this, as Plato demonstrates, because he has come to understand it via dialogue. This dialogue, like *The Symposium*, ends back in the realm of everyday life. As the philosophical issues are resolved, Phaedrus declares metaphorically, “the heat is abated” (p. 92). Socrates suggests that he and Phaedrus make an offering to the local deities. Socrates offers a prayer. He declares to Phaedrus, “that prayer, I think is enough for me.” Phaedrus validates the truth of Socrates’ discourse and the ethos of dialogue as he replies, “ask the same for me for friends should have all things in common” (p. 92).

Plato shunned writing, yet, his legacy exists today mainly in print. There is irony in learning about dialogue from Plato’s *Phaedrus*, and in drawing from its notion of dialogue for the printed text of a dissertation on dialogue. Plato wants us to preserve the meaning of *The Phaedrus* in memory and pass it on via discourse. Furthermore, the problem of preserving the meaning of discourse via memory is not unique to *The Phaedrus*. Dialogue, by nature, mediates between giver and receiver to preserve meaning in any medium. Here, one can apply the content-process-effect model. Meaning-making (i.e., a process) is the translation of a message (i.e., content) resulting in the intended interpretation (i.e., effect). The intended interpretation might have an effect in various ways—e.g., in the preservation of relationships, in the creation of artefacts, such as a written account of the dialogue, or in a policy that reflects the collective will of its creators. Dialogue thus still has an essential role in communication in everyday life. For example, the process of this dissertation has the dialogic dimension of
the conversational collaboration of student and committee. It also has the defence, which, by design, should include dialogue according to the academic tradition.

Writing is too firmly embedded in modern everyday life to be proscribed for dialogue. Dialogue must work for conversation, and it must work in the Media. How, then, does modern dialogue practice adjust for the everyday reality of writing and printed text? Plato’s dialogues are not the only epistemic traditions of communication that survived for centuries before the printing press. Nations have them, religions have them, professions have them. How have other dialogues evolved? To illustrate how dialogue evolves as a process from the elite philosophical discourse of ancient Greece, to the modern democratic world of print and mass-media, I turn to the work of Yehuda Halevi.

Yehuda Halevi was a Jewish physician and poet who lived during the 11th and 12th Centuries in Spain. He lived in a world of many social and philosophical tensions. He describes his era as a time when, “Christian and Moslem share the whole world between them…they wage their wars and drag us down in their fall” (Halevi, quoted by Heinemann, 1960, in Philo, et. al, p. 9). As a child, he lived in Toledo under Muslim rule, and later in various Muslim cities under the Christian administration. During his youth, the Crusades began; when Halevi was 24 years old, the first Christian siege of Jerusalem took place resulting in the massacre of its Jewish and Muslim inhabitants. Jerusalem is sacred to the Jewish people; it appears in much of Halevi’s poetry.

Halevi wrote in Arabic, in a language and style that both adhered to, and challenged the predominant culture. This was an elite culture of refined manners, taste and assimilation. He was well acquainted with Arab science and was versed in Greek thought via the epistemic training of his medical education. In medieval Spain there were no texts of Plato in circulation, and only “vaguely remembered” allusions to Socrates in a “universal, Arabo-Islamic, Neoplatonic” form (Ilai Alon, in Hughes, 2008, pp. 6 - 7). According to Hughes, (2008) Halevi would have learned of Plato from Galen’s summaries of Greek philosophy. True Platonic dialogue was thus neither a literary genre, nor a discursive practice in Halevi’s world. Halevi’s sense of dialogue was drawn from the distinct influences of his life in the mainstream culture, and from his life as a religious outsider.
At the age of 50, Halevi began working on *The Kuzari*—which stands as his definitive work of art, science and philosophy. It took over 20 years—most of the rest of his life—to complete. In it, he creates a new form of dialogue. Halevi’s project was to express his independence as a Jew in the enlightened—but conflict-riddled—world of medieval Spain. In *The Kuzari*, Halevi is neither an apologist for, nor a defender of Judaism. According to Heinemann (1960), Halevi “combines the physician’s clear apprehensions of empiric reality and the urge to check up dull theories through knowledge of life...he displays the profound sympathy of the artist for everything that touches the heart of the individual and the soul of his people” (p. 11). He takes the position that science and religious philosophy must be compatible; this has always been firmly held in both the Jewish and Muslim traditions. He also takes a critical approach to the aesthetic and historical traditions of Christian and Arab literature. In its time, *The Kuzari* stands as a thoroughly modern work in its content and in its form.

Halevi derives his artistic and philosophical power from his special use of dialogue. *The Kuzari* is mediation of the worldviews of five fictional characters. The characters are a pagan king, a philosopher, a Muslim scholar, a Christian scholar and a Jewish scholar. *The Kuzari* is also a mediation of the forms of dialogue that are characteristic of those five worldviews. This is an example of the process dimension of communication in conflict and problem-solving that I introduced in Figure 6. Here, five different practices of religion and nationhood interact with five different practices of dialogue as forms of communication. In other words, *The Kuzari* is a meta-dialogue—i.e., a dialogue of dialogues.

Halevi’s use of dialogue as a literary form makes *The Kuzari* a uniquely successful mediation of medieval culture, literature, religion and science. It allows the dialogue’s interlocutors to each speak in their own voice (i.e., stylistically, philosophically and culturally). It is thus an argument for authenticity, and a rejection of particularism. Halevi does not accept discourse that adheres exclusively to any one tradition; his discourse is designed to speak to any and all traditions. Halevi lived as a Jew in a society that was dominated by the dialectic of Christian and Islamic thought. At first, the predominant discourse in his everyday life was Islamic, in opposition to the mainly minority of Christianity. Later, the predominant discourse was Christian, opposing the
mainly Islamic minority. Through the literary device of meta-dialogue, Halevi is able to look at religion from a framework larger than that of either of the dominant religions.

Hughes (2008) describes Halievi’s approach as a “dialogue of subversion” (p. 27). It is not fully a ‘fusion of horizons’ or the form of resistance described by de Certeau’s ‘walking in the city’. However, it is an important example of how dialogue evolves to achieve both of these ideals. Halevi does not reject Islam, Christianity, Paganism or philosophy—which today would be called secularism. Rather, he rejects assimilation and universalism. Hughes describes this method as “a sustained attempt to deconstruct a particular reading of religion in general and Judaism in particular.” (p. 29) It is radical, though not hostile to the notion of dialogue of medieval Spain that was based on a limited knowledge of Plato. Halevi reinvents the Platonic form of dialogue, while preserving its ethos.

This re-invention is the same kind of ‘invention’ that I described in Chapter 2 in relation to Isaacs’ notion of dialogue in our time. Halevi’s radical turn is also an early form of dialogism—the literary theory from Bakhtin’s essay “Discourse in the Novel” (1981). Bakhtin argues that all texts exist in relation to one another, and that the different voices (i.e., heteroglossia) in the texts merge in dialogue. There is thus an ongoing relationship between what a text says (i.e., its content) and how it speaks (i.e., its process). Hughes makes essentially the same claim about The Kuzari when he argues that, “the form of the work reinforces its content” (p. 49). Bohm would call this ‘coherence’. This is the theoretical connection between Content and Process in the ‘triangle’ model.

**Dialogue as Mediation, Summarized**

In this chapter, The Kuzari exemplifies the connection between content and process in the ‘triangle’ model. That connection is grounded in theory and philosophy. I have argued that dialogue is epistemic in two ways. It is epistemic because it transmits the content of discourse from one person or group to another with the intent of preserving a particular interpretation. It is also epistemic in the way the process of dialogue-making is transferred from sender to receiver. In dialogue, the participants act
as both sender and receiver in a negotiated process of negotiated meaning. Though
dialogue is epistemic, it evolves because process and content are by nature negotiable.

In this chapter, so far, I have discussed how dialogue illuminates the connection
between process and content on the ‘triangle’ of communication in conflict and problem-
solving. In Chapters 3, 4 and 5, I examined the connection between process and effect. I
used the City of Vancouver drug policy situation, CLS and The Afghanistan Dialogues as
examples. In each of those examples, I focused on a different dimension of the model to
show how each of the triangle’s three dimensions can be used as an entry point for
dialogue analysis and design.

To complete my theoretical development of the triangle, I will next examine the
connection between content and effect. This is where context is called into question. For
example, mainstream notions of medicine, crime and everyday social relations frame the
discourses of both drug policy and developmental disability. How, then, do social or
historical contexts frame and influence what is accepted as the predominant
interpretation of any given discourse? For example, how does so-called evidence-based
empirical research come to be accepted as the arbiter of good drug policy? Or, why
does the Provincial health care system accept community living as the standard for care
of the disabled today, when only a few years ago evidence-based science determined
that developmentally disabled children were best cared for in mental hospitals? In the
same way that I traced the development of everyday discourse from ancient elite
dialogue, to medieval “subversive” dialogue, to modern democratic dialogue, I will now
trace the development of the contextual factors that define situations in which dialogue
might be used. I will begin by turning to the work of Paul Ricoeur.

**The Context of Modernity: Three Dominant Discourses**

Paul Ricoeur’s study of Freud provides a basis for taking my proposed framework
down to the deepest intra-personal level, and does so in such a way that it ultimately ties
back to the societal level. As a conflict intervener, I am constantly concerned with the
interpretation of what is communicated in conflicts. I have to be mindful of how the
parties interpret the experiences that frame their views, how they interpret each other
and how they interpret my communication with them and with each other. To that end, Ricœur (1970) proposes that interpretation must go beyond the simple “restoration of meaning” to embrace what he calls “the school of suspicion” (p. 32). One challenge he highlights is to balance the emphasis on recollection of the intended meaning of texts, with a sense of suspicion. The other is to balance the competing or opposing frameworks of different prevailing schools of suspicion in science (e.g., Freud), in political economy (e.g., Marx) and in philosophy (e.g., Nietzsche).

Rather than take sides with any of the apparently conflicting schools of suspicion, Ricœur (1965) finds a bridge between the two orientations of interpretation (i.e., recollection and suspicion) in the collective works of Freud, Marx and Nietzsche. He does this, in part, by interpreting how his three “masters of suspicion” cast into doubt the Cartesian notion of doubt. This is, perhaps, a natural development of his earlier work on the history of philosophy in which he seeks to reconcile Western philosophical problems of “objectivity and subjectivity” in a predominantly Christian society. There, he begins by locating the philosophical intersection between “the ‘direct’ path of self-knowledge and the ‘indirect’ path of history” where the philosopher “tries to regain possession of his own meaning by recovering the meaning of history lying beyond his own consciousness” (History and Truth, p. 33). Later, via ‘the school of suspicion’, Ricœur extends the scope of the search for self-knowledge from the level of the individual, to that of all of society. In other words, to be truly and justly suspicious, one must not rely on only critical interpretations of an individual’s words, or on a given interpretation of a conflict, but on the entire network of people and social institutions that have a stake in a given individual’s discourse.

Ricœur (1965) develops at length in History and Truth the importance of “unity” and of “the word” in establishing the role of interpretation in making meaning. In Chapter 4, “Speaking and Praxis,” Ricœur proposes a “triangular dialectic between perception, knowledge, and action” (p. 169) that is resonant with—and philosophically consistent with—the Content/Process/Effect triangle. Ricœur bases his proposal on an assumption of the prevalence of theology (i.e., Christian theology) and a (Western) science that “encompasses all” within a “scientific attitude” (p. 169). He then argues against the Cartesian duality of subject and object, in favour of this triangular dialectic as follows.
In saying that each term of this triad “dialecticizes” itself within, I mean that each one has working within it a twofold and inverse process, a tendency to *dogmatize* itself and a tendency to *problematize* itself. Here we have a more subtle way of making the truth vibrate. (p.169)

He thus argues for a ‘politics of suspicion’ as a central philosophical concern. Ricœur attempts to both understand and challenge the dogmas of Western science and the dominant Christian religious traditions through the interpretation of meaning. However, if interpretation of meaning is to have meaning, he later warns, one must not apply suspicion cynically. The hermeneutics of suspicion, then, is not only a critical or destructive orientation; it seeks “…a new reign of Truth, not only by means of a ‘destructive’ critique, but by the invention of an art of interpreting” (*Freud & Philosophy*, 1970, p. 33). In other words, *recollection* is not limited to affirmation, and *suspicion* is not automatically a rejection; one need not assume that modernity is inherently good or evil.

In his synthesis of the approaches of his three masters of suspicion, Ricœur (1965) demonstrates the application of his ‘art of interpreting’ to conflict resolution. For example, he proposes a process that arrives at a single, shared perspective to resolve the philosophical conflicts between Descartes and the modern masters of suspicion, and he resolves the conflicts among the modern masters themselves. This builds on the same principles of perspective-making advanced by Simmel (1955) and Lewin (2000b) to arrive at a comprehensive approach to conflict and communication. First, Simmel’s work frames the macro level of social and multi-party discourse where conflict is ever-present, often latent and marked by fuzzy boundaries in time. Then, Lewin’s work frames the intra- and inter-personal micro levels where the symbiosis of one’s perceived interests and identity formation are ever-present, conscious and marked by fuzzy boundaries in space. Finally, the ‘masters of suspicion” collectively frame the invisible and hidden levels of consciousness that underlie all discourses in Western societies. Ricœur does this via the same kind of “dialogue of subversion” that I argued in the last section of this chapter Halevi uses in *The Kuzari*.

My corollary to Ricœur’s (1970) claim that Freud, Marx and Nietzsche are the modern masters of suspicion is the following; each master’s field represents a dominant discourse of Western life, and collectively they comprise the full set of meta-narratives that dominate the discourses of—and about—conflict in everyday life. According to a
simple reading of Ricœur’s manifesto on suspicion, the dominant frames of everyday discourses in Western life in this model would be the fields of psychiatry (i.e., Freud’s field), economics (i.e., Marx’s field) and morality (i.e., Nietzsche’s field). However, as I will discuss in the next few sections of this dissertation, at the highest practical level of differentiation, these fields can be organized along the disciplines of science, economic exchange and religion. I will also explain the relationship of the fields of Ricœur’s masters according to the fractal model (see Chapter 1) and the dimensions of content, process and effect in everyday discourses.

Here, we can extend my analysis of conversational turns (i.e., shifts between dialogue, dissemination and debate) in the events that I observed, to an interpretation of the situations that defined those events. This extension brings into the framework an awareness of the sociological and historical developments that have shaped the predominant scientific, economic and moral norms of Western Canada. In the dialogue events of Chapters 4, 5 and 6, there were participants from diverse fields and stations in life. Some people came from different academic specialties, but otherwise had much in common with each other socially and culturally. As I discussed at the end of Chapter 6, Schudson (1997) and Simpson (1997) warn that conversations involving people who have too much in common can suffer from too many unexplored assumptions. It would be more natural for people to challenge or seek clarification about social and cultural assumptions in an Afghanistan Dialogue, than in a meeting of drug science and policy experts. However, a “school of suspicion” seeks to extend consciousness by challenging all assumptions.

The conversations in question are comprised of the kinds communication that take place in everyday life when any number of people are engaged in decision-making, innovation, problem-solving, or conflict resolution. Western scientific and technological rationality, Western social and cultural norms, and Western notions of progress and morality set the context for such interactions. Thus, there are a few things going on at once ‘in the moment’ of any communicative moment in everyday life, which I summarize as follows; these same things will be ‘going on’ at the same time in my discussion of them.
1. Western societal order rests on three fundamental discourses that are suggested by the disciplines of the three ‘masters’ of Paul Ricoëur’s ‘school of suspicion’: science, economic exchange and religion.

2. These three fundamental discourses are related to each other, consistent with the content/process/effect structural model that I proposed in Chapter 2.
   - Scientific and technological rationality frame and define the contents of everyday discourses.
   - Economic exchange frames and defines the processes of everyday activity, according to the rationality of science and technology.
   - Western (religious) discourses of morality frame and define the effects, outcomes and relationships that result from the implementation of scientific and technological rationality through the primary process of economic exchange.

Please note that the third point above builds on, or enfolds, the second point, which builds on, or enfolds, the first. My discussions of these successive points in the next section will consequently increase in complexity and length.

3. Everyday discourses of decision-making, innovation, problem-solving, and conflict resolution are biased by the three fundamental discourses in a characteristically Western way. Critical theories and ideologies might contest the biases of capitalism, Christian ethics or technological rationality, but the norms that are based on these biases and which determine what are legitimate facts or legitimate ways of reasoning prevail. These biases are as follows.
   - Content bias. Truth is derived from scientific and technological rationality, which is framed, defined and determined by Western empiricism.
   - Process bias. The organizing process of economics and exchange is framed, defined and determined by capitalism.
   - Effect bias. Morality and discourses on the effects of science, technology and commerce are framed, defined and determined in relation to, or in reaction to the dominant religious paradigm (i.e., Christianity) of Western societies since the Enlightenment.

In the next three sections, I will discuss the three dimensions of the ‘triangle’ model, building on what I learned about them by observing dialogue. This will provide a refined framework for the ‘triangle’, and the overall conclusions that follow.
Science as a Framework for Determining Discourse Content

The content (dimension) of discourses in Western life—which is the canon of knowledge that determines what is generally accepted as true or false in everyday life—is dominated by the rationality of Western science and technology. For example, gravity, electromagnetic theory and relativity are sanctioned for official, legal and technical purposes, whereas astrology and prophecy are out. This follows a long historical trajectory, which began with the rise of empirical science in the so-called project of the Enlightenment. Its predominance crystallized in the Industrial Revolution, leading to what has recently been characterized as a “postmodern turn” in which modern science and technology have been described as “among the principal organizing forces of everyday life” (Best & Kellner, p. 100). The ideal of science and technology has been generally regarded as emancipatory. However, it has also been variously critiqued as an increasingly harmful influence politically (Habermas, 1990), sociologically (Postman, 1992) and even existentially (Heidegger, 1977). In any case, the dominance (and some would argue the hegemony) of scientific and technological rationality is not in dispute; only the ultimate human values of science and technology are.

Progress and Economic Exchange as Organizing Processes

The process (dimension) of discourses in Western life has been driven by an ideal of progress that began with the Enlightenment. The primary mode of achieving progress is, in theory, through technological development, commerce and economic exchange. Planning and management theory have had a prominent role in the design and administration of the modern practices of everyday life. These disciplines work together to apply scientific principles to the management of various institutions. With the increased use of business models in the management of public institutions (e.g., government departments, health care organizations, alternative dispute resolution programs) and the emergence of so-called “private-public-partnerships,” the practices of commerce have come to dominate crucial areas of public life. For example, Canadian hospitals, utility companies and universities are increasingly being run as profit centres, rather than as services.
If the content dimension of everyday discourses answers the question, "What constitutes knowledge and truth?" for Western societies, then the process dimension answers the question, "How is this knowledge to be applied?" Various areas of expertise are oriented toward the organization of people and things to apply the knowledge, data and principles of science and technology in Western life. Predominant academic specialities and 'professional' associations have formed around, and integrate such areas as planning, information management, risk and business administration. These fields emphasize the application of scientific methods of process management, and make supplementary use of so-called "soft" skills in human resources and conflict resolution to facilitate the conditions that cause workers to most efficiently achieve "bottom line" financial results.

Much has been written about the emergence—and negative effects—of so-called "scientific management," which began with Frederick Taylor’s (1911) *The Principles of Scientific Management*, and was later embodied in Henry Ford’s design of the assembly line (e.g., the use of interchangeable parts and interchangeable workers). Though these principles provided the epistemic basis for today’s more mechanized, quantitative practices, they were not necessarily intended to privilege science at the expense of people. Even one the staunchest critics of the social economy of scientifically-rationalized work processes, Neil Postman, admits that “Taylor did not invent the term ‘scientific management’,” he “used it reluctantly,” and only intended to bring science into the work place to increase profits” (*Technopoly*, 1992, p. 51).

The discipline of organizational development has also historically emphasized productivity and financial performance. However, over the last two decades a body of literature has emerged that seeks to apply the rationality of science more broadly, for example, by applying Lewin’s theories of action research and people-supportive psychological principles in pursuit of a “‘bottom line’ [of financial performance,] dignity, meaning and community” (Weisbord, 1987, p. xiv). This is particularly true of so-called Japanese management practices, which largely stem from the post-Second World War work of American industrial engineers Joseph Juran and W. Edwards Deming.

Another important area of activity that infuses modern commerce with scientific and technological rationality is the discipline of risk management. For example, Hacking
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(2006) notes that the sciences associated with risk and probability originated in “problem-situation(s) in the means of production” (p. 5). The evolution of risk management from ancient times to the present parallels the evolution of scientific and technological rationality, particularly with respect to the key historical turning points of the beginning of the project of the Enlightenment (circa 1660) and the Industrial Revolution (circa 1840). In this case, each turning point was characterized by important complementary contributions made by amateur ‘scientists’ and established ones. The social construction of accepted knowledge thus evolved to depend on the transfer of a system of facts and beliefs that began in the ‘ivory tower’ of scientific institutions (e.g., the Royal Society of England) and was later transferred to lay people through the mediation of amateur scientists, inventors and industrialists whose primary activities were in commerce.

In the 1660s, London haberdasher John Graunt published a study of London birth and death records that he undertook partly for the pleasure of looking for patterns where no one had previously looked for patterns, and partly for the practical purpose of creating the first demographic marketing database (Bernstein, 1996, p. 76). At the same time, Christian Huygens, a Cartesian mathematician in Holland published the first textbook on probability. The confluence of these developments was instrumental in launching “the first serious application of the doctrine of chances” (Hacking, 2006, p. 100). It also established one of the earliest links, or strategic relationships, between the merchant and the scientist. This functions as a bridge of common interest between the content area of science (i.e., scientific and technological rationality) and its primary process in everyday life (i.e., commerce). The social significance—what some today would call cultural capital—of this bridge between science and commerce should not be underestimated: amateur Graunt was elected a fellow of the prestigious Royal Society.59

Graunt was in a sense more of a pure scientist than some of his peers in the Royal Society. Because he was not versed in the rationality of Enlightenment ‘natural

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59 This was no less impressive in the 17th Century than was former American Vice President Al Gore getting an award in 2007 from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for making a movie about global warming. The whole notion of branding an entertainment industry association as an “academy” of art and “science” is an artefact of the 350-year-old symbiosis of science and commerce. Each lends the other ‘cultural capital’ by association; science becomes popular because it is on film with celebrities and film becomes sacred because it is under the “academic” authority of science.
philosophy’ or any other science, Graunt had to work with only what his data told him. His Baroque version of a grounded theory probably did not go over well with the more conventional fellows of the Royal Society, but it did inspire the progressive ones to invent theories that fit their data, rather than the other way around. For example, Hacking (2006) notes how the application of Graunt’s approach to a controlled study of the efficacy of medical treatments for the plague in the late 1600s resulted in a true revolution of science.

The relationship between the data obtained by such an enquiry, and hypotheses about the efficacy of doctors is not a causal one—it does not depend on any particular theory of medicine. It is an epistemological relationship independent of the particular subject matter. As soon as men have distinguished epistemological from causal concepts of evidence, we can begin reasoning with Graunt… The miasma versus infection controversy was centuries old. Here a new kind of data is for the first time brought to bear. As Süssmilch said, Graunt was a Columbus. (Hacking, 2006, p. 105)

Like its social aspect, the communicative significance of this bridge between commerce and science should not be underestimated. The interaction of Graunt’s research and that of his contemporaries is an early example of the cross-disciplinary, multi-party aspect of communication that I am investigating in this dissertation.

As modern, industrial technology evolved, multi-disciplinary, multi-party innovation involving businesspeople and scientists increasingly became the norm. As the canon of scientific knowledge became broader and more complex, the culture and social organization of innovation in commerce and of advancement in scientific theory likewise became increasingly multi-, and cross-disciplinary. As Bernstein (1996) notes of the science of risk, “Nobody actually discovered the concept of ‘normal’ any more than anybody actually discovered the concept of ‘average’” (p. 151).

Non-scientist innovators, who were established as manufacturers and inventors of patentable ideas, proliferated and became an essential part of a new scientific-industrial complex. In the 1840s, world traveller, mapmaker and amateur scientist John Galton made discoveries in many fields of science. The synthesis of Galton’s work with that of mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss led directly to the creation of the concepts of mathematical average and normal distribution. Like Graunt, Galton was elected a fellow
of the Royal Society, in spite of his amateur status. Likewise, Alexander Graham Bell, Henry Ford, Frederick W. Taylor and Thomas Edison made prolific technological contributions without having the benefit of a university degree.

The development of economic life under the rationality of science has thus set the stage for the current situation, in which commerce and science are distinct, yet inseparable enablers of a symbiosis between scientific rationality and the means of production that extend into everyday life. Confidence in scientific rationality, and the potential for non-scientists to succeed, falsely implies that commerce is somehow democratic. Unlike the institution of the Church that science replaced, one need not be ordained to share in commerce’s power structure. Confidence in scientifically rational commerce also tends to narrow the focus of conversations in conflict and problem-solving to the technical criteria of business (e.g., profit and loss, efficiencies). These criteria address questions of “how”—which are inherently process issues. However, failing to also ask “why?” renders scientifically rational practices technically efficient, but fails to assure that they are socially meaningful.

**The Effect of “Why?” and the “Why?” of Effect**

The effect dimension of the triangle model represents the outcomes of dialogues and conversations in conflict and problem-solving. The essence of effect is meaning. In this section I discuss the roles of Western (scientific and technological) rationality and religion in framing the meaning of everyday discourses that demand rationally and morally coherent answers to the question, “Why?” Sometimes, one’s need to know why is a practical matter. Knowing why something happened or why something needs to be done gives an event the context for one to understand how best to act or which sets of practices best apply to the situation at hand. Other times, the need to know why addresses the communal or personal need to place the situation at hand within a coherent—as opposed to dissonant—framework of life itself. The effect dimension thus gives both direction and purpose to dialogue and conversation in everyday life.

An effect is indicated by a transformation, evolution or revolution in content and/or process. New knowledge—whether resulting from discovery or from the
The refinement of existing information—is a content transformation. The changes in people’s thoughts, feelings, intentions and frameworks of knowledge that result from such transformations are effects. Changes in the practices of everyday life—whether evolutionary or radical—are process transformations. When a practice changes as the result of a conversation, the original practice, the new practice and the conversation are all processes, whereas the transformation itself is an effect. Effects take various forms (e.g., a change in a relationship, a feeling, an artefact of a decision-making process, the solution to a problem). The outbreak of war is an effect; falling in love and the breakdown of a marriage are effects; getting hired or fired or tenure are effects; the pleasure derived from a good cup of tea is an effect. Each of these phenomena has an element which is purely content (e.g., the ingredients, materials and recipe for a good cup of tea), and one which is purely process (e.g., the coordination in time and space of the particular method, technique and actors that produce a particular good cup of tea). The effect dimension is all of the intersections and/or resonances of content and process. All such intersections are different pathways to answer the simple, but essential question, “Why?” Why? Because people apply more than mere logic to make meaning of their experiences; they apply sensibility.

Paul Ricœur’s study of Freud argues for a critical approach to hermeneutics. He identifies Freud, Marx and Nietszche as “masters” of a “school of suspicion.” Freud focuses on psychoanalysis, which is a specialty of medicine, which is a specialty of empirical science, which is the dominant mode of Western knowledge formation. Marx focuses on Capitalism, which is the dominant mode of Western economic exchange. Nietszche focuses on religion, from the dominant Christian moral paradigm. Collectively, their critical theories expand consciousness and provide a philosophical framework for interpretation. This framework can be applied in general to illuminate the context of situations and events examined in this dissertation.

The question, “why?” stems from the human need to find meaning in, or make sense of events and situations. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the ethos of dialogue places meaning-making—and therefore questions of “why?”—are at the heart of discourse. Meaning-making is an essential part epistemic learning. Dialogue is a form of epistemic learning; it relies on the processes of memory—which I discussed in
Chapter 1. In the next section, I will discuss how memory and meaning-making come together to restore to Western discourse the question “why?” I will first turn to the work of Avishai Margalit on ethics, morality and memory.

**Thick & Thin Relations, Memory and Reconciliation**

In *The Ethics of Memory*, Avishai Margalit (2002) makes a distinction between ethics and morality that focuses on “human relations rather than actions or reasons for actions” (p. 8). In this approach, the key to ethics in human relations is found in memory. Most of us honour the dead, mainly by remembering their names and relations, rather than their actions. On my father’s grave marker, I had the engraver put my father’s name, followed by “beloved husband and father.” I did not mark it instead with his best-ever bowling score—which was more impressive than his name, but not uniquely reflective of his most significant mark on the world. According to Margalit, “the human project of memory, i.e., *commemoration*, is basically a religious project to secure some form of immortality” (p. 25). He finds that, as a religious issue, remembering is of the “utmost importance to the politics of memory” (p. 26). However, he does not frame the religious issue as entirely an ethical issue.

Margalit tells of an army colonel whose career is cut short by the public’s “moral wrath” when he forgets the name of a soldier who was killed by ‘friendly fire’. Margalit questions the officer’s obligation to remember; “on the face of it, asking about remembering the name of the soldier is just a metonym for asking about remembering the young soldier himself” (p. 18). To the public, the officer’s remembering the soldier’s name would have been proof that he cared about the soldier. Being unable to recall the name is interpreted as a moral flaw, rather than a cognitive error. Based on this notion, Margalit proposes the following.

Our little story about the officer’s forgetfulness highlights a triangle of relations that is at the center of an ethics of memory. One side of the

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60 The Rabbinic commentators noted that the biblical commandment to blot out the name of Amalek, would-be destroyer of the ancient Hebrews, was dependent as much on remembering his name as on forgetting it.
triangle connects memory and caring, the second connects caring and ethics, and only then we are ready to connect memory with ethics. (p. 27)

The connection between caring and ethics in this formula is Margalit’s extension of Heidegger’s idea of caring. For Heidegger (1962), “the primary item in care is the ‘ahead of itself’” (p. 279), which is found in the uniquely human ability to plan for the future needs of others. Margalit applies the same notion of care to the past. One can argue from my earlier about Bakhtin and Hall, that dialogue as a text is omni-directional in time. Similarly, Margalit (2002) argues that caring implies common hopes for the distant future and shared memories of the distant past (p. 35). They are interdependent.

Margalit also frames caring and ethics as omni-directional in space. He does this by making a distinction between one’s near relations and one’s distant relations. At any given time, one’s near relations (i.e., family, self) are connected to one via what Margalit calls “thick relations” of care. Nearness and farness in this case are distances in both emotional and physical/geographical space. In other words, those who are close to us on the family tree are naturally closest to us, and our next-door neighbours are closer to us than people who live across the continent, and so on. He distinguishes this relationship of closeness from one’s relations with all others as follows.

Like others before me (notably Bernard Williams), I make use of the fact that the English language has two terms, ethics and morality—the first from the Greek, the second from the Latin. Morality, in my usage, ought to guide our behavior toward those to whom we are related just by virtue of their being fellow human beings, and by virtue of no other attribute. These are our thin relations. (p. 37)

Thick and thin relations thus constitute the axes of Margalit’s framework. According to this framework, Margalit says that the case of the officer and the fallen soldier is an example an ethical violation, not a moral one. Combat soldiers are a close family, subject to the ethics of thick relations, not strangers, subject to the moral code of thin relations.

To complete the triangle, Margalit considers the “systematic ambiguities” associated with one’s relations with one’s neighbours. Neighbours are ‘mere humans’, but they fall under the categories of both ethics and morality, because there is no clear line that differentiates one’s neighbours from total strangers. As one gets closer to one’s
heart and home, “morality [thus] turns into ethics” (p. 45). According to Margalit, Western history has been characterized by two social ‘projects’: the “Christian’ project of turning morality into ethics (by making all relations thick), and the ‘Jewish’ project of keeping morality and ethics apart” (p. 45). The historical evolution of the dominant ‘Christian project’ will be key to my discussion of how Western rationality and Christian ethics shape the problems of dialogue today.

In the end, Margalit argues that memory is essential to honouring our thick relations and finding forgiveness for the wrongs done to us via our thin relations. The task of remembering is a group effort. It involves the principals, witnesses, historians and archivists of memorial stories, artefacts and texts. This collective effort serves to keep open the channels of thick and thin relations, which are essential to conflict resolution and reconciliation. Margalit concludes as follows.

…the end result of such a course is not in our hands. Only its beginning is up to us. It depends on two elements. The first is adopting, as a policy of behavior, an exclusionary reason to counter reasons for action that are based on the injury done to us. The second element is a second-order desire to overcome our first-order resentment, vengefulness, and insult stemming from that injury. (p. 209)

We need to not forget in order to survive. This means that it is certainly not wise, and probably not possible, to ‘forgive and forget’. We need to forgive, but we cannot forget, so we learn to overcome resentment, in part by being collaborative. That makes us better people. Thus, to forgive a stranger for some significant wrongdoing is to perform the ultimate act of caring for the stranger and for oneself. This is the essence of restorative justice, in which the focus on wrongdoing is not in terms of perpetrator and victim, but in terms of a disruption to the community. In such a situation, both thick and thin relations are strained. The community relies on both sets of relations to put things right again. They are interdependent.

In Between Vengeance and Forgiveness, Martha Minow (1998) looks at reconciliation as a process defined by actions and reasons. This is the philosophical complement to Margalit’s approach which focuses on “relations, rather than actions and reasons.” Minow’s experience with post-Apartheid and post-genocide truth and reconciliation commissions covers little of what Margalit explores about thick relations,
but illuminates much about thin relations. Minow—who is Dean of the Harvard Law School—recognizes that vengeance and punishment do not necessarily serve the interests of justice.

Minow focuses on the world of people in tension between wanting revenge and needing reconciliation in the wake of crimes against humanity. This is where—as I argued early in this chapter—the ideological or negotiating positions that people take in discourses of conflict can be seen as the effects of past experiences. Those experiences affect future discourse. Minow notes that survivors of violence express different preferences for how to deal with perpetrators. Some “ache for retribution… some want financial redress; psychological or spiritual healing seems crucial to others…People understandably may have great trouble sorting out priorities among the possibilities” (p. 4). Minow does not offer a solution. However, against the reality that “legal responses are inevitably frail and insufficient,” Minow acknowledges that revenge in the forms of compensation and punishment do not resolve things for victims or perpetrators. Harsher legal remedies are worse; “new cycles of revenge and violence in the name of justice kill…hope” (p. 5). What Minow recommends is, in effect, a shift from focusing on the position that a victim takes regarding how to deal with the perpetrator, to focusing on what the victim needs to deal with the situation. This is reframing.

To end cycles of violence, there must be a shift from revenge to some form of forgiveness. Minow argues, from a practical standpoint, that “some psychological and religious views suggest that forgiveness can help transform perpetrators and victims, or simply victims” (p. 19). More importantly, she argues—as does Margalit—that perpetrators, victims, and bystanders all have roles and interests in the process of forgiveness. It is not merely setting the record straight that advances resolution, it is equally the act of engaging in reconciliation that is transformative to individuals and communities.

If we apply Margalit’s notion of memory as a form of honouring, and Bohm’s notion of perspective-taking as coherence-inducing, then forgiveness can be thought of as essentially a process of collecting individual memories until they become a collective memory. Often, forgiveness involves only two people. However, in dialogue it might involve many others, as witnesses or as parties in a larger conflict. The collective
memory might be rather more complex than an individual’s account of intentions, events, and effects. For example, the collective memory might need to acknowledge multiple accounts of history to balance the ethical imperatives of fairness in discourse, with the moral imperatives that defined a conflict. In this, Minow and Margalit have common cause. Where Margalit argues that the preservation of memory is instrumental in maintaining our thick and thin relations, Minow argues that reframing takes place via inquiry and testimony. The inquiry process occurs at the level of the most thin of relations; ethnic violence is generally inter-ethnic or international, not familial. However, Minow’s process-focus works from the testimony of individuals. Reconciliation happens one testimony at a time.

In exploring “the dimension of healing that could emerge for individuals” in the inquiry and testimony process, Minow refers to the work of therapists and Holocaust scholars. She cites Eric Santner, who, “drawing on the works of Sigmund Freud and Saul Friedlander…defines trauma as the overstimulation of a person’s psychic structures so that the individual needs to reinvent or repair the basic ways of making meaning and bounding the self and others” (p. 64). Explaining the role of information flow across intra-personal boundaries in the process of “profound reconstruction,” Minow quotes Santner; “[To take massive trauma seriously] means to shift one’s theoretical, ethical, and political attention to the psychic and social sites where individual and group identities are constituted, destroyed, and reconstructed” (Santner, in Minow, p. 64).

From extreme cases of mass violence, Margalit and Minow provide frameworks that can be extrapolated to analyze relationships and processes for communication in conflict and problem solving at all levels of everyday life. The framework of relationships derives from my discussion about the effect dimension of my ‘triangle’ of communication in conflict and problem-solving. Relationships are one aspect of effect; others include solutions, positions, outcomes, agreements, treaties and policies—which are discussed throughout this dissertation. The process dimension, exemplified in the extreme by Minow’s case studies on truth commissions, includes dialogue and conversations in conflict and problem-solving. At the everyday level, Margalit argues that memory is essential to establishing the meaning of a soldier’s death and his commanding officer’s duty to care. Minow argues that the experience of giving testimony is instrumental in
making meaning of the post-genocide process of truth and reconciliation. The problem of meaning-making is thus at the heart of intra-personal, interpersonal, and social conflict.

No matter how comprehensively one applies scientific principles to disasters, conflicts or everyday problems, scientific explanations will at most only explain the “how.” We know the chemistry, mechanics and even the psychology that predicts hostile human responses in various circumstances, but we do not—we cannot—find a scientific reason for suffering. In History and Truth, Ricœur (1965) reflects on the impossibility of empirically reducing the human will to commit violence—which is the most un-subtle form of unresolved conflict and dissonance—down to a problem of the physiology of humans.

An anatomy of war requires the larger task of a physiology of violence [itself]… The summary psychology of empiricism, which gravitates around pleasure and pain, comfort and happiness, neglects to treat the irascible, the taste for obstacles, the will for expansion, for combat and domination.

(p. 225)

Here again, his discourse on truth foreshadows the ‘school of suspicion’ with its focus on issues of Freud’s science of behaviour and Nietzsche’s philosophy of morality. In the discussion that follows, he goes on to claim that “Marx’s interpretation of history is indispensible” (p. 226) in that non-violence cannot be reduced to empirical causes and effects. However, history alone is not enough to explain conflict.

Ultimately, according to Ricœur (1965), a ‘physiology of violence’ turns on issues of intent, action and effect that run beyond the scope of secular rationality. In the preface to the first edition of History and Truth (1955), he frames the significance of history as a “philosophico-theological problem” (p. 3). When his discourse on power goes beyond the horizons of Freud, Marx or Nietzsche, Ricœur invokes religious concepts—in the Christian paradigm—such as the Sermon on the Mount (p. 223), “spirituality” (p. 230), and [moving from] “thou shalt not kill” to “thou shalt love” (p. 231). This serves partly to place his discussion in its true historical context as an epistemic Christian-centric development, and partly because there is nowhere left to go but outside the secular limits of Western philosophy and science.
Later, in Chapter 2 of *Freud & Philosophy*—which introduces the notion of a hermeneutics of suspicion—only two names appear other than those of the three masters: Heidegger and Descartes. In solidifying his case for Nietzsche’s status as a master, Ricœur (1970) paraphrases Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, saying “destruction…is a moment of every new foundation, including the destruction of religion” (p. 33). Although Ricœur finds fault with Nietzsche’s “biologism” and “contradiction,” he agrees with the intent and target of Nietzsche’s suspicion. Invoking Heidegger is Ricœur’s way of signalling that Nietzsche’s suspicion was revolutionary. It is also his way of laying claim to the school of suspicion as a radical, historical, “new foundation.”

Ricœur (1970) solidifies his justification for a ‘philosophico-theological’ clean slate by placing in historical context the radical invention of the new “art of interpreting.” He does this by invoking another master—Heidegger—to link historically the revolutionary work of the masters of suspicion to the philosophy of Descartes. Descartes is one of the pair of ‘pure’ philosophers—the other is Francis Bacon—among those whom historian I. Bernard Cohen (1985) describes as the “codifiers of the method” of empiricism (*Revolution in Science* 79). The lineage, then, runs from Descartes who “triumphed over the doubt as to things by the evidence of consciousness” to the masters of suspicion, who “triumph over the doubt as to consciousness by an exegesis of meaning” (p. 33) to the school of suspicion that resolves the problems of the earlier masters and synthesizes a new art of interpretation. The birth of a “school of suspicion” thus follows the Enlightenment’s revolutionary trajectory and fulfils Heidegger’s prophecy; not only is G-d dead, but religion can finally be put to rest, too.

The arc of this philosophical revolution parallels the evolution of a panoptic, therapeutic State inhabited by vulnerable, pathologized subjects. This is the violent State apparatus that gave rise to the CLS situation. The same apparatus frames the lives of those disenfranchised by drug addiction. This historical arc has had a subtle, but widespread effect on Western practices of communication in conflict and problem-solving. The transformation from a society of “resilient” communal individuals to a mass of dependent subjects involves a shift from active to passive participation in public life. In

61 The three other “codifiers”—Newton, Galileo and Harvey—are more accurately described as “natural philosophers” or philosophers of science.
a "resilient," community, individuals are oriented toward serving others. Public discourse in a “resilient” society is based on each participant exercising care and commitment to others in service to the interests of the community. In a “vulnerable” society, individuals are oriented to being served, according to their entitlements. Public discourse in a “vulnerable” society is based on self-advocacy in support of self. This is the kind of advocacy sought by the Afghanistan Dialogues. The shift from resilience to vulnerability is a shift from thin relations to thick relations as defined by Margalit. It is thus the same shift that Margalit argues is “the Christian project of turning morality into ethics (by making all ethics thick)” (p. 209). In the next section, I will discuss how this shift can be understood in light of the three dominant discourses. I will begin by discussing the role of science as the discourse that presently dominates the three dominant discourses. That discussion will set up my dissertation’s final remarks.

_The Meta-Frame of Science, and its Shift from Morality to Ethics_

In philosophy, truth is an elusive concept. Nonetheless, people seem to be able to get to deep enough levels of understanding reality to satisfy themselves in most areas of action in their everyday lives. If one wants to know how to boil water for a cup of coffee, or which kinds of chickens lay brown eggs, there are various accepted ways to find out and get on with the business of day-to-day life. It is an essential ‘truth’ of the everyday discourses that are the subject of my research that people seem to know when they have arrived at the necessary and sufficient knowledge to make a decision or settle a dispute. Our everyday discourses refer us to accepted sources of knowledge, which we recognize as collective knowledge, conventional wisdom, or common sense. In the absence of a suspicious attitude, these sources define for us the level of understanding at which to stop peeling layers of the onion of understanding. If each layer constitutes a frame of understanding, then the deepest layer of understanding—the one that tells us to stop questioning—constitutes a meta-frame. In that sense, people generally consider empirical science to be the meta-frame for our everyday discourses in Western society.

Over the last 20 or 30 years there has been a so-called ‘postmodern turn’ in the use of narrative in the discourses of everyday life. I propose that this ‘turn’ corresponds
to a post-Cartesian/Baconian shift in the emphasis of everyday discourses from the moral (i.e., questions about “why” we exist and “what” constitutes right and wrong in our co-existence) to the ethical (i.e., questions about “what” is fair and “how” each of us can equitably and efficiently get our fair share). The shift rests on the following two notions.

1. Because all perspectives are considered to be relative, truth itself is considered to be relative.
2. Since each of us defines reality according to our own individual narrative ‘truth’, and since fairness demands that all people are equal, all individual perspectives are granted to be equally valid.

These notions sound democratic, but they present a problem with respect to dialogue and conversations in conflict and problem-solving in everyday life. As I argued in the last section, in a risk-managed society, there is a shift from resilience to vulnerability. This creates a false expectation that people will be fully accommodated, in spite of their conflicting or irreconcilable ‘truths’. This is a problem, because, one ideological frame can only be accommodated by compromising, denying or refuting some other frame.

The “postmodern” position also stops short of addressing the issues and questions that satisfy the human quest for meaning. One consequence of this is that Western society has been shifting away from a moral (i.e., “thin” relationship, collective) orientation, to an ethical (i.e., “thick” relationship, individualistic) framework in matters of rights, administration and personal responsibility. For example, most countries’ governments have justice systems that severely limit or exclude aboriginal and religious justice systems, which are based on principles of restorative justice. With the exception of some cases of aboriginal treaty and land claims, the trend in Western legislation and political discourse has been increasingly against restorative and traditional practices, particularly with respect to Muslim and Jewish traditions. Table 7 summarizes various ‘processes’ of everyday life to illustrate the difference between frameworks that are predominantly moral and ethical. Here we find the dominant frameworks of empiricism, Christian ethics and Capitalist exchange all tend toward the features in the Ethical Frame column.
Table 7. Comparison of Moral and Ethical Discourse Frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Moral Frame</th>
<th>Ethical Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texts/Questions</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment</td>
<td>Right/Wrong</td>
<td>Fairness/Unfairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Relationships</td>
<td>“thin” relations</td>
<td>“thick” relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Relationships</td>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimate Relationships</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>“resilience” paradigm</td>
<td>“vulnerability” paradigm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body/Mind</td>
<td>Healing/Wellness</td>
<td>Medicine/Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Restorative</td>
<td>Criminal/Civil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra-Personal Relations</td>
<td>“I-lessness” (a)</td>
<td>Politeness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(a\) “I-lessness” refers to Gadamer’s (2004, p. 124-128) concept of self-forgetfulness, or losing oneself when a state of true dialogue is achieved.

This historical shift is a factor in the situations studied in this dissertation, because areas of conflict such as the situation in Afghanistan, drug policy and social service delivery are significantly tied to populations and communities that have basic concerns and values outside the scope of secular, Caucasian/Western/Eurocentric, male, Capitalist/corporate interests.

I propose that much of today’s societal conflict stems partly from the inherent impossibility of arriving at tenable, negotiated meanings using multiple, but exclusive (i.e., so-called ‘postmodern’) perspectives. The social relativist position might be good for self-focused ego gratification, but not for getting anything done with others. Perhaps this is why postmodernism has been associated with cynicism and ivory tower elitism. However, there are some key aspects of the postmodernist critique of society that resonate with more substantial and robust critical theories of modernity. In The Postmodern Condition, Jean-François Lyotard (1984) proposes that the only guiding principle left in Western society is the capitalistic pursuit of profit. In “The Question Concerning Technology,” Heidegger (1977) suggests that technology tends to reduce humans to little more than the raw material that supplies energy needs of technology—a concern that applies to communism, too. Herbert Marcuse argues similarly in One-Dimensional Man that capitalism has reduced everyone within its advanced industrial system to consumers who are fed by mass media, advertising and corporate
propaganda to fulfil false needs. These concerns underscore the importance of a more nuanced understanding of how communication in everyday Western life is influenced by scientific and technological rationality in a capitalist system.

According to various sources (e.g., Gadamer, Heidegger, and Habermas), we resolve differences with each other according to our framing of truth, and reach a shared understanding through a “fusion of horizons.” Gadamer proposes that we do this through a dialogical process that seeks an existential connection that Martin Buber (1970/2002) first described as the “I-Thou” relationship (i.e., *I and Thou*); Heidegger (1977) proposes that we must seek a return to traditional ways of being (i.e., “The Question Concerning Technology”); and Habermas (1984/1987) proposes that we form agreements through the logic of mutually resolved arguments (i.e., *Theory of Communicative Action, Volumes 1 and 2*).

Because this fusion takes place in communication via language, it is essentially a constructed process of negotiated meaning. According to Habermas' theory of communicative action, there are only two ways such a negotiation can be pursued: via ‘strategic action’ (e.g., power, force, manipulation, coercion), or via ‘communicative action’ (e.g., reason, dialogue, dialectic). In the case of strategic action, fusion cannot take place, because any sense of agreement is a false sense. In the case of communicative action, negotiators must agree on (or assume) a set of criteria that will be used as a basis for deciding the outcome. In communicative action, each party has a relative perspective on the problem, but that does not prevent them from coming to an agreement based on a revised understanding of the problem. In an ideal world of Habermasian discourses in the public sphere, it would be possible for society to function with everyone free to pursue their lives according to their own perspective—to an extent. However, at the point beyond which people are unable or unwilling to achieve a fusion of horizons, negotiations of meaning shift to discourses of power.

It is at that point, I propose, where postmodernist relativism has broken down. It would be impossible for a society to function if everyone was free to pursue life exclusively according to one’s own frame. In the end, to get anything done, someone must compromise, use force, or come to a different understanding. The relativist position privileges individuals, or interest groups, over society as a whole, and thus rules out
compromise or coming to a different understanding. A better, alternative position would have to be oriented toward a broader range of concerns (e.g., as suggested by the diversity and vastness of issues raised by all three of Ricœur's (1970) 'masters of suspicion') in fulfilment of Heidegger's (1977) vision of a new way of being.  

Habermas does not achieve this. The ideal of communicative action depends on a “process of argumentation in which the individuals concerned cooperate... [because] only an intersubjective process of reaching understanding can produce agreement that is reflexive in nature; only it can give the participants the knowledge that they have collectively become convinced of something” (Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action, p. 66). However, what if one or more of the people involved, contrary to the ideal, lack the capacity to reach a shared perspective? What if it is faster or more advantageous to use strategic action under the constraints of the prevailing economic system?

People still need a rational frame in which to work that balances the fulfilment of the interests of individuals with those of society. Such a framework cannot compromise individual or societal interests at the level of morality (i.e., those things that concern questions of “Why?”). In such a framework, compromise, as a last resort, must be negotiable at the level of questions concerning “how” to get things done. The criteria for making such decisions must be clearly understood. As I have argued in this dissertation, neither can the criteria be forced on people, based on science, conventional wisdom or an ethically imposed program. The criteria for decision-making in all cases must be negotiable, and must be morally and ethically egalitarian. This brings us to the final section of the dissertation, in which I summarize how to apply the three communicative options model.

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62 This is a task of extraordinary complexity, like the combinatorics of the CLS case, but on a societal scale.
In Summary: Applying the Three Communicative Options Model

In this section, I will discuss how to apply the three options with a focus on dialogue design. I will give three brief examples. The first will be theoretical, touching on discussions in the Preface, Introduction and Literature Survey chapters of this dissertation. The second will be case studies, touching on the discussions of the situations and events that I observed and analyzed. The third will be my final comments on the Law Society situation.

Fractal Regions of Dialogue: The Dialectic of David Bohm, Thomas Kuhn and Rabbi Tarfon

In Bohm’s (2004) conception of it, the “vision of dialogue” is an ideal, and discourse is a binary function; either there is dialogue, or there is incoherent discourse. They are distinct states, separated by a quantum gap. Bohm framed his ideal of dialogue as Western science frames the process of arriving at ‘truth”—like approaching the asymptote of a mathematical function (i.e., one gets progressively, infinitely closer, but never arrives). However, there is an inherent contradiction here; Bohm’s dialogue both exists as something separate from normal discourse, and does not exist because it is only ideal. Here Bohm has fallen into the paradox set by an irreconcilable tension between his Platonic, ideal design for dialogue, and his imperative for communicative action in an empirical, Aristotelian, quantum physical world of everyday discourse.

Bohm, the natural scientist/philosopher, has strayed from the epistemic orthodoxy of science—the predominant system of knowledge formation according to the grand project of the Enlightenment. However, he acknowledges this as being a problem inherent to science—not to dialogue. According to Bohm:

Science is predicated on the concept that science is arriving at truth—at a unique truth. The idea of dialogue is thereby in some way foreign to the

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63 Here, I use the term ‘quantum’ in the scientific sense, as opposed to the common use of the term to indicate a big difference. In physics, quantum states are discrete, but not necessarily far apart.
current structure of science, as it is with religion. In a way, science has become the religion of the modern age. (p. 43)

Bohm goes on to quote Max Plank’s comment about new ideas waiting for old scientists to die off. Thomas Kuhn (1962) has been widely cited for using the same quotation in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (p. 150). Although their translations differ somewhat, the gist is the same; the old order imprints the seed of a new ‘truth’ on the new order, and the seed comes into dominance in the passing of the old order. Either way, the handoff, or transition, from old knowledge to new knowledge is important.

The transitional nature of the structure of knowledge-making suggested by Bohm (2004), Plank (cited in Kuhn) and Kuhn (1962) is the epistemic structure of [r]evolution that I have described as a fractal form. I propose, on that basis, that Bohm fell into a trap of limited vision. In everyday life, discourse [r]evolves through time and space; this is the classical, philosophical conception of dialogue in which there is a ‘flowing through’. Bohm’s kind of dialogue of today will arrive at today’s ‘truth’, but it will only be commonly acknowledged as truth tomorrow—after that ‘truth’ has been naturally called into question and validated by a new generation’s ‘school of suspicion’. What seems like the unattainable ideal is only unattainable in one’s own generation.

It is no wonder then, that Bohm equates science with religion. The only way to reconcile the apparent incommensurability between his ideal and his reality is to expand beyond the limits of an empiricist’s subject-object frame to a metaphysicist’s frame of holistic space-time. This longer-term worldview is not new. I am reminded here of one my favourite passages from *Pirkei Avot*, in which Rabbi Tarfon says [2,000 years ago] regarding one’s life, that the ‘day’ is short, ‘the task’ exceeds the time allotted, and the ‘master’ is insistent; although one is not expected to complete ‘the task’, one is not free to withdraw, because—he reminds us—the reward is not for the world of one’s own lifetime. Yet, we continue to plant trees and pass on knowledge—neither of which will bear fruit in this lifetime. We live today for our descendants and their societies.

Bohm’s influence came not from the Torah, but from the eclectic teachings of J. Krishnamurati, who combined traditional, ancient Eastern religious beliefs with modern Western scientific rationality. Anderson (2002) notes that, “no two individual paths could be more different than these two individuals, Krishnamurti and Bohm, coming together
for dialogue” (p. 6). Each was a master of content in his own field, and a master of presentation, questions and answers in a group. It was from this privileged position that each came to question the process of discourse in which mastery of one’s field is the primary qualification for leadership. Leader-masters become revered; their followers give them license to influence the thinking of the group. This can be a problem when leader and followers become too attached to their ideas.

Two phenomena lead to such attachments. The first is a feature of dissemination. When a leader disseminates information, as Bohm and Krishnamurti did, ideas do not only flow one way. This is one of the points that Stuart Hall makes in his theory of mass communication; there is always feedback. In mass communication, this feedback is subtle. However, as I argued in in Chapter 5 (in Dialogue and the Processes of Encoding & Decoding), many such subtle interactions add up to an appreciable audience effect—this is what I call diffusion. Leaders can be influenced by followers, often in subtle ways. The second phenomenon is group-thought. When a feedback loop resonates harmonically—like the drone strings on some musical instruments—the effect can be overwhelming. In the absence of critical self-reflection, group-thought takes over. As Anderson notes, “both [Krishnamurti and Bohm] experienced the power and limitations of group-thought, and both had to oppose it” (p. 26). Their solution to the problem is dialogue.

Bohm is an advocate for uncompromising group reflection in dialogue. His vision of dialogue deals with the challenge of leadership by elevating everyone in dialogue to equal, leader status. However, this too has its challenges. While Bohm accepts the spirit of Rabbi Tarfon and Krishnamurti’s type of worldview, he is still firmly rooted in the post-Enlightenment paradigm that regards dialogue as an idea that asymptotically approaches the ideal of democratic discourse. An asymptote is a curve that gets closer and closer to another curve ad infinitum. Asymptotes meet only in theory, and at infinity. Therefore, in Bohm’s conception of it, dialogue is ultimately impossible; only the pursuit of dialogue is real. Nonetheless, he reflects on his own, numerous, fleeting experiences of something he regards as ‘dialogue’.

I propose that Bohm’s conception of dialogue is impractical and over-determined. If dialogue cannot be attained fully, it becomes far too easy for its detractors to dismiss a
dialogic approach to discourse. Everyday life is tension-filled, dialectically challenged, “solution” oriented, and subject to the effects of group-thinking. It is also a site where dominant—and often domineering—discourses of partisanship, adversarial advocacy and the so-called “argument” culture (Tannen, 1998) have become the default condition. Restoring a higher sense of purpose, without the prerequisite that one must ‘finish the task’ demands that we find a more holistic, practical approach. Such an approach must consider dialogue attainable, and not an end in itself. It must also account for the validity of one’s personal experience—if only a temporary experience—at attaining a state of dialogue. To that aim, I propose that we need to turn to Baxter and Montgomery (1996).

Baxter and Montgomery (1996) propose specific criteria for “good”—as opposed to “not good”—dialogue; good dialogue should be respectful, constructivist, ongoing and revelatory (Relating, pp. 222-224). The first three of these criteria speak to making dialogue a viable, robust process. The last one speaks to upholding the purpose of discourse; dialogue serves to increase understanding, it does not seek closure of a debate. This necessarily requires opening up the discourses that seek to claim truth and negotiated meaning in everyday life to the kinds of suppressed historical discourses that Foucault described as “subjugated knowledges” (Foucault, 2003, p. 7). For example, it took years of legislative and judicial fighting to bring the authorities in Canada to sanction negotiation and oral narrative histories in the native (First Nations) treaty and land claims process.

Throughout this dissertation, I have emphasized the importance of negotiated meanings. Dialogue is the ‘option’ where this negotiation takes place. The problem of achieving good dialogue in communication in conflict and problem-solving is partly epistemological and partly ethical. It is epistemological, because the methods and rationality of problem-solving are framed by socially constructed, historical factors. The dominant discourses that define these frameworks have changed since Plato first taught the Western tradition of dialogue. This epistemic teaching has evolved through medieval times, as Yehuda Halevi’s dialogue demonstrates, through the Enlightenment, and up to current ideal of Bohmian dialogue.

64 This is my paraphrasing of their longer definition of the criteria.
All of those changes involved negotiations and the resolution of conflicts. Negotiation and conflict resolution are not linear processes. People learn, process and solve problems according to the unique combinations of their specific backgrounds. They must be allowed to work through their situations accordingly. Imposing a structure of problem-solving on anyone is an impediment to progress in all forms of discourse. Interest-based, positional, rights-based and rational methods of problem solving are equally valid orientations. The tendency for one to prefer one method over another stems from one’s unique combination of personality “spaces” and does not indicate anything about one’s ability or reasonableness. Facilitators, mediators and interveners must work within the tensions of multi-party situations to support heteroglossia, not to suppress it. Furthermore, heteroglossia applies to speech and voice. However, dialogue is felt as a fusion of perspectives not just heard, but seen. It is therefore hetero-scopic.

Three Options in Theory and in Practice

Throughout this dissertation I have also argued from theory and history that dominant Western cultural norms impede the human quest for harmony and conflict resolution. One factor is the cultural bias of global capitalism that privileges the individual, choice and competition as the chief means of settling disputes. Competing differences will not go away by ignoring them. Another factor is the Enlightenment ideal of a rational society, guided by the norms of “thick relations.” This ideal does not resolve the tension between the needs of the individual and those of society. I have characterized the sum of these problems as an effect of three dominant discourses. I have also proposed that a framework of three communicative options can guide the design of communication in conflict and problem-solving in light of these problems.

Each of the three communicative options of dialogue, debate and diffusion therefore approaches this problem differently, and as follows.

1. Dialogue takes differing—even competing—perspectives as a starting point and seeks to reconcile differences in thin relations via the improvement of thick relations, and differences in thick relations via the improvement of thin relations. Participants in dialogue work to maintain their relationships as interlocutors no
more or less than they work at improving those aspects of their relationships that define their conflicts and problems. This is the ideal situation for discourse as described by Bohm.

2. Debate seeks a single, societal perspective as the end point in discourse. It privileges thick relations over thin relations by seeking to resolve conflicts and solve problems according to democratic, logical, and procedural standards. In an enlightened society—one in which everyone has equal access to information and resources—conflicts and problems can be settled fairly, ethically and rationally. This is the ideal situation for discourse as modeled by Habermasian communicative action.

3. Diffusion accepts the perspective of the individual as the beginning and end points of discourse. It privileges thin relations by not imposing one standard of societal, thick relations on the process of discourse. People are free to create and disseminate their own narratives, and meaning is negotiated in the marketplace of ideas. This is the ideal situation for a critical response to the problem of “postmodern” discourse as modeled by Foucault’s theories of knowledge and power.

This framework of three communicative options is also consistent with what I observed in actual dialogue situations and events. The importance of the interplay of three options is more readily seen in each of the three situations (i.e., the City of Vancouver drug policy consultations, the CLS “Resolving Our Differences” project, and the Afghanistan Dialogues series) than in any given dialogue event. However, the ‘yield’ of dialogue is most pronounced in certain events. Those events benefitted from what happened in planning, organizing and publicizing the projects and events.

In the City of Vancouver situation, the uses of each of the three options in the situations evolved. The planning began with an emphasis on diffusion. Among this dissertation’s three primary cases, this was consultation as it is often conducted in areas of policy development. The planners sought to give event participants information about drug science and policy, disseminated by technical experts. Such a forum could have been conducted without any planned time and space for dialogue. However, by including
dialogue in the event program, the Drug Policy Program office created the conditions for three options throughout the project. Thus, the event began with heavy emphasis on diffusion, but in a format that was designed to “create the container” for dialogue.

In the drug policy dialogue event’s exchange of opinions, and in the questions and answers there was some debate. However the “Visioning a Future” event was designed to minimize debate. This was facilitated on the opening night by the moderator’s focus on storytelling and content. It was facilitated on the second day by my process-focused interventions. Here, the ‘triangle’ model can be applied. For example, my debriefing in plenary sessions of the small-group work focused as much on how the dialogue process was working as on the content of drug policy discourse. In another example, my intervention with Donald McPherson—recruiting him to transcribe the final debriefing session—served as an intentional shift from dialogue back to diffusion. In this case, the group’s various break-out dialogues were summarized, argued, negotiated and turned into a single-form statement of content. By openly reflecting on Mr. McPherson’s role in this, I helped the participants make a conscious shift back to content in a way that was signalled an openness to continue the use of dialogue in future events. As it turned out, some of the future events did include dialogue, some were more like focus sessions and others like information sessions, depending on the training and preference of the facilitator in each case. My point here is that dialogue could, and did, take place in later events, building on the original event.

In the CLS situation, planning and facilitation focused on process. Dialogue was understood to be part of the process, though the goal of the consultation process was to identify and use a variety of methods. In this case, the movement from dialogue to debate to diffusion was fluid and frequent. The design and planning emphasized participant input in all aspects of process. Here, the triangle model can be applied. In particular, the two aspects of the process dimension (please see Figure 6) are important. The processes of negotiation, dialogue, intervention and dissemination (i.e., “how we communicate about X”) all served as templates for the design of a policy for the use of negotiation, dialogue, intervention and dissemination in conflict (i.e., “how we do X”). The shifts from one option to another were less planned or structured than they were in the City of Vancouver and Afghanistan Dialogue situations. For example, the incident
involved the manager of “site A and site B” saw a scheduled dialogue turn into a debate, a conflict intervention, a negotiation and a dialogue. All of this was facilitated at various points by diffusion (e.g., memos and posters), debates (e.g., private meetings) and dialogue (e.g., facilitated group sessions without an agenda). This is what I found happened when process design is based on the maxim “facilitate what is happening, rather than what the facilitator thinks should be happening.” In other words, in the process of developing a customized, optimal system for communication in conflict and problem-solving, the use of ‘three options’ naturally emerges. Based on my conflict resolution training, I would not have predicted what happened at CLS. I would have been inclined to favour collaborative, so-called “win-win” methods, and worked to avoid or suppress others. However, I found that the emergent process, with its many approaches and shifts among the three ‘options’ resulted in a better process. It also ‘yielded’ more dialogue and an outcome that had the confidence of a very large group of people. Here too, as dialogue developed, the capacity for dialogue developed, resulting in the two large group dialogues near the end of the policy design phase.

The Afghanistan Dialogues were by design the most like Bohm’s vision of dialogue. They focused more on sharing perspectives and creating what Bohm called "coherence." In these events, my privileged access was limited to observation and a few interviews with planners. I can therefore comment mainly on what happened at the events. Though I found that each event had a different mix of dialogue, diffusion and debate, the trend of improved dialogue here is comparable to the drug policy and CLS situations. In the drug policy and CLS situations, there were tangible, measurable outcomes. I cannot comment on the outcome of the Afghanistan Dialogues on the same basis. However, I did observe that people kept attending the events; there was a growing core community of dialogue.

Each of the three communicative options has its challenges. By giving equal weight to thick and thin relations, dialogue runs the risk of satisfying neither. The tension between the human quest for harmony and conflict resolution, and the "postmodern problem" is both a problem and an opportunity for dialogue. Also, in a worst-case scenario, one might find that a steady or growing community of dialogue amounts to little more than a feel-good group, engaged in dialogue as placebo. However, as my
observations in the City of Vancouver and CLS situations showed, the capacity for
dialogue is of value, even if the benefits are not immediately seen. The competitive,
rationally aspect of debate is effective at reconciling problems that are considered to be
legitimate in the context of the predominant, competing forces of Christian-centric *thick*
relations and science’s assumed stance of moral neutrality. However, competition works
against conflict resolution’s need to achieve social cooperation. This is especially true
wherever there are at stake close or communal *thin* relations (e.g., among those who are
neither Christians who tolerate secular science, nor secularists who tolerate Christian
values). Diffusion is good for the thin relations in a democratic society; free speech, the
freedom to associate with whomever one chooses and the freedom to believe what one
chooses are essential to human emancipation. However, dissemination becomes
tyran without the checks and balances of debate’s fairness and becomes a set of
fractured, irreconcilable narratives without dialogue’s ability to revise assumptions.

Finally, if dialogue is the option in which meaning is negotiated and
transformative change is generated, then we must approach it with an *intention* to
maintain one’s moral and ethical relations. This involves more than suspending one’s
assumptions; it involves actively seeking to hold others in an “I-Thou” relationship. In
such a relationship one must balance one’s modern sense of autonomy and interests
with a sincere desire to serve others. Debate and diffusion are not well suited for this
purpose. Debate is inherently ethical, self-interested and autonomous. Diffusion has
elements of both the ethical and moral frameworks, but the moral aspects are supported
only by subtle interactions. Dialogue is the only option that has the potential for “thin”
relations to any great degree. *Dialogue must therefore emphasize service to others over
fairness, self-interest, efficiency, or attainment of empirically rational outcomes.* The
main consequence of this is the following.

- experts who are invited to speak at dialogue events must
  recognize that they will accomplish more by letting others speak
  and interact than they will by seeking to be persuasive or
  informative. This is counter-intuitive to our “argument culture.”
  However, it is essential to democratic discourse.

Dialogue planners must expect that true, focused dialogue will take time to develop. It
grows in the course of a series of events. The results of this dissertation also suggest
the following.
• dialogue event planners can advise speakers and participants with confidence that they will achieve better outcomes by limiting prepared speeches to between five and seven minutes.

“Creating the container” is, perhaps, the biggest challenge in dialogue design. Plato shows how to accomplish dialogue in an elite society—one that privileges moral, or thick relations. Bohm shows how to accomplish dialogue in a culture that privileges ethical relations over moral relations. However, both processes seek ethical and moral relations. Dialogue can be made whole by drawing from the best practices of both, and by recognizing that the current state of dialogue is biased in favour of ethical relations.

In the next section, I will discuss how dialogue can be applied to situations in which traditional—i.e., morally oriented—communities are in conflict with mainstream Canadian society. In particular, all three cases involve the Canadian justice system. Canada is widely considered to be a tolerant, inclusive society. However, it is also a “mosaic” society of many cultures. The First Nations and the Canadian Jewish and Muslim communities are examples of opportunities for dialogue. In the first case, I will compare a historical case with one from my own experience. In the second case, I will examine an emerging situation that is comparable to the Law Society situation.

**Case Comparison: Panama Canal and Deline**

In order to anticipate issues of trust regarding disclosure in the CLS intervention, I considered an analysis of Raiffa’s 1973 Panama Canal Negotiations case study, and compared it with the case of a negotiation that I facilitated successfully before working with CLS: the Deline First Nation Justice System treaty negotiation of 2000.

The Panama Canal negotiations involved an inter-government negotiation (between the US and Panama) and an *intra-government* negotiation (between various parties within the US). As the negotiations unfolded, Ellsworth Bunker attempted to fill two roles: negotiator for the US and mediator of the US *intra-government* dispute. The latter involved dealing with a level of complexity greater than the CLS project, because elected officials and industry lobbies comprise large groups of players.
By contrast, the Deline negotiation was relatively small. It involved about 100 people, including the Deline First Nation community in Deline, NWT, and negotiators from the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories. In this case, each team had a chief negotiator and there was one intervener (me), who acted as mediator/facilitator for all parties.

Both negotiations played out over a period of about two years. In both cases, there had been a history of bad relations, low trust and genuine grievances. A major difference between the two was in how negotiations developed over the two years. The Panama Canal negotiations began with an identification of issues and general agreements in principle; the focus was on settlement. Federal level negotiators were keen to create and claim value, based on their perceived self interests. The Deline negotiations began with planning and relationship building over negotiations on other topics; the focus was on relationship. Federal and tribal negotiators were keen to serve the needs and interests of each other and of the relationship.

The Panama Canal negotiators elected to keep the negotiations going without disruption (Raiffa, Richardson & Metcalfe 2002, p. 479). They were able to do this by concentrating on those issues that were easy to resolve (another example of “low hanging fruit” issues). When Bunker was unable to broker a deal on the status of forces agreement, he resorted to a goodwill demonstration of concessions, in the interest of keeping the negotiations going without disruption. He apparently assumed that the Panamanian negotiators would return the favour at some later date (they did not). From there, things deteriorated for Bunker. In the end, various parties acted on their Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA) (e.g., the Department of Defense leaked information to the press, and Senator Thurmond built a coalition of Senators to block a new treaty).

In the Deline negotiations, the parties agreed to meet all at once. Rather than focus on settlement, they began their plenary session with a dialogue circle. As dialogue progressed, the parties adopted FOTE behaviour (see p. 139) to the extent that they

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65 The Deline negotiations took two years to reach an agreement on all points of negotiation. The parliamentary process of drafting and ratification of the treaty document took an additional three years.
shared internal policy and position papers. Within a day, they were able to move on to formal negotiations. Formal negotiation stalled the next morning when members of Deline’s Council of Elders refused to discuss certain issues. At that point, I called a break, dismissed the other negotiating teams and held a caucus with the Deline team. The caucus became an intra-government negotiation of the Deline team, co-facilitated by me and the chief negotiator for the Deline. During the caucus, it was important to the Deline team that the Federal and Territorial negotiators not know that Deline was resolving internal conflict. The other negotiating teams concluded that the Deline team was using dialogue as a delay tactic in order to run out the clock. By mid-afternoon of the second day, the Deline had reached agreement on their internal issues and the plenary session resumed. There was consensus agreement by the end of the day, resulting in a template for a treaty. The negotiating teams ratified the agreement, with some changes, three months later.

The Deline situation benefitted from a long-range focus on relationship and confidence building. The culture of dialogue stemmed from the planners’ co-created process. It was specific to this situation, rather than drawn from a “solution.” It fused the best practices of Native dialogue and Canadian government consultation. The success of the event was due to the flexible shifting between plenary and small group dialogue. As intervener, I was able to take advantage of their years of planning and relationship development. I could not have imposed dialogue on them. Though the parties understood the event to be a negotiation, they designed it to include all three of the ‘options’. The “moments of opportunity” in this situation were dependent on the parties having built enough confidence to put service ahead of self-interest, and on having co-created a dialogue process that could be easily invoked when needed. All I had to do was recognize the opportunities. The result was a negotiated treaty for a traditional justice system for Deline, operating within the larger framework of the Canadian justice system. It was not perfect for anyone, but all compromises were last-resort measures that made sense to everyone involved. The compromises met the test of heteroscopia—i.e., they were understood from a single perspective of differing viewpoints.
Sharia and Rabbinic Courts:  
A Case Study in Power Relations, Politics and Dialogue

In the Deline example, the government and judiciary of Canada eased the deadlock of years of legal wrangling over native claims by sanctioning the previously 'subjugated knowledge' of oral traditions in its judicial practice. This gain for First Nations justice was entirely consistent with the ideal of multi-vocal dialogue. On the other hand, some Canadian authorities have, at the same time, moved to further 'subjugate' other 'knowledges' via legislative moves to suppress access to Islamic and Jewish traditional justice in private and family matters.

One can account for this contradiction by considering Foucault's (2006) observation that the "juridico-political matrix" works in "crisis" [management mode], like a medical practice that seeks to "confront the disease" rather than cure it or prevent it. Foucault noted that the "word crisis means 'to judge', just as the disease comes up for judgment on the day of the crisis, so the doctor, in this role as a kind of arbitrator, is judged in turn by how he presides over the combat, and he may come out as victor or vanquished in relation to the disease" (p. 244). In other words, the seat of power is reactive and does what is politically expedient. Frustrated, in the wake of years of failed negotiations, Canada relented and allowed 'the Crown's' adversary in treaty settlements to use its own voice in the discourse. At the same time, frustrated in the wake of the 9/11 crisis and the politics of Western-Middle Eastern relations, Canada has moved to suppress the same type of voice in other segments of its multi-cultural society. In the former case, "the Crown" gets to "come out as the victor" and First Nations get the collateral benefit of a fuller, more ideal, more inclusive dialogue process. In the latter case, the dominant discourses of secular law and a Christian-centric society 'come out as victor' and the interests of the Muslim and Jewish communities both suffer in the collateral damage to their cultural and communicative rights.

Even if processes of justice and social change favour those in power, the dialogic discourses of problem-solving and conflict resolution are not inherently so biased. First Nations are allowed to negotiate in good faith for their rights according to the rationality of their oral tradition: why not others? Kleefeld and Kennedy (2008) have shown how Canadian judicial process and religious law—while equally complex—are
commensurable on complex issues. Their research acknowledges from a secular perspective that when there is a will to make Canadian justice and religious justice work together, the outcome is better from the minority group perspective and no worse from the perspective of well-established practices of secular justice. The cases cited by Kleefeld and Kennedy demonstrate that using dialogue in the processes of law works better for a society that seeks to respect those who are anything other than the dominant group (e.g., white and secular or Christian in Canada).

Kleefeld and Kennedy (2008) make an extensive survey of the resolution of family matters in the Jewish Bet Din court system. Their analysis does not address dialogue per se. However, Jewish courts traditionally rely on dialogue on two levels: interpretation of Jewish law is based on an oral tradition that was recorded for posterity 2000 years ago in the Talmud, and Jewish courts use dialogue in important ways in the courtroom process. Over the last 17 years, I have worked with a few Bet Din courts in the US and Canada on family matters, as a mediator, as a witness, and once as a judge for several divorce cases. A ‘day in court’ in a Bet Din is designed to be more humane, more efficient and no more ritualistic than a day in a secular court. Like a secular court, there are statements (i.e., dissemination/diffusion) and examinations (i.e., debate). Unlike a secular court, there is also informal conversation (i.e., dialogue) in the official court process.

Staunch secularists find traditional justice unacceptable on ethical, or on ideological grounds. However, the reverse is not the case in Canada. From the perspectives of various forms of traditional justice, secular law is not inherently an ethical or ideological problem. Like the Deline treaty, traditional justice systems in Canada work within the Canadian justice system. Jewish and Islamic courts do not practice law. According to their own systems, they are forbidden from violating secular law. Why, then, do some people want to eliminate Jewish and Muslim courts in Canada?

Only keepers of the “juridico-political matrix” and the perceptions of those who are not familiar with traditional justice systems, or those who oppose out of hand

66 There are two kinds of ‘witness’ in a Bet Din. The kind who testify to the facts in a case are rarely involved. The other kind act in a capacity similar to a notary or the Chair at a thesis defence, signing that they witnessed that the legal documents were “kosher.”
anything which is not secular, pose a problem. Alternative systems, such as traditional religious courts, native healing circles, and their secular equivalents (e.g., truth and justice commissions) are far more dialogue-oriented than the secular justice system. By opposing such systems, some secularists have framed dialogue itself as a problem. However, they do so without cause, and at the expense of all that dialogue has to offer. Dialogue is a process that could improve the practices of everyday justice by aligning them more with the dialogic aspects of well-established practices and traditions found in everyday life.

What is needed here is a fair hearing for these so-called alternative systems. They have not been allowed to make their cases on equal terms with government, as was the case with the Deline. Instead, Canadian judicial and legislative authorities have dictated the terms of decision-making. They could learn from the Deline experience.

This brings us to the final case—the Law Society. It is similar to the Bet Din and Sharia court case. It involves a clash between the justice system and a community that authorities in the justice system have regarded as being outside of its ethical, epistemic framework. In the Deline case, I argued that dialogue was instrumental in creating a better society for all parties. In the Bet Din and Sharia case, I discussed how reason and research argue in favour of allowing these traditions to continue because they offer the dialogue option—which is largely missing from the secular justice system. I have argued throughout this dissertation that dialogue is an essential ‘option’ of communication in conflict and problem-solving. I have also argued that people become convinced of the value of dialogue when they experience it; nothing instils confidence in the option of dialogue better than the experience of dialogue. I will now apply this understanding to the Law Society case.

Epilogue

I introduced the Law Society case at the beginning of this dissertation as an Epilogue to an earlier conflict. There was a conflict in the evolution of the professional practice of mediation. It was a conflict between the epistemic community of lawyers and the emerging community of mediators. It originally gave my dissertation context. As
Georg Simmel notes, conflicts run in cycles. During the course of this dissertation, the Law Society situation has continued to run through a cycle of conflict. I now report on the current state of that situation. I will begin with some background on the problem, discuss what transpired while I was writing this dissertation, and then apply the lessons of this dissertation to suggest an alternate ending to this situation.

Conflict intervention in general, and mediation in particular, are not regulated or credentialed as a profession anywhere. However, mediation is overseen by various government bodies that set standards of practice and make referrals to consumers in the US, Canada, Australia, Japan, Israel, South Africa and the UK, to name a few. In British Columbia, the Dispute Resolution Office (DRO) of the Ministry of the Attorney General launched a Mediator Roster Society in 1998. This society maintains rosters of mediators who meet the DRO’s qualifications to practice in civil cases, in family cases and in child protection cases in the province. There are currently over 200 mediators on the civil roster. Of those who list their education or occupation, 134 are lawyers, and 77 are not. Among the non-lawyers, 6 have backgrounds in justice or paralegal work, and many do claims adjustment for the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia—which is a Crown corporation. Many of the roster’s non-lawyers are in, or have participated in, court-affiliated, lawyer-supervised practicum programs that were designed to provide mentoring for aspiring mediators and ease the burden of small-claims cases in the provincial court system. The family mediator roster—which was launched in 2002—has 24 lawyers, and 15 non-lawyers—most of whom have backgrounds in counselling, psychology and related fields. The child protection roster has 23 lawyers and 31 non-lawyers—most of whom have backgrounds in counselling and social work. Even without factoring out the government’s small-claims practicum students and insurance adjusters, the dominant community in the field is thus law, followed by counselling and social work.

No court or marketplace has established that mediation falls under the purview of a law society. However, rosters, court-affiliated mediation programs, and government-administered consumer referral programs are among the forces that give the American Bar Association and Law Society of BC the apparent power and authority to grant to non-lawyers the privilege of consulting on problem solving with people in conflict. The Bar Association interpreted that it had the power, based on the perspective, logic,
rationality and power of the justice system, without any systematic inquiry into what mediators were actually doing. Thus, non-lawyers are permitted to act as problem-solving consultants in some conflicts, but the Bar Association still has the ability to reverse this and use the power of the justice system to prevent them from practicing in the future.  

In British Columbia, the legal status of mediation is still unresolved. There have been a few industry societies that have tried to organize mediators and conflict intervention consultants as a self-regulated, professional field of practice. All consisted of lawyers and non-lawyers. Among them, the ADR Institute of Canada, the Arbitration and Mediation Institute of BC, the DR Innovation Society, Family Mediation Canada, and the BC International Commercial Arbitration Centre have tried various partnerships and efforts to bring mediation practitioners together in one organization. None has succeeded. Beginning in 2007, the Attorney General’s Mediator Roster Society—a quasi-regulatory body, which Alexander (2008) would classify as a “referring body”—and the DR Innovation Society—which oversees a Small-Claims Court mediation program—began merging. Both institutions began as part of the provincial justice system. Both accepted non-lawyers as qualified roster members. This was challenged by the Law Society—which is particularly concerned about non-lawyers mediating in family situations (i.e., divorce, custody, separation and child protection).

In 2006, both societies responded to the Law Society’s challenge by participating in an ADR Task Force review of mediation in BC. They produced a 2007 report entitled “Lawyers as Dispute Resolution Professionals: A Discussion Paper.” According to this report, lawyer-mediators in the study, “supported the view that all forms of mediation should be regulated by the Law Society, not just family mediation…” (p. 24). The study also quotes focus group participants who expressed the following.

People want to problem solve, not litigate, and they don’t see lawyers doing this so they look elsewhere…Do not create a dichotomy between

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67 This is not entirely the case in British Columbia, where the ability to do family mediation has already been limited by provincial authorities. With the exception of some longstanding family counsellors who were “grandfathered” into inclusion, one must be either a family law lawyer, or be part of the family justice system to get government approval to be on a mediator roster, without which one cannot get professional liability insurance. However, there are no guidelines that specify what exactly constitutes family mediation.
lawyers and mediators. There are values here that should inform more than just mediation. The Law Society should endorse these values generally. (p. 55)

The task force report focuses on legal issues and interests, particularly on the differences between the practice of family law and all other branches, and the Law Society’s concerns about billing and retainer fees. It also reflects a growing movement among mediation-supportive lawyers to rebrand ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) as ADR (Appropriate Dispute Resolution) to place mediation within a range of options—many say a spectrum—including arbitration, litigation and negotiation (p. 15), and it argues for the collaborative family law process (p. 55). All of the participants in the task force process (i.e., investigators, evaluators and interview subjects) are lawyers, and all the sources in the literature review and background information are from law publications. Nonetheless, the task force recommends that non-lawyers continue to be allowed to practice mediation. However, according to Kari Boyle, the Executive Director of the DR Innovation Society and acting Executive Director of the BC Mediator Roster Society, “the report of the task force was published and buried by the Benchers (i.e., the Directors of Law Society) in 2007” (Kari Boyle, personal interview, 11 February 2010).

In 2009, a member on the BC Family Mediator Roster was found by the Law Society to be practicing law without a license. She had been a family lawyer in another country, moved to Canada and took up divorce mediation, where she advertised herself as a ‘legal mediator’. This got the attention of Law Society, and they decided it was time to again call into question the legitimacy of non-lawyers mediating in BC. However, Kari Boyle asked for and was granted a meeting with the Law Society, to allow some contributors to the ADR Task Force and representative non-lawyer mediators to argue

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68 The Law Society’s job is to make sure that lawyers follow professional standards, and that non-lawyers do not practice law. However, practice is matter of ‘billable hours’. If a non-lawyer gives legal advice and prepares documents for someone else they are only considered to be practicing law if they are paid. On the other hand, I once approached the lawyer in charge of the Law Society’s pro bono legal service about offering volunteer mediators from my society as part of the service. He was keen on doing so, until he asked me where I attended law school and I clarified that some of the mediators would be non-lawyers who were roster members. He then became verbally abusive to me and withdrew his support.

69 The family mediator in question argued that she had prepared the divorce agreement documents for free, and therefore was not practicing law. The Law Society disagreed, noting that money is not the only reward that qualifies as payment; the ‘free’ document preparation gave her the benefit of other paid work with the clients. She resigned from the Roster Society.
their case for allowing non-lawyers to keep on practicing mediation in BC without the regulation of the Law Society.

The meeting was held on 15 April 2010. It was intended to begin a dialogue about mediation for lawyers and non-lawyers. I was invited to participate as a non-lawyer mediator. Of the 17 people in attendance, I was the only mediator who was not either a lawyer, or one who does statutory mediation/arbitration under a branch (e.g., Labour Relations, Attorney General, Child Protection) of provincial government. I took notes at the meeting, using my dialogue observation and analysis protocol. I will treat what was said there as confidential. On that basis, I will only disclose here my own involvement in the meeting. During the two hours of this event, I spoke for approximately 90 seconds, not including introducing myself—which took about 20 seconds. Using my protocol, I estimate the dialogue ‘yield’ of this event to be 0%.

There was much important dissemination and debate at this meeting. However—as I have argued in this dissertation, from theory and practice—it needed to have some measure of dialogue to be fully meaningful and transformative. In my 90 seconds of ‘air time’, I recommended that non-lawyer mediators be consulted in the process of developing standards for the practice of mediation. This was well received around the table. The meeting participants resolved to continue working as a group. Since that meeting, the only follow-up has been the release in May 2010 of the meeting minutes. It includes some preliminary results of the development of practice standards for assuring that non-lawyers do not practice law in the course of mediation. I have made a few email inquiries about the possibility of soliciting input from non-lawyer mediators. However, the administrator who organized the review process has since left the Law Society.

As of May 2011, I am unaware of any further developments resulting from the meeting at the Law Society. The only other significant development in the situation has been the completion of the merger of the Attorney General’s Mediator Roster Society with the Provincial Court’s mediation practicum program. The new organization is called

70 According to the confidential invitation, this meeting was officially framed as a discussion about “some confusion about how far non-lawyer mediators can go in documenting the arrangements between parties to a mediation.” However, in unofficial conversations, it was represented to me as an opportunity to share perspectives as experts in the field of mediation.
Mediate BC—a name that resembles those of Crown Corporations (e.g., Justice BC, Community Living BC, BC Assessment). I now get occasional emails from provincial authorities advising me of Law Society actions against mediators who have been found in violation of the Law Society’s Code of Ethics.

The epilogue to an earlier situation served as the preface to my dissertation. During the course of my research and writing, the situation has evolved. What took place during this period of evolution has become the epilogue to my dissertation. I began the dissertation with the following question.

• What can be learned about dialogue as a form of communication in conflict and in problem-solving, based on a synthesis of communication studies and my privileged access to specific and everyday conflict intervention situations?

In the case of the Law Society situation, the answer is simple. The missing element of communication in conflict and problem-solving in this situation is dialogue. In particular, it is the kind of dialogue that is inclusive, epistemic, and that achieves a balance of ethical and moral—i.e., “thick” and “thin”—relations. Thus—as I have argued from theory, history and practice—authorities in the justice system must be willing to approach outsiders in this situation with an attitude of service to others. There is no risk involved in listening and being open to truthful disclosure in the interests of justice and community.

Having an intention to serve others is the foundation of the best practices of consultation in Canada. It is also the foundation of dialogue practice from Plato, to Halevi, to Bohm and Krishnamurti. The lesson of their experience—which I have confirmed in my observations of the situations and events in this dissertation—is that dialogue evolves. Dialogue evolves in large groups, in small breakout groups, in situations and in events. There are many paths that lead to moments of opportunity for dialogue. I offer this dissertation in the hope that my observations, ideas and recommendations on these matters will be of use to others for communication in conflict and problem-solving.
Prelude

This concludes my dissertation. I have argued that, in conflict, epilogues become preludes. Preludes evolve as situations, epistemically—like fractal forms—to become epilogues again. From epilogues, the cycle starts again. I will therefore end this essay by anticipating two future preludes. The first is my own—i.e., how has my practice changed as a result of what I learned from my dissertation? The second is what I recommend to others, including suggestions for further research.

How does the concluding work for this dissertation begin to change my practice?

Before I began this dissertation, I was trained and experienced in interest-based negotiation and so-called transformative conflict resolution. Though these methods worked for me, I found that I had to do hard work to oppose the efforts of those with whom I worked, who favoured other methods. For example, I was taught that it is counterproductive to start a conversation in conflict or problem-solving by taking a position or offering a solution. Instead, one should refrain from offering solutions until interests have been fully discussed. This makes sense, if everyone thinks that way and follows that advice. However, few people think that way and follow that advice. In studying the culturally predominant modes of reasoning and problem-solving, and in my observations, I have come to see how some people communicate more fluidly in conflict and problem-solving using other methods. Likewise, when I first studied and practiced the modern methods of dialogue, I believed dialogue to be desirable and debate to be undesirable. I also believed that dialogue had to be pure, unfettered by practical goals and agendas. However, I have found that practical matters yield some of the best ‘moments of opportunity’ for dialogue.

As I go forward, and in light of what I have learned, I will be more inclusive of the variety of methods that people use in conflict and problem-solving. Given the predominant ways that people reason, communicate, and deal with conflicts and problems, I intend to work more toward a balance of methods and ‘options’ than toward any particular position. Dialogue is essential to personal and public discourse; it needs its advocates. I will continue to promote dialogue, both in the pure form and in the
practical form. However, I will also be prepared to include the other 'options' or forms of communication in my method. The experience and research of this dissertation has given me more reason to have confidence in the value of using varied, fluid, and flexible processes of communication in conflict and problem-solving.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

In light of this dissertation, I have also come to believe that more research needs to be done on the variety of communication methods used by interveners, mediators and facilitators. The framework I have used in this dissertation could be used to compare other kinds of situations (e.g., commercial and court-based mediations, interpersonal conflict interventions). It could be used to compare epistemic communities (e.g., how members of different professions mediate). It could also be used to compare communication methods in different communities of practice (e.g., when mediators solve problems, compared with when engineers solve problems). In each of these proposed studies there are separate and overlapping populations. For example, there are people who do both commercial mediation and interpersonal conflict intervention, and there are others who do only one or the other. Among the different studies I propose, there are separate and overlapping populations. These overlaps would allow for comparisons and 'cross-cutting' of data in any number of grounded theory-based research studies.

**Recommendations for dialogue and communication in conflict and problem-solving in everyday life**

The following is a compilation of my dissertation’s recommendations for dialogue and conversations in conflict and problem-solving in everyday life. These recommendations are offered as lessons learned, not as "solutions." They are based on my observations in the field, and the reflections of those with whom I have worked. They are based on the qualitative findings of the research of this dissertation, and are consistent with a synthesis of the theories, models and historical perspectives I have discussed here. They are offered as background material for the Prelude of future situations that I cannot predict, but that I believe can be anticipated.
The Conflict 'Triangle Model' (given as Figure 6 in Chapter 4, fully defined on p. 164 Chapter 5)

When two or more people are engaged in communication in conflict or problem-solving, there are three dimensions of the situation at hand about which one must be consciously aware and which one must at all times seek to keep in balance: the content, the process and the effect.

The Three Options

The three options are defined as follows.

- **Dialogue** is conversation in which people discuss their perspectives openly and equally, and are not bound by predetermined procedural rules for the flow of conversation or its outcome. Dialogue emphasizes the participation of everyone present, a “sharing of common content” (Bohm, 2004, pp. 30-31), and an "intention… to reach new understanding and, in doing so, to form a totally new basis from which to think and act” (Isaacs, p. 19).
- **Debate** is conversation in which people argue for the adoption and/or implementation of their pre-conceived positions on an issue, and against the arguments made by others. Debate emphasizes rational argumentation, reciprocity (e.g., equal “air time”) in the flow of conversation, and the settlement of an opposition of positions which are treated as incommensurable.

- **Diffusion** is the dissemination of information, arguments and position statements, via which people make their ideas and positions known to others. Receivers are not bound by procedure regarding how they receive and respond to what is disseminated. Diffusion involves movement, both as scattering and as mixing of information and ideas across time and space.

These terms are further defined and compared in Appendix A, p. 281.

**Characteristics that Identify Dialogue – for use in conversation analysis**

- Dialogue seeks to uncover understanding of multiple perspectives;
- It has a practical standpoint;
- It has an ethical standpoint in the pursuit of truth; and
- It uses open inquiry, and a “without prejudice” approach to the offering of ideas.

**Recommendations for Communication in Conflict and Problem-solving, and for Dialogue Process Design**

1. Dialogue, debate and dissemination (or diffusion) are equally ever-present. They are not events. They are the options for the process of communication in all discourses of everyday life. There is no inherent harm in framing a communicative event as a dialogue, a debate or a speech. However, in planning any such event, if one wants truth to emerge or change to occur, one must plan the event to allow for all three options to be used at any given moment.

2. The Content-Process-Effect relationship is a valuable frame through which to assess dialogue and conversations in conflict and problem-solving.
3. Constructive, egalitarian discourse requires having all those who are interested at the table. The more they interact directly with each other, the more meaningful and useful dialogue will occur. One way to accomplish this is to minimize the use of static presentations by guest, or expert speakers, no matter how much it might seem that their discourse will better frame or inform the discourse.

4. In large group situations, breakout discussion groups, tended by trained facilitators, accomplish more than presentations given by experts. Multiple sessions of breakout discussion, composed of different configurations of coherent groups are required for a full, open exchange of information. Varying the configurations of breakout groups facilitates the interaction of experts and non-experts better than question-and-answer sessions that follow presentations given by experts. This 'cross-cutting' of also allows individuals to share their perspectives on the diverse areas of their life experience. This is true for one-off events and for ongoing or extended processes of decision-making, policy formation and social action.

If the intent is to have dialogue, to share perspectives and information, and to build confidence in the discourse with participants, speakers are advised to limit their remarks to 5 – 10 minutes.

5. Negotiation and conflict resolution are not linear processes. People learn, process and solve problems according to the unique combinations of their specific backgrounds. They must be allowed to work through their situations accordingly. Imposing a structure of problem-solving on anyone is an impediment to progress in all forms of discourse. Interest-based, positional, rights-based and rational methods of problem solving are equally valid orientations. The tendency for one to prefer one method over another stems from one's unique combination of personality "spaces" and does not indicate anything about one's ability or reasonableness. Facilitators, mediators and interveners must work within the tensions of multi-party situations to support their heteroglossia, not to suppress it.

6. Facilitators, mediators and interveners can provide no better service to a group than holding up to them a mirror that reflects the content, process and effects of their discourse. Each member of a stakeholder group will see the situation at hand differently. This is heteroscopia— the clash of perspectives that drives heteroglossia. There is nothing wrong with this; it is the product of an earlier fusion of horizons, and the substrate upon which will be built any future fusions of horizons.

7. The combinatoric possibilities for conflict or resolution grow exponentially with the size of a group. No matter how intelligent, persuasive or forceful a participant, facilitator, mediator or intervener is, no group is manageable for long enough to accomplish anything both
meaningful and lasting. Fair, efficient, wise and enduring outcomes
result from facilitating an ongoing negotiation of discourse process,
rather than holding people to an expert-generated event plan. Point 2
applies here; seek to maximize the inclusion of participants in the
planning and flexible implementation of the process.

8. Asking questions in closed—i.e., “yes” or “no”—form should be avoided
entirely. Exclusive use of open questions—i.e., questions that cannot
be answered by yes, no or maybe—results in better enquiry and better
relationships in conflict and problem-solving.

Service to Others

Communication in conflict and problem-solving requires some measure of
dialogue. Dialogue works best if one places a higher priority on serving
others than on advancing one’s own interests. Theory and practice
indicate that the intention to serve others is enhanced by the experience
of dialogue. Theory and practice also indicate that as the intention to
serve others in dialogue increases, dialogue outcomes are enhanced.
REFERENCES—WORKS CITED


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Appendices
## Appendix A. Key Terms Defined and Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directional Orientation</th>
<th>Goals and emphasis</th>
<th>Procedural Framework</th>
<th>Feedback Mode(s)²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dialogue¹</strong></td>
<td>Omni-directional:</td>
<td>seeks mutual understanding</td>
<td>Negative and positive: senders amplify their messages to receivers and receivers amplify their messages to senders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paths are interwoven, interactive.</td>
<td>emphasizes reason, emotion, relationship and process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Debate</strong></td>
<td>Bi-directional:</td>
<td>1. seeks resolution of issues</td>
<td>Positive: receivers resist senders' messages and amplify their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>each path is two-way, adversarial, active/reactive.</td>
<td>2. emphasizes reason over emotion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. emphasizes process over relationships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diffusion</strong></td>
<td>Multi-directional:</td>
<td>6. individual seeks to be understood and secure the agreement of others.</td>
<td>Positive or negative: senders amplify their messages to receivers, and receivers choose whether to resist or amplify parts of the signal back to the sender, and/or to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>each path is one-way and either adversarial or non-adversarial</td>
<td>7. emphasizes autonomy of individuals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Senders control “encoding” and receivers control “decoding” unilaterally.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Receivers become senders.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹Dialogue

²Feedback Mode(s)
David Bohm is one of the most influential theorists of modern dialogue. His book, *On Dialogue* (2004) is widely cited. It differs from the ancient Platonic kind of discourse that defined dialogue for millennia, primarily in its focus on the free flow of conversation, and on its premise that participants have no agenda or pre-conceived purpose for talking. Platonic dialogue is narrative and directed toward teaching and learning. Bohm’s dialogue is directed toward being open to anything that might arise in the conversation. Platonic dialogues have identifiable characters who speak persuasively, and ultimately make their points—which are often in apparent conflict, and which are resolved rhetorically by the main characters. Bohm’s dialogue focuses on an entire group, and emphasizes what emerges in both content and process over a series of conversations. As a crude measure of the diffusion of these two different notions, one might consider the differences in how many “hits” a Google search of each might yield. For example, my searches resulted in the following.

- Dialogue: 75.7 million hits
- Bohm + Dialogue: 3.49 million hits
- Plato + Dialogue: 5.5 million hits
- Dialogue + Ideal: 14 million hits
- Socratic + Dialogue: 7.1 million hits.

My working definition of dialogue is intended to embrace both the ancient, Platonic, and modern Bohmian notions.

Based on the model of control systems, a negative feedback loop is a cause-effect chain in which an increase in input signal results in a decrease in output. A positive feedback loop is one in which an increase in input signal results in an increase in output signal. In this case, to resist is to regard with suspicion or hostility and to act against, and to amplify is to advocate for and to act in support of something.

1) In debate, the input signal is adversarial disagreement. The more competently people debate, the more they increase both conflict and disagreement, resulting in positive feedback.
2) In dialogue, the input signal is clarification. The more competently people engage in dialogue, the more they simultaneously decrease hostility, resulting in negative feedback, and increase understanding, resulting in positive feedback.

3) In diffusion, the input signal can be either adversarial disagreement or clarification. If the disseminator’s (i.e., the sender’s) message is accepted as intended, then negative feedback results, and if the sender’s intended outcome is not achieved, then positive feedback results. In dissemination.
Appendix B

Dialogue Event Field Notes

Appendix B - Sample 1: Scanned image of notes taken at 30 March 2009
Afghanistan Dialogue, (followed by raw data calculation form).
Communication in Conflict and Problem-solving

Dialogue Analysis Form

Dialogue Event Date: 30 Mar 2009

Intro: 5 min + Outro: 2 Min
Expert speaking: ___45min________

Questions (# of them, total time):__ (12) 13 min (3 from Afghans, one unsolicited)

Answers to Questions (# of them, total time):__ (21) 42 min_________

Exchange (# of them, total time):__ (8) 8 min____________________

Facilitator:__ (5 interventions) 7 min____________________

PowerPoint?:__ Yes________

Viewgraph/Overhead?:__ NO________

Speaker/Non-speaker air time ratio = 87/21 = 4.14

Dialogue-exchange/non-dialogue ratio = (based on average of 2 minutes/answer)
24/100 = .24
SFU AFGHANISTAN DIALOGUE: 11 JUN 07

(5:25) Bob A. introductory remarks about the series

(5:29) Intro of guests: Gordon Smith, Michael Capstick, Lauryn Oates, Toor Wesa.

(5:31) Gordon S. – Report [power point] concerned about lack of informed debate, problem complex. Why we went into Afgh. Mistake for us to move focus from Afghanistan to Iraq. Much less aid to Afgh. than Bosnia/Kosovo, underestimation of values of Afgh., Not enough consideration of openness of Border w/Pakistan. NATO’s future, Europeans do not feel same issues we do. Public opinion Re: Rate of assistance f/govt + CIDA, James Dobbins ED, “Beginner’s Guide” (Rand Corp.) w/young man, list of priorities.

(5:43) Questions to Gordon: What effect did US pullout have? (5:44) Gordon longer conf. goes on, tougher for (5:44) And Q: clarifying Question (5:44) Gordon (5:45) Gov’t doesn’t want to be seen talking to me (5:45), (woman) And Q (5:46) back/forth

Afghanistan-accented man AQ: (5:46) Gordon how long will NATO forces stay?
Can/woman AQ: to what extent is regional focus different? Speak to that issue (5:47)

Gordon I agree w/ you, in ideal world yes. Afgh is owed a turnaround in Kandahar before we go. We’ve got to have that debate. → [Bob A invites Lauryn to speak] (5:50) Lauryn –

report “Taking Stock” on how we have progressed/regressed on women’s rights. [power pt] on Canadian women for women in Afghanistan. [invites people to look up website]

[5:53] “role of media in this conflict”, Entertainment, modicum of info, playing sides OR…

to provide info for the public to make informed opinions? “what are untold stories?” →

Map of Pakistan and its role in situation. Canada can play diplomatic role

[5:56] (Lauryn Cont.) “Poppies”, two sides of argument don’t work, need to find middle ground, think creatively. “In Defense” we won’t thru long process of consulting our membership, firm commitment to Canada. Military in Afghan. “Public debate focused on”, Absence of Aghan, Afgh/Canadian voices in debate. “Experts” w/o 1st hand experience. “Guiding Questions” → “why a military mission?” Not for us, they’re not a threat, reason should be to help them, not protect us. Prevention of civil war” [Bob A. gives whisper re: time] bio7 “next slide please” [Bob A gives her 2 more minutes]

“Criticisms of the military mission, next slide. [Bob A, you’ll get more time later] “In
development – is aid reaching Afghans?” + “is it making a difference?” I have millions

more examples, maybe we’ll get to that debate later. (Gill) [Bob A, list for dinner

please…] Questions for Lauryn: AQ (Afghan Man) What is criteria of commitment

(manpower, resources) do you see it happening in future? (6:12) Lauryn - I agree, we

recommended more manpower; need public pressure.

(6:13) AQ older c/woman, “do you see hope for women getting involved in peace

process? Lauryn - [shows slide f/later in power pt.] Lots of gender workshops, (6:16)

(Afghan? Woman – AQ): issues remain same since pre-9/11, war is biggest business in

Afghanistan, one solution is bring in other countries + economies, are various nations

thinking along similar lines? What type of dev.?

(6:19) Lauryn – yes, it’s about making structure, need small bus. + micro credit training.

[side conversations] (6:20) issues linked Afghan. Is 4th poorest country…[Bob,

intervenes] [need internal dialogue] Gordon (6:21) Toor: mis-communication among int’l

orgs, problem – lack of system – what if CIDA leaves? No sustainability
Bob A, does not ministry create a system? (6:23) Toor, they are there to do X, Y, Z. (6:23) Toor: I’m not prepared in writing, I’d be happy to answer Q’s → Bob A –

Minister gave impression that we were trying “herd cats” – you have some intel + knowledge, what’s GAP? (6:24) Toor, grassroots approach → (6:26) AQ “Afgh Man” - I saw on TV 2 Canadian soldiers who stopped villagers, my reaction – why foreigner can ask these Q’s? (6:27) Lauryn – all kinds of stores, one good example – troops donated kites, Taliban forced family to use it as signal… (6:28) Bob A – Toor, have you been stopped? Toor - yes/ (6:29)

Capstick Interviews Fine line between hearts + minds + force. Anecdote @ being shot at by US. Canadian forces trying to put Afghan forces up front, but it’s gonna take time. A matter of balance. Yes, we’ve made mistakes, …we’re learning [hand up] last (6:31) AQ responds why do they show on TV (6:31) (Capst.) advantage or free press. Most media do not lv. Airport, troops call it death watch → AQ again my 2nd question NOTES p.22 of report
(6:33) Gordon – purpose was to get people thinking the unthinkable. [hand up] (6:34)

[Bob A Questions for Toor] AQ – young woman Q for all, I met w/country director in Ottawa, I’m interested in interaction why not legalize? (6:35) (Lauryrn → big pharma co’s,

I’m for legalizing, every yr. ….but there’s alternatives, US supported Turkey, explore options, my concern is US Gov’t. policy is media-oriented not productive. (Bob A.) (6:37)

pass mike to Mike Capstick, FIRST ANNOUNCE FINAL EVENT (6:38) Mike Cap.

‘Batting Cleanup’ I led military team, work’d w/gov’t on civil side. Aim of tonight was to discuss report, prefer another question.

→ (6:41), I agree w/some of report. NATO should not be responsible for non-security-related tasks, int’l institutions not up to (assistance) mission, bad combination: US-dominance + lack of strategic mission in Kabul, no plan, bonn process to est. gov’t, but no plan>elections.

(6:45) took 4 mos to make plan in 2005, should have been done in 2002. → vision statement leadership of insurgency has not entered polit. Process, + renounce violence,
most Taliban are not ideologues, they are criminals “day fighters”. Peace conference is pipe dream. → Poppy is complicated issue.

(6:54) single biggest obstacle. Effect on social fabric. Afghan farmer is end of global chain (Russian, Serbian…) sharecropping model compares with Canada Wheat Board.

(6:59) It’s a well balanced document. London conference only agreed on “what” now need “how.” (7:01) we’re there for them, not over security. I'll end. (Bob A.) asks Toor: “to reflect” on this. (7:02) Toor [I cannot understand/hear clearly his answer/response] 7:06: Question, [Bob A. warns, pose this as Question]

Afghan? Man A. Q: I have a quick comment…2 issues about Pakistan

7:08: [Bob A intervenes, let’s go to panel] → Capstick “I hear what you’re saying”…[Pakis?/Afghan? man argues]/woman in audience complains he is being selfish: Lauryn responds to question. Bob asks for Toor + Gordon to comment too. (7:15) (same man pitches in.) Gordon speaks up (ignores him + addresses Bob A.) comment on NATO council, need political solution, legalize drugs (Geo Schultz even said so) Bob A. 1 more Q

(7:17) (Mike?), alienation of foreign troops. (7:18) (Gordon) – boots on GND, Capstick (7:19) Airpower is substitute for boots on GND. (Bob A.) (last Q) (7:22) What is a private industry? Toor: (7:23) only private sector [free flow of comments] Lauryn.

//Sof Pasuk (7:25)