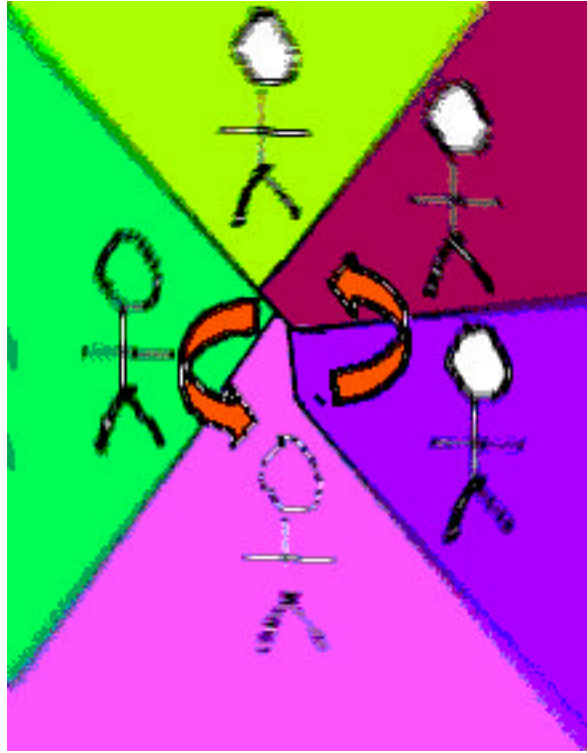


ro/ta/tion - 2



We begin in J.O. Goodscratch (or as it is affectionately referred to by residents, "Scratch") - a town near the southern coast of Stasis.

The founder of the place was some person named Neptacious Getwithit, who stopped in this little dust bowl of a town for (you guessed it) a "goodscratch."

J.O.? Different people had different stories.

J.O. might be for Jacobin O'leary - the person Neptacious was looking for (who might have been something of a swinger). It might be for Jugular Overwrought - the person who shot Neptacious in the butt while courting Jacobin (exactly who Jugular was involved with has been the subject of much speculation). Or, it just might be for the fact that Neptacious was something of a jerk off.

Whatever the intriguing but unessential origins, over time Goodscratch had blown up into a huge industrial city, only to deflate to a middle-size, post-industrial township, only to deflate further to an empty neo-pomo-apocalyptic-profit-challenged-pseudo-village: a place with numerous empty buildings, one bagel shop, and 4 lane streets, but only an occasional bicycle moving during rush hour and ever-so-infrequently an ancient trolley-car (which only a few years earlier was perceived to be a novel purchase for the town, but now seemed merely to indicate exactly how out of the step they were).

The consequence - J.O. is now something of a ghost town with companies leaving by the week - in fact, there was only about 8 left. Rumor had it that 3 more were scheduled to leave by the end of the month.

Our story does not concern the whole town, however - just one small part of it. In fact, just one building: the House of Overly Charitable

Bastards.

Within this building there was a meeting being planned for the representatives of the 5 biggest community leaders in town. The group was brought together to talk about what should be done about the decaying "Scratch". In the group was

- the Reverend's person (REV),
- Council-person Humblebee's person (HUM),
- the NONCOMMITALS' person (abbreviated M – the letter in the middle of their name, counted from the front as well as the back),
- Freedumb Incorporated's person (FREE), and
- F.L.A.T.M.O.U.T.H.'s person (flagellating loudmouths and teachers mad over underdevelopment that hinders, abbreviated FLAT).

All these people represented each of their respective organizations leaders' they were like "seconds" – the person who comes before the person you want arrives.

Also in attendance were three people from the community center: Prudence (the director), Patience (the secretary) and Pestilence (the resident spiritual advisor) – "the bastards of charity" as they were affectionately known in the neighborhood.

[So you know, there were 5 days before the event was supposed to take place and the budget was set at \$750.]

The beginning of the meeting was somewhat intense as all of the individuals in the meeting were attempting to get their various points across regarding what they wanted to see take place.

All eyes shifted to the door, however, when a very enthusiastic and loud voice stated in the background that,

"I have come to help people. Is this a place where I can get this

With this statement, BE enters the picture. After a glance and about a second of their time, the various reps turned their attention back to their business. During the pause, Patience had walked over to make introductions and greet the spirited youth in an appropriate manner.

"Hello...my name is Patience," said the secretary quite enthusiastically. "You have no idea how pleasant that was for me, for all of us. It's nice to know people still feel this way."

"Well, I do. Sorry (extending a hand) My name is BE - How can I help?"

(grasping and shaking the hand) "The pleasure is mine... BE. With regards to help...(thinking for a moment) we could use some assistance setting up. We're going to have a big meeting here in the next couple of days and I'm sure that we can use someone."

"Excellent" said BE.

"Go in the back and see our resident fixer-up-person, Backhed."

"Backhed?..." BE uttered.

"Yeah, you'll understand when you meet..."

Having received some direction, BE picked up the sole possession carried - a bag with some clothes and the "book that never closes" (which we'll

talk about a little later) and hurriedly walked down a long corridor toward the back of the building. This quickly turned into a left, a right, another left and a stairwell moving downward.

Struggling to find the way and occasionally calling out, BE inevitably found someone.

When BE saw (or rather encountered) the person called Backhed, the name was clear. Patience wasn't joking.

Backhed was so busy moving this and fixing that that all you could ever see was the back of the head. Indeed, these "bodily functions" were performed so fast that evidently the "a" never had a chance to get into the name. True to form, the "e" just moved over to the "d" and they all just got to work.

The two greeted each other for a second and then Backhed was showing BE where different tools were. As if remembering something, Backhed turned toward the door.

"no time to waste," said Backhed. "I'm sorry, we are supposed to assist the necks upstairs and..."

Before BE knew it, Backhed was off, grabbing BE along the way, and they went quickly upstairs, against the wall and into the flurry (which was now going full force - everything moving in a high paced staccato with everyone's head bobbing back and forth like a tennis match as each speaker exploded. This is why Backhed called them necks by the way (it was felt that this was the only part of their bodies that worked properly. The rest, Backhed suggested, "didn't see much action").

Upstairs, all seemed to move in a hurried flash or a fuzzy blur, except for BE and the three leaders of the House. For them, things moved at a somewhat slower, more realistic, what some might call normal pace.

The rest were just getting started.

HUM – “Oh no, oh no, that will not do,” stated the person from the Council-person’s office. “Look... there are 5 seats at the table, with the moderator on the right side and Council-person Humblebee on the far left. The Council-person must be closer to the moderator. Position is everything.”

FREE – “Freedom inc’s person cannot be turning to the right. Our persons’ back spasms if strained on that side. Very unbecoming. No can do.”

REV JR. – “We don’t see what the problem is.”

M – “Of course you don’t ... your on the right side. Right next to the moderator.”

The basic tempo of the room was one of incessant movement around in a circle, ever-spinning, ever-moving, first that one speaking, then that one, then another across the room to someone else, then another direction, a pause and then it continues.

FREE – “There is no wrong side to be on people,” interrupting Freedom inc, “We are all working for the same cause...”

FLAT – “Oh, Please... this must be your first movement outing.”

HUM – (chiming right in) “Look... we do not mean the ‘right’ side as in correct or good. We mean the right side, as in the opposite of left... Idiot,” the last part being mumbled.

FREE – “oh, my mistake.”

FLAT – “the REV should move their seat.”

REV JR. – “Well, why must we move? If the lord placed us here, then it must be the place to be.”

This met with blank stares and a few heads being turned toward and a few moving away.

HUM – “Who set this order anyway?” looking around.

Patience – “We at the center.”

M – “Oh, so that’s the order that calls your tune: REV JR., FLATMOUTH...”

Pestilence (barking) – “That is not fair. We used no such criteria.”

REV JR. – “Oh... so you do have a pecking order? You just didn’t

Prudence – “That is not what was meant.”

M – “Oh, it just came out that way? Do you think the M’s are stupid? Ain’t nothing coincidental. The BEAst has a hand in everything.”

Prudence – “what beast?” whispered to the group, “Patience is the

Patience – “We could just move all the seats around.”

REV JR. – “And what would the order be then? We will not allow ourselves to be put in a bad light.”

FLAT (mumbles) – “Oh, you’re going to be sitting outside then,

REV JR. – “What?”

FLAT (smiling) – “nothing.”

HUM – “Well, what will you do?”

The group pauses thoughtfully. The silence, however, is broken rather fast.

FLAT – “If we don’t like what you come up with, we flagellators will just have to back out.”

FREE – “Here, here... we must be closer to the moderator.”

Deliberating, the group went back to being quiet.

After about 10 minutes, BE broke the silence.

BE – (nervously) “Excuse me for jumping in here... but... why not put the moderator in the center of the table?”

Prudence and HUM (simultaneously) – “What?”

BE – “Well... rather than have a rectangle with people lined up along the side, make the table circular and put the moderator in the middle. This way everybody would be the same distance from them and no one would be closer.”

All in unison – “hhmmmmmmmmmm.”

Different people –

“That might work.”

“Interesting.”

“Doable perhaps.”

With that, the five reps pulled out cell phones and walked to opposite sides of the room leaving the three community center personnel, Backhed and BE looking at each other.

Patience (whispering to BE) – “good thinking.”

Prudence – “yeah.”

Backhed (whispering) – “dang fool.”

After a few seconds, the reps trickled back to their seats and sat down.

REV JR. – “we’re in”

FLAT – “ok”

M – “acceptable”

HUM – “very well”

FREE – “we could be down with that”

Patience (seizing a rare moment of agreement jumps in as if to rap up) – “well then... perhaps we should just end things there and meet tomorrow... say 9am?”

Negotiating briefly, the reps agree on 10:17 and leave. Prudence, Patience and Pestilence just kind of look at each other – exhausted. Patience asks Backhed if it could be handled and with a nod, the three of them take off into some office, talking along the way.

BE (looking confused) – “Are things always like this?”

Backhed (contorting the face with a mixture of disgust and impatience) – “we ain’t got no time for that stuff. I leave those questions to the three necks in there. I’m the ... (pausing to search for a word) I’m the body of this place and body got work to do. Philosophize when you done working.”

Backhed started looking at some wood lying against a wall.

“Alright youngster, hope ya aint got no plans tonight... thanks to you, you just increased our workload with your little silly suggestion. We gots to build this hear rountable of equal access.”

BE – “no, I don’t have any plans.”

Backhed – “good! (pointing over to the wall) Go over there and get

BE (somewhat hesitantly) – “Actually... I don’t have a place to

Backhed – “I didn’t think so.”

BE – “how did you know?”

Backhed – “What am I just off the boat? You walk in my place of bizness with that look on your face. Willing, but trouble. Yeah,

guarantee that they got out of the way for a while, the store was created, undesirable mates were repeatedly occupied, and those able to finally free themselves from boredom as well as aggravation began to form an underground support system for LIBERATORE (donating funds to the organization – unsolicited, and coming up with new ideas for how the store could expand).

This night the purchases were minimal:

Extra nails –

\$10

Before walking off Backhed said, "It's all just getting started

Grumbling a bit, pif said good night and left BE alone.

Sitting on the cot, BE picked up "the book that never closes." This was done at different moments during the day. Actually, today was the first day that BE had not picked it up at least once. This would not be done again.

The book? Well, the book was required reading for a group that BE used to be connected with called "the people". The people were a radical group that advocated changing the price of traffic tickets to bring about an improvement in the "SYSTEM." (This was always said loud, with a certain mixture of hostility, aggression, distrust, and mystery and with your fingers punctuating different words in the sentence – like, "you have to watch out because the SYSTEM will do it to you [punctuated words are underlined]).

"The amount of ticket prices," members argued, "was the primary reason why people (not the group, but other folks – this was always confusing) didn't try to do anything."

"people" (not the group, but they could be included here), members argued, "is all set to rip things up, but they are not ready to be taken to jail on some thing about tickets.

You got long lines at the place; no air conditioner; the bathrooms stink ... You go in and before you know it, the whole day is gone, your feet are sore, your tired, you lose your job (cause you know you can't take a whole day off), you can't drive home so you have to take some public transport system – so now you stink, and by the time you get home, you just collapse.

That symbol, that possibility, keeps folks from joining movements. Most think it is the teargas, the fear of nightsticks in the belly, or

not getting what they want. That's nonsense though, it's the ticket problem.

Think BE, that's why places where people get together have those meters in front of them. You can't get nothing done when all you can do is thinking about going back to feed the meter, feeding the SYSTEM.

Think about it. You sit down. Someone is talking to you and all you can do is let them jabber on, glancing at your watch, waiting to go back and feed the meter. They got your attention span by the pocket book, BE. But we got to change that."

"Real power," members continued one day, "existed with revealing truths to people, for once you were inside their heads and you could get them thinking in a way similar to yourself, then they would act on what you suggested. And damn," members would always say, "you can't mess with all those folks out there pushing for stuff. It's a mighty scary thought."

The theory advocated by the group was actually pretty straightforward.

"when folks (people, not the group) racked up traffic tickets, as all folks were likely to do with THE SYSTEM always looking for them, they became scared about taking on the SYSTEM that oppresses them."

"The boot is slavery," the members used to say.

(The boot [or "Toby's shoe"] was the thing that police put on your car when you owed them too much money or you were not able to pay

them when they wanted the money. Generally, it was colored some bright, obnoxious yellow or orange to label you, and scare off others – as they stared at it driving by and remembered where they were.)

According to the People (the group), the current time period was modern day slavery, a chain around the legs of the people (not the group). The key to change and improvement was knowledge and knowledge could only be obtained from one source – yes, the book that never closes.

The book was a 2500 page unpublished manuscript made up of sayings, drawings, and other markings – like the thickness and style of a phone book, only less organized and more interesting.

In the introduction was the following quote:

IMAGINE IF LIVES WERE LIVED BACKWARDS.

PEOPLE WOULD BE BORN AT AGE 75 IN A COCOON ON SOMEONE'S BACK.
(A MALE MOST LIKELY GIVEN THE WEIGHT).
FROM THIS POINT ON THERE BODY WOULD DEGENERATE DOWN TO THE MOMENT
WHERE THEY ENTERED THEIR DEATH-MOTHER AND DISSOLVED.

THEY WOULD COME INTO EXISTENCE KNOWING ALL THAT ONE WOULD ACCUMULATE
OVER THE COURSE OF A NORMAL LIFESPAN.
THEY WOULD HAVE THE INSIGHTS AND MISTAKES ALREADY WITHIN THEIR POSSESSION.
THEY WOULD KNOW WHAT READING, ART, LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, WORK, JOY, AND SADNESS
REALLY MEANT.
THE BEST PART: THEY WOULD GET YOUNGER AND STRONGER WITH THIS WISDOM.

OF COURSE, ONE WONDERS:
HOW OR IF THINGS BE DIFFERENT IF LIVES WERE LIVED BACKWARDS?
WOULD THERE BE LESS INEQUALITY OR MORE?
LESS HATRED? MORE VIOLENCE?
WOULD PEOPLE BE MORE OR LESS WILLING TO STAND UP IN DEFENSE OF SOME WRONG
OR TO CHANGE SOME CONDITION FOR THE BETTER?
IF WE KNEW WHAT IT FELT LIKE BEING AT THE END OF LIFE IN THE BEGINNING,
WOULD WE BE BETTER ABLE TO MOVE THROUGH IT, CHERISHING IT AND IMPROVING IT
OR WOULD WE BE MORE APT TO COURSE THROUGH IT, DANGEROUSLY AND WORSENING IT?

THE QUESTIONS BEAR ASKING EVEN THOUGH WE DO NOT LIVE IN THIS SITUATION.
THEY SPEAK TO THE ISSUE OF WHAT WE CARE ABOUT AND
WHAT WE WOULD DO TO REACH THEM.

DO YOU KNOW? DO YOU CARE?
AS YOU APPROACH DEATH, EVER LOOMING IN THE FUTURE,
ARE YOU COMFORTABLE IN LEAVING THE PLACE THAT YOU EXIST WITHIN
TO THE NEXT GENERATION?
SHOULD IT BE REPAIRED?
IT IS WORTH YOUR TIME TO IMPROVE IT (EVEN A LITTLE),
OR SHOULD THIS BE LEFT FOR THEM TO DEAL WITH? AS YOURS WAS WITH YOU.
WOULD YOUR EXISTENCE HAVE BEEN "BETTER" IF YOUR PARENTS HAD SPENT A LITTLE
TIME TRYING TO IMPROVE THEIR WORLD AND LESS

IN BRIDGE OR GIM OR VACATIONS OR EACH OTHER?
YOUR GRANDPARENTS? YOUR GREAT-GRANDPARENTS?

IF YOU HAD THE WISDOM OF THE OLD WITHIN YOU NOW
(THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LIFE ALREADY LIVED),
WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

JOIN ME IN THE QUEST TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION.

How could you respond to something like this, but continue to read on?

The book itself was taken from some old political scientist who had been compiling information for about 75 years. "The creator" had always skimmed materials, saving what was thought to be important, and later became convinced that it should all fit together somehow. After the passing of the creator, however, the quest to decode the text was delayed.

Indeed, it was only brought back to life when a diskette containing the book was found by the grave-tender in the back pocket of the creator's pants, encountered during the 10 year transplantation of the body into a new holding area.

As there was no next of kin, the grave-tender decided to take it home and take a look into the mysterious person that had been occupying their time.

Fascinated with the contents, the grave-tender became obsessed with the information and began trying to figure out what it meant. The pursuit inevitably drove the person insane and they died 12 years later, mouse in hand, clicking around checking out some obscure reference in the book.

This situation delayed the quest some more until a month after the grave-tender's death, when a cleaning person came to the person's house to perform their weekly duties. Seeing the employer dead, the cleaning person decided that (since they were there) they would clean the apartment anyway – being careful not to disturb the body.

After finishing in the bathroom, the cleaning person decided that they would leave the door open to the house so that a neighbor could report

what had taken place. Not wanting to call the police, because of the potential trouble this would bring, this seemed like the wisest thing to do.

Inevitably the open door brought the wrong kind of person (or the right one depending upon your priorities) and the house was robbed. As a major part of the loot, the computer was taken apart and out of curiosity one of the criminals decided to check out what was on the hard drive before they erased it.

While scanning, the criminal came across a series of files entitled "the book that never closes", they read several of them and became intrigued with the bizarre collection of information. In fact, the criminal became so fascinated that they gave up their life of crime and tried to get it published.

Publication was not easily obtained. Actually, it was denied by everyone who saw the manuscript for they were told that the book didn't really appear to go anywhere, and that (amidst numerous deficiencies) modern story-telling required one thing to be publishable: a simply, understood direction. This led to much distress within the criminal.

Things changed however. One day, when making some extra copies in COPYASECOND in order to continue to find a publisher, a clerk in the store decided to take a copy for their weekly sale of information.

COPYASECOND was a multinational conglomerate that developed and sold ideas on all types of things (interestingly or sadly – again depending upon one's perspective, all of the ideas came from people who copied materials in these stores which, if you haven't guessed by now, was merely a front for COPYASECOND).

The actual theft was rather simple. When individuals gave over their materials to be copied, the organization just kept one copy for themselves. This information was faxed in the national office, sorted into a relevant category, forwarded to the relevant legal department, and then copywritten. When individuals made the copies themselves, the machine itself facilitated the theft. Each machine was programmed to make an internal copy of any material that was copied on it. After the flash of blinding light, one copy would be shot out to the onlooker/copier. Simultaneously, another copy would be shot down into a storage facility, which would be emptied at the store's closing, sent to the national office, and so on.

The most interesting part was that no one upon realizing that they were ripped off could do anything about it. Aside from the immense legal fees that would be engendered, the same defense was used over and over successfully: we told them what we were going to do – copy their stuff, and despite this information they proceeded to come in anyway and go about their business. Sounding reasonable to the legal establishment, they never lost a case.

But sorry, I digress.

While unpacking up the daily goodies from one of the copiers, a clerk glanced at the copy of the "book that never closes" and they also became obsessed with it. In fact, based upon the clerks reading of the information contained within the book, they decided to quit their job, rent out a loft space, and become a cult leader who dedicated themselves to deciphering the sacred text and distributing its message to the public on the net.

According to the list of hits at the bottom of the page, the actual distribution end of the project didn't go so well: the manuscript was only downloaded by 17 individuals. One of these 17 people was extremely important. They became the founding member of the people (the

group) and the book, which was handed down from scholar to death merchant to thief to cultist, was sold for \$9.99 (the .99 was given to a librarian in a small state in Stasis who was trying to decipher some of the more bizarre diagrams and track down some obscure references) and studied daily.

This night, as always, BE held the book and flipped through some of its pages (which were not placed in any order whatsoever) and began to think about what was on them. The book is actually quite important for BE, as we will understand a bit later. To tell these stories, accurately at least, one must confront what is in the book (the ramblings of the unknown author) as well as what happens to/with BE. Indeed, if BE's story is a journey through the heart of a troubled land, a wandering spirit, and those efforts put forward by those people who wish to change it, then so is book itself.

THE OPTIMIST PROCLAIMS WE LIVE IN THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS; AND
THE PESSIMIST FEARS THIS IS TRUE -

JAMES ABELL (THE SILVER STALLION)

This night's quote was as strange as the rest of them...

Reflecting, BE came up on an elbow and tried to figure out what was meant by the statement. Was there really no hope? Is hope merely a function of one's world view?

It was too late for deep thought however.... The weariness of the day had overcome the brain and BE fell asleep as slowly (but as assuredly) as the blanket was being pulled up over the shoulders.

At about 6:45, BE was awoken by some of M's people. BE found out that all of the group's security teams came through the building each morning before the organizational rep came over.

Today, BE was searched, finger printed, photographed, and given a quiz about the Stasis' constitution.

If BE passed, then it meant that BE could read political documents and that BE had to be watched, they said. Although BE could read these (from BE's days with the people – the group), the constitution was never seen – so the failure came quickly and gloriously.

Before things really got started, however, BE picked up the book and read the statement for the day:

"THE CONQUERORS OF OUR DAYS, PEOPLES OR PRINCES, WANT THEIR EMPIRE TO POSSESS A UNIFIED SURFACE OVER WHICH THE SUBERB EYE OF POWER CAN WANDER WITHOUT ENCOUNTERING ANY INEQUALITY WHICH HURTS OR LIMITS ITS VIEW. THE SAME CODE OF LAW, THE SAME MEASURES, THE SAME RULES, AND IF WE COULD GRADUALLY GET THERE, THE SAME LANGUAGE; THAT IS WHAT IS PROCLAIMED AS THE PERFECTION OF THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION...

THE GREAT SLOGAN OF THE DAY IS UNIFORMITY."

- BENJAMIN CONSTANT, DE L'ESPIRIT DE CONQUETE

FREE – removed from public consumption?

REV JR. – who picked this seating arrangement?

Patience – I did this morning.

HUM – Oh, it just came out that way, interesting.

Patience – [just sighed]

FLAT – who sits in front, to the left?

Pestilence – Freedumb inc

FLAT – Here? Here? Here? [– going around the table slowly].

Patience – FLATMOUTH, REV JR., Council-person ...

HUM – where's the camera?

Patience [looking at Prudence]

Prudence – on the left of the stage.

All – oh no! [except REV JR.]

M – M has a mole on the left cheek – no deal.

HUM – My candidate has their back to the camera.

FLAT – We get a horrific angle.

FREE – This sucks!

Pestilence – What now?

HUM – We must have better screen access.

FLAT – Our person cannot sustain this angle for several hours.

REV JR. – Its not all that bad...

FREE – Of course not, you have frontal access. The camera hits your person straight on. We get an ear and some lips.

And so it continued for at least an hour.

The drone was somewhat interrupted by a small voice:

BE – Why don't we just get more cameras?

All in unison – what?

BE – This way each person could have their own frontal view and we can hear what they have to say as well as see them.

HUM – With different screens! We could each have our own screen up there on the curtain.

REV JR. – OK

FREE – who gets to be first?

Pestilence – oh no, please.

M – I believe we can come to an agreement.

FLAT – Lets pick numbers out of a hat.

All – ok

M – whose hat?

FREE – mine

REV JR. – check it out first and make sure that nothing is in it.

HUM – Wait! How will the camera be mounted? IF they are each

placed around the outside, somebody's head could be blocked.

FLAT – that will not do.

M – tis true, tis true.

REV JR. – nope, not at all.

And so it continued for another hour or so.

BE – why not suspend them from the ceiling.

Backhed just looks at him like BE is crazy

All – hhhmmmmmmmmmm

BE – like a “speaker-cam”?

HUM – No, why not have it like the N.U. – put little cameras into the table pointing directly up at the speaker.

Patience – umm

REV JR. – I like it. This will have to be done or we will have to leave.

Pestilence – I'm sure we can do something.

[the five pulled out cell phones and walked to opposite sides of the room]

Patience – good thinking BE.

Prudence – yeah.

[they all come back and sit down]

REV JR. – were in

FLAT – ok

M – yup

HUM – very well

FREE – we could be down with that

Patience – Til tommorow then, 9am. [the bastards of charity walked off talking about canceling programs and shifting funds. The budget was now probably around \$1659.62]

[they all leave]

Backhed – Alright boy, thanks for increasing our workload. Hope you aint got no plans tonight and no mo bright ideas tommorow. We gots to build this hear camera projectile thingy.

BE just kind of looked at him.

They worked all night getting wood, sanding, painting, cutting. They then put it on the stage at about 4 am and went to sleep. "You ain't seen nothin yet," Backhed mentioned again before they went to sleep.

5 used cameras	\$439.27
mini-camera stands	\$17.43
bandaids (BE had a little accident)	<u>\$5.14</u>

\$461.84
overbudget \$

As BE moved to open the book, catching a glimpse of some diagram, it seemed to be quite clear that frequently words and pictures contained there soothed; Other times they just seem to scathe. Utterly exhausted, sleep beckoned and the book was put back down underneath the bed.

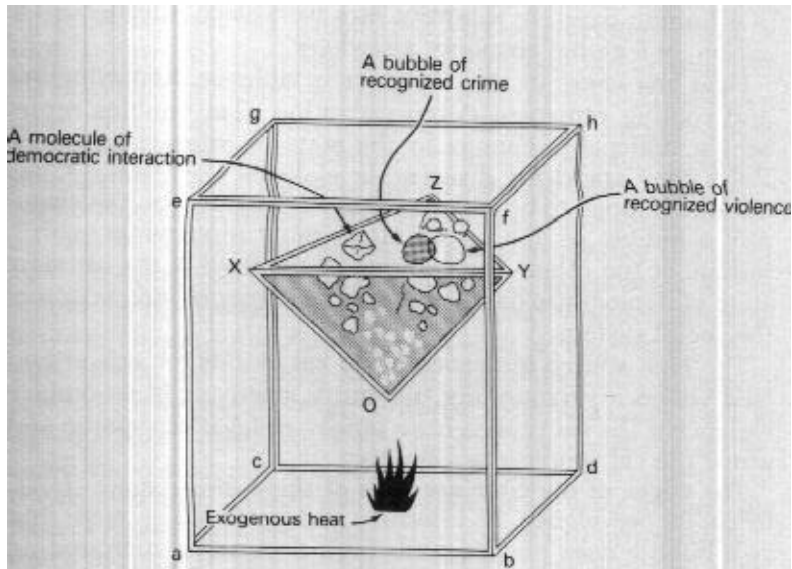


Diagram 4: The Schlegel Vat of Violence

OXYZ = the Schlegel vat of violence = any social system

X = intensity of violence

Y = prevalence of violence

Z = duration of violence

O = bottom of glass structure

abcdefgh = social interaction exogenous to the social system plus formal social control initiatives on the social system

pepinsky diagram

Yeah, there was going to be some bubbling, BE thought. The heat was turning up.

BE was awoken at about 6:45 by some of FLATMOUTH's people. He was searched again, finger printed, and photographed. The quiz was skipped, but a urine-analysis test was applied.

At 9 am the meeting started back up again. All 8 people walked over to the table and HUM started it up again.

HUM – I've been thinking...

The center staff looked at each other.

HUM – ... we still have not resolved who gets to sit where. There will still be somebody's back to the audience. This could be seen as rude and disrespectful to the audience as well as the thousands of home viewers that will wish to see their council-person favorably projected. My person cannot be affiliated with such behavior.

REV JR. – I agree.

Patience – uummmmmmmmmmm (looking at BE)

BE – we could rotate the seats?

FREE – like that children's game? Boy, please.

FLAT – Who do you think you are dealing with here? We at FLATMOUTH cannot have our representative jumping up and down, moving about as if they are confused. We just can't do that.

They must appear calm, cool, and in control – even if they aren't.

HUM – True. Movement is not putting forward a strong statement. It appears to lack commitment; stick-to-it-tive-ness.

Patience – What if the people stayed put, but the table moved?

All – looking at each other quizzically...

Patience – What if the table rotated, therefore, all people would have their back to the audience for the same amount of time? This would increase the budget, but...

REV JR. – our representatives, the voices of the people would not look disrespectful.

M – True, very true.

FLAT – who would monitor the rotation time?

REV JR. – one of our people could do it; They have watches.

HUM – I don't think so.

M – We will need a monitoring post.

All – turn around looking

FLAT – This wall (pointing up). Up there would be fine.

All – (nod in agreement)

Phones ring, they all pick up their cells and move to opposite corners.

HUM – good day, other business

M – yes, later.

FLAT – til tommorow

FREE – we could be down with that, but we have to go up outta here now.

REV JR. – bye.

The staff just sat there for a minute and then walked off. After a pause, patience spoke.

Patience – thanks again BE. [still can't tell if the tone was sarcastic]

Pestilence – BE? What about you... Rotating tables?

Patience – What else were we going to do?

BE – (looking at Backhed) did I do something wrong?

Backhed – Nope. Just get the tools, JO.

BE just kind of looked at him, got the tools, worked until the wee hours on the new construction, and fell asleep.

1 small motor	\$75.00
2 large tubes	\$40.00
1 huge rubber band	<u>\$52.50</u>
	\$167.50
overbudget \$	

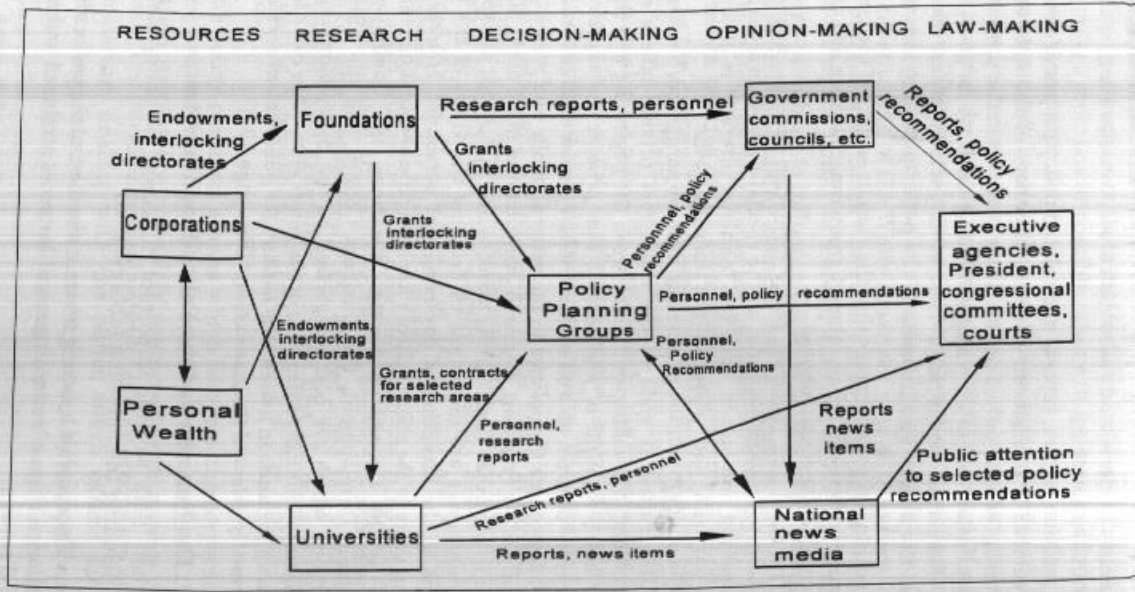


Table 9-1 Cited from *The Powers That Be*, G.W. Domhoff, p. 63.

BE was wide awake this time at 6:45 when REV JR.'s person step into the sleeping area. They just kind of looked at each other and moved on. No search, no finger printing, no photos, no quiz.

At 9 am the meeting started back up again. All 8 people walked over to the stage, checked out the slow, circular motion, and the Freedumb inc person started it up again.

FREE – We've been thinking...

The staff just looks at each other in anticipation and disgust.

FREE – although rotation helps with visibility, the people in the back wont be seen except for certain moments. That won't do.

Patience – Why not?

FREE – Well, the people will think that representative while in the back are less active, less committed.

HUM – Precisely.

REV JR. – the back needs to be tilted slightly.

Prudence – tilted?

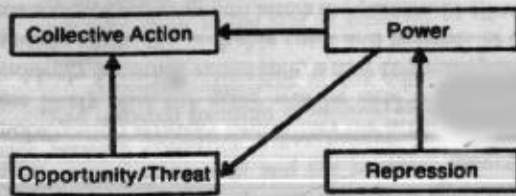
FLAT – yes, a tilt to show all community leaders

Patience – can that be done Backhed?

He nods. Anticipated cost: \$450; overbudget - .

- 1 Collective action costs something.
 - 2 All contenders count costs.
 - 3 Collective action brings benefits, in the form of collective goods.
 - 4 Contenders continuously weigh expected costs against expected benefits.
- Both costs and benefits are uncertain because (a) contenders have imperfect information about the current state of the polity; (b) all parties engage in strategic interaction.

We sum up the relevant costs and benefits under the headings repression/facilitation, power, and opportunity/threat. On the opportunity side, the main relationships in the model run:



tilly – from mobilization to revolution

Patience – ok?

All – nod approvingly

After a brief pause, the consensus is somewhat shaken.

BE – how will the people stay in their seats when it is raised?

HUM – Good thinking. Hmmmmmm.

REV JR. – Seat belts.

All – hmmm mmmmmmmmmmm

Expected cost: \$12 per seat belt; overbudget – .

M – who will control the buckle release?

Patience – Why don't we have each person handle their own.

All – hmmm mmmmmmmmm. Ok.

M – What about the speed of the table movement, who controls that?

Patience – We will?

Anticipated cost \$115; overbudget – .

M – No, we will have to have someone monitoring that.

FLAT – We as well.

FREE – And us, of course.

HUM – We will all have representatives present.

Prudence – ok, everyone will be standing there watching.

M – I have another concern.

Patience – yes.

M – Our representative will require something to drink.

FREE – Yes, of course, mouths do get dry.

REV JR. – they do, they do.

FLAT – No, we cannot have our people with dry mouths, it makes them look desperate.

HUM – Yes, if they cannot handle their own thirst, they won't appear capable of handling the people's needs.

FREE – the needs, yes, the needs.

Patience – This one we have covered. There will be water between each speaker.

HUM – Water?

BE – How will it stay on the table with it rotating and tilting?

Patience – One thing at a time. HUM, what would you like?

HUM – carbonated water?

M – freshly squeezed lemonade, with one ice cube

FREE – herbal tea

FLAT – soda pop

REV JR. – vodka

The others just kind of stare at the rep.

REV JR. – our representative gets a little nervous at these things.

Beverage cost: \$150; overbudget - .

After a few minutes pass:

Patience – May we now move to other business?

All – Mumble, nods, Mumble, nods

Patience – Alright, we have picked up advertising at three radio stations as well as 2 tv spots for no cost.

Pestilence – (at a whisper) thank god...

HUM – Any what, may I ask, is the order of the names in the ad?

M – why did we not see the advertisement?

FREE – we must approve of such things, to make sure that the names are spelled correctly and to make sure that they meet our standards. Image is everything they say.

FLAT – drink your hunger...

Patience – huh?

FLAT – just a saying...

REV JR. – what in the hell does that have to do with anything?

FLAT – sorry.

BE – the names could be listed alphabetically.

All (except REV JR.) – nope

BE – Age?

All (except FLAT) – nope

BE – Gender?

All (except M) – nope

Pestilence – Why don't we randomly switch them around throughout the day?

All – mmmmmmmmm, well ok.

M – How will the names be selected?

BE – We can randomly pick names out of a hat.

Backhed – Why don't we use that lottery machine that we built back in '52?

All – ok

Expected repair: \$25; over budget - .

Patience – Now, maybe we can finally get to the agenda. What shall we talk about?

Everyone kind of sat there.

Prudence – Why don't we address these companies that keep pulling out?

Different folks – ok, yes, right on, of course, amen...

Patience – Which one? ... Megacorp?

REV JR. – They aren't that bad.

Patience – Mediamegamonsterconglomerato?

FLAT – No, we are engaged with a lawsuit with them that precludes any discussion of their activities in Stasis.

Patience – Sheepeunoch Products inc?

Prudence – No, they give a lot of money to the center.

Patience – Death Delivery 100?

FREE – No.

Patience – Why not?

FREE – We have a certain connection with the organization that cannot be disclosed at present. But it precludes us from contesting them in any activity that might be taken against them. At least, of

course, until the connection becomes resolved. I would urge all of you to assist us with this matter.

The staff just kind of looked at each other and the other organizational representatives just nodded.

Again breaking the ice,

BE – Maybe we shouldn't talk about specific groups. How about subjects?

Patience – Good. How about Closings? ... Or, mass firings?

HUM – too sensitive. We could unduly offend some folks that might be willing to help otherwise.

Patience – golden parachutes that enable these executives to leave a company and make a bunch of cash when it collapses?

FLAT – there is a lawsuit pending that precludes discussion of the subject.

Patience – oh. What about new industries? You know, re-investment?

M – like what?

Patience – I don't know specifically, but perhaps we could open that up for discussion.

FREE – We don't know what to say on this issue.

REV JR. – You mean suggest something?

Prudence – Yeah! Isn't that what you're supp...

And just then a thunderous, KABOOM was heard in the background and a cloud of dust moved across the room. As everyone turned around, they could see that the stage had collapsed from the weight of all the hardware put on it, the ceiling caved in, and a big cloud of dust rose from the ground to cover everybody. Nobody was hurt. Everybody was just a little stunned.

Anticipated cost: \$5,000; over budget - .

HUM started after about 10 minutes of silence. The others grabbed their cells and walked to opposite sides of the room.

HUM – What a tragedy?

Backhed – BE, get a broom.

BE just kind of stared at him. Outside one could hear the firetrucks and rescue squads coming toward the center. Patience just kind of sat there, in shock. Prudence started to cry. Pestilence started picking through the rubble, more in disgust than in an effort to actually try to salvage anything.

Coming back toward the center of the room, the necks started up again.

REV JR. – I know we are now mourning the tragic, tragic destruction of an old, old mainstay in the community. But we must, we must move on. This might not be the right time, but we have to address the subject. The people require it. We could have

the meeting at our church...

At that point, everyone just kind of stopped, suspended in mid-sentence as they all turned to look at REV JR... As if on cue, with the emergency trucks arriving as well as the local media, the different people stepped toward the doors and outside to meet the press.

The group was remarkably clean (given what had just happened), each punctuating the tragedy of the occurrence, and the upcoming press conferences that were to be held about the matter.

True to form, M declared that there would be a full investigation to consider the domestic terrorism levied upon people who attempt to challenge the system. REV advocated a return to the morals that helped make Scratch a power beacon for the rest of Stasis to follow – which was to be the subject of the upcoming sermon. Each had their own take on why the tragedy happened, who was responsible, and what should be done about it. Backhed was back cleaning up the stage, assessing the damage to the building, and using the parts from the wreckage to fix up other parts of the structure that demanded immediate attention.

BE swept for a while, but after an hour or two this just seemed kind of fruitless and thus BE had decided that it was time to go. BE walked into the back and downstairs, put on the knapsack and started to leave.

Between screwing, hammering and sanding, Backhed caught a glimpse and waved goodbye. BE thought about asking what JO meant, but it was concluded that the name and this place was just beyond understanding.

Walking out of town and glancing down at the book, BE read:

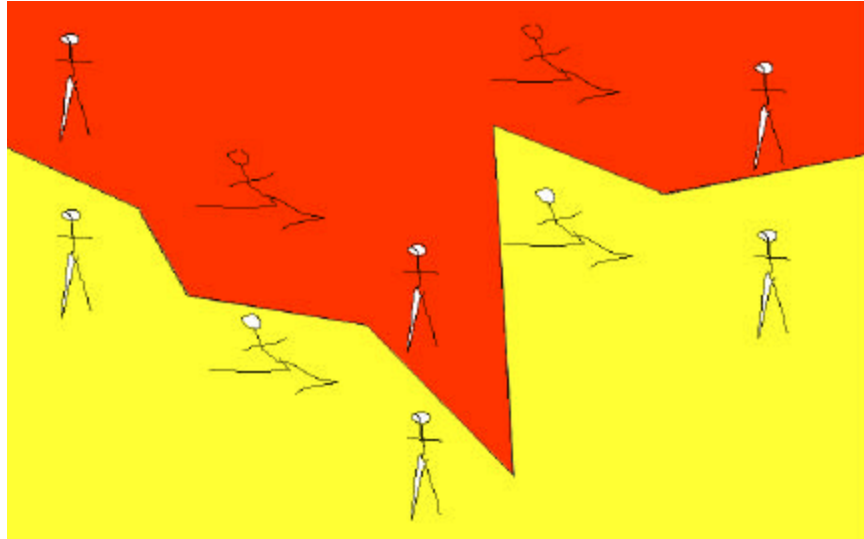
"LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE PIMPS HAVE TAKEN OVER THE WORLD.
THEY DON'T DO ANYTHING,
THEY DON'T MAKE ANYTHING -
THEY JUST STAND THERE AND TAKE THERE (U).

JEAN GIRAUDOUX (THE MADWOMAN OF (HAILLOT)

Yeah, BE thought, that makes sense...

poli-pimps and movement hoes...

A Symmetry - 5



FREEDOM IS A POWERFUL ANIMAL THAT FIGHTS THE BARRIERS, AND
SOMETIMES MAKES PEOPLE WISH FOR HIGHER FENCES.

LANCE MORROW (UNKNOWN)

print shop and made about 10,000 flyers.

Before everyone went to sleep, they took flyers, mapped out their distribution zones and took off. BE, Pif and Jamal stayed a little while longer just to make sure that everything was ready to go. Please at their level of preparation they decided to retire.

I don't know if you have ever passed out flyers or anything but, let me see, it is not pleasing, enjoyable work. You are standing outside in varied

types of weather (heat, rain, wind, snow, and those boring days of endless sunshine). You come up with different ways to try to get through to the customer or, as we suggest, the participant. Referring to the person that you are trying to contact as a customer the group felt that this was trivializing what it is that we try to do and it insults the people. Nevertheless, most people tended to look at what we did as selling.

People would give us a nod trying to pre-empt the delivery. They would give you shrug, the shoulder, the finger. They would walk across the street and try to avoid the whole interaction.

No thank you is the most familiar comment. The responses don't just stop there however. More creative ones include:

- oh, I got one already on the other block (as we had mapped out the entire city this wasn't possible);
- sorry, I don't take things from strangers;
- hey look alright already, you people are everywhere bothering people.
- I have cancer, just leave me alone with your little pieces of paper so that I may die in peace;
- Don't you worry about the fact that you have killed off a whole bunch of trees and contributing to the high level of trash being left all over the floor.

The people had a million and one reasons for not acknowledging you.

The majority however will take your material and in the span of about 5 to 20 steps, they will drop your stuff on the floor or look for a trashcan. This is particularly frustrating for after a day of trying to distribute information (emptying your bag) and you have given all that you have and you are making your way back to the compound, you take a few steps and all over the floor your days work is littered; All of it.

Each of the members experienced the same the thing. Each also

had a different response. Some screamed, some cried, some picked up their stuff, some attempted to distribute the fallen merchandise – after cleaning off the paper knocking off a variety of messiness off of the back, some just shrugged and returned back to base. After about a week of this ... strategy, or lack thereof, the members had become somewhat dejected.

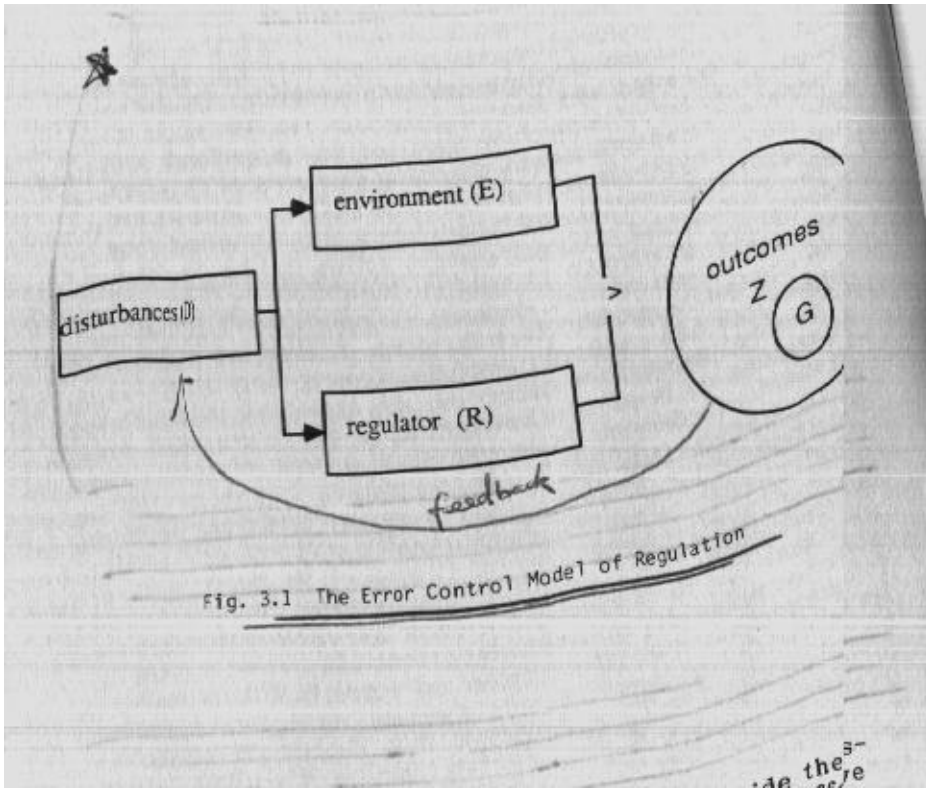


Fig. 3.1 The Error Control Model of Regulation

the³⁻
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Simultaneously however on the other side of town a group of organized concerned citizens had gotten together for they were upset about the large amount of trash now being left around the city by this particular group. In fact they argued that all the group was doing was adding to the litter of the city and decreasing the value of the property and the aesthetic bounty of the landscape. They concluded that something needed to be done and needed to be done soon.

The following week, this group went before city council and pleaded their case. City council had argued that they had already allocated money toward this end and that they were not going to do any more. The citizens group was not satisfied with this however. What they started doing the next day was going to be an important step, not for activism mind you (although that is precisely what it involved). Rather, it would be a major step for stasis (the position, the outcome not the place).

What the citizens group started to do was hang out around the organizational members when they handed out pamphlets. They stayed about 10 or 15 feet from them with a huge orange bag that said "pamphlet trash co." – in which case they would just stand around and stick out their hands, arms, hearts and bags to get people to deposit the pamphlets after they picked them up.

All they would say to this was "thank you for your deposit the citizens appreciate it." Smile and leave.

Needless to say the members were not happy about this. After a while they began to realize what was going on. It was kind of hard to miss these people following you around all over the city and then standing right behind you with a big orange bag, encouraging people to throw out what you just gave them.

This led to more than one confrontation: you had those members that would try to scare these people off (one screamed in the middle of

the street "help a fellow citizen, I'm being attacked"); some would try to walk and go in different directions, hiding behind cars, running into restaurants and going out the back way and sliding out bathroom windows – anything to try to lose these people so that they can get back to the business of distributing the manifesto to the population in need, so that they can get back to the business of dropping them on the floor.

Whatever the problems presented by the citizens group, this last problem was by far the most vexing. BE came up with the idea that maybe the people weren't really able to get into what the pamphlet had to say because the printing was too small. BE rushed to the front of the room one day, grabbing another member by the hand so that they can simulate the transaction.

Walk up to me slowly, BE commanded. What can you see from there? How much of the material can you see from there – BE kept asking at different distances. Now grab one and start to walk. Seeing the person slow down BE jolted them, no keep walking at your normal pace and try to read. The point was clear: you really couldn't read anything unless you stopped and nobody was going to stop because they really didn't know why they should stop.

Well that is what we are for, one of the members started. We are there to direct them, explain to them what we are about.

Come on, BE retorted. Do you think they are going to listen to somebody passing out flyers on the street. We been out there for days and I see people on every other corner passing out stuff and I also see people walking right on by them. They look at them like they are scum.

Well they are, another member chimed in. They are just trying to hook the person into buying something.

So are we, stated ephipany, really seriously. As far as the participants are concerned, we are doing the same thing, piddling our

little wares on little pieces of paper. I agree with BE, we need to get a little bit bigger, a little bit bolder with the approach.

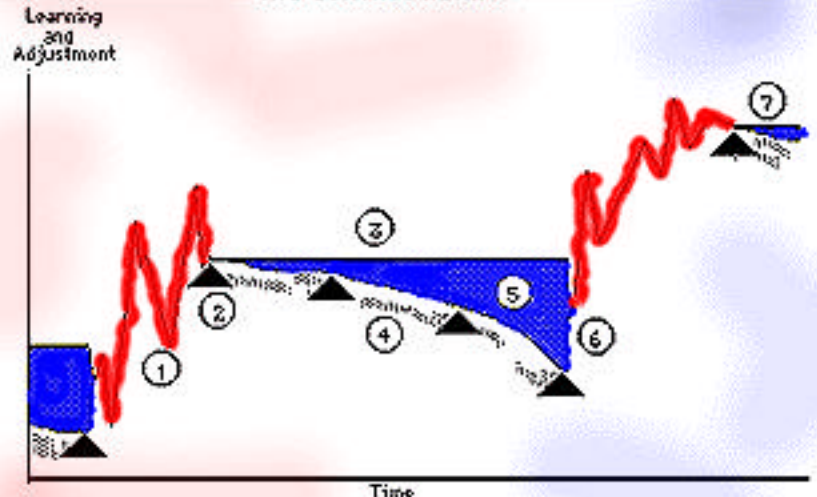
Yeah, the others added. Make it so they can't ignore us. He came up with the idea that they should use things that they used to use back in the old days – huge cardboard signs attached to the front and back of their bodies with cushioned ropes slung over the shoulders (the cushions being for comfort). Parts of the message could be distributed with these huge signs as the members walked around town. The problem of course was which parts of the message.

One of the members realized that the whole manifesto wouldn't fit on one or even a few boards. In fact, it was clear that only a few points could be raised. The basically needed to figure out what should be put on the boards to represent the manifesto and lead someone to be interested enough to read the whole thing. They figured out that if the boards were 4 by 5, if writing was put on the front as well as the back and if they had several members go around together, between them they could cover quite a bit across at any one point in time.

And thus it began:

rows of 3 or 4 members at once walking around the city in succession so that people could read one, then look at another, and then another. This seemed to be a little bit more effective than the previous mechanism because there was really nothing for anybody to take (unless they stopped you to get more information), you weren't really handing anybody anything. This eliminated the awkwardness of the physical transaction. People could just kind of glance from a distance and walk by, but in this situation, they would actually be able to see some of what the manifesto said.

The Conflict Helix



- KEY**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. CONFLICT | 5. GAP |
| 2. BALANCE OF POWERS | 6. DISRUPTION OF STRUCTURE OF EXPECTATIONS |
| 3. STRUCTURE OF EXPECTATIONS | 7. NEW STRUCTURE OF EXPECTATIONS |
| 4. CHANGE IN THE BALANCE OF POWERS | |

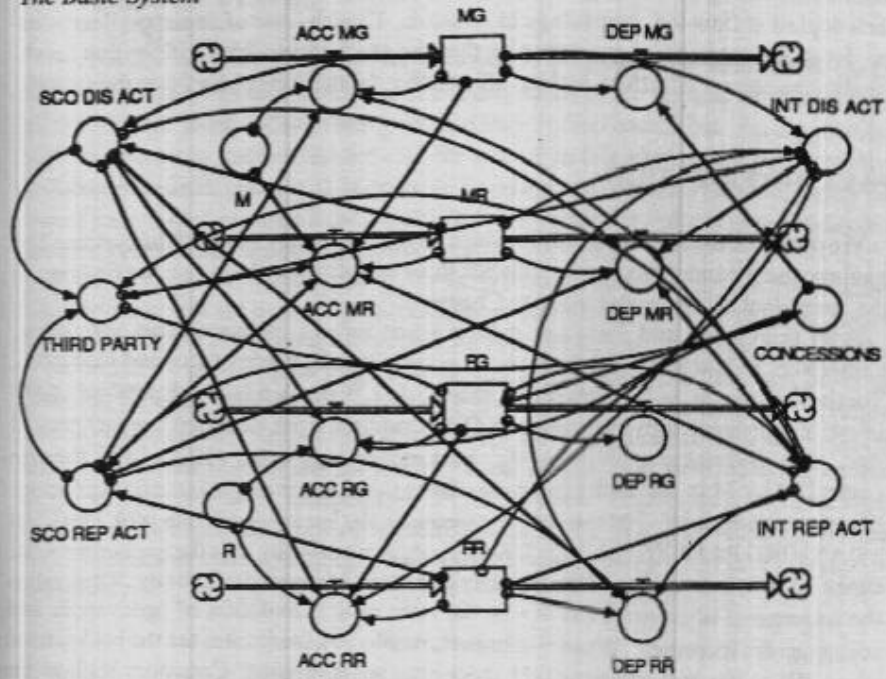
The group of concerned citizens didn't like this at all. They again went in front of city council and now they argued that the group was littering, not with their papers but with their words - Their big, huge, abusive, imposing words attached to these immense things that they were walking around with obstructing individuals walking and that the path traversed by people to get to different locations was now being blocked by these structures. This could lead to gangrene they suggested because as individuals tried to get around them they would get poked and stabbed by nails and splinters left in the boards. This would lead to a series of rashes and blisters that would be spread all throughout the city causing a medical emergency.

City council was still unmoved. Again taking the initiative the group of concerned citizens figured that the best way to handle the situation was to construct walkways that would be wide enough for people but not wide enough for these placards. They in fact would be wide enough for two normal size individuals to pass one another, which is exactly the number of people that should be walking on the sidewalk anyway and therefore they came up with these configurations that would eliminate all wide "harassment points" as they referred to locations where group members attempted to convey information.

And thus it began: for days, weeks and inevitably months the citizens group, out of their own pocket and after bringing enough votes into city council, developed their "pathways to freedom." Construction work was taking place all over the place and nobody knew what was happening.

When completed, the logic of the plan had proved quite successful. Members of the group could not walk through the pathways, at least not straight. They had to turn sideways in order to get through and people could just zip on by them without slowing down. This was somewhat uncomfortable because the signs were kind of heavy enough by themselves let alone trying to shuffle sideways while trying to carry them.

The Basic System



Note: ACCMG: Accumulation of movement grievances; MG: Movement grievances; DEP MG: Depletion of movement grievances; SCO DIS ACT: Scope of dissident activity; INT DIS ACT: Intensity of dissident activity; M: Movement response; ACC MR: Accumulation of movement resources; MR: Movement resources; DEP MR: Depletion of movement resources; THIRD PARTY: Support of the movement by third parties; CONCESSIONS: Regime concessions to the movement; ACC RG: Accumulation of regime grievances; RG: Regime grievances; DEP RG: Depletion of regime grievances; SCO REP ACT: Scope of repressive activity; INT REP ACT: Intensity of repressive activity; R: Regime response; ACC RR: Accumulation of regime resources; RR: Regime resources; DEP RR: Depletion of regime resources.

As a response, the members decided that they would try standing in a row. Standing in a row was somewhat inefficient because viewers could only see one side. Individuals would then have to slide along a wall and when in the street they would have to turn around and lay the other way. This became real problematic if the person decided to go down another street. The members would then divide up and try to head the individual off. They were often successful with this strategy but the message would always be merely a fraction of what it was supposed to be.

The frustration of this strategy took a toll on the members and they decided to go back to the compound. Epiphany came up with the idea that since one dimension had been cut off they should move in another one. In this case you would go up. Then they realized that if you were standing on one side of the little sidewalk area you could only read so much. In response they decided to find some material that would bend near the top. This would fit the space and would allow someone to read more of the manifesto/

Because of the sheer size of the new placard they could only make 10 of them and it required about 8 to 10 members to carry them. This limited the amount of the city that the members could cover at any one time. They managed to get them up and running. After a couple days the members were back and the street with their newest configuration and the manifesto was back in the sky.

People continued to be somewhat annoyed with the whole process. They tried to find different ways of getting by, getting around, and ignoring the message. This did not make the members of the group particularly happy because they had gone through all this effort to communicate with them and they felt that their work was just wasted. A few people did stop and take a look.

To this action, the group of organized concerned citizens were truly and profoundly upset. They began talking about freedom, beacons of

light, opportunity, not being subjected or forced to do anything. And in this light they suggested that rather than have the sunlight blocked, rather than have their vision interfered with, by this group imposing their views strongly upon them – they would rather eliminate all light and with this eliminate the possibility that this would ever happen again.

They came up with concept of the lowered floor, or the raised ceiling – depending upon ones perspective. This entailed attaching to the pre-existing planks on either side of the sidewalk a ceiling – eliminating the possibility that large signs could be brought into any ones' view. Also, this eliminated the likelihood that anyone would be subjected to the messages being put forward.

Now there were several problems with this plan: 1) the cost obviously – but this they were willing to piece together (with tax dollars of course); 2) they also had the issue that the signs could be seen as individuals walked in between the boundaries but they were willing to tolerate this although it seemed rather bizarre that individuals would walking in these tunnel configurations, attempt to cross the street, get some daylight, see political messages for a few seconds and then go back into the darkness of the tunnel; 3) with regard to the lighting within the tunnels one of the citizens came up with the idea, using their own company, with a light system that would provide light within the tunnels that would be connected to the streetlights and which for a moderate fee would light up the tunnels.

Never rattled, epiphany came up with the idea that if they were to block individuals walking throughout the tunnels on either side, in other words if they could develop panels that were the size of the space – itself (on the sides and above), they could enclose an individual in the trap, until they had finished reading the material after which we would then release them. This would guarantee that there was no way that they could avoid or escape seeing the message.

After this the members went about the business of trying to

measure the space. At about 3 in the morning, several of the members went to different locales in the city, going through the tunnels to size things up. While there, the members noticed that cameras had been installed within the tunnels to monitor activity. On the side of the camera were the letters GOCCC – group of concerned citizens corporation, evidently the organization had started to branch out into the surveillance, monitoring and repression business.

In response, they had to quickly improvise and come up with a way to complete their task without drawing too much attention. With a short hop they realized that the ceiling was relatively low; stretching as in a yawn in either direction (with arms out to the side) they were able to gauge how wide it was.

With these measurements set the members were more or less good to go. The members went about the business of first building the panels and then using them. Members were broken up into groups of two, and each of the pair how to practice as there were several ways that information-conveyance could be completed. Some stood about a block apart and slowly moved into to sandwich the participant. Others liked to stand against the wall and kind of sliding against the wall, snaring the individual quite unexpectedly with a flip of the board and the pelvis.

BE brought to everybody's attention the problem that if participants were entrapped without a light being overhead that they would not be able to read any of the manifesto and that all the effort would be wasted. Cheryl, another member, suggested that the organization could lower down over one of the walls a flashlight so that they could read the material. Upon trying this out however members discovered that either the participants would try to pull the members over the wall or they would end up breaking the flashlight as they attempted to breakthrough the barrier.

The members concluded that they then had to strategically entrap participants, capturing them underneath the pre-existing lights. As this is

where the GOCCC had also placed the cameras the members knew that some good timing was necessary. At each camera, the members had meticulously sabotaged the equipment or otherwise made some type of disturbance so that they could time how long it would take for GOCCC security to show up. Of course, a repair job was likely to bring a response slower than a mugging or egg throwing at a camera (as unfortunately 2 of the members were later to find out as they were confiscated in approximately half the time that they thought that they had). After these quirks were worked out, however, they were again ready to try.

Later on another member identified the point that there was no guarantee that the participants were doing the reading of the manifesto. Parnell came up with the idea to put a whole in the board, so that they could monitor progress. After DeDe had been poked in the eye by a man on Wordsworth Avenue they gave this idea up.

As another response that had participants read the manifesto aloud to them before they would release them. For those individuals that decided that they did not wish to cooperate and read the manifesto, one of the boards would move in and proceed to squish them a little bit.

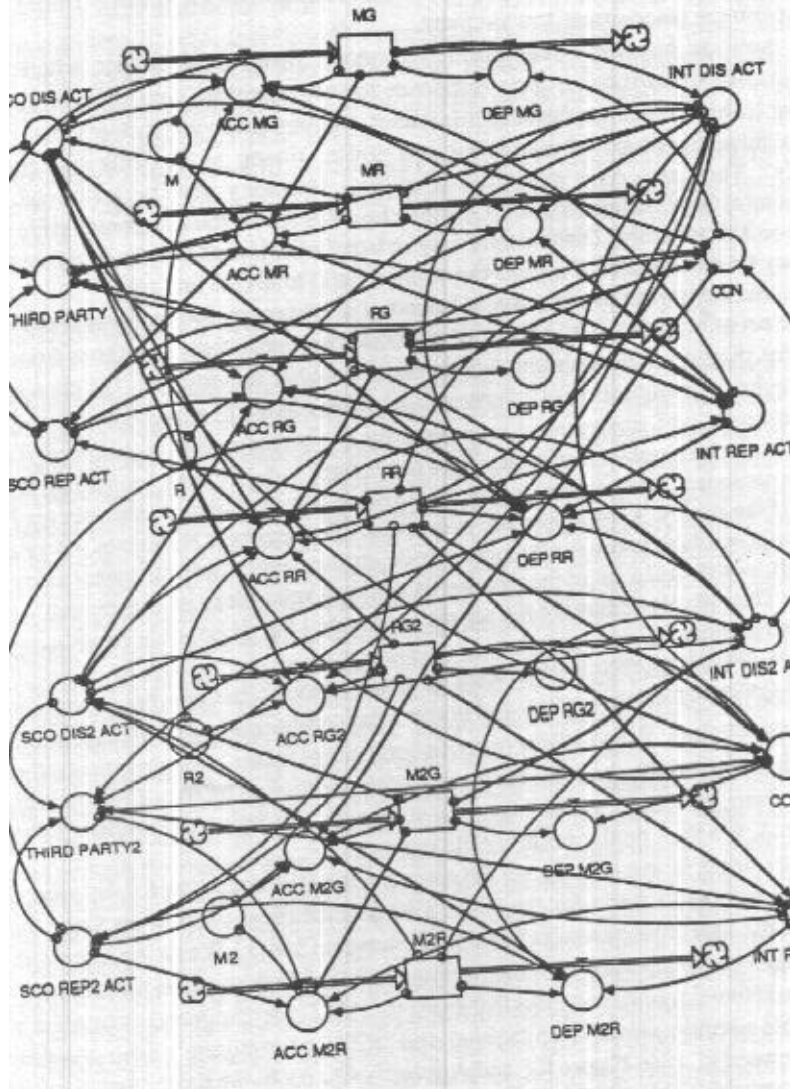
This last element more than enraged the group of organized concerned citizens. They put in even more effort trying to figure out how to eliminate the group and its manifesto. With about 300 individuals behind them in the research wing of the GOCCC, they did come up with a solution. This solution entailed coming up with an interconnecting tunnel mechanism above the individuals where the space had been merely a plank so that the large signs could be blocked. Now the GOCCC decided that they would construct holes where the lighting mechanisms were so that they could release or "download" as they would say a helmet of freedom.

The helmet would fit over one's head, sort of like oxygen masks in airlines. The individual would be captured, a hole would open up, the helmet would drop down, the individual would put the helmet on and

with this mechanism the individual could not only withstand the attack of the group but they would have access to 320 stations (although pre-approved by the GOCCC telecommunications network), inevitably to be increased to 489.

To fund this endeavor, the GOCCC reached out to the commercial business community in order to provide them with commercial time for the various stations. This provided money to fund the construction and also allowed them to construct several schools and community centers.

ment Industry



Once constructed, the members were totally confused as to what to do. The usual technique of trying to squeeze participants did not work for the helmet was made large enough to facilitate comfortable positioning of the human body. This provided enough breathing space for an individual being compressed to withstand attack until the GOCCC security team showed up to liberate them.

BE in particular started to have some problems when on one effort at communication both of the handles on the board had fallen off. The board fell on top of him as one of the participants had more aggressively utilized their helmet as a battering ram.

The next few meetings were a bit intense as everybody was trying to figure out what to do. The helmet turned out to be an effective mechanism against communication and the GOCCC started to develop different types, which could be requested by an individual under attack. One of the different types was able to shoot out tear gas; another one shot out some spikes that went into the boards and held the group member there unless they decided to let that part of the manifesto go (these confiscation allowed the GOCCC to identify what type of material was being used so that they could stake out these locations).

Because of this the group had to change their manifesto boards from a plywood to a light metallic material which increased the cost of each board and simultaneously the number of members that it took to carry one.

The resolution to the helmet problem was the most difficult thus far of the GOCCC counter-measures. This required that the members experiment a bit on different tactics. They had constructed their own mini-tunnel in HQ and designed everything in accordance to what surveillance reports had revealed (i.e., they had the same exact dimensions that were found on the street). The members simulated a helmet drop in of a helmet which had been commandeered when a member pretended to be entrapped, verbally requested three different helmets be dropped down

and then jumping on one as it was lowered (with the other members) and pulling on it until it fell off.

BE demonstrated that if one threw a net over the two manifesto-boards that the helmet was unable to be lowered. The helmet could be eliminated if they used a net, especially if one were reinforced with a wire-mesh, which would not be cut by any blades emerging out of the helmet in the future. With this technique they were back in the street in 20 hours to continue their education of individuals.

It was at this time that GOCCC studios released its first emergency broadcast about the terrorist attacks taking place in the tunnels. According to the broadcast a group of individuals were running around town, kidnapping people off the street, performing some ritual on their bodies and then burning them. The visual accompanying the story was a charred stump of a human-like thing, all contorted, red, brown and black with steam coming off of what once might have been a head. It was not clear what had happened but one of the panels used by the group was photographed as being underneath the charred creature, suggesting that the group was responsible.

This response to the group by GOCCC was even more ingenious and sinister than the others applied before. Moreover, the GOCCC maintained that they did not want to be entrapped; they refused to be blocked from walking wherever their heart took them. Indeed, rather than live in this world with people that would interfere with other humans and burn them, they would prefer to live underground within a complex, multi-level environment. This enabled individuals who were entrapped and unable to reach the helmet of freedom to go underground and proceed on their way.

Of course there was a minor fee of \$5.00 that was required for passage. It was initially dark in the underground dwelling and construction would need to be undertaken. All of these things required capital. For those who could not pay, the GOCCC accepted all major

credit cards, checks and bank cards.

Within the underground dwelling, GOCCC lighting systems was used, the GOCCC cafes were established for those who did not wish to immediately rush to their next appointment after dropping in. The "drop" was facilitated by either a very thick mat that people would land on or a rubbery slide, depending upon the quality of one's neighborhood. Right after "touchdown" an individual was photographed and fingerprinted so that the GOCCC could track subsequent terrorist activities. GOCCC emergency medical stands were set up, libraries, automatic walkways, and there were big screens that identified where the most recent terrorist activity had taken place above ground.

This action left the group stunned for months. They just sat around numb trying to figure out how this could be countered. Interestingly, at the same time that the group's activities fell off, the terrorists activities increased dramatically. Evidently the death toll had been increased to 21.

Both above and below we see the development of the GOCCC newsletter, housing development, public transportation, beepers – there motto was simple: "We've got your back."

BE would keep consulting the book at night. Nothing BE found really seemed to be relevant to what they were experiencing. It all came down to a battle to control the tunnel. They had to move fast, before people could be lowered and they had to be able to avoid the helmet-hooks.

Reading aloud to the group one night, BE came up with a really simple idea which was modified by Epiphany – a box. Either attached to bicycles, motorcycles or small tractors, could be used to encompass or capture the participant for education. Basically members would drive around the streets, which were still left alone by the GOCCC, and then into the tunnel. After this was done, members could capture individuals,

one member would then put their device in reverse, the other would go forward and off they would go or alternatively they could stay right there until the education process was complete. To facilitate verification, each member would wear headsets that were connected to an intercom system in the box. Over the "com" they could instruct the participant what to do as well as make sure that it was done correctly.

With 7 fully constructed devices, involving 14 vehicles they were back in the street within 2 days.

The effect of this strategy was not that bad actually. Of course, there were a few mishaps. The people that were monitoring the tunnels were occasionally off, so that on a few attempts more than one individual was captured in the box. Sometimes if a relatively large individual was in the tunnel and they were captured the box would not close fully. By and large things went along rather smoothly. In fact, the group got one convert, who after being "boxed" threw themselves on the ground and pledged their undying allegiance to the organization and the manifesto.

One of these over-crowding incidents did give the GOCCC idea about how to counter the box strategy. Looking back at some videotape Epiphany was rather disappointed that they had not come up with this contingency.

GOCCC personnel referred to the solution as the ES-Countermeasure put out by GOCC industries. The ES-Countermeasure involved the "Expando-Suit." Basically once an individual was enclosed in the box, they would push a sequence of buttons and the suit would expand into a humungous ball until the sheer integrity of the box itself buckled underneath the stress of the pressure.

This expansion would also do damage to the side embankments of the original walkway. The repair work undertaken by GOCC construction was relatively quick and each repair job came with another news headline about the destructiveness of the terrorists.

Although there were incendiary devices accompanying either the ES-Countermeasure or the box-configuration, it was usually the case that these terrorist attacks involved massive fire damage. Indeed, several news-people began referring to the boxes as toasters and the charred body fragments as toast. Everyone would also begin to see bumper stickers saying: "don't roast like toast, ES the boxes and support freedom."

The ES-Countermeasure turned out to be the last straw for the group. In the face of this technology and the sheer size of the organization that they were countering, most of them just quit feeling that they were unable to continue.

BE and Epiphany were not quite done. During the day, they would take a boxload of pamphlets (the initial materials created by the group), walk to some of these terrorist locations where things were being rebuilt and dump the pamphlets into the holes created by the terrorists as well as the airducts that had been left open by the newly experienced explosions. They would watch the pamphlets float back and forth on their way down into the subterranean haven.

Once they had dispersed of all the material, BE picked up the book and the knapsack. Pulling the bag over a shoulder, BE was moved to open the book and doing so BE caught a glimpse of a quote by someone named Eco: "The author should die" the quote began, "once (they have) finished writing, so as not to trouble the path of the text." To this, all BE could do was smile.

Almost sensing a change in mood, Epiphany stopped, turned, looked and asked what was amusing. BE read the quote again – this time aloud, much to Epiphany's delight. After musing over the words a few times, individually and then in tandem, they began to move again. Their hearts were a little lighter this time, and their minds a little clearer. The journey would be long (this much they were aware). In some way, however, it seemed to make a little bit more sense to them and with this

they proceeded.