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WORK ENERGY AND THE CHARACTER OF ORGANIZATIONS:
AN ORGONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR
ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

A Research Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the School of Business and Management
Pepperdine University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Organization Development

by
Martin D. Goldberg

December 1988

This research project, completed by

MARTIN D. GOLDBERG

under the guidance of the Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Business and Management in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Date December 1988

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ABSTRACT

WORK ENERGY AND THE CHARACTER OF ORGANIZATIONS: AN ORGONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

To date, the field of organization development (OD) has lacked the kind of unifying approach to theory and practice that would enable it to be considered a discipline. The present study, in conception and methodology, commences building a unified framework for OD based on the work of psychiatrist and natural scientist Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957). By conceptually merging the field of OD with the science of orgonomy, that body of knowledge based on Reich's discoveries, this project lays the foundations for a comprehensive theory that can lead to greater understanding of the nature, development, and functioning of organizations, a theory with the potential to (1) diagnose characteristic types of organizational configurations and prescribe differentiated intervention strategies; (2) draw upon and integrate the multiplicity of interventions available, be they behavioral or structural; and (3) address and unblock deep-seated socioemotional issues, helping whole systems actualize their full potential. The immediate aim is to develop an orgonomic diagnostic and sociotherapeutic framework for OD, yielding an interconnected series of hypotheses and strategic case management propositions that can begin to be tested in the future.

Reich's discovery of a tangible life energy, orgone energy, together with his functional understanding of human character are applied to understand the character of energy movement--and blockage--in organizations. Orgonomic principles of energy functioning and therapeutic methods are employed in a systematic manner in the organizational domain, leading to the development of a rudimentary organizational character typology and sociotherapy with the goal of restoring the capacity of chronically blocked systems to freely discharge work energy in a productive, gratifying way.

The series of hypotheses and strategic propositions generated in the project have been developed by (1) a review of the relevant literature and integration of the findings of both orgonomy and OD, guided by expert advisors in each field; (2) participation in monthly clinical training seminars at the American College of Orgonomy in Princeton,

New Jersey, concurrent with the Pepperdine University Master of Science in Organization Development Program; and (3) organizational consulting casework and experience.

DEDICATION

To the memory of Albert I. Duvall, M.D.,
physician, teacher, man;

and to

Cristi Lucas Goldberg
and
Hannah Elizabeth Lucas Goldberg,
my family, my life, my love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This project--really a labor of love--owes much to many. What I thought began two years ago as an effort to unite an orgonomic understanding of character with the field of organization development stretches back, when I actually reflect on it, at least as far to the close of my undergraduate days some twelve years earlier. Having completed my studies in history with considerable enthusiasm, I was interested in pursuing a non-academic career devoted to, what I tried awkwardly to explain to others at the time, "a special kind of social research," research which had a practical, human impact, while trying to get at the underlying emotional and biocultural processes that governed change in social institutions over time. Little did I know that the field of organization development--which applied the behavioral research disciplines to problems of the workplace--existed or was an arena that I would eventually find so absorbing. It took a great many years for me to find this path, winding across the course of personal orgone therapy, graduate studies in history, cultural and physical anthropology, pre-med science course work, my entry into the business world and corporate life, studies of organization development, and finally back to an appreciation and integration of orgonomy at a social level of analysis and practice. To all those along the way too numerous to name, I wish to say thanks. To those who have been expressly helpful since this project began as part of the Pepperdine University Master of Science in Organization Development Program, I wish to sound a more direct note of appreciation.

To my fellow students and faculty of the Pepperdine Nu class--those souls I was so closely associated with in a learning community throughout the formulative stages of this work--I owe a special debt of gratitude. Besides the friendship and wisdom that came from each of them, collectively they taught me that a community can tolerate genuine movement and natural growth--both in itself as a whole and in those individually who constitute it. The Pepperdine MSOD Program will remain one of the most significant experiences in my life. I would especially like to thank Roger Ervin, Dianna Olds, Stephen Pyle, and Phyllis Saltzman--those classmates whose critical skills and willingness to hear me out and engage themselves in my endeavor were an important source of learning and support throughout. Phyllis, particularly, was unsparingly generous in her counsel and encouragement. Early on, she urged me to expand the project beyond its more prosaic, initial focus

and reach for my highest ambitions; for that, I am forever indebted. To Professor Walter Ross, Pepperdine University advisor on the project and Director of the MSOD Program, a heartfelt thanks for his willingness to endorse me so fully in this undertaking. His enthusiasm, broad-mindedness, and critical observations--observations that sought to strengthen the main lines of the study from its own point of view--reflect the very best in the academic tradition. He particularly helped tighten the presentation of the organizational character types proposed in Chapter 5, and he encouraged me to give free reign to both "head and heart" in the final chapter. Walt's support, together with the spirited interest of Program Co-Director, Professor David Jamieson, especially on the early formulations of the work, enabled me to proceed with a maximum amount of freedom and self-discretion. I hope the final product presented here has not betrayed their confidence in me.

At my own workplace, I would like to thank Richard Barkley and Donna Dahl, colleagues who early saw in me the potential to deepen my knowledge and practice of organization development and provided the backing to help send me on my way. Too, I would like to thank John T. Adams, who helped sharpen a number of the concepts presented, as well as acknowledge Dedra Geran, who formatted the graphics on the figures and tables contained herein. External consultants Adele Borman, Howard Hyden, Len Korot, and Susan Nero, with whom I co-facilitated workshops during the course of the project, were also sources of learning and support. Of course, thanks is particularly owed to the many clients worked with before and throughout the project. I have learned much from their courage and patience, from their willingness and, yes, their resistance to face difficult issues. In all this, they have helped me learn much from the errors of my ways.

Those affiliated with The American College of Orgonomy in Princeton, New Jersey provided real stimulation and patronage once I contacted them and let them know of my research project proposal. Linda Barrett and Dr. Charles Konia were especially generous in making the facilities and educational seminars of the College available to me. Dr. Peter Crist has been more than a research advisor and clinical seminar teacher; he has become a good friend. Peter has helped me rediscover the true meaning of "buddyship" over our many months of meeting both on the East and West coasts. Throughout, he brought the insights of a psychiatrist and the wider learnings of orgonomy to my work and life. I do not exaggerate when I say that many of the basic concepts presented here--both in substance and in the way they are integrated--owe their very existence to Peter. This project would have suffered immeasurably had he not been so intimately connected with it--and willing to believe

in me--from the start. I would also like to credit his natural scientific orientation for helping me clarify and strengthen the final methodological approach to the study. The time he took to provide the painstaking critical and editorial commentary throughout the manuscript, and his special help with the synopses of the individual level character types in Chapter 5, were extraordinarily giving. Peter, thank you. Your collaboration made the difference. A note of thanks is also owed to the participants in the College's Didactic Training Seminar in Character Analysis for their interest and mutual spirit of discovery and learning in the thrilling realm of our young science, orgonomy.

I wish also to say a word about Albert I. Duvall, M.D., in whose memory this project is co-dedicated. It was through the skilled work--and deep humanity and care--of Dr. Duvall that I first awoke to the exciting possibilities held by the world of orgonomy. He was an exemplar therapist and man. I did not have a chance--circumstances and the living process being what they are--to say thank you before he died late in 1979. I feel no small obligation--and love--for Dr. Duvall for the great work he did with me. I hope, in a small way, that this study finally and belatedly speaks to his spirit for the path he set me on. He was a great, great man.

This project was made even dearer to me because of the birth of my first child, Hannah Elizabeth Lucas, concurrent with its final writing. Her birth was the most powerful event in my life and gave an immediacy and balance to my perspective about the place of work in the context of life's other needs. Already, little Hannah has helped me vividly appreciate that the very emotional source of work lies in love, and that work without love--and without play--has no meaning. With all parental pride, I say she is a terrific person. What a joy you are, Little Girl!

Finally, a special word about my wife, Cristi. With respect to this project, she was always there to hear, evaluate, and improve preliminary conceptual formulations as well as numerous drafts; she also offered a number of key ideas and connections of her own, most notably, helping me to first think about and relate the structure of groups and organizations with the somatic aspects of the individual. For the six years I have been with her, Cristi has been more than any man can rightfully expect. Patient and wise, funny and understanding, warm and loving, Cristi has been a true companion and partner from the beginning of our relationship. She has truly provided me with a home in the world. It is no accident that by trade she is a teacher. She has been my greatest teacher of all. Upon my discovery of this work, she has been a tower of continuing strength,

nurturance, and guidance--intellectually and, most importantly, emotionally. And, with the birth of Hannah, she has taught me the most important lesson yet: to know what it is to be unafraid to father--to father ideas and children of my own making, and to father them in a way that calls forth their best, that special and unique life inherent in each of them, which this work, in the end, is really all about.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The basic problem of a genuine democracy, a work-democracy, is more than just a problem of economy of labor. More than anything else it is a matter of changing the nature of work so that it ceases to be an onerous duty and becomes a gratifying fulfillment of a need . . . to harmonize the conditions and forms of work with the need to work and the pleasure of work, in short to eliminate the antithesis between pleasure and work. Here a vast new field is opened for human thought If man could again have a direct relationship to the product of his work, he would also be happy to bear the responsibility for his work, a responsibility that today he does not have or refuses to have.

--Wilhelm Reich¹

At a recent closing session of a Pepperdine University Master of Science in Organization Development class, Edgar H. Schein (1988), one of the founders and leading thinkers of organization development (OD), was asked what he thought were the central problems currently facing the field. His reply was illuminating:

1. There is an overabundance of interventions and no guiding or unifying theory. This leads to "technological fractionalization."

2. The field inadequately speaks to the major change requirements of today's complex organizations. Not

¹The quotation is from The Mass Psychology of Fascism (1946/1971b, pp. 286-288, original emphasis).

only is theory needed, but "a whole new level of theorizing" is essential.

3. Concurrent with the rise of information technology and spiraling network capacity, organizations are structurally becoming increasingly flat and hierarchy more and more dysfunctional. As this trend continues, new kinds of participatory organizations will arise "more as a matter of fact than choice," and OD will have to truly accommodate this shift. Participation, while traditionally valued in OD, can no longer be construed as an "ideological" matter.

4. OD needs to operate from a "sounder clinical base." There is a great deal of anxiety unleashed in OD work, and practitioners need to get the theoretical background and training in psychodynamics if they are to be effective.

5. The needed conceptual development and training in the field is difficult to pursue in traditional institutional settings. Unfortunately, universities by and large "are not ready to legitimate organizational therapy" as a body of work.

6. Methodologically, the field needs to draw more from anthropology and clinical psychology than from traditional, statistical social-psychology approaches. Intensive field work and case studies are more likely to yield the essential new insights and practices than comparatively broad but superficial quantitative surveys.

7. Today, the "emotional dimension is missing" in the focus of OD activity. There is an emphasis on performance and design at the expense of dealing with underlying emotional issues within organizations. Practitioners need to recognize this gap and develop means to address it.

Schein's remarks, when I first heard them, rang deep and true, and seemed to crystallize much of what has made me discontent with prevailing models and practice in OD. Theory is diffuse, eclectic, and often contradictory. Interventions proceed too haphazardly and unsystematically. Clinical insights and affective issues are commonly ignored. Additionally, there is too great a concentration on refining hierarchical, bureaucratic systems rather than on seeking deeper avenues of approach to free qualitatively new levels of organizational participation and productivity. There is, to be sure, a diverse range of organizational literature and practice treating each of these areas, but this very diversity is itself reflective of the problem: these regions of inquiry and action remain discreet and disconnected. An integrative approach to the field--one that can begin to make it a discipline--is missing.

The present study, in conception and methodology, strives to deal with all these issues in its effort to commence building a unified framework for OD based on the work of psychiatrist and natural scientist, Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957). This project seeks to lay the foundations for

a comprehensive theory that can lead to greater understanding of the nature, development, and functioning of organizations, a theory that has the potential to simultaneously

1. diagnose characteristic types of organizational configurations as well as prescribe correspondingly differentiated intervention strategies;

2. draw upon the multiplicity of technical interventions available--be they structural or behavioral--and integrate them into meaningful patterns of action in behalf of the client-system; and

3. address and unblock deep-seated emotional problems at the root of so much organizational functioning, freeing systems to fully actualize their own potential rather than settling for temporary, symptomatic change.

The construction of such a theory, of course, can by no means be accomplished in a single sojourn; it is a long, long journey, of which the present investigation is only a beginning. As a start, this study conceptually merges the classical field of OD with the science of orgonomy, that body of knowledge based on Reich's discoveries. By marrying these two fields at a conceptual level, it is the immediate aim of the project to develop an orgonomic diagnostic and sociotherapeutic framework for OD, yielding an interconnected series of hypotheses and strategic propositions that can begin to be tested in the future. I want to emphasize that the sociotherapeutic formulations

developed herein are focused on strategic case management, not tactics. I also want to stress, more generally, that the entire framework presented needs to be regarded as "in process." Subsequent operational testing will undoubtedly require many of its features and suppositions to be modified, added to, or otherwise abandoned.

The question is this: Why Reich? Why is the science of orgonomy chosen as the basis for launching such a comprehensive organizational framework? Reich was, of course, much heralded in his early character analytic therapeutic work. This part of the body of his work gets at the missing clinical and emotional dimensions in OD that Schein so eloquently addresses. But this still does not account for why Reich's modality, and not some other clinical approach, is utilized. Further, why include Reich's later work in the equation--his natural scientific discoveries in orgonomy--that branded him so controversial a figure? The answers here primarily lie in the fact that orgone therapy at an individual level already and uniquely fulfills the three theoretical conditions outlined above. First, it has a fully developed character typology that prescribes differentiated intervention strategies. Secondly, it takes a unified approach to therapeutic practice, incorporating a complete spectrum of technical somatic and character analytic interventions fragmented in other modalities. Thirdly, it powerfully addresses and dissolves emotional blockages that keep individuals from

living whole and happy lives and restores their capacity to fully function.² Moreover, the therapy satisfies these three conditions because of its deep understanding of the nature, development, and functioning of the human organism, an understanding rooted in the larger comprehension of primordial energy movement.

The premise here is that Reich's discovery of a tangible life energy, orgone energy, together with his functional understanding of human character have fundamental applicability to organizational dynamics. In this study, Reich's theory of character as a function of the way emotional energy moves and is blocked in the body is applied to understand the character of organizations. Orgonomic principles of energy functioning and therapeutic methods are employed in a systematic manner in the organizational domain, and a rudimentary organizational character typology and sociotherapy is proposed.

The extension of Reich's discoveries from the biophysical to the social realms inhere in his own writings. He discussed extensively the relationship between character and society (1929-1934/1972c, 1931/1971a, 1933/1972a, 1942/1973c, 1946/1971b, 1952/1972b, 1953); the

²Psychiatric orgone therapy is among the most powerful of the individual clinical modalities. It has demonstrated the ability to successfully cure deeply entrenched character disorders such as masochism and schizophrenia that other approaches are not able to touch. Its very powerfulness suggests it as a point of departure for understanding organizational phenomena. This is especially the case given the widespread lament among OD theorists and practitioners about the "intractability" of large-scale human systems.

processes of self-regulating systems, both living and non-living (1948/1973a, 1949/1951/1973b); and the functional identity of sexual energy and work energy, the immobilization of which generates a neurotic character--and social order--replete with symptoms (1933/1972a, 1942/1973c, 1946/1971b, 1953/1976). He was also among the first to write about the dynamics of organizational work-democracy (1946/1971b). Today, much of the interest in holistic health and disease at an individual and community level is derivative of Reich, albeit often "with its source unacknowledged."³ Although the corpus of his work is far-ranging in breadth and in reach, throughout it, Reich relentlessly focused on the common functions of free energy movement, blockage, and on therapeutic interventions that unbound the energy to move freely again.

Energy is a concept that is by no means foreign to organizational theorists and change practitioners. Chris Argyris (1970), Richard Beckhard (1969), Robert R. Blake and Jane Mouton (1969), Peter Block (1987), David A. Nadler (1977), Edgar H. Schein (1969, 1985), and others all make reference to the importance of energy in organizations, yet their use of the term is largely metaphorical and scattered. The open systems conception of organizations (Bertalanffy, 1968, 1975; Buckley, 1967; Katz & Kahn, 1966)

³The history of Reich's fate in his own time--and exile at the hands of the established scientific community--is chronicled in Myron Sharaf (1983). The quote is Sharaf's (p. 481).

on which socio-technical models are based (Trist, 1981) is wholly founded on energy assumptions, though in these frameworks the energy is only seen as deriving from outside the system and not part of a dynamic core. As elaborated later, this leads to conceptual contradictions and blind alleys with respect to workable change strategies. From a theoretical standpoint, Linda S. Ackerman (1984) has been one of the few to see energy as a central reality endemic to the organization. However, her conceptualization remains vague, neither probing the specific nature of this energy nor providing an explanatory framework of how it functionally develops and behaves within particular systems. It therefore holds out little promise for practical strategies.

As with energy, the concept of character is not new to the field of OD. Certainly, its related concept of culture has now become something of a cliché. Eric Berne (1963), Manfred Kets de Vries and Danny Miller (1984), Schein (1985), and Philip Selznick (1957) are among those who use the term "organizational character" from a psychodynamic perspective. Unfortunately, while each of their references is highly suggestive, all are all-too-brief and unsystematically explored. Too, since none of these formulations are based on an energetic foundation, they remain primarily descriptive of dynamics rather than serving as dynamic frameworks for change.

Thus, while the twin themes of this project--energy and organizational character--are not new to OD, they each heretofore have been treated in a fragmentary and partial manner. More fundamentally, they have not previously been connected with each other in any comprehensive way. From the standpoint of the present study, this is what ultimately makes so much of the current theory and practice in OD sterile and incomplete. It is this gap that the present investigation, based on Reich's monumental work, seeks to bridge. As such, the aim is to set the stage for a more primary end: helping client organizations--the people within them--work and function in a full and natural way.

METHODOLOGY

The series of conceptual hypotheses and strategic propositions generated in this project have been developed by three general means:

1. I conducted a review of the relevant literature and integration of the findings of both orgonomy and OD. This has involved distillation of the principles and main lines of discovery in each, and conceptual synthesis of the two fields. The synthesis has proceeded "functionally," in Reich's sense of the term.⁴ Throughout, I have sought to avoid simply "transposing" orgonomic individual

⁴For Reich, what unites any two disparate realms is the identity of a deeper common functioning principle (1949/1973b). The common energetic functions between organizations and living systems have governed the investigation here.

characterology to the organizational domain on the grounds that while the individual and social realms may have functional energetic equivalence, they are manifestly different and would be ill-served by a such a mechanical--and mystical--transfer of knowledge. Rather, I have attempted to understand the social (i.e., organizational) realm on its own terms by drawing upon organomic findings about living and non-living systems in the context of what is known classically, or can otherwise be observed, about the way organizations function and develop. I have sought to describe the course of movement and blocking of work energy in an organizational system and relate it to the way biosexual energy moves and blocks in the human organism. Appropriate selection and treatment of material has been guided by two primary project advisors: an expert in OD with a clinical background and a systems perspective; and an organomic psychiatrist and physician, who assisted with the clarification and formulation of the organomic material.

2. I participated in monthly seminars at the American College of Orgonomy in Princeton, New Jersey. Concurrent with Pepperdine University's MSOD Program, I attended the basic Didactic Seminar in Medical Orgonomy, together with physicians, psychologists, and other mental health professionals in training, to better grasp organomic diagnostic and therapeutic principles (May, 1987 through April, 1988). I was also afforded the opportunity to participate regularly in advanced clinical case seminars

with senior psychiatrists. In all, this formal training at the College was indispensable for the learning and perspective gained.⁵

3. I drew upon my organizational consulting case work and experience. Formulations in the study have in part derived from my OD practice, both prior to and during the course of the research and writing. Observations and insights were gained from varied consulting assignments and contexts, including structural, behavioral, and training interventions in both small and large system settings. In my role as an internal consultant to a mid-size commercial bank, I worked with divisions and departments as well as the organization as a whole. This provided the central context from which many of the concepts spontaneously emerged or were otherwise sharpened. Valuable insights and learnings were also provided by a high-technology retail corporation to which I externally consulted as well as my professional contact with other organizational entities during the course of the project. While it is difficult to convey the many subtle ways my consulting experiences have shaped my approach here, I have tried to draw upon them as much as possible to help illustrate the formulation of the character types presented in Chapter 5. I share with Schein (1988), and Reich (1942/1973c), the methodological belief that by

⁵It also coincides with Schein's aforementioned remarks about pursuing needed conceptual development and psychodynamic training for the field outside of traditional academic institutions.

intensely focusing on a few individual cases much of a general nature can be learned.

Finally, I would like to note my personal experience in orgone therapy over twelve years ago. Insofar as it has had an enduring effect on my life, the experience has contributed to the formulations presented in a myriad of ways. It is commonplace in OD to talk about "self as instrument of change," and my reflections on my own therapy throughout the development of this project have helped me appreciate the wisdom of this insight anew.

PLAN OF THE CHAPTERS

A succinct outline of the remaining chapters will help focus the reader's attention on the main flow of the argument.

Chapter 2, the Literature Review, examines the textual and conceptual background to the body of the study. The section on orgonomy includes a discussion of the energetic theory of character upon which the subsequent organizational formulation largely builds, while the section on OD probes the problem issues that the integration of the two fields raises.

Chapter 3 presents the basic energetic model of organizational functioning. Essentially a chapter in organizational theory, it elaborates the concept of work energy and hypothesizes structural, developmental, and behavioral features common to all organizations. The

general function of organizational character is introduced here.

Chapter 4 focuses on the socioemotional developmental stages and basic structural segments of organizations, variables held to be key in the genesis and functioning of particular types of organizational character.

Chapter 5 submits a preliminary organizational character typology based on the framework previously developed. A range of character types--from fully functioning and participative systems to chronically blocked, "neurotic" organizations--are offered. With each, the genesis, chief distinguishing features, and strategic avenues of sociotherapeutic approach are profiled. Various principles of an orgonomic sociotherapy are suggested throughout.

Chapter 6 presents the conclusions of the project, highlighting key areas in need of operational testing and further inquiry as well as next steps to be taken in the development of the work. It also shares a number of major personal learnings and reflections on the wider implications of the work.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since this research project merges OD with orgonomy, the Literature Review incorporates material from each of the two literary streams. The material discussed presents the textual and conceptual background of the body of the study, which itself aims at showing the relationship of knowledge and natural affiliation of the two fields. The orgonomic literature is reviewed first and encompasses in some historical depth the psychiatric, sociological, and biophysical work that has been drawn upon to understand the nature, functioning, and development of organizations. This treatment is followed by discussion of the classical OD literature--in organization theory and structure, organizational culture dynamics, and change methodology--as it hooks on and connects to the considerations raised by the orgonomic material.

ORGONOMIC LITERATURE

The orgonomic literature spans from Reich's early character analytic work in the 1920's to the multi-faceted research carried out under the auspices of The American College of Orgonomy today. The work produced has been rich and varied--though despite numerous references to the

fundamental importance of work hygiene and the relationship of social process to energetic expression, virtually no clinical or field research has been conducted on the nature of work institutions themselves. This is certainly the case since Reich himself wrote and published. Following Reich's own rudimentary studies to illuminate the basis of "natural work-democracy" (1946/1971b, p. 360), no systematic effort to understand the nature and functioning of organizational life has been made from an orgonomic point of view. Nevertheless, the discussion below seeks to clarify how the literature from the psychiatric, sociological, and biophysical branches of the discipline form a coherent basis for the beginnings of an orgonomic approach to organizational and work science.

Orgonomic Psychiatry

The sources that best elucidate the bioenergetic theory and therapy of character at an individual level are Reich's Character Analysis (1933/1972a), The Function of the Orgasm (1942/1973c), and Elsworth F. Baker's Man in the Trap (1967). Additionally, articles in The Journal of Orgonomy by Baker (1978a, 1978b) and Charles Konia (1985, 1986b, 1986d, 1987) are especially useful in clarifying the central goals and features of the therapeutic approach. One of the main aims of this project is to understand how the functions of the therapeutic modality at the individual level may be applied to the level of the social system;

therefore, comprehension of the orgonomic psychiatric literature is crucial.

Character Analysis (1933/1972a) details Reich's early contributions to psychoanalytic theory and technique and demonstrates that the very resistances and symptoms a patient presents are but part and parcel of a characteristic pattern of defense against inner energetic strivings. Previously it was thought that the patient's symptoms constituted the neurosis; however, as Reich struggled with the practical difficulties of effecting psychotherapeutic cure, it became increasingly clear that the patient's entire character was neurotic--the function of which was to bind undischarged energy in relation to the world. The character was found in the overall attitude and bearing of the patient--not so much in the "what" but in the "how" of presentation: the patient's typical psychic and somatic manner of expression. Furthermore, where the character "froze" in the adult neurotic was identified as corresponding to the psychosexual stage of childhood development where the originating conflict with the world occurred. Reich found that the individual frustrated at the phallic stage of development, for example, would invariably project a hard and bristly contemporary facade in thought, action, and in body tonus (phallic narcissistic character). In this way, the current character of the patient literally "contained" the energetic psychic conflicts of his past. It was from this line that Reich developed the technique of

consistently confronting the presenting mode of expression as a character resistance--and then working backwards--to systematically unlock the content of the patient's history. Reich found that when the character resistances were thoroughly dissolved, especially the latent negative transference expressed against the therapist, the patient spontaneously became capable of true positive functioning.

Character Analysis (1933/1972a) is considered a classic text in psychoanalytic circles today (Sharaf, 1983). Ironically, Freud's original work and hopes notwithstanding, it was Reich's stress on the sexual and actual somatic sources of the neuroses that proved too much for the psychoanalytic community to accept and where Reich found himself standing increasingly alone (Reich, 1952/1972b). In The Function of the Orgasm (1942/1973c), Reich recounts the evolution of his therapeutic approach, from the development of the orgasm theory to "the breakthrough into the biological realm" (p. 250). Early clinical studies first revealed it was the orgastic function that allowed healthy patients to discharge excess energy and thus maintain an ordered "sex-economy" (p. 6); there was no need for them to bind up energy in symptom formation and neurotic character traits. Reich called individuals capable of gratifying themselves in the sexual act "genital characters" (p. 169).¹ Such individuals had full access to their feelings

¹It should be understood that by "gratification in the sexual act" Reich meant something very specific: the
(continued...)

and reasoning abilities, while in their relations with others and the world they were spontaneously moral and decent, but not moralistic or compulsively "duty-bound." Their bodies were strong, flexible, and radiant. They were also capable of giving themselves to work they believed in freely and fully. On the other hand, patients who remained neurotic, regardless of the length of their analyses, consistently suffered from a stasis of sexual release. The range of sexual expression of these neurotic individuals varied directly with their character (as did their capacity to work) and thus made clear that a rigid character "armor" both prevented the discharge of and absorbed sexual excitation. Moreover, this character armor proved to be functionally identical with the spastic muscular contractions Reich saw in the bodies of these patients. True, this character and muscular armoring had served a protective, defensive function at the time of the original childhood conflicts with the world, but in the context of his patients' adult lives Reich observed it to have become increasingly constrictive and dysfunctional, damming up gratifying sexual release and thereby creating the present-

¹ (...continued)

capacity of the organism to surrender completely to its pleasurable sensations with a partner of the opposite sex free of any incestual identification. With complete surrender, the act ends with involuntary convulsions of the entire body and temporary loss of consciousness. Reich termed this capacity "orgastic potency" to distinguish it from the ejaculatory or clitoral climax popularly denoted by the word orgasm. The average man and woman in our culture are not orgastically potent. See Reich (1942/1973c).

day energetic immobility which in turn maintained the psychoneuroses. Indeed, in every case where there was a disturbance in psychic functioning, a disturbance in orgasmic functioning was also present. This contrasted sharply with those healthy patients who were able to experience sufficient sexual satisfaction so that energy was apparently drained away from their neuroses. It was these series of findings that led Reich to conclude that Freud's notion of the libido must be more than a metaphorical concept; it must be a real, physical energy.

In his efforts to better understand the nature of this energy, Reich undertook a series of basic natural scientific experiments. These experiments are what gradually led to the discovery of orgone energy (orgone for "orgasm" and "organism" energy), which Reich later determined to exist not only within the living organism but to radiate out beyond the surface of the skin as an energy field and to exist in the atmosphere itself. This energy--which had numerous qualities unlike any other form previously discovered--was observable, measurable, and found to be basic to all forms of life. Reich determined orgone energy to be spontaneously motile, luminous, and mass-free, with many health-giving properties.² Meanwhile, in his clinical psychiatric work, Reich increasingly came to understand the character as a unitary psychosomatic means of

²The detailed account of the experimental discovery of orgone energy and its later investigation can be found in Reich's The Cancer Biopathy (1948/1973a).

expressing and blocking a tangible, pulsating bioenergy, an energy experienced immediately as the emotions. With this, he developed interventions that worked on the musculature directly, in addition to the psychological methods employed in his earlier character analytic treatment. Whether the therapeutic means used in an individual case were physical or psychological, however, the goal of the treatment Reich eventually came to deem medical orgone therapy was the same: to re-establish the free circulation and natural genital discharge of energy in the patient by loosening the chronic holding--or armoring--of the organism. This amounted to biopsychic character restructuralization in accord with the natural way the energy moved. Reich found that as the patient moved over the course of therapy towards a genital structure and was fully able to experience orgasmic charge and discharge, a "self-regulating character" emerged (1942/1973c, p. 169). More energy was available for immediate expression in work and other domains of the world because there was no need to bind it up in irrational strivings or in neurotic psychic or physiologic symptoms.

The fullest and clearest exposition of orgonomic psychiatry as it is practiced today is found in Elsworth Baker's Man in the Trap (1967). Baker, who studied with Reich for eleven years and was responsible for directing most of the training and research of medical orgonomists following Reich's death in 1957, presents "in organized form the basic concepts of Reich's theory of character" (p.

xi). Man in the Trap is especially lucid diagnostically; it delineates the various character types--i.e., genital, phallic, anal, oral, and ocular types and sub-types--in relation to the psychosexual developmental stages and anatomical segments where armoring occurs. The text is particularly clear in summarizing the specific factors determining each character. As originally identified by Reich (1933/1972a, p. 160), these generally include the following: the time at which an impulse is frustrated, the extent or intensity of the frustration, the impulse against which the central frustration is directed, the ratio between frustration and permission, the sex of the main frustrating person, and the contradictions in the frustrations themselves. Baker (1967, pp. 29-63) also illuminates the therapeutic sequence with which one addresses each of the affected body segments. On the whole, the method of treatment is to work from the latest developmental conflicts back to the earliest, from the head of the organism down, sequentially reintegrating the energy flow of each successive body segment with the next until the organism is functioning as a single, unconflicted entity (genital mode of functioning). In all, there are seven distinct, but interdependent body segments: ocular, oral, cervical, thoracic, diaphragmatic, abdominal, and pelvic. Additionally, Baker presents the contributions of co-workers and those of his own to the field--most notably that of identifying the eye as a major erogenous zone and the first

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psychosexual arena of human development (1967, pp. xii, 18-20). Through the course of his clinical experience, it became evident to Baker that armoring in the ocular segment produced distortions in vision as well as identifiable character types (for example, the paranoid schizophrenic) who literally had difficulty in seeing the world (pp. 141-152).

Subsequent articles by Baker (1978a, 1978b) in The Journal of Orgonomy predominately stress the biophysical dimensions of the therapy, emphasizing the movement of energy in the patient and the avenues of approach for working with it in dissolving the constrictive armoring. Especially important is building up the patient's tolerance for energy charge. Here, the therapist does not attack the spastic armor or character attitudes directly but allows the patient to breathe fully and develop a rhythm; this exerts an inner push on the blocks. A recent series of papers by Konia (1985, 1986b, 1986d, 1987) further elaborates the biophysical nature and method of the therapy. Particularly accented are (1) the relationship of other therapeutic modalities to medical orgonomy via their handling of the organism's psychosomatic unity; (2) the fundamental functions of expansion and contraction, sexuality and anxiety, and core and periphery, in relation to the alternating directional flow of energy in the patient; (3) the specific sequence and course of the therapy mandated by this alternating directional flow; (4) the specialized roles.

of the therapist and patient in the latter's struggle towards health; and (5) the manner in which disturbances of natural energetic functioning inform the structural organization of the armoring.

Orgonomic Sociology

The sociological work in orgonomy most immediately relevant to the present investigation is found in Reich's embryonic writings on the "work function of biological energy" (1953/1976, p. 51) and "natural work-democracy" (1946/1971b, p. 360). More recent studies by Curtis Barnes (1979) and Konia (1986a, 1986c) also help illuminate what has largely been a neglected track of inquiry within orgonomy--the application of functional insights to the issue of work in society.³ Before turning to these publications, however, some brief background on how Reich derived his orgonomic sociological formulations is in order.

Reich was first driven to explore sociologic functions based on his earlier findings in his psychiatric

³The bulk of work in social orgonomy since Reich's death has been in the field of "sociopolitical character typology"--understanding how different sociopolitical ideologies operate as energetic defenses within the individual and, to a lesser extent, within certain social constellations. See especially Baker (1967, chap. 13) and Paul Mathews (1967, 1980, 1987). These studies undoubtedly have a bearing on issues of organizational politics, as do Reich's later writings on the "emotional plague" (1953, p. 1; 1953/1976, p. 205)--his term for a socially destructive state of being which is typically veiled by moralistic rationalization. However, such studies lie outside the scope of the present investigation, which seeks to lay the underlying foundations of an organizational character typology per se.

practice. From clinical knowledge about his patients, Reich (1933/1972a, 1942/1973c, 1953/1972b) understood that the conflict between instinct and outer world--although deeply embedded in the existing structure of human affairs--to be ultimately a social artifact, not biologically immutable. In this, Reich differed profoundly from the pessimistic speculations proffered by his teacher Freud in Civilization and its Discontents (1930/1961). Factually, Reich knew that deep, natural health was possible, even though contemporary society was, generally, quite unready to pay the price of sex-affirmative acceptance. Indeed, the armoring of civilization en masse and widespread appearance of neuroses could logically be accounted for by the wholesale frustration of primary biologic urges from birth on within society at large. Thus, Reich concluded, the fault of man's life must not lie in his nature, but in his culture. This line of reasoning led him directly to the study of society.

In The Invasion of Compulsory Sex Morality (1931/1971a), Reich applied British anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski's findings on the Trobriand Islanders to an understanding of the social origins of patriarchy and the oedipus complex--prerequisites for our armored civilization. The distinctive non-repressive customs of the Trobrianders in love, work, and play provided clear ethnographic evidence that revealed what was considered "normal" and "natural" in our civilization--compulsive and enforced morality designed to hem in so-called "sinfulness

and sloth"--to be cultural rationalizations. Also, Reich was among the very first to seek a theoretical integration of Freud and Marx (Reich, 1929-1934/1972c); in Marx, Reich saw both a great mind and the general hope of social development. However, his practical experience with the European Communist parties in connection with the adolescent, sexual counseling clinics he established during the early years of the Nazis led Reich eventually to renounce any interest in political Marxism, and he later came to regard communism as "red fascism" (Reich, 1953/1976, p. 205; Sharaf, 1983). In his book, People in Trouble (1953/1976), a collection of social writings from 1927 to 1945, Reich recounts his efforts at social reform through his "sex-political" counseling centers (p. 119). Again, in the end, he concluded that politically motivated change could at best only stir the hopes of people; their character structures would nonetheless remain immobile (1953/1976, p. 101). As with his clinical psychiatric findings, this Reich concluded not from academic conjecture, but from the difficulties he encountered in his practical efforts to bring about change. Instead of politics, Reich thus urged a focus upon "vitally necessary work processes" (p. 12)--whether in science or medicine, agriculture or industry, education, administration, or the arts--as the surest path to meaningful change in social arrangements. Only by concentrating on the "factual processes" (p. 12) demanded by work itself could energy be expended in behalf of actual,

human betterment. Thus, after all was said and done, what crystallized from this period of Reich's life and thought was an enduring interest in the social and energetic functions of work.

As People in Trouble (1976, chap. 3) makes clear, Reich's study of Marx left him with a fundamental appreciation of the "living productive power" of work (p. 48). From Marx, Reich gained an understanding of how human labor alone creates value; after all, it is the application of human energy in the transformation of raw materials and resources that gives a product or service its status as such and thus its inherent worth. Concurrent with this, from Freud and sex-economic psychiatry he understood that patients who were non-neurotic and thus essentially free of genital disturbances had energy available for gratification in productive work.⁴ Hence, contrary to the prevailing views that saw work and sexuality as mutually antagonistic phenomena, Reich came to perceive that a common functioning principle of living energy operated behind both. Out of his own natural scientific discoveries, Reich later came to understand this living energy as biological orgone, which led him subsequently to write:

The laws of biological energy, of the orgone, encompass the basic mechanisms of both work and sexuality, and thus the emotional forces within,

⁴Unlike Freud, Reich appreciated it was not so much that these genital characters "sublimated" repressed energy into work; rather, just because they had no sex-economic stasis, direct, non-reactive energy was available for gratifying work. See Reich (1942/1973c).

without, and between human beings. These laws underlie rational as well as irrational endeavor The basic biological mechanisms of life are not simply a mechanical sum of sexual and work functions. They constitute, rather, a third factor simultaneously identical and antithetical as well as more fundamental. Sex-economy and orgone biophysics are therefore not the sum of Marxist and Freudian concepts but new disciplines based on sociological and depth-psychological insights, which led, from the incompatibility of these concepts, to the discovery of a third concept common to both. (1953/1976, p. 72)

As Reich freed himself from his Freudian and Marxist preconceptions and gave greater autonomy to his own developing thought, he came to see that work served a "biosocial function" identical to sexuality--the energetic discharge of which determined the character of human social existence. In the essay, "The Biosocial Function of Work," incorporated as part of the volume entitled The Mass Psychology of Fascism (1946/1971b, chap. 10), Reich asserted that the quality of this work energetic discharge on a mass scale informed the quality of social existence as a whole. Broadly speaking, the discharge of natural work energy could either be frustrated or fulfilled--accompanied by lifeless, compulsive routine, on the one hand, or spontaneous gratification and productivity, on the other. The former conditions, by and large, characterized the work institutions of modern civilization; the latter reflected a state Reich had previously identified as "natural work-democracy,"⁵ and which he had earlier found a prototype of

⁵To escape the Nazis, Reich had emigrated to Norway, where he continued his work from 1934 to 1939. In 1937, he
(continued...)

in Malinowski's description of Trobriander society (Reich, 1931/1971a, pp. 78-79).

Work-democracy was a major concept for Reich. Fundamentally, he used the term to refer to the organization of work along lines that were natural to the work process itself (Reich, 1946/1971b, chap. 13). For Reich, work was a "basic biologic activity, which, as life in general, [rested] on pleasurable pulsation" (1946/1971b, p. 286). As with sexuality, work was a bioenergetic function that, under affirmative conditions, was both pleasurable and goal-directed. However, if a forbidding environment dammed up the discharge of work-energy, the natural unitary flow of the energy would turn over on itself and manifest in a fragmented and reactive way. Again, given prevailing circumstances, this was largely the case; in his psychiatric and social work, Reich found a chronic characterological disturbance among the general populace wherein the demands of task seemed to stand eternally against the pleasure of accomplishment. This was a characterological disorder Reich deemed to be among the gravest obstacles to human life for it continued to reproduce the very social arrangements which engendered it. Sociologically, the resolution to such a

⁵ (...continued)

anonymously authored a limited distribution pamphlet entitled, "The Natural Organization of Work in Work Democracy." The publication details are supplied by Sharaf (1983, p. 270). Given the development of the work-democratic movement in Scandinavia at about this time, research into the possible interrelations between Reich and the origins of this movement is worthy of future attention.

conflict lay in the rediscovery and expression of what he called natural work-democracy, the rational and responsible interrelationships between human beings in which gratifying, productive work was effectively discharged. "The basic problem of a genuine democracy, a work-democracy," Reich wrote,

is more than just a problem of economy of labor. More than anything else it is a matter of changing the nature of work so that it ceases to be an onerous duty and becomes a gratifying fulfillment of a need . . . to harmonize the conditions and forms of work with the need to work and the pleasure of work, in short, to eliminate the antistudy between pleasure and work. Here a vast new field is opened for human thought. . . . If man could again have a direct relationship to the product of his work, he would also be happy to bear the responsibility for his work, a responsibility that today he does not have or refuses to have. (1946/1971b, pp. 286-288, original emphasis)

Men and women could experience gratification in work insofar as they could have immediate and direct contact with the products of their labors. However, such gratification was possible only if (1) they had practical knowledge of the work tasks at hand; and (2) social conditions favored the expression of responsible work relationships. Thus, for Reich, work-democracy implied full, and not simply formal electoral or representative, participation in the processes of work. A division of labor would still obtain, but it would be natural to the factual requirements of creating a product or a service--and hence basically cooperative--rather than mechanically conventional and splitting. On a wide scale, work-democracy would not relieve masses of working men and women from their social responsibilities;

instead, it would burden them with it. Finally, for Reich, the concept of work-democracy represented the reality of natural work relationships between human beings--what work actually consists of--and not simply an ideology "about" work. In other words, Reich held that work-democratic relationships were spontaneously evident to the extent that people were working--and suppressed to the extent work was not constructively accomplished.

Always interested in the tangible and concrete, Reich was well-aware of early organizational efforts at worker self-management. That the first attempts at the "self-administration of firms" (Reich, 1946/1971b, p. 290) failed so disastrously, for example, in the Soviet Union--where ruling elites mechanistically replicated the authoritarian, compulsory work structure of the past--did not refute for Reich the fact that every work process was naturally and inherently work democratic. On the contrary, such attempts at work reform were doomed to failure as long as they sought to superimpose change upon a bioenergetic function that was already there and simply striving for its own intrinsic, voluntary expression. "The self-regulation of work is spontaneously present," wrote Reich (1946/1971b, pp. 290-291). Thus, change was not a matter of creating self-regulation, as it was

a matter of changing the structure of the working man in such a way as to liberate this natural work-democracy from the encumbrances of bureaucracy and to help it to develop its own forms and organizations. (1946/1971b, p. 291, original emphasis)

Reich felt that, under the right conditions, healthy work forms would emerge organically in the social organism, much like he saw freer, more productive and less compulsive work styles emerge in the individuals he treated.

In sum, Reich determined that work, like the sexual function, to be a biologic, energetic source of human existence--inherently rational and pleasurable. In the context of the treatment and prevention of human sickness, be it psychiatric or social, these bioenergetic functions did not need to be established. As already existing, living functions, they needed only to be supported and freed from their stultifying constraints. Indeed, this is what led Reich to write what would later become the motto of orgonomy: "Love, work and knowledge are the wellsprings of our life. They should also govern it" (1946/1971b, p. 366).

Since Reich himself published, however, there has been little effort at developing his seminal work concepts from an orgonomic frame of reference. Two notable exceptions are Barnes' article, "Toward a Functional View of Economics" (1979), and a recent two-part study by Konia (1986a, 1986c). Barnes has helped clarify the fundamental relationship between work activity and work product, especially the lawful, bioenergetic function of work at the level of the individual organism:

Work originates with bioenergetic tension, which the organism perceives as feelings of longing, desire, or discomfort; physical activity follows, and, finally, contact is established with the work product, which produces a relaxation of tension felt as pleasurable gratification. This, as Reich

indicated, is the four-beat orgasm formula, which is the basis of work. Contact with a work product guides the organism functionally toward more or different work activity. Such contact explains the lawfulness and self-regulation of unarmored work functions. (1979, p. 127)

On the other hand,

Work activity that is unrelated to feelings of need or longing for a work product is perceived as meaningless. Where work activity does not result in a work product or where contact between worker and work product is disturbed by external factors, the work experience is irritating or frustrating. Where armoring distorts perception of want or longing, or blocks the release of tension by attainment of the work product, work activity becomes irrational. (p. 127)

Barnes also illuminates the market economy as a field of voluntary exchange between interacting energetic systems (transacting parties). In the reciprocal exchange of products and services, value is determined through the subjective feeling, or relative longing, attached to work products, an exchange in which, as Konia (1986a, pp. 62-63) later points out, buyers and suppliers are literally "charged" and "discharged." Under free-market conditions, profit thus represents the accumulation of charge for later pleasurable discharge (expansion). This self-regulated transfer of work products Barnes contrasts with the coercive exchange of non-market or authoritarian conditions and economies; here, the emotional charge and discharge of work activity and products is restricted from occurring in a free, natural way, leading to immobilization of the work function and stagnation in production (contraction). In his two-part study, "Cancer and Communism" (1986a, 1986c), Konia

links identical processes occurring in the biological and the sociological realms through the common functioning principle of bioenergetic functioning. This leads to both applied insights as to the devitalized core and runaway expansionism of communist states in addition to more general insights identifying functionally equivalent characteristics of biological and social systems. These latter characteristics Konia identifies as (1) a developmental and organizational course from lower to higher energy potential, an energetic peak, and then decline and death; (2) organization into an energetic core, periphery, membrane, and energy field which interact with the environment; (3) homeostatic self-regulation; (4) a functional unit of organization within the organism as an entity; (5) existence within an energetic continuum; (6) spontaneous organization, and free energy exchange, of parts within each system; and (7) the capacity to chronically armor and thereby compress energy in the system, giving rise to various symptoms and disease states.

Orgonomic Biophysics

Reich's discovery of orgone energy opened a whole new path for thinking about biology and physics. No longer were biological organisms thought to consist solely of physio-chemical mechanisms bound by entropic processes, but were understood to consist of a pulsating energy core in dynamic exchange with an environment that itself was a moving energetic continuum. As Reich made clear in the

combined edition of Ether, God and Devil/Cosmic Superimposition (1949/1951/1973b), what separated the living from the non-living realm was the encapsulation of this moving energy within a membrane. Entropic processes were observable, of course, but only to the extent of the energy being bound by mechanical conditions. Surely the individual biological organism consisted of mechanical mediations of energy that led in the direction of disintegration, but it also metabolized free energy, the extent of which the organism continued to live and thrive. Such energy was not merely "imported" from the outside (leading to the effect classical physicists and biologists have inaccurately characterized as "negative entropy"), but rather was inherently motile within the organism itself. Indeed, early, well-controlled experiments with free-standing orgone demonstrated that it violated the universal applicability of the Second Law of Thermodynamics (Reich, 1948/1973a, pp. 112-126; 1951/1973b, p. 154). In an enclosed, "empty" box constructed of alternating layers of organic and metallic substances, a box later termed the orgone energy accumulator, Reich consistently found a positive temperature difference between it and a control box with identical thermal properties; hence, here was a case where heat was being immediately created and "accumulated" which classical physics claimed could not occur. This experiment thus demonstrated that energy was not simply running downhill in the universe, but was also continuously being renewed and

charged (orgonotic potential vs. mechanical potential). As mass-free energy was everpresent in the atmosphere, charge could accumulate and could eventually lead to spontaneous organization of living forms. In fact, in the mid-1930's, using careful research protocol and laboratory technique, Reich had previously discovered under the microscope transitional forms between the living and non-living; the motile vesicular formations he observed from sterilized infusions of inorganic and organic material such as earth, coal, and grass he termed "bions" (1948/1973a, p. 14)--some of which spontaneously organized to form a primitive type of protozoa. The startling experimental evidence from the bions and orgone energy accumulator shattered a number of reigning assumptions of modern biology and physics including the presumption that the spontaneous generation of living forms had been entirely refuted as well as the equivalency of energy and mass. Instead, structure and matter were now deemed to be secondary to a ubiquitous, primordial, mass-free energy that obeyed its own distinct physical laws.

One such law Reich identified as the free energy metabolism of living systems. In the process of their organization, the bions followed the same course of biological pulsation Reich found in the orgasm formula, namely, tension-charge-discharge-relaxation. This sequence of biological pulsation appeared to be basic to all forms of life (Reich later called it the "life formula") and led to a new definition of health: the free, uninhibited pulsation of

the entire organism. As one of Reich's Norwegian colleagues, Ola Raknes, later wrote:

As long as nothing occurs to hinder this pulsation, the entire organism will take part in it, and we say the organism functions freely. If something external threatens to stop the pulsation, the organism will try to rid itself of the obstacle, either by exterminating it or by fleeing from it. If the organism succeeds in doing this while maintaining its pulsation intact, we say it is healthy. If, however, the obstacle is allowed to take effect for so long a time that larger or smaller parts of the organism do not manage to take part again in the pulsation, or if the obstacle harms or destroys greater or lesser parts of the organism, we say that the organism is ill. If the damage is so great that the pulsation completely comes to an end, the organism dies. . . . the free energy metabolism of the organism [is] the basic prerequisite for health, and the free biological pulsation [is] the criterion of this free energy metabolism and thus also of health. (1971, pp. 157-158, original emphasis)

Gradually, Reich came to understand that chronic disturbances of biological pulsation in the human organism constituted the basis of much physical disease such as cancer and many forms of heart disease. In The Cancer Biopathy (1948/1973a), Reich laid the foundations for a radical reformulation of psychosomatic medicine so that purely psychological or physio-chemical structural agents could no longer be deemed core to many of these disease processes. Rather, a disturbance of bioenergetic functioning could now be shown to be the key determinant of many specific disease patterns--and not simply as the predisposition of the disease states, but in many instances as the actual origin of the structural and tissue breakdown itself. Certainly, psychological and physio-chemical

factors were involved in the various modes of the diseases, but fundamentally only as secondary, ancillary processes.

Another fundamental law of orgone energy functioning Reich identified as "superimposition" (1951/1973b, p. 181)--the streaming together of two orgone energy fields that create a separate, distinct form with its own unique energy core. The streaming together of free energy could be observed microscopically in the formation of the bions (1951/1973b, pp. 193-198), meteorologically in the formation of clouds and hurricanes (pp. 258-271), and cosmically in the formation of spiral galaxies (pp. 225-238). In each case, the energetic structure of the superimposed forms was identical--that is, with a core, periphery, and field--although, again, in the case of living systems, the movement and organization of energy had progressed to the point where it was enveloped by a membrane and exhibited the four-beat life formula.

Eventually, Reich developed direct methods to accumulate positively charged energy as well as "bust" stagnant, immobilized energy for purposes of medical treatment (1948/1973a, pp. 310-342; 1955, pp. 97-113). He was also successfully able to deploy techniques fashioned on a similar methodology for purposes of weather modification in the non-living realm, breaking drought conditions (energetic stasis) in the atmospheric orgone and producing rains (Reich, 1952, pp. 171-182). What each of these innovations holds centrally for the present

investigation is that both the biological and the non-living realms were shown to obey common physical, energetic laws. Clearly, the biological realm was a special case of the non-living, but the discovery of orgone energy demonstrated it was not distinct in the way classical scientists or philosophers had long ago come to think. With the existence of biological orgone at its core, the living organism could no longer simply be regarded as an ultra-complex mechanical system, on the one hand, or a teleological, purposefully driven system, on the other. (This dichotomy in thinking Reich aptly described as the "mechano-mystical" split) (1953, p. 2). Rather, Reich's discoveries paved the way for understanding the living organism as an energetically functional system, a system bound by a membrane and energy field that employed specialized, mechanical complexes by way of mediating its free energy exchange with the outer world.

Subsequent researchers have confirmed and elaborated upon Reich's experimental discoveries many times over. Especially useful for an overview of the biophysical fundamentals in orgonomy is Courtney Baker's "The Orgone Energy Continuum" (1980). The interested reader is directed to the extensive theoretical, clinical, meteorological, experimental, and laboratory work which has been published in The Journal of Orgonomy since 1967 as well as James DeMeo's comprehensive Bibliography on Orgone Biophysics (1985) for additional literature.

Finally, insofar as the present study seeks to develop the foundations of a comprehensive organizational diagnostic and therapeutic methodology, note should be made of Reich's functional method of inquiry which constituted the basis of his own approach to the formulation of theory. Reich contended (1949/1973b, chap. 1), unlike the traditional scientists who devised research with tightly articulated formal hypotheses, that simply immersing oneself in observable phenomena and the practical difficulties a problem posed was the surest path to meaningful theoretical formulations. Citing Goethe, Reich recalled, "What is the hardest thing of all?/That which seems the easiest/For your eyes to see,/That which lies before your eyes" (1949/1973b, p. 5). Of course, the investigator would begin with broad points of orientation, much like Reich did himself in his psychiatric and biological inquiry. However, only by remaining open to the evidence of his own senses would the researcher be able to make valid observations about the functions of nature--and not, in effect, predetermine the phenomena observed with mechanistic or idealistic interpretations. Thus, while maintaining a strict position of objective observation and exacting experimental control technique, Reich held that the critical precondition of an objective investigation of natural phenomena was the researcher's openness to his own organismic sensations (1949/1973b, chap. 3); without this, after all, there could be no empirical "experience." The researcher blocked from

his own organ sensations would blur, explain away, or otherwise preclude from view strictly observable phenomena; he would be afraid to immerse himself in the wash of data before him. In contrast, the investigator fully open to his own sensations and feelings would be able to reach out and "meet" the phenomena on its own terms, leading to the formulation of a functional theory (i.e., a theory accounting for how the phenomena actually functioned--and hence ultimately practical). For example, Reich's openness to his own organismic sensations is what enabled him to be the first to observe in the psychoanalytic movement that masochism was fundamentally curable and thus not caused by an unempirically postulated "death instinct" (1942/1973b, p. 154). In the same manner, he was able to notice the swelling and spontaneous organization of the bions in the lab without feeling structurally compelled to dismiss his observations by reference to uncontrolled, ad hoc explanations of the dominant scientific paradigms. In both cases, of course, Reich developed new, fully functional formulations about the phenomena observed, formulations that arose from immediate contact with the data itself, which in turn led to practical, useful consequences. These formulations were simple, broad, and elegant, with predictive power for vastly complex phenomena. Lastly, they shared a common characteristic Reich particularly felt a hallmark of a good formulation: the ability to bear fruit in surprising new directions, leading to ever deeper insights about the

phenomena observed, while uniting them with apparently disparate realms of functioning.

ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE

The classical OD literature as it relates to the topics considered in this study covers an extremely wide canvass. Because this project seeks to develop the foundations for an integrated diagnostic and therapeutic methodology based on a new biosocial, energy model of organizational functioning, it touches on almost every sub-specialty of the field. It would literally be impossible to do justice to the rich diversity of material represented in the relevant literature without some narrower organizing principle to focus the review. The organizing principle selected here is that body of literature directly drawn upon in formulating the central components of the study, books and articles which speak to the pertinent problem issues in organization theory and structure, organization culture dynamics, and change methodology.

Organization Theory and Structure

The questions that probe the very nature of organizational life--What is an organization? How are organizations conceived and formed? What makes them move and work?--have been the basis of much speculation and inquiry and, indeed, form the core of that specialty known as organization theory. Two of the most general treatments reviewed here are W. Richard Scott's integrative conceptual

survey, Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems (1981), and Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn's now classic The Social Psychology of Organizations (1966). As discussed in more detail below, Katz and Kahn to a great extent define the prevailing paradigm about the nature of organizational systems, and in turn rely heavily in their own formulation on the work of the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy, itself later published in the volumes General Systems Theory (1968) and Perspectives on General Systems Theory (1975). Representative literature evaluating the extent to which organizations can be viewed as biological versus non-organismic systems is also considered in this context. Next, Linda S. Ackerman's article "The Flow State" (1984) is discussed, one of the few treatments to break with the dominant view that considers energy as something fundamentally external to the organization, while Karl E. Weick's innovative The Social Psychology of Organizing (1979) is examined principally for its contribution to the notion of organization "conception"--what Weick himself refers to as the "emergence of collective structure" (p. 96). Finally, the basic structural segments that can be found in all organizations are reviewed in Henry Mintzberg's The Structuring of Organizations (1979).

W. Richard Scott (1981), a sociologist, presents a four-type schema for understanding the historical and conceptual development of organization theory--one that mirrors the history of organizational improvement

interventions themselves. Type I models of organizational functioning--closed, rational system models--predominated from roughly 1900 to 1930 and are characterized by an emphasis upon the rational aims and subdivision of labor in an organization. The work of Max Weber (1922/1946, pp. 196-244) and Frederick Taylor (1911), stressing the inexorable logic of depersonalized bureaucracy on the one hand and scientific management on the other, exemplify this approach. In both Weber and Taylor's conceptions, the outer world plays little role in how an organization functions. The organization is seen as a self-contained, rationally functioning entity driving towards its own aims; hence it is effectively "closed." Type I models are contrasted with what Scott designates as Type II or closed, natural system models, dominant from the 1930's through about 1960. Embodying the work of human relations theorists such as Elton Mayo (1945) and Douglas McGregor (1960), Type II models reflect a more organic view of organizations--the many informal, diffuse, and conflicting needs and processes of organizational life. Emphasis here is laid upon the organization's "norms," "personality," or "character"--the latter as seen notably in the work of Philip Selznick (1957), of whom more will be said later. Much of the work implied in these formulations is still highly relevant to organizational theory and development practice today; however, because they generally consider such informal, "natural" dimensions apart from--and not in dynamic

interaction with--the outer world, they remain essentially closed in thrust, in turn promoting an inward-looking intervention strategy. These models, Scott contends, have been largely eclipsed by Type III organizational images, which he deems open, rational system models. First appearing in the late 1950's and continuing until at least the mid-1970's, Type III models focus on the functional interplay of the organization's outer environmental demands and internal structural response. Writers such as Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch (1969), Jay Galbraith (1973), and James Thompson (1967) all emphasize the rational aims and formal adaptive features of organizations--e.g., structure as uncertainty reduction, the generation of consciously managed sealing mechanisms and buffering strategies--in the context of mitigating the environment's impact upon their principal, chosen ends. Type III models all underscore how contingent organizational arrangements and intervention strategies are upon the wider environmental context.⁴ Only more recently, Scott argues, have these rationally-behaving, open system models been confronted by an alternative conceptualization--what he terms Type IV or open, natural system models. Of these he writes:

It appears that we are currently on the threshold of a major shift in the types of theoretical models that guide our investigations of the structure and

⁴That body of consulting practice known as "socio-tech"--with its stress upon the rational "joint optimization" of the social and technical spheres of an organization--clearly operates from Type III conceptual assumptions. See Eric Trist, The Evolution of Socio-Technical Systems (1981).

behavior of organizations. The open, rational models that have dominated our theories since the early 1960's are being challenged by a set of open, natural models. We are in the early stages of this development, and our announcement of the paradigm shift may be premature or incorrect, but there is clearly a flurry of activity on this front These models place great emphasis on the importance of the environment in determining the behavior and life chances of the organizations; they are clearly open systems models. However, the assumption that organizations behave as rational systems is strongly challenged in this work. (1981, p. 131)

In the work represented by James March and Johan Olsen (1976), John Meyer and Brian Rowan (1977), and Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald Salancik (1974), rational decision making processes tied to the explicit aims of the organization are often usurped by fragmented goals and technologies, institutionalized norms, and entrenched socio-political behaviors--patterned internal responses that are all, in effect, overdetermined by the environment. In their recent efforts to apply psychodynamic models to the understanding of how whole organizational systems function, Manfred Kets de Vries and Danny Miller (1984), Ian I. Mitroff (1983), and Edgar Schein (1985) also reflect this natural, open systems approach. Each of their works is considered in greater detail below. Similarly, insofar as it stresses the everpresent role of an environmentally-shaped organization character structure, the present study shares the same theoretical orientation. To this it must be added, though, that the orgonomic organizational framework developed in subsequent chapters does not at all renounce the rational or even some of the closed dimensions suggested by the other

types. As Scott himself concludes, knowledge of all four viewpoints

is indispensable not only as a guide to past contributions but also as a key to understanding many of the conflicts and controversies that continue to lie close to the surface The perspectives exhibit great resilience (1981, p. 132)

Here it seems wise to recall one of Reich's guiding methodological principles when dealing with many-sided issues: "Everyone is right in some way--it is merely a matter of knowing 'how'" (Reich, 1942/1973c, p. 25).

Organizations are not only predominantly viewed today as open systems, but also as open, energy systems. Katz and Kahn (1966) elaborate this mainstream theoretical orientation, understanding every organization as

an energetic input-output system in which the energetic return from the output reactivates the system. Social organizations are flagrantly open systems in that the input of energies and the conversion of output into further energetic input consist of transactions between the organization and its environment. (pp. 16-17)

Borrowing heavily from classical physics and the open system's theory work of Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968, 1975), Katz and Kahn define a number of characteristics that underlie their basic theory of organizational functioning. These include (1) strict importation of energy from the environment (in distinction to energy as spontaneously arising from within); (2) the organization itself as a complex throughput mechanism; (3) organizational product as energetic output; (4) organizational activities as patterned and cyclical systems of events; (5) "negative entropy,"

meaning that the organization must import and store more energy than it exports given the presumed universality of the Second Law of Thermodynamics; and (6) boundary maintenance via steady state/dynamic homeostasis. With respect to this last item, Katz and Kahn write

The importation of energy to arrest entropy operates to maintain some constancy in energy exchange, so that open systems which survive are characterized by a steady state There is a continuous inflow of energy from the external environment and a continuous export of the products of the system, but the character of the system, the ratio of the energy exchanges and the relations between parts, remains the same. . . . the basic principle is the preservation of the character of the system. (1966, pp. 23-24, emphasis added)

One of the relevant--and controversial--issues that emerges from the above theoretical assumptions is the extent to which a social organization can be viewed as an organism or "living system." Bertalanffy's own General Systems Theory--a conceptual attempt at developing a unified field embracing both the non-living and living realms--implies that it can be. For Bertalanffy (1968, 1975), the key distinguishing factor is whether a system is "open" or "closed." Systems that are open are defined as living; by importing more energy than they export ("negative entropy"), living systems, be they biological or social, exhibit their commonly observed dimensions of movement, growth, and excess capacity (stored energy). With such logic, Bertalanffy in a single stroke attempts to reconcile both vitalistic and mechanistic worldviews and also rescue the Second Law of Thermodynamics from apparent contradiction; living systems,

of course, manifest not just degenerative properties over time, but generative and regenerative properties as well (i.e., they are more than mechanical systems). Curiously, however, those sympathetic with Bertalanffy's formulation argue that it is precisely these open, generative and regenerative characteristics that differentiate the social organization from a living system. For example, in Sociology and Modern Systems Theory (1967), Walter Buckley contends that, unlike biological systems, organizations have the ability to modify their own shape and structure, thus reflecting the property of being "morphogenic" (p. 58). But is it not true that biological systems demonstrate such structural flexibility and modification continuously in their own growth? Are not the psychophysiological adaptive mechanisms of all living organisms ongoing testimony to this characteristic? Yet another voice in the controversy belongs to Michael Keeley. In "Organizational Analogy: A Comparison of Organismic and Social Contract Models," Keeley (1980) argues that an organization does not so much resemble an organism with a tightly defined membrane, as a free collection of men and women voluntarily consenting to enter into a "social contract" (p. 337). While usefully illuminating the very real problem of boundary definition and regulation in an organization, the case made, in effect, is a restatement of the old bifurcated argument against the naturalistic understanding of man--namely, that human

systems are essentially free, not determined.⁷ Still another perspective on the issue comes from John Kimberly in The Organizational Life Cycle (1980). After reviewing the ongoing scholarly debate and noting its rather fruitless "either/or quality," Kimberly concludes

Biological metaphors, imperfect though they most certainly are, can serve a very useful purpose in the study of organizations. . . .their use can lead to the raising of important new questions and perhaps to the recasting of old ones. (1980, p. 9)

Further, Kimberly adds that the reluctance of social scientists to pursue an organizational framework based on more natural, developmental models stems from a misunderstanding of the extent to which prevailing theories in biology are themselves unclouded. Kimberly cites the economist E. T. Penrose from the article "Biological Analogies in the Theory of the Firm" (1952): "it is not an easy task even for the biologist to state unambiguously what is meant by an organism or what distinguishes [it] from non-living matter" (p. 807). In many ways, this is the crux of the issue. From the standpoint of orgonomic knowledge, much of the debate is moot. First, the controversy itself is inadequately grounded. In no instance have those social scientists or biologists writing on the problem come to grips with the concrete discovery of the ubiquitous, mass-free energy Reich named orgone. As discussed above, the

⁷This theme--and indeed the whole debate--is echoed in the related furor over the relatively new field known as "sociobiology." For a survey of the literature here, see Thomas C. Wiegele, editor, Biology and the Social Sciences: An Emerging Revolution (1982).

empirical discoveries in orgone biophysics lead to a radically different conception of what constitutes an organism and what divides it from the non-living. Secondly, whether the social organization can be definitively classified as a living system or not, it retains its more central status as a natural, energy system, exhibiting spontaneous movement and generation of structure. The organization, of course, is an open system in that it interacts with energy outside of it; but as an organization, as the formulation in Chapter 3 elaborates, it has developed its own dynamic energy core that is fully involved in the economy of the exchange. This is not generally recognized by classical systems theory, which restricts its notion of energy to a phenomenon that is wholly imported to--and thus simply "put through"--the organization.^a

^aThis leads to crucial conceptual contradictions and severe practical consequences. Classical systems thinking cannot cope with the question, "Where does the energy emanate from to begin with?" Certainly not from other living systems because they, too, merely "import" energy from the outside. Yet this is precisely what its proponents must claim. Such circularity betrays open systems theory's mystical and mechanistic character--despite its pretensions to reconcile vitalism and mechanistics. It remains mystical in that it literally "abstracts" the energy from a system at the outset; mechanistic in that the organization itself is reduced to a hollow, throughput mechanism.

With the organization so conceived, both mystical and mechanistic OD technologies necessarily result. These are exemplified at the extremes by starry-eyed "transformation" efforts that seek to "infuse" change on the one hand, and ultra-rationalist approaches that seek to engineer and design change on the other (e.g., socio-tech). In either case, the interventionist often eventually encounters insurmountable resistance, and the change effort frequently collapses or fails to diffuse. From the standpoint of the present study, such outcomes are

(continued...)

One of the few to break with this notion of energy from an organizational theory standpoint is Linda Ackerman. In "The Flow State: A New View of Organizations and Managing" (1984, p. 117), Ackerman envisions the organization as a "dynamic energy" field with a concentrated core (purpose), a periphery (culture and leadership) and intervening formal layers--all, in a constant state of flow with the environment. According to Ackerman, the function of management and organization intervention strategy is to regulate the energy flow so it moves freely to the outer world with minimum barriers and constraints. In this regard, Karl Weick's highly innovative work in organizational theory is also quite suggestive. One of Weick's main themes in The Social Psychology of Organizing (1979) is the notion that an "organization" as such is a fiction; rather, one can simply speak of different states of being organized. But what is it that is being organized? For Weick, organizations are borne out of the convergence of people who have diverse, or originally divergent, ends in the environment at large. Out of this merging together of individual interest and mutual charge emerges what Weick

* (...continued)

predictable; the energy in the system that constitutes the quantitative charge of the resistance is not fully accounted for. How could it be? There is no conception of a dynamic, structuralized energy core. For a discussion of a recent case of organization transformation failure at PacBel suggesting such dynamics, see the December, 1987 issue of Vision/Action edited by Beverly Scott; William A. Passmore's "Overcoming Roadblocks in Work-Restructuring Efforts" (1982) outlines the conditions under which socio-technical interventions typically are stopped.

calls "collective structure"--the repetitive, "interlocked behaviors" that form the state of being organized (1979, p. 91). In the sequence of this process, organizational purposes are not arrived at first; rather, Weick writes, "as structure begins to form, members converge first on common means . . . to implement interdependence," and only afterwards converge on common ends. When this happens,

the diverse ends remain, but they become subordinated to an emerging set of shared ends. This shift is one of the most striking that occurs in group life and it is one of the most complex. (1979, pp. 91-92)

Finally, Weick notes, "once a collective structure forms, people take steps to insure that it is preserved" (p. 96); it becomes the core or "basic building block" for the creation and development of further collective activity. One of the principal means by which organizations maintain and articulate themselves is the process Weick calls "enactment." Once a core organizational structure is formed, it acts back upon its environment, perceiving, receiving, and sending messages based upon the continuity of its internal constellation. In this way, the organization continually shapes the very environment to which it adapts. Lastly, in The Structuring of Organizations, Henry Mintzberg (1970), who like Ackerman and Weick also sees the organization as a "system of regulated flows" (p. 35), outlines the enduring structural segments he identifies as being fundamental to all organizations. For Mintzberg, there are five basic functional parts of an organization:

(1) the "strategic apex," which essentially orients the work of the system; (2) the "middle line," with its accompanying (3) "technostructure" and (4) "support staff" to coordinate and assist work production and delivery; and (5) the "operating core," that segment which actually performs or discharges the task work out into the world. Each of these segments, Mintzberg argues, can take different shapes in relationship to one another depending upon the organization's age, the nature of its work, and the complexity of the environment in which it functions. Mintzberg's work is unique in that it seeks to get at the underlying generic structural components of all organizations regardless of the specific formal shapes they situationally happen to take.

The Function and Formation of
Organization Culture:
Clinical Perspectives

One of the central and most celebrated issues to arise in OD theory and practice in recent years is that of organizational "culture"--how it functions and develops as a crucial mediating link between organization and environment. While there has been an extensive body of literature dealing descriptively with the informal normative patterns and symbolic attributes of organization culture, such as Terrence Deal's and Allan Kennedy's Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life (1982), the focus here is upon those works that have been more explicitly informed by a psychodynamic, clinical perspective. Such a focus is

suggested not only by the nature of the present investigation, but by some of the very problems inherent in the wider literature. Peter Vaill, in his editor's note to a recent issue of Organization Dynamics (1988) devoted to the subject, observes how much of the topical discussion on culture and culture change reflects a superficial and all-too-easy view, one that wholly underestimates the scope and deeply anchored nature of what it is up against, both conceptually and practically. "Culture isn't just patterns of relationships, and isn't just a few attitudes that people seem to share," Vaill writes (1988, p. 2).

I would like to see a tougher, more conservative definition of what culture really is: . . . "a system of attitudes, actions, and artifacts that endures over time and operates to produce among its members a relatively unique, common psychology." . . . To the extent that we are succeeding in fostering change in attitudes and actions without too much anguish among organization members, we may be dealing with phenomena that really aren't deep enough to be called aspects of "culture." . . . we need to reserve the term "culture" for the relatively deep-seated and inaccessible attitudes, values, and habits of action [because] the time is coming--and it is already here for some organizations and institutional practices--when true culture change will seem needed We need an understanding of the deep phenomena (pp. 2-3, original emphasis)

In this context, works by Berne (1963), Kets de Vries and Miller (1984), Mitroff (1983), Schein (1985), Selznick (1957), and others are reviewed for their contribution to understanding "organization character"--and for their subsequent implications for organizational "health." This is followed by a discussion of the representative clinical and other relevant literature dealing with "sociodynamics"--

or group developmental theory--as it illuminates the pathways by which culture seems to develop in the first place.

Perhaps the most comprehensive and richest picture of culture to emerge to date is that of Ed Schein in Organizational Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View (1985). A social-psychologist influenced by psychoanalytic, group dynamic, and learning theories, Schein himself argues that culture is a deep, complex, and evolutionary phenomenon reflecting

a pattern of basic assumptions--invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration--that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (1985, p. 9)

The basic assumptions of a group's culture as they develop over time are "taken for granted" and hence basically unconscious; they thus permeate and give cohesion to the ideational, behavioral, and structural dimensions of the group as it continues to interact with the environment. For Schein, culture is essentially an historically evolved, functional phenomenon mediating organization and environment--functional in this way even if it proves partially irrational or dysfunctional with respect to subsequent changes in the organization's environment. This is because culture primarily serves a socioemotional or characterological, defensive function.

Culture solves problems for the group or organization and, even more important, it contains and reduces anxiety. The taken-for-granted assumptions that influence the ways in which group members perceive, think, and feel about the world stabilize that world, give meaning to it, and thereby reduce the anxiety that would result if we did not know how to categorize and respond to the environment. In this sense culture gives a group its character, and that character serves for the group the function that character and defense mechanisms serve for the individual. (1985, p. 312)

The notion of organization culture as character is one that is key to Schein, and in this he is not alone. "Clinical sociologist" Philip Selznick (1957) makes a similar case for treating "institutionalized" values and often irrational decision-making processes as functions of a more primary organization character. In fact, Selznick cites Reich (p. 39) together with Otto Fenichel, a close co-worker of Reich's in the 1920's and early 1930's, in defining organization character as consisting of historical, integrative, functional, and dynamic attributes. The concept of organization character also appears in the innovative if somewhat neglected work by Eric Berne, The Structure and Dynamics of Organizations and Groups (1963). A psychiatrist and founder of Transactional Analysis, Berne views organizational culture as the social equivalent of the individual's personality structure, the function of which is to identify boundaries (identity) in relation to the outer world. For Berne, organizational culture regulates the work of the group--indeed, distinguishes the group as a group from that of a boundary-less crowd--via three segments: (1)

a technical or task-related culture (reflecting the collective rational activity of the membership--Adult state); (2) a group etiquette or social contract (reflecting the conscious rituals or formal traditions of the membership--Parental state); and (3) the organization character (reflecting the archaic or emotionally-laden aspect of the membership--Child state). Berne contends that the group character binds anxiety by sanctioning expression of certain emotions and is revealed by those abrogations of the social contract that the group provisionally permits. Ian Mitroff in Stakeholders of the Organizational Mind (1983) draws from Berne, Freud, and Carl Jung in identifying how deep--and often irrational--needs of various internal and external constituencies shape and delimit an organization's "character" or "collective unconscious," filtering and distorting its perceptions and strategic policy making-process.⁹

The Neurotic Organization by Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) is a sophisticated, full-scale attempt to apply a psychodynamic perspective to the understanding of how whole systems function. Kets de Vries, an organizational scholar and practicing psychoanalyst,

⁹While not couched in clinical terms, Jay Lorsch similarly discusses the constraining impact of culture on the formulation of clear-sighted strategic vision in "Strategic Myopia: Culture as an Invisible Barrier to Change" (1985). Coming from Lorsch this is noteworthy; as discussed above, he has largely been identified with the more rationalist tradition in OD. A related critique of linear strategic planning can be found in David K. Hurst, "Why Strategic Management is Bankrupt" (1986).

together with Miller argue that organizations, like individuals, develop characteristic styles of neurotic dysfunctioning that pervade their focus, structure, and behavior. The case made is that

intrapsychic fantasies of key organization members are major factors influencing their prevailing neurotic style and that these, in turn, give rise to shared fantasies that permeate all levels of functioning, color the organizational culture, and make for a dominant organizational adaptive style. This style will greatly influence decisions about strategy and structure. (1984, pp. 19-20)

In all, five types of system-wide, neurotic organization "styles" are identified: (1) a paranoid style, preoccupied with internal and external threats, resulting in widespread distrust, centralized reporting systems, and a reactive, poorly focused strategy; (2) a compulsive style that, because it is obsessed with efficiency, tight internal controls, and bureaucratic regimen, stifles needed initiative, participation, and appropriate discretionary decision-making; (3) a dramatic style, characterized by a vitality and hyperactivity that betrays inadequate controls and rash, high-risk strategy and decisions; (4) a depressive style that is relatively stable and internally efficient, but apathetic and competitively weak; and (5) a schizoid style, characterized by vacillating strategy, a vacuum in leadership, poorly integrated structure, and politicized decision processes (pp. 15-45). After diagnosing the organizational pathology, the function of the interventionist, according to Kets de Vries and Miller, is to help a firm's top managers gain insight into their

individual and shared defense mechanisms and then "work through" their sources of resistance in what can be a long, arduous process.

While bold and unique in its cultural typology, one of the major problems of The Neurotic Organization, as with other "natural" system formulations, is that no clear picture emerges of what constitutes a healthy organizational culture. As in psychoanalysis and much of traditional medicine itself, health is not defined positively but rather, conversely, as the absence of disease.¹⁰ W. Richard Scott's critique (1981) of Selznick could equally apply here:

One learns a great deal from this literature about what makes an organization "sick" and about various forms of illness or deviance; but very little is said about those forces that sustain an organization and keep it "healthy," with its goals intact. (p. 94)

Of course, Kets de Vries and Miller argue that a fluidity of styles is generally best since any single neurotic style can rigidify under changing conditions and become

¹⁰See, for example, Edmund Bergler, M.D., Curable and Incurable Neurotics (1961) for this view. Interestingly, classical medicine and psychiatry reflect the same assumptions that lay behind open systems thinking. Again, according to open systems' logic, living organisms are defined by their absence of entropy (negative degenerative potential), not by a spontaneously motile, life-giving energy (an energy that in its course also happens to degenerate and regenerate). Despite the countervailing empirical evidence, the widespread appearance of these negatively-framed assumptions in so many scientific fields reflects how deeply ingrained they are in the larger culture or character of our civilization, as Reich so keenly observed (1949/1973b, 1953).

increasingly dysfunctional. However, with all its stress on pathology, one comes away from the book with a sense that organizational dysfunction is essentially a given; it is only a matter of delineating the type. In fact, the book sweepingly characterizes highly participative, work-democratic organizational cultures as "utopian," assigning them a "dramatic," pathological status (1984, p. 66-68). Such a treatment leaves little hope for the organizational therapist to do much beyond helping the organization clean up its act and better adjust to its basic neurotic style. Indeed, in their conclusion, Kets de Vries and Miller are not sanguine about the possibilities for change. This is a perspective they share with Schein (1985), who concludes in his own volume that organization cultures may by nature be recalcitrant to change. Such pessimism, while in part reality-based, may be linked to yet another common feature of the two volumes: the character of an organization is seen as deriving from the character of its executive leadership rather than from the way it modulates a more primal work energy drive. Undeniably, there is a powerful connection between top management and organizational character. Yet by wholly equating the two and leaving out energy as a systemic, underlying driving force, a bias is built-in towards the founders and current day head of an

organization, reflecting frozen, hierarchical presumptions.¹¹

In contrast, the present study holds to a more holistic conception of what makes for a healthy organizational culture, one in which founders and leaders by nature serve a less dominant and more enabling role, a conception that pays homage to the fact that the organization as such has a life--or energy--of its own. This is not to say that founders and leaders do not act or become dominating under certain adverse, developmental conditions--indeed, under prevailing circumstances, they typically do; this is the heart of the issue of neurotic character formation. Rather, as dynamic work energy systems, organizations are conceived herein as naturally healthy from inception, only becoming ill--i.e., developing various neurotic, hierarchical character structures--if the discharge of this energy is sufficiently thwarted by the outside world. In taking this more positive stance, two distinct bodies of organizational literature are drawn upon and integrated. The first body of literature concerns images of what makes for a healthy work culture; the second body concerns group developmental theory.

¹¹At the individual level, psychoanalysis is similarly biased towards parental causation and the head of the organism--with little understanding of how the organism is driven by its present-day, energetic stasis or the way the head functions as a part of an entire bioenergetic system. It, too, is similarly pessimistic in therapeutic outlook.

As for the former: While the field is wanting from the standpoint of a natural, energetic perspective, several strains of literature do conjure up such a healthy model of organizational work character. In the work-democratic tradition itself, for example, one finds a hopeful, normative conception of whole systems functioning. Issuing out of a number of research sources, including the findings of Tavistock's Wilfred R. Bion (1959), early industrial democracy projects sought to achieve highly productive, non-hierarchical work cultures that struck a balance between workers' task and emotional needs. Indeed, in Democracy at Work (1976), Fred Emery and Einar Thorsrud contend that only when a system optimizes conditions of internal self-regulation can it fully function and be healthy; hierarchically mediated systems unduly concentrate pockets of power and thus lead away from such autonomy, diminishing the fulfillment of both task and sentient needs. Max Elden's "Democratizing Organizations: A Challenge to Organization Development" (1985) and Paul Bernstein's cross-cultural, empirical study, Workplace Democratization (1976), also press the case for the conceptualization of social systems not hierarchically dominated or derived. Beyond the work-democratic literature, futurist scenarios such as Alvin Toffler's The Third Wave (1980) and Peter Drucker's "The Coming of the New Organization" (1988) argue that systems with an organic, self-managing character will increasingly not be matters of choice, but--in an

information-driven age requiring high degrees of flexibility, integration, and mobility--matters of survival. It is envisioned that such organizations will, of course, continue to have leaders--but far fewer in number and in a more orchestrative, "conductive" role. Parallel here, of course, are the characteristics of organizational excellence defined by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., both together (1982) and apart (Peters, 1980, 1987; Waterman, 1988). Peters and Waterman emphasize such system's elements as an open and outward-looking customer-focus; introspective, supportive management; high employee involvement, enthusiasm, and productivity; and an enduring capacity for self-renewal. Finally, of course, classical OD literature such as that of Chris Argyris (1970), Richard Beckhard (1969), Warren Bennis (1969), Robert Blake and Jane Mouton (1969), Samuel A. Culbert (1974), Rensis Likert (1961), and Robert Tannenbaum and Sheldon Davis (1969) basically operate from a compatible normative view, stressing the congruence of task achievement and human fulfillment in effective, open, forward-moving organizations. In this tradition, Peter Block's The Empowered Manager (1987) particularly highlights the difference between dependency-inducing, counter-productive bureaucratic cultures and more fully functioning and inspired, "entrepreneurial" cultures (p. 22), cultures that foster self-responsible, gratifying work activity at every level of the organization. In sum, while all these

strands of literature vary in emphasis and scope, taken together they provide a counterpoint to the darker image of organizational health found so frequently in the clinically-inspired literature on culture.

"Sociodynamic" literature--a term referring to group dynamics and the socioemotional stages of group development--provides a basis for understanding how organization character appears to develop in the first place. While this literature originally arose in the context of research on training, therapy, and small group work, in this study its dimensions are assumed to be the pathways by which whole organization cultures evolve and, under certain conditions, become developmentally arrested. This is a position also taken by Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) and Schein (1985), though in a substantially different form.

Two useful overviews of the sociodynamic literature can be found in A. Paul Hare's Handbook of Small Group Research (1976, chap. 4) and Roy Lacoursiere's The Life Cycle of Groups: Group Developmental Stage Theory (1980). Each are attempts to summarize and categorize the various theorists--seeing overlapping similarities from R.F. Bales (1950) and Bion (1959) to B.W. Tuckman (1965) and Will Schutz (1958). The work of Lacoursiere, a psychiatrist, is particularly noteworthy. In his outline of five developmental phases--i.e., orientation, dissatisfaction, resolution, production, and termination--Lacoursiere sees

individual intrapsychic and group developmental stages as functionally identical. For example, Freud's psychosexual stages and Bion's "basic assumptions" (1959, pp. 93) of group fight/flight, dependency, and pairing are treated as analogues.¹² Too, in his 1968 article, "Toward a Genetic Theory of Group Development," Bennis sees the socioemotional developmental stages of groups as corresponding to the oral, anal, phallic, and genital stages of psychosexual development. This is a theme picked up and elaborated in Chapter 4.

Of course, not all investigators see the socioemotional aspects of group development as distinct, sequential phases. Bion himself did not, but rather he saw them as perpetually surfacing counter-impulses to rational group work. In an interesting variation, Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) assert that particular neurotic organizational cultures correspond to a main shared fantasy upon which the dominant coalition becomes fixated, a fantasy arising from the individual personalities of its members and, at a group level, from painful, unassimilated encounters with the environment that stimulate and intensify identification with one of Bion's three basic assumptions. Thus, in their own typology, organizations frozen in a fight/flight shared fantasy form the basis for the paranoid style; those which

¹²Thus, Lacoursiere couples the dependency/pairing basic assumptions with the oral stage under "orientation"; the fight/flight assumptions with the anal and phallic stages under "dissatisfaction"; and the work group assumption with the genital stage under "production."

are stuck in pairing or "utopian" fantasies, the dramatic style. Such shared fantasies, once anchored in the system, color the culture and functioning of the system, although they are presumably affected continuously by emerging patterns of new shared fantasies throughout the work of the organization.

In attempting to sort out the multitude of dimensions involved, Schein (1985, pp. 148-208), too, provides a comprehensive review of the literature and ventures a synthesis of his own in identifying four stages of group evolution, each with a dominant assumption and socioemotional focus. Stage One represents group formation, with dominant assumptions of dependence upon the leader and a self-orientation wherein each group member seeks inclusion, influence, intimacy, and identity. When group members successfully work through this stage, and an intermediate period of counter-dependence passes, Stage Two is entered; here, a "fusion" assumption operates ("we're a great group"), with focus upon harmony, conformity, and a mutual search for intimacy. In this stage, conflict is generally suppressed as the group moves out to develop an identity of its own. This is followed by a group work phase, Stage Three--a rational, reality-based stage characterized by an emotional investment in accomplishment, teamwork, and individual contribution. Finally, Schein posits an end-phase of group maturity, Stage Four, in which the group narrows its range of interests in what it has been

successful in the past--in effect, "closing off" from the world, minimizing creativity and member differences that pose a threat to institutional traditions. In Schein's synthesis, a catalytic "marker event"--i.e., some critical incident--flags the movement from one stage to the next, although unassimilated conflicts faced in one stage may reappear and be activated in another.

Because of its conceptual parsimony, Schein's framework is the one which the sociodynamic formulation developed in Chapter 4 takes as a central reference point. However, given the free energy assumptions of the present study, Schein's last, maturity stage seems an artifact of unassimilated experiences at previous stages and is therefore dropped. A "terminal" sociodynamic phase does, in fact, seem doubtful when applied to whole organizational systems without prearranged endings such as T-groups. Similarly, at the front end of the developmental process, this project incorporates some of the more recent literature around "visioning" in its hypothesis of a vision stage yet earlier than that of leader-dependency (Schein's Stage One). While he does not represent it as a developmental stage as such, Block (1987) argues that the establishment of organizational vision is the primary emotional event in the early life of an organization, providing excitement, charge, and a means by which it stakes out its position and identity in the world. Developmentally, this would seem to fit in with Lacoursiere's aforementioned orientation stage.

Before a group is dependent on a leader, the leader first functions in a way to orient the group, externally and internally.¹³ Indeed, the self-orientation of group members that Schein identifies in his initial group formation stage seems contingent upon such an earlier, differentiated phase. The primary importance of vision as a preliminary function of group leadership has also been thoroughly emphasized by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (1985), James Kouzes and Barry Posner (1987), Noel Tichy and Mary Anne Devanna (1985), Richard A. Walton (1986), and many other students of management and organization. The notion of an initial vision stage of socioemotional development is, of course, also a direct parallel to the ocular stage of psychosexual development understood in orgonomy.

Organization Change Methodology

Since this research project constitutes the beginnings of a strategic interventionist and diagnostic framework, OD articles and texts detailing models of change and methods of practice are briefly considered as they impact on an orgonomic approach. Two excellent overviews to the problem of organizational change can be found in Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal's Modern Approaches to Understanding and Managing Organizations (1984) and Robert

¹³This is the case even if the leader provides no explicit orientation. In T-groups with first time participants, for instance, members regularly enter into the dependency stage "confused"--that is, they look to the group leader with a frustrated orientation or vision of what they're about.

Chin and Kenneth D. Benne "General Strategies for Effecting Changes in Human Systems" (1985). In each, it is quite clear how particular change approaches and methodologies result from underlying assumptions about the nature of social systems' functioning.

In discussing change, it is first necessary to draw some distinction between what has been called "first-order" and "second-order" change. Amir Levy and Uri Merry in Organizational Transformation: Approaches, Strategies, Theories (1986, chap. 1) provide a comprehensive review of the literature in distinguishing quantitative change continuous of a current system's structure (first-order) and qualitative change discontinuous of the structure (second-order). The first seeks to fine-tune or adjust the functioning of an organization to its given set up; the second seeks to change its basic shape--hence it is revolutionary and "transformative." Levy and Merry are fervent about the prospects of organizational transformation--in particular about the possibilities of rapidly changing bureaucracies into radically different participatory systems. An alternative, more conservative view is expressed by W. Warner Burke in Organization Development: Principles and Practices (1982, pp. 365-368). In reviewing the relevant historical literature, Burke argues that while effective OD efforts do indeed result in a change of culture or "personality of the organization," bureaucracies are highly durable and not really subject to

much change; whole systems' shifts are rare and, when they do occur, more a function of environmental factors than the intervention effort. He thus concludes, somewhat sadly, that the aims of the change agent need to be more narrowly focused in scope. In contrast to both Burke and Levy and Merry, the present study combines and, in effect, recasts first- and second-order change perspectives. Qualitative, characterological restructuring is indeed sought, but not in a way that constitutes a radical, discontinuous departure from a system's roots. Rather, as elaborated in the body of the project, neurotic-bureaucratic processes are, as it were, "rolled back" into their more natural, energetic bases of functioning. In this way, the hardened pessimism and optimism of both first-and second-order change perspectives are effectively dissolved and the discussion moved to a deeper level, one that incorporates the essential insights of each while avoiding their dead-ended parochialism.

In thinking about the entire problem of organization change, the pioneering work of Kurt Lewin is indispensable. In Field Theory in Social Science (Lewin, 1951), Lewin outlines his now classic notion of organization process as a "moving field of quasi-stationary equilibrium" (pp. 172-174) consisting of driving and restraining forces. The purpose of organization interventions, for Lewin, is to create disequilibrium and then "refreeze" the organization into a higher equilibrium point as it moves through this steady-state flow. Of the two avenues of approach for inducing

change, pushing the propelling forces or lowering the restraining forces, Lewin emphasizes the latter. It is far easier to effect change simply by "letting it happen" than by pushing it. This puts a premium on dealing with resistance as a restraining force to organizational change.

Curiously enough, however, there is a much less well developed body of literature tackling the problem of resistance than one might suspect. In the organizational change literature, too frequently, it seems, resistance is treated as an operational consideration or barrier--rather than the core of the change problem itself. Notable exceptions here are Bennis (1969), Block (1978), and Robert Fritz (1984). Block, in Flawless Consulting (1979), writes,

Dealing with resistance is harder than actually doing data collection and much harder than coming up with good interventions. The meat of the consultation is dealing with resistance. (p. 137)

For Block, dealing with client resistance is key because it is a "predictable, natural, emotional reaction against the process of being helped . . . and having to face up to difficult organizational problems" (p. 113, emphasis added); resistance is thus critical to engage and dispense with, especially in the early, contracting phases of the change effort, if the consultant and client are to go on to an unimpeded, joint resolution of the problem at hand. More pointedly still, Warren Bennis in Organization Development: Its Nature, Origins, and Prospects (1969) intimates how the form and nature of the resistance the client projects--

especially onto the change agent--may well be a window into the actual form and nature of the change problem itself. In a fascinating passage never really picked up and developed, Bennis notes:

Possibly the most important factor in estimating the probability of success [in an OD effort] . . . has to do with the change agent's relationship with the client system, in particular, the quality and potentiality of the relationship. . . . the main point we want to stress is the diagnostic validity of the relationship; the problems that inhere in that relationship are probably symptomatic of the problems to be encountered We are suggesting that one of the best ways of diagnosing cultural readiness has to do with the way the client system reacts to and establishes a relationship with the change agent. The quality and vicissitudes of this encounter--insofar as it is a miniature replica of the intended change program--provide an important clue regarding the fate of the organization development program. (1969, pp. 46-47)

This, of course, is identical to the problem of transference--and from the resistance side, negative transference--found in Reich's character analytic technique. Elaboration of this technique as a means of diagnosing and treating organizational character is handled in Chapter 5 of the present investigation. Lastly, Robert Fritz in The Path of Least Resistance (1984) asserts that staying with the natural flow of where the client is at moment to moment works in not triggering resistance out of its normal sequence.

In addition to diagnosing the defensive structure and mastering resistance, two of the major technical competencies called on to utilize the framework developed in the current investigation are process observation and large

system strategic case management skills. Schein's Process Consultation (1969) is still the best treatment of the former. In focusing on how the consultant or change agent ongoingly builds the client's readiness for change, process consultation, as Schein defines it, helps the client system learn to see its key problems for itself, while facilitating its internal capacity to fashion appropriate solutions. This is principally accomplished--again, in a manner not dissimilar to character analysis--by interventions and feedback that help the client see the "how" rather than the "what" of events. In this sense, Schein regards the change agent as a "sociotherapist" (1969, p. 134). Richard Beckhard and Reuben Harris in Organizational Transitions: Managing Complex Change (1987) stress the necessity to think in strategic terms to leverage large systems change. The change agent is not simply helping the client with piecemeal tactical diagnoses and interventions, but continually thinking through and coordinating what is needed to get to the desired end state; this requires a comprehensive change strategy or "map" to actively manage the change process. While Beckhard and Harris's own formulation is developed in the context of change planned jointly and rationally with the client, it is employed in the present study as a "meta-" or "black box" strategy for contending with the irrational dynamics of organizational character.

Other useful change literature drawn upon throughout the project are: William G. Dyer's Team Building (1977) and

Dale E. Zand's "Collateral Organization: A New Change Strategy" (1970) for their basic methodologies in working with groups; J. Richard Hackman and Greg R. Oldham's Work Redesign (1980) for structural avenues of approach; Roger Harrison's "Choosing the Depth of Organizational Intervention" (1970) for its concept of gauging the emotional tenor of the intervention and its implications for change strategy; and David Nadler's Feedback and Organization Development (1977) for diagnostic techniques as well as the utilization and development of information channels to mobilize energy for change.

Finally, I would like to say a word about the literature dealing with action research methodology and the formulation of theory. Here, too, Lewin (1951) serves as the guiding light in the classical OD tradition. Theory flows out of action, and theory in turn enriches and informs action. The way to understand a system, Lewin once noted, is to try to change it (cited in Schein, 1985, p. 135); knowledge as well as fruitful hypotheses are gained at the limits of where a system resists movement. Lewin's action research methodology is distinguished from more mechanistic investigation approaches in that it assumes a world that is active and alive. It does not begin with strict hypotheses about static, experimental events; rather, it resembles Reich's functional method of research in letting insights, patterns, and theory emerge gradually out of "moving" experience, leading to ever new, interconnected observations

and meaningful actions. Since Lewin, the action research method has been built upon by Wendell French (1969), R. Lippitt, J. Watson, and B. Westley (1958), Burke (1982), and others for understanding the planned phases of OD practice. In summary, these include entry, contracting, diagnosis, feedback, action planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Given the organic perspective of action research, the formulation of theory can itself be thought of as a Lewinian type of "field event"--"unfreezing, moving, and refreezing" over time with the interplay of actual events (Lewin, 1951, pp. 228-229). In this way, theory can become more elegant, profound, and functional over time. Of course, regardless of their developmental states, all theories do have certain defining elements. Robert Dubin's "Theory Building in Applied Areas" (1976) maintains that a theory is given its status as such providing it specifies the following: (1) units of analysis, (2) the units' laws of interaction, (3) the boundaries within which the units interact, and (4) the states through which the units as a system may move. All theories break down in practice when they are applied outside the boundary within which their units lawfully interact--and, indeed, this is the problem with so many OD models as they are applied to complex organizational realities. They lack definition as to what the boundary of their application is; strictly speaking, this is what makes them something less than theoretical models. On the other hand, a theory is not only complete,

but scientific to the extent that it can be subjected to empirical tests, has predictive value, and generates useful strategic propositions. This, in the end, is what led Lewin to conclude, "There's nothing so practical as a good theory" (cited in Weisbord, 1987, p. 70). The present investigation seeks to lay the cornerstones for such a theory in the organizational domain--one that can be more fully built upon and tested in the future.

Chapter 3

THE WORK ENERGY BASIS OF ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations are natural, energetic phenomena. They represent moving, emotional constellations of work energy in dynamic exchange with a field or universe of energy outside their boundaries. While varying individually, all organizations share a number of basic structural, developmental, and behavioral features in the way this energy moves--literally, in the way the energy is organized both inside and out. This chapter explores the energetic nature of organizational life as it lays down an organomic model of what organizations are and how they fundamentally function.

SEMANTIC ROOTS

Common language usage affirms the notion that organizations are both energy-driven and function as living organisms. The phrases "tapping people's energy," "making good use of energy," and "not putting energy into wasteful tasks" are routinely found in the literature and language of organizations. Both managers and theorists alike speak of an organizational "head" and "body" as structural components of organizational life. Effective leadership is considered a matter of establishing "vision" and focusing "charge,"

while work tasks themselves are "discharged." In so doing, vital, motivated systems reflect the property of being "inspired," whereas systems with weak inspiration generally express little emotion or energy release in the form of viable products and services. Too, "branch" offices are said to lie in a "field" immediately surrounding the center of organizational activity, a field wherein contact with the outer environment is initially made. In all these respects, corporate organizations literally seem to be corporal phenomena: organismic systems embodying active, working energy.

The Indo-European roots of the word "work" suggest that these connections are more than accidental. Stemming from the root "werg," the word work literally means "to do." According to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (Morris, 1969), its Greek form, "ergon," is the common origin of the words "work," "energy," and "action"; what is more, the suffixed o-grade form, "worg-a," of the Greek derivative means "organ," to "swell" as in "orgasm" (pp. 1549-1550). Here, the common energetic root of work and sexuality--and its encapsulation in a living, "organized" form--is revealed. Indeed, the very word "organization" denotes this associative clustering of vital, working energy--"life energy," as it were. From his clinical experience and experimental investigations, Reich (1942/1973c, 1953/1976) postulated that work and sexual energy were two complementary aspects of a common biological

energy hitherto unidentified in strictly physical terms, an energy he termed orgone.

WORK ENERGY AND THE BIOSOCIAL "CONCEPTION" OF ORGANIZATIONS

Reich first identified work energy as an expression of the core bioenergy of the human animal (Reich, 1942/1973c, 1946/1971b, 1953/1976). As a basic expression of life energy, work energy is functionally identical with sexual energy. Indeed, work is said to be a means by which man secures "his living," just as sexuality is a means by which the living comes into being, both literally and also involving the senses. Too, like sexual energy, while work energy functions out of the biological core of individuals, it is as Reich recognized by nature "biosocial"; i.e., it always functions in a social arena outside the individuals who embody and express it. This arena may be said to be "social" to the extent that the energy develops and moves in concert with others or is otherwise discharged, exchanged, and replenished in a field of energy with which it interacts.¹ Again, as with sexual energy, work energy is

¹Of course, work energy manifests itself in a social domain different than that of sexual energy, namely, the domain of labor and production (Reich, 1953/1976). Indeed, without considering its biologic, energetic core, work appears to operate in a domain that is wholly antithetical to sexuality, reflecting the presumed eternal contradiction between "reality and pleasure principles" (Freud, 1930/1961, p. 24). This is a contradiction replicated ad nauseam in organizational and behavioral ideologies that stress the inherent gap between the world of work and the gratification of human needs--a contradiction in which
(continued...)

experienced as emotion, constituting in its own realm the subjectively felt motive or motivational force of work ("process" or "labor-power") together with the objectively real motion or movement of the work activity itself ("production").

Grounded in individuals, work energy can concentrate itself across a field of individuals and form a collective structure or organizational core--a process that will be described at some length below--and once this organizational core forms, this energy can be seen to operate identically at the level of the social organism just as it does in individuals. Expressed in classical organizational terms, work energy operates at every level of the "human system"--at the level of individuals, groups, organizations, and even whole civilizations (cf. Bertalanffy, 1968, 1975; Tannenbaum, et. al., 1985).

The simplest illustration of the way work energy functions is at the level of the individual. When we work in an unblocked way, fully focused on our goals, we experience ourselves as effective and the work process

¹ (...continued)

classical OD methodologies have become irrevocably ensnared (e.g., interventions based on divided assumptions about process vs. task, people vs. structure, etc.). However, with Reich's contribution of the underlying energetic unity of work and sexual energy, it has become possible to understand that pleasure and work are not naturally antagonistic; rather their contradiction simply represents a deeply embedded historical convention that an appropriately conceived therapeutic methodology can dissolve--within the individual and within the organization. See the discussion in the text.

itself as exciting, expansive, and gratifying. In this case, the "charge" and gratification we feel is literally a function of the excitation and discharge of the work energy moving from the core through periphery of our organism in an unimpeded way.² The converse also holds: when we experience blockages in work--inwardly or outwardly imposed--we experience our work activity as frustrating, constrictive, and ungratifying; moreover, task accomplishment is not complete because our energy is tied up and not fully available for effective release. When this situation becomes chronic, we no longer feel "free" in our work; rather, work becomes experienced as dull, monotonous, and "meaningless," with various psychological and physical symptoms of stress (undischarged energy) often coming to the surface.

At the level of the social system, equivalent dynamics are also at play. Like individuals, organizations, too, function as natural systems in that vital, working energy moves from an organizational core to periphery or boundary, outward to the world for expression. When this collective energy moves in a free and harmonious manner throughout the organization and into the market environment,

²This is a biosocial phenomena and not the same thing as "job satisfaction" as the term has been used in the industrial psychology literature. In fact, the current methodological confusion and debate over the correlation of "job satisfaction" with "productivity" is a good example of the blind alley social scientists create by their refusal to acknowledge work as a unified, energetic function. For an overview of the controversy, see Hackman and Oldham (1980, chap. 1).

it is experienced by group members as exciting and fulfilling. Members feel mutual "charge" and release in their productive accomplishments together (cf. Konia, 1986a, p. 62). They feel "free," "empowered," "collaborative," and "productive." Conversely, organizations with blocked work energy neither fully discharge their tasks nor generate a feeling of excitement or collaborative fulfillment in their members. Work energy remains trapped inside the system and cannot get out. This is why, far from being experienced as "free," chronically blocked organizations are literally perceived as "traps" (cf. Baker, 1967, p. vii; Culbert, 1974, p. 1; Reich, 1953, p. 1). Blocked organizations cannot fully concentrate their available energy on their goals; in fact, their goals are often poorly defined, fragmented, or otherwise out of focus, reflecting the stymied nature of their energy to begin with. The internal climate in these organizations is often characterized by frustration and routine, "aimless" work, work in which members feel ineffective and dispossessed. Other interpersonal and structural symptoms of distress--dysfunctional norms, power conflicts, role ambiguity, policy and systems breakdown, funding and capital problems, and the like--are also frequently manifest.

Whether the system is at the individual, group, or organizational level, certain basic energetic relationships are evident. Figure 1 outlines the difference in energy flow between any type of free and chronically blocked human

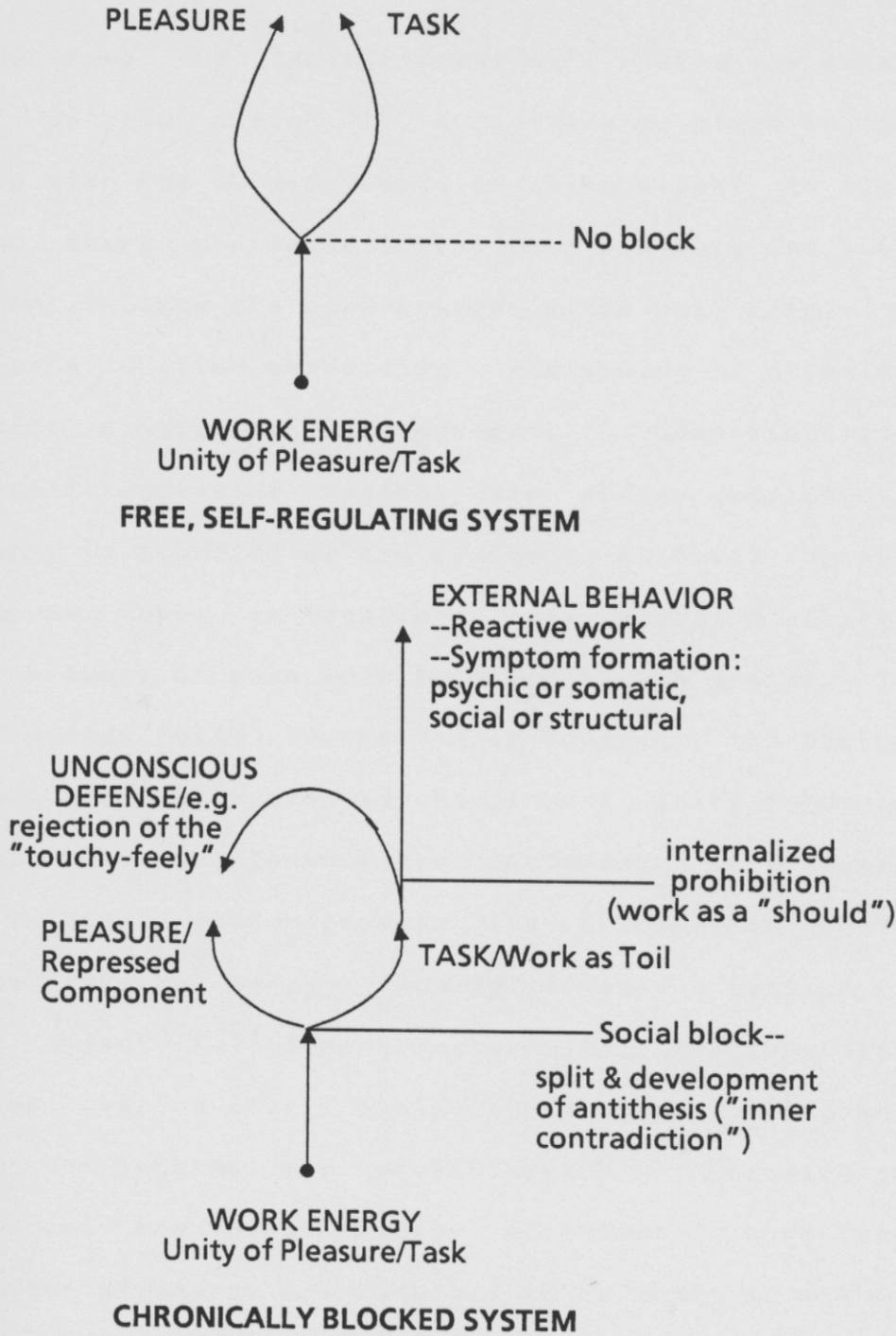


Figure 1

Diagram Depicting Flow of Work Energy

Source: Derived from W. Reich, [The Function of the Orgasm] (V.R. Carfagno, Ed. and trans.), New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973c, pp. 142; 184 (originally published, 1942).

system. The free, or "self-regulating" system as Reich (1942/1973c, p. 180) called it, encounters no block in its relationship with the outside world as it develops; it thus exhibits no sharp contradiction between pleasure and task accomplishment. Since the work energy moves out freely to the world as a unified expression, the system is oriented fully towards gratifying achievement. Quantitatively speaking, self-regulating systems are energy efficient: minimum energy is required by the system to be built up and stored because there is regular, full energy discharge towards the primary or core work function of the system. In short, the system fully "works." In contrast, the system that becomes chronically blocked develops a sharp internal contradiction between pleasure and achievement in response to a block initially encountered in its environment. With the system's internal energy thus split, only a portion of it reaches object fulfillment externally; the remaining portion turns over on itself inside the system, fueling and sustaining the internalized prohibition.³ Chronically blocked systems are never energy efficient: more than minimum amounts of energy are required to be built up within the system because not all energy is available for object

³This appears to be the precise process whereby the "work vs. pleasure" antithesis--so prominent in our civilization--is anchored in individuals and in institutional settings (Reich, 1942/1973c).

fulfillment (undischarged energy).⁴ Excess energy, which thus continues to build within the system as a vicious circle, then spills over in the form of presenting symptoms. Such symptoms can either be psychic or somatic (in the case of an individual), or social or structural (in the case of a group or organization)--or, indeed, at once psychosomatic or sociostructural in manifestation. In fact, just as there is a "psychosomatic identity" expressing the basic character of energy movement within an individual (Konia, 1985; Reich, 1942/1973c), a "sociostructural identity" expresses the characteristic movement of work energy within an organization--i.e., the common way both the social (or interpersonal) and structural realms of an organization express and bind the underlying movement of vital work activity (energy) throughout the system. The model suggests that organizations with a narrow transactional focus vis a vis their current environments are always at one and the same time constrictive in their goals, roles, and sanctioned communication channels (structural realm) as well as in their normative attitudes about the kinds of data considered permissible to communicate (social realm). In cases such as these, the social and structural realms are not simply

⁴The notion of "negative entropy" from classical systems theory essentially describes this phenomenon. The problem is that this compensatory energy build-up is a secondary reaction based on the blockage of free energy movement in an organization to begin with; it is not the kind of universal, natural condition as classical systems thinking contends. See the relevant discussion in Chapter 2.

accidentally similar; rather they form a functional identity or unit with respect to the way they constrict the movement of work energy throughout these organizations. Whether at the level of the individual or organization, the psychosomatic and sociostructural identities constitute the character of the system; literally they are a system's "identity" with respect to its "characteristic" energy movement--its loose-tight properties and expansive-contractive qualities. Thus, depending on how the system actually functions, the psychosomatic and sociostructural identities reflect either the self-regulating or chronically blocked character of energy movement.

To return to a consideration raised earlier: How is it that organizations form to begin with, given that work energy originates out of individuals? Here Karl Weick's notion of the emergence of "collective structure" (1979, p.96) and Reich's theory of "superimposition" (1951/1973b, p. 181) are parsimonious. Weick (1979) first challenged the traditional notion, as articulated by rational systems theorists beginning with Weber (1922/1946), that organizations are initially constituted around some pre-determined purpose or logical end. Rather, he described the formation of organizations as a process of coalescing personal interests and resources of individuals, a process wherein diverse, individual interests stream together and precede a common end, with the superordinate purpose or function only secondarily emerging (1979, pp. 91-92). In

other words, organizations and the purposes around which they form are initially instrumental of individual interests, not vice versa; they "emerge" from the convergence of interests that are originally divergent. For instance, the two individuals who came together to form the commercial bank to which I consult did not initially do so with the purpose in mind to form the business, but because their individual life historical, ego, and monetary interests first simply merged and combined (their "paths crossed"); for a number of years prior to the formation of the organization, they collaborated as real estate developers on various building projects together. The birth of their more separate enterprise--the bank--only came about later. Having experienced occasional difficulty raising working capital, they came to see that a market opportunity existed for an entity that could help fund entrepreneurial customers like themselves. Only at this point, when their overlapping interests fully fused and became identified with something larger than themselves, was the bank "conceived" and subsequently born. This accords with Weick's more general formulation. The emergence of shared purpose or wider common function constitutes the "collective structure" we call the organization.

While Weick's model is not framed in energetic terms, it would surely be easy to do so. The merger of individual interests comprises the merger of individual work energies, from which a new, shared structure of work energy

emerges. The individual energies, first mutually excited by each other and attracted into an association, over time are capable of freely consolidating themselves into a concentrated organizational core. Recasting Weick's formulation in this way enhances it and makes it fully come alive, for it adds the emotional components of charge and excitement missing in his approach, components that are almost always highly visible at the birth of an organization (as was evident, by all reports, in the case of the bank). It also fully corresponds to the basic process of creation Reich termed "superimposition" (1951/1973b, p. 181), a physical process he found occurring spontaneously throughout all of non-living and living nature--from the creation of spiral galaxies, hurricanes, and clouds, to the generation of microscopic forms of protozoa and human life itself. The principle of superimposition describes the observation that from the merger or superimposition of two or more separate streams of free (orgone) energy, a concentration of energy forms and spirals; this formal concentration and spiraling represents, when sufficiently charged, a new configuration or structure of energy.

Reich (1942/1973c) had previously identified the distinction between living and non-living systems when he discovered what he called the four-beat life formula of tension-charge-discharge-relaxation. He had discovered this in terms of his understanding of the function of the orgasm and initially called it the "orgasm formula" (1942/1973c, p.

272). He observed that non-living energy systems can manifest various combinations of the components of the four-beat formula, but that only living systems spontaneously demonstrate the cycle in the particular sequence outlined above. For the life formula to originate, it is essential that the energy organize itself to the point where it is enveloped by a membrane or pliable boundary. Non-living systems are either not enclosed in a membrane (such as atmospheric phenomena seen in clouds, hurricanes, or the aurora borealis) or may have once been living systems that have lost the capacity for pulsation. Organizations appear to resemble living organisms in that they are unified around a core or common function and have a pliable boundary within which free energy inside the system is charged and discharged in relation to energy outside of it (Konia, 1986a, pp. 60-63). Where an amassing of energy has not sufficiently concentrated around a common function and boundary, no organization can be said to exist; indeed, at best it may resemble a loose association or "aggregation" of individuals, and even more weakly organized, a "crowd" (Berne, 1963, p. 73). At the other end of the spectrum, where organizations have been so thoroughly depleted of energy or ossified to the extent that they can no longer transact any business outside of it, the organization is said to be "dead." However, whether in the final analysis organizations can definitively be classified as living organisms, they exhibit the spontaneous movement of free

energy that characterizes both living and non-living systems.⁵ From an orgonomic point of view, structure, be it living or non-living, always represents a certain level of bound or frozen energy formed through a process of superimposition. Applied here, the principle suggests that organizations--their structural core per se--are always borne from the swirling movement of work energy.

This connecting of Weick's and Reich's formulations for a unified picture of organization conception did not at first occur to me from a simple reading of the literature; in fact, at first I completely missed it. Instead, it was an unexpected outgrowth from what I observed in the following consulting case. Briefly, the mid-size commercial bank for which I consult had never developed a credit training program for its 100 plus line lending officers. Scattered interest existed at best among the three senior credit staff to develop such a program, when one of their more concerned members contacted me to explore the possibility with them; he was especially concerned because objective portfolio performance data indicated weakening asset quality. Subsequent dialogue with the three revealed that the lack of a formal mechanism to develop credit skills was symptomatic of a wider institutional devaluation of the credit quality function as reflected in inconsistent support

⁵It is the working hypothesis of the present study that organizations demonstrate basic energy functions in common with living systems. How close organizations are to living systems in the specific scientific sense that Reich used the term is the subject of further research.

from top management, inadequate structural review and controls, and lack of ownership for credit standards from the line. A training task force was assembled, consisting of the three senior staff members and two regional line managers, to review and confirm the presenting problem in light of the wider cultural issues. The task force, which I facilitated, met weekly for a period of several months. As specific components of the problem were assessed, resistances probed, and needs analysis developed, energy for the effort gradually began to build. The scattered interest initially present was replaced with mounting enthusiasm and excitement for a training project that would implement in a way to make a wider impact on the lending functions within the bank as a whole. Leadership charge for the function began to emerge (from one of the senior staff members who had originally been more skeptical and frustrated, incidentally), and quite spontaneously--without any design intervention from myself--a new organizational structure for the entire credit function materialized outside of the task force sessions themselves, one that reconstituted reporting relationships, lines of authority, and loan committee representation. While the rest of the task force sessions proceeded "according to plan," the more organic implication was clear: the individual energy and interest in the process had crystallized to the point where structure was literally created. The intervention had startlingly suggested that moving or concentrating the

energy had driven the structural process of change; moreover, the structure was wholly emergent from the energy. Thus, it was not a matter of directly facilitated "action planning" to create the structure as traditional OD methodology would have stressed. Rather, the facilitation lay in the development and concentration of the mutual charge for the function. The structure spontaneously emerged. Since the consultation concluded, the structural changes introduced have taken deeper root in the organization and have been built upon, concurrent with the implementation of the training project.

The above case led me to think about the general process whereby organizational structure is created. Once I was able to connect this experience with my theoretical interests and reading in orgonomy and OD, the formulation of how organizations are conceived presented above fell clearly into place. Just as important, there was another piece of fallout from the case: it led me to think about the strategic focus that tactical interventions needed to take. While it was equally possible for an OD practitioner to intervene from the behavioral or structural side of a case, it was now clear that regardless of the port of entry the focus of the intervention always had to be to move the energy itself if deep, organic change--change that was capable of producing structural creation and realignment from the inside out--was to obtain.

TOWARDS A GENERAL THEORY AND THERAPY OF ORGANIZATIONS

Once an organization is founded, it brings to the world a certain amount of work energy directed to a primary mission or core function which it discharges out to the world (Ackerman, 1984; Beckhard, 1969). In the case of a bank it is to provide financial services to facilitate the flow of commerce; in the case of a hospital, to render community medical services; and so forth. This core work function, although directed, is not discharged in a vacuum--far from it. From birth through subsequent development, the organization is in a continual state of energy exchange with its environment, which is itself made up of human, physical, and capital resources and other energetically driven social systems that have a stake in the enterprise (cf. Barnes, 1979, pp. 124-139; Katz & Kahn, 1966, p. 127).⁴ To facilitate energy transfer from the organization's core to the world, it is evident that an intermediate layer of comparatively free work energy operates--the organization culture or, more precisely, the organization character (see Figure 2). Stated most simply, the character is nothing more than the characteristic way in which the free energy moves or is blocked in relation to the system's core work

⁴This contrasts with classical systems theory insofar as energy resources in the latter formulation are seen as wholly derived from outside the system ("energy inputs")--not interactively arising from a structuralized energy core in dynamic exchange with energy outside the system. In classical systems theory, the organization has no core as such.

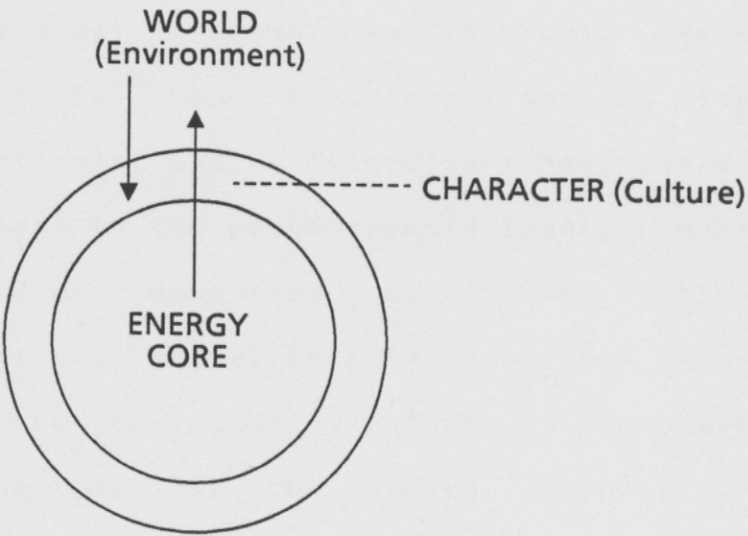


Figure 2
An Energy Model of an Organization

function and the world. The character can be described as a permeable layer of free energy operating at the periphery or boundary of the system. Its essential function is to express and bind the core work energy in relation to the world, and it does so through mechanisms that are both social (interpersonal norms, relationships, attitudes, perceptions, values, and beliefs) and structural (goals, roles, policy, strategy, systems, and rewards). As argued above, these social and structural domains together constitute a functioning unit, literally a "sociostructural identity" equivalent to the psychosomatic identity operating in individuals as described by Reich (1933/1972a, 1942/1973c). Via the organization's social and structural domains, then, the character provides an adaptive and consolidating function for the system, modulating inner energy drive with outer world, and it gives the organization its particular identity (Berne, 1963; Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984; Peters, 1980; Schein, 1985; Selznick, 1957).⁷

Because it is a functional adaptive component, the character is simultaneously elastic (outwardly adaptive) as well as capable of sharp rigidification (inwardly

⁷In this sense, the character performs the function of keeping the organization in a state of "quasi-stationary equilibrium" with respect to the field of energy in which it operates (Lewin, 1951, pp. 172-174). It would seem that this "quasi-stationary" quality--of bundling up a relatively free level of work energy--is what gives the concept of organizational culture or character its commonly observed "ethereal" or "slippery" properties, even among experienced OD practitioners.

defensive). Generally speaking, this elasticity is more present at the birth and the developmental years of the organization than during its later history. Based on the organomic model, the character typically forms early on in the history of the organization as a broad function of (1) the quantity and quality of energy the organization brings with it to the world (energy charge and threshold), (2) the nature and timing of the events (energy exchanges) encountered in the world (receptive or hostile), and (3) the manner in which the intervening organization character layer processes these events. If the organization can adequately meet a disturbance in the environment, its character moves to express energy towards the world (expansion). This is likewise the case in meeting a receptive environment. The characters of these organizations are said to be self-regulating (Emery & Thorsrud, 1976; Katz & Kahn, 1966; Raknes, 1971; Reich, 1942/1973c, 1946/1971b). If, on the other hand, the organization is unable to adequately meet the environmental disturbance, it recoils and turns its energy inward, thereby consolidating the energy at the boundary to form a protective "armor" against the threat (contraction) (Baker, 1967; Konia, 1986c; Raknes, 1971; Reich, 1933/1972a, 1942/1973c). Early events such as these represent critical junctures in the formation of the character, for it is to these events that the character develops and arrests. Arrested character development is nothing more than the points at which the energy turns in

and is unavailable for direct expression towards the world. Instead, it overflows indirectly in the form of social and structural symptoms, symptoms that are both internal to the organization (management behavior that "disables" employees from acting, for example) as well as externally expressed in the marketplace (for example, poor customer focus or product fit in the market). Generically, the character regulates and structuralizes the organization's work energy expression in the world. Specifically, the armored character "protects" the youthful organization from overwhelming disturbances in its environment. A functional adaptive response learned early in the organization's life, the armoring can become chronic. Over time, however, the chronically armored organization proves dysfunctional, because threats encountered in its later history have a force that is driven by its character frozen in its youth. The organization thus "enacts" its history onto its present environment (Weick, 1979, p. 91). This is what undoubtedly leads "mature" organizations to so frequently misinterpret their problems, whether these problems, once again, are internal human resource or technical ones, or external, market-related concerns. Such problems, or opportunities, are viewed through an armored character lens, and are thus not responded to objectively (Baker, 1967; Kets de Vries and Miller, 1984; Lorsch, 1985; Mitroff, 1983; Reich, 1933/1972a; Schein, 1985, Selznick, 1957). Literally, the objects of their response are confused with the internalized

past threats that induced the armor; indeed new threats often simply continue to reactivate and excite the energy to maintain the armor. The elaborate self-fulfilling prophecies of groups and organizations in conflict with each other or with their environments exemplify this condition.

At an individual level, orgonomic psychiatric theory bases its concept of character formation and arrest on modified Freudian stages of human psychosexual development (ocular, oral, anal, phallic, and genital stages) (Baker, 1967, pp. 16-25). Essentially, human character armoring forms in the somatic segment associated with the psychosexual stage where dominant amounts of bioenergy are turned inward (repressed) and blocked from expression--again, due to perceived environmental threat (Baker, 1967, pp. 48-66; Reich, 1933/1972a, pp. 368-390; 1942/1973c, pp. 138-154). Thus, schematically speaking, massive, unresolved, environmental disturbances encountered during the ocular stage of an individual's psychosexual development are manifested in character armor localized at the ocular somatic segment; disturbances encountered at the oral stage are manifested at the oral segment; frustrations at the phallic stage are manifested at the pelvic segment; and so forth. Blockings in each of these stages and armorings in each of these segments can combine to produce specific character types. Presenting behavior and symptoms are thus manifested in a characteristic psychosomatic fashion. The function of the orgonomic psychiatrist is to

work with the patient to remove the armoring--and thereby restructure the character--by successively loosening trapped energy at each of the affected segments until a genital mode of functioning is fully secured. The genital mode--through the function of the orgasmic discharge--affords the fullest range of energy expression for the organism. With no energy tied up in chronic stasis, the individual in the genital mode can truly "give" of himself in all spheres of life (thinking is rational and creative, work is self-directing, and deep, satisfying love relationships are possible).

Applying this formulation to the level of the social system, it is hypothesized that organization character formation and arrest is based on socioemotional stages of group development modified from Schein (1985)--namely, vision, dependency, fusion, work-aggressive, and work-democratic stages (pp. 185-208). These stages, which themselves appear to be functionally identical counterparts to the psychosexual stages of individual character development, are delineated and discussed fully in Chapter 4. Suffice it here to say that these sequential socioemotional stages embody qualitatively different levels of energy drive and are presumed to be basic to the development of all groups and organizations. Organization character formation is predicated on the extent to which the socioemotional stages are satisfied or alternatively

frustrated in the developing system's interactions with the environment.

In addition to these historical developmental stages, the organization also appears to have three basic structural segments: the head (that orients the work), the middle line (that facilitates the work), and the operating core (that discharges the work) (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 19). In complex systems, multiple individuals and groups can represent each segment, though basically the three segments correspond to top management, middle management, and the operating line respectively.^a As Mintzberg stresses, each segment can take a different shape in relationship to the others from one organization to the next, from organizations wherein the head (or "strategic apex" as Mintzberg terms it) dominates the middle and operating core, to those systems wherein the articulation of the middle line is highly expansive and predominant. While Mintzberg argues that the relative shapes a system's segments take are largely a rational response to the organization's current environmental demands (simplicity vs. complexity, for example), ergonomic theory would assert that the relative shapes of the segments is principally a function of the organization character--itself historically determined during the socioemotional developmental period. Now, if the organization fully develops through all its developmental

^aThe basic structural segments are discussed at length in Chapter 4.

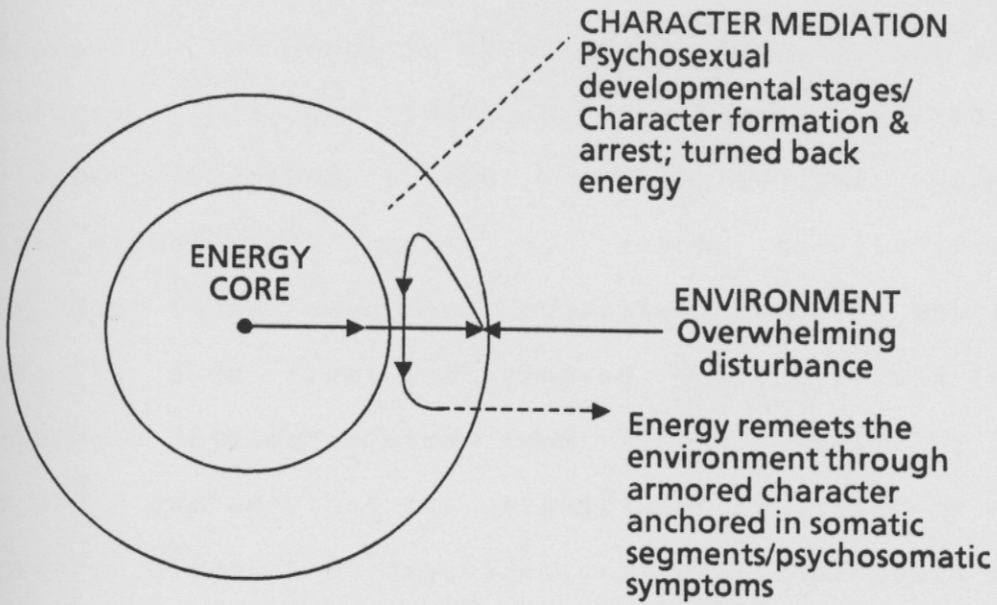
stages with few if any major blocks (satisfying the final, work-democratic stage), the organization develops a self-regulating or work-democratic character (Elden, 1985; Emery & Thorsrud, 1976; Reich, 1931/1971a, 1946/1971b).⁹ In this case, the system's full access to its entire work energy capacity is structurally reflected in the fluid interplay between all three segments, with none of the segments disproportionately dominating the others vis a vis the presenting demands of the environment. Such a condition would be reflected, for example, in fully collaborative, working relationships between top management, middle management, and the operating line, each carrying out their distinctive functions in an interdependent manner.¹⁰ Here, the organization is indeed truly capable of functioning

⁹Reich (1931/1971a) defined work-democracy as "the natural and intrinsically rational work relationships between human beings. The concept of work-democracy represents the reality (not the ideology) of these relationships, which, though usually distorted because of the prevalent biological armoring and irrational ideologies, are nevertheless the basis of all social achievement. Work-democracy excludes all forms of dictatorial work, and dictatorship, in turn, excludes work-democratic functioning" (pp. 78-79, original emphasis).

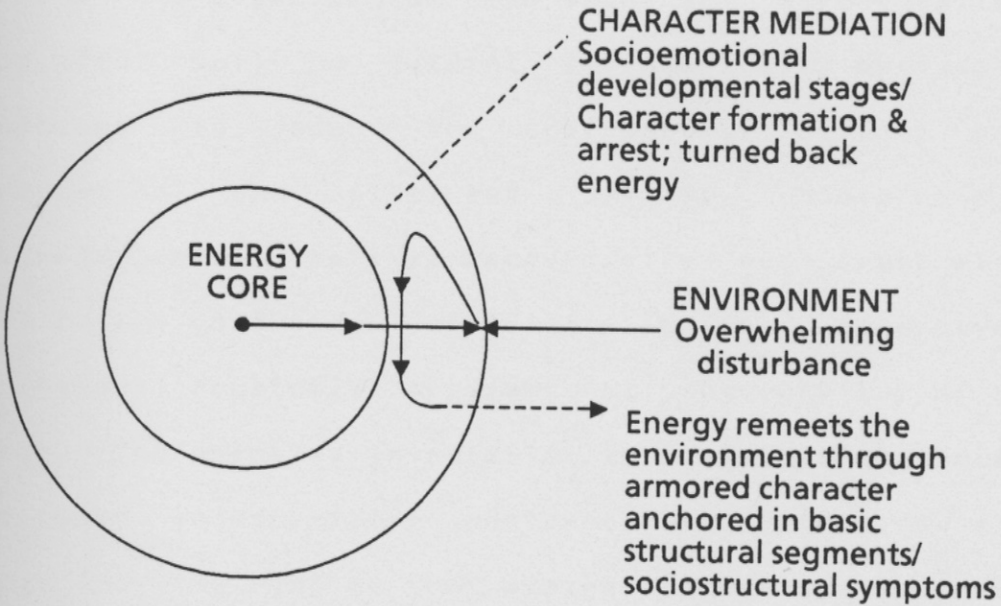
¹⁰Thus, in this instance, top management would primarily concentrate on orienting the fundamental direction of the work, with respect to the outer market environment as well as inside the system; middle management would primarily be concerned with facilitating the flow of work from top to bottom and vice versa; and the operating line would be freely enabled to discharge the work in its interactions with the environment. In other words, the organization as a whole would be fully aligned, with each segment participating completely in the system's core work function--i.e., the organization would function work-democratically.

"rationally" and as an integrated whole in response to the current environment (cf. Galbraith, 1973; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Galbraith, 1973; W.R. Scott, 1981).

On the other hand, if the organization encounters significant frustration during its socioemotional developmental stages, organizational character armor results, interceding rational functioning and structural response. Indeed, the organization becomes irrational and "neurotic" (Kets De Vries & Miller, 1984, p. 18). Specifically, it is believed that the character armor forms in the basic structural segment associated with the socioemotional stage during which dominant amounts of work energy were turned back and repressed (trapped) in response to a perceived environmental threat (see Figure 3). Thus, again from a schematic standpoint, unresolved difficulties encountered during the vision stage would be anchored in characteristic armoring of the highest levels of the organizational head segment (e.g., those levels responsible for the chief executive function); frustrations of the dependency stage would be anchored in heavy armoring of yet a lower level of the head (e.g., the chief operating level); frustrations of the work-aggressive stage would be anchored in a specific constellation of armoring at the operating core; and so forth. Regardless of the locale and character of the armor, the armor continues to "hold" the energy charge of the historically created block, thus creating a contemporary energy stasis vis a vis the system's



THE ARMORING PROCESS OF AN INDIVIDUAL ORGANISM



THE ARMORING PROCESS OF A SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Figure 3

**A Comparison of the Armoring Process
of Individuals and Organizations**

environment. The armor is effectively one and the same as "bureaucracy" (Block, 1987, p. 19; Reich, 1946/1971b, p. 291; Weber, 1922/1946, p. 196). This is what makes the system structurally unable to respond to its immediate environment in an open and objective manner; instead it takes its cues from its armored character, and in this resembles a "closed" system (W.R. Scott, 1981). In the case of a system that met significant frustrations during its vision stage,¹¹ an organizational character would obtain with chronic vision armoring, armoring that would be manifested both structurally and behaviorally at the highest levels of the organization head segment. Structurally such armor might well be evident in habitually dysfunctional mechanisms to scan the environment, perform market-segmentation, and otherwise develop, coordinate, and integrate general policy; behaviorally such armor might be found in the confusion, disorientation, and normative lack of insight routinely apparent at the very top of such a system. The point is in relation to the other segments, the head would be especially contracted and tight, sucking up energy from the rest of the system, literally reflected in top level power compaction and conflict. At the extreme of this condition, the head would literally appear "split" from the body of the organization, which would be comparatively formless, resulting in a vision blocked organizational

¹¹Essentially, this is the stage when the orientation of the system's core work function is established.

character. (For more here, see the corresponding character type proposed in Chapter 5.)

Regardless of their specific differences, all neurotic organizational characters are formed in essentially the same manner: based on the dominant socioemotional blocks and the way the blocks articulate themselves in the basic organization of the armor--both structurally and behaviorally. A mix of specific character types--their genesis and chief distinguishing features--is elaborated in Chapter 5. Whatever the organizational character, though, each manifests behavior and symptoms in prototypic sociostructural fashions. Given this, the general sociotherapeutic aim is to work with the client-system to diagnose the character, and then, through a course of strategically mapped interventions, unblock trapped energy sequentially at each of the affected structural segments until an integrated work-democratic mode of functioning is firmly established. This amounts to organizational character restructuralization. The path for doing so, of course, will vary with each character. However, only when the residual trapped energy is unblocked at each of the affected segments and the original conflicts are addressed can the organization yield to its normal functioning--the free and full discharge of gratifying, productive work in which the entire system participates (work-democratic mode of functioning). Until then, the organization is not functioning with its full energy focused on its work goals,

and this energetic stasis accounts for its symptoms, whatever their particulars and proliferation. Once the core energy is mobilized and the underlying, chronic conflicts faced, the symptoms--be they social or structural--should dissolve or resolve on their own accord, for they would be deprived of their sustaining, driving force.

Chapter 4

SOCIOEMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES AND BASIC STRUCTURAL SEGMENTS OF ORGANIZATIONS

In every organization, five natural socioemotional stages and three basic structural segments are proposed that interdependently link the system's historical development with its current structural configuration. The five socioemotional stages are the vision, dependency, fusion, work-aggressive, and work-democratic stages (defined separately below).¹ The three organizational structural segments are the head, the middle line, and the operating core.² The sequential socioemotional stages represent qualitatively different levels of free energy expression and recapitulate the general development of an organization

¹Taken together, these stages represent a conceptual synthesis of traditional sociodynamic and individual organomic findings. The socioemotional references draw principally from the work of Bennis (1968), Bion (1959), Hare (1976), Lacoursiere (1980), Schein (1985), Schutz (1958), and Tuckman (1965). The organomic references are from Baker (1967) and Reich (1933/1972a). For particular citations, see the discussions of each stage in the section of the text that follows.

²These are drawn from Mintzberg (1979). While Mintzberg also recognizes two differentiated components of the middle line--the technostructure and support staff--operating in large, complex systems, they are not treated as separate structural segments here because their form as such is not essential to all organizations, as Mintzberg's own formulation asserts.

during its embryonic structural formation--that is, development that directionally proceeds, as Mintzberg (1979) and Drucker (1988) have implied, from the head down.³

These relationships are illustrated in the example of the formation and development of any given MSOD class. In its embryonic development--prior to any socioemotional development--lies the class' basic constitutional formation. The core faculty is consolidated first (the head), followed by the development and establishment of the administrative role and accompanying recruitment, selection, and coordinative processes (middle line), followed lastly by the actual recruitment and assembly of students (operating core). After this essential structural configuration is laid down--that is, after the bound energy of the class is born as a single entity at the first session--the class then proceeds to reiterate the identical developmental sequence at a socioemotional, or comparatively free energy, level; here it undergoes the parallel process of developing from the upper to the lower ends of the system, from the vision and dependency stages--stages when the orientation and leadership of the group are established--down through its fusion, work-aggressive, and work-democratic stages--when the group's cohesion, performance, and synergistic interdependency are made possible. Based on the present

³This parallels how the psychosexual stages of individual development recapitulate the ontogenetic development of the human embryo, development, that is, from the head down.

formulation, it is the level of fulfillment attained during this sequential socioemotional period that largely establishes the class's identity or character as a class, distinguishing it from other classes.⁴ If the class develops freely through all its socioemotional stages, it would develop what is later defined as a self-regulating or work-democratic character, structurally reflected in the fluid interplay of all three basic segments. However, if the class developed chronic blocks or "hooks" in its socioemotional development, a neurotic character would result, with armor (or structural ossification) forming at precisely those structural segments corresponding to the blocks. The class that develops chronic blocks at the work-aggressive stage, for example, would consistently exhibit "pushy," task-oriented processes in the way the learning (work) would be discharged by its students (operating core).

In short, the socioemotional stages represent the historical and qualitative dimensions of the organization after it is born; the basic structural segments represent the enduring--and therefore contemporary--quantitative dimensions of the system, dimensions that are formally

⁴Strictly speaking, the class also derives a core identity charge based on the strength and quality of energy the individuals bring with them to the class at the outset. However, once assembled as a unit--that is, once structuralized into an organizational core--the system's socioemotional development takes over and conditions the character of the group. This series of events exactly parallels how individual identity is driven by a bound energy core (partially mediated by genetic mechanisms), in turn overlaid by psychosexual development.

malleable based on the extent to which the socioemotional stages are frustrated or fulfilled. In this way, the structural segments embody the organizational character, be it self-regulating or neurotic. In the case of the neurotic system, the structural segments are the sites for the armor and contain the organization's historical frustrations encountered during its socioemotional developmental phases. In other words, the current shape of the structural segments literally "contains" the organization's developmental history. From an OD standpoint, the theoretical implications are clear: the current form of the structural armor provides an exact diagnostic window into the key socioemotional conflicts of the organization; thus interventions that effectively pierce the structural armorings of the system--if consistently pursued--should automatically penetrate to the historical conflicts, or frustrated socioemotional energies, which generated them to begin with and which continue to lock up the system.

SOCIOEMOTIONAL STAGES: SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Just as the psychosexual stages mediate individual character development, the socioemotional stages are held to mediate group or organizational character development. In fact, the five psychosexual stages--the ocular, oral, anal, phallic, and genital stages--appear to be functionally identical counterparts to the socioemotional stages--the vision, dependency, fusion, work-aggressive, and work-

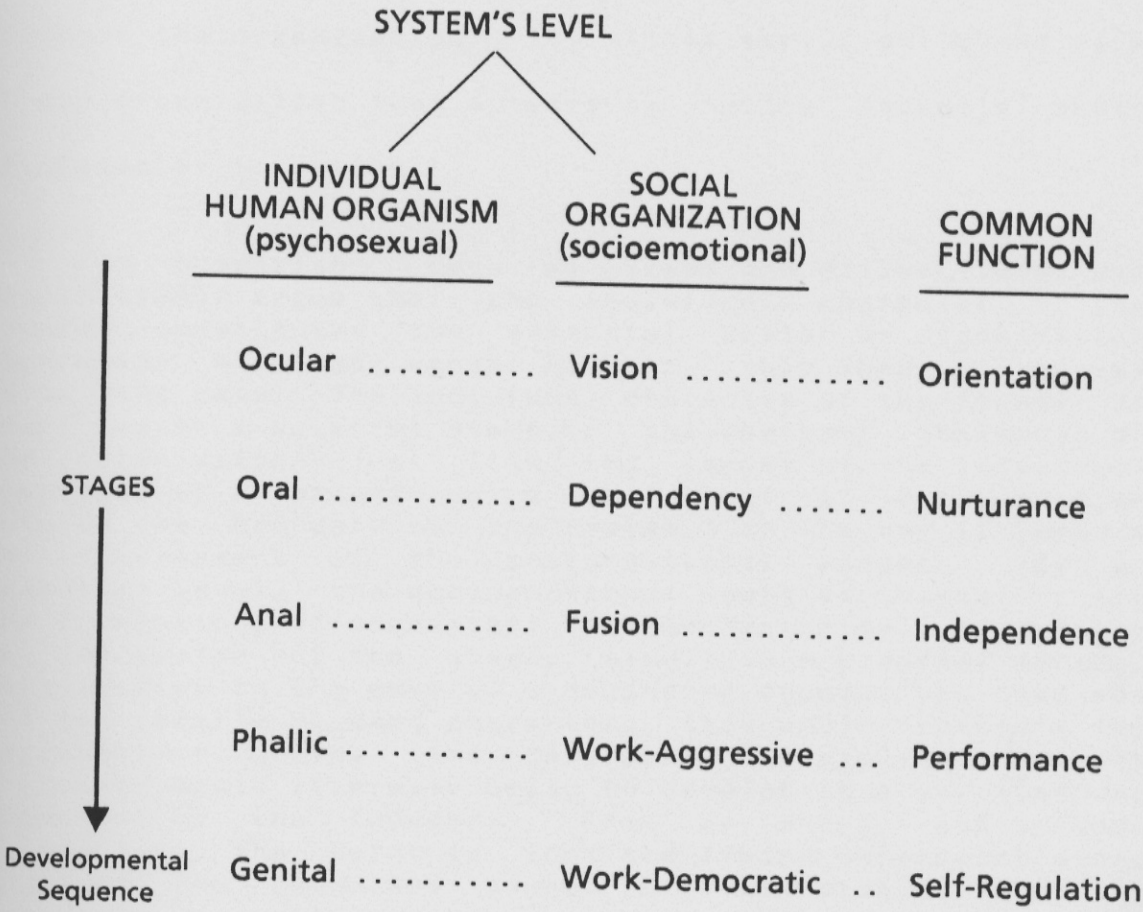
democratic stages respectively. Though differing in specifics, sociodynamic theorists such as Bennis (1968) and Lacoursiere (1980) have noted the general developmental identity of the psychosexual and socioemotional realms. In the present treatment, the ocular and vision stages are functionally responsible for the orientation of the individual and social system respectively; the oral and dependency stages are responsible for the nurturing of the individual and social system, particularly in relationship to the parents or founders⁵; the anal and fusion stages identically represent phases when a system more fully establishes its own functioning independence of the parents, while the phallic and work-aggressive stages correspondingly signal the performance of a system; lastly, the genital and work-democratic stages are identical insofar as they activate the fully expressive integration and self-regulation of a system as a whole (Table 1). Plainly, there are profound formal differences between the psychosexual and socioemotional stages because each operate in different realms and at different levels of the human system, but their functional identity suggests, again, the bioenergetic unity of sexual and work energy.

During its development, the organization, if successfully nurtured, would move through all its natural

⁵The oral and dependency stages are also both followed by an intermediate phase of "counter-dependency." See the discussion of the dependency stage below.

Table 1

A Comparison of the Functional Identity of Individual
and Social Developmental Stages



socioemotional developmental stages, culminating in the work-democratic stage. While there is evidence to suggest that the stages may reoccur or recycle throughout the life of a system (Bion, 1959; Schutz, 1958; Tuckman, 1965), it is logical to assume that they develop in their freest--and thus most impressionable--form immediately following the birth of the organization. It is this early, childhood life of the organization that appears to be the essential basis of character formation.*

*In comparison, Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) and Schein (1985) argue that the individual character of the founder constitutes the essential basis of organization character. At closer range, however, this does not appear to be the case. The individual character of the founder no doubt leaves a powerful stamp on the emergent character of the organization--just like the impact of the individual character of a parent on a child--but it does so from outside the boundary of the system, in the way it impacts the development of the socioemotional stages. At an essential level, the socioemotional energies themselves are the foundations of character; the founder simply conditions the expression of the stages, albeit in a powerful manner. For example, in the case of a demanding founder who does not let go (orally blocked character), this would frustrate the organization during the dependency stage--and so its character would literally begin to develop in a way that was dependent on the founder. From an energy and systems perspective, the point is that the frozen dependency stage would be the immediate source of the problem, not the founder's personality.

The parallel here, of course, is that neurotic children often develop characteristics similar to their parents, for the parents typically frustrate in the child what they cannot tolerate in themselves. This can lead to similar psychosexual blocking in parents and their offspring, and thus to certain similarities in character. The same principles seem to apply to founders and the socioemotional blocking of their organizational offspring.

Theoretically, what is initially confounding here is that founders typically serve as "parents" outside the boundary of the system and simultaneously as "leaders" inside the boundary of the system. The founder as parent continues to have his own life and interests vis a vis the

(continued...)

To develop to the level of a functioning neurotic character, the organization must at least develop to the work-aggressive stage during its early life (the stage that "literally gets the work out"), although this stage may be wholly or partially given up if blocks at earlier stages are encountered. The neurotic organizational characters--with their assortment of work-stage and pre-work blocks--are the typical cases seen in OD, and thus candidates for an orgonomic sociotherapy. In contrast, if energy is completely blocked at the pre-work stages and the system never develops to the work-stage, the organization--in the absence of extraordinary, externally sustaining resources--would cease to function and die. These cases are obviously never seen. Either they go out of business during their infancy (for example, the many entrepreneurial-dominated firms that can never marshal the energy resources to successfully get their products out to market in the first year of their lives), or they remain so dependent on outside help for their very survival that they are insufficiently independent to treat (for example, firms that have never performed, but are simply carried via massive capital infusion by affiliated entities for reasons of family or tax

⁶ (...continued)

system from the outside, while playing a separate leadership role within the organization which, too, has a life of its own.

advantage).⁷ It should be noted that the socioemotional stages, while differentiated, have no sharp demarcation between themselves, but overlap and interdependently affect each other (Bion, 1959; Lacoursiere, 1980; Schein, 1985). This is also the case with the psychosexual stages of development at an individual level (Baker, 1967; Reich, 1933/1972a).

The Vision Stage

The vision stage is proposed as the first socioemotional stage of development.⁸ While the sociodynamic literature summarized in Hare (1976) and Lacoursiere (1980) has not referred to it as a separate socioemotional stage as such, some of the classical findings, together with recent organizational literature (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Block, 1987; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Tichy & Devanna, 1985; Walton, 1986), warrant giving it

⁷This formulation mirrors that of orgonomy at an individual level: those who never develop to the phallic stage result in infantile characters, characters that never acquire any functioning independence. This distinguishes them from the neurotic, or for that matter seriously psychotic, characters. They are not candidates for therapy (Baker, 1967).

⁸The vision stage is the functional equivalent to the ocular stage of psychosexual development in an individual. Orgonomy is unique in the clinical modalities in recognizing a distinct ocular stage (Baker, 1967). Classical psychoanalysis does not differentiate it from the oral stage. Similarly, in his group developmental stage formulation, Lacoursiere (1980), a psychiatrist, refers to a recognizable "orientation" phase but does not differentiate it from a leader-dependency phase.

consideration as a separate stage. Indeed, it appears to be the preeminent stage concerned with the basic orientation of the core work function of the organization, helping the system position how it functions externally and internally, giving it focus, perspective, and imagination.

I am proposing that satisfaction of a separate visioning stage enables the organization to "see" its environment clearly, to map its surroundings and future, and in general to simply understand what is happening within and around it. It represents the critical first stage of development, one in which the infant organization simply explores what it is about. However, as the recent organizational literature suggests, the early visioning period is often insufficiently attended to (Block, 1987). This may well account for the widespread confusion, disorientation, and lack of imagination that is evident in so many organizations today (Lorsch, 1985; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Peters, 1987; Waterman, 1988). It is not just that the current environment is so complex and moving so rapidly (Toffler, 1980), but that organizations lack the emotional capacity to handle and understand it based on past disturbances affecting their characters. Without a satisfied visioning stage, there can be no clearly focused strategy or tactical plans; indeed, without it, attempts to concentrate on the latter may simply be misdirected (Hurst, 1986).

Theoretically, environmental disturbances leading to frustrations during the visioning stage may be due to constraining founder behavior, severe competitive pressures that preempt concentration here, and the like. While many developing organizations may encounter difficulties during this stage, impairing their focus and direction to a greater or lesser degree, there appear to be whole systems that are acutely disturbed in this stage, systems that develop severe identity problems that characterize their entire functioning. These are the vision blocked characters. (These can be sub-typed based on blocking at subsequent socioemotional stages as well). These organizations have presumably experienced extreme shocks from the environment or founder during this stage.

The Dependency Stage

The dependency stage refers to that period when the staff looks to the leader, or founder, for guidance and direction (Bion, 1959; Hare, 1976; Lacoursiere, 1980; Schein, 1985).⁹ Emotional concerns center around issues of inclusion, influence, and nurturance from the leader. When this stage is satisfied, it is hypothesized that organizational members feel they can count on rational direction that simultaneously meets their emotional needs for intimacy. This is indirectly supported by T-group observations as summarized by Hare (1976) and Schein

⁹The dependency stage is the functional equivalent to the oral stage of psychosexual development.

(1985). In T-groups, dependency issues are satisfactorily worked through only with the spontaneous emergence of clear-headed leadership from members of the group itself. Forward group movement is dependent on rational (not necessarily formal) leadership that meets its needs. As part of this process, a momentary period of counter-dependence is entered in which the group resists leadership direction of any kind as it prepares to enter into the more fully independent fusion stage. On the other hand, when the dependency stage is frustrated, members get hung up with leadership and authority issues, resulting in behavior that craves more and more attention from the leader (Hare, 1976; Schein, 1985). This phenomena, too, is borne out in T-groups. Here, the counter-dependency becomes exaggerated as does its opposite expression' of submissiveness. Below the submissiveness and rebelliousness alike lies a "demanding" attitude--an attitude that literally demands more and more authority because its original emotional security needs were not met.

I am proposing that deprivation of emotional security needs at the dependency stage leads to an organizational character where the members feel essentially powerless and depressed. In their own organizational typology, Kets de Vries and Miller (1984, p. 63) have in fact argued that a "depressive style" of organizational dysfunctioning emerges based on hang-ups in a dependency mode, while Baker (1967, p. 118) at the individual level has

described a depressive character arising from the frustration of the functionally equivalent psychosexual stage.

The Fusion Stage

The fusion stage represents the period when group or organization members come into their own, when they begin to identify and think of themselves as a system with its own identity apart from that of the founder or leader (Hare, 1976; Schein, 1985).¹⁰ The emotional focus in this stage is on harmony, conformity, and intimacy; the behavior that Bion (1959, p. 105) observed as "pairing" typically occurs during this stage. Group norms of cohesion rapidly develop during this period, while individual member differences are seen as threats and are generally suppressed. Members feel pleasure and mutual competence in accomplishing their work together. Leadership behavior during this stage tends to be subordinated to the wishes of the group. In short, the group or organization in the fusion stage is rather dreamily idealized as an object. In Schein's words, the dominant assumption of this stage is, "We are a great group; we all like each other" (1985, p. 191).

I am suggesting that if this stage is fully satisfied, group wishes for intimacy and bonding are

¹⁰The fusion stage is the functional equivalent to the anal psychosexual stage of development.

fulfilled.¹¹ Groups and organizations that fulfill the fusion stage would, in fact, eventually tolerate member conflict and a "clash of ideas" because they have learned these are part of a greater consensus (cf. Beckhard, 1969, p. 11). If, on the other hand, the stage is frustrated or blocked, the group would develop an intensified sensitivity to process and emotional issues within the group. As in individual character development (Baker, 1967, p. 17), this might lead into two different directions. The first would be wherein members are highly absorbed with group process, leading to a kind of "romantic fantasy" about the group that only thinly masked internal conflict. The second possibility would be for group members to develop extremely mechanistic work attitudes, attitudes that wholly suppress any group feelings or intimacy. Again, Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) support both possibilities in their characterization of organizations stuck in respectively "utopian" (p. 66) and "compulsive" (p. 28) styles of neurotic dysfunctioning. In either case, such repression might well come about because of excessive trouble and emotional conflicts encountered during the fusion stage--conflicts that the group could not contain--thus the issues and conflicts of the stage would be denied. With a strong block at the fusion stage, any deep sentiments in the group

¹¹At the individual level, when children are able to go through the anal stage without significant frustration, they feel their own independent identity (Baker, 1967; Reich, 1933/1972a).

would typically be denied as "inappropriate" for work and covered over by a superficial concentration on tasks or conformist pressures for "group harmony." This, of course, is the equivalent of a reaction formation in an individual neurotic character.

The Work-Aggressive Stage

Strictly speaking, the work-aggressive stage does not appear to be a fully differentiated stage, but merely the first phase of a unified work-stage (Schein, 1985, p. 205).¹² While not every sociodynamic theorist recognizes a work-aggressive component as a distinct subphase, the work of Bennis (1968), Bion (1959), and Lacoursiere (1980) supports its conceptualization as a separate stage. As the group "rediscovers" its central work while emerging from the fusion stage, it begins to aggressively reorient itself towards task goals. There is a renewed sense of excitement and "push" to get the work done, an emphasis on production and the performance of external tasks to please the buyer of the products or services.

The framework here suggests that if the work-aggressive stage is satisfied, the organization would exhibit pride in its work accomplishments and in the demonstration of its wares; it then moves on to the more

¹²The work-aggressive stage is the functional equivalent to the phallic stage of psychosexual development.

fully integrated work-democratic stage.¹³ If the work-aggressive stage were frustrated, however, this would lead to a fixation on performance and exhibition of strength. This is not to say that such an organization would actually focus on performance; rather, because it is hung-up here, it would focus on feelings of high performance and strength. Again, since the work-aggressive phase represents only a partial work-stage, it still embodies socioemotional energies not fully available for actual work. This is the province of the last, work-democratic stage. Another distinction seen in individual character typology seems relevant here, a distinction based on the severity and completeness of the block.¹⁴ This could lead to two possibilities. On the one hand, it could result in an organization that is consistently righteous in its work endeavors, as if on a solemn mission (for example, some military defense contractors); on the other, it could result

¹³At an individual level, satisfaction of the phallic stage results in proud phallic display on the way to the more fully-integrated genital stage.

¹⁴Frustrated psychosexual blocks may be of two types: repressed and unsatisfied (Baker, 1967, p. 17). Repressed blocks represent a more complete frustration of the affected stage than the partial, drive inhibited gratification afforded to the unsatisfied block. Each results in a different quantity of energy available at the somatic segment in which it is anchored, and thus gives rise to qualitative differences in characters. For example, a repressed phallic block results in a character whose aggression is missionary and righteous; an unsatisfied phallic block results in an overtly "macho," Don Juan type of character.

in an organization with a "pumped up" bravado about its performance and competitive strength. The latter would be reminiscent of Bion's "fight" reaction (1959, p. 105) as well as the "tough guy/macho culture" depicted by Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 107). As submitted earlier, organizations that evolve a neurotic character have at least reached the work-aggressive stage of development or they would never sufficiently function at all. It would appear that many profitable commercial organizations in today's world fall in this broad spectrum of work-aggressive types. This is hardly surprising given the competitive soil and armored conditions of the civilization in which they develop. Developmentally, it is presumed that the work-aggressive character is fixed because of a clamping down the system experienced when it first reached the work-stage: the pleasurable component of the work energy is presumably blocked from expression through some kind of environmental stakeholder demand to defer, postpone, or otherwise delimit gratification (e.g., an overwhelming situational need to get the product to market regardless of the human cost, or an external bureaucratic agency not able to tolerate the proud displays of the wares of an emerging organization).

The Work-Democratic Stage

The work-democratic stage is advanced here as the final, most inclusive stage of socioemotional development.¹⁵ This stage signals that the organization is fully ready to express its work energy directly and spontaneously in its work, and integrate group members into an effective, resilient, problem-solving team (Schein, 1985, p. 204). Reich (1946/1971b, p. 289) describes work-democratic organizations which function on a non-neurotic basis, paralleling the description of effective organizations found extensively throughout the classical OD literature (Argyris, 1970; Beckhard, 1969; Bennis, 1969; Blake & Mouton, 1969; Block, 1987; Emery & Thorsrud, 1976; Likert, 1961; Mayo, 1945; McGregor, 1960; Peters, 1987; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Tannenbaum & Davis, 1969; Waterman, 1988). These descriptions collectively have been taken as the basis for rendering a separate work-democratic stage of development and the characteristics of organizations that reach it.

If satisfied, this stage would result in rational work attitudes and competent interpersonal relationships as described in the literature. Because member differences are valued, all would participate freely and actively in the work process. In general, organizational units that have reached the work-democratic stage exhibit high collaboration

¹⁵The work-democratic stage is the functional equivalent to the genital stage of psychosexual development.

towards the development and fulfillment of organizational goals and objectives; any form of dictatorial coercion by leaders or group members is thus effectively precluded. Essentially, authority is based on knowledge, not formal position. While there is a synergistic concentration on task by group members who fulfill this stage, process-oriented, group maintenance behaviors are also fully accessible to ensure that the organization stays in good working order and authentically manages its conflicts. Trust, mutual commitment, and teamwork are high in these organizations, and members have a real capacity for "leveling" with each other and with the customers or clients they serve: they realize that the full discharge of their work depends on such relationships.

Because it focuses on the full expression of natural work energy, resulting in gratifying achievement that is reality-based, the work-democratic stage would represent the deepest and most secure of the stages; that is, like its psychosexual counterpart, the genital stage, it is the most stable and least susceptible to regression once attained. Like the other stages before it, however, even the work-democratic stage could be frustrated. If the stage is reached but blocked, the energy would not be available for symptomatic expression at other socioemotional stages, but rather (because the energy is fully concentrated in the system as a whole) directly manifested in stasis and "flight" (Bion, 1959, p. 105). In general, this would lead

to an exaggerated sense of the organization being fully "proactive" and "alive."¹⁶ In brief, the frustrated work-democratic stage would give rise to an underlying attitude of "drama" throughout the system, where a rash and "wild" enthusiasm for work predominates (Kets de Vries & Miller, 1984, p. 31).

BASIC STRUCTURAL SEGMENTS: SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

The basic structural segments are the fundamental divisions of the organization. The three basic segments are the head (that orients the work), the middle line (that facilitates the work), and the operating core (that discharges the work) (Mintzberg, 1979, P. 19). As a whole, they appear functionally equivalent to the somatic segments of an individual.¹⁷ While the segments are distinct, they also overlap and are interdependent; that is, a disturbance in one segment necessarily affects the shape and functioning of the others. It is hypothesized that the segments are the sites of the structural armor of the organization, which itself forms as a function of work energy disturbances. At the deepest levels of disturbance, the structural segments

¹⁶Individually, this situation would be the functional equivalent of a characterological hysteric (Baker, 1967, p. 104; Reich, 1933/1972a, p. 204).

¹⁷The individual somatic segments are the ocular, oral, cervical, thoracic, diaphragmatic, abdominal, and pelvic. They are the somatic sites of the character armor where psychosexual developmental frustrations are anchored (Baker, 1967; Reich, 1933/1972a).

would anchor blocks in the socioemotional stages in the shape of the armor.

Since the work energy resides in individuals as biosocial energy (Reich, 1946/1971b; 1953/1976), it is the patterned movement of individuals that forms the basic energy movement of the system. In an open, effective system, the structure of the organization consists of patterned movements that fully facilitate the discharge of work energy. In a chronically blocked, neurotic system, the structural armoring of the organization is nothing more than the frozen patterns of movement that block the system's free energy. Depending on the character of the blockages, these frozen patterns of movement may be manifested in rigid role constellations, strategies, operating processes, coordinating systems, and the like. They could also be manifested in the dysfunctional use of capital resources, hardware and technology, and facilities.

The premise here is that the natural course of work energy moves up and down throughout the body of the organization (from head to operating core), parallel to how functional operating divisions within an organization are laid out to discharge their work (from top to bottom).¹⁸ In contrast, the armoring sites of the segments are conceived as cross sectional "rings" perpendicular to the way the energy flows (cf. Baker, 1967, p. 44; Reich, 1933/1972a, pp.

¹⁸ Individually, energy moves up and down the human organism. Constrictions of energy move across, from side to side (Reich, 1933/1972a).

368-390). In this way, the structural armor serves to join peer levels from each of the operating divisions to choke off and constrict the free circulation of work energy in the system as a whole. Figure 4 diagrams the manner in which the segments are pictured to connect and armor rings joined. To illustrate with an example: a commercial banking division of a statewide lending institution has various representatives and structures serving in the system's head, the middle line, and operating core--just as does the institution's real estate division and financial services division, for instance. If the organization as a whole is free, the operating divisions perform fluidly up and down and across functional divisions as needed. However, if the organization is chronically blocked, it will be blocked across all the functional operating divisions in the affected structural segment. Thus, when the head segment of the entire institution is blocked, all the individual heads of the operating divisions are affected. Here, each of the operating heads not only functions as a leader of his own division, but he also functions in a peer level organization per se--in this case, the basic head segment of the institution as a whole.¹⁹ Energy that is chronically blocked at the head segment would tend to diffuse and choke

¹⁹Compare this notion with Likert's "linking pin" concept of organizational structure, which also emphasizes how individuals function in multiple organizational units simultaneously (Likert, 1961).

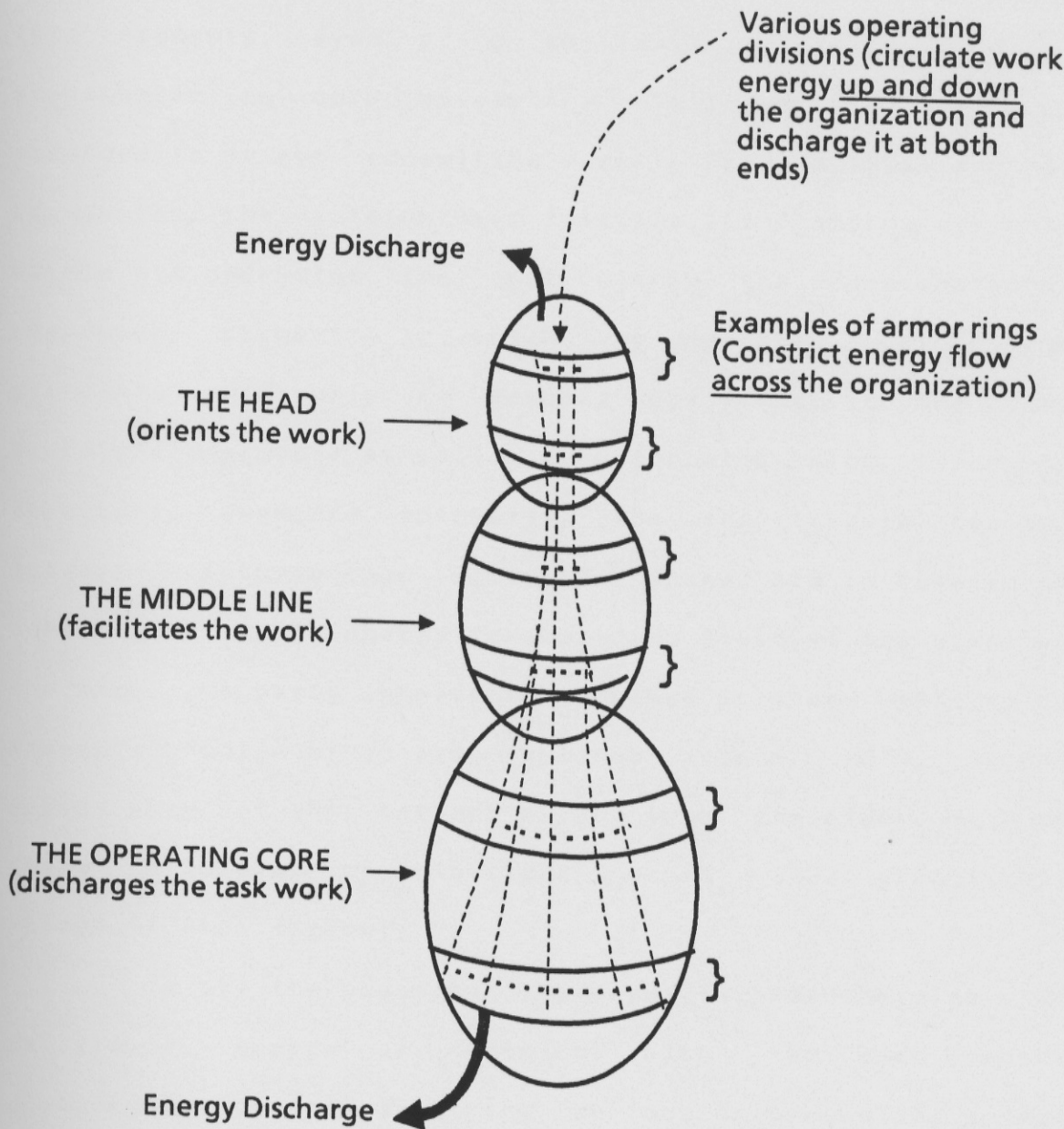


Figure 4

The Basic Structural Segments of an Organization and an Example of its Armor Rings

Sources: Derived from H. Mintzberg, *The Structuring of Organizations*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1979, p. 20; and from W. Reich, [*Character Analysis* (3rd ed.)] (V. R. Carfagno, trans.), New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972a, p. 372 (originally published, 1933).

off the energy available to any given operating division's line segments, even if a particular division head is sympathetic to more movement. This pattern has been observed in my own consulting work. From a total systems standpoint, the division head fulfills his function not only within his operating line, but within the cross-sectional structural segment in which he operates. The same principle would apply to members operating in the other structural segments as well. As elaborated below, the basic structural segments themselves are the targets for the suggested intervention activity, whose aim in turn is to unblock the frozen energy movement and dissolve the armor at the site. A basic intervention-change strategy would be to assemble "collateral organizations" (Zand, 1970, p. 64) across each of the segment's functional divisions; each of these collateral organizations would thus effectively represent each segment.

In all the segments, the armor is presumably layered as frozen energy or emotion, with the most recent disturbances deposited at the surface or presenting aspect of the armor and the original socioemotional conflicts at the deepest layers.²⁰ In approaching the armored segments therapeutically, the general principle would be to handle the conflicts presented not only from the head of the

²⁰This parallels the case with individuals: blocked energy is layered in the armor, with the most recent conflicts at the surface and the conflicts resulting from early developmental frustrations at deeper layers.

organization down, but also from "periphery to core"--that is, from the most superficial emotional issues to the deepest, from the conflicts' latest manifestations to their developmental beginnings (Baker, 1967; Beckhard; 1969; Beer, 1987; Konia, 1986c; Reich, 1933/1972a). If the interventionist were to unblock too deep a level or too low a segment too quickly, more energy would be unleashed than the system could structurally handle, likely resulting in greater system's breakdown (energy contraction). The organization's capacity to tolerate increasing levels of energy charge must be built up gradually and sequentially in the course of the sociotherapeutic effort (cf. Harrison, 1970; Levy & Merry, 1986). After all, direct expression of the charge had previously been forbidden and bound up in the armor.

The Head Segment

The head segment is the section of the system in which the deep structures of the "strategic apex" are housed: the organization's central planning, integrative, coordinative, and environmental scanning mechanisms all function as part of the organizational head (Mintzberg, 1979, pp. 24-26).²¹ The entire complex of these structures is concentrated at the highest end of the social system, and in this regard appears to be the functional equivalent of

²¹The organizational head segment is the functional equivalent to the head of the human organism, site of the ocular and oral somatic segments.

the individual organism's central nervous system. However, like the brain, the deep structures of the head segment also have the capacity to process and transmit communications up and down the "spine" of the organization via the system's interconnected series of managerial and customer contact functions, which themselves make contact with the environment (functional equivalent to the peripheral nervous system). In this way, the organization's head is functionally linked to the other segments in processing energy transactions with the outer world. When properly working, the head simply performs its central orienting function (the "work of top management"), serving to guide, and integrate the work of the system, as well as conceptualize its learnings, to optimize the system's functioning in the world. Properly functioning, it does not "dictate" the organization's work, but it envisions and orchestrates--through its series of complex "conductive" mechanisms--the work of the system (Drucker, 1988, p. 49; Peters & Waterman, 1982). These structures all correspond to the chief strategic and executive functions of the organization, and can be occupied, depending on the complexity and size of the system, by an individual or group of individuals (a system's executive committee, for example).

It is proposed that the vision stage of socioemotional development is directly connected to this highest section of the organizational head segment. The

ergonomic framework presented here predicts that deep frustrations encountered during the vision stage would be manifested in malfunctioning of these upper structures of the head on an ongoing basis; dysfunctional patterns of interpersonal behavior and confused bureaucratic regimen would arise to block the effective, current-day functioning of this segment. What is particularly significant here is the diagnostic implication: By observing the present-day functioning of the entire system, and by observing where and in what way the energy appears to block (its syndrome of characteristics), the interventionist can determine the historical conflicts that are the key to the character and then develop the corresponding case management, or intervention, strategy. In the instance at hand, narrow strategies and normative conceptions, structural inability to scan the environment, and confused direction at the upper end of the system all suggest the complex of characteristics indicating a deep, historic vision block. Because of the tremendous contraction at the top management level of the organization, such a condition would require the intervention strategy to take a highly specialized and differentiated avenue of approach than would another socioemotional block (for example, a work-aggressive block). It is not a simple matter of going in and directly working on the executive team's "vision" (i.e., group vision exercises and the like). The fact that the system is structurally blocked here may make it blind to the vision

problem to begin with. Indeed, its "blindness" is its problem. A different strategy would be needed to surface the underlying orientation problem gradually. Anything short of this would not work. The particular strategy proposed in a case such as this, as well as its larger implications for intervention strategy, are discussed in Chapter 5.

At what appears to be a lower sub-segment of the head lies yet another series of operating structures. These structures are associated with the senior management functions that take in energy resources from the environment and operationally manage the system (the chief operating structures). While the chief executive structures basically look outward, these slightly lower level functions of the head serve to sustain the organization inside through its day-to-day decision making and articulation of policy. Properly working, this lower section of the head segment functions to nourish the internal growth of the organizational system (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Bennis & Nanus, 1985).²² The dependency socioemotional stage, I am submitting, is directly tied to this section of the head and, if frustrated, would give rise to particularly blocked structures localized here. Armoring in this section would be evident by expectations, roles, and various operating

²²This structural sub-segment appears to be the functional equivalent to the oral segment in an individual.

processes that concentrate an excessive feed of information and decision making here, rendering the rest of the system relatively helpless and unable to act. Organizations that are chronically contracted in this sub-segment of the head would be expected to operate in a relatively demanding and dictatorial fashion.

The Middle Line

The middle line of the organization is primarily charged with facilitating the work of the system.²³ Roughly corresponding to the associated structures of middle management, this segment consists of line unit, technical support, and administrative managers and processes (Mintzberg, 1979, pp. 26-29). In the middle line are housed the vital structures of the system that are responsible for circulating the energy to either end of the organization.

Because they perform a secondary, facilitative role, the structures of the middle line do not appear to be directly tied to a primary socioemotional stage of development; rather, their functioning and shape appears to be dependent on the general character of the system based on

²³This structural segment appears to be functionally equivalent to the somatic segments in the individual lying between the head and the pelvis. The exact differentiation of the middle line as a counterpart here is the subject of further study, and Mintzberg's formulation of a wholly specialized "technostructure" and "support staff," noted earlier, is suggestive (1979, pp. 29-34). However, for purposes of the present investigation, the middle line does appear to include the functional equivalent of the vital structures of the thoracic and diaphragmatic segments in individuals. See the discussion in the text.

the overall extent of socioemotional satisfaction.²⁴ I am suggesting that if the system has developed to the point where it is relatively open at the top and at the bottom, the middle line is able to draw sufficient inspiration to circulate the energy for discharge both above and below. If, on the other hand, the system is blocked at any stage, the middle line would become congested and inhibited in its ability to facilitate the flow of work. It would develop excessive structuralization and freeze (cf. Mintzberg, 1979; Parkinson, 1957; W.R. Scott, 1981). As a consequence, the head would lack sufficient energy and information to fully discharge its work (environmental scanning, appropriate resource intake), as would the operating core with its work (task work discharge out into the environment). Once blocked, then, a congested middle line would contribute to the perpetuation and facilitation of the suppressed system. In short, even in a blocked system, the middle line's natural facilitative function would continue to be expressed, but in a distorted manner. Armoring in this segment is presumed to always take on the particular character of the system, but would generally be reflected in an immobility of middle management as manifested in rigid roles and operating procedures, narrow delegation of power, limited communication channels, and excessive caution and

²⁴This formulation is an extrapolation from individual organomic knowledge. The functioning of the vital structures of the chest and "middle" somatic segments are not directly tied to particular psychosexual stages, but to the functioning of the organism as a whole.

risk-averse behaviors (Block, 1987). One of the first means of mobilizing energy in any blocked organization is to get the structures of the middle line moving (Block, 1987).²⁵

The Operating Core

The operating core represents that basic structural segment that actually performs the task work of the organization (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 24).²⁶ This segment consists of the operating line units that merge with the system's customers to discharge its products and services. I am proposing that if the operating core is fully functional, its structures, systems, and personnel are rationally aligned with the other two segments to carry out its work in a way that is productive and gratifying for those inside the system as well as those outside who are served. If the segment is chronically blocked, not only would alignment problems between all three segments be evident, but so would localized structural difficulties as reflected in the internal production process, product delivery, and customer/product fit. Problems with product

²⁵This also fully accords with ergonomic findings with individuals. One of the first avenues of therapeutic approach is to mobilize the chest and encourage the patient to breathe more fully, restoring the pulsation of respiration through inspiration and expiration, creating an inner push on the blocks (Baker, 1967, 1978a; Reich, 1933/1972a).

²⁶The operating core is the functional equivalent to the pelvic somatic segment of the human organism.

(or service) quality and output quantity would also be manifest. The energy principle here is that any structural segment that is chronically blocked would necessarily imply systemic problems in the alignment and functioning of the other segments, although symptom formation would prominently present in the centrally blocked segments corresponding to the chief socioemotional developmental disturbances. This principle derives from the central hypothesis that organizations function as unitary, natural energy systems.

It is hypothesized that any chronic socioemotional block will interfere with the function of the operating core. In accord with the functional equivalent in individuals, I am submitting that a vision or dependency block anchored in the head segment would interfere with work energy reaching the operating core, whereas blocks associated with the fusion, work-aggressive, or work-democratic stages would be reflected in sociostructural disturbances within the operating core itself. Some of these variations are suggested in Chapter 5. Regardless of the particulars, however, the operating core would be the last segment to be freed in any sociotherapeutic work because of the tremendous reservoir of natural energy concentrated here. The sociotherapeutic aim at large is to enable the whole system to concentrate its energy for free and effective discharge. As long as the energy cannot be fully discharged through the operating core, it would continue to back up in the system, creating the contemporary

stasis that sustains the neurotic character with its accompanying symptomatology.

Chapter 5

SOME CIRCUMSCRIBED FORMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTER

Theoretically, a continuum of organizational characters exists based on the multiplicity of ways systems can develop and be blocked during their socioemotional stages. This calls for the elaboration of a systematic organizational character typology functionally equivalent to what is worked with in individual orgone therapy, a typology that can accurately assist the OD agent in charting differential diagnosis and intervention strategy. While the application of orgonomy to OD eventually promises just this, the present investigation, because it represents a first conceptual effort, renders only a few circumscribed forms of organizational character.¹ As hypothetical or heuristic constructs, their function is to serve as guideposts for a more comprehensive, case-intensive research effort in the future. This chapter proposes a number of organizational character types based on the social orgonomic model presented in Chapters 3 and 4, descriptions in the organizational literature, and application of functionally equivalent types identified in individual orgone therapy.

¹The heading for this chapter is adapted from Reich's first effort to develop an individual character typology (1933/1972a, p. 204).

Each of the character's socioemotional genesis, chief distinguishing features, and suggested strategies of sociotherapeutic approach are treated.² A variety of actual consulting case vignettes, from which the types proposed in part also draw, help illustrate some of the main dimensions of the characters as well as more general diagnostic and intervention principles. In all, six character types are presented: the work-democratic character, the work-dramatic character, the work-aggressive character, the "chronic depressive" character, the fusion-blocked character, and the aggressive-vision blocked character. These characters are selected for discussion because they represent a range of types from healthy to those that are chronically blocked at each of the five socioemotional developmental stages proposed earlier (vision, dependency, fusion, work-aggressive, and work-democratic stages). They thus exemplify how the general developmental principles previously discussed could manifest themselves in a variety of specific organizational forms. The formulation of these specific character types is supported by observations and casework with organizational entities with which I have consulted, entities which also form the basis for their specific selection. Each of the character types here are described as "ideal types." It should be understood that in

²This way of presenting the character types is modeled after Baker's manner of exposition (1967). The reader is also directed to Baker's text for a full description of each of the individual character types presented briefly in this chapter.

reality the organizations they represent are an admixture of neurotic and fully functioning types, falling on a spectrum from severely blocked to work-democratic. This is in line with what is seen in individual character typology.

Before moving on to a discussion of the types themselves, it may be useful to briefly elaborate two principles, one that appears to underlie the diagnosis of each, and another that guides their case management. With respect to diagnosis, from the standpoint of individual orgone therapy, character forms as a function of the way energy typically moves and is blocked in the body; this gives the orgonomic psychiatrist a unique ability to diagnose the character not only by attention to the content and qualities of a patient's words and behavior, but by direct observation of the somatic structure as well. Baker (1967) notes that each of the body's seven somatic segments need to be examined before the therapist makes a final determination of the patient's character. In any individual case, it may not necessarily be enough for accurate diagnosis to simply look at the psychological manifestations of behavior. It is essential to view the behavior in the context of how it functions in the organism as a whole to arrive at a usable diagnostic appraisal. I am proposing that the same principle holds in diagnosing organizational character. It may not be enough for understanding an organization to simply observe the patterned behaviors (social interactions, attitudes, expressed values, and

beliefs) of its members. Rather, the notion here is that one must always look at how the behaviors qualitatively function in the operation of the system as a whole--specifically, how they function in the three basic structural segments of the organization (the head, the middle line, and the operating core). The framework developed here thus affords the sociotherapist a unique opportunity to diagnose character by directly observing how work activity (energy) typically moves and is blocked in the basic structural segments of the system, thus moving the diagnosis beyond surface behavioral description, subjective verbal reports, and the ideologically biased assessments of its members and anchoring it in the way the system objectively functions.

Lastly, as with individual therapy, 'it is hypothesized that while character diagnosis drives specific case management strategies, it does not prescribe particular tactical interventions; these would be driven by the needs of the client at any point in time in the sociotherapeutic process. At any given moment, the resistance to the movement of energy may manifest itself behaviorally or structurally, requiring corresponding tactical responses in the context of their function within the character. Thus, the avenues of approach for treating each character type discussed focus on strategy rather than specific intervention techniques. Presumably, the full scope of interventions are available for each of the characters, from

those that are behavioral and process-oriented to those that are structural, even though particular techniques are occasionally suggested throughout this chapter for purposes of illustration. Intervention techniques, therefore, could --and should--be largely eclectic and continuously innovated.³ The functional case management strategies underlying these techniques, however, would be characterologically specific. After all, it is strategy that integrates and sequences the variety of tactical possibilities to move the process of characterological restructuralization along. Simply put, the general goal of the sociotherapy submitted here is to restore the capacity of blocked systems to function fully, enabling them to freely discharge work energy in a productive, gratifying manner.

THE WORK-DEMOCRATIC CHARACTER

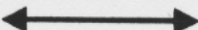
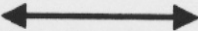
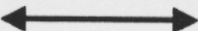

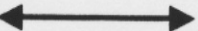
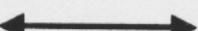
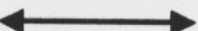
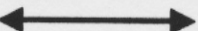
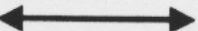
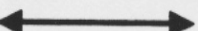
An organization with a work-democratic character is proposed to reflect those systems that are fully functioning and effective. Reich (1971b) describes as work-democratic those organizations that operate on a fully rational and

³This follows the approach taken with the individual characters as reflected in Reich's first development of character analytic techniques and subsequent discovery of somatic methodologies. It should also be mentioned here that future organizational field research may uncover a set of identifiable techniques that appear to be typically appropriate for certain characters under specific conditions. To the extent this is possible, however, it would have to develop out of extensive case experience and practice.

natural participatory basis--organizations, that is, without chronic armoring. Also, the term "work democracy" has been used extensively in the classical organizational literature (e.g., Bernstein, 1976; Elden, 1985; Emery & Thorsrud, 1976) to refer to systems that fully incorporate the participation of their members and are "self-regulating." The character type drawn here is intended to capture the qualitative dimensions of effective systems legend among traditional organizational thinkers and change practitioners: systems that are open, inquiring, productive, and fully actualizing of their human potential (Argyris, 1970; Beckhard, 1969; Bennis, 1969; Blake & Mouton, 1969; Block, 1987; Likert, 1961; Mayo, 1945; McGregor, 1960; Peters, 1987; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Tannenbaum & Davis, 1969; Waterman, 1988). Because they are structurally fluid as described below, work-democratic characters would also reflect the flexible, "network" properties of effective systems envisioned in futurist organizational scenarios (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Drucker, 1988; Mintzberg, 1979; Schein, 1988; Toffler, 1980). Organizations with a work-democratic character are to be broadly distinguished from the chronically blocked (or armored, neurotic) characters in that in the latter energy remains trapped inside the systems, giving rise to a host of typical internal and external dysfunctional behaviors such as those summarized in Table 2. The overall characteristic distinctions between work-democratic and neurotic, armored

Table 2

**Comparison of Work-Democratic and
Armored, Neurotic Organizations
(General Characteristics)**

Effective/Self-Regulating Organizations (Work-Democratic)		Ineffective/Chronically Blocked Organizations (Armored, Neurotic)
Work/Pleasure Unity (Work experienced as pleasurable)		Work/Pleasure antithesis (Work as a duty and a "burden")
Immersion into work process		Compulsive fixation on task or inability to work or concentrate
Confrontive of problems at root		Evade problems; "blame" symptoms
Clear sense of direction/ flexible in action		Rigid direction or aimlessness
Attitudes of empowerment		Attitudes of powerlessness or compensatory attitudes of grandeur
Work experienced as "meaningful"		Robotic/mechanistic work styles
Sociostructural unity, harmony		Sociostructural contradictions, tension
System and sub-systems move smoothly as a unit		Poor integration/coordination between sub-systems
Flexible task assignment & roles		Structural rigidity in task & role assignment
Use of well defined temporary systems		Fixed or insufficient systems

organizational characters proposed here are outlined in this table. What makes the present conceptualization particularly unique, in contrast to other "natural open systems" formulations to date (W.R. Scott, 1981), is its clear identification of a healthy type. For example, Kets de Vries and Miller (1984), in their own typology of organizations, make no basic distinction between healthy and neurotic systems; only neurotic styles are recognized.⁴ In these frameworks, this leads to muddy therapeutic goals and, indeed, to therapeutic pessimism.

The functional equivalent to the work-democratic character at the individual level is the genital character, a type first identified by Reich (1933/1972a, 1942/1973c) and succinctly summarized by Baker (1967):

The genital character is that individual who fulfills the criteria of health. That is, he is well enough integrated and free enough emotionally so that he can sufficiently express and satisfy himself in life. Because satisfaction is available to him, he does not build up tension and develop chronic armor. Ideal health is, of course, merely a concept and is not found in nature; but functional health is fluid and allows a wide range of expressions. (p. 101)

In short, the genital character refers to a self-regulating individual with a resilient organism, one who has the full

⁴This is equivalent in OD thinking with classic psychoanalytic theory which makes no basic distinction between health and neurotic illness in individuals. Kets de Vries, in addition to being an organizational scholar and consultant, is also a practicing psychoanalyst. It should be noted here that Reich was the first in the psychoanalytic movement to identify the characteristics of health; in fact, this was the beginning of his departure from the fold (Reich, 1933/1972a; 1942/1973c; 1952/1972b; Sharaf, 1983). See the discussion in Chapter 2.

range of emotional expression at his disposal for rational discharge in all aspects of his functioning--in the way he loves, in the way he works, in the way he thinks. The genital character may develop occasional blocks in either the psychic or somatic realms, but these would be temporary, lasting only as long as functionally needed. The genital character is distinguished from the neurotic characters in that the latter do develop chronic armoring.

Genesis

An organization with a work-democratic character is presumed to emerge if all of its socioemotional stages of development were satisfied. No major blocks would be evident.⁵ Because of the quality of its core charge and the nourishing circumstances under which it developed, the work democratic character would be able to grow to its full potential, enabling it to wholly express its present wants and needs in the environment.

Characteristics

It is hypothesized that such a system spontaneously discharges its work energy in a productive, gratifying manner, and in this, the entire organization participates freely as an integrated--or "work-democratic"--unit. The system's sociostructural identity--or if one prefers, its complex of social, technical, and administrative subsystems

⁵At the individual level, a genital character emerges when all psychosexual stages have been reached without any blocking.

--would be rationally and naturally aligned to access the unimpeded flow of energy from the system's core to the world. The work-democratic character literally satisfies its core work function in the world; it is a fully working, self-regulating system. Directed in its core energy, it would nonetheless be characteristically flexible in its formal structural arrangements. Use of well-defined temporary systems and fluid assembly of interdependent project teams would typically be in evidence. Such flexibility permits the work-democratic organization to freely engage itself in the markets that it serves or, alternatively, to systematically withdraw; the point is such expansion or contraction would be entirely functional to the demands of full energy expression in the system's current environment--and not a product of chronic retreat or "shrinking" from the environment based on past disturbances encountered during its socioemotional development. The healthy system is capable of fully reaching out and responding to the stakeholders in its environment (i.e., customers, regulators) in a rational way, whereas the chronically blocked system is inhibited in these transactions through its defensive character and armoring. The armored organization is unable to completely act in and respond to its environment.

The socioemotional fulfillment that presumably lies at the historical base of the work-democratic character is manifested in the resiliency of the organization's present-

day focus, structure, and functioning. The head of the work-democratic organization sees the challenges and opportunities in its present environment clearly and with perspective, while looking imaginatively--and with strategic deliberation--into the future. Its strategic planning process would not be linear and mechanistic, but would engage creative possibilities and a combination of both feeling and thinking (Hurst, 1986). Further, because its leadership empowers, rather than constricts, the body of its workers, its middle management ranks and operating processes would typically be lean, efficient, and "coaching" oriented. There is a minimum reliance on external rules, policies, and procedures. Instead, access to feelings, interpersonal trust, and a commitment to genuine problem solving and true collaboration serve as key internal regulators of behavior. In the work-democratic character, the various functions of the middle line would fully facilitate the "inspiration" of the work; they would not clog or otherwise obstruct overall work movement as they do in the chronically blocked characters. Process as well as product are fully valued. Periodic meetings, for example, that examined how the organization is functioning would be in evidence. With individual and group integrity at a premium, members of work-democratic systems would deal honestly with their internal organizational conflicts when they arise and would not avoid them or be overpowered by them. Indeed, such issues would be faced precisely to dispense with them so

there could be better focus on work activity and full gratification in externally productive tasks once again. In general, organizational members would be fully immersed in the accomplishment of their work, and members of each structural segment in particular would not be preoccupied or bogged down with extraneous, speculative fantasies about what others might be thinking. This could be diagnosed by an interventionist, for instance, by the comparative lack of "attributive" (Argyris, 1970, p. 41) behavior and statements made between individuals and sub-groups as revealed in one-on-one or sub-group interviews. Fully "charged" with responsibility, they would each simply--and wholeheartedly--discharge their work. In fact, the three basic structural segments--the head, the middle line, and the operating core--would be easily aligned as the work energy circulates freely and fluidly throughout the entire organization before being discharged most completely via the operating core. It must be emphasized that in the work-democratic characters there would be no rigid, formal distinctions between the three structural segments.⁶ While each segment would continue to perform its specialized function, any formal differences would not take on energetic dimensions over and

⁶Indeed, because there would be a priority on participation and contribution in work-democratic systems, it is quite likely that individuals would serve in multiple structural segments simultaneously--which is another way of saying that the energy circulates freely. The extent to which a particular work-democratic system functions in this way would seem to largely depend on the size and complexity of the system as well as on the nature of its core work.

above their specialized role in the operations of the system as a whole. There would be no unnatural or irrational hierarchy. After all, it is the gratified achievement of the whole organization that is the hallmark of the work democratic character. This holism is indeed just that: the integrity of the system's developmental past and operational present; its inner energetic demands and formal organizational arrangements.

Sociotherapy

Because work-democratic organizations are defined to operate as fully functioning systems they would not be candidates for characterological restructuralization. However, intervention may be needed if stasis were to occur.⁷

Stasis could arise when the organization in its present day functioning has situationally become blocked from satisfying its core work function for any prolonged period. In the work-democratic character, there are no major blocks to activate pre-work stage symptoms with stasis, but the organization might well present and openly complain of being stuck. Indeed, the system might very well solicit help through some form of OD process in which it actively participates as a full partner. Because of its basic work-democratic structure, such a system would be prone to be quite rational and reality based in its

⁷This is the case at an individual level with a genital character.

description of its problems and in its approach to solutions. Thus, no long term cultural change or characterological, resistance-oriented therapy would be needed as with the chronically blocked characters.^a Here, the sociotherapeutic aim could simply be to provide supportive aid and counseling to help get the system moving again. While energy could be mobilized through the variety of classical social and structural interventions (depending on the extent of the stasis), it is likely that a straightforward action-research methodology--relying on basic data collection and feedback to the system's governing body--would be sufficient to do the job (Burke, 1982; French, 1969; Lippitt, Watson, & Westley, 1958; Nadler, 1977). This has, in fact, been my experience with comparatively healthy work groups. Simple collection and presentation of data in team building sessions can be quite effective with these organizations. The data is honestly considered and dealt with. Issues it raises are not rationalized, explained away, or otherwise prematurely "solved" as is typically the case with chronically blocked organizations.

THE WORK-DRAMATIC CHARACTER

I am proposing the work-dramatic character to represent a neurotic type of the work-democratic

^aSee the discussion relative to the other character types.

organization. Kets de Vries and Miller (1984, p. 31), in their own typology, have coined the term "dramatic" to refer to a style of neurotic organizational functioning that in many ways reflects the frenetic qualities of the character described here.⁹ Also, I have consulted extensively with a statewide branch systems' operations division of a commercial bank that has exhibited many of the features discussed below and from which the description of the character type drawn partially emanates.

The functional equivalent to the work-dramatic character at an individual level is the hysterical character. Although hysteria has been recognized from ancient times, its clinical exposition was first associated with psychoanalysis and later clarified and understood by Reich (1933/1972a) in functional energetic terms. Essentially, the hysterical character has reached the genital stage but with anxiety, resulting in genitality that cannot be accepted (Baker, 1967). There is a simultaneous push towards, and flight from, genital sexuality. This leads to incomplete discharge of energy and sexual dissatisfaction in the character; the consequence is "an

⁹In their type, Kets de Vries and Miller also reflect a strong dependency component that colors the description of the core neurotic style (i.e., hysteria) they present. While such a mixed type of organizational character undoubtedly exists, the dependency component (corresponding to orality in an individual) is not presented here to keep the heuristic clean. Kets de Vries and Miller, of course, do not posit a work-democratic stage of functioning from which the basic dramatic style emerges. See their discussion on p. 214.

organism which is alive, but restless and flighty" (Baker, 1967, p. 105). Accordingly, the armoring pattern seen in hysterics is soft and light. Armor shifts throughout the organism without becoming chronically stuck in any particular somatic segment. In this character, ego-alien symptoms are prone to develop, but the individual has difficulty dealing with them because of the underlying flightiness.

Genesis

An organizational "dramatic character" is presumed to emerge when the final work-democratic stage is reached but is precipitously shut down due to inhibitions from the founder or other stimuli from the environment. The organization is thought to attain a work-democratic mode but with anxiety, thus exaggerating and "dramatizing" the basic excitement of work emblematic of a work-democratic unit.¹⁰

Characteristics and Symptoms

Because of its presumed underlying work-democratic structure, there would be no pronounced pre-work blocks to trap or hold the energy in this character and cause the system to regress. Energy, thus, would not concentrate in any particular structural segment giving rise to localized armor and symptomatology as in other chronically blocked

¹⁰An hysterical character is produced at the individual level if the genital stage of psychosexual development is reached but frustrated.

characters. Rather, in the work-dramatic character, the whole system would be flooded with undischarged energy, making it appear restless and "flighty" (Bion, 1959, p. 105). With deep issues always threatening to erupt, structural armor would generally be light and tenuous. Indeed, such firms might generally complain of lacking "muscle" and impact.¹¹ For example, members of the operations division to which I consulted, referred to above, continually complained about how they were ignored and had no power in the larger organization or with customers. Their goals, roles, and operating processes, while extensive in surface coverage, were only thinly established and secured; that is, while widespread task assignments and voluminous standard procedures were readily evident, these were often not taken seriously or considered vital to the running of the business because its members were unassertive about seeking the support they needed to fully function. Moreover, they did little to vocalize their concerns directly or confront the situation even though they knew it was needed. In general, work-dramatic organizations are systems with an exaggerated sense of aliveness and agility, systems in a constant--but unfulfilled--state of excitement about their work. They are diagnostically recognizable just because they are very excited and alive (again, since the system is blocked at the work-democratic stage, the whole

¹¹As previously discussed, muscular armor is generally light in hysterics. A timidity is also typically present.

organization is flooded with undischarged energy). This is the dramatic quality. Accordingly, they may profess to be "very interested" in OD interventions, creative activity, or a renewed sense of leadership to help them finally develop the gratified achievement they seek, but since their energy is trapped and cannot get out, their members would typically find it difficult to tolerate the kind of patient, organic development that would lead to satisfaction here. In my experience, there is an impulsive, "do it now" quality to the work. Such systems are likely to be continually frustrated in their work, repeatedly seeking new opportunities to satisfy their pent-up frustration. They may seek out one managing "savior"--or for that matter, OD change agent--after the next, just as they might impetuously seek out new organizational arrangements, projects, product niches, or acquisition vehicles. Such systems would be expected to characteristically vacillate in strategic focus. In all of this, the chief characterological attitudes of "flight" and "running" are manifested. Unfortunately, the underlying character structure would give them a provocative quality, inciting each new business opportunity to disappoint them and let them down. Again, the operations division I consulted with thrived on taking on one ad hoc corporate project after the next; there was always an initial excitement about the task. The projects, however, never seemed to have enough sustenance to satisfy its members' inner sense of

frustration and felt lack of impact on the rest of the system. In fact, each new project turned up issues that reminded them of their predicament and thus wound up as discouraging.

Sociotherapy

With the work-dramatic type--as with the other chronically blocked organizational characters--it is incumbent on the interventionist to recognize early on what is happening in the relationship between himself and the system, using it diagnostically and therapeutically to identify and unmask the chief resistances (in this case, the flighty, running attitude). This is functionally identical to the basic character analytic work as first identified by Reich (1933/1972a). Despite the surface positive cooperation, until the latent negative transference with the sociotherapist emerges and is dealt with, no real progress in the OD process is probable. Without it, the interventionist would soon get enmeshed into the client's characteristic patterns of behavior and the sociotherapy would risk being aborted or co-opted. This has been my experience on a number of occasions with clients who initially established a "positive" relationship with me and which I accepted too quickly at face value. Once any issues of depth were touched, the clients ran and turned on me. Denial of the existence of any problems and bitter criticism of me resulted, followed by their termination of the consulting engagement. On the other hand, if the latent

negative transference is drawn out and exposed in a way that clients can understand and accept, it should provide a window into the basic structure of the conflict that they face. In the case of a work-dramatic type, this transference could be used to help disclose to the change agent and to the client-system itself the underlying running attitude--and, as a result, help drive the process of change. This, too, has been my experience. Once I pointed out how such a client's flighty behavior with me was interfering with the course of the consulting effort, much of the resistance subsided, and we were able to begin to move the process forward. In the organizational literature, Block (1978) has emphasized the primary importance of dealing with resistance in the early phases of an OD effort, while Bennis (1969) has suggested how the nature of the resistance as it is projected onto the change agent mirrors the nature of the conflict inherent in the change project itself. To my knowledge, however, no one to date has taken Reich's finely developed character analytic resistance technique and applied it to the realm of organizational diagnosis and change.

In general, it appears that work-dramatic organizations need to be approached slowly and with care. Rapid, "transformational" change efforts would, of course, be alluring and appeal to them at the outset, but would predictably sour once the underlying character was more directly confronted. The sociotherapist would need to be

on the alert for the running away attitude, which is likely to continually appear in manifold forms. As Baker (1967, p. 107) has written with respect to the functional equivalent character in individuals, the core of the treatment for work-dramatic organizations would appear to lie in "cornering" them and preventing them from running. Once this is established, their anxiety should spontaneously emerge--and with it the issues behind the source of their conflicts.

This course was precisely my experience with the work-dramatic type of operations division I consulted with over a two year period. Deeper issues were more accessible compared to other organizational units I have worked with (reflecting, I believe, the division's work-democratic core), but only after the members of the leadership group were slowed down over a prolonged series of weekly, two-hour (task force development) sessions and made to face their anxiety over their constant "doing" behavior. At one point in a session, one of the members stopped and said with insight to the rest of the group, "We do, more than we think." Once this process insight emerged from the leadership team itself, much energy was mobilized for change. Interventions then proceeded with the rest of the system; i.e., they progressed from the head of the division --the leadership team--down. Thus, after the leadership team was effectively mobilized, the middle line and leadership team were worked with conjointly, followed by

incorporation of the operating core into the developmental process. It should be noted that negative transference was dealt with extensively, and at increasing levels of intensity, throughout the first year-and-a-half of the effort. After working through a number of emotional layers of denial, anger, confusion, and sadness via a series of both structural and behavioral tactical interventions relevant to the presenting needs of the group, the division's members have settled down with a new focus and have begun to experience deep satisfaction in their work. A new, felt impact on the rest of the organization and its customers is evident.

THE WORK-AGGRESSIVE CHARACTER

Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 108) describe a type of organizational culture they designate as "the tough-guy, macho culture," a culture driven to prove itself and to "succeed." The character proposed here in part draws from their description. It also partially draws from my general experience with organizational entities that, in varying manners and degrees, reflect the aggressive qualities portrayed. As with the other characters presented, the type submitted here, of course, is an heuristic.

The functional equivalent to the work-aggressive character at an individual level is the phallic narcissistic character. The phallic character was first identified by Reich in 1926 to differentiate a character form that stands

between the hysteric and the compulsive (Reich, 1933/1972a, p. 217). The essential qualities of the phallic character center around his aggression, which result from his frustration at the phallic stage. This propels him to constantly try to prove his potency, coloring all aspects of his life. As Baker (1967) writes

Aggression often shows not so much in what he says or does as in how he says or does it. He is bristly and anticipates an expected attack by attacking first. This aggression is a defense against surrender and finding himself weak. The erect phallus is his bulwark of confidence and erectile impotence causes him to fall to pieces--he becomes anxiety laden, cringing, and helpless. In behavior toward a love object, he has always some sadistic traits, more or less disguised, and the narcissistic element in his loving is more important to him than his actual partner is. The more neurotic he is, the more obtrusive his behavior becomes. His impressive self-confidence, vigor, and flexibility move toward arrogance, hauteur, cold reserve, and deriding aggressiveness. He resents subordination unless he in turn can dominate others. (pp. 111-112)

The armoring in the phallic character is typically heavy throughout the organism, as especially seen in the hard quality of the pelvis, the puffed-up chest, and broad shoulders. This is all in keeping with the character's tendency to literally cover any sign of weakness. In treating a phallic character, once the presenting symptoms of weakness have abated, he may well retreat from therapy, feeling puffed-up once more and denying any need for therapy.

Genesis

A work-aggressive organizational character is believed to result if the system reaches the work-aggressive

stage of socioemotional development without attaining full satisfaction.¹² The outer environment--founders, competitive pressures, bureaucratic agencies, and the like--presumably prohibited the system from expressing pride in its early work accomplishments; the organization thus becomes "stuck" at the early work-stage, continually seeking to break out of its predicament through a forceful display of prowess to the world. In short, the work-aggressive character is thought to seek "revenge" on a world in which it was limited and with which it competed for scarce resources and attention.¹³ Unlike a number of the characters with mixed blocks defined later, the "pure type" of work-aggressive offered here encountered no significant blocking at earlier stages of development and thus would operate completely as a work-aggressive.

Characteristics and Symptoms

I am proposing that the central presenting attitudes of the work-aggressive character are ones of being "tough" and "macho," as Deal and Kennedy (1982) have described in their typology. This kind of organizational character represents the highly competitive firms--competitive inside and without--firms preoccupied with market share, winning,

¹²A phallic character results in an individual based on frustrations encountered during the phallic stage of psychosexual development.

¹³An underlying attitude of revenge is key to the individual characterological phallic. It is no accident that popular language recognizes the stereotypic macho male as a "lady killer."

and "being number one." Such organizations are detectable in part by the oft-repeated stories of macho prowess in the organization (e.g., "the time the company 'blasted away' the competition," legendary "war stories" within the organization, "the time top management got drunk together at an offsite") (cf. Mitroff & Kilmann, 1975). Also, in such organizations, feelings and reflective, inquiry-oriented behaviors would typically be treated as weaknesses; indeed, they would predictably be banished from the workplace on the grounds that the competitive environment precludes such "luxuries." I have heard this rationale in my consulting experience with management teams regularly. In a sense, this rationale of the work-aggressive type would be correct. Insofar as its environment was competitive and did treat such feelings as a luxury--this attitude would accurately reflect the system's developmental past. Of course, since the essence of any frozen developmental behavior is that it literally becomes "timeless," the work-aggressive character would perpetually "enact" (Weick, 1979, p. 91) its history onto the world, choosing the most competitive and combative arenas in which to operate and thereby "prove" itself. It would never feel adequate. Suffice it to say, the work-aggressive organization would operate more from its socioemotional, characterological imperative than from the reality of its current environment.

As with its normative attitudes, structurally the work-aggressive is presumably armed for combat too. The

armoring of the system would likely be heavy throughout, with sophisticated technological and other operating processes typically well developed. A tendency to rigid status differentials at the top and middle segments of the organization would also be in evidence. However, the armoring would be expected to be heaviest at the operating core, the segment that literally gets the work out. Strategy, roles, and operating processes would all be arranged to determinedly "push out" product. The work-aggressive firm might well profess a concern for product quality, but this could be considered as part of the system's facade¹⁴; in the end, it is quantity that counts--"more" is what is sought. The work-aggressive firm would be particularly detectable by its "impressive" demeanor and bearing, from its flashy interpersonal behaviors and product advertising to the very decorations of its headquarters' offices. At one corporate organization I have visited (a national, fast food retail chain well known for its "high performance" attributes and employee "burn out"), the art and furnishings of the headquarters building were literally "breathtaking" and "striking." At the extreme, however, the work-aggressive organization's characteristic attitudes of

¹⁴In individual orgone therapy, the character presents in three layers: (1) the facade--the surface, "conscious" layer of socially approved behavior the patient presents to the world; (2) the middle layer--the repressed, harsh and cruel impulses that have been bottled up (the so-called Freudian "unconscious"); and (3) the biologic core--the deep, primary life impulses that if gratified are spontaneously social and moral (Baker, 1967, p. 61; Reich, 1946/1971b, p. xi).

competitiveness and impressiveness might turn to belligerence and haughtiness. This could prove dysfunctional under stress as the system began to drive away more and more employees, suppliers, and eventually customers. I am proposing that the work-aggressive type is, ultimately, not interested in truly serving customers' needs, but in dominating markets and "knocking them dead" (revenge). This would give them a tendency to heavily concentrate power and engage in monopolistic practices over time. Such attitudes would also be prominent in the relationship the work-aggressive firm might establish with a change agent--whom it would predictably see as a prime competitor for power.

Sociotherapy

In some ways, the work-aggressive organization does not appear to be a likely candidate for sociotherapy. Its very structural need to prove itself and stand alone in the world would militate against seeking help. However, the organization might seek help, as with any chronically blocked character, when its armor had broken down, giving rise to prototypical dysfunctional symptoms that could no longer be rationalized or excused. In the case of a work-aggressive organization, the system might turn to help were it to begin to see mounting evidence of "non-performance."¹⁵ This could be reflected in a variety of ways, but, in

¹⁵ Similarly, the phallic character turns to help when he feels impotent.

keeping with the character, would presumably most always be quantitative in expression (declining profits, deteriorating sales and productivity, weakly performing products vis a vis the competition, the rate of turnover, and so forth). At bottom, all of these represent expressions of the organization's increasing sense of powerlessness. However, it would be quite unexpected for the work-aggressive organization to seek help to improve itself qualitatively in this regard, where it might better tap its human potential. Such a human way of framing problems, of course, would be warded off by the organization's very attitude of toughness. To all this, the interventionist would need be attentive. Methodologically, I am suggesting that the very reason the organization gives as its basis for seeking help--its "presenting complaint"--is a clue to its character (cf. Baker, 1967, p. 214).

It is logical to assume that the first avenue of attack on the work-aggressive character would be to attend to the system's presenting complaints with structurally-oriented interventions focusing on performance and productivity. Since either behavioral or structural interventions can mobilize energy, it is sensible to select the avenue that is most comprehensible by the character. Since structural interventions typically appear "hard" and measurable ("quantitative"), they would seem fitting tactical responses here. Also, the change agent would need to be prepared to deal with the negative transference issues

wherein the system would repeatedly seek dominance and control. Such dominance might be expressed, for example, by sarcastic remarks that belittle the change agent or by a consulting contract which seeks to dominate him and put him in an inferior position--in some cases manifested in reducing the change agent to a "pair-of-hands" (Block, 1978, p. 20). I have experienced both. The interventionist must authentically confront all this in the context of the presenting problems to (1) assure the consultative process is not derailed, and (2) begin to expose the characterological attitudes of toughness and dominance that serve as a chief defense against the core anxiety. I have found process-oriented feedback, such as Schein (1969) suggests, as well as the sparing use of "mirroring remarks" to be effective. Working from the head of the organization down, enjoining the middle line and the operating core respectively, I am suggesting that the characteristic attitudes of belligerence and dominance would need to be confronted again and again, layer by layer, until the historic crux of the problem is unraveled. The precise interventions would vary based on the specific requirements of the case, but the organization's membership would essentially need to hear, through a variety of feedback mechanisms, that they are "not so tough at all." Again, it must be understood by the change agent--and ultimately the client-system itself--that the chronic attitudes of toughness and performance are masked expressions of

frustrated work-aggression, which the system is afraid to confront. This is why the system so consistently "acts out" its aggression in its surface behaviors: they are attempts to satisfy the organization's inhibited socioemotional aggression. In keeping with the theoretical formulation discussed earlier, this most basic conflict would not be surfaced until the operating core was brought into the change process, the segment that actually discharges the task work. In all, the sociotherapist would need to break down the work-aggressive attitude through interventions that meet the system's presenting wants while helping the organization truly be strong and face its weaknesses. Situationally relevant task-related interventions that had an emergent process component would be in order here. This strategy would enable the system to gradually tolerate feeling its powerlessness as well as genuine expressions of cooperative satisfaction (representative of the satisfactions its members experienced in the past fusion stage), both of which it now fears and binds with its chronic show of toughness. Once the system can get in touch with the socioemotional sources of its anxiety, it should develop naturally to a work-democratic mode of functioning.¹⁶ With the work-aggressive character,

¹⁶The functional equivalent of this is the case with treating phallic characters. Here, the therapeutic strategy consists of breaking down the phallic aggression and allowing the patient to tolerate soft, passive feelings, previously fulfilled at (and identified with) the anal stage. Once the underlying helplessness is felt and
(continued...)

the biggest challenge to the change agent would not seem to lie in freeing the head or middle line segments, or even in liberating the heavily armored operating core, but in keeping the energy and interest of the client focused on staying with the deeper process of characterological restructuralization once the initial presenting problems have cleared. As soon as the system is out of its problems of "non-performance" and beginning to do well again, the work-aggressive organization may likely "quit" the change process, exhibiting an exaggerated sense of pride and "strength" once again. This is predictable because of the nature of the character: the historic work-aggressive block could render dealing with the underlying thwarted sense of pride and strength insurmountable.¹⁷ Anticipating this, the

¹⁶(...continued)

integrated, "the patient develops by healthy pathways to genitality" (Baker, 1967, p. 115). Characterologically, individuals with a phallic structure are always inwardly afraid of retreating to the anal level, which they ward off with their aggressive strivings.

¹⁷This formulation has implications for understanding why so many socio-technical redesigned systems are prone to collapse and revert to hierarchical systems over time (Passmore, 1982; Trist, 1981; Walton, 1980). Briefly, my premise here is that socio-tech, with its vaunted promise of delivering "high performance work systems," appeals to work-aggressive organizational characters. (It seems no accident that its change process is highly structural and design-oriented in approach, with characterological issues almost wholly neglected.) Once socio-technical interventions reach the operating core, a tremendous amount of energy is unleashed that is difficult to sustain over the long haul. From the organomic point of view adopted here, the explanation is clear: the underlying character and structural armor of the system have not been touched by the intervention. Indeed, they may simply have been rearranged and bolstered via a formal facade of "participative" change.

change agent in working with the system from the outset, once again, needs to consistently point out the presenting attitudes of toughness as a resistance. This could be accomplished through the use of character analytic process observations. It could also be accomplished by feeding back hard data showing the discrepancy between professed and actual performance. Both of these interventions would need to be conducted at maximum levels of intensity tolerable by the client-system.

THE "CHRONIC DEPRESSIVE" CHARACTER

A "chronic depressive" character is proposed as a type of organization with low energy, depressive qualities.¹⁸ Kets de Vries and Miller (1984, p. 34) describe a neurotic style of organizational functioning they refer to as "depressive," a description utilized here. Also, in my own consulting experience, I have had the opportunity to work with a technical support group within a commercial bank, a group whose functioning first suggested the dynamics of this character to me.

¹⁸The name for this type of organizational character is borrowed from the individual character of the same name for want of any better descriptive language in the organizational literature; this is why it appears in quotation marks here.

The functional equivalent to this type of organizational character at the individual level is the chronic depressive character. Although aspects of this character had been previously described, Baker (1967, p. 118) was the first to clearly delineate its dimensions. The chronic depressive individual is essentially a phallic character in whom the overt aggressive features are masked by quiet, restrained behaviors. These behaviors result from severe repression during the earlier oral stage. The character combines the typical aggressive stance of the phallic with the inhibited infantile oral demands, resulting in demanding behaviors that turn the aggression inward towards the self. The chronic depressive individual thus becomes his own taskmaster, able to express his phallic core only by constantly driving himself, albeit in a quiet, hard-working fashion. According to Baker (1967)

Depression ordinarily is not obvious, but seriousness is always present [The individual with a chronic depressive structure] is inclined to blame himself for most difficulties, while the usual phallic blames others. He is tolerant toward others but intolerant toward himself. He is righteous, determined, extremely responsible, and rigidly honest, possessing a strong, relentless drive even though his energy is usually below average. (pp. 119-120)

Biophysically, he is typically thin with an armored jaw. The ocular segment, though, is comparatively open, resulting in the individual's capacity to see and judge the world clearly. Because of the chronic depression, the energy level is typically low, but this also leaves him with a relatively stable neurotic structure. The individual

chronic depressive generally performs quite well, although never up to his own demanding standards. It is essential in treating the individual chronic depressive to first mobilize the chest because of the dangers of the low levels of energy available in the organism. This functionally creates an expansive "push" in the organism, which is needed to free up the inhibited aggression and redirect it outward towards the world. The underlying stability of the structure allows the therapist to actively push in this direction.

Genesis

A "chronic depressive" organizational character is presumed to represent those systems that combine frustration at the work-aggressive stage of socioemotional development with an earlier dependency block.¹⁹ Basically work-aggressive in structure, the sharply frustrated dependency stage is believed to color direct expression of the system's work-aggressive features, giving rise to a character that chronically demands more and more from itself in the world. These are organizations that would have not only been inhibited from feeling the full pleasure of work at the work stage, but internally undernourished from a leadership standpoint during the dependency stage as well. I am proposing that the dependency block anchored in the head

¹⁹ An individual chronic depressive character represents a phallic with an oral repressed block.

segment inhibits energy from reaching the operating core for full discharge.²⁰

Characteristics and Symptoms

It is hypothesized that the "chronic depressive" organization is low in energy and leadership drive that enables others to act independently, but internally efficient and comparatively stable. In the technical support department to the line-units to which I consulted, its members were inwardly focused on specialized operating processes rather than on external, market-related concerns. This inward operational stance presumably compensated for the lack of empowering leadership within the entity as well as displaced a more aggressive posture towards the environment. Its members typically felt--and behaved--like "high level clerks." In one-on-one and group interviews, they reported feeling joyless, put upon, and lacking in power and respect, from the line to whom they served and with each other. These criticisms were not freely and easily communicated, but were themselves expressed with a rather low, murmuring, hopeless quality. Notwithstanding the presenting complaints, the department technically performed quite well. Based on the functional equivalent in individuals and the available organizational literature, this would seem to be a characteristic of the full-blown type, especially if the system operates in a relatively

²⁰ In the chronic depressive, the armor at the oral segment restricts energy from reaching the pelvis.

stable, or protected, competitive environment, which would allow it to continue to focus its energy internally and provide a steady, if staple, product to its customers. However, should changing external circumstances require the organization to be more actively and energetically engaged with the world--in the form of providing new services, opening up new markets, and generally responding to the competition--the "chronic depressive" organization might falter; the system might well cling to its internal operating processes and in vain look for the leadership to respond to its needs and propel it forward. This, in fact, characterized the group with which I worked.

I am proposing that, structurally, the lower operating segment of the head would be dominant because of the dependency block; it would hold much energy in check via demanding behaviors of the rest of the organization to produce more (work-aggressive component colored by the dependency block). Its leadership would wield a form of compliance from the middle line and the operating core by simply being non-responsive to its members' emotional needs, but this would also manifest itself in a form of passive aggression (members digging in their heels and not participating in group meetings, poor upward communication flow to the top and middle line, respectively, little gusto in the manner and tempo of discharging task work, and so forth). On the other hand, little, overt counter-dependent behavior would be in evidence--again, presumably

because of the keen emotional deprivation encountered during the dependency stage. In its dealings with the head and the operating core, the middle line would apparently just cave in, while still "holding out." In the department I worked with, members of the middle line were essentially resigned and seemed singularly uninspired in their managerial work, while members of the operating core labored dutifully on their tasks, day after day. As a whole, there was little spirit or joy in the system. Such a system, as Baker (1967) reports in the functional equivalent in individuals, merely appears to survive. With this as the total picture, one would likely find a great deal of formality in interpersonal relationships, functional role definitions, lines of authority, policies and procedures, communication channels, and so forth. All of these internal structures and operating areas could become target sites for symptom formation because of the way they suck up disproportionate amounts of energy. Basically, the chronic dependency block is believed to inhibit the organization from marshalling the aggression needed to cope with the increasing competitive pressures of its environment. Its aggression is deflected internally.

Sociotherapy

The basic case management strategy for treating the "chronic depressive" organization would seem to be to mobilize the aggression and get the whole system to focus

its energy outward.²¹ Essentially, the organization needs to be moved to make more expressed demands directly onto its environment and stop demanding so much from itself internally (the source of the system's hopelessness and depression). Because its energy is turned so significantly inward, this would require considerable persistence on the part of the interventionist, who will need to "push" members of the system past their socioemotional comfort zone of passive aggression. The danger of breaking the system down, however, by pushing too hard or going too deep would seem to be less than with other types of armored organizations because of the relatively stable structure of the character (cf. Baker, 1967; Harrison, 1970). In my actual case experience, considerable one-on-one feedback and consultation was needed with the incumbent of the chief operating role to deal with the way in which she continued to bind the members of the system to a technical orientation, thwarting their emotional satisfaction and independent capacity to act. This, of course, reflected the dependency block. Correspondingly, members of the system, notably the middle line, had difficulty tolerating their own counter-dependent, aggressive behavior when it erupted. The dependency block inhibited their overt, counter-dependence. In general, the type is torn between its frustrated work aggressive strivings and its internal dependency impulses.

²¹The functional equivalent here is the overriding strategy for treating an individual chronic depressive.

The only way out of the impasse is through helping members of the system forcefully express their demands, whatever they might be. As a first step, helping the membership get in touch and identify with what they want would be critical. The change agent would also need to be prepared to educate the unit's members on the developmental role of the aggression in liberating the energy from its moorings. The middle line in general would need a great deal of help to learn to tolerate energy expansion--and the pleasure of work--so it could do its job of facilitating movement in the system. Its members would have to learn to accept their own share of responsibility for keeping the system pent-up. This could conceivably be accomplished in periodic team development and empowerment sessions in which the entire middle line participates (Dyer, 1977; Block, 1987). However, it would be necessary to have the chief operating leader present so the upper portions of the system could open up and expand together as a unit. This would, of course, slow the opening up process because of the great dependency inhibition, but it seems imperative if the system's members are to learn to confront their stifled aggression. Members throughout the system would have to discover how their preoccupation with internal operating processes in general ties up their aggression and effectiveness. The interventionist would also have to be careful not to collude with the system by formal structural interventions that avoid the core of the problem. The

temptation to ignore the deeper emotional issues would be great with the "chronic depressive" because of the intensity of the lurking negative transference--which would presumably redirect the group's pent-up hostility from the internal leader directly onto the change agent.

THE FUSION-BLOCKED CHARACTER

The organizational material for this description draws from Kets de Vries and Miller (1984, p. 28), who provide a portrait of a "compulsive organization" similar descriptively to the character type envisioned here. The "machine bureaucracy" defined by Mintzberg (1979, p. 314) and the "process culture" of Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 119) also provide material for the type. Reich (1971b), too, speaks about compulsive bureaucratic regimen in machine-like terms. From my own consulting casework, three related organizations have been drawn upon: a regional office and an international trade finance division of a commercial bank as well as a high-technology retail corporation.

The functional equivalent on the individual level of the fusion-blocked character is the compulsive. As Baker (1967) describes,

The compulsive is the human machine. His outstanding characteristic is caution, and the general function of the character is to defend against stimuli and to maintain psychic equilibrium. On the deepest level, it is actually a defense against soiling. The general impression is one of great control A pedantic concern for orderliness is prominent. The compulsive's whole life, even to minor details, is run according to plans laid carefully ahead of time All the

muscles of the body, but especially the pelvis, pelvic floor, shoulders, and face, are spastic. This gives the typical hard expression and awkwardness. Contact is mechanical. (pp. 124-126)

Two psychic manifestations typically present in the character are doubting and affect block. Both are means of the compulsive of holding still and controlling any movement.

Genesis

A fusion-blocked organization is proposed as a result of sharp repression encountered during the system's fusion stage followed by frustration at the work-aggressive level.²² It is hypothesized that the severity of the initial block holds expression of the later work-aggressive charge in check, causing the system to retreat to the fusion level and function in a cautious, controlling, and "holding" manner.²³ The origin of the fusion block presumably lies in particular founder or environmental conditions that strictly limit members of the system from expressing spontaneous, natural, positive feelings of cohesion.

Characteristics and Symptoms

A fusion-blocked character basically would operate as a tight, bureaucratic machine, one in which "every last

²²A compulsive character is produced by repression at the anal psychosexual stage followed by frustration at the phallic level.

²³The functional equivalent dynamic is found in compulsives.

detail of operation is planned out in advance and carried on in a routinized and preprogrammed fashion" (Kets de Vries & Miller, 1984, p. 28). Spontaneity, initiative, innovation, and expressions of feeling would be almost wholly absent. Because of the frustration at the fusion stage, the central driving characteristic of the system would be to avoid emotion and spontaneous movement at all costs, conserving its equilibrium in what it sees to be a threatening and chaotic world. I am proposing the system would seek to accomplish this through an armored sociostructural identity fixated on holding still and maintaining control. From the social side, the character would be expressed through stereotypical normative attitudes of caution and doubt. New markets, business opportunities, and change itself would likely be greeted with characteristic caution and skepticism (e.g., "we doubt if that will work"). The doubt serves to hold any feeling or movement in suspension so there would be "no surprises." As Block (1978, p. 116) points out, such an attitude is simply another means to maintain control. The fusion-blocked character's expressed values of thoroughness, quality, competence, and being systematic all reflect the same underlying attitude. Too, a collectivist mindset might well be emphasized at the expense of individual initiative ("being a team player"), but true group processes wherein any spontaneous emotional issues might arise would be characteristically avoided. Indeed, underneath the facade of group togetherness there might well be a good amount of

one-on-one management (control again). Similarly, the fusion-blocked character may actively solicit team building interventions precisely as a means of prescribing order and defining roles. This was exactly the case with all three consulting efforts referenced above.

From the structural side, the machine-like character would be expressed through a reliance on careful planning and scheduling, standard operating procedures, established systems, and ritualistic formal codes of behavior. Unlike the "chronic depressive" character (which, I maintained earlier, is also oriented to internal processes), the fusion-blocked organization, however, would embrace efficient structural processes precisely for the sake of control. As such, the fusion-blocked character represents the bureaucratic system par excellence. Wherever possible, it operates fully at the level of standardization, routinization, and centralization of power. With hierarchy prototypic throughout, there would be a decidedly disjointed quality to the interrelations between the three structural segments. There would predictably be little open, spontaneous communication. With the three cases I facilitated, staff relations were indeed rather forced and stiff. The head, obsessed with losing control, typically involved itself in mundane administrative problems and tended to lose sight of the big picture. This seemed to me to lead directly to the observed practice of mandating lower level group participation in certain operating decisions (as

is also commonplace in the classical Japanese bureaucracies); this, in turn, seemed a compensatory means for the top manager to regain perspective and control. In the type at large, the middle line would likely be staffed with technocratic specialists to ensure measurement, "quality control," and conformity to corporate policy, while operating divisions would be highly compartmentalized. At the deepest level, the compulsive emphasis on control, uniformity, and group pressures to conform is conceived of here as a reaction to the frustrated sense of community and cohesion of the fusion stage.

Sociotherapy

The fusion-blocked organization may seek help because its managerial staff feels empty or is beginning to sense it is losing control. In either case, the interventionist would need to unmask the affect blocked nature of its reigning attitudes. Passion and any spontaneous expression of frustration at its problems come hard for this character. Indeed, in my experience with related kinds of organizations, the type has initially come to me with its problems well detailed and even written out in advance.²⁴ The fusion-blocked system has difficulty owning and confronting its problems at any emotional level because they are indicative of the conflicted feelings it

²⁴ Similarly, in the initial examination, the compulsive character often has his reasons for coming to therapy written out on a list.

tries so consistently to suppress, and so the system, beginning with the head, would need to be made aware of the affectively flat nature of its response to its condition. To do so, the change agent would have to see through the methodical and emotionally superficial quality of the consulting relationship the system would seek to establish with him, and this could be difficult. The change agent's wish for a "model client"--one that is pleasant, "cooperative," asks plenty of questions, and listens to him endlessly--could backfire here; the fusion-blocked character may well present in all these ways, and the consultant, if he does not recognize the character, could thus end up in collusion with the neurotic system. The endless questioning and organizational analyses the system encourages, of course, are all means to avoid getting to the point. Behind the doubting, caution, and concern for control would lie a great deal of suppressed anger--the first layer of which is the frustrated fusion stage to which the organization has retreated. It is proposed that this uppermost layer of anger would need to be gotten out and worked through first.²⁵ Pursuing this line in my consulting experiences, I noted that top managers consistently discovered a new desire to forcefully push their work units to simply "get the job done" and "quit the complaining," coming to understand their previous desire for "participative group harmony" as a

²⁵This proposition comes out of the functionally equivalent strategy in treating compulsives.

misguided means of controlling their own anger--at their organizations for not sufficiently performing and at themselves for not sufficiently pushing. Theoretically, this would lead to the resurfacing of the work-aggressive impulses, which in turn would need to be broken down to deal with the deepest level of developmental frustration: the fusion block. Here, "critical mass" groups (Beckhard & Harris, 1987, p. 53) from the entire organization could be brought together to develop a deeper level of community and sharing. Characteristic denial ("it's no problem") and anger could very well resurface here again and would then need to be dealt with. Beyond this, the fear of genuine intimacy and reaching out would need to be gently uncovered and mutually explored. Community building interventions that unite process with task in this endeavor might well be effective.

THE AGGRESSIVE-VISION BLOCKED CHARACTER

The aggressive-vision blocked character proposed here draws largely from my own consulting experience with a commercial bank as a whole organizational system. In their own typology, Kets de Vries and Miller (1984) describe separate "paranoid" (p. 23) and "schizoid" (p. 38) styles of organizational neuroses, descriptions that on a composite basis also provide the basis for the present description.

The functional equivalent of the aggressive-vision blocked character at the individual level is the paranoid

schizophrenic. Schizophrenia has a long history of conceptualization in the psychiatric literature. It was originally viewed as a hereditary or degenerative disease. Later, Freud proposed a psychodynamic explanation for the related disorder, paranoia. It was not until Reich (1933/1972a), however, that a comprehensive, functional energetic understanding of paranoid schizophrenia was made. Expanding on this understanding, Baker (1967) was the first to classify the disorder characterologically. The reader needs to be aware that the organomic understanding of the word "schizophrenia" is broader than that used in the classical psychiatric literature. In the organomic literature, schizophrenia includes those individuals with psychotic disorders in the classical sense together with those individuals with a characterological--though not necessarily symptomatic--disorder. The essence of schizophrenia from the organomic perspective is that there is a block in the unitary functioning of perception and biophysical excitation, resulting in their split. This is thought to result from severe trauma during the earliest days of the ocular stage of development. In the character, both perception and excitation are acutely present, but because of their split the true origin of the excitation may not be properly perceived. This results in characteristic misinterpretations of the world and of the self. In its most extreme forms, this manifests itself in hallucinations and delusions. Characterologically, confusion, resulting

from the eye block, is always present. The paranoid subtype results from additional fixation at the phallic stage, which colors the expression of the misinterpretation and confusion. Typically, this presents as projections of the individual's own sensations onto others and feelings of being persecuted. Suspiciousness, mistrust, and rationalization are thus all distinctive features. The typical biophysical features of the paranoid schizophrenic are the following: (1) heavy armoring of the ocular segment, reflected in the inability of the individual to use his eyes to connect with others in a deep and natural way; (2) a severe throat block; (3) inhibited respiration, even though the chest is comparatively unarmored and soft; and (4) an extensive, diffuse energy field that appears to have no boundaries. Therapeutically, it is important to work cautiously and be aware of the underlying mistrust within the character.

Genesis

An organization with an aggressive-vision blocked character presumably arises when the system encounters massive frustration at the vision stage, but proceeds with enough energy to develop to the work-aggressive level, where it is slapped down by the founders or environment once again. Thus, disorientation and an aggressive posture towards the world are embodied in the character simultaneously. It is presumed that the vision block

develops immediately in the life of the organization, giving the system its enduring stamp of splintered identity.²⁶

Characteristics and Symptoms

I am proposing that the chief distinguishing trait of an aggressive-vision blocked organization is its "blind belligerence." As with other characters, such a trait may be masked by a facade in which it would not be immediately evident, but under stress and conflicting environmental circumstances would surface directly and become pronounced. Not only is "vision" and clearly-formulated strategic direction in these firms presumed to be lacking; they would also lack any perspective as to the internal basis of their problems.²⁷ The character's crippling combination of vision and work-aggressive blocks would be revealed in the central tendency of its top executive team to project and

²⁶A paranoid schizophrenic is produced by a repressed block at the ocular stage of psychosexual development followed by frustration of the phallic stage. That the ocular repressed block is understood within orgonomy to occur within the first ten days of life--and very possibly earlier, in utero--has theoretical implications for the origins of a vision block at an organizational level. This implies that a vision block may occur at a structural level following conception but before the organization is actually born. Integration here with some of the considerations raised in Chapter 3 regarding the structural formation of organizations is a subject for future research.

²⁷In keeping with orgonomic theory at the level of the individual functional equivalent, this inner lack of access is presumed to be what separates the true vision blocked character from other types of chronically blocked organizations. The latter, too, of course, would all manifest typical problems with their vision and strategic focus, but without the historic vision block they would not be characterologically incapacitated in this regard.

rationalize its own inner sentiments onto others: any problems that arise would be completely ascribed to competitors, regulators, customers, or employees, for example. It never would be a matter of coming to terms with its own impulses or performance. At an individual level, Reich (1933/1972a, p. 481) characterizes this as a split between sensation and perception; the organism feels one thing, but perceives or "sees" another. In the end, this is the basis for the "schizophrenic split" accounting for the character's perceptual distortions (including delusions and hallucinations). At an organizational level, the character's top management would manifest this split by taking a highly reactive stance vis a vis the external and internal environments, a stance from which the organization's confused formal direction and vacillating strategies would directly issue. Poorly defined goals, incompletely delineated target markets, inadequate articulation of policy, and inconsistent organizational arrangements--all of these would inevitably follow.²⁹ Throughout the system, fantasy and factionalism would abound. As with the firm's top managers, its middle managers and employees would be reactive and disown any problems that were theirs: problems would always be seen as

²⁹Perversely, the organization may trumpet all of this in its official pronouncements (facade) as evidence of its "flexibility" and "commitment to being opportunistic." In this, the organization would be sincere if gravely out of touch. Even the facade of the character gives evidence of the split.

someone else's fault; some other division's responsibility; the blame of top management or "the culture"; and so on. I am suggesting that at every level of the operation, there would be a great deal of fear, suspicion, and persecutory (victim) sentiment. There would be a super-sensitive and "touchy" quality to the members--anything external might set off their aggression, and this would be reflected in the response to even mild interventions. Isolated and cut off from any genuine contact, they would live in their fantasies and external identifications--which they would try in vain to combat. Because the aggressive-vision blocked system is presumed to lack the structural capacity to grow and truly develop its internal resources, the organization would be led to scatter its attention forever outward in search of new opportunities to ameliorate its condition. This, in turn, would create a perpetual cycle of failed startups and busted expansionary activity, be it at the departmental, divisional, or subsidiary level.

At a basic structural level, I have observed in my own consulting experience with such a system that the upper segments of the head were highly compacted and isolated from the rest of the organization. The top, where the armor was most heavily concentrated, rarely made direct contact with the other levels of the system. The administrative staff roles surrounding this uppermost segment rigidly tried to guard and screen any communications into and out of the function. Armoring in the segment was also evidenced by the

highly disproportionate way power flowed and decision making remained trapped at this level, by the fearful deference to the very top of the organization, and by other narrowly defined information channels to scan the external and internal environments. Too, not only was the top thoroughly disoriented in terms of strategic direction, it was thoroughly unapproachable on issues of its disorientation. The lower (chief operating) level of the head segment was also severely blocked and served to insulate the chief strategy-making complex from feedback and the rest of the system. Organizational improvement strategies suggested to this level of the system were typically "choked off." The visioning apparatus of the system was thus effectively isolated and kept immobile.²⁹ In the character type at large, the head would be functionally "split" from the body of the organization, itself comparatively formless and lacking in structure (confusion again); there would literally be a power vacuum in the middle line and the operating core because of the tremendous amount of energy trapped within the head. I am suggesting that this lack of structural definition in the body of the organization would lead units within the middle line to vie for power with each other, but to do so within the overall limits of "holding

²⁹As discussed earlier, this parallels an orgonomic observation of schizophrenia: not only is the ocular segment blocked, but there is a severe constriction in the throat which, from an energetic point of view, serves as a second line of defense to insulate the ocular segment (Baker, 1967; Reich, 1933/1972a).

still" and seeing how top management reacts next to each of their moves. This would serve to keep the system as a whole on hold.³⁰

Sociotherapy

My experience tells me that the aggressive-vision blocked firm needs to be approached cautiously and slowly. Because of the characteristic mistrust, the change agent would need to work hard to establish the level of cooperation necessary to effectively begin the process, let alone see it through. The negative transference would be especially rough because of the projective and persecutory features. The fear and suspicion behind the transference would need to be handled. From my own experience, clearly describing the course of the developmental effort and directly pointing out the attitude of the client when it arises ("you seem to be frightened about this work") can be effective. While not abandoning my basic facilitative role, I have also noticed that as a change agent I have needed to be prepared to be somewhat prescriptive and to push because of the general confusion and work-aggression present.

As with the other types, sociotherapeutic work with this character would proceed from the head of the

³⁰ Again, this parallels an orgonomic finding at the individual level. In schizophrenia, the chest is soft (unarmored), but does not seem to move. The lack of respiration devitalizes the organism as a whole and keeps it on hold. Trapped in a constant state of fear, the schizophrenic literally holds his breath.

organization down, from the most superficial presenting problems to the deepest. After some initial, surface work with the head, helping it to simply clarify its present position, it may be useful to immediately work on the middle line with interventions that help sharpen wanted structure and desired control mechanisms. (I have found that the comparative lack of structure here allows more energy to stay concentrated in the head, and this is a problem). Once some appropriate middle line structures are in place, the change agent could begin behavioral-oriented interventions (dealing with, for example, personal empowerment or the quality of interpersonal relationships) across the middle line to increase its members' sense of ownership and free movement.³¹ I have worked in precisely this sequence with some measure of success. All of this, of course, may well meet with resistance because of the great fear present, but this cannot be helped; it is important to get the middle line mobilized to, again, draw energy down from the head and get the top structures themselves mobilized. Predictably, the top would at first clamp down and react negatively to such movement, at which point the negative transference would sharply reappear (it did in the consulting case I worked). Because of the severe vision block, constant work would be needed with the head of the organization to help

³¹This is the equivalent of what is seen in the treatment of individual schizophrenic characters: once the upper segments of the organism are freed up, armor can spontaneously develop in the lower segments. In fact, when this occurs, the prognosis of the case is improved.

ensure that any gains made in the developmental effort are consolidated and maintained. I am proposing that each step of the way would be met with renewed counter-resistance from the greatest points of armoring (in this case, the head) because of the contraction and holding present.³² At this point, the interventionist would need to return to the upper segments of the head and again work on the organization's vision. A deeper level of vision this time may be worked on than previously, but it still might be necessary to keep the focus external. The top may not be ready to "see" and confront its internal, holding behaviors vis a vis the middle. The interventionist needs to be sensitive to where the client is in the process at each moment so resistance is not triggered out of its normal sequence (Fritz, 1984). At this juncture, I have found that working with the top on establishing clearer customer focus strategies to be a good point of departure here because it (1) immediately appeals to the organization's external, work-aggressive impulses; and (2) positions the client-system to back into deeper organizational issues (which connect the top with the other segments) at the next turn in the process. Once this is accomplished, the interventionist could proceed to work with the middle line and head together as a unit, then on to the level of the operating core, each time returning to repeat and deepen the work with the

³²The functional equivalent of this is observed in individual orgone therapy routinely.

visioning segment alone. This process would need to be reiterated until the top could tolerate the open, fluid functioning of the entire system without shutting down.

POSTSCRIPT

The six organizational character types proposed in this chapter--from the healthy, work-democratic character to the chronically blocked, neurotic characters--are by no means intended to be definitive. The descriptions of each of their socioemotional geneses, chief distinguishing features, and strategic avenues of sociotherapeutic approach are meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive. Indeed, the entire intent throughout this chapter has been to formulate the characters as hypothetical constructs, stimulating further inquiry and action-research. Nonetheless, I believe they represent a start at understanding organizational character from an energetic point of view, one that has both structural and behavioral avenues for diagnosis and case management at its disposal. In this, their formulation is unique, opening up new possibilities for the practice of OD on a more inclusive, systematic basis than in the past.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS

This project has been a tremendous growth experience for me, both personally and professionally. It has helped me come to terms with my own sense of what organizations are, how they function and develop, and what is needed at a deep level to unblock them so they may freely function. Looking back to when I began the project some two years ago, I now recognize that I had previously had an intuitive grasp of many of the notions developed herein; however, this project compelled me to elaborate them and make them explicit, integrating them into a coherent whole. As a result, I was able to take them much further than I ever would have imagined. Many of the pieces of my background were brought together during the research and development of this work--from my longstanding interest in orgonomic psychiatry and social analysis to my practical interests in organizational change and renewal. Moreover, I found the quality of my own organizational consulting practice changing throughout the course of this project. Today, I find I have far greater understanding of--and patience for--the depth of organizational life, respecting the powerful forces that both propel organizations forward and constrain their healthy movement. Too, I have a much greater sense of

the blending of theory and practice, appreciating in a keener way how one without the other is helpless. As a result of working on this project, today I feel far more powerful as a practitioner in working with organizations, far more able to simply be present for the client, while simultaneously being grounded in a deeper theoretical orientation to help guide and sort out the profusion of data swirling around the developmental process. The framework developed here has helped anchor me, as it were, to deal with issues of an emotional weight with which I was previously not able to contend. I find myself, for example, reacting far less irrationally to the projective denigrations of clients than I did earlier, for I have a more thorough appreciation of how such transference functions as part of their organizational characters. All of this has given me strength as a practitioner. I believe it also reflects how the framework developed is more than an academic treatise, even though it was, of course, developed in the context of a university program. The fact that so much practical growth accompanied the development of the project helps attest to, I think, the viability of its central assumptions and approach: namely, that organizations are natural energy systems and that the characteristic ways energy moves and blocks in organizations need to be understood if meaningful, lasting change is to obtain.

The development that took place in my own person throughout the duration of this work mirrors a major implication the project has for the field of OD at large--its ability to integrate a vast array of dimensions historically fragmented in the field. As stated in the Introduction, the splintering of so much of the field's theory and practice has heretofore preempted it from becoming a more predictive, proactive discipline. While the present formulation has a long way to go before it can qualify as a scientific framework for OD, I believe it represents a unique start towards the construction of a more "unified field theory." This is reflected in its ability to integrate into a coherent whole what is known about living and non-living energy systems, bioenergetic characterology, organization theory, culture, socioemotional process and group developmental dynamics, organization structure, work-democracy, organizational change strategy, and intervention methodology and technique. Up to now, these particular regions have remained discreet and disconnected, rather than being incorporated into an organized framework to attack the multi-dimensional nature of the problem at hand: large-scale human systems change.

By beginning from an energy point of view, the current framework also helps clarify and dissolve the seemingly endless series of dead-ended debates rife in the field--the debates, for example, between whether one approaches organizations structurally or behaviorally;

contingently or normatively; contemporarily or developmentally; or, as argued more recently, from the standpoint of "first order" or "transformational" change. In a certain sense, the very "confusion of voices" current in the field signifies the quest for a more comprehensive, integrated framework. The structure versus behavior debate, for instance, is effectively dissolved once one recognizes how both are elements of organizational functioning and antithetically reflect common characteristics of energy movement. Both structural and behavioral interventions are therefore needed depending on how the energy manifests itself in a particular case. Likewise, what is the sense in continuing the OD debate that polarizes holding out standards of effective organizational functioning versus accepting the client-system on its own terms? Both normative and contingent approaches to case management are essential. Simply put, the implication of the present formulation is that the interventionist needs to approach the strategy of a case normatively but the intervention tactics contingently. Despite having an overall case management strategy which is driven by a differential character diagnosis, it is the ongoing particulars of the case itself that must drive the selection of specific interventions. These must always be assessed in light of a clear goal of organizational health. Such a formulation is a far cry from what most current models in OD specify--whether they represent classical action-research, socio-

tech, cultural analysis, transformational change (Levy & Merry, 1986), or eclectic "frame" methodology (Bolman & Deal, 1984, p. 4). In contrast to the present formulation, all these models specify rather rigid sets of techniques (that may or may not be appropriate to a particular case) or, alternatively, empty formulations that leave the change agent pondering the bottomless "complexity" of organizational change but not quite knowing where to begin. While I certainly appreciate that models and frameworks hold out an aesthetic level of intellectual interest and appeal on their own, in the end they are only tools to leverage change. To the extent they cannot do so, they are not useful. Similarly, recent efforts to identify characteristics of organizational health (Peters, 1987; Peters & Waterman, 1982), while refreshing, have largely turned into exercises to exhort systems to change. Talking at systems, just because one has a good grasp of what makes for effective organizations in the abstract, is, of course, no substitute for organizational therapy. It is my sense that the present formulation helps point the way out of much fruitless squabbling and this latter-day type of exhortation and moves the discussion of organizational change in a more promising direction. In charting some of the initial pathways here, I make no pretense at originality. This direction, I believe, is one that has always been implicit in the fields of orgonomy and OD. I

have simply put some of the pieces together, describing the way in which they appear to map.

Although all of the above implications represent tentative kinds of judgments, in another, more strict sense, the present investigation has no "conclusions." As stated from the outset, this project represents only the beginning of an extended inquiry. The broad territory of organizational character and development has only been mapped out here in an exploratory way. Many expeditions--over many years--will be required to confirm and disconfirm, to clarify and fill in, the main outlines and features proposed throughout the body of this work. These expeditions will require a combination of action-research with more narrowly defined theoretical efforts. The remainder of this chapter reviews and highlights some of these areas for operational testing and further examination by way of the following research agenda. Because the implications of the present formulation stretch out in so many different directions, as I have tried to indicate, the list below in no way seeks to be complete. Rather, I have attempted to define only what some of the key areas, and immediate next steps, seem to me to be that will help advance the development of the work as a whole:

1. Test and further delineate the neurotic organizational character types proposed--from their genesis and chief distinguishing features to their sociötherapeutic

strategies and tactics. Each of the character types rendered in Chapter 5 are themselves hypothetical constructs at this point. They need to be more thoroughly examined and "fleshed out" in all their dimensions. The surest path for accomplishing such a task, as Reich's methodology (1942/1973c, 1949/1973b) and Schein (1988) suggest, is by simply immersing oneself in the rich details of actual cases. For any given consulting case, this would entail faithfully describing, in depth, the nature of (a) the client-system's presenting problems; (b) historical development; (c) current social and structural patterns of behaviors; (d) course of the consulting relationship (including feelings of the change-agent); (e) sequence, methodologies, and types of interventions engaged; and (f) the progress of the case at each turn. To be of value, such descriptions would have to accurately reflect the natural, organic unfolding of each case, and not be "forced-fit" into any conceptual framework. Such write-ups would obviously have to derive from field cases lived by the consultant. Based on these clinical or ethnographic types of descriptions, I believe many of the particular strategic propositions generated in the thesis would be clarified, discarded, or otherwise modified and expanded. I think they would yield important findings not only as they pertain to the specific character types but as they relate to the more general theoretical formulations as well (e.g., socioemotional stages, basic structural segments, character

analytic resistance technique, and so forth.) I am suggesting that the best way to check the validity and viability of the formulations presented--as well as develop them further--is by conducting and observing actual cases, not by engaging in academic research or debate. This, of course, is in the best of the action-research tradition within OD as first articulated by Lewin (1951). Descriptions of such case efforts should be rendered both at a small "system-within-a-system" level as well as at a whole systems level to better understand the limitations of the formulations proposed.

2. Identify and describe in detail actual systems functioning in a work-democratic mode. Confirmation of this type of organization--its existence and dimensions--as well as its developmental basis and conditions are essential for the general formulation proposed. A combination of field research and description of consulting cases brought to "health" could provide the basis for the approach. Study of startup and redesigned socio-technical operations--cases that effectively work as well as those that have collapsed--could also generate relevant findings as to the true nature of fully self-regulating organizations.

3. In OD casework, use the framework to help sort out whether to approach organizations with behavioral or structural interventions, and to determine at what level of the system to intervene. Despite all the dialogue about doing diagnosis first, historically these are rather random

points of departure for OD case management, highly dependent on the political fortune, disposition, and particular technological expertise of the change agent. If the framework can be utilized to help rationally differentiate where, in what way, and in what sequence to intervene in a particular system, it will prove effective as a practical tool and help validate its theoretical base. Furthermore, this will allow its techniques to be replicated and taught to others.

4. Further investigate the distinction between living and non-living energy systems as it pertains to organizations. This is a central theoretical issue upon which the very nature of organizations--and their development--turns.¹ To what extent are specific organizations differentiated by this distinction? Do organizations generally represent a transitional form between the two? Issues of boundary regulation (problem of an organizational "membrane") and the existence of the four-beat life formula as identified by Reich (1951/1973b) would be the primary focal points of investigating this problem. Research questions could proceed along such lines as these: To what extent are organizational members, including founders, simultaneously inside and outside the boundary of the system? How does this impact the organization's energy functioning and opportunities for intervention? Again,

¹Resolution of this issue could also pay dividends in other areas of organomic inquiry.

casework observation would be key. The existence of the four beat life-formula of tension-charge-discharge-relaxation could conceivably be assessed by full description of the way organizational units build momentum and discharge work activity.²

5. Develop a clearer understanding of the common energetic function between the socioemotional and psychosexual stages of development. The description of the equivalence of the two realms in the body of the study (as summarized in Table 1) is primarily psychological. A deeper, energetic formulation would lead to greater clarity of their functional identity and formal differences.

Many other avenues, of course, could be discussed as a basis for testing and elaborating the work begun in this project. After all, the entire investigation represents a series of hypotheses. To recapitulate: The major hypothesis that has run throughout the project has been that organizations function as natural energy systems. This hypothesis has itself branched into many sub-propositions including the following: (1) the basis of organizational formation, and the sociostructural nature of organizational character and armor (Chapter 3); (2) the socioemotional developmental basis of organizational character, and the

²Preliminary evaluation here is suggestive. Members of an organizational unit first build up mechanical tension towards a goal, then mutual charge by way of combining resources to meet it, followed by discharge of work activity, immediately accompanied by relaxation and a feeling of gratification.

three basic structural segments of organizations (Chapter 4); and (3) some specific forms of organizational character, from healthy to chronically blocked, encompassing each of their specific genesis, distinguishing features, and sociotherapeutic strategies of case management (Chapter 5). Suffice it here to say that testing of the entire framework will be difficult and especially time consuming since it takes such specialized training to utilize. In this regard I would point out that usage of the present framework should be reserved for those who have been specifically trained in orgonomy and its organizational application as elaborated in this study. At an individual level, orgonomic psychiatry is especially powerful, and disaster can result if its methodology and techniques are employed in the hands of untrained practitioners. I am concerned that the functional equivalent would be the case with the presently developed form of social orgonomy. Training for this field cannot occur in a week long workshop or simple reading of the literature. It will take a good length of time. Proper perspective in utilizing the framework will not come overnight. I, myself, found during my own character analytic training period that I moved in and out of clarity with respect to the interpretation of any particular individual character type. Thus, while the energetic principles that underlie the approach to character are simple enough, in practice they can get quite tricky. Deep processes take time to ripen and unfold. All of this will

impact the speed at which the formulations in the present work can be tested--if nothing else for the want of practitioners who are in a position to utilize the framework. It is difficult enough to find OD practitioners oriented to clinical work, let alone adding the requirement that they be trained in orgonomy. I feel quite certain, however, this will be necessary. I fully expect to be working alone in this effort for quite some time.

Nonetheless, this work does represent to me an extraordinary opportunity and path. The integration of orgonomy and OD holds out exciting prospects for both fields. OD has lacked the theoretical foundations to effectuate deep and lasting change in large-scale human systems, while orgonomy, since the days of Reich, has failed to extend itself into the working sphere of social life, a sphere which it has always had so much potential to offer humankind. By merging these two fields, I am hopeful that the work begun here helps unlock that vast potential.

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