Theorising Empowerment Practice from the Pacific and Indigenous Australia

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Finally, I acknowledge Australia as the land of its first peoples, and pay my respects to all the clans and nations across whose country I travelled in the course of this work.

Statement of originality

This is to certify that the content of this thesis is my own original work. This thesis has not been submitted elsewhere for any degree or other purposes.

I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

Signed:
Abstract

Since the 1970s, the concept of empowerment has been widely adopted in a range of fields from international development to education, and management to public health. This diversity has enriched the literature on empowerment, but has also contributed to a lack of precision in the way empowerment is defined and employed. In the field of community psychology, empowerment is taken as the matter of central interest, assuming individual, organisational and social dimensions, as it is oriented towards people taking collective action to improve their circumstances by rectifying disparities in power and control. Accepting the view that empowerment necessarily incorporates these three dimensions of persons, groups and their interaction with society, this thesis asks whether there are universally applicable ways that organisations can intervene to support people to assume greater autonomy and control over their circumstances.

This thesis is empirically grounded in four organisations and their social intervention practices. Three of these organisations are in the Pacific (Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Fiji) and one is in Aboriginal Australia. Across this variety of historical, social and cultural settings, these groups show conceptual similarities in their operations and outreach methodologies. The case-study organisations share a philosophy that is framed positively in terms of control by people of their social development, and negatively as constrained by the effect of structures of colonising power relations. They have in common the aim of producing personal, group and social change that is transformative. Interrogating these similarities, the thesis explores the diverse literature on empowerment to develop a three-dimensional model of the empowering group called ‘the field of community control’.

As a foundation for this model, the thesis advances a universalist view of human need based on the classes of security, identity and autonomy. It then employs Habermas’s concepts of dramaturgical, normative and teleological action to incorporate into the model a dynamic view of the group as the locus of control for personal and social change. Finally, the thesis draws on social action studies from the United States to develop the concept of social empowerment as agency. The model shows these individual, group and social dimensions in dynamic relation, and provides a framework for interpreting the change processes, indicators and outcomes of empowerment in each dimension. The thesis reveals that empowerment occurs in the transformative domains of risk and trust, critical consciousness and structural innovation, these being the public goods that groups must produce to mobilise personal and collective power.
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Theorising empowerment practice from the Pacific and Indigenous Australia.

Introduction

Here is a complex, if narrow, set of problematical facts to be interpreted or explained. The extent to which they are a significant set depends on the extent to which a logical explanation of them accounts also for other significant facts habitually occurring with them.


1. *The Study*

This study examines empowerment as it is practiced by four different organisations. Taken together, these organisations span a period of 28 years, from 1982 to 2010, as well as locations, from the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Fiji, to Cape York, Australia. These organisations have been and are engaged in a diverse range of activity, including rural village development, conservation, democratisation and health promotion. In their present forms, two of the organisations are not-for-profit companies, one is a trust, and another is a university research institute.

The aim of this study is to provide Stanner’s “logical explanation” of the practices of these organisations. That is, in looking at the practices of these organisations and the programs they operate, the study intends to work from practice to theory, and in doing so to re-evaluate and expand our theoretical reach for understanding empowerment and what is required to organise for this outcome. This process of theory formation provides the opportunity to compare and contrast the different contexts in which these organisations operate, seeking what is common and what is unique to the context, the organisations and their activities. Using this approach, the study aims to develop a common framework for understanding empowerment.

There is great diversity in the fields that address the concepts of empowerment and participation. Psychology, sociology, development studies, feminist studies, participatory research, organisation theory, social movement theory, business and education all make use of the terms to describe both a value orientation and a theoretical approach to developing individual and community interventions, and creating systemic change (Zimmerman 2000). This study will ultimately consider a range of authors from many of these fields, as it moves from first looking at practice to then examining the contribution of these authors to theory that describes the practices of the four organisations as they undertake their specific programs.
This study deliberately does not embed a definition of empowerment at the outset. The reason for this is to allow a space for clear and specific meanings of the term to emerge in the course of the examination of practice. This is necessary because the popular use of ‘empowerment’, and the associated language of dialogue and organisation, has become so extensive as to render the term practically meaningless (Cohen & Uphoff 1980; Rappaport 1995). In Australia, a 2007 review of community development interventions with a specific empowerment objective found that there is “a great deal of confusion and contention in the literature about the term community development and its constituent concepts of community, participation and empowerment”, and identified the need for “conceptual clarity about these terms and their interrelationship” (Campbell 2007:305). The present study hopes to contribute towards this greater conceptual clarity. To do so, this study is guided by four central questions:

• What are the linkages between an organisation’s practices, its operational philosophy and empowerment?
• How can these linkages be theorised synoptically?
• How do organisational strategies optimise empowerment?
• What organisational elements are necessary and sufficient to a successful empowerment program?

2. Methodology

To approach these questions this thesis will use the diversity of the case studies presented to explore empowerment practice in a range of contexts. The material for preparing the organisational profiles that form the basis of the study come from the following sources:

• Statements of aims and objectives;
• Internal records of organisational plans and processes;
• Internal records of retreats and self-assessment;
• Training guides and printed resources;
• Participant evaluation reports;
• Internal evaluation reports;
• Published evaluation reports;
• Published commentary;
• Media reports;
The author approaches the Pacific organisations from the point of view of someone who has, to varying degrees, been a participant in what is described. Having worked for the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) on North Malaita in the previous two years, for the 1986 evaluation of the SIDT, the author represented SIDT, and wrote the final report. The team for that evaluation included representatives from the Overseas Service Bureau (now Australian Volunteers International), the Australian Freedom from Hunger Campaign (now incorporated in Oxfam), and SIDT. As well as ongoing informal contact with the Bismarck Ramu Group (BRG), the author was contracted by BRG as part of a three-member evaluation team in 2008, and by the Social Empowerment Education Program (SEEP) in 2009, again as part of a (different) three-member team. It is in the course of this work that the author has had open access to the personnel and records of these groups. The terms of reference for these evaluations asked the teams to analyse and also make judgements about the effectiveness and organisational capacity of these groups. These evaluations were thorough, and the team was given unlimited access to all employees, members and directors of these organisations. Evaluations included field work in each case. The teams drew extensively on interviews, workshops, field reports, organisational reports, audit and financial management records, and commentary from third parties in government and other agencies, local and international, in preparing these evaluation reports (Barcham 1987; Barcham 2008; Barcham 2009). These organisations stand out as exceptional for their innovative practice, persistence over time, and ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

In Australia, the author’s professional roles have included three years, commencing in 2000, as town clerk for the remote Arnhem Land community of Bulman. This period coincided with the formation of the Nyirrangulung Mardrulk Ngadberre Regional Council, an initiative of the Jawoyn Association, Katherine. The author engaged in extensive talks with elders, government and existing council members and communities in securing agreement on the Regional Council Community Government Scheme (Commonwealth 2003), conducted a pre-electoral awareness campaign, and undertook discussions with each community to prepare the Council’s regional development strategy (Barcham 2004). Later, from 2004 to 2006, the author worked as

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1 Permission has been granted by these groups and/or persons to use this material under protocol 2011/117 approved by chair of ANU HREC #4, 26/5/2011. Any material relating to specific organisations has been provided to them for their comment and approval.
manager for a regional Indigenous employment scheme in Bega, Eden and Wallaga Lake in south-east New South Wales until its closure (as a result of policy changes by the Howard Government in 2006). In the course of this work in Australia, the author discovered no organisations that bore any resemblance to the Pacific models in their manner of applying principles of empowerment and participation. The apparent dearth of programs in Australia that demonstrated the principles of the Pacific organisations initially led the author to query the applicability of the practices employed by these organisations to Aboriginal Australia. However, this research question – asking if the practices of these Pacific organisations could be transferrable to Aboriginal Australia – was answered in the affirmative in finding the Family WellBeing program.

The Family WellBeing program is notable in the Australian context for being developed by Indigenous people, and also for its longevity, consistency of purpose and adaptability. The additional factor of organised delivery of the program coupled with local action, was provided by the James Cook University Empowerment Research Program (ERP), to be considered in Chapter 4. The ERP has been described as acting as a “default community development organisation” (McCalman 2011b: email response), and thus provided an Australian parallel with the Pacific experience. At this point in the research, the focus of the study shifted from how to apply the Pacific experience in Aboriginal Australia to looking at all four case-study organisations in their role as organisations that support empowerment in diverse situations. Separate research on the Family WellBeing program and James Cook University was conducted in the course of the present study.

2.1 Action and Reflection

As the reflections of a practitioner seeking to understand how four organisations have acted to try to achieve personal, group and social change, this thesis draws on a long tradition that couples social action with conceptual reflection.

In the fourth century, Aristotle considered participation in his analysis of Greek city-states. While he found that political participation was not an absolute condition for human happiness and the good life, he did take the view that “self-sufficiency and action”, coupled with contemplation of the ethics of justice, defined the route to realisation of one’s full humanity (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, quoted in Mulgan 1990:201). An organisation based on justice should give the “virtuous man” a place in its governance, and he should “gladly and freely accept that as part of his social duties” (Mulgan 1990:211). Women, foreigners and slaves lacked full humanity precisely
because they were excluded from participation in political life.

Aristotle’s *Ethics* establishes the fundamental relationship between reflection as theory formation about what is considered good and righteous, and the practice of right action by the virtuous citizen. Aristotle was ambivalent about the role of active political participation in making a good life. He believed that distributive justice implies that power is distributed on the basis of merit, but also implies the participation of equals. The outstandingly superior person can be accorded absolute rule, but there is also merit in government by a collective of virtuous citizens ruling as equals through political processes (Mulgan 1990:207). For Aristotle, both can be effective in achieving a society capable of delivering the perquisites of happiness and a good life.

Aristotelian praxis is defined in terms of actions that contribute to justice in the formation of the individual’s “virtuous” character. The modern development of the understanding of praxis has taken a number of different paths. There is a discernible division between the “Northern Tradition” from the United States, primarily concerned with the design of collaborative research with the aim of system improvement, and the “Southern Tradition” of Latin America, which emphasises breaking down the structures and practices of colonisation and domination of knowledge production by elites, including local elites (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008:27).

The Northern tradition is founded on the work of psychologist Kurt Lewin, begun in the late 1920s. Lewin’s study of intended behaviour showed:

- the significance of the person in the situation; one does not merely respond to stimuli but decides to do something about them and, in deciding, changes the situation for oneself (Lewin 1999).

Lewin coined the term “action research” to describe a methodology that incorporates the research subject in the act of researching with the intention of changing external circumstances for the benefit of the subject.

Educationalist David Kolb applied Lewin’s work to develop an “experiential learning cycle” (Kolb & Fry 1975). Kolb’s learning cycle consists of four elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, the formation of abstract concepts, and testing in new situations (Figure 1).
As well as education, Kolb’s interest lay in studying organisational behaviour in the field of corporate management and professional learning. In this context, theories about empowerment later became extremely popular. Widespread use of the term empowerment reflected the interest of North American corporations in “alternative forms of management that encourage commitment, risk-taking and innovation” in the face of foreign competition (Thomas & Veldhouse 1990:667).

Subsequent study in the field of action research in community psychology takes empowerment as the central “phenomena of interest”. Empowerment is seen as a “multilevel construct applicable to citizens as well as to organisations” (Rappaport 1987:121). The concept suggests individual control over one’s life, as well as participation in the life of the community through mediating organisations. Empowerment is regarded as a mechanism for mental health intervention that aims to “modify processes and mediating conditions that create risk” (Rappaport & Seidman 2000:2). Social conditions are regarded as risk factors for mental health, to be addressed through individual empowerment. Organisations can have a role in this by providing people with opportunities to gain control over social conditions. The essential elements of this “multilevel” empowerment are “participation, control, and critical awareness” (Zimmerman 2000:58). However, in terms of organisation, psychological research “to examine how empowered individuals work together to create competent communities” remains an unfinished project (Zimmerman 2000:56).

In the 1960s, the civil rights movement in the United States prompted a burgeoning of the study of organisation for social change (Davis et.al. 2005). However, study of the sources shows that this literature focused on organised action in specific political
contexts, rather than the process of learning and emancipation – “critical awareness” – in driving that organised action (Zald & McCarthy 1975; Piven & Cloward 1977; McAdam et.al. 2001; Davis et.al. 2005; Opp 2009). Organised action for social change is dealt with in the field of the North American practice of “organizing”, typified by the work of Saul Alinsky (Alinsky 1969). However, this takes the form of examining strategies and tactics for organisation, and whilst it dwells on an ideology of liberation, it too is not concerned with why particular strategies may be effective in an individual or psychological sense. So, in the Northern tradition, action research is isolated in the fields of psychology, health, business and education, and remains largely divorced from the study of political action for social change (Boyd & Angelique 2007). Zald, McAdam and Alinsky, as theorists and practitioners in the field of political action, have a rich contribution to make to understanding organisation in its political context. By bringing together this Northern tradition of political economy with action research and community development internationally, this study of four diverse organisations hopes to contribute towards understanding Zimmerman’s problem of how “empowered individuals” create “competent communities”.

The North American approach to the creative reconstruction of social arrangements through organisation was derived from the liberal sociology of Talcott Parsons² (Parsons 1956; Minkler & Wallerstein 2008). In Latin American, the Southern tradition held that Hegel and Marx reigned supreme. From this perspective, we see that Aristotle’s ambivalence about participation is resolved by giving our attention to the status of “women, foreigners and slaves”. When attention is brought to bear on those who are marginalised in society, attaining the truth about one’s full personhood requires independent self-consciousness, and from this Hegel reasoned that praxis must consist of political action to transform society (Hegel 1929:497).

The Southern tradition is closely identified with educator Paulo Freire (Freire 1996). Through the 1970s, in the North East of Brazil, Catholic and other organisations applied the methodology he developed, introducing the further Latin strand of liberation theology, following the Second Vatican Council which ended in 1965. Freire applied Hegelian praxis to the attainment of literacy by marginalised groups. In Freire’s analysis of dialogue, “the word” (italics in original), for it to be a true word,

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must be at the same time a praxis. Another influential Latin American was Columbian Orlando Fals Borda (Borda 1979). In his discussion of praxis and knowledge in Columbia, Borda also acknowledges his debt to Hegel, Marx and the Frankfurt School as makers of the philosophical foundation of “critical social science committed to action as a means of transforming the world”. Borda describes knowledge as the “dialectical unit” formed by theory and practice for the purpose of “action research” (Borda 1979:41). It is not entirely clear where Borda adopted the term action research, which he placed in inverted commas without reference. While he cites Kuhn’s *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Kuhn 1970), it is tempting to see Lewin’s influence.

The definitions of action research from North and South share a cyclic rhythm of action and reflection in reckoning with the challenge of epistemology. Knowledge production for social action is about perceiving reality with “the intention of both knowing and transforming it” (Borda 1979:39). Borda describes four “complementary and alternating steps” in the application of this method of knowledge production: initiating exchange; continuing with action at the local level; reflecting in order to modify practice; and concretising the reflective research as innovative action (Figure 2).

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Figure 2. The dialectical method of action research, after Borda (1979:39)

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3 To be discussed in Chapter 3.

4 Kuhn’s work also appears in the field of community psychology, to be discussed in Chapter 4. Obviously, Lewin’s contribution pre-dates this.

5 Sartre describes concretising as “reification”, the process by which meanings are changed and new categories created. “Words are matter,” he writes, that “carry the projects of the Other into me and […] carry my own projects into the Other” (Sartre 1983:98).
For Borda, the dialectical method appreciates “popular wisdom”, and implies the following imperatives:

1. Studying reciprocal relationships between common sense, science, communication and political action.
2. Examining the interpretation of reality from the point of view of the [Columbian] proletariat, according to “specific mediating categories”.
3. Studying how subject and object combine themselves in research practice, and recognising the political consequences of this combination (Borda 1979:43).

The first, a so-called “pedagogico-political field”, has a psychological element of “helping to change the class in itself into a class for itself”. The second imperative is necessary to “advance the struggle in which theory and practice coincide”. Finally, the Columbian experience confirmed the thesis that “the difference between subject and object can be reduced in the practice of research” by synthetic knowledge about “the idea of life” (Borda 1979:50).

Back in the North, experience in Latin America, Asia and Africa led to a major rethinking of development concepts in the early 1970s (Uphoff & Esman 1974). This stimulated research into the empowerment and participation of the world’s poorest and most marginalised populations. The US Congress, in its 1973 Foreign Assistance Act, made clear that “American development assistance is to be extended in ways that involve the intended beneficiaries in the planning and implementation of project efforts, as well as the gains from development” (Uphoff 1980:213). The capital investment and “trickle down” model of the 1960s was being replaced by one that emphasised the goal of “human progress” (Grant 1973). Throughout the 1970s the thinking of development specialists was dominated by this more people-centred focus, founded on a “basic-needs” approach (Grant 1973; Streeten 1981; Korten 1987). Participation was identified as an essential element of this strategy (Uphoff & Esman 1974; Cohen & Uphoff 1980; Burkey 1993).

In the field of development studies, ideas about what might constitute participation by the poorest evolved over time. Uphoff and Esman drew attention to local organisation as “a necessary if not sufficient condition for accelerated rural development” (Uphoff & Esman 1974:1). They pointed to village development committees in southern Africa, the Sarvodaya movement of Sri Lanka, cooperatives characterised by the
pooling of economic resources, and various interest associations as examples of local organisational efforts that demonstrated a participatory development paradigm (Roughan 1984:24; Vakil 1997:2060). In Africa, these types of organisations were seen as ways for the poor and marginalised to “achieve self-reliance and to explore and articulate their development priorities” (Nyoni 1987:51). The poor, as participating partners in their own development, required “organisational channels through which to make decisions, maintain communication, mobilise and manage resources, and resolve conflicts” (Uphoff 1988:53). In Europe, the concept of “self-reliance” became part of an analysis that linked poverty at the periphery to metropolitan wealth. This perspective was used to define self-reliance in terms of organisation which negated the political and economic structures of the centre (Galtung 1976). In Latin America, a similar analysis was known as “Dependency Theory” (Cueva 1976).

As praxis, these Northern and Latin American ideas, joined by the approach to ontology emerging from the participatory action research orientation of organisations in the Philippines and India (Rahman 1993), along with European and North American funds, led to a proliferation in Asia and the Pacific of non-government organisations formed with the objective of fostering collective empowerment (Howlett 1985; Roughan 1986; Uphoff 1988). These organisations emphasised that self-reliance has a communal focus (Roughan 1986). In this view, basic need has individual and communal characteristics, and so some of the basic needs of those who are marginalised cannot be met because social structures are configured by local elites and the metropolitan North (Galtung 1976a). Community characteristics like cohesiveness and strength of resolve “can only be assured if the community itself controls the basic needs of its life” (Roughan 1986:14), including control of local organisation. Self-reliant development became fused with political action and “liberation” in postcolonial contexts (Nyoni 1987; Craig et.al. 1990), coupled with interventions sharing the “widespread belief in the potential for building capacity at community level and generating change from below” (Craig et.al. 1990:286). Empowerment of individuals through organisation is necessary to the perspective that “sees poverty as the result of political processes and is therefore committed to enabling communities to enter those processes” (Vakil 1997:58).

Internationally, there are many non-government organisations engaged in community development that share an “emphasis on the values of democratic participation and the empowerment of the powerless” (Craig et.al. 1990:290). For practitioners of
community development based on collective empowerment of the most marginalised, participation through local organisation is equated with political empowerment of people. The geographic boundaries of “Northern” and “Southern” traditions, as described by Minkler (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008), break down when exposed to these international development scenarios. Nevertheless, as evidence of the extent to which all these streams have become braided together, it is Minkler’s definition of participation, as it applies to research, that emerges from this short history of empowerment as the contemporary standard for empowering practice. She says community-based participatory research is an intervention that is:

about knowledge creation and the value of critical and emancipatory reason for understanding power dynamics, for recognising the interconnections between the personal and the social and between life worlds and system worlds, and for identifying the barriers to and facilitators of human actions that move toward the goal of social change […] as we engage with community to promote more just societies (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008:40).

Minkler’s reference to “life worlds and system worlds” is drawn from the Frankfurt School referred to by Borda. She is referring to the critical sociology of Jurgen Habermas (Habermas 1974). Habermas observed that since the eighteenth century, the relation of theory to practice has grown to encompass more than a naturalistic observation of the human race. In his day, Aristotle observed that political institutions rely primarily on coercive authority rather than political participation for the moral education of citizens. The coercive role of the state is necessary because of the assumption that humans are not virtuous by nature. Instead of this, Habermas argues that:

theory now deals with the objective, overall complex of development of a human species which produces itself, which is as yet only destined to attain its essence: humanity (Habermas 1974:330).

For Habermas, following Hegel, central to theory that espouses the goal of full humanity is comprehension of relationships of power in human affairs. Rational praxis is construed as “liberation from an externally imposed compulsion” – in Aristotle’s case, the coercive power of the state. Habermas interprets theory which is guided by

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6 This is a reference to development studies theorist Robert Chambers (Chambers 1992), quoted in Minkler (2008) as a discussion paper.
this interest in liberation as enlightenment, and this enlightenment is presupposed by
the specific experience of “emancipation by means of critical insight into relationships
of power” (Habermas 1974:330). As we see today, empowerment brings together
community psychologists and community development practitioners from north and
south in the Hegelian tradition, informed by diverse praxis, “stretched out along the
vertical axis of world history”, while theory’s claim to provide “orientation in right
action” remains constant (Habermas 1974:330). From a theoretical perspective, in this
thesis, Habermas’s *Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas 1984, Habermas
1987) will emerge as a central to theorising empowerment.

In seeking to theorise empowerment from examination of the practices of the case-
study organisations, the process for interpreting the case studies follows Borda’s
dialectical method of action research. Step 3 of Borda’s method refers to “returning to
reflect upon the experimental whole in order to detect more adequate ideas or shed
more light on old concepts or theories so as to adapt them to the real context” (Borda
1979:39). In the present study, the “experimental whole” refers to the practices of
these organisations, and the client response to those practices. Here, “returning to
reflect upon” this consists of comparison of the practices of these four organisations
with the existing body of empowerment theory. The many reports and other
documentary evidence of the practices of these organisations often provide good
indications of the theoretical background being employed to direct practice. By
examination of this writing, coupled with interpretation of the tools and methodologies
used by the organisations in the programs they support, and interviews conducted with
members of the organisations, the present study clarifies the theoretical underpinnings
of each organisation. In the first half of the thesis (Chapters 1 – 4), each case study is
reflected upon to draw out those aspects of empowering practice emphasised by the
particular circumstances of the organisation. This is then compared with the relevant
streams of theory.

Beginning this task has been greatly assisted by the work of Dr John Roughan.
Roughan’s 1986 thesis *Village Organisation for Development* is a landmark in
development practice in the Pacific. Roughan begins from an analysis of a person-
centred approach to development as the basis for participatory workshops to create
tools and narratives to support village organisational efforts in a rapidly changing
environment. The methodology developed by Roughan and his collaborators became

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7 In Kolb’s “experiential learning cycle”, step 3 corresponds to “forming abstract concepts” (Kolb
1975), see diagram p. 10.
the template for the work of the Solomon Islands Development Trust, much of which was subsequently adopted by the other Pacific organisations in the present study.

2.2 The Psychosocial Approach

If action and reflection form the basis of the process for the present study, then empowerment as a “central theme” of a psychosocial approach is what defines its structure. In coming to terms with what constitutes the domain of psychosocial studies, the Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) for health of Meredith Minkler (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008) and Nina Wallerstein (Wallerstein & Duran 2006) again stands out as the exemplar. In addition to many of the sources cited above, their work is also informed by the feminist, post-structuralist and post-colonial praxis that has grown in the intervening 29 years since Borda published his studies in 1979 (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008:35). Minkler and Wallerstein have initiated and gathered together a folio of praxis employing action research8 as a public health intervention for marginalised populations in the United States, including Indigenous Americans, Latinos and HIV suffers (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008).9

In Community Based Participatory Research the purpose of studying processes of empowerment and participation is in part to seek evidence of “the added value of participation to the intervention and to the intervention’s [health] outcomes” (Wallerstein & Duran 2006:319). Like Zimmerman, another North American health professional, Wallerstein and Duran see the value of participation to outcomes as “direct and indirect and multilevel”, posing problems for evaluation. Outcomes can be affected by “material or program conditions […] or psycho-social” resilience and protection. They suggest that this “critically important question” of outcomes may need theory to “adapt and expand to better uncover these differences” (Wallerstein & Duran 2006:319). This is a further area where this thesis seeks to make a contribution.

In the field of public health, the term “psychosocial” is allied with studying “social, physical and mental wellbeing” as a medical outcome (Marmot et.al. 1995:127). Perhaps the most well-known study in this area is the “Whitehall II” study, comparing sickness absences with public service ranking (North et.al. 1993). In this study of 10,314 British public servants, psychosocial parameters measured included, at work:

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8 To avoid the use of acronyms such as CBPR, I will, where possible, use Lewin’s term “action research” to refer to this orientation of researchers to participation. Acronyms appear part of the tradition in this field: PAR, RRA, PRA, RAP...

9 The full folio also contains praxis on sexual harassment of Khmer girls in California, transgender communities, Indigenous community leadership, Photovoice for participatory assessment, and organisation among hotel room cleaners in San Francisco and Las Vegas.
occupation strain, decision latitude, control, skills, pace, and support, assessed with a 67-item questionnaire; and outside work: social circumstances, personal difficulties, and emotional, practical and negative aspects of support assessed by 15 self-report questions by four nominated close friends or relatives of each subject. As well as known risk factors such as smoking and alcohol consumption, the study showed that psychosocial factors at work and outside work predicted rates of sickness absence (North et.al. 1993:362–363). Reported in the medical literature, it is evident from what was measured that the methodology of this study adopts a sociological approach to defining the parameters of “psychosocial”. These differences reflect a division between psychiatry, using a medical and biological model, and psychology, with its greater emphasis on behavioural and cognitive processes. With respect to what is “psycho-”, it is this latter usage that is employed in the present study. Of interest here is placing psychological characteristics such as motivation, emotion, perception, learning, judgement, reasoning, problem solving, symbolic abilities, self-awareness and reality testing (Newman & Newman 2006:7) in a single framework with social phenomena.

With respect to what is “-social”, the finding that psychological stress is both a cause and an effect of society’s inequality structures (North et.al. 1993; Elstad 1998; Lynch et.al. 2001) naturally draws attention to power, power relationships and empowerment as part of health outcomes. However, this apparently central theme has, in the health field, been overshadowed since the mid-1990s by discussions about “community capacity, community competence, community cohesiveness, and social capital” (Elstad 1998; Laverack & Wallerstein 2001:179). The emphasis on what is communal has created difficulties, particularly in the Australian Indigenous context. “Aboriginal community” or “communities” are terms often used as a convenient label for groups of co-located individuals, families and clans that are often highly heterogeneous (Scrimgeour 1997). Without organisation of some kind, even though defined collectively in the dominant social sense, the term “Aborigine” does not define a community; what happens when Aboriginal people organise does define a community of often (to the outsider) surprising spatial and social dimensions.10 As a study about organisation, this thesis will define “community” as what takes place when a group of

10 The use of the term “organise” here refers to both formal and informal organisation that is goal directed. Organising a funeral or excursion is as much a goal-directed activity as organisation to operate a health service. Differences in kind aside, what is essential to note is who is becoming organised: on the one hand who has the time, energy and motivation, and on the other, who may or may not be legitimate representatives of “the community” for whom program activities are intended. Particular families, language groups or clans may represent only local elites.
heterogeneous individuals “collectively take action toward attaining shared and specific goals” (Laverack & Wallerstein 2001:180).

In the contemporary Australian context, the Cape York Substance Abuse Strategy, 2002, describes substance abuse as “a psycho-social contagious epidemic” (Pearson 2002). The strategy is quoted in the context of an evaluation report on the Family WellBeing program promoted by Apunipima Health Council and Cape York Partnerships (Tsey et.al. 2006). Here, “psycho-social” is used to describe how the social web is “infected” by “the behaviour of addicts” (Pearson 2002:21) and that this “explains the behaviour of family, friends, the community and the whole society” (Tsey et.al. 2006:17). Family WellBeing is an Australian Indigenous-developed empowerment program that has demonstrated effectiveness (Campbell 2007; Tsey et.al. 2009). The Family WellBeing training process is used as “a tool for engaging participants on a wide range of issues affecting their health and wellbeing” (Tsey et.al. 2006:8). Among a wide range of sources, the interdisciplinary team at James Cook University draw extensively on psychological approaches to empowerment (Rappaport 1995; Zimmerman 2000) as well as the action research of Minkler and Wallerstein.

In contemporary social science, what is “-social” is constituted by a spectrum of processes from interpersonal and family relationships, social roles, cultural myths, communication patterns, “community” support and ideology to patterns of economic distribution and selective discrimination or intolerance (Newman & Newman 2006). Bearing in mind that “the criterion for correction of thought is, of course, reality” (V.I. Lenin quoted in Borda 1979:41), taking the point of view of those who are marginalised, the present study assumes that the outcomes of these processes are known. With respect to economic status and discrimination, the low socio-economic status and disproportionate suffering of the world’s indigenous peoples is well documented (Carino 2009). It is not the province of this white Australian male to presume to probe, for the purposes of this study, an Indigenous appreciation of “interpersonal and family relationships, social roles, cultural myths”. By taking empowerment as its central theme, this study will challenge the categories used to consider these psychosocial factors, re-ascribing the categories of personal, social and cultural meanings through a universal approach to what constitutes the psychosocial foundation of our common humanity. In this way, the study hopes to clarify the meaning of “right action” in pursuing empowerment, participation and organisation as
interventions in a cross-cultural environment.\textsuperscript{11}

As we have seen, the process of reflection, or theory formation, coupled with action, or practice, is critically concerned with personal, group and social dimensions in evolving a rational praxis of life. Because it simultaneously inhabits the dimensions of individual enlightenment and socially imposed conditions, the specific kind of emancipatory experience referred to by Habermas or Freire is necessarily one in which a participant deepens understanding of him- or herself both in terms of individual mind and psychology, as well as his or her role as an active, socialised member of a community. The content of the psychosocial approach is developed in the second half of the thesis (Chapters 5 - 8). There, each chapter uses the theoretical perspectives from the case studies to define the characteristics of these personal, group and social dimensions in turn. In the final chapter, these three aspects of a psychosocial view of empowerment are brought together into a single model.

3. The Context of Colonisation

The Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Cape York, Australia, present heterogeneous geographical, cultural, historical and social scenarios. One characteristic they share, however, is the experience of European colonisation. While conquest, empire-building and colonisation have long been a part of world history, the Western imperial project\textsuperscript{12} is marked out by its global geographic scale and the extensive reordering of local economies to integrate them into the Western, capitalist mode of exchange (Magdoff 1978; Hayter & Watson 1985; Prasad 2003). Also, it is evident that Western imperialism has also subjugated peoples culturally and ideologically (Prasad 2003:5), in the Pacific and Australia most noticeably through the Christian church. Such is the depth of this penetration by Western institutions and political and economic structures that, for the Pacific nations in this study, formal sovereignty has had limited economic and political value in the postcolonial environment. Political instability and economic hardship characterise all these Pacific

\textsuperscript{11} “Cross-cultural” is another term under stress. Researcher and researched constitute a cultural boundary in action research. The usage in this instance comes from international development assistance.

\textsuperscript{12} “Colonialism” refers to the physical occupation of territory, whereas “imperialism” may be exercised through control of major institutions. Thus, while the European imperial project involved extensive occupation, “neo-colonial” or “post-colonial” imperialism is characterised by the projection of economic power and the control of institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Hayter & Watson 1985). The “West” is used here to refer to both. In the Pacific context, this usage is admittedly becoming dated with the expanding influence of Asia, and the global nature of capital.
In the Australian context, Western penetration reaches its ultimate extent. The colonisers did not go home. Aileen Moreton-Robinson uses the verb *postcolonising* to “signify the active, the current and the continuing nature of the colonising relationship that positions [Indigenous people]¹⁴ as belonging but not belonging” (Moreton-Robinson 2003:38), in a country where sovereignty remains in the hands of the colonising power (Brady 2007). Dispossession and the colonial rhetoric and policies of “smoothing the dying pillow of the full bloods, and breeding out the colour of the half-castes” (Cowlishaw 1999:87) places Indigenous Australians *in extremis*. In ruling the way Indigenous “subjectivities, identities and bodies are constituted”, the Australian nation state maintains Indigenous marginality, “homelessness” and “disruption, dislocation, and proximity to whiteness” (Moreton-Robinson 2003:37) in a way unlike that in the Pacific.

In Australia, it is evident that there is an urgent desire to foster the participation of Indigenous Australians in their self-development, as discussed by Noel Pearson, Warren Mundine (quoted in Maddison 2009) and Mick Dodson (Dodson 2006). In his paper delivered to the Native Title Conference 2007 in Cairns, Tom Calma spoke of the views of Aboriginal traditional owners about government policy for Indigenous economic development, including land, access to capital, and home ownership. He tells us that:

> the majority of Indigenous people and traditional owners who responded to the survey last year support the position that sustainable economic development is essential for the well-being of Indigenous communities on Indigenous land. This is also the policy position of the Australian Government.

However, he goes on to say that even if there is broad agreement about a policy direction, implementation of policy is problematic. Calma says the problem is that “the process they have chosen to implement this does not provide for the active participation and engagement of Indigenous people” (Calma 2007).

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¹³ Viz. the continuing presence of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, the wide extent of political corruption in Papua New Guinea, and the continuing military rule in Fiji.

¹⁴ The original text refers to “us”. In assuming this term in parenthesis, not in the original text, the author notes Moreton Robinson’s comments on the diversity of Aboriginal Nations. As noted, the author believes she speaks for many, and so uses this broadest term to denote “us”. In the present study, the term "Aboriginal Australians" is used to refer to Australian Indigenous peoples.
Dillon and Westbury have argued that “government activity and authority” in remote Aboriginal communities requires a specific kind of implementation process that needs to be “focused … on facilitation and enablement of Indigenous citizens and groups” (Dillon & Westbury 2007:213). The Australian Government’s Indigenous reform agenda *Closing the Gap* states that it is “underpinned by a new way of engaging with Indigenous Australians”, that recognises people’s capacity to participate in development and implementation of programs and policies, based on “listening”, “trust” and “dialogue” (FaHCSIA 2009). Achieving this new engagement in circumstances where there is a “perceived lack of strategy and innovation” across the Australian Public Service requires “strengthening the capacity of the public service” (FaHCSIA 2009; DPMC 2010). The reform agenda recognises that this engagement requires strengthening involvement by the corporate, NGO and philanthropic sectors (FaHCSIA 2009a). This study’s hope, ultimately, is to address itself to these audiences as they engage in action with Australian Indigenous peoples.

It is the persistence of the legal, economic and political regimes of the imperial project of the West that unites the heterogeneity of these Pacific states and Australia. Using Moreton-Robinson’s verb, for *postcolonised* people, the consequences of colonisation are:

configured within this postcolonising society through power relations that are premised on our dispossession and resisted through our ontological relationship to land (Moreton-Robinson 2003:37).

The author believes Moreton-Robinson speaks for many in the postcolonial world. Her statement seems as true in any of these Pacific “nations” as it is in Australia.15

To emphasise the commonalities of this shared structural imposition, the present study adopts language from development studies, referring to this relationship as having had the structure of a centre and a periphery (Galtung 1976).16 However, in a contemporary sense, while the “periphery” still suggests marginalisation, in Australia the inequality of the power relationship is one “where one system is the encapsulating state and the other is a localised system of a minority group” (Morphy 2008:130). In this thesis, the image of an encapsulated minority will also be applied to islanders confronted with the

15 Bouganville’s secessionist movement is one example. The “nation” of the Solomon Islands is a fiction to the Kwaio of Malaita or Weather Coast people of Guadalcanal. As emerges in this study, land ownership and the “ontological relationship to land” is the number one issue identified by groups in Papua New Guinea and Fiji.

16 This usage also overcomes the difficulties with “Europe” and “the West” referred to earlier.
“radical, indeed incommensurable, difference” (Moreton-Robinson 2003:30) between postcolonial system worlds of governance and local lifeworlds; and being a minority in a global political economy in which they cannot participate (Fukuyama 2008).¹⁷ This study proposes that the expansionary nature of capital has closed the periphery, leaving islands of Indigenous survivors.

Dialogue, participation and empowerment are terms that have been used for decades to describe a set of techniques for coming to terms with the question of difference – difference of culture, of experience, of knowledge, of resources and of power. This study will examine specific practices, and, through a developing body of theory, interrogate this practice to reveal the values and philosophy that underpin organised action for empowerment and the implications of these for future practice. In doing so, it hopes to establish the necessary requirements for those who would choose to engage in dialogue to explore individual choices and develop participatory and empowering organisations capable of constructively sustaining Indigenous people’s potential and aspirations.

4. Chapter Outline

This study is divided into two major parts. Part 1 (Chapters 1–4) presents the four case-study organisations. Each of these chapters is in turn divided into two sub-sections. The first presents the data on each organisation, outlining their organisational practices and programs. The second employs this data to derive different theoretical aspects of empowerment, as each organisation shows a different emphasis in its approach.

Having tapped the case studies for their theoretical underpinnings, in Part 2 (Chapters 5–8), the conceptual insights thus gained are examined for their contribution to understanding personal (Chapter 5), community (Chapter 6) and social empowerment (Chapter 7). Finally, in Chapter 8, these three aspects of are brought together in a single framework, giving a synoptic view of organisation for empowerment. This framework shows the dynamic interrelation between persons, groups and their social effects in a three-dimensional model of empowerment called the field of community control. This provides a dynamic view of strengths-based change processes, indicators and outcomes.

¹⁷ Fukuyama’s “memo” refers to the Solomon Islands, and is applicable to Papua New Guinea. Note that at the time of writing, Fiji continues to be subject to significant sanctions and travel bans by other Commonwealth nations.
Part I

The Case Studies
Chapter 1
Solomon Islands Development Trust – A Foundation in Community Development

“The voyage of discovery rests not in seeking new lands, but in seeing with new eyes.”

Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past

1.1 Part 1: Profile

1.1.1 Introduction

In 2012 the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) celebrates 30 years of operation. SIDT began with the development of a national network of locally based teams delivering development education workshops directly in village communities. The rationale for this approach, and the structure of these workshops, grew out of doctoral research conducted by John Roughan. A Brooklyn NY boy and former Catholic priest, Roughan’s work began when he was given charge of the Rohinari Mission Station in the Are’Are (pron: aree-aree) district of South Malaita in 1960. As a missionary, school administrator and, later, kinsman through marriage, Roughan served the community “in the capacity of social scientist” from that time to the present (Roughan 1986:25).

Roughan’s involvement with the people of Are’Are continued through the 1970s when he was appointed Director of Catholic Schools and Catholic Relief Services for the archipelago. In 1974 he left the Solomons and entered the University of Hawaii to study the role of village organisation in development. For his doctoral thesis work on this subject, Roughan teamed up with his Are’Are kinsmen. Together, through daily contact, trust and commitment to each other, they set about the construction, planning, application and evaluation of a different kind of social intervention aimed at:

- understanding Are’Are history and its relationship to village development;
- strengthening local organisational efforts for village development;
- creating ways for villagers to assess their quality of life;
- planning ways to continue to support local organisational efforts through promoting participation in those efforts and the use of paraprofessionals in village development (Roughan 1986:3).
It was this final aim of the thesis that led ultimately to the creation of SIDT, an Indigenous non-government organisation. In 2009, Dr John Roughan was awarded the Solomon Islands Cross for his services to the nation.

1.1.2 Aims and Objectives

Since its formation, SIDT has worked with villages across the provinces of the Solomon Islands to “promote community empowerment in areas of governance, education, health, environment, natural resource management, and disaster risk management”. SIDT’s vision emphasises strengthening the quality of village life in order to “address the social, environment and economic challenges facing the Solomon Islands” (FSPI 2009).

Roughan’s original fieldwork in South Malaita that became the methodology of the Solomon Islands Development Trust was conducted between June 1980 and April 1981. The Trust itself was formed in September 1982, following a workshop with representatives from several national organisations, namely the Solomon Islands Christian Association, Malaita Youth and Adult Training Centre, the National Provident Fund, the National Council of Women, the SI Development Bank and the SI Government. These trustees undertook to create a new development agency, and to build a mandate for an alternative vision of development. This alternative vision sought to challenge the dominant view in the Solomon Islands that development was:

- the product of an externally funded project;
- individualist rather than communal;
- limited to material production;
- male dominated (Barcham 1987:19).

The principles and practices of the organisation are laid out in the “Statement of Resolve” agreed to at the workshop.

The role of SIDT will include questioning the conventional development wisdom, raising the consciousness of both development donors and recipients concerning local development issues, and creating conditions where alternative development visions and actualities can take place. To raise these issues indicates how SIDT wishes to view its place in the Solomon Islands development scene. Thus, as a new development institution, SIDT intends to carve out an identity for itself which clearly distinguishes its role in development (Roughan 1982).
The Statement begins with a critique of the “project-as-development syndrome” – the notion that the project is the only, or at least the most important, path to development, and goes on to stress the need for linkage of projects to “village life systems”. These systems are the cyclic rhythms in village life that exert the strongest influence on the 85 per cent of Solomonese living in villages, and it is these, maintains the Statement, that should be the focus of attention when considering development proposals. SIDT will achieve this, continues the Statement, by focusing on the quality of village life (Roughan 1982).

The Statement takes the view that development is not an automatic consequence of any project, technology or technique, but that these should be seen as tools for greater understanding. Reflection, analysis and understanding require conscious human effort, and the Trust will make this type of adult education effort part of all activities. The program to be carried out by the Trust is a ‘whole package’ consisting of project activities linked to a focus on village quality of life and adult education. The Statement is decisive about working only with those groups and organisations that accept the whole package (Roughan 1982). The durability of the perspective adopted in the Statement is shown in an article written for the twentieth anniversary of the Trust, in which the core theme remains: “SIDT understands that the heart of the nation lies in village life” (Narasia 2002).

During the period 1984–2003 the activities of the Trust included rural water supply and sanitation, malaria and HIV prevention, addressing vitamin A deficiency, eco-forestry, butterfly ranching, coral reef conservation, small business development, and fruit fly eradication (Roughan 1997). Other SIDT projects included:

- the Coral Gardens Initiative;
- disaster preparedness;
- health, population and family planning through community theatre;
- the Ross Mining project – community representation and negotiation with the mining company;
- distance education;
- a Restorative Justice Program. (FSPI 2009)

SIDT’s focus on a national, extensive approach to outreach that delivered adult education, appropriate technologies, and questioned the dominant project-oriented thinking, was seen as an end in itself, a ‘national work’ (SIDT 1984). In the context of Solomon Islands non-government organisations, SIDT is characterised as an
“alternative voice organization that actively contests and questions government” (Rhodes 2007:14).

1.1.3 Strategies

As the Statement of Resolve makes clear, SIDT was to be established as a development agency emphasising the linkage of the project to village life systems. Looking at the Statement, and the selection of the original board of trustees, it is apparent that from the outset SIDT had the intention of establishing itself as a national institution with its own specific program. The process for the establishment of SIDT drew together a board of trustees capable of giving the Trust legitimacy as a national institution.

The primary strategy of SIDT was to establish a national network of paraprofessionals able to provide the kind of adult education it envisaged. The focus on ongoing adult education was implemented through the use of “mobile teams” of trained villagers drawn from a range of communities, language groups and provinces. Establishment of this village outreach program initially focused on the wide strategy of making contact with as many village communities as possible with the intention of building a critical mass of people who had experience of the SIDT approach.

Field implementation began in 1984 with a two-month residential training in the village of Harumou, Are’Are Lagoon, South Malaita. The beginning of a national field network was in place by 1985. From a staff of zero in 1982 to 104 by 1986, the field workers of SIDT consisted of 61 men and 43 women operating in teams of three to five, plus six head office staff in Honiara and eight overseas volunteers located in the provinces (Barcham 1987). By 1994, this field staff had grown to 270 Solomon “volunteers”, still working in teams of three to five, and still using the delivery mode of extended excursions and workshops (Chesher 1994).

With the aim of establishing a national network came the need for SIDT to have some permanent presence in each of the provinces of the widespread Solomons archipelago. The decision was made to set up bases in village communities rather than provincial centres, again emphasising SIDT’s focus on the village as the basis for development. Each base was known as a ’People’s Centre’ in an effort to convey that the centre was not SIDT’s but existed, rather, as a community resource. Built by the local community, space in the Centre was rented by SIDT.

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18 Known as Mobile Team Members, the paraprofessionals were generally referred to as "MTMs".
People’s Centres served as places for teams to meet for briefing and debriefing, to practise appropriate technologies\textsuperscript{19}, undertake administrative tasks and to work with the overseas volunteers resident there as part of SIDT’s presence. The provincial centres necessarily operated with a high degree of autonomy, as travel and communication around the archipelago was often slow, irregular and difficult. SIDT’s strategy relied on providing adequate local supervision and logistical support to the teams, and a regular flow of information in both directions between head office in Honiara and the provincial team centres. The efficacy of SIDT’s ability to penetrate directly to the village level with its wide network of teams was recognised after its major role in relief work following the disaster of Cyclone Namu in 1986 (Rhodes 2007:19).

SIDT invested early in educational media, including theatre and \textit{Link} magazine. While the first group of overseas volunteers had been involved in the general establishment of the national network, the second group offered more specialised skills, and staff included both a graphic artist and a person with theatrical experience. The first \textit{Link} magazine was available in June/July 1987.\textsuperscript{20} Its function was twofold: first, to put SIDT on display, particularly in terms of its vision of development in Solomon Islands; and second, as a means to respond to criticism. This criticism most often took the form of claims that SIDT was anti-development. These claims were of two types: SIDT was anti-development because it did not fund projects; and that SIDT was anti-development because it opposed industrial-scale exploitation of natural resources.

This latter criticism is significant. SIDT’s approach was not an open-ended invitation to village communities to set the agenda for SIDT as an organisation. SIDT’s emphasis on village organisation as a development strategy led it to view certain kinds of development as contrary to this objective. SIDT takes this a step further by its active opposition to foreign interests involved in tuna fishing and tuna baitfish extraction, and industrial-scale logging of rainforest for export (Roughan 1997). This vein of environmentalism was another early feature of SIDT’s approach. Its importance in the present study lies in the fact that only in relatively isolated cases did industrial-scale development arise as an issue for village communities. It was primarily a position that

\textsuperscript{19} Primarily simple ways to improve conditions using local materials – the “ventilated improved pit” toilet is one example.

\textsuperscript{20} Some issues of \textit{Link} were previously available on the World Wide Web. The server that retained these copies at http://fspi.internetfiji.com/ at the time of writing is unavailable. SIDT also regularly published the Link Calendar, which included graphics and cartoons appropriate to the Trust’s development message. An example from the 1988 calendar is appended (Appendix 1).
arose from SIDT’s view of development. Where communities did raise the issue, SIDT actively sought to bring the views and experiences of that minority of communities into the national arena. Through its network, SIDT facilitated contact between communities that had experienced environmental degradation of their lands or seas, and those considering entering into supply contracts with foreign interests. This facilitation was part of SIDT’s “on-going adult education”.

1.1.4 Tools and Methodologies

To give meaning to a reflective and analytical approach to development, SIDT employed tools made for that purpose. These were called the Village Quality of Life Index and the Development Wheel, which were delivered as part of “village-level development workshops” (Barcham 1987). Contrary to the project-as-development view, SIDT saw that development needed to occur in a “self-reliant and technologically appropriate manner” that included women, and had the ultimate goal of a unified and self-reliant people (Roughan 1986:11).

The tools based on this particular view of development attempted to address the meeting of Solomon Islands village society with Western development at the level where it takes place: in the village. Villagers were encouraged to see development as involving all aspects of life, personal, social and material. This process was facilitated by encouraging villagers to publicly converse about the nature of development, and how they saw it affecting their lives in the village.

The Development Wheel (Appendix 2) was designed to provide a frame of reference for this discussion. A wheel figure is used to show that personal, material and social growth should come at the same time. The training notes accompanying the figure explain that

a standard development answer for Third World nations is that material growth must come before a nation (or a village, or a person) can have the other two. Our answer is that if all three do not grow well together, then there is not really any progress for the nation or the village or the person (Roughan 1984).

The Development Wheel picture aims to help people visualise the meaning of unbalanced development – that is, doing well in one area but not in another. It shows that both the person and the society are vital for growth. The spokes of the Wheel
would be scored from 1 – 10 on each parameter. A well-rounded wheel suggested growth in social and personal as well as material well-being.

The second workshop exercise invited villagers to examine the “quality of life” in their village using the Village Quality of Life Index (VQLI – Appendix 3). This exercise aimed to bring the focus of development efforts back to the village, raising awareness among village people that responsibility for their lives lay in their own hands, and that bettering village conditions depended far more on their own efforts than on what others could do for them.

An important part of the narrative of the Development Wheel and VQLI was that, having been created with Indigenous participation from Roughan’s collaborators, it struck a chord with older people who were strongly rooted in traditional culture. In spite of the tools’ foreign appearance, they served to re-establish traditional values and ways as a legitimate basis for future growth.

Two further tools were also employed. The first, the Social Cosmology Chart (Appendix 4), showed six dimensions of the social universe: social space, time, knowledge, relationships of persons to nature, relationships of persons to each other, and a spiritual dimension. For each dimension there were pictorial representations for ‘before Whiteman’ and ‘after Whiteman’. The tool aimed to extend debate about traditional versus contemporary values, making clear that there are two social systems operating in the village community which are distinctly different. The tool grew from information contained in the Development Course Notes used in SIDT training, which sought to clarify that development as modernisation implied a particular set of values, ideologies and “deep structures” (Roughan 1984), and could not simply be incorporated into village life without change to existing traditional values and social structures. The second, the Past/Now/Future exercise, was a visualisation exercise that followed on from the social cosmology discussion. In a quiet, contemplative environment, people were asked to reflect on the past and how their community had changed from then to the present. Next, people were asked to consider what the future might hold if the trends evident from that reflection continued. Together, these tools attempted to construct a narrative about change and control that was based on village people reflecting collectively on their own experience.

The paraprofessional mobile teams took this narrative to villages on extended field excursions. These excursions included three to four days staying in each community, conducting a series of workshops using the analytical tools to engage the village
community in discussion about development issues. The teams, where possible consisting of both men and women, undertook a regular two-week touring schedule, returning to their home community in the alternate two weeks. Communities self-selected to host a mobile team. Word of mouth provided the process for this self-selection. Usually, team members would be approached while on tour with requests for visits. The more the teams toured and had exposure, the more requests were generated. The teams would use local transport, often walking, and relied on the host community to provide board as part of the arrangements for a visit. Following a request, the teams would make an initial visit to the community to agree on a time for an extended visit, and to check what regular activities such as community days or church activities might assist or impede the conduct of the team’s work while visiting. Having reached an agreement with the community about these arrangements, teams would undertake to return at a given time. Critical to the success of the teams was building initial trust and credibility. This was based on first asking community leaders when it would suit them to have a visit, as opposed to simply making a program based on efficient use of SIDT’s time and resources, and secondly on returning reliably at the agreed time, and maintaining contact. This negotiated process of making contact with communities and the use of local resources marked out SIDT’s approach as different to government or other non-government organisations in the eyes of villagers. SIDT teams came to them, in their community, at an agreed time convenient to them, and stayed for an extended period.

In the course of a village visit, the teams would conduct workshop sessions based on the tools, asking that the whole community – elders, leaders, women and youth – be present. Normally three workshop sessions were held, each extending for a half-day or evening. The workshops were combined with practical activities. These might consist of simply assisting the community with activities it had planned, such as building construction, fencing, gardening or community maintenance. Alternatively, these activities could encompass alternative technologies previously practised by the team members, including construction of pit toilets, drainage, rock pathways, kitchen improvements and cooking techniques (Barcham 1987). Later, other adult education materials addressing specific issues such as logging, nutrition and disaster awareness were incorporated. Thirty years on, much of the original SIDT methodology remains, with continued village outreach and the maintained use of analytical tools, now called “open learning tools”, including the Development Wheel, VQLI and the Past/Now/Future exercise (Roughan 2010).
1.1.5 External Relationships

SIDT’s original emphasis on water supply and sanitation technologies, such as pit toilets, drainage and paths, came as part of a package for joint implementation of the national Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) project by SIDT and the Solomon Islands government, funded by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (AFFHC 1987). It is instructive to consider this in a little more detail.

While the Solomon Islands Rural Water Supply and Sanitation project had shown a reasonable track record on paper, with 78 per cent of the Solomon Islands population having an installed water supply system by 1986, installation of water systems was not a reliable indicator of acceptance or usage (AFFHC 1987). Frequent breakages, coupled with little or no maintenance, inappropriate siting and poor drainage, led to low utilisation and sometimes a degraded village environment, with consequent increased health risks. Analysis of the problem led those involved to suggest that the RWSS project suffered from a lack of community participation, and treated the villager as a passive recipient of development. A “community development” approach was needed to augment the government program. Evaluation documents from the time (McDonald et.al. 1986; AFFHC 1987) cite as the “benchmark definition” of community development a 1955 United Nations definition:

Community development is the process by which efforts of the public themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of a community and to integrate the community into the life of the nation and enable them to contribute fully to the nation’s progress. This complex process is then made up of two essential elements: the participation of the people themselves and the provision of technical and other services in ways which encourage initiative, self-help and mutual aid and make these more effective. (UNESCO 1956)

Using this as their standard, project partners including the Australian Freedom From Hunger Campaign (now incorporated in Oxfam Australia), the Overseas Service Bureau (now known as Australian Volunteers International) and the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (now AusAID) identified SIDT as the vehicle for people’s participation, and the Solomon Islands Government as the provider of technical services (McDonald et.al. 1986; AFFHC 1987).
In the extensive evaluation work that was carried out on the SIDT component of the project, it was found that things did not work out as imagined. One of the fundamental difficulties was the political nature of water supply. SIDT encouraged communities to express their views – views that were often critical of government and the delivery of the water supply program. “Talking about water supply” immediately raised questions not of pipes and taps, but of the actions and priorities of the government instrumentality meant to deliver them (Barcham 1987). SIDT, in responding to village priorities, found itself in conflict with the priorities of the project. SIDT’s idea of “community development” was not a process that paved the way for trouble-free entry of government technical teams, with willing villagers contributing labour and schooled in ongoing maintenance; community development was not just community participation and cooperation in planning and construction. It was a far more complex and political discussion.

While agencies such as the Solomon Islands Government and the Australian Freedom From Hunger Campaign tended to see SIDT failing to maintain focus on water supply (AFFHC 1987), others saw water supply as a backdrop to SIDT’s wider activities in village organisation (McDonald et.al. 1986; Barcham 1987). The experimental nature of the SIDT/RWSS project led to a lack of unambiguous direction as to just how the two aspects of community participation and government expertise were meant to come together. As a consequence, the project did not achieve its stated aims in relation to cooperation between SIDT and government and the meshing of the two programs as proposed by the UNESCO definition of community development. At the time, SIDT lacked the institutional development to respond well to this challenge. Its ability to exert influence on government and donor agendas was limited, and there was an initial acceptance of the need for a level of expediency, called by some “pragmatism”, in setting project goals (AFFHC 1987). In retrospect, the organisations involved in the RWSS project did not just have different development philosophies – modernisation on the one hand, self-reliance on the other – but these philosophies were incompatible.

The RWSS project emphasises one of the early difficulties for SIDT. Roughan and the SIDT Trustees had left the door open to link “the project” to village quality of life through adult education. All of the references to the work of SIDT by external agencies use project headings – “Coral Gardens”, “Bednet” or “Eco-forestry”, for example – to define the Trust’s activities. Few references appear to acknowledge the work of simply maintaining an adult-education network, or to community capacity
building through local organisation and problem solving, as ends in themselves. While commentary on the Trust’s activities can use the language of community development, participation, empowerment or village focus, for donors, outcomes are couched in terms of specific goals. It is apparent that for donors it was the material and tangible aspects of development that were the reference point and the benchmark of success. At any one time, up to a dozen funding sources contributed to SIDT, each seeking to exercise its particular development agenda through an identified “project”.

1.1.6 Internal Relationships

Roughan established the principles of recruitment for SIDT mobile team members when he made his initial selection of co-workers. Spending time in each of the villages that he hoped would participate in the development of an education program, Roughan looked for “persons with proven track records of trustworthiness and local leadership qualities” (Roughan 1986:86). Trust and credibility have already been mentioned as attributes necessary for the relationship between SIDT mobile team members and the village to be successful. The first team of co-workers employed in the process of Roughan’s thesis work had been handpicked on this basis. Roughan’s choice was based on a paraprofessional model of service delivery. Roughan recognised the limitations of a classroom-based formal education program for delivery of adult education that aimed to “activate villagers” (Roughan 1986). His intention was to develop a nucleus of trained village persons capable of continuing the program once his participation ended.

The paraprofessional model was a well-established methodology by 1980. Roughan draws on the work of the Centre for International Studies at Cornell University to describe the paraprofessional as “a person indigenous to the service area who has very limited technical or specialised training”, able to be “an intermediary between local publics and a service industry, transmitting information in both directions and assisting local publics to claim and use resources which are available through the paraprofessional’s efforts” (Esman et.al. 1980:8). Selection criteria for paraprofessionals emphasise personal qualities over technical skills. Literacy, for example, may be less regarded than honesty or leadership qualities. Care is also taken in selection to try and circumvent the dominance of particular factional interests (Roughan 1986:86). Later SIDT experience showed the benefit of teams working outside of their immediate home territories for this reason.
The first training of SIDT paraprofessionals began in July 1980. The training took place over eight weeks, with three days per week of formal attendance involving lectures, discussion and written work. The course developed by Roughan and his collaborators required 120 hours of formal participation, plus another 40 hours of informal discussion and review. In addition to working on the course notes developed by Roughan (Roughan 1984), the team spent substantial amounts of time on review, discussion and small-group practice in delivery of the development course material. Roughan and his co-workers took on the task of assimilating each other’s knowledge, working together to develop the means of turning the resultant interpretation of development in the Are’Are context into a series of workshops and activities suitable for the village environment. This original group of 10 team members participated directly in the development of the tools and methodologies described above, refining their content and practising their delivery through the initial pilot workshops conducted in the trainees’ home communities. It was an intense and creative period for all participants (Roughan 1986:91). Translation of this experience to a national program presented a major challenge. The development of the tools and techniques to be used had been a collaborative process between Roughan and the first team members, and Roughan had an established background in the Are’Are community himself. The opportunities for dialogue were extensive and well-established in this research group. However, having developed the material for use in village communities, and settled on the mobile team model of three- to four-day village visits, this group was confronted with the problem of how to extend their experience to others.

Roughan had been able to work directly with the communities and individuals involved in his initial selection of trainees; however, for the national program village communities alone selected the first crop of mobile team trainees. While communities had been asked to nominate men and women who were respected and of good character, inevitably this first national group of 60 people represented a mixed bag of talents and skills. Nominees entering the first national training were not subject to a rigorous selection process in the course of that training. There were no pass or fail standards. After training, team members tended to self-select, as those who had not grasped the SIDT approach opted out of the rigours of organising and maintaining a touring program.
The difficulty was that Roughan’s earlier collaboration had essentially been a transformative experience unique to that group. While they had developed some useful tools, the tools themselves did not make a transformative experience, which appeared to require the interaction of people. The original group was acutely aware of the limited time that village communities could devote to the workshop sessions, and opted for a delivery model that would maximise public discussion, emphasising small-group discussion and general debate using the tools as a stimulus, rather than devoting precious time to lectures and information sharing (Roughan 1986:105). Although the first national training used the same basic material of the Development Course Notes, and extended over a similar period of time, new recruits tended to seize on the tools as the core of their delivery, placing little emphasis on the task of how to facilitate public discussion. The unintended consequence of this was that, in the Christian Solomon Islands, many of the new mobile team members saw themselves as disciples of the new development, the “SIDT way”. It was their task, they believed, to proselytise across the archipelago, preaching the new good news.

Another challenge was presented by SIDT’s acceptance that “the planning, implementing and writing-up of projects holds an honoured place in development strategy” (Roughan 1982). From 1984 to 1994, SIDT held “thousands of workshops attended by tens of thousands of villagers” (Chesher 1994). While an earlier “Forest Resource Inventory” project run by the SIDT Forest Protection Unit had accessed the widespread knowledge of the villagers, this had not contributed to any decline in industrial-scale logging, “despite this impressive exchange of information” (Chesher 1994). Of this, Richard Chesher, a consultant who conducted an evaluation of the Forest Protection Unit,\(^{21}\) says SIDT “found that their awareness raising programmes have not made any changes in behaviour, therefore, they have decided to promote programmes that encourage change in behaviour instead” (Chesher 1994). What was required were more “action-oriented projects”. This suggests continuing ambivalence about the role of the project in SIDT’s work. One of the Unit’s projects was a partnership between SIDT and Greenpeace called the “Solomon Islands Ecoforestry Programme”. The program assisted community groups to begin small-scale eco-forestry projects. These projects were based on a portable sawmill and chainsaws producing certified hardwood for a niche New Zealand market in “ethical” tropical

\(^{21}\) While the FPU is employed in the present study in a critical light because of what followed, Chesher’s evaluation appears on the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific website as part of a suite of “best practice” examples. SIDT is lauded for “awareness and vision; integrating stakeholders; training and educational initiatives”. 39
timber. SIDT’s task was to run village-based educational programs “to raise awareness and later on to train representatives from villages on how to practice eco-forestry” (Chesher 1994). Unsurprisingly, the project was fraught with problems of transportation and continuity of supply. However, in terms of its core business of village outreach, SIDT scored well on the process. There was a very high awareness of the organisation, and SIDT efficiently did its part in the project (Chesher 1994).

More recently, SIDT has said it “will return to its practical roots in 2010 to 2014 by focussing on building capapcity Solomon Island villagers” (SIDT 2012). Kombuvatu, a Honiara estate housing residents from almost every Solomon Islands province, offers a good example of this. In recent years Kombuvatu residents went through a highly stressful period as a result of the estate being located immediately adjacent to the “Tiger Camp” of the Malaita Eagle Force, one of the groups responsible for militarised civil unrest in 2004. Jennifer Wate, currently Director of SIDT, organised a “Restorative Justice Training” session for the group. This group of Kombuvatu housewives thanked SIDT for the workshop, the first of its kind, one reporting that “the training was an eye opener for her and that she had come to realize that she hadn’t learnt anything new but the course reinforced skills within herself and how she could apply them within her own community” (SIDT 2005). SIDT also responded to a burgeoning urban population through the Honiara Youth Theatre, performing street theatre on topics as diverse as youth mental health and urban sanitation (SIDT 2008). SIDT has also resumed the extensive use of participatory assessment tools and its focus on village organisation.

1.2 Part II: Analysis – Goals, Processes and Indicators of Development

1.2.1 Defining “Development”

The “Statement of Resolve” defines the overall approach of the Trust’s work. First and foremost is the emphasis on the village as the unit of development, as opposed, say, to the cattle farm or the cocoa plantation being the main focus of development activities. Development is not just about more income. It includes the human cycles of growth and maturity, birth and death – the formative influences on personal and social change. It is the village, reflecting collectively on its situation, that becomes the vehicle for the definition of development. This reflection is facilitated by the use of analytical tools and discussion. The wide range of activities encompassed by SIDT can be understood against the background of its commitment to village self-reliance, appropriate
technology and adult education. From water supplies to social justice, the focus is on building local self-reliance through participation, and the strengthening of local organisational efforts and institutions. This is the “identity” that distinguishes the role of SIDT in the Solomon Islands.

The practices of SIDT can be summarised as follows:

- questioning the dominant development paradigm, and providing an “alternative voice”;
- involvement in a diverse range of projects related to “quality of life” and “self-reliance”;
- use of paraprofessionals conducting extended tours, staying in host communities and using local transport;
- importance of the personal values of paraprofessionals;
- use of locally developed tools to facilitate reflection, analysis and understanding about village development (Development Wheel, VQLI, Social Cosmology, Past/Now/Future);
- creating a national institution;
- opposition to industrial-scale development.

SIDT takes a holistic approach to the meaning of development. This orientation proposes a view in opposition to modernisation that legitimises traditional world views, construing “the project” as a type of development that is invasive, and modernisation as contributing to “an increase in village decay, growth of the generation gap between young and old and diminished quality of life” (Roughan 1982).

To change this process of modernisation requires a new consciousness on the part of both development donors and recipients. Human progress is not simply the result of contact with modernity – “beautiful houses do not make beautiful people” – but is an “internal function of persons and communities, helped or hindered by external things”. It follows that “external” intervention has “a catalytic role, never a dominating or directive one” (Roughan 1986:4). SIDT’s approach as an organisation defined its practices in terms of this catalytic intervention.

Roughan characterised development as “transformational”, in that it involved first a change in people’s thinking and attitudes towards the nature of the development process. For Roughan, this paradigm requires
a basic shift of the person-in-community and community-of-persons from being dominated, controlled and manipulated to becoming subjects, architects and moulders of their own future. Such an interior focus demands shifts in both the attitudes and the methods of persons working in transformational development (Roughan 1986:5).

The concept of transformational development is rooted in the development debate that occurred during the 1970s, referred to in the introduction (Uphoff 1980; Streeten 1981; Korten 1987). Particularly influential for SIDT was the work of Johan Galtung, who at that time was serving as Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at the University of Oslo. In 1978, on behalf of the United Nations University, Galtung initiated a project known as Goals, Processes and Indicators of Development (GPIP), specifically to “contribute to new theories and practices of development” (Galtung 1976). The GPIP project makes several assumptions about development in order to position the project relative to other fields of development research. First, development is defined as development of people. For Galtung, development

is not defined as the production of goods and services, nor as their distribution, nor as institution-building, nor as structural transformation, nor as ecological balance. All these may be necessary social conditions or means, but development as such is seen as human development, as development of people in society (Galtung 1976:1).

Secondly, the concentration on the person-in-society is seen as “the satisfaction and further development of basic human needs”. These basic needs “include material and non-material needs”, identified under the headings of “security, identity, welfare and freedom” (Galtung 1976b). A developed country is one “which guarantees an acceptable minimum of security, welfare, identity and freedom for everyone”, through a spatially and temporally specific combination of production, distribution, institutions, social structures and culture. Galtung sees this as a way to engage with a global world, where there are no “developed” countries as such – countries that may necessarily provide the template for the progress of underdeveloped countries.

22 As part of this project, Galtung served at a number of universities around the globe, including the University of Hawaii. Galtung’s residency at this university coincided with Roughan’s work on his doctoral dissertation. Unpublished material in the author’s collection is drawn from material collected by Roughan at that time.

23 The definition of “basic human need” is further discussed in detail in Chapter 6.
By shifting the development debate from one focused on the imposition of a particular “template” to one focused on need, basic human need provided the theoretical framework for SIDT’s praxis of “questioning the conventional development wisdom”. Its focus on the “quality of life” emphasises both the material and non-material aspects of human development as a person-centred process.

Thirdly a fuller understanding of the relationship between the person-in-community and the community-of-persons rests on a construction of society based on two complementary views: society as actors, and society as structures. This approach underlies SIDT’s design of the tools used in village workshops, and defines the specific meaning of “self-reliance”.

1.2.2 Self-reliance

Galtung positioned the Goals, Processes and Indicators of Development project as an opportunity to create a framework for considering potentially universally applicable development goals. His approach is unashamedly value-laden:

Human fulfilment, reduction of violence, abolition of misery, reduction of alienation and abolition of repression – such goals will not be questioned but will be assumed as the guiding lights of the exercise. The purpose of the project is simply to try to understand better the conditions under which all of these goals (not one, two or three of them) can be obtained … (Galtung 1976:2).

SIDT’s Development Wheel exercise attempts to capture this multi-variant nature of human development. The Development Wheel is based on Galtung’s analysis of the universal goals of development, shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. World Goals (after Galtung 1980)
The “actor-oriented” and the “structure-oriented” perspectives on society are complementary. According to the action-oriented perspective, “societies are the sum total of the actors participating in them” (Galtung 1980:62). However, in freely pursuing their goals, actors will inevitably come into conflict. The structure-oriented perspective sees society in terms of the “structures of interaction between actors” (Galtung 1980:62) that regulate conflict and its resolution. The structure view reconstitutes the implicit autonomy of the actor view. Thus, while a free-market orientation can be meaningful from an actor perspective, in terms of the “being-power” of free will and autonomous choice and the “having-power” of possession of resources, it is blind to the “position-power” of structural relationships between actors (Galtung 1980:63). In international relations, the degree of autonomy of actors is regulated by the pattern that governs those relations, characterised by Galtung as having the structure of a centre and a periphery. Centre-periphery formation is a consequence of a Western orientation that sees the West as the centre of the world, possessing a universally valid value set that is not only its right, but its duty to distribute all over the world. Changing this structure from the periphery relies on establishing relations that are autonomous, contradicting the exploitation and penetration by the West. This can be achieved by building a pattern of participation, contradicting the fragmentation and marginalisation inherent in being peripheral. It is the struggle to create these contradictions that Galtung defines as “self-reliance” (Galtung 1980a). This necessary structural contradiction accounts for the practical incompatibility between modernisation and self-reliant definitions of development.

The Development Wheel incorporates Galtung’s three types of power (being, having, and position) into a single, holistic analytical tool, expressing these in terms of the interrelated perspectives of personal, material and social “wellbeing”. Galtung’s parameters of security, identity, equality, autonomy, solidarity, self-reliance and participation are all incorporated as spokes of the Wheel. Roughan and his Are’Are collaborators worked for two months to refine and define all of the 18 spokes of the Wheel. Roughan’s collaborators were particularly influential in defining the material aspects of wellbeing to include land ownership, land use, transport, shelter, nutrition, health, and so on (Roughan 1986:137). The figure also incorporates the two poles of the person-in-society and the society-of-persons into a singular circular representation.

The SIDT Development Course Notes incorporate another concept directly from Galtung’s work: that of “social cosmology” (Roughan 1984). Galtung uses this
concept to describe the effect of socialisation on needs-definition. His aim is to understand “Westernization”, a “social code” that shapes the world in its own direction, validating some approaches and rejecting others as incompatible. He sees this as necessary to make us aware of the “Western imprint” that tends to slant a general approach to basic human needs in specific directions that are compatible with the Western code. The “code” is expressed in terms of some overall assumptions about how the world in general, and human relations in particular, are organised, and how they evolve and are maintained over time. These assumptions fall into two groups: “social cosmology” and “social structure” (Galtung 1976a). It was the later mobile team members in North Malaita that created the pictorial representation of Galtung’s social cosmology, using it as a tool to demonstrate the penetration of Western social codes into traditional-life worlds, clarifying the way in which two potentially incompatible systems were present as influences in the life of the village community. The Past/Now/Future exercise draws attention to development as a process with consequences for all of village life, as opposed to being defined as something that happened to villages as a consequence of any particular project. This was captured graphically in SIDT’s flyer about the impact of industrial-scale logging shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. SIDT drew attention to the consequences of development for village life.

On the other hand, the Village Quality of Life Index attempts to give this background in development theory practical significance for the village community. It focuses attention on “the ways and means to begin development action in one’s own village” (Roughan 1986:147). The Index assesses factors such as a clean, accessible water supply; dry, open village surroundings; adequate shelter, cooking facilities and
material goods; and village organisational efforts. It assumes that there is a close connection between these elements and overall quality of life. The items on the VQLI inventory were selected “though hours of discussion” (Roughan 1986:150), emerging from the life experiences of Roughan’s collaborators. The intention of the VQLI was to demonstrate that many development goals were within the power of the village community to achieve independently, establishing a practical basis for self-reliance, and also as a response to the often-asked question about “what a village should do to begin development” (Roughan 1986:147).

As well as supporting the overall approach to understanding village development, the concept of self-reliance contributed to the praxis of SIDT’s stand on industrial-scale development, and conservation of the environment as a development goal. Village communities in the Solomon Islands are heavily reliant on forest resources. Loya cane, sago palm leaf and timber for housing construction, various plants and insects, firewood, unpolluted water supplies, medicines and many other items are harvested directly from the forest environment. While self-reliance may not necessarily imply self-sufficiency, it is true that the ability to independently meet some basic needs serves the goal of autonomy. By removing these resources and contributing to increased erosion and stream-bank damage, industrial-scale logging undermines this goal. Equally, it contributes to imposition of a different economy, based on cash – cash needed to substitute for the lost resources, but rarely used in this way. Similarly, wholesale removal of small baitfish leads to declining stocks of larger fish important to the diet and trade capacity of coastal communities (Barcham 1987).

The purpose of the tools was to facilitate the kind of “conscious effort” and public discussion needed for “reflection, analysis and understanding” of development issues (Roughan 1982). SIDT’s catalytic intervention has the goal of generating participation in the village development process. Being aware that participation can mean anything from stoic attendance at meetings, to contributing project labour, to engaging in public debate, it is important to address the fundamental issue of the “what”, “who” and “how” of participation (Cohen & Uphoff 1980:214; Roughan 1986:19).

1.2.3 Participation as Dialogue

To be seen to be real, participation must have an effect on the development process. That is, it is not just the contribution of labour to, for example, a government water supply project, but needs to be the result of people themselves identifying their needs
and the resources to address those needs, and agreeing on how to equitably distribute the results.

“Dialogue” defines the form of participation by village communities in the SIDT workshop (Roughan 1986:11). Dialogue is defined as an open communication process that is dialectical – that is, the process changes all participants. Freire states it thus:

Human existence cannot be silent nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world. To exist humanly is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection [...] Founding itself upon love, humility and faith in humanity, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of mutual trust (Freire 1996:69).

Participation as dialogue is a process that promotes change, leading to new balances between researcher and researched, rich and poor, and deeper insight into how underdevelopment and overdevelopment are linked together (Galtung 1976a:3). Dialogue explores at a “deeper level and with more symmetry” how “researcher and researched or citizen and decision makers/planners” look at goals, processes and indicators in development (Galtung 1978). Galtung identified the need to build into research methods the “conceptions people themselves have of their needs, of the goals of development, of processes leading to development, and how people know they are on the right track” (Galtung 1976:3). This research intervention requires the process of dialogue, and the creation of networks of individuals and groups able to contribute to their own understanding as well as the understanding of others.

For Roughan, dialogue is the means for the development facilitator to be “in the business of inventing ways for people to lift themselves from passivity into actively taking hold of their history and shaping it” (Roughan 1986:12). Further, development based on dialogue shifts from being a speculative and deductive exercise to one rooted in the experience of people. In this way, “the dialogical method protects the development facilitator from the temptation to dominate because no one party controls the agenda” (Roughan 1986:12).

If participation is not just about attending meetings, or contributing local resources to a project developed elsewhere, then participation necessarily relies on local organisational efforts to give it expression. This is because public discourse on the
issues affecting the community can only lead to action if organisation exists to bring decisions into practice. Studies from rural Asia (Uphoff & Esman 1974; Freidmann 1978), Latin America (Meehan 1978) and Africa (Ingle 1977) underlined the importance of people’s organisational effort. Initiative is stimulated by the process of participation, and this needs to be harnessed in “disciplined problem solving institutions” (Owens & Shaw 1976:23) able to make linkages horizontally with similar organisations, and vertically between local organisations and structures at the centre of government. Participation through locally organised and controlled activity builds not only local cohesiveness and abilities to problem-solve, but also gives expression to local aspirations in the political sphere. This, says Roughan, is the beginning of development that has been achieved through the process of personal transformation.

It is the nature of dialogue that it is also a praxis. As Freire tells us, “word=work=praxis” (Freire 1996:67). The use of the paraprofessional strategy takes SIDT to the village community, making the statement that reaching out to the village person is SIDT’s priority. Employing a negotiated process of village entry, using local transport, residing temporarily in the community and relying on local hospitality all reinforce the message that the paraprofessionals are people of the community, alert to local sensibilities and paying respect to local knowledge. In the context of this praxis, as well as methods, Galtung and Roughan draw attention to the importance of the “attitudes” of development agents.

1.2.4 Attitudes

For Galtung, the necessity of particular attitudes on the part of the development agent arises from the “psycho-political” nature of self-reliance (Galtung 1976a:208). Self-reliance begins with the concept of penetration of the periphery by the centre, called in Latin America “dependence” (UNEP/UNCTAD 1974:898). To contradict the normative influence of the centre requires self-confidence and self-respect, “a faith in own values and own culture and civilisation; the traditional one and the ability to create new culture”, resistance to the formation of “tastes” that can only be satisfied with goods from the centre and “fearlessness as an attitude and practice of invulnerability” (Galtung 1976a:208). Roughan takes this further, emphasising the “interior focus” of development as the transformation of consciousness. For Roughan, this focus necessitates four attitudinal orientations:

- political participation that includes local organisational efforts that “concretise the concept of political participation”;

• awareness that basic human needs, defined as “physical, psychological, spiritual and transcendent”, are met as both the product and the process of developing community cohesiveness and unity;
• comprehension that the structural view of society is necessary to understand the inequalities of wealth, justice and autonomy that occur within a system, and linked to this, awareness of dependency as a structural phenomenon;
• a positive attitude to women to negate the male-dominated structure of society (Roughan 1986:5–10).

Further, the praxis of dialogue required the paraprofessionals to practise what they preached. No paraprofessional could credibly discuss the VQLI if his or her own community was rundown and fractious. The actions of the paraprofessionals in practising “self-reliance”, “self-respect”, “participation” and “equity” within the team environment were critical in taking the Development Wheel from being a dead instrument to something village people could grasp and constructively employ.

1.2.5 Challenges

From the author’s experience, if a group scored low on material aspects of the Village Quality of Life Index – for instance by lacking tools or a medical box – an immediate expectation was created that SIDT would supply these as part of its development program. Countering these expectations was made difficult by SIDT’s ambivalence about the role of specific projects in its work. Many mobile team members continued to harbour and share the belief that SIDT’s role as a development institution must ultimately involve “cargo” of some description. One particularly torrid experience for the author involved a community that had, in its view, achieved high scores on every spoke of the Development Wheel. Having attained what they regarded as SIDT’s standard for village life, the community now expected that access to international aid dollars would follow. Rather than using the Wheel figure for its intended purpose of generating dialogue, the Mobile Team Members had instead conveyed the message that achieving the goal of development promoted by SIDT – a beautiful, clean, healthy village with a high quality of life that had been achieved by the community’s independent efforts – would trigger a flow of goods. It appeared that the question of what happens next, after the process of communicating with villagers about the deeper implication of development was begun, remained unresolved for the mobile team members, and for the organisation. “Awareness” had not changed the nature of the development process, and for many was seen as just the first step before latching onto
the real “meat and potatoes” of getting aid dollars to do a project. Chesher’s 1994 report suggests that even 10 years on from these events, uncertainty about SIDT’s processes still existed among SIDT staff. Adult education and “an impressive exchange of information” had not produced behavioural change. The response had not reconsidered SIDT’s training or delivery, but assumed that the hard currency of chainsaws and portable sawmills must be the solution.24

This suggests two major weaknesses in SIDT’s approach. First, the rudimentary training given to the later groups of paraprofessionals failed to adequately define dialogue in practice. So-called “preaching” the SIDT message was substituted for the much harder task of engaging the community in dialogue, using the tools as support for this process. Secondly, there was a lack of adequate screening of paraprofessionals for those attitudes considered so important for the agent of “transformational development” as envisaged by both Roughan and Galtung. SIDT sought to secure its mandate as a national organisation through the appointment of a board of trustees representing a range of existing national organisations. As well as the enormous administrative challenge of operating a national organisation with a large staff of paraprofessionals, this approach contradicted the praxis of dialogue. If the form of participation is dialogue, then the mandate of an organisation is necessarily based on a continuing participatory relationship between the community and the organisation, at least until such time as the community opts out of the relationship. By adopting what might be called a “scattergun” strategy that aimed to build a “critical mass” of aware communities, SIDT undermined its own approach. The evidence of SIDT’s participation in a wide range of information-based activities, from vitamin A deficiency to fruit fly eradication, suggests that the role of the paraprofessionals became restricted to the older definition of acting as an “intermediary between local publics and a service industry”, producing an “impressive exchange of information” but less in the way of actual behavioural change. Information exchange as the default role of the paraprofessionals did not live up to that envisaged for them as being agents of critical consciousness and social change.

1.3 Summary

SIDT’s Statement of Resolve, like Galtung’s Goals, Processes and Indicators of Development project description, is a conceptually complex and ambitious statement

24 Returning to the Solomon Islands to celebrate 30 years of SIDT, the present study noted that SIDT has returned to its “practical roots by focussing on building capacity of Solomon Island villagers” (Anniversary Program, 2012).
of intent. Galtung and SIDT place the person-in-society and the society-of-persons as the dual foci of development efforts. Those efforts must involve the people in dialogue, “questioning the conventional development wisdom”, contributing to “new theories and practices of development” and creating “alternative development visions” (Galtung 1978; Roughan 1982).

As the title of this chapter suggests, this alternative vision provides a foundation for important themes that will be explored and developed further in the coming chapters. Employing the exemplar of SIDT’s praxis, four related theoretical perspectives emerge:

1. A person-centred “basic human need” analysis of development: this person-centred approach indicates that a psychosocial interpretation, involving both material and non-material aspects, is called for in understanding change and development.

2. Use of an actor-structure analysis to define the place of the person as a social actor interacting with disparate structures: seeing that Galtung’s conception of being/having/position power can be interpreted in terms of personal/material/social wellbeing indicates the possibility of a relationship between power, control and wellbeing.

3. Use of a centre-periphery analysis to define self-reliance: this perspective shows the significance of local organisational effort, and the ability to use local resources to problem-solve, in asserting meaningful control as a contradiction to the one-way street of modernisation.

4. Freirian dialogue as the process of participation: conscious effort, reflection and analysis is the style of intervention for the development agent. It indicates that development which seeks to address power disparities requires an intervention of a particular kind, likely to involve at least an entry process, group involvement and the use of collaboratively developed tools.

SIDT’s praxis provided a substantial foundation in community development for other organisations in the Pacific. Its overall consistency of approach and its longevity are impressive. How other organisations developed this practice, learning from the challenges faced by SIDT, is the subject of the next case study, the Bismarck Ramu Group.
Chapter 2

Bismarck Ramu Group – Independence Day

“Be the change you wish to see.”

Arun Gandhi, quoting his grandfather, the Mahatma, in “An Interview with Arun Gandhi”, B’Han, C. Reclaiming Children and Youth

2.1 Part I: Profile

2.1.1 Introduction

The Bismarck Ramu Group (BRG) was incorporated as a not-for-profit company under the Papua New Guinea Companies Act in 2000. While it has conducted activities in other parts of Papua New Guinea, and many of its activities have had national significance, its most notable work is focused primarily in Madang Province. The link between the BRG and the Solomon Islands Development Trust is found in the person of Barry Lalley, a Peace Corps volunteer with SIDT in Guadalcanal Province from 1985 to 1987. With a background as a political and community organizer in the United States, Lalley injected his experience into his work with SIDT, and his later work in Papua New Guinea. The influence of his earlier SIDT work is evident in a number of graphics used by the Bismarck Ramu Group, including PNG Asde/PNG Tude/PNG Tumora (Figure 5), the Question Man (Appendix 5), which incorporates Galtung’s social cosmology and Ha-Ha, Richer (Appendix 6), an image that emerged from the SIDT training described below. For this reason, the story of BRG returns first to SIDT and the Solomon Islands.

During his time with SIDT, Lalley wrote, “SIDT’s belief in village men and women as a resource rather than a problem must be incorporated into the fabric of the organization itself.” Lalley saw the need for SIDT to model its objectives in everything it did. If participation by village people in their own development was the objective, then training and the organization of SIDT must be conducted on the same basis: “an organization which understands the importance of structures must create structures internally which strengthen what Mobile Team Members have learned” (Lalley 1987).

25 Reflecting its North American origin, this term will be spelt with a “z” when used to denote this specific set of practices, to be discussed below.
In an experiment aimed at achieving the kind of internal structures he envisaged, Lalley, along with Melissa Stratton, another Peace Corps volunteer, and the North Guadalcanal SIDT field officer Phillip Rongatha, designed and ran a training workshop for new SIDT mobile team members (MTM). Held at Dadave on Guadalcanal in 1987, the workshop sought to uncompromisingly value participation, and a Melanesian approach to knowledge production and organisation. For the Dadave workshop, the knowledge and experience of the participants would form the basis of the three-week residential workshop. For these trainees, the Melanesian practice of communication through “storying”, or getting one’s point across through parable or allegory, “was exactly what we wanted from the trainees […]. By talking about their lives, their villages, the changes and problems they experience, a process can begin whereby they start to take control of their lives” (Lalley 1987). The participants themselves generated the workshop content that was then the subject of discussion and analysis. Extensive use was made of role-plays, team- and trust-building exercises, and later, graphics to assist with the introduction of the tools. One participant proposed the following image: a ‘rich white person goes back to his country with stacks of money to live the good life, while the local landowner lives poorly having sold his land to the

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26 Solomon Islands Pijin.
white man’ (Appendix 6). Lalley stressed the potential for drama to make workshops ‘fun, creative and enjoyable’ as well as informative.

Like Roughan’s approach to working with his original collaborators, at the Dadave workshop substantial time each day was spent on reviewing the previous day’s discussion, after participants had had the opportunity for out-of-session reflection and discussion. All of this was before any mention of SIDT, use of the tools, and SIDT’s program. The process of sharing and analysing personal experience became the mechanism for building group solidarity. Recognising that the MTMs were the essential ingredient to SIDT’s success as a change agent, they needed “a training program that gives the MTMs the confidence and support they need to creatively deal with their rapidly changing world” (Lalley 1987).

Another important feature of the Dadave training was the rigour with which participants were assessed for acceptance as SIDT Mobile Team Members. The field officer and volunteers assessed each member on their understanding of the work, and those not meeting the grade were asked to retrain. All trainees had to complete the entire three-week course, including conducting nine practice village development workshops in the surrounding communities as part of a team. Of eight trainees, three successfully completed the full program. Two left early for family reasons, one completed five of the nine practice workshops and was permitted to gain more experience touring with a team before being reassessed, two did not satisfactorily complete the course and chose not to retrain, and one was asked to retrain, and toured as a trainee in the mean time.

The Dadave training serves as the introduction to the Bismarck Ramu Group. BRG represents the evolution of the SIDT approach as much as it was also a new beginning.

2.1.2 The Bismarck Ramu Integrated Conservation and Development Program

The Bismarck Ramu Group began as a conservation project. In 1996 the Group was formed as part of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) funded Bismarck-Ramu Integrated Conservation and Development (ICAD) program. The Bismarck-Ramu ICAD was one of several experimental integrated conservation projects run as part of the Biodiversity and Conservation Resource Management Programme (BCRMP), jointly initiated by the Papua New Guinea office of UNDP and

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27 The image at the appendix is from the BRG "Guide For CDT Members in the Bismarck-Ramu ICAD". Several of the images contained in this guide have their origin in SIDT (Don't Complain, Organize!; Ha, Ha, Richer; Social Cosmology; Asde/Tude/Tumora).
the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation. ICAD and the Biodiversity and Resource Management Programme have been the subject of extensive reporting and scholarly discussion (Grant 1996; Ellis 1997; McCallum & Sekhran 1997; Saulei & Ellis 1997; Ellis 1999; Filer 2000; Telesetsky 2000; van Helden 2001; Foale 2002; Filer 2005; Mowbray & Duguman 2009). This literature relates primarily to the implementation of tropical forest conservation policy in PNG. In terms of the development of BRG as an organisation with an effective methodology, two reports are of particular relevance, *Race for the Rainforest* (McCallum & Sekhran 1997) and *Race for the Rainforest II* (Ellis 1997). The first examines the Lak ICAD project in New Ireland, which was terminated in 1996 without the objective of a conservation area being achieved. The “Lessons from Lak” (McCallum & Sekhran 1997) informed the second project in the UNDP Bismarck-Ramu Area of Interest28 in Madang Province, which is discussed in the second volume (Ellis 1997).

Analysis of the Lak experience led to conclusions remarkably similar to those proposed by Roughan 15 years earlier. The “Lessons from Lak” showed that for the ICAD process to be successful, “dependency attitudes need[ed] to be confronted and self help ones encouraged” (McCallum & Sekhran 1997:54). It was realised that the behaviour of field staff had a bearing on the ability of any development intervention to challenge community attitudes. Field staff had to “set an example” by relying on local resources and avoiding displays of wealth (e.g. project equipment and transport, consumption of imported food) that created expectations of a quick return for the community in exchange for cooperation. The use of material incentives to drive the ICAD process was shown to preclude the community’s search for its own development solutions. Like the SIDT/RWSS project, it was found that modernisation through importing technology, and self-help through creative problem-solving, were mutually exclusive processes. To achieve the aim of self-reliant communities, ICAD projects needed to provide “catalytic support” for development and had to “invest heavily in education to transform communities’ ideas about development” (McCallum & Sekhran 1997:56). The Lak ICAD showed that:

> communities must come to reassess the meaning of development, the long-term consequences of their present land use actions, and the conservation value of their forests. They must rethink the process by which they seek development (McCallum & Sekhran 1997:60).

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28 Area of Interest, or AoI, is a UNDP label used to identify biodiversity “hot spots”.

The Bismarck-Ramu Group began to coalesce around the opportunity to implement this different approach to community engagement with conservation and development. The new Bismarck-Ramu ICAD would assess “social feasibility” based on “community motivation” using “Community Development Teams” with skills in “listening” and tools including “community mapping, timelines and conservation matrices” (Irwin 1997). John Chitoa, formerly a Forest Officer with the PNG National Forest Authority, and an observer of the Lak experience, was employed in January 1996 as area manager for the Bismarck-Ramu ICAD. He remains in 2012 as leader of the coordinating team for BRG. Lalley joined Chitoa on the Bismarck-Ramu ICAD project, leaving his position as Community Development Director for the North Simbu Rural Development Project, a model that had attracted the attention of the BCRMP team for its use of Participatory Rural Appraisal, community resource mapping and social analysis. Lalley’s journey had taken him back to the United States, and then subsequently to PNG through his involvement with the PNG Integral Human Development Trust, formed in 1990. One of the objectives of the Trust was the training of Melanesian Literacy Trainers on a voluntary paraprofessional model. PNG Trust worked with other indigenous NGOs in Melanesia, including the Solomon Islands Development Trust, the Vanuatu Komuniti Development Trust and the Literacy Association of Solomon Islands (PNG 2000).

Ultimately, the Bismarck-Ramu ICAD project “led to the creation of a new indigenous NGO known as the Bismarck Ramu Group” (Filer 2005:7), which is the next part of the story.

2.1.3 The Bismarck Ramu Group

The PNG Biodiversity and Conservation Resource Management Programme (BCRMP) supported the Bismarck-Ramu Integrated Conservation and Development (ICAD) program with funding from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Global Environment Facility until 1999. At that time, UNDP chose to change strategy and direct funds from the Global Environment Facility through large international NGOs working in cooperation with local partners. While some commentators have suggested that BCRMP’s failure to secure a further round of funding was due to ICAD programs becoming unfashionable (Filer 2005), the fact that the UNDP Global Environment Facility continued to fund community-based conservation suggests that the problem may have lain with the BCRMP and the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation rather than with the principles of
community engagement. One of the last acts of the BCRMP was to initiate a process that led the Global Environment Facility to fund a community-based marine conservation project in Milne Bay province. A joint UNDP/Conservation International project, the Bismarck Ramu Group (BRG) had substantial involvement in the training of “Village Engagement Trainers” for that project from 2000. The Milne Bay marine conservation project, funded by UNDP, and run by Conservation International rather then the PNG Government, drew heavily on BRG’s expertise (Pontio 2005).

Whilst the ICAD component of the BCRMP had proposed to “develop innovative methodologies for conservation of biodiversity” (Ellis 1997:19), BRG was pressing the limits of the institutional boundaries of the ICAD program. From the BRG perspective, biodiversity conservation could not happen without local self-determination. This was not just a matter of principle; the Lak project showed that there were clear strategic and empirically demonstrated reasons why local motivation and conviction were essential to any successful intervention. In the words of the draft framework plan for the Bismarck-Ramu ICAD,29 “if conservation and sustainable resource use truly doesn’t fit into the communities’ needs and beliefs then the ICAD project shouldn’t be there anyway” (Ellis 1997:21).

BRG refused to go into the Ramu Area of Interest talking about conservation. As Lalley notes, the PNG Post-Courier newspaper reported that 35 per cent of women die in childbirth in Ramu. “Are people thinking about conservation at this stage?” he asks (Lalley 1998). With the change to supporting conservation through large international NGOs, BRG and UNDP parted ways in 1999. In his short but useful history of BRG, Anderson describes what happened:

The split from the UNDP meant giving up large sums of money. The UNDP wanted the emerging BRG to work with a large international conservation group, The Nature Conservancy (TNC). However TNC maintained an approach focused on biological conservation, which was no longer acceptable to the community oriented BRG. John Chitoa says the UNDP tried to push the two groups together, and millions of Kina were on offer:

“But we decided not to take it and it was really kind of a unique thing, you know, no one really wants to disregard money from donors ... [but]

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29 Ellis notes that this document, the Bismarck-Ramu Integrated Conservation and Development Framework Plan 1995–1999 was only ever circulated in draft form, and never published.
we did not agree with the project that was proposed ... we have different agendas.” (Anderson 2004)

The period of the UNDP-funded Bismarck-Ramu ICAD is referred to by BRG as the “colonial days” (BRG 2004). In 2000, BRG became an independent entity. Independence day was a major shift for BRG. The BCRMP required a focus on high-conservation-value, low-threat areas. After independence, BRG moved to areas under immediate threat of industrial-scale development. This was accompanied by putting BRG’s agenda more visibly in the media through joint letters and advertising. Conservation as a Western construct was replaced with the issue that had been there since the start of the ICAD: land. BRG’s banner, Graun im Laip (Land is Life), puts the Indigenous perspective front and centre. As Chitoa says, “people in Papua New Guinea are very much connected to their land – it’s their guarantee of survival” (Anderson 2004).

BRG’s insistence on defining and implementing its own agenda, and its daring ability to say “no”, attracted the sympathy and support of like-minded donor agencies, including the Netherlands-based Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation (ICCO), which was one of SIDT’s early funders, and the German Lutheran Bread for the World. BRG’s emphasis on trust and building relationships extends to its funders. ICCO and Bread for the World developed a trust relationship with BRG that continues to give the group the opportunity to follow its own path. Part of that trust is based on BRG’s commitment to personal trustworthiness and honesty. Financial accountability is of a high standard (both in the office and on patrol, women exclusively handle the money), and reporting and other funder-accountability requirements are highly satisfactory (Barcham 2008).

BRG began as a group of eight individuals, growing during the ICAD phase to five Community Development Teams supported by three clerical staff and a “church liaison officer” (Ellis 1997). In 2002, numbers grew to eight full-time staff and 16 part-time community organizers (external training and campaigning activities had been added to the community organizing). By 2008 there were between 30 and 35 members, with staff distributed between the Campaign Program, Training Program, Community Facilitation Program, the Information, Communication, Education Program, and administration and support staff. At the time of writing, in 2011 there were a total of 43 people involved with the group. Feeling that the group was becoming too large, 2012 has seen a reduction in numbers to 31.
2.1.4 Aims and Objectives

BRG has stated its aims in slightly different ways at different times. In 2003, its approach is distilled as:

- **Our Principles**
  
  People centred, working in partnership, accountable for quality results, dedicated to financial integrity, inspired and innovative.

- **Our Values**
  
  Personal honesty, integrity, commitment; working together in teams – with openness and trust; empowering others and respecting differences; encouraging risk-taking and responsibility; enjoying our work and our families (Guman 2003).

In 2005, BRG’s “vision” is stated thus:

BRG’s purpose is to fight against the exploitation of people, land and resources in Papua New Guinea. We educate, inform and empower people so they can organise, make informed decisions, speak out freely and act to protect and keep control over their land, resources and livelihoods (BRG 2005).

Others have summed up BRG’s early approach to community development in the ICAD project up as:

- firstly, developing Indigenous partnerships with villager-landowners;
- secondly, assisting villager-landowners to develop self-reliant strategies based on customary land tenure; and, finally, assisting villager-landowners in community planning, including resource management and conservation options (Anderson 2004).

In a paper delivered by Conservation International to a 2005 conference on community engagement, BRG is described as a local environment awareness organisation that works to assist communities on issues of land rights, literacy, conservation and culture […] The experience from BRG and the Lak ICDP projects provided excellent guidance in devising a system that works with communities concerned about managing their natural resources, and has achieved exceptional on-ground support from communities. The BRG has been
highly successful in mobilizing communities at the grassroots level. Most importantly, their work has not only been effective, but also sustainable in the long term (Pontio 2005).

Unlike SIDT, BRG did not set out to create a new development institution. Even in the choice of name there is vagueness about what this “group” is all about. In the context of other PNG non-government organisations and the Lak experience, BRG sought to deliberately distinguish itself as not being a development organisation. An early BRG document titled “BRG Guidelines” sets the following parameters:

- BRG must remain small and focussed in its work of promoting self-reliance and working together. It does not seek to grow much beyond its present size. It seeks to minimize bureaucracy, channelling most of the funds and other resources it receives to the field operations rather than in administration;
- BRG does not seek to build an institution;
- BRG must remain focused on working with and assisting communities to organize themselves. BRG will restrict itself to working with communities in Madang Province;
- BRG must not overextend its work itself in its work. It must know its limits, be comfortable with them and say NO when it has to be said;
- BRG is not a training organization. While BRG members conduct training throughout PNG, they are done on an individual basis. Organizations, groups and individuals who are involved in working with communities are welcome to come and observe and learn how BRG operates;
- BRG will network with other people and organizations, however the networking must come about naturally; not just for the sake of networking nor dictated by donor agencies;
- BRG does not seek to promote itself via media stories, brochures, pamphlets etc. BRG seeks to continue its work in a low profile manner. Pamphlets will be created and given to donors;
- BRG will continue to invest much time and resources on personal and professional development of BRG personnel. BRG members are expected
to maintain a high standard of professional performance and personal behaviour.

Independence, flexibility and a low-key approach to supporting communities thus characterise BRG’s mission. A list of “aims and objectives” contained in the guidelines bears comparison with the SIDT paraprofessional approach:

- Assist communities to organize themselves;
- Rid people of cargo thinking and assist them in being self-reliant;
- Strengthen culture;
- Help people recognize the strength and value of women;
- Share thoughts, discuss and assist people in their thinking about development and development issues;
- Help people recognize two systems that are in place (Western and traditional) and these systems are not often compatible [*sic*];
- Strengthen people’s thinking about looking after their environment;
- Explain the negative impacts of large-scale development and tricks used by companies;
- Work closely with schools and churches to strengthen their thinking about looking after the environment;
- Establish a core group of community organisers. (BRG 2004)

It is notable that any reference to “the project” is absent from these statements. The SIDT view that projects do not of themselves make development has been taken to its logical conclusion by deliberately excluding project-related activities as in any way being part of the purpose of BRG. Instead, the focus is on the role of the paraprofessional and the quality of the relationship with communities. The other salient feature is that objectives are not static. BRG’s aims are characterised by being means rather than ends, while providing detail about working principles.

2.1.5 Strategies

Looking over its aims, it could be said that BRG’s overall intention is to develop strategies for whatever its objective happens to be at the time. In this way, failure is also a learning experience that provides the opportunity for further reflection and modification of its strategic approach. Reflecting on change in BRG, Chitoa says that
there were “some things that worked well while others that did not work out. There were lots of discussion[s] as to what were relevant and what weren’t” (Parsons et.al. 2005). The question, “What do we do now?” is a persistent driver of BRG’s strategic direction. The question is captured graphically in one of the images used in training (Figure 6). Caspar Poin, chairman of the BRG Board of Directors says:

I see there have been plenty of changes in BRG since we left UNDP in 1999. The first thing I want to say about all these changes is that all of them belong to everyone in the organisation. The changes, as with BRG’s development has been natural. They are organic changes. We haven’t tried to plan too far ahead in the future to identify challenges and plan some strategy of meeting them. We have waited for the challenges to meet us, and then we get together as a group and decided on how to respond (Anderson 2004).

That response has been based on three primary strategies. First are the paraprofessionals. Originally called “Community Development Teams”, the teams of paraprofessionals are now known as “Community Organizers” – yet another way in which BRG declares that it is not on a development mission. Teams of trained paraprofessionals, including both men and women, conduct extended tours known as “patrols”. “Patrol” is used by BRG to describe their strategy of extended field contact visits. Like SIDT, the implementation model consists of training paraprofessionals to work as mobile facilitators. The SIDT model of committed, low-key, Indigenous teams, paid a nominal stipend and using local transport and facilities, became the model for BRG.

The touring program was intensive rather than extensive, with regular visits to selected communities. BRG has given particular attention to the criteria it uses for selecting the communities with which it works. As post-colonial BRG shifted to focus on
communities where the threat to the local environment from industrial-scale development was high, they sought out communities that were motivated to collaborate in opposing invasion of landowner rights. Assisting a particular motivated community to get a result was given priority over trying to build critical mass through large numbers of contacts. Successful individual community change was the goal, and this success was itself used as the means to attract new communities and build momentum for wider change, via the successful community publicly promoting its activities.

Secondly, there is “organizing”. This approach is uniquely North American in its origins, and draws on a tradition of social intervention to support marginalised groups and minorities. In Papua New Guinea, the best way to explain what this means is by example. In the following example it is interesting to make a comparison between SIDT’s “eco-forestry project” and BRG’s response to the same issue of industrial-scale logging.

During the period of the ICAD, BRG made contact with clans of the Wanang area. When a leader from that area, Filip Damen, declared his interest in stopping industrial-scale logging on his and adjacent clan lands, BRG spent two years supporting the group to resolve the internal barriers to the clans working together, and facilitating the process to define and codify the clans’ shared resource mapping knowledge. BRG always relied on the support of Wangan landowners to continue to negotiate and press in the absence of BRG team members, between visits. In accord with BRG policy, there were no material incentives, and no permanent presence was established in the area. Access to the area required transit through the lands of clans hostile to Filip and the 11 clans involved in trying to reach agreement. On its regular visits, BRG provided an interpretive bridge to the PNG legal system that allowed the clans to find a legal mechanism to control and conserve their land that would be binding on all parties, landowners and loggers alike. Ultimately, the 11 clans contracted to a deed that expressed their ownership and aspirations for land in a legally enforceable and innovative way. The BRG process assisted the clans to make aggressive use of good information and legal support to realise an internally negotiated settlement that ultimately conserved 18,000 hectares and defined land use in other areas of their joint estate.

This is discussed in more detail in the theoretical analysis of BRG.
The deeded conservation area now hosts a 700,000 kina project for the Centre for Tropical Forest Science, to conduct a baseline study using a series of small-scale “carbon monitoring stations” to “enable landscape and regional monitoring of forest carbon stocks” (Newstext 2008). More recently, Filip Damen flew to San Francisco to receive a US$10,000 award for being an Indigenous islander with “exceptional achievement in preserving the environment and culture of any of the world’s 100,000 islands”. Mr Damen was awarded “for leading efforts by a group of 11 Wanang villages to sign a conservation deed” (Newstext 2009).

There is no mention of BRG in these media references. It is, however, interesting to note that Mr Damen, who has never been a member of BRG, is referred to as “a customary landowner and community organizer” (Newstext 2009). While the future is always uncertain, Mr Damen and the clans involved were able to express their opposition to logging as their will, without any promise other than their contribution to maintaining control of their customary land ownership and culture.

A third strategy is known as “Training”. Workshops run by BRG staff have embraced community development, organizing, leadership, health and hygiene, gender, literacy, traditional medicine and conservation. Furthermore, appropriate technologies for diverse local audiences, including the police force, and international audiences seeking to understand the BRG methodology, have been utilised. The 2002 Evaluation (Eagles & Jones 2002) of BRG drew attention to the fact that demand for BRG’s services was outstripping the company’s capacity to deliver – a trend that has continued to drive BRG’s growth (Anderson 2004; Parsons et.al. 2005; Barcham 2008).

In addition to training, in later years BRG created a number of separate but integrated functional divisions (Appendix 7 – BRG Lines of Communication). In addition to the community facilitation and training functions, there is now also a “Campaigns” function, which raises issues in the press and the wider community, makes videos for release on Youtube, creates and accesses blogs, and through the Community Organizers supports landowners to mount legal challenges. The “Information, Communication and Education (ICE)” function produces pamphlets, posters and other material for public consumption (Bosco et.al. 2007). Campaign activity has included seeking to improve wages and conditions at the RDTuna packing plant in Madang.

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31 In PNG Pijin, “training” embraces a wide range of educational activity. The English meaning of highly structured, vocational-type training is not intended.
supporting the Kananam community in their opposition to the social and environmental impacts of the RDTuna wharf adjacent to that community (Kananam 2003), opposition to clearing for oil palm plantations in the Upper Ramu Valley and on the coast south of Madang (Parsons et al. 2005; Sindana & Paol 2010), and supporting landowners to oppose land registration, logging (in particular the activities of Malaysian-owned Rimbunan Hijau (Sindana 2007)), sea-bed mining proposals, and the massive Ramu Nickel and Cobalt project being undertaken by a consortium led by Chinese Metallurgical Group Corporation, and including Australian-owned Highlands Pacific Ltd (Evara 2010). Information activities have included raising concern about the introduction of hybrid rice (Sukot 2008), and informing and advising interested communities about carbon credit trading and the UN program to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. BRG was approached by Macquarie Group for advice on implementation of carbon trading (Barcham 2008), providing the highest quality information exchange for communities.

2.1.6 Tools and Methodologies

A guide to the original methodology was complied by the first BRG teams (Lalley 2002). The guide sets down in detail the process of generating participation with the aim of building self-reliance and community control. It also sets down the rationale for the process used. From the outset, the aim was to model the desired outcome. “Participation” is defined in the guide as the community being in control of the process used to build self-reliance. The focus is on helping communities organize for self-reliance. The conservation methodology associated with the ICAD project using matrices is dealt with as a separate section in the guide.

The BRG process begins with community entry, in which teams look for motivation and conviction. These are evident when communities begin to organize, showing confidence, a willingness to cooperate together for a common aim, and commitment (Grant 1996; Lalley 2002:12). Because BRG takes an intensive approach to working with communities, teams assess what the community has done between visits. As well as making it clear that the community leaders can ask BRG to leave at any time if they are unhappy with anything the team is saying or doing – or “you don’t believe you can trust us” (Lalley 2002:6) – BRG also reserves the right to move on from communities that are only active when the teams are present. As was the case with the Wanang clans, the community must demonstrate its willingness to organize by working on its community program in BRG’s absence.
In the BRG guide, the process of participation begins with listening. Teams tell the community that they would like to hold a community meeting at a future agreed date. The team stays in the community for a few days to help prepare for that meeting by listening to people’s concerns. This first-entry visit is to begin the process of building trust. Teams listen for “community themes” – “those things which people have the strongest feelings about” (BRG 2002:47). This is done because “emotion is linked to motivation. Only on issues which they feel strongly will people be prepared to act” (Lalley 2002:47, emphasis in original).

The focus is on community assessment rather than problem seeking, and on solutions rather than needs. Every effort is made to discourage the expectation that BRG’s function will be to materially assist the community to meet its needs; the teams make it clear that they are there to assist the community to plan and organize, and that they “are not a bank, or a funding agency or a church or a business” (Lalley 2002). Offering no material incentive, BRG seeks an outcome driven by conviction rather than by the expectation of real or imagined external incentives, and with it, sustainable outcomes. The insistence that there are no material incentives associated with collaboration with BRG is based on the evidence that “handouts don’t build motivation” (Ellis 1997:19). BRG’s literature is firm on this point: “rid people of cargo thinking and assist them in being self-reliant” (BRG 2002). Coupled with a focus on listening and self-reliance is a clear strategic logic based on the Lak experience: the ICAD was not in a position to outbid logging companies for landowner’s consent to conservation based on provision of goods or services.

The original group of Community Development Teams (CDTs) developed a “Seven Step Process” from community entry to mobilisation and follow-up (Appendix 8). However, it was found that telling people there were seven steps to go through tended to raise expectations that there would be “cargo” at the end of step seven. Like the community referred to in Chapter 1, communities focused on getting through the steps rather than working on developing critical thinking, thus defeating the whole purpose of the program. The 2005 Evaluation (Parsons et.al. 2005) drew attention to the potential to broaden the community process by inclusion of a further step after step four, which it called community “analysis”. The report expressed concern that the only outcome for which BRG had a fully developed process including planning matrices was conservation, and that communities should be able to exercise other options based on their own analysis.
With respect to this, it is important to emphasise that the steps were intended only to serve as a guide for the CDTs. Over the years BRG discussions have proposed seven steps, four steps and two steps, and some have suggested just one. The use of a “step process” is a way to codify and structure reflection, not a recipe to be slavishly followed. Listening to each other and to communities is seen as the first and essential skill of community organizers. The guide for CDTs opens with the exhortation to “Listen. The more you talk, the less effective you are. Stop the preaching!!!” (Lalley 2002:1).

BRG’s patrol schedule includes up to a week of briefing prior to field visits, and a week of debriefing subsequent to field visits. Briefing/debriefing includes all staff. Practising presentations using role-play, reflecting collectively on the information gathered on previous visits, and brainstorming possible scenarios and solutions is an essential part of these sessions. The progress and nature of the process is always up for grabs, and this constant reflection and flexibility of approach is characteristic of BRG. Essential to BRG’s approach is the way the organisation itself constantly models and practises the processes it seeks to implement in communities. Promoting critical thinking based on mutual trust and credibility defines all of BRG’s interactions. In addition to team building and other techniques used during the process, the significance of the process is also marked out by the amount of time team members spend together in formal and informal discussion. The BRG compound at Jais Aben, formerly the Christenson Research Institute, provides a comfortable residential environment for the team members to meet and live together. Building internal relationships, strengthening trust and encouraging a unified, non-hierarchical team approach is a major purpose of the briefing/debriefing process. Anderson notes that “the result is a group which does not ignore goals, but stresses process; and a group which actively organises exhaustive opportunities for collective participation in group plans and evaluation” (Anderson 2004).

The tools used by BRG, including the community mapping process and graphics such as Question Man, Social Cosmology Chart, Ha-Ha Richer and others are intended only as tools. Unlike SIDT’s Development Wheel and VQLI, they are instruments to be used for clarification if needed, and are neither part of a predetermined process to be rolled out at the appropriate step, nor the focus of the community visit. That said, there is one tool, introduced at the second step of BRG’s process, that has stood the test of time: the PNG History Timeline.
A large painting in the BRG meeting house portrays an imaginary view of the Kuk agricultural site. The Kuk World Heritage archaeological site in the Western Highlands of PNG conserves the evidence of the world’s first domestic agriculture (UNESCO 2009). Dating from 10,000 years BP, this site is a key marker on the 50,000 year Timeline used by BRG (Grant 1996). The purpose of the timeline is to root communities in their traditional beliefs and customs and to demonstrate that self-reliant development is not new, representing continuity with the past. The timeline shows the relatively short period since the “discovery” of PNG by the Spanish and Portuguese in the 1500s – the time when people adopted the sweet potato as the main staple, largely replacing the traditional taro – and the 1800s that brought Christianity and an end to cannibalism. The timeline also marks the (relatively recent) birth of Christ. In an evidence-based way, the Timeline seeks to build community self-confidence, equating self-reliance with a traditional development model.

2.1.7 Governance

As noted above, the BRG has a non-hierarchical, or ‘flat’, organisational structure. This is achieved because BRG prioritises people over structures. The recruitment process emphasises looking for the kind of people who will fit into the “BRG family” (Parsons et.al. 2005). The incentives to participate are not primarily financial reward or prestige. Trustworthiness, honesty and sobriety are sought-after qualities for BRG, and the maintenance of these qualities is strictly enforced within the organisation. Lalley has used the work of Jim Collins of the Stanford University Graduate School of Business to describe BRG’s recruitment policy. Collins studied the experience of 1,435 successful enterprises, and reported the following:

[We] expected to find that the first step […] would be to set a new direction, a new vision and strategy for the company, and then to get people committed and aligned behind that new direction. We found something quite the opposite. Successful managers did not first figure out where to drive the bus and get people to take it there. No, they first got the right people on the bus (and the wrong people off the bus) and then figured out where to drive it (Collins 2001).

Recruitment is based on the community organizers recommending “anyone just like themselves” (Lalley 2002:31). Subject to a rigorous selection process that aims to identify skills in leadership, problem solving and teamwork, the function that each
person then fulfils within the organisation becomes to a large degree a matter of negotiation between the organisation and the individual.

At an annual review meeting, members of the organisation are able to nominate their activities for the coming year. This process reflects two aspects of BRG’s organisational structure. First, like the briefing/debriefing process, it provides time for people to reflect on what has gone well, and what could be done differently. Discussion is undertaken in an atmosphere of trust, not blame. As Lalley notes, BRG meeting processes are

strictly Melanesian; they talk things through ... ad nauseum ... because relationships matter, people matter ... and I think that part of the Melanesian character is not only carried out in the organisation but in the way they run things in the village (Anderson 2004).

Second, the annual meeting and review process, and the briefing/debriefing, works to minimise specialisation. This is brought about by extensive sharing of information from all participants in the organisation. Everyone who wants to can know what is happening in each aspect of the organisation’s integrated program, and have the opportunity to work in different areas and acquire different skills and types of knowledge. This is part of BRG’s commitment to continually building the skills and knowledge of its permanent staff and the paraprofessionals.

Weekly organisational meetings allocate and track completion of financial, administrative and other tasks in a relaxed but highly disciplined environment. There are established processes for annual performance reviews; likewise, the patrol debriefing process includes team members assessing each other’s performance. An essential part of this disciplined environment is the BRG Board of Directors, appointed from within the organisation. The Board meets regularly and is able to draw on outside expertise to assist it with reflection and the resolution of issues that arise. Being of the organisation, the Board has a well-developed working knowledge of BRG, its strategies, methodologies and values. It deals effectively with discipline and maintenance of BRG’s high performance standards (Parsons et.al. 2005; Barcham 2008).

There is a great deal more that could be said about the achievements of BRG. This brief profile captures just a small slice of its short history, large achievements and special organisational characteristics. At its annual review, all are reminded of the articles of the Papua New Guinea Constitution, which recognises customary land title.
Customary land owners, with the support of BRG, have successfully brought forward constitutional challenges to the terms of industrial-scale development, challenges that have had national and international effects (Callick 2010; Staff 2010; Callick 2010a).

2.2 Part II: Analysis – Modernity and Globalisation

2.2.1 The Effect of Globalisation

There are many obvious similarities between the BRG approach and that of SIDT. These include the use of mobile teams of paraprofessionals operating in a way that reflects local conditions; direct contact with village communities; extended stays in the community; the importance of the personal values and behaviour of paraprofessionals; the use of Indigenous-developed graphic tools; opposition to industrial-scale development; and the emphasis on self-reliance. BRG’s reflective approach to organisational development also addresses the pitfalls encountered by SIDT. These include the decision not to build an institution; the mature relationships developed with donors; the cultivation of an organisational community, the “BRG family”; the significant amounts of time spent on continually enhancing the skills and knowledge base of paraprofessionals; and the modelling by the organisation of the outcomes it aims to achieve in communities.

While it can be argued that BRG is a simple evolution of the SIDT approach, having absorbed the “Lessons from Lak” and having developed an ability to reflect and adapt its approach, there are other indications that BRG is more than this. Four factors stand out as instrumental in this.

- the conscious development of a defined BRG community;
- the importance placed on continually building the skills and knowledge of the paraprofessionals;
- the ability to say no, and a willingness to take risks;
- the definition of the role of the paraprofessionals as community organizers.

In the absence of literature that identifies particular theoretical foundations for the methods employed by BRG, the search for a theoretical framework in which to interpret these innovations begins with looking for a comparable praxis. As the practice of “organizing” will take this search to the United States, it is interesting to start by comparing BRG’s practice with the response of North American corporations to the challenge of globalisation. This response was first defined in 1992 by the
moniker “Workplace 2000”, a North American vision of the twenty-first century workplace (Boyett & Conn 1992). Workplace 2000 was a response to the shift of global capital to mass production in low-wage economies, and the growth of the service sector in the United States. This “new capitalism” was about “using new technologies to engage in flexible production of customised products and services dovetailed to specific consumer identities in a globalised economy” (Gee 2000:516).

“New capitalism” included the popular corporate discipline of “total quality management” that demanded of employees “new concepts of work, quality, community, learning, and leadership” (Wiggenhorn 1990:71). Fundamental to this new workplace were empowered individual workers (Conger & Kanungo 1988; Thomas & Veldhouse 1990) able to “actively transform, improve and adapt their work practices to fast-paced changes in markets and technologies” (Gee 2000:518). This corporate “community of practice” has the following characteristics:

- Members bond through a common endeavour;
- The common endeavour is organised around the whole process, enabling integrated organisational functions;
- Members possess extensive organisational knowledge, able to carry out multiple and overlapping functions;
- Knowledge is first tacit, based on values, distributed across members and their tasks, and dispersed in networks of relationships: knowledge arises from group interactions;
- Leaders work to design the community of practice, helping members to turn their tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, realising that much knowledge remains tacit and embedded in social and cultural practices.

(after Gee 2000:519)\(^{32}\)

As the workplace shifted to an orientation where “training becomes education” (Wiggenhorn 1990), Workplace 2000 carried over into North American approaches to classroom pedagogy. In this field, the language of corporate communities of practice was infused with Foucaultian discourse (Brown 1994; Gee 1998) to give theoretical support to this educational praxis.

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\(^{32}\) Gee cites Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994, without including the page number or the title in the bibliography. The author assumes the reference is to “Reflexive Modernization”. However, the list appears to be Gee’s second order summation of the original work.
2.2.2 **Foucault and the Social Discourse**

The classroom pedagogy that developed in response to the demands of global corporatisation is reminiscent of Freire’s criticism of the “banking” concept of education, where students are “receptacles to be filled” (Freire 1996:52). It incorporated cognitive psychology, recognising students as “active constructors rather than passive recipients of knowledge”, possessed of “multiple intelligences” (Brown 1994:6). The classroom was viewed as a “community of learning” with multiple methods of participation through art, theatre, technological skills, reading, writing, teaching and social facilitation. Essential to this pedagogy was recognition of learning as situated and contextual – that is, as a process that encourages newcomers to “adopt the discourse structure, goals, values and belief systems of the community”. This kind of collaborative learning “promotes an atmosphere of joint responsibility, mutual respect and a sense of personal and group identity” (Brown 1994:10). In adopting the language of “discourse”, the new classroom pedagogy invites reference to Foucault’s concept of discourse, used to describe a domain rooted in “human practices, institutions and actions” (Loomba 1998:39). In Foucault’s thinking, this domain governs reproduction of relations of power.

[T]here are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse (Foucault 1986:229).

Foucault’s concept of discourse represents a development of the Gramscian notion of ideological hegemony, which relies on both coercion and consent (Gramsci 1971:12). Freire conceptualised this consent as false consciousness, the “internalised consciousness of the oppressor” (Freire 1996:30) that, following Hegel, must be first undermined and then transformed into independent self-consciousness in order to facilitate continuing human growth. Roughan adopted this orientation in his theoretical development of SIDT’s pedagogical approach, which aimed at “unmasking erroneous thought patterns” (Roughan 1986:4). Foucault takes this notion further, conceiving the

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33 In 2011, this is common classroom practice, employing for example DeBono’s “Six Hats” approach. Its persistence is shown by a November 2011 Google search for “learning styles”, which gets as the top hit for images a site called “Voices of Leadership – Inspiring Leaders to Empower Others”, which links to the IBM CEO study 2010.

34 Relationships of power concern collective action, and are dealt with in the second part of the present study.
post-structuralist position that power does not emanate from a centralised or hierarchical structure, but “is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere” (Foucault 1990:93). However, while Foucault has been employed by feminist and colonial scholars in drawing attention to the way social reproduction resides in everyday life, he has also been criticised for leaving no space for dissent (Loomba 1998).

While it would appear true to say that dominant discursive practices make it difficult to think outside them, notions of “false” consciousness and the concept of power as totally insidious appear to be particularly disempowering perspectives. In seeking an autonomous social space to assert control, feminist scholars have argued that readings of culture can change when “the focus is extended to […] the material world of the domestic” (Newton 1989:19), shifting focus from the construction of domination to specific environments and experiences. A dialectical relationship between the person and their lived discourse is proposed by feminist scholars, arguing that men and women are “makers as well as users of culture, subjected to the same ideological constraints, yet forcefully resisting those same constraints” (Walkowitz 1989:238).

Post-colonial scholars, many from Latin America, adopted a similar orientation, drawing on their experience of the power of local discourses to contest the dominant colonial discourse and its legacies (Alva 1995). In this post-colonial analysis history is not a single narrative. There are multiple discourses that “jostle up against each other, fight and conspire together, influence and change each other: they make us and we make them” (Gee 1994:4).

In this more contemporary analysis, Galtung’s “being power” now appears as a space to independently develop a learning community capable of conscious collaboration to evolve an autonomous discourse. In the United States, this process goes by the name of “organizing”.

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35 The study of colonialism and its legacies is riddled with suffixes. Views about post-, de- and re-colonisation have their basis in differing perspectives on the project of modernity, yielding a range of post-modern, post-structural and finally neo-conservative counter-projects. Habermas (Modernity versus Postmodernity, New German Critique, No. 22, 1981) and Giddens (Modernism and Post-modernism, New German Critique, No. 22, 1981) consider the modern and post-modern projects in detail. This is a significant debate that will be considered later in the present study in relation to conceptualisations of power in the context of Habermas’s critique of Aristotelian praxis. For the present, the use of the term “post-colonial” is adopted from Jorge de Alva and signifies “not so much subjectivity after the colonial experience as a subjectivity of oppositionality to imperialising/colonising discourses and practices” (Alva 1995:245). This definition allows the inclusion of the range of post-colonial conflict from geographically displaced peoples such as African-Americans to anti-colonial resistance to imperial culture in both de-colonised and settler states in the Pacific and Australia.
BRG’s aim of establishing a “core group of community organizers” and its strategy of “training” reflects the North American tradition of “organizing”. As far back as the ride of Paul Revere, North American culture supports independent citizen organisation, as noted by de Tocqueville (de Tocqueville 1945, first published 1835). In the context of the present study, the term is identified with “left-wing” organizing in the tradition of Mary Harris “Mother” Jones, who organized for the United Mine Workers Union and later co-founded the International Workers of the World. In the 1930s the organization of unemployed people gave rise to the Worker’s Alliance of America, and the simultaneous movement of organized labour produced the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. Post-war, the exemplars are the Civil Rights Movement that spawned a range of actions and organisations: the Freedom Rides, the Birmingham sit-ins, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, and Students for a Democratic Society, to name a few; and the movement of welfare recipients that led to the formation of the National Welfare Rights Organisation (Piven & Cloward 1977). Organizers strengthen, connect and mobilise grassroots groups to enhance their leadership, voice and power. Dave Beckwith from the Centre for Community Change defines organizing as:

the process of building power through involving a constituency in identifying problems they share and the solutions to those problems that they desire; identifying the people and structures that can make those solutions possible; enlisting those targets in the effort through negotiation and using confrontation and pressure when needed; and building an institution that is democratically controlled by that constituency that can develop the capacity to take on further problems and that embodies the will and the power of that constituency (Beckwith & Lopez 1997).

Today in the United States, community organizing is a well-established professional discipline. Prominent institutions include the National Organizers Alliance (founded in 1993 and based in Washington DC), publisher of Ark, a magazine for community organizers; the Centre for Community Change (founded in 1968, originally based in Chicago and now with offices in New York and Washington DC); and the Midwest Academy (founded in 1973 and based in Chicago), a training school for community
organizers. The Academy was founded by Heather Booth and her husband Paul Booth, a founder and former national secretary of Students for a Democratic Society and former president of Chicago’s Citizen Action Program, formed in 1969 by trainees from Saul Alinsky’s Industrial Areas Foundation (Midwest Academy 2011).

Saul Alinsky is one of the doyens of organizing. His two small books, Reveille for Radicals (1969) and Rules for Radicals (1971) arranged and made more accessible his process for organizing empowering action. Alinsky’s organizing experience began with his PhD work at the University of Chicago. In this context, during the 1930s he participated in the organization of a diverse coalition of groups from the “Back of the Yards”, the industrial area adjacent to the Chicago stockyards. At the time, Alinsky saw that

community organizational enterprises have traditionally confined themselves to co-ordination of professional formal agencies which are, first, superimposed upon the community and, second, play a superficial role in the life of the community. It is a rare phenomenon today to discover a community organization in which the indigenous interest and action groups of the community not only participate but also play a fundamental role in that organization (Alinsky 1941:797).

Alinsky’s focus on organizing “indigenous” organisations capable of mobilising a constituency in direct action later led to him forming the Industrial Areas Foundation to train community organizers. Under this model, the organizer has the catalytic function of facilitating and mediating between interest groups in a constituency with the aim of organizing for action. Heather Booth states this as the formula “OOO = Organizers Organize Organizations” (Beckwith & Lopez 1997). 36 Alinsky states that these organisations have two major functions: to “generate power” and develop a “people’s program”, which can then yield a “people’s movement” (Alinsky 1969:54–55).

In structuring training for organizers, Alinsky distilled the foundational language of “tactics” and “targets” which are “frozen”. Alinsky’s tactics are based on studying relationships of power. Tactics should evolve from a group’s own thinking, be fun and a piece of political theatre. The target of those tactics should be a person or group that has authority vested in it by existing power relations. The target is isolated based on its

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36 With respect to BRG, and the guideline to not build an institution, note that Beckwith is referring to “institution” building in the community, not the organisation that organises.
vulnerability and position in the decision-making process people are seeking to affect, and then “frozen”, or made the exclusive target of attack. As others come to the defence of the target, the campaign widens. This narrowing of tactics can make the protest appear overly dogmatic, but is necessary, Alinsky says, when “in a complex and urban society it becomes increasingly difficult to single out who is to blame for any particular evil” (Alinsky 1971:130). Freezing targets is a matter of personifying injustice in order to make protest actionable. Alinsky’s principles have been expanded upon over the years. In a more contemporary vein, Dave Beckwith from the Centre for Community Change37 outlines four principles for community organizing that can be paralleled with BRG’s approach:

• People are motivated by their self-interest (BRG: start from where the people are at; what are their issues?);
• Community organizing is a dynamic process (BRG: maintain ongoing contact with the community through the process as it develops);
• Learn to deal with conflict and confrontation (BRG: promotion of self-reliance is inherently in conflict with industrial-scale development, requiring “a certain fearlessness” as a quality of Community Organisers;
• Take into account the fundamental definition of an issue, and mould group goals that are immediate, specific and realisable (BRG: work to create critical consciousness and use this to develop strategies and tactics for a specific set of circumstances) (after Beckwith & Lopez 1997).

The American emphasis on citizen organisations recalls Roughan’s approach to community development, much of which was based on the work of John Freidmann (Freidmann 1978). Freidmann stressed the necessity of building power through “linkage”. He in turn quotes Uphoff and Esman who accent linkage “horizontally […] at the same level and especially vertically between local organisations and structures at the centre of government”. Emphasising “structures”, Uphoff and Esman point to the potential effectiveness of vertical integration of strategies to achieve change. This is a strategy that has been used by BRG. The client community is linked by the Community Organizers and BRG staff to, for example, legal resources to undertake court action challenging government decision-making. Through BRG and the PNG legal system, landowners are linked vertically to directly challenge corruption and

37 CCC helps “poor people develop their own strong organizations to improve their communities and change policies and institutions that affect their lives”. http://www.communitychange.org/
faulty decision-making at the highest level. In community organizing, the success of this linkage rests first on the mandate of the client community, established by the Community Organizers. In challenging structures of power through collective action, the active community is supported by BRG as part of the community’s collective action.

This vertical integration shows how community organizers can play a bridging function, bringing communities into direct contact with the decision-making processes that affect them through the provision of skills and resources. For BRG it is about provision of means, not definition of ends. This is not to say that the community totally controls the agenda. As the description of BRG’s practice shows, BRG is highly selective about the communities with which it works. Not only is local motivation essential, but there must also be a congruence of worldview, a meeting of minds between BRG’s tacit and fluid vision of the future, its “telos”, and the aspirations of the client community. This telos is, as Alinsky says, essentially about how the “Have-nots can take power away from the Haves” (Alinsky 1971:130). In this sense, organizing is about growing community as well as giving it expression in action. It is this intentional approach to community that links these three strains of praxis from North America: corporate training, classroom pedagogy, and contemporary community organizing. As the example of BRG also demonstrates, in organizing for empowerment, the intentional community of practice is an essential component.

2.2.4 Modernity, Community and Dissent

The creation of intentional communities has been theorised as a response to global modernity (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994). As the project of modernity reached global scale, the relationship between humanity and its environment fundamentally changed. The environment was no longer able to provide sufficient resilience to compensate for humanity’s consumption and waste. Rather than the “end of history” (Fukuyama 1992), it is the death of nature that defines our age. Beck characterises this as the existence of global, uninsurable risk, entering the lexicon during the 1990s as the “risk society” (Beck 1992). The other prominent author on global risk, Anthony Giddens, states it thus: “henceforth and for the foreseeable future, with all its imponderables, we are dealing with a human rather than a natural order” (Giddens 1994:78). It follows that the evolution of social critique becomes much more than an academic exercise. Our own conscious efforts must take the place of the balancing forces of nature. What is significant here for the present study is that in the context of
global modernity, the process of evolving this critique is founded in how the modern intentional community defines itself.

The above material compared BRG with Northern practices aimed at transforming workplaces, classrooms, interest associations and finally society. In common is this defining characteristic of creating intentional communities. In Scott Lash’s definition, these modern communities “consciously pose themselves the problem of their own creation and constant re-invention far more than traditional communities” (Lash 1994:161). Believing that the traditional community, be it workplace, classroom or neighbourhood, is a “receding social structure” (Lash 1994:111) eroded by the globalisation of modernity, Lash sees the need to conceptualise community anew. He locates his definition of the modern community in Hegelian Sittlichkeit, “concrete ethical life” (Lash 1994:148), expressed in Sitten, accepted daily practices or habit. It can be seen that this nicely parallels SIDT’s “philosophy”, and BRG’s search for “like minded people” to join the organisation. The creation of new practices that buttress this community is reflected in SIDT “carving out an identity”, or BRG’s emphasis on extended briefings and debriefings creating a setting deliberately contradicting the force of the clock and the deadline.

Jurgen Habermas, in his Theory of Communicative Action (Habermas 1984, Habermas 1987), argues that this process of communal self-definition is underwritten by that which is “explicitly aimed at critique of system order to win space for the lifeworld” (Lash 1994:140). In addition to Lash, other authors, including Minkler and Wallerstein employ this language of “lifeworld” and “system”. Freire and the Latins also demonstrate a connection to this language through their Hegelian roots. In Habermas’s view, the fundamental integrative tool that provides a legitimate sense of “we” is communication. This integrative function draws upon the “lifeworld”, meaning the shared understandings, including values, which develop through face-to-face contact. This recalls the arguments used by feminist and post-colonial scholars to carve out a space for ordinary experience as a legitimate source of knowledge. According to Habermas, the legitimacy of the lifeworld is rendered ineffective, or “colonised”, by system. This is the rationalised world of capital and power, constructing atomised individuals as part of the system – as worker or housewife, as a task rather than as flesh and blood. It is Habermas’s view that since the legitimacy of values is born in lifeworld communication, the continuing colonisation of the lifeworld by system ultimately leads to a crisis of the values and common understandings that bind
societies. Since system also depends upon the lifeworld for its legitimacy – for example the belief that system operates in the best interests of all citizens – active restoration of group legitimacy, called “communicative action”, is inevitably a critique of system function.\textsuperscript{38}

It is in this context that Lash develops his description of “reflexive community”. This community is not the same as an interest association, nor is it about shared characteristics, say, being “Melanesian”, or “rural villager”. It is about agreement on what Habermas would call “discursively redeemable validity claims”. These are the instruments of consensual power, what Lash calls “unthought categories” that are the “ontological foundations of practical consciousness” (Lash 1994:154). Note that this is not about questioning tradition in the sense of counter-factual subjectivism. Communally, there is no subject, there is only “we”. Participants are worlded together in what Lash terms “hermenautic reflexivity” (Lash 1994:158). This praxis operates to turn tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge by generating cognitive psychological awareness, a mindful comprehension of the self, understood through these unrecognised instruments of habit, emotion and values as employed in the speech acts of the collective. As constituents of the lifeworld, these are the ingredients of evolving critical consciousness. This reflexive, intentional community is a more concrete form of Galtung’s and Freire’s conception of dialogue.

What follows is the creation of an alternative discourse. In the present study, this has its precursor in the definition of self-reliance, Galtung’s “contradicting the exploitation and penetration by the West” in centre-periphery relations. In terms of lifeworld and system, self-reliance can now be more specifically defined as the “withdrawal of obedience to institutions that have lost their legitimacy” based on “common conviction” (Habermas 1977:81). This is demonstrated in the way BRG’s “different agendas” allowed them to reject the UNDP offer. It is an agenda bolstered by consciousness that, says Chitoa, “it’s basically a common enemy that they’re up against – globalisation” (Tarczynski 2007).

So, it is evident that, as in a post-colonial analysis, this alternative discourse is evolved from the lifeworld. Habermas’s conceptualisation of lifeworld and system adds dimension to Galtung’s portrayal of human development as analysed in the Development Wheel. The basic dichotomy between actors and structures is retained in the lifeworlds and system of Habermas. More concretely than Galtung, for Habermas

\textsuperscript{38} Communicative action and its implications for empowerment is discussed further in Chapter 5.
the collective self is “worlded” in speech acts – what Foucault calls the “gap between” where meaning is created. While Galtung and Roughan were acutely aware of not wishing to impose values, and are open about the value basis they take, in emphasising social spaces, Habermas provides a way to conceive of not the values themselves, but the way they are made overt in a community worlded in alternative discourse. That this outcome is one posed in contradiction to the colonisation of the lifeworld, and is a reclamation of social space, means that dissent is necessarily a characteristic of the modern reflexive community. In as much as they define themselves autonomously through the ingredients of the lifeworld, this type of dissent appears as a characteristic of both SIDT, “questioning the conventional development wisdom”, and BRG, “to fight against the exploitation of people, land and resources in Papua New Guinea”.

In its communal dissent, creation of an alternative discourse is an expression of power, the ability to say “no” to systematic colonisation by modernity. Quoting Thomas Jefferson, Habermas affirms the “emphatic concept of praxis” that “no one really possesses power; it springs up between men when they act together” (Habermas 1977:81).

2.2.5 Informational Tools

An interpretation of the informational tools used by BRG provides an opportunity to further build on the discussion of Habermas’s theory of communicative action. Achieving understanding in language requires a “rationally motivated agreement among participants that is measured against criticisable validity claims” (Habermas 1984:75). For Habermas, this “agreement” can be seen as four “analytically distinguishable concepts” of action. Types of validity claims used in these forms of social action “characterise different categories of a knowledge embodied in symbolic expressions”: knowledge that is utilitarian, normative knowledge, and subjective knowledge (Habermas 1984:75). According to Habermas, actors draw on these three types of knowing, or “worlds”, in different ways when engaged in communication. These three types represent different uses of the ingredients of the intersubjectively shared lifeworld, which is found already interpreted, and forms the background for

39 To be discussed further in Chapter 6, briefly, Habermas’s four concepts of action are: 1. Aristotelian teleological action (decision making): actor attains end by choice of means. Collectively expands to strategic action. 2. Individual normatively regulated action: members of a social group who orient their action to common values, comply with norms, “expectation of behaviour”. 3. Group dramaturgical action: participants in interaction “constituting a public for one another”. Purposefully disclosing subjectivity. (Desires and feelings, romance). 4. Public communicative action: at least two subjects who “seek to reach an understanding about the action situation in order to coordinate their actions by way of agreement”. Consensual intention.
communicative action when participants refer thematically to something in the world. Habermas sees that for the social scientist, the world problematises itself in the “objective contents of thought”, the objectivity of a “problematic, uncomprehended complex of meaning that can be opened up only through intellectual labour” (Popper quoted in Habermas 1984:76–78). This problematising becomes communicative action when claims to objective truth, interpersonal norms and subjective sincerity are ascribed to the perspective of the speakers and hearers themselves. It is the actors themselves who seek consensus and measure it […] against the “fit” or “misfit” between the speech-act, on the one hand, and the three worlds to which the actor takes up relations with [her] utterance (Habermas 1984:100 italics in original).

Chapter 1 considered critical consciousness in terms of dialogue. Here, the concept of dialogue, word and action, has now been further described in terms of communicative action that relates actors to the world through their own interaction. The independence of critical consciousness is achieved by subjects mediating content from objective (the totality of all entities about which true statements are possible), social (the totality of all legitimately regulated interpersonal relations) and subjective (the totality of the experiences of the speaker to which she has privileged access) types of social action to “mobilise the rationality potential” in communicative action (Habermas 1984:99). Communicative action requires “tools” that are validated by all three worlds. While Habermas uses the speech-act as the appeal to validity, it is important to note that the communicative model of action is not the same as communication. Lash’s use of Zeuge, “gear”, to expand the meaning of the speech act to include “language and informational tools” (Lash 1994:149) and their symbolic contents, is appropriate. The speech-act is any medium of communication whereby actors come to an understanding with one another.

In Habermas’s delicate dissection of types of action, and drawing on the applicable “thematic segment” of the lifeworld, the objectivity of communicative action creates the potential autonomy of the intentional collective. While Habermas assumes a phenomenological approach, this objectivity gives greater clarity about critical consciousness as being autonomous in its ontological status. Lash supports this view. For Lash, Habermas’s “communicative rationality” is a means “by which intersubjectivity can roll back the claims of the system, and expand the space of the life world” (Lash 1994:145). The cooperatively pursued goal of reaching
understanding produces these substantive goods of shared meanings, Lash’s “tools and products” of reflexive communities. The cultural goods produced in the specialist field of BRG and the paraprofessionals as skilled organizers are “produced as much by the supporters as the players” (Lash 1994:161), that is, engagement with people of the likes of Filip Damen of the Wanang clans is a necessary part of the creation of shared meaning that drives the change process. The tools and skills of the paraprofessionals alone are not enough to produce change. There must also be communication that affirms shared beliefs about the world, such that the client group can identify with and build innovative action from the information and other resources BRG makes available. Together, through this communicative action, the paraprofessionals and their clients create a legitimate community.

In this way it can be seen that collaboratively developed informational tools such as the Timeline and Question Man embody communicative action. This is significant for two reasons. Firstly, the images propose an alternative to Freire and Foucault in declaring the capability of people themselves to innovate by deploying the material of their lifeworld as an act of negation to the world. There is no “false consciousness”, nor is the dissemination of power ubiquitous. Secondly, they are images in which “cultural tradition is itself made thematic” (Habermas 1984:77), giving it and other categories of the lifeworld an objective existence, where formally they have been “unthought” (Lash) or “undiscovered” (Habermas).

2.2.6 Risk and Tradition

In respect of modernity and globalisation, reference has already been made to the status of risk. In his critique of Beck, Giddens makes a point which further contributes to Lash’s characterisation of community in reflexive modernity with respect to the interpretation of BRG praxis. Giddens suggests that “risk and trust […] need to be analysed together in conditions of late modernity”. Modern, reflexive society is “not only a risk society” but also one in which trust has to be “energetically treated and sustained” (Giddens 1994:186) by the reflexive community.

Like Lash, Giddens questions “the old dichotomy between community and association” (Giddens 1994:186). He proposes that there now exist “new forms of social solidarity” maintained by “active trust” (Giddens 1994:186). While Giddens’s vision is oriented to the West, a dispersed so-called “me generation”, the evidence shows that BRG is conscious of this type of solidarity as part of its group dynamic. “Trust building” exercises are a regular part of its practice, and the relationship with
both client communities and donors is founded on trust that must be actively maintained. While Beck’s view is that global society is defined negatively, by generating common risks, Giddens argues that the flip side of this is that risk collectively taken can build trust. In the case of BRG, this can be the first personal risk of allowing oneself to be vulnerable and authentic in establishing collective solidarity, or the collective risk of turning down the “millions of Kina that were on offer”.

In this vein, Giddens proposes “two directly connected domains of transformation”, the “extensional spread of modernity” on the one hand and the “processes of intentional change” (Giddens 1994:57) on the other. With respect to the former, as discussed above, saying “no” negates the global universalisation of modern institutions, Habermas’s “system”. With regard to intentional change, Giddens proposes that processes of intentional change require “the disinterring and problematising of tradition”. The choice of language is perhaps unfortunate, and being cautious of the idea that tradition could somehow be a problem, Habermas’s characterisation of reflexivity as making cultural tradition “thematic” is to be preferred.

What is important to note here is that as a domain of transformation, intentional change poses a risk to tradition, just as does modernity. In building collective solidarity, tradition is always at risk. It follows that maintaining discursively redeemable validity demands that the group have control of the content and process of change. Without control – or to use Habermas’s language again, without the group defining itself autonomously through mediation of elements of the lifeworld – group solidarity cannot be maintained, because group validation will collapse. For each participant who has placed him- or herself at stake in a process of change, this is a personal risk. In this theoretical context, practising personal risk through trust-building and group practice exercises prepares the paraprofessionals for questioning long-held beliefs and practices among themselves and in the community.40 It is in this transformative domain of risk and trust that the bonds are made between personal and collective power.

2.3 Summary

The analysis of BRG began with four defining elements: a BRG community; empowering practitioners; the ability to say “no”; and paraprofessionals as community...

40 The Timeline plays a central part of the work of the Social Empowerment Education Program in Fiji, and will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter.
organizers. Exploring comparable practice in corporations, classroom education and organizing in the United States, and investing this with a theoretical basis from contemporary social science, has led to an analysis based on globalisation and modernity.

This analysis has implications for defining community. In the present study, community has been defined as being realised in “communicative action”, in which actors collectively mediate objective, normative and subjective knowledge and make thematic the stock of cultural knowledge, the “lifeworld” that forms the background to these. Lash calls this “hermeneutic reflexivity”. Community is necessarily defined this way in response to the invasiveness of modernity. It is implicit in this definition that the formation of community is intentional – that is, it has a voluntary aspect – and that it is teleological, as shown in the first instance by its negation of modernity based on lifeworld praxis expressed in the practice of “organizing”. This is in sharp contrast to traditional definitions of community.

As well as contributing this definition of community, this analysis has led to understanding the four perspectives from the previous chapter\(^{41}\) in terms of a single theoretical approach: communicative action. In terms of actors and structures, communicative action relates actors to each other through the analytically different worlds of objective, normative and subjective knowledge, each embedded in a lifeworld which is progressively colonised under the conditions of modernity. In terms of dialogue and a person-centred approach to development, it can now be said that when participants are worlded together in hermeneutic reflexivity, praxis operates to make overt what was formerly tacit knowledge – “unthought” categories. This process contributes to evolving critical consciousness by producing a mindful awareness of self as embedded in the lifeworld. This process can only be achieved in the context of a voluntary group or “community”, meaning at least two persons, and that this process also necessarily will involve system critique. This further suggests that empowerment must be a consequence of the communication that occurs when a group intentionally comes together for a purpose. In order to more closely examine the nature of this communication as a psychological phenomenon, the next chapter considers a more specific example of how the dimensions of the lifeworld can be made explicit by exploring the psychological force of narrative and its effect on civil society in Fiji.

\(^{41}\) Person-centred development; actor/structure; self-reliance and centre-periphery relations; dialogue.
Chapter 3

Social Empowerment Education Program – New Narratives

“[O]ne way out of this is through creating a new narrative ...”

Sister Emi Frances Oh, response to questionnaire (Barcham 2009)

3.1 Part I – Profile

3.1.1 Introduction

The Social Empowerment Education Program (SEEP) began in 2001 as one component program of the Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECREA), based in Suva, Fiji. To demonstrate the challenges confronted by civil society organisations in Fiji, the origins of ECREA and SEEP are here interwoven with some of the fraught politics of the island state.

From Independence in 1970 until the formation of the Fiji Labour Party in 1985, ethnic Fijians dominated the Fijian parliament. In 1987, a coalition led by Timoci Bavadra, an ethnic Indian, won power for the Fiji Labour Party. In the same year, Lieutenant-Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka, a figure who bound together “Christianity, chieftliness and politics” (Tomlinson 2011), led a coup to restore ethnic Fijian rule. Thousands of ethnic Indians fled the country. Rabuka held new elections after introducing a racially discriminatory constitution in 1990. At that time, seeking to respond to “escalating religious tension, racial strife, poverty and unemployment” (Khan 2008), a group known as the Fiji Institute of Contextual Theology formed, changing its name to the Fiji Council of Churches Research Group on becoming a member of the Fiji Council of Churches (FCC) in 1991.

By 1997, Fiji again had a racially non-discriminatory constitution, and in 1999 the Fiji Labour Party formed a government led by Mahendra Chaudhry, like Bavadra before him, an ethnic Indian. In the interim, in 1998, the FCC Research Group held a strategic planning workshop. The participants at the workshop highlighted “the need to empower people and their communities for participation and involvement in the social, economic and political issues that affect their lives and the lives of others in the wider community” (Khan 2003).
In May 2000, businessman George Speight and retired major Ilisoni Ligairi stormed parliament, again aiming to make Indigenous Fijians politically dominant. Taking Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry and his cabinet hostage, Speight proclaimed himself acting premier. The President, Ratu Mara, sacked the Chaudhry government on the orders of Fiji’s Great Council of Chiefs. In late 2000, following a “relationship review” (ECREA 2011) with the FCC, the Research Group registered under the Charitable Trust Act using the name Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECREA).

ECREA was officially launched on 25 October 2001. Its aims are to address the social, religious, economic and political issues facing Fiji by subscribing to the principles of social justice and equity, integral human development, and servant leadership. ECREA is a member of the Asia-Pacific Research Network, World Association for Christian Community, Jubilee South, and the Asian Coalition for Human Rights (ECREA 2011).

In a pamphlet produced in 2001 entitled “Community Empowerment”, ECREA places itself firmly in an activist role in civil society:

Democracy is often described as “government of the people, for the people, by the people”. It will only really succeed if we, the ordinary people, get involved and continually participate in the life of society – challenging our leaders and urging them to respond to the needs we see around us (ECREA 2001).

Also in 2001, a six-month pilot program called the Social Empowerment and Education Program (SEEP) was initiated by ECREA. In response to the 2000 coup, ECREA conceived SEEP as a means to seek restorative justice and empower Indigenous Fijians to participate in civil society beyond the ballot. Given the activist role envisaged by ECREA, it is worth taking a moment to further consider the complex environment in which SEEP operates.

The Indigenous Fijian social context has several layers of highly structured and formal leadership. From colonial times, land registration has existed through the Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB), which regulates landowner identity through registration of villages and mataqali, the land-owning entity represented by leaders of family groups. As a consequence, the NLTB has a powerful influence over development decisions and the distribution of financial benefit from land rent or compensation. The mataqali is a sub-set of both the village (koro), and the clan (yavusa). At the village level, there will be both a chief of the mataqali and a chief of the village, the latter being an
administrative position created in colonial times, as well as pastors and/or catechists. Groups of *koro* form a *tikina* or district, which can be different from an administrative district. All Indigenous Fijians (*taukei ni qele*: “owners of soil”) are united by *vamua*, the system of chiefly kingdoms and common people together, incorporating both land and people.

As well as these parallel structures of modern and traditional leadership and land ownership, religion places another layer of strain on community coherence. There are a large number of Christian sects at work in Fiji, each competing for congregations, and each with different interpretations of leadership and of who is privileged in opportunities to preach and conduct ritual. Even small *koro* may host more than one sect. Muslim and Hindu faiths are also prominent.

Fijian Independence placed over this complexity an electoral process for selection of government representatives, and a parliamentary system of adversarial debate. The author suggests that it is not unreasonable to expect that with so many sources of legitimation, alternative forms of authority are likely to be asserted in these circumstances. It is the author’s view that Fiji’s “coup culture” (Oh 2009) is one expression of this. This is not to condone government-by-force, but it does place emphasis on the historically determined structures that lead to coup culture, rather than the specific actors. It is the author’s view that “coup culture” is a response to dealing with a highly complex and difficult post-colonial environment. Part of that response is based in ethnic differentiation between the Fijian descendants of indentured Indian labourers and Indigenous Fijians – a further layer of tension and complexity in this small island state. The Indigenous population was legally prevented from participation in the colonial economy, while the chiefly system of governance was permitted to continue and was itself co-opted into the colonial governance structure. The British largely went home at Independence. The Indians had made home in Fiji (Douglas & Nasoga 2008). As Fraenkel and Firth note, “Fiji’s problem since independence in 1970 has not been state weakness but rather the ethnic divisions created in colonial times by the British” (Fraenkel & Stewart 2007).

This background serves to suggest the scale of the task confronted by SEEP. ECREA Director Chantelle Khan sees SEEP as a strategy for people-centred development – development that “empowers people to regain control of their communities and organizations […] and make decisions that contribute to the community and organizational human development, ecological sustainability [and] economic
productivity” by focusing on restoring power and confidence to civil society (Khan 2003). SEEP takes the view that the highly structured and formal forms of authority in Fiji – in the family, village, church, school and ultimately the nation – lead to people being dependent and passive. Overcoming this Fijian “culture of silence” is seen as part of this process of change. Ordinary people are “afraid to speak up” and “do not take any initiative or responsibility themselves”. While tradition demands “an appropriate sense of obedience and respect for those in authority”, it is SEEP’s view that this culture of silence needs to be questioned (SEEP 2008).

For SEEP, being “empowered” means that people can:

- come to recognise their own dignity and value;
- realise that everyone is committed to shared values;
- gain confidence to express their opinions and influence the decisions which affect their lives;
- claim their rights as citizens;
- realise that acting in solidarity is necessary for wider change. (SEEP 2008)

Oxfam, Caritas and the Christian World Service have supported the Social Empowerment Education Program through its parent body, the Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy. SEEP is opaque to some donors, who fund ECREA generically. Consequently, sources of information specifically about SEEP are limited. Oxfam prepared a case study for the AusAID Building Demand for Better Governance initiative (McErvale & McLelland 2007), using SEEP’s experience, and AusAID features SEEP in its 2007–08 Annual Performance Report under the heading, Social empowerment and education in Fiji: The AusAID-NGO Cooperation Program – supporting community capacity building and development best practice (AusAID 2008). Apart from these limited and rather superficial sources, much of the following material comes from internal SEEP reporting of retreats and training, in addition to published ECREA reports and pamphlets.

It should also be noted that the present study examines SEEP as a component program of ECREA. Consequently, the line between SEEP and ECREA sometimes blurs. For example, an ECREA pamphlet quoted above, entitled “Community Empowerment”, does not mention SEEP, but it does provide important background to SEEP’s orientation. Similarly, ECREA lists 31 “strategic partners”, among them the Bismarck Ramu Group (BRG) (Khan 2008). SEEP and BRG formed a relationship from the commencement of the SEEP paraprofessional training program in 2001. It should be
apparent that SEEP has developed in a quite different cultural and political context to
the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) and BRG. The existence of this
relationship between BRG and SEEP provides an opportunity to examine the
adaptation of the BRG empowerment process to a novel cultural setting.

The initial SEEP training and six-month pilot was followed by a further three-year
pilot phase and a five-year program-development phase. Now mature, the Board of
ECREA agreed in 2009 to make the program independent of the parent body (Eagles
et.al. 2004; Barcham 2009). Khan, formerly Director of ECREA, moved with SEEP as
it became independent.

3.1.2 Aims and Objectives

In 2001 the SEEP Programme Advisory Committee produced a draft “Programme
Guide”. It states:

Mission: Provide training in critical literacy on awareness, education and
dialogue of one’s own development in face of rapid changes and global
forces, centred on Christ’s teachings.

Vision: building a harmonious nation of diverse communities through
participatory leadership development towards transformational personal
and social change.

Between 2001 and 2007, the Programme Advisory Committee, including Lalley from
BRG, Khan from ECREA, the SEEP program co-ordinator, Leo Nainoka, and another
member with connections to a range of Fijian civil society organisations, continued to
meet for reflection and planning. Additionally, the community facilitators did field
patrols, a SEEP group spent time with BRG in Papua New Guinea, and SEEP
significantly modified the BRG tools and methodology in the course of further
fieldwork. Within ECREA, SEEP remained small. “Scouting” field trips to identify
communities interested to work with the SEEP program had yielded a “poor response”
– another way of saying progress was slow and difficult, and there were some false
starts. However, by 2009, SEEP had successfully engaged with one tikina of six
communities in the Noemalu district (Barcham 2009).

42 At one point, SEEP sought to provide itself with a base outside Suva, as part of a rural
community. Some family ties with the community facilitators led to a good deal of confusion –
another example of the experience of SIDT and BRG in not having family members work in their
own area.
In 2007, at the end of two three-year funding cycles, SEEP was “contributing to the ECREA vision by focusing on rural Indigenous communities working on social justice through contextual critical analysis of history and the Fijian culture” (Khan 2007). By 2007, SEEP had the following objectives:

- to strengthen ECREA’s community empowerment process and overall approach to working with communities;
- to strengthen and support a national network of community facilitators and change agents;
- to provide opportunities for community leaders to share experience, develop new knowledge and skills and address issues of mutual concern (Khan 2007).

By 2009, SEEP had identified the issues of land and leadership as two matters of mutual concern to village communities and SEEP. It was SEEP’s view that these two issues were of importance at local, district, provincial and national levels. SEEP planned its “conscientization” process to meet this need, and implemented this process in Noemalu District. In the course of the 2009 evaluation, the author toured the Noemalu district of Viti Levu with Wina Kyoga of BRG and Cema Rokodredre of SEEP. Our observations absolutely confirm the views first expressed by McErvale and McLelland: that the SEEP process can produce highly significant change. In relation to the SEEP objectives of encouraging mataqali to broaden participation in decision making, there appears to have been a fundamental shift in approach. Most noticeable is the vocal place assumed by women, who are “now permitted to present their opinions in village decision-making meetings where previously they had been entirely excluded” (McErvale & McLelland 2007). At the same time as giving people confidence in their identity by rooting them in a positive traditional narrative, the SEEP process allows leaders and led to create new social contracts, to shift responsibilities and to confirm those outcomes through traditional ritual. One example of this was the formal induction of new leadership in one community of the Noemalu district, with the SEEP paraprofessionals participating as invited guests at the ceremony (Barcham 2009). Participating communities show greater coherence and purposefulness. In 2009–10, SEEP continued to work through how to bring these issues of land and leadership, and the transformation communities have achieved, to bear on the national stage.
3.1.3 Strategies

The SEEP community development process is the result of the experience of the pilot phases of the project, combined with BRG’s experience of community engagement. SEEP Community Facilitators and other staff from SEEP have undertaken field experience in Madang Province and have attended BRG training. Khan recognised in BRG an approach to community engagement and empowerment that coincided with her own views and the philosophy of ECREA. As mentioned above, Lalley, the BRG technical adviser, has been directly involved as a SEEP facilitation trainer since 2001, and there have been a number of staff exchanges. Initially the SEEP process was based on the model of touring teams of paraprofessionals (Community Facilitators); however, SEEP’s approach continues to be modified as the program gains further experience.

Knowledge and practice of Indigenous Fijian protocol is a selection criterion for the SEEP Community Facilitators (CFs). The current CFs are of the view that this excludes Indian Fijians from at least the facilitation process in communities. However, given that SEEP was conceived and led by Khan, who is of Indian descent, there is acknowledgment that cooperation with Indian Fijians is vital to the future of Fiji (Barcham 2009). As of 2011, the community development model used by SEEP is aimed at various leadership groups – traditional, modern, church, female, youth and informal Indigenous – in the communities of a single tikina. It involves leaders and communities in a two-step process. Like BRG, the first step is engagement and trust building, including clarification of SEEP’s reasons for being in the community. Also like BRG, SEEP makes it quite clear that its involvement in the community is in no way coupled with material incentives, and that its focus is on self-reliance and community control. The second step is a critical analysis of Fijian history and community structures. SEEP refers to this as the Community Analysis Process (CAP), which is split into three components: CAP 1, CAP 2, and CAP 3. The model of engagement and analysis aims to build a participatory space where a broader range of people can express their views and negotiate solutions. Observation suggests that the individual CFs play a huge part in the process as role models (Barcham 2009). The way the team works together, the style of cooperation between men and women, the degree to which women are vocal and the level of participation in community activities are all closely observed by the community while the CFs are present. While it is probably true that this is the case in all circumstances where outsiders seek to engage
with a small community, it strikes the author as a particularly powerful cue for change in the Fijian context.

Like BRG, SEEP and the community facilitators allocate time and use their communication skills to establish a relationship with the community by listening. CFs emphasise that the community must take ownership of the issues they themselves raise, and not expect that either SEEP or the CFs will provide solutions for them. Independent community action catalysed by SEEP intervention has included: ceremonies to delegate authority or achieve reconciliation; coming to terms with inconsistency between traditional and other value systems; allowing the participation of women; renegotiating conflict between traditional and modern leaders; initiation of new development goals; and recommencement of community associations (women, youth) supported by solesolevaki (meaning working together on cooperative ventures, typically fundraising, but also a commercial kava cooperative). Community ownership has been demonstrated by communities’ willingness to themselves negotiate solutions to issues identified by them, including the often tense and conflicted issues of land and leadership.

SEEP has also made significant changes to the BRG approach, most obviously by introducing regional leaders’ meetings called Community Forums. To facilitate these gatherings, Community Facilitators use the same range of analysis tools and discussion as used within the communities. The Community Forum will be made up of both formal and informal leadership, including women and youth leaders, traditional and modern leaders, and religious leaders. The impetus to vary the BRG model and incorporate a leadership forum appears to have sprung from the particularly Fijian deference to authority (Barcham 2009). The Community Forum process provides leaders with an opportunity for discussion of community issues in a structured setting away from their families, koro and congregations. Simultaneously, SEEP community visits encourage communities to clarify the issues they need to deal with in order to achieve community aspirations, and in particular to clarify and act on the interrelated issues of land and leadership. These two approaches of forums and community visits are seen by SEEP as mutually supportive.

This is an interesting development. The original SIDT model of mobile teams, ‘paraprofessionals’, was a deliberate strategy to get education out into the context where it would be applied, so that learning and doing became one and the same thing. While this appears to make sense from a pedagogical point of view, BRG trainers have
also expressed a preference for intensive training in an environment separate from the everyday demands of the community, and SEEP has now institutionalised leadership group training as a separate activity to community “conscientization”.

In the Fijian context, bringing leaders together out of the immediate context of their community appears to be linked to the specific needs of formal and informal leaders and leadership structures as critical to change among taukei. Isolating the leaders from the led provides an opportunity for people who are often in conflict to reconsider their roles and their stake in the wellbeing of their community. It is also an expression of the confidence and fearlessness of the SEEP CFs, in deliberately bringing together people known to be in conflict over the key issues of leadership and land ownership. This is a substantial move on from the SIDT approach of using integration of “the project” or “appropriate technology” with quality of life as an indirect means to generate reflection. Here, participants are invited to use a structured, neutral setting to get straight to the heart of the matter of resolving conflicts over their most difficult issues.

3.1.4 Tools and Methodologies

Looking to the SEEP graphic tools, it is reflection on the internal dynamics of country and community that stands out. Tools used by the Community Facilitators include new graphics, such as “Above and Below the Table” (Appendix 9), and “codes”, such as the “Theatre of the Oppressed” (Figure 7). Other SIDT inspired graphics have survived transfer to a new environment. The “Question Man”, originally derived from Galtung’s social cosmology, is remarkable for its demonstrated durability and flexibility of application. SEEP’s emphasis on civil society is evident, by way of contrast with SIDT and BRG. The conservation message is absent, with no images such as “Ha-Ha Richer”, and less direct concern with village assessment as in the Village Quality of Life Index. However, in terms of the work schedules of the paraprofessionals, there are many similarities with the BRG process. The work of the Community Facilitators includes briefing and debriefing, the community entry process (called “scouting”), the use of community mapping, presentations, and small and plenary discussion in the context of several extended visits. In addition, training forums are held outside of communities at a neutral location.

Of particular interest to the present study is the intensive use of the SEEP Timeline. While conceptually similar to the BRG model, the Timeline has had the content entirely reconstructed for use in an Indigenous Fijian context (Douglas & Nasoga 2008). The content is reinforced and supported by visits to the Fiji Museum during the
Community Forums. The following rendition of a sample of the Timeline content is based largely on the “Timeline” DVD produced by ECREA. “Timeline” provides a critical analysis of Fijian history from an Indigenous perspective. It begins by presenting a debate about the origins of taukei, exploring an Indigenous Fijian identity. It uses all the devices of drama and setting to propose an evidence-based narrative of Indigenous Fijian identity and society. Much of the early part of the DVD is devoted to the evidence of the Lapita migration. In order to convey what a radically different perspective the Timeline brings to taukei, it is necessary to tell a little of the story.

The Lapita culture is the name given to the artefactual remains associated with the people who settled the area east of the Solomon Islands, called Remote Oceania, between 3400 and 2900 years ago. The earliest Lapita sites were found in the Bismarck islands. Within 400 years the Lapita had spread over an area of 3400 kilometres, stretching through the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia, and eastward to Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. Located on small islands and the coasts of larger islands, and separated from one another by as much as 350 kilometres, the Lapita lived in villages of stilt-legged houses. They made earth-ovens and distinctive pottery, they fished and exploited marine and aquacultural resources, they raised domestic chickens, pigs and dogs, and they grew fruit- and nut-bearing trees (Hirst 2009). They also maintained fleets of ocean-going catamarans and possessed exceptional navigational skills.

Cannibalism was actively practised at the time that Christian missionaries arrived in Fiji, and was assumed by them to have been a constant of Indigenous culture. This myth was perpetuated by a story based on oral histories that was published in 1892 in the Fijian newspaper Na Mata (Douglas & Nasoga 2008). The story, the result of an essay competition run by missionaries, tells of migration from Africa in the canoe Kaunitoni by Lutunasobasoba and his kin. This story subsequently gained great

43 Directed by Scott Douglas, written by Scott Douglas and Isikeli Nasoga (RIP), and narrated by Isikeli Nasoga (with English subtitles).

44 Facilitators in the community setting do not use the DVD. When in a community, the facilitator enacts the narrative using photographs pegged to a line.
currency among Indigenous Fijians. Apparently unfamiliar with *Na Mata*, early anthropologists also helped to perpetuate the story, seemingly unaware of its origin (Raven-Hart 1956). There is no physical evidence of this migration; however, there are families who claim ancestry to Lutunasobasoba today. Their genealogies suggest an arrival around 1400AD. The latest estimate of the arrival of the Lapita people is 1200BC (Douglas & Nasoga 2008). Some histories record that Lutunasobasoba saw smoke, further suggesting prior occupation (Wright 1986).

The pottery remains of the Lapita migration at the Bourewa archeological dig, near Labasa on the island of Vanua Levu, show intricate design and artisanship. Jewellery and ornaments were worn. One shard shows skirted women joining hands in a line, perhaps dancing. Ledua Traill Kuilanisautuba, a Research Assistant with the University of the South Pacific at the Bourewa dig, provides much of the commentary on the Lapita artefacts. As the camera lingers on her features, it is clear that she bears a remarkable resemblance to a Lapita woman whose face was reconstructed from remains found at the dig. This reconstruction appears simultaneously in the camera’s frame. Nasoga speculates that from the evidence it would appear that the early Fijian lifestyle was inconsistent with war and cannibalism. He attributes the change to conflict, along with the change to the rigid authority structures and divisions of labour that remain part of contemporary Fijian culture, to a changing climate that put pressure on limited natural resources, bringing clans into conflict. The clear implication is that *taukei* have a great deal to be proud of in embracing their heritage, and that the rejection of a cannibal past brought on by acceptance of Christianity need not imply a complete rejection of *taukei* culture, as many seem to believe.

The SEEP “Timeline” DVD graphically explores this and many other important historical themes, from colonisation and the legal recognition of the Great Council of Chiefs, to the economy and labour relations, Independence and the 1987 coup. The narrative challenges contemporary beliefs about national identity at the same time as nurturing a positive, alternative narrative that resonates with *taukei* consciousness.

3.2 Part II: Analysis – Community Psychology

3.2.1 *Narrative and Empowerment*

The SEEP process has been informed by a combination of intellectual analysis, community engagement experience and Fijian knowledgeability. SEEP deliberately
takes people onto socially risky ground, questioning beliefs about the past and asking people to confront and resolve tensions and conflicts over the central issues of land ownership and leadership in communities. In these things it has been successful, producing significant change at the scale of whole communities.

In village life on Viti Levu, adherence to a hierarchy of authority can lock communities in indecision and uncertainty if senior leaders are absent in towns for long periods. SEEP has successfully mediated leadership transition in such communities. The strong presence of women in meetings held over kava is modelled by SEEP trainers. The effect on the many women present45 was to strengthen their participation in decision making about leadership. Sister Emi Frances Oh, a member of the SEEP Program Advisory Committee, commenting on the Timeline history narrative used by the Community Facilitators, says:

I believe that people are tired of this coup culture and its different faces and expressions in the power struggles for domination, the cycle of violence and the abuse of human rights […] and how these impact on the lives of ordinary Fiji citizens […] Fiji is stuck in an impasse right now and one way out of this is through creating a new narrative out of which people can start re-envisioning a desired future and how to move forward. [The Timeline] is a story that is credible and authentic […] The story is life-giving, that it can capture the imagination of the Fijian people as a nation … and to value our differences and diversity rather than demonizing them (Oh 2009).

The striking imagery of the SEEP Timeline indeed weaves “a story that is credible and authentic”. The external evaluations of SEEP (Eagles et.al. 2004; McErvale & McLelland 2007; Barcham 2009) show evidence of the success of the program, suggesting the important part the Timeline story has played in the change that has occurred in communities.

This transformative character of narrative is a concept developed by Julian Rappaport. In 1986, Rappaport received the Award for Distinguished Contributions to Community Psychology and Community Mental Health from the Community Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association at its annual conference. To appreciate Rappaport’s use of narrative, it is necessary first to introduce the field of community psychology. In his 1987 paper Terms of Empowerment/Exemplars of Prevention, based

45 Unusual in itself in the kava hut.
on the paper he gave at the 1986 conference, Rappaport suggested that an “ecological theory” is needed to guide research in the field of community psychology. While the notion of an “ecological theory” sounds vastly complex, what Rappaport is proposing is relatively modest in scope in comparison to the use of the term in the biological sciences. First, since the field of community psychology is by definition about groups, the field requires perspectives that can be “an antidote […] to the one-sidedness of person-centred programs” typical of the individualised approach of clinical psychology (Rappaport 1987:135). Secondly, community psychology needs to be concerned with the “environment” of the group, its historical and cultural context, and community “settings”. Thirdly, community psychology needs to invite research on “organizational processes, citizen participation, change in general and social change in particular, networks, social skills, and the psychological sense of community” (Rappaport 1987:135). As a consequence, Rappaport argues that empowerment should be accepted as the central “phenomenon of interest” for community psychology, along with the exemplar of prevention. This is because empowerment suggests both individual determination over one’s own life and democratic participation in the life of one’s community, often through mediating structures such as schools, neighbourhoods, churches, and other voluntary organizations. Empowerment conveys both a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power, and legal rights. It is a multilevel construct applicable to individual citizens as well as to organizations and neighbourhoods; it suggests the study of people in context (Rappaport 1987:121).

The influence of Rappaport’s 1987 paper remains visible in 2007, when, in a special issue of the *American Journal of Community Psychology* devoted to collaborative action and organisation, Boyd and Angelique state that “community psychologists study such things as empowerment, ecological analysis, sense of community, diversity, and prevention” (Boyd & Angelique 2007).

Half-way in time between these two publications, in 1995, Douglas Perkins and Marc Zimmerman co-edited another special edition of the *American Journal of Community Psychology*. The lead essay, “Empowerment Theory, Research and Application” (Perkins & Zimmerman 1995), canvases 10 years of progress in the field. Perkins and Zimmerman refer to the phenomenon of empowerment having “evolved from the new, paradigm-challenging concept to become itself highly popular and mainstream”
(Perkins & Zimmerman 1995:571). In common with the present study, they identify that popular adoption of empowerment has led to “casual usage” of the term, which is “often inadequately conceptualized and loosely defined” (Perkins & Zimmerman 1995:572).

Since Rappaport in 1987, in the field of community psychology, empowerment has been described as a “multi-level construct”. Zimmerman describes these levels as:

- **Personal**: perceptions of personal control, a proactive approach to life, and a critical understanding of the sociopolitical environment;
- **Organisational**: processes and structures that enhance members’ skills and provide them with the mutual support necessary to effect community level change;
- **Communal**: individuals working together in an organized fashion to improve their collective lives and linkages among community organizations and agencies that help maintain that quality of life (Zimmerman 1995:581–2).

The persistence of this view does not appear attributable to empirical evidence, which has been hard to develop given that “as a practical matter not all research can be at every level of analysis” (Rappaport 1987:139). As recently as Boyd and Angeline (2007) there is the call to develop an interdisciplinary dialogue between community psychology and organisational studies as a means to bring these two disciplines together. More likely, it seems that the persistence of this view is attributable to Rappaport’s warning of 10 years earlier, that “for psychologists the largest danger is that we will limit ourselves to the study of individuals” (Rappaport 1987:139), a tendency to be avoided if the field was to achieve the kind of Khunian paradigm-shift that he envisaged. Similarly, measurement of the “open-ended construct” of empowerment has been regarded as undesirable because it is seen as context-dependent, and therefore “theoretically inconsistent with the construct given the specific demands and characteristics of different settings and life situations” (Zimmerman 1995:596).

The difficulty faced by community psychologists in overcoming these practical and theoretical issues persists in Zimmerman’s 1995 article, “Psychological Empowerment: Issues and Illustrations”, which restricts itself to elucidation of the concept of psychological empowerment, called “PE”, as an individual phenomenon.
The empirical evidence for this individual level cited by Zimmerman supports the conclusion that PE is “expected to include a sense of and motivation to control; decision-making and problem-solving skills and a critical awareness of one’s sociopolitical environment; and participatory behaviors”, demonstrating the “intrapersonal”, “interpersonal” and “behavioural” aspects to individual empowerment (Zimmerman 1995:588). It can readily be seen that these aspects – for example, participatory behaviour – rely on interaction with other “levels” of empowerment for their efficacy. Zimmerman finds himself lacking a theoretical perspective able to address important questions such as: “How [do] the intrapersonal, interactional, and behavioral components interact to form PE? How do these three components relate to one another? Are some components of PE contingent upon others?” (Zimmerman 1995:590).

Rappaport introduces narrative as a means to respond to these questions. Zimmerman states that critical awareness “refers to one’s understanding of the resources needed to achieve a desired goal, knowledge of how to acquire those resources, and skills for managing resources once they are obtained” (Zimmerman 1995: 589). Rappaport proposes that narratives can be regarded as a resource that supports empowerment at all levels: “stories and storytelling are useful concepts for a cognitive psychology that spans different levels of analysis” (Mankowski & Rappaport 1995). Rappaport is empirically confident of his ground. He states that “there is a great deal of evidence to show that narratives create meaning, emotion, memory and identity” (Rappaport 1995:802). He refers to a body of literature pointing to community narratives as a powerful force for both personal and social change, and that helping people to identify, create, and tell their own stories, individually and collectively, is an endeavour consistent with the development of empowerment” (Rappaport 1995:802).

Recalling feminist authors, Rappaport emphasises the importance of people giving voice to their stories to generate empowerment through a “collective narrative that sustains their own personal life story in positive ways” (Rappaport 1995:796). For example, depending on the narrative, a person can define himself or herself as an alcoholic hopelessly drifting through existence, or as a survivor struggling to deal with life in the only way that seems viable. From a practical point of view, Rappaport sees the value in creating “new settings that may serve a legitimating function for people to tell their own stories” (Rappaport 1995:799).
Rappaport’s proposal has clear resonance with Habermas. If narrative gives meaning to “emotion, memory and identity”, it is possible to equate narrative with lifeworld, and thus see more clearly the relationship between lifeworld and individual psychology, and the way in which these generate meaning in the interaction known as “communicative action”. Indeed, Habermas identifies narrative as “a special form of […] speech” in which actors base their communication on “a lay concept of the world, in the sense of the everyday world or lifeworld” (Habermas 1984:136). Telling one’s story, and hearing it told back in the stories of others, serves the function of objectification. This permits empowerment through the new setting being based on individual contributions of content, making the lifeworld thematic and the setting socially autonomous, as discussed in the previous chapter. Rappaport seeks to understand the “illusive [sic] and interesting” concept of a “psychological sense of community” through “shared narrative” (Rappaport 1995:803 – footnote). This shared community story is conveyed through social interaction, texts, pictures, performances and rituals. The setting for this story telling can be, and often is, an organised group. In the particular mental health context of Rappaport, “mutual help organisations” can be a setting where “a new community narrative is formed” (Rappaport 1995:804). Reflecting on other papers in the 1995 special edition of the American Journal of Community Psychology, Rappaport, in a similar vein to the present author, observes that

many of the same mechanisms are observed when the various researchers look for empowerment in successful voluntary service organizations, mutual help groups, religious congregations, educational programs, community coalitions or partnerships, business and community organizations, or agricultural cooperatives (Rappaport 1995:799).

Rappaport reasons that if “the process of identity development and change is hypothesized to be similar for all people”, then narratives generate personal outcomes: “people with negative social identities are not individually different (read blameworthy) than those with positive social identities” (Rappaport 1995:804). In so saying, Rappaport confirms that gaining an empowered identity through narrative is a phenomenon of structures and relationships rather than a quality of actors. In terms of actors, Mankowski and Rappaport state that “stories are created by people, and in turn,

46 In support of this present study, Rappaport comments, “when empowering organizations already exist we can learn a great deal about empowerment by collaborating with them to learn about and help them spread their story” (Rappaport 1995:800).
create us” (Mankowski & Rappaport 1995:216). This confirms the dialectical relationship between personal and social narratives. If, as Mankowski and Rappaport suggest, “the self is a knowledge structure and knowledge is stories, [then] the self is stories” (Mankowski & Rappaport 1995:215).

These reciprocal relationships between individual stories and community narratives can be characterised as dialogic. [...] Social knowledge constitutes the forms in which individual knowledge is created, while individuals also contribute to the revision of community narratives (Mankowski & Rappaport 1995:216).

Mankowski and Rappaport propose that individuals “create, enact and maintain their personal identity” through the “mapping” of social narratives, or “story skeletons”, onto their own story (Mankowski & Rappaport 1995:215). In circumstances where an individual has experiences that cannot be readily mapped onto remembered social narratives, that person may seek out “alternative frameworks within which such experiences can be integrated into a coherent and whole personal story” (Mankowski & Rappaport 1995:215).

From the point of view of community psychology, Rappaport affirms the perspectives on empowerment generated by the case studies in this and preceding chapters. What has been achieved so far in the present study is to understand these mechanisms in terms of communicative action. This has some implications for the approaches used in community psychology, stemming from the power aspect of empowerment. While Rappaport acknowledges that research on empowerment and narrative is being done in the fields of “anthropology, sociology, linguistics and literature, cultural studies, discourse analysis, cognitive psychology, and social cognition” (Rappaport 1995:801), he and his colleagues have not adopted the analysis of power inherent in discourse, communicative action and reflexive community that is recognised in these other disciplines. Social narratives serve to preserve the status quo, providing the common “skeleton” as the referent for personal identity formation. As occurs in circumstances where social outcomes produce a disparity of power between actors – that is, some are empowered by the narrative, and some disempowered or marginalised by the same narrative – then it would seem, as Habermas proposes, that a new “coherent and whole” narrative must be presupposed by the specific experience of “emancipation by means of critical insight into relationships of power” (Habermas 1974). This is some
distance from Zimmerman’s Northern conception of “critical awareness”. Rappaport confirms, however, that a group with a structure is a necessary part of developing alternative narratives that tell the members of a group “something about themselves, their heroes, their history, and their future” (Rappaport 1995:803).

Applying Rappaport’s analysis to the SEEP Timeline, it can be seen as providing an alternative narrative, a “skeleton” onto which Indigenous Fijians are able to map a personal and community narrative that is coherent, whole, and their own, as opposed to the imported narratives of Christianity, colonialism and democracy. History is used as a tool by SEEP because “things that happened to our ancestors define what happens to us today; history asks questions about why things happened the way they happened in our country” (Douglas & Nasoga 2008). As Khan explains, “history can be very empowering, depending on how you tell it” (Douglas & Nasoga 2008). The Timeline is an evidence-based narrative that places Indigenous Fijians at the centre of their own development, not as innately cannibalistic and failing actors who must deny their past, but as a people engaged in dealing effectively with changes in their natural, social, and political environments over millennia.

SEEP makes use of this narrative in its engagement with taukei communities on issues of land ownership and leadership. As indicated above, by proposing that SEEP has the aim of supporting taukei to “regain control of their communities and organizations”, it is seeking to influence the political environment in Fiji in favour of “social justice”, and a society that can move beyond racial discrimination to build a democratic national identity. While something like this may be a tacit goal of SIDT or BRG, here, in the Fijian context, it is overt. For this reason, the next section goes on to examine the context in which the SEEP narrative is employed: as a means to reconstruct a Fijian sense of civil society as an antidote to “coup culture”.

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47 Zimmerman states, “the conceptualization of PE that is presented is rooted firmly in a social action framework that includes community change, capacity building, and collectivity. Social change, however, may take many forms and may not necessarily result in a power struggle” (Zimmerman 1995:582).

48 At the same reference, Rappaport writes, “A community narrative is a story that is common among a group of people. It may be shared by the group through social interaction, texts (although texts are not necessary), and other forms of communication including pictures, performances, and rituals’. This is the meaning intended here by structure in a group, that of organised performance.
3.2.2 *A Place in Civil Society*

As seen above, the term “civil society” has been used by ECREA and SEEP since their inception. A thorough exploration of Fiji’s “coup culture” and the effect this has on the meaning of civil society and the limits to action it imposes is beyond the scope of the present study. However, any consideration of civil society in Fiji cannot ignore the coup phenomenon. ECREA demonstrated its position in Fijian civil society in its response to the 2006 coup, the so-called “good governance coup” that held promise to “supersede the politics of race by military force, and then to selectively engage the previous protagonists in a nation-building project” (Fraenkel & Stewart 2007:5). Titled ‘Time of uncertainty, opportunity’, ECREA’s public position at that time included the view that

> it seems regrettable that those who have condemned the military takeover seem obsessed with the "violation of democracy" perspective and fail to recognise the "anti-racist" and "pro-people" aspects of the takeover which could be termed the "social justice" perspective (Fiji Times 16/12/2006).

The Fiji Council of Churches and Assembly of Christian Churches had put out a statement supporting the democratically elected government and leadership of Laisenia Qarase, stating that “we do not recognise and support Commodore Bainamarama’s interim government because it is illegal and unconstitutional” (Staff 2006). As Fraenkel (2007) comments, “the 2006 coup divided civil society organizations, judges, academics and politicians, as well as, more broadly, triggering an unfamiliar ethnic realignment […] The paradoxes and contradictions of the 2006 coup outdo anything in Fiji’s modern history” (Frankel 2007:6–8). In the same volume, Mahendra Chaudhry states: “Fiji’s intelligentsia – be they academics, politicians, clerics, the legal fraternity or the suddenly vocal human rights activists – have been deeply divided by the events of 5 December 2006 and the best way forward for the nation” (Chaudhry 2007:343).

For ECREA, its social justice mission anchored its decision to not reject Commodore Bainamarama. Many saw the crux of the issue in Fiji as Qarase-style “democracy” versus good governance, equity and social justice (Chaudhry 2007). There appears to have been a widespread and debilitating withdrawal of civil consent as a result of the effect on governance of the Qarase government. Subsequently, this has meant finding

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49 Searches by the author suggest that civil society in the Pacific is an understudied area, with the notable exception of work at the Australian National University. Study of Fiji and narratives of Indigenous culture and political control that explore the scope and role of civil society in an environment of coups and/or military control could occupy a thesis in its own right.
ways to work with the reality of military rule by Commodore Bainamarama, a reality that has proved to be persistent. ECREA has played an active part in generating debate about “the best way forward”, maintaining principled relationships with other civil society players and the state, expressing its views through engagement.

What is demonstrated here is that once again, organisationally, an empowerment agenda is teleological, in this instance driven by the end of “social justice”; it involves dissent, in as much as ECREA asserted its autonomy in isolating itself from mainstream opinion in making the decision not to condemn the 2006 coup; and it involves risk, in that ECREA and SEEP funding sources were threatened by the stand that was taken, and equally, support for a stand in favour of civil society in the context of military action had unknown future consequences.

ECREA also expressed these principles in its community programs. In an early SEEP discussion paper, former ECREA Director, Chantelle Khan, (Khan 2003) talks about the role of SEEP in terms of changing power and service provision relationships between the state, the private sector, and civil society. Khan gives her analysis of contemporary Fijian society in a paper entitled “Some Pointers for SEEP”. In her assessment,

civil society began to lose its function as the guardian and promoter of social justice, and the primary vehicle by which people articulate, define and suggest remedies to their issues of concern […] The days where these issues are discussed at the village level and where solutions are proposed are declining. Today civil society is more and more dependent on the State, business, and outside consultancy to define their concerns and what they need to resolve the issue (Khan 2003).

Here, as well as being a “promoter of social justice”, civil society is “the primary vehicle” through which people participate, and includes “the village level”. Civil society is placed in a dependent relationship with the “state, business and outside consultancy”, one that requires an autonomous response from village communities to reverse the decline in local problem-solving institutions. Following the 2006 coup, this need has become more pressing. Brij Lal identifies the vacuum left by the “paralysis” of the “traditional bastions of [Indigenous] Fijian establishment” – the Methodist

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50 Cooperation can be a productive course. Leo Nainoka of SEEP began a press campaign on behalf of the people of Noemalu tikina, whose only transport is ponies. The campaign resulted in a delegation of the tikina leaders meeting in the Commodore’s office, securing an undertaking to construct road access, and an interim grant of 100 beasts.
Church and the Great Council of Chiefs – as responsible for the fact that “no clear-cut pattern of response [to the 2006 coup] has emerged from the Fijian\(^{51}\) community” (Lal 2007). The reinvention of locally autonomous institutions is necessary to civil society because “democracy cannot be achieved rapidly or sustained unless it is built on sound legal, institutional and cultural foundations” (Chaudhry 2007).

In order to understand the process of SEEP working with taukei communities in order to create the “cultural foundations” for democracy through empowerment, it is necessary to examine more closely the relationship between coup d’état, civil society and democratisation. Experience in the field comes from Latin America. Latin American parallels with the Fijian experience of the Qarase government include states in decay through “corruption, incompetence, and neglect of the electorate’s basic needs” (Encarnacion 2002). Also shared with Fiji is the significant role played by the church in support of democratisation (Karl 1990).

The experience of Latin America suggests that military coup is a transitory stage (Karl 1990:6). In this period of transition, the terms of civil society are subject to the limits of the institutional prerogatives assumed by the military. Such prerogatives are

those areas where, whether challenged or not, the military as an institution assumes they have an acquired right or privilege, formal or informal, to exercise effective control over its [own] internal governance, [and so] to play a role within extra-military areas within the state apparatus, or even to structure relationships between the state and political or civil society (Stepan 1988).

The clear determination and limitation of the appropriate extent of military power is a measure of civilian control. In the circumstances of coup d’état, civil society becomes only that which is “extra-military”. In the Fijian context, “politicians” appear for the present as players in civil society in contrast to the military rule of the State.\(^{52}\) Where there are no “predictable rules of the game” (Karl 1990:6), the boundaries and functions of civil society are broad at the same time as being subject to “structured contingency” (Karl 1990:5). Observing day-to-day life in Suva, the stark reality of that structured contingency appears on the streets as armed men in uniform, and public buildings occupied as barracks.

\(^{51}\) Lal consistently refers to Indigenous “Fijians” as distinct from “Indo-Fijians”.

\(^{52}\) Commodore Bainimarama has indeed asserted, “I am not a politician” (*Fiji Times*, 6 Dec 2006).
So, it is evident that the military context significantly changes the operation of civil society. Janet Hunt (2008), in her study of civil society organisations in East Timor, draws the same conclusion. Hunt begins by drawing on current development literature to outline three perceived roles for the non-government organisation as a component of a broader civil society. This literature views these organisations as:

- having a democratising role in relation to the state, and a means of making states accountable to their citizens;
- emphasising civil society as contributing social capital through the participation of people in voluntary associations;
- contributing to peace, conflict resolution and human rights (Hunt 2008).

The objectives of ECREA and SEEP are clearly consistent with these goals. However, as Hunt found in East Timor, under conditions of conflict “the idea that civil society should act as a countervailing force to the government, or a mechanism to make it accountable, [is] not particularly useful”. A similar conclusion can be reached under conditions of coup d’etat. The scope of praxis is limited under military rule. Hunt proposes that

an alternative approach which may be more helpful to frame thinking in such contexts is an adapted Gramscian one, in which post-conflict development is seen as an ideological struggle within elites of both civil and political society, less about capitalist domination, than about the entrenchment of human rights and values of non-violence within a state and society (Hunt 2008:293).

ECREA’s record suggests that there is indeed an “ideological struggle” going on in Fiji to entrench human rights and democratic values as part of “the rules of the game”. In terms of SEEP’s process, based on an historical narrative, there is a conscious strategy to empower taukei to organize autonomously, revitalising the village component of civil society as a means to delegitimise “coup culture”.

In order to grasp the significance of the SEEP process as a means to achieve social change in Fiji, it is worthwhile to take Gramsci as a starting point. Gramsci (Gramsci 1971) led Marxists away from the focus on economy to the viewpoint of social reproduction based in cultural and ideological struggle. The subsequent praxis in Eastern Europe and Latin America was founded on “self organisation and civic autonomy”, and “the creation of independent spaces, in which individuals can act
according to their consciences” (Kaldor 2003). Naturally, this view once again recalls Habermas’s communicative action.

Habermas has this to say about civil society:

its institutional core comprises those non-governmental and non-economic connections and voluntary associations that anchor the communication structures of the public sphere in the society component of the lifeworld. Civil society is composed of those more or less spontaneously emergent associations, organisations, and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in private life spheres, distil and transmit such reaction to the public sphere (Habermas, quoted in Ehrenberg 1999:222).

Habermas abandons “holistic aspirations to a self-organising society”, be they the aspirations of Rousseau or Marx.53 “Civil society can transform only itself, and it can have at most an indirect effect on the self-transformation of the political system” (Ehrenberg 1999:223). This appears particularly stark in circumstances where the political system has been usurped by the military. Civil society may influence the military, but it is the nature of military authority under conditions of coup d’état that the military can only change itself. As a consequence, it should not be expected that SEEP will demonstrate the kind of vertical integration of activism seen in BRG, or the attempt to integrate “local organisations and structures at the centre of government” as described by Freidmann.

Instead, the internal transformation of civil society is possible because it is the “territory of mediation” between the family and the state, Hegel’s Burgerliche Gesellschaft (Kaldor 2003:27). In contemporary usage, adopting Habermas’s classifications and dialectical orientation, and recalling also the feminist perspectives discussed earlier, civil society is “a sphere of interaction […] composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary organisations), social movements and forms of public communication” (Kaldor 2003:45).

Here is visible the convergence of diverse perspectives. First, this description corresponds to the terms used by Zimmerman in community psychology to describe that “phenomenon of central interest”, empowerment, and the three levels making up this “multi-level construct”. However, what Kaldor has added to this view is that these

53 Or John Wesley, for that matter.
three levels – or in this case “spheres” – in fact compose one “sphere of interaction” she terms “civil society”. Finally, Habermas once again brings these elements together from a theoretical point of view, in defining that sphere of interaction as the field of communicative action. This brings us to a theoretical position beyond competing ideologies as a way to describe the SEEP process in taukei communities. The empowerment process can be seen to work through a narrative “attuned to how societal problems resonate in private life spheres”, at a time when taukei perceive that “the present age is one of decline, in which former power relations are being reconfigured” (Tomlinson 2011:167).

3.2.3 Partnership with Christianity

One of the themes of the previous two chapters has been to make overt the “philosophy” that underlies the use of empowerment as a program strategy and organising principle. From the beginning of this chapter it has been apparent that Christian values and institutions play a very significant part in ECREA and SEEP. While the Board of ECREA and the staff of the organisation are racially mixed, they share the belief that “the love, mercy and grace of God are revealed in Jesus Christ”. At the 2001 SEEP Training at Nadave, Viti Levu, the topic of “Community Analysis” starts with a talk about “Christianity and its impact on Fiji”, and small-group discussion on the difference between Christianity and Church. Christian research networks have been extensively used in the development of SEEP material. This Christian orientation is a significant contrast to BRG literature, which has grown from the conservation language of the ICAD, and that of SIDT, which retains an international development orientation.

In terms of where SEEP draws this philosophy, Vatican II era Catholic theology (as interpreted in the Catholic social justice literature), and the “liberation theology” of Gustavo Gutiérrez (1971), coupled with the contemporaneous and ecumenical work of Freire, are direct and apparent influences on SEEP. SEEP literature affirms “the values of Christianity, and the creative and transforming character of God” (Khan 2003). Literature produced by Khan and SEEP is steeped in the language of Freire. The use of “conscientization”, “codes”, “critical literacy”, “culture of silence” and “dialogue” all derive from Freire’s process of “cultural action for freedom”. Above a door in the SEEP house is the following quote, attributed to Freire: “Trust is established by dialogue: it cannot exist if the words of both parties do not coincide with their actions.”
The work of Paulo Freire has been touched on in previous chapters. The tools and methodologies created by Freire have been highly influential in the field of international development, and in adult pedagogy. A review of theoretical approaches to empowerment would not be complete without some examination of Freire’s contribution. His work was highly influential throughout the 1970s, initially in South America and later in Africa, in Nyerere’s Tanzania. Later still, his approach became influential in Europe, where it was often identified with Ivan Illich and the “deschooling” of society (Freire 1977). In translation from the original Portuguese, and heavily laden with Marxist revolutionary polemics, interpretation of Freire’s work is fraught with difficulty. Born of devout Catholic parents, Freire often worked through Christian organisations, and spent some of his career as special educational adviser to the World Council of Churches.

It is Freire who forges a partnership between a moral world of faith, and Hegelian humanism. Following Hegel, for Freire, liberty requires “staking one’s life” – meaning the security of mythologised and irrational “false” reality – in exchange for the “independent self-consciousness” required “to transform concrete, objective reality”. On dissent, Freire affirms that critical consciousness leads to the expression of social discontent, “precisely because these discontents are real components of the oppressive situation” (Freire 1996).54

For Freire, this acquisition of liberty takes place through dialogue, “the encounter between men [and women], mediated by the world, in order to name the world” (Freire 1996:69). As a member of the revolutionary avant-garde, Freire’s defining concern with dialogue was to engage with the people in their struggle against oppression (Freire 1977). In his work, the validity claim to subjective sincerity appears as existential “love”, and “faith in humankind”. “If I do not love the world – if I do not love life – if I do not love the people – I cannot enter into dialogue” (Freire 1996). Like Scott Lash from the previous chapter, Freire proposes an ontological basis for dialogue. Dialogue is an “existential necessity” for people to “achieve significance as human beings”. On that foundation, this existential necessity cannot exist without “critical thinking”, which “constantly immerses itself in temporality” (Freire 1996).

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3.2.4 Freire’s pedagogy

The broader acceptance of Freire’s work as a curriculum method in Europe comes from his pursuit of literacy as a structured program. In the program, “codes” are chosen to “problematicise the existential situation” of learners. The codes are based on 17 “generative words” chosen by specialists following “preliminary investigation” of the linguistic universe of the learners. To some degree, this suggests what BRG or SEEP might call “community entry”, or “listening for community themes”. Generative words must be:

- of pragmatic value to learners, commanding common understanding;
- graded for phonetic difficulty;
- tri-syllabic to allow immediate experimentation by learners with various sound combinations (Freire 1970).

In-session discussion in learning these generative words is supported by discussion groups, the circulo de cultura. Beyond this kind of specificity, Freire’s critique of adult classroom texts using linguistic contexts not of the learner’s world also has relevance beyond a revolutionary context. Such texts, “when mechanically memorised and repeated, are deprived of their authentic dimension as thought-language in dynamic interplay with reality. Thus impoverished, they are not authentic expressions of the world” (Freire 1970:10). Literacy grows in the “difficult apprenticeship” of the person learning to name his world. In “liberating education”, the relationship between teacher and learner must be one where the “educator” does not provide the content. This comes from the “educatee”, who mediates this content to create knowledge of the world in naming it (Freire 1977). All persons in a learning group reflect critically on a text, or “codification”, which represents a “real existent” or one constructed by the learners, as in the codes used by SEEP community facilitators.

Decodification is a two-step process. The first stage of decodification is taxonomic dissection of the “surface structure” of the code: “readers […] focus on the relationship between the categories constituting the codification”. The next step, comprehending the “deep structure”, or “object-action whole” suggested by the unification of the categories in the code, is to problematicise the codified situation (Freire 1970:14). This recalls Giddens from Chapter 2. For Freire, problematising gives meaning to the dialectic between the relational categories, and is, in his view, the foundation of literacy.
Like the dialectic of Habermas discussed in Chapter 2, codification mediates between “concrete and theoretical contexts (of reality)” at the same time as mediating between “knowing subjects, educators and learners” (Freire 1970:14). In Freire, Habermas’s objectification of society is quite literally a photograph, sketch or slide, which for the co-learners effects “an operation basic to the act of knowing: they gain distance from the knowable object” (Freire 1970:15). Gaining objectivity begins the process of “conscientization”, the process in which persons as knowing subjects come to the realisation that their life is determined, and through this knowledge appreciate their capability to transform that reality. Says Freire, “only beings who can reflect upon the fact that they are determined are capable of freeing themselves” (Freire 1970:28).

For Freire, conscientization implies a transition from one mode of consciousness to another. These modes of consciousness, “semi-intransitive” and “naïve transitive”, correspond to particular “historical-cultural” configurations (Freire 1970:32). Semi-intransitive consciousness coexists with the configuration of the “culture of silence”, which is a phenomenon of the “closed society” – a relic of colonialism and the time when “the culture of silence took shape” (Freire 1970:35). In common with the authors in Chapters 2 and 3, Freire recognises that de facto consent by silence is not driven by actors, but is “the result of the structural relations between the dominated and the dominators”, hence the naming of the mode of consciousness as semi-intransitive (Freire 1970:33). The other half of the dialectic is the consciously acting subject, for whom “silence is no longer seen as an unalterable given, but as the result of a reality that can and must be transformed” (Freire 1970:38).

Freire’s pedagogy is first person-centred, based as it is around the “conscious body” that is not “a mere copy of objectivity” (Freire 1977). His analysis of popular action as a collective endeavour is founded on the transformative capacity of work, in the sense of consciously directed effort. Through work on the world, “consciousness is in turn historically and culturally conditioned through the ‘inversion of praxis’” (Freire 1970:32), the process of action and reflection, world=work=praxis. Within a framework of cultural action for freedom “in opposition to the dominating power elite” (Freire 1970:51), and cultural revolution “in harmony with the revolutionary regime”, as in China where “history is made by human beings” (Freire 1977), Freire’s praxis always has the goal of revolution, with its concomitant use of “popular” emergence of consciousness among “the masses”. This interpretation clouds the relationship between individuals and collectives in terms of social action beyond pedagogy. Freire does not
propose “1000s of schools for revolution” (Freire 1977) but seeks the engagement of the avant-garde as drivers of social change with the people in their “historical-cultural” struggle. What is clear is that codification is a method that teaches literacy that is “to make history; […] to read history (and not just the newspapers)”. Once people “get history in their hands, they discover the meaning of future, and then the people get hope” (Freire 1977). Here Freire’s pedagogy meets Rappaport’s community psychology. The code is one point in the narrative of a people’s history, a narrative that necessarily informs the literal meaning of the generative word.

From its commencement, SEEP has sought to go straight to the heart of the matter for Indigenous Fijians in emphasising social justice and political engagement. What is entirely evident from Freire’s methodology is that if people are not part of the process of defining their problems and developing solutions, if they are not providing the content of the development discussion, failure occurs because there is a lack of consistency between

the problem, the background, and what people actually experience […]

The defining process does not allow people to look beyond their immediate concern, nor allow ample space to talk about the background, their feelings and views of what the problem is and how it could be solved […] The present process of defining issues and solutions disempowers people in that they are not part of the (problem) defining / solution (finding) process (Khan 2003).

SEEP courageously provides means for Indigenous Fijians to reflect on their internal state of affairs – as Khan says, by “contextual critical analysis of history and the Fijian culture” (Douglas & Nasoga 2008) – in precisely the way that Freire would have admired.

3.3 Summary

SEEP’s critical analysis of history and the Fijian culture as portrayed in the Timeline actively proposes an alternative narrative of Indigenous Fijian history and culture – a narrative of growth, change and adaption to the environment. The evidence suggests that reflection on this narrative has had a significant effect in communities. The SEEP group carefully models Freire’s action-reflection process as a guide to their praxis. In so doing, the group has reconstructed the BRG operational model to work in an Indigenous Fijian social environment, having rebuilt the knowledge base that informs the process. SEEP has substantially demonstrated that the organisational and
community process developed by the Bismarck Ramu Group is transferrable when there is an existing core group with organisational support. While BRG’s influence is evident, SEEP has significantly modified this process over 10 years, and SEEP has only recently become an independent entity. Evidently, knowledge transfer between organisations, and the evolution of foundational tools and specific tactics, takes time, commitment and material.

This analysis of the role of SEEP in civil society supports the dialectical view proposed by Rappaport. As well as usefully and simply presenting communicative action as narrative, community psychology also provides empirical support for Habermas. Gaining an empowered identity is a phenomenon of structures and relationships rather than a quality of actors. Structured opportunities to impart our stories and assess the values in the choices and decisions that those stories convey, are both personal and civic events. Organisation for empowerment implies the creation of independent spaces in which individuals can act according to their consciences. These new settings of self-organisation and civic autonomy serve a legitimating function for people to experience a sense of personal power and control in a social environment. Continuing group effectiveness requires that the values represented by an organisation are an anchor, providing identity for person and group as participants in civil society. The security of that anchor relies on it being embedded in the lifeworld, and subject to continuing validation by expanding engagement with civil society.

That empowerment is called for as a strategy for social change implies that a disparity of power must exist, expressed as a structural relationship between oppressor and oppressed. It is the narrative of oppression that members bring to the group setting. For empowerment to occur, organisational telos must be evident in the development of an alternative narrative. In these circumstances, dissent is inevitably a part of civic autonomy because the critical consciousness that is necessary to an alternative narrative creates discontent as an expression of the oppressive situation. If there is no disparity of power, empowerment is not called for as a strategy.

Having established here that an empowerment methodology is transferrable between cultures and settings, the next chapter considers the quite different setting of Aboriginal Australia as an opportunity to further expand the understanding of the operation of an empowerment program in circumstances of continuing colonial oppression.
Chapter 4

Family WellBeing – Empowering Research

“It’s an eye-opener …”

Family WellBeing course participant, Hopevale (Tsey et.al. 2003)

4.1 Part I – Empowerment in Indigenous Australia

4.1.1 Introduction

As noted in the Introduction to the present study, the author has observed a lack of empowerment-based programs in Aboriginal Australia; more particularly, of those that bear any resemblance to the Pacific organisations and programs discussed in the previous chapters. It was this observed lack that motivated initial research on this topic. In the 1990s there was a burst of interest in the study of empowerment for Aboriginal Australians associated with community planning and community development when the now defunct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) tied funding of future programs to the development of community plans, and provided funds for the purpose of plan preparation (Wolfe 1994). While many communities employed a consultant to prepare a plan to meet the requirement, others made attempts to use the opportunity to genuinely seek community participation in making and controlling community plans.

These communities found that “there is no facility at government, resource agency or community level devoted to and capable of undertaking quality planning and development work” that gave Aboriginal people “the power to decide” (Wolfe 1994:5). Across the board, from ATSIC staff to local organisations and communities, the program fell short because it did not find “an effective way of incorporating education and training components, or of providing planning support on a long term basis” (Wolfe 1994:3). In other words, there was in Australia no body able to provide the kinds of organisational, facilitation or communication skills that could build

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55 There is some conflict in the present study between the use of “Indigenous” and “Aboriginal” to describe Australia’s first people. This arises from the fact that while “Aboriginal” seems to be the preferred term in the south of the country, in the north, first peoples also include Torres Strait Islanders, and consequently the broader term “Indigenous” is commonly used. Being of the south, the author has generally used the term “Aboriginal”, unless the setting is specifically related to northern Australia, where this case study is located.
empowerment and control in a community development setting. Furthermore, looking across the organisations that Wolfe surveyed in 1994, from homelands resource associations to Land Councils and the Aboriginal education sector, every group, while called “non-government”, was dependent on state funding and existed as a response to legislative requirement or state imperative. All were subject to the state’s requirements of accountability for expenditures within specific program guidelines. These were not “voluntary” organisations in the sense developed in the previous chapters.

Of the communities that sought to develop a voluntary approach to community planning, of interest to the present study is the work of Alan Randall from the time he was based at Walungurru\(^56\) on behalf of the Northern Territory Open College. Evolving over a six-year period, the program developed by Randall and the Walungurru community followed many of the paths established for community development seen in the previous chapters: Indigenous-developed program, the use of itinerant teams of Aboriginal paraprofessionals, extended community stays with follow-up visits, and continuing education and training based in Alice Springs. What is of interest is that the ultimate destiny of this program was to become formalised as part of a certificate in Aboriginal Community Administration on the model of the Community Management Training Unit of the South Australian School of Aboriginal Education of the Technical and Further Education system (Wolfe 1994). The early sense of a programmed team approach that included a paraprofessional outreach component was lost as the course became a module in a certified qualification.

More recently, Estelle Con-Goo reports in 2003 that “it is very difficult to locate documentation on individual empowerment in an [Australian] Indigenous context” (Con-Goo 2003:11). Empowerment may be raised as an issue, but falls short of being the matter of central concern (Eversole 2003). Generally, from 2000 onwards interest in the study of Aboriginal empowerment in Australia was found in the field of health, particularly mental health in primary health-care settings, where it has persisted. In this field, empowerment generally falls under the rubric of “social and emotional wellbeing” (Henderson 2004; Campbell 2007). In this context, there still remains a paucity in documentation of the experience of practitioners, and a base from which to build the types of empowerment skills referred to in previous chapters (Campbell 2007; McCalman et.al. 2009). The notable exception to this is the work undertaken by the James Cook University Empowerment Research Program (ERP).

\(^{56}\) Also known as “Kintore".
Whereas in the previous chapters the organisation and its program have been synonymous, here, the program – the Family WellBeing program – was adopted and promulgated in an organised way as a framework for participatory action research undertaken by the Empowerment Research Program (ERP 2006). This research has been consistently published in the fields of community psychology, psychiatry, and primary, community and rural health (Tsey & Every 2000; Tsey et.al. 2003; Tsey et.al. 2004; Whiteside et.al. 2005; Whiteside et.al. 2009; Haswell et.al. 2010; Tsey 2010 and others). The Family WellBeing program is an accredited course providing a Certificate II level qualification under the Australian vocational training system.57 Through the auspices of the ERP, unlike Randall’s experience, the training modules of the Family WellBeing course continue to be a part of a coherent program.

4.1.2 Family WellBeing and the Empowerment Research Program

The Family WellBeing program originated in Adelaide in the early 1990s. Its genesis was with small groups of Aboriginal people, including “Stolen Generation”58 survivors. The Aboriginal Education Development Branch (AEDB) of the South Australian Department of Education, Employment and Training initiated the Family WellBeing program as a community development program to address the barriers to employment for Aboriginal people. It began by informally providing lunches as a means to bring Aboriginal people together to discuss issues of local concern. The participants, recognising that they needed more skills to heal themselves and their communities, sought support to develop a more structured program. This became the Family WellBeing course, developed with initial assistance from the AEDB, and later the Indigenous division of the South Australian Department of Vocational Education and Training (Whiteside et.al. 2009; McCalman 2011a: research interview). The training was designed to ultimately provide a qualification in counselling. Importantly, the content of the program had been generated by Indigenous people, responding to the needs they had identified. The accredited program that developed was delivered in four stages, with a further “Train the Trainer” stage that includes 150 of hours of practice presentation. Each stage is designed to be delivered in 30 hours of face time, by two

57 The original course was accredited in South Australia. It is delivered as an accredited course by ERP trained facilitators in Queensland and NSW under agreement with the Bachelor Institute in the Northern Territory. Its accreditation expired at the end of 2010, and it was downgraded from a Cert. III to a Cert. II course (McCalman 2011: email response).

58 Adults who, as a consequence of government policy, were removed as children from their families and surroundings and placed with white Australian families or into group “homes” operated by missions.
facilitators working in tandem, either as a one-week block, or as a weekly session over four weeks.

The numerous South Australian Family WellBeing (FWB) groups that formed\(^{59}\) gradually became a network of trained facilitators acting as FWB Coordinators and group workers, delivering and continuing to develop the program. These Coordinators organised FWB in their area, attended regular group briefings in Adelaide and continued to develop their professional counselling skills (Tsey et.al. 2006). This network disintegrated when funding arrangements changed, and FWB seemed destined to meet the same fate as Alan Randall’s work, becoming a course in counselling in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector, without the ongoing support needed to maintain a coordinated program in a group format.

Fortunately, FWB was spared the fate of Randall’s earlier efforts. In 1998, a coalition of groups in Alice Springs led by Tangentyere Council\(^{60}\), received funding under the National Suicide Prevention Program following a wave of youth suicide in the region. Seeking a program to provide skills for professionals, families and young people at risk, the Council connected with some of the FWB trained facilitators in Adelaide to deliver this program (Tsey & Every 2000)\(^{61}\). The initial contact between Family WellBeing and the James Cook University Empowerment Research Program (ERP) occurred the following year, when Professor Komla Tsey, then with the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Queensland, enlisted as a “participant evaluator” in the FWB course at the invitation of the coalition (Tsey & Every 2000).

Based on earlier work carried out during the 1990s by the Menzies School of Health Research and the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health ( Boughton 2000; Boughton 2001; Condon et.al. 2001), Tsey and others had identified empowerment and control as two critical emergent themes in speaking with Aboriginal people and health services across the Northern Territory (Devitt et.al. 2001). Through his participation, Tsey identified Family WellBeing as a potential vehicle for research into

\(^{59}\) FWB groups met in Murray Bridge, Port Augusta, Ceduna, Adelaide, Whyalla, Port Adelaide, Point Pearce, Enfield and Noarlunga. These groups also conducted their own limited outreach activities to include Kooniba, Yalata, Port Pirie and Port Lincron.

\(^{60}\) In 1928 Mparntwe (Alice Springs) was declared a prohibited area for Aborigines. By the late 1960s, as many Aboriginal stockmen were laid off following the determination that they be paid award wages, substantial “town camps” developed around the fringes of Mparntwe. Tangentyere Council developed to provide municipal and other services to these settlements.

\(^{61}\) Adelaide, “down south”, remains the metropolitan centre not only of South Australia but also of the Northern Territory. In spite of the distance, it is not surprising that people in Alice Springs would look in that direction for support, and maintain networks there.
these dimensions as social determinants of Aboriginal health. Tsey assessed the value of the Family WellBeing program as effective “in assisting individual participants, through personal empowerment, to increase their capabilities – that is, enhance their awareness, resilience and problem solving ability” (Tsey & Every 2000). Being an action researcher, Tsey asked participants what measures they would consider relevant to assess in the program. This led to the development of a standard evaluation sheet, which has since been extensively used to assess the effect of the program on self, extended family, workplace and one’s wider community (Tsey et.al. 2009). The apparent success of the Family WellBeing course in Alice Springs resulted in its adoption by the James Cook University/University of Queensland research team led by Tsey.62 The research has been conducted by a range of diverse partnerships and people, including but not limited to:

- James Cook University, School of Indigenous Australian Studies and School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine (Yvonne Cadet James, Valda Wallace, Komla Tsey, Mark Wenitong, Mary Whiteside and Janya McCalman);
- University of Queensland, School of Population Health (Melissa Haswell Andrew Wilson, Brenda Hall, Arlene LaLiberte, Lyndon Reilly and Rachael Wargent);
- Apunipima Cape York Health Council (Teresa Gibson, Liz Pearson and Cleveland Fagan);
- Gurriny Yealamucka Health Council Aboriginal Corporation, Yarrabah (David Baird, Ruth Fagan, David Patterson, Bradley Baird, Les Baird, Senimelia Kingsburra and Kaylene Jackson);
- Tangentyere Council, Alice Springs (Eunice Blackmore and Kathy Abbott);
- Yaba Bimbie Men’s Group, Yarrabah (David Patterson, Bradley Baird and Dennis Warta);
- Ma’Ddaimba-Balas Men’s Group Innisfail (Darryl Ahkee, Anthony Jia and David Ambrum);
- Queensland Department of Communities (formerly Department of Families), North Queensland Regional Office (Karen Dini-Paul) (Tsey et.al. 2006).

62 Beginning with the Menzies School of Health in Alice Springs, Tsey has changed institutions a number of times, whilst maintaining his consistent focus on empowerment and control. Continuing collaboration between the various institutions where Tsey has been influential is a feature of the Empowerment Research Program.
More recently, the Empowerment Research Program and Family WellBeing course delivery has been further extended. In 2009 the Royal Flying Doctor Service, using ERP-trained facilitators, coordinated the five stages of FWB training for the Lower Gulf townships of Normanton, Mornington Island and Doomadgee. The training was coordinated by Ann Kreger and facilitated by Cath Brown, Lyndon Reilly and Teresa Gibson. In February 2010, 11 staff from five Aboriginal Medical Services on the North Coast of NSW participated in Stage 1 of the Family WellBeing Training at Ballina through the Many Rivers Aboriginal Medical Service Alliance (FWB 2010).

Being an accredited course, FWB has remained largely fixed in the course content. Limitations of time, low levels of educational attainment and limited previous experience of facilitation processes have been constraints in the delivery of the program to Stage 5 (Daly et.al. 2005; Kreger 2011: research interview; McCalman 2011a: research interview), and frequently only Stage 1 is delivered (McCalman 2011a: research interview). Also, there has been a perception that the Certificate in Counselling proposes a deficit model of people having “a problem” which requires fixing through “counselling”, which is seen as being at odds with the strengths-based orientation of the ERP (McCalman 2011a: research interview). In terms of promotion, a course to address leadership is likely to be more attractive to Indigenous people than one to address counselling (Brown 2011: research interview). In response to these factors, the course has been condensed by Tsey and Gibson for use as a non-accredited version called “Concept of Leadership and Empowerment”. Similarly, Tangentyere Council have selected elements of the program to develop a non-accredited version, called “Community WellBeing Course for Young Women” (Stearne 2010). Both of these courses use unaltered modules from the accredited course, primarily from Stage 1.

4.1.3 Aims and Objectives

For this researcher, Family WellBeing stood out for its longevity, consistency of purpose, adaptability, and for the fact of it having been developed with Indigenous people. Adoption by the Empowerment Research Program as a framework for participatory action research introduced the element of an organised program. This provided sufficient rationale for including the FWB/ERP as an empowerment program.

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63 The complete list of FWB sites extends further than this. As well as additional trial sites in the Cape York Region associated with the ERP (Hopevale, Wujal Wujal, Wuchopperen [Cairns Aboriginal Medical Service]), the program has been independently used with groups in the South Australian Riverland, Tasmania, and has been trialled in Papua New Guinea. See McCalman, PhD thesis, upcoming.
with enough similarity to the Pacific programs to provide a useful measure of the applicability of the Pacific model to Indigenous Australia. As would be expected given its action orientation, the research has been undertaken in complementary ways: by participants to discover useful knowledge for themselves, and as evidence for empowerment and control as determinants of health and as outcomes of program activity.

Given that the FWB program and the ERP are not synonymous (in the same way as the Pacific organisations and their programs are) immediately raises the possibility that the aims and objectives of each may not be synonymous either. This is indeed the case. To first consider the Empowerment Research Program, it sets out to:

develop a 10-year action-oriented research program in order to test the usefulness of “empowerment” and “control” as analytical tools for understanding and addressing the social determinants of health among Indigenous Australians (ERP 2006).

Being part of a university research institute, the ERP addresses itself to specific research objectives with a strong basis in theory and the search for evidence. Publication of results constitutes a significant aim of any research endeavour. Through its publications, a major need being addressed by the ERP is to establish the evidence for empowerment-based interventions in Australian Indigenous communities. Through its design as participatory action research on the model of Minkler and Wallerstein’s Community Based Participatory Research, the ERP has contributed to change in Indigenous communities (Tsey et.al. 2009). From its beginnings, in 2001, in the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Tropical Health, to 2011 and its manifestation as an action research program hub at The Cairns Institute (James Cook University, Cairns), the ERP contributed 54 published articles to peer-reviewed journals, 12 monographs as book chapters and 26 research reports for a variety of stakeholders (ERP 2011). In other words, as would be expected, the ERP aims to meet the requirements of sustaining an academic research program, promulgating its findings through sustained, quality publication of results. This program has included the development of the Growth and Empowerment Measure, a psychometric scale designed to collect “valid and reliable data on domains of empowerment that are

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64 This will be addressed in more detail in Part 2 of this chapter, which, as with previous chapters, concerns itself with theoretical perspectives.
relevant to Indigenous Australians” (Haswell et.al. 2010).

Similarly, the ERP needs to sustain itself through winning research grant awards. A broad mix of short-term income sources have sustained its consistent, decade-long research activity. The National Suicide Prevention Program was a significant source of funds in the early establishment phase. Later, as the ERP expanded and refined its approach, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Research Council became major sources of program funds. Cooperative Research Centre support has also been significant. A range of smaller funding arrangements have been entered into, including professional development, cooperation with family support services and shire councils, and program evaluation projects (ERP 2011). What is apparent is that the ERP has been successful in supporting a decade-long research agenda by composing a range of shorter-term projects into a coherent and worthwhile whole.\footnote{This recalls the situation of SIDT, required to report and produce results for a diverse audience of donors. Grants for work in palliative care and swine flu containment are appropriate for the methodology, and the ERP is able to add value to these by making them part of a larger program, contributing its core business of building health leadership, skills and organisational capacity, and empowering local voluntary organisations. However, the necessity of patchwork funding adds administrative load and makes it harder to maintain a singular focus.} In the author’s experience, this is a common phenomenon for those seeking to achieve worthwhile outcomes in Aboriginal communities. This recalls the situation in international development 30 years ago, when empowerment and community development were still relatively unexplored territory. The funding situation of SIDT referred to in Chapter 1 is one example of this.

The ERP consciously oriented itself as a participatory action research program. That is, it sought to use research expertise to increase the capability of research subjects to conduct research themselves on issues they identified as significant through their own, guided investigations. The framework to achieve this was provided by the Family WellBeing Program.

Superficially, the aim of the Family WellBeing program was to provide training for participants to the level required to achieve a Certificate II level qualification in counselling. Recalling its beginnings with groups of Indigenous people meeting together, and then seeking out further skills to address the issues they were uncovering, the Family WellBeing program sought to develop “key understandings and skills that help Indigenous people to heal and become leaders in their communities” (Haswell & Gibson 2001). As part of the ERP, the Family WellBeing program has been aimed primarily at two audiences: existing interest groups, specifically men’s and women’s
groups; and staff from health and welfare organisations, particularly in the areas of alcohol and other drug rehabilitation, and mental health.66

Consequently, the program can be viewed in two associated ways: as a means of personal transformation; and as a means to build core capacity within organisations, in this case health and welfare services (Tsey 2011: research interview). This is reflected in a FWB promotional “flyer” that briefly outlines the program. On the one hand, it aims to:

“empower” participants and their families through training in analytical and problem solving skills so as to assume greater control and responsibility over the conditions influencing their lives (Daly et.al. 2005).

In this context, the outcomes of FWB have been promoted in the following terms. It

• is an “eye-opener”, and helped them understand the many things that have influenced them, the emotional burden (often anger) they carry from unresolved issues in the past and the reasons why they are struggling to find hope and meaning in their lives;

• helped them to think about situations before reacting in a harmful way – understanding how emotional reactions can lead to negative actions allows people to make positive choices;

• gave them skills to recognise the drama that locks us into harmful relationships and to change them into positive ones where growth can happen;

• enhanced their self-esteem and problem solving skills to be able to reach for higher goals, better jobs, study opportunities and greater achievements;

• helped them to work better in groups, find their voices to speak out and become better listeners, be more supportive and sensitive to the needs of other people and work towards a better community (Haswell & Gibson 2001).

On the other hand, within organisations, staff can become a “more empowered group” (Haswell & Gibson 2001) through FWB. FWB is “a means for providing workers with more skills to deal with intrapersonal issues, an opportunity to reflect on their practice,

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66 There was also an adaptation of the program that was applied with school-aged children to equip them with better skills for coping in the home environment. While this was well received, it has not been a persistent component of the program over the period of the ERP.
and tools to use in their work with clients” (Whiteside et.al. 2005):7. FWB creates a “safe space” for Indigenous workers to:

- open up and talk about themselves;
- recognise their own strengths as well as those of others;
- understand what makes a good, respectful relationship;
- become able to see the opportunities that even painful loss can bring;
- gain greater understanding and respect for their fellow workers;
- recognise and foster each other’s strengths and challenges;
- learn to speak out and be heard assertively when something is not right (Haswell & Gibson 2001).

An interesting aspect of the ERP/FWB program has been to create educational pathways leading to formal qualifications, with the objective of achievement at the highest level. It was recognised early in the implementation of the ERP program that to sustain the program, “ongoing training and supportive supervision will be necessary, and a mix of skills including people with local knowledge and people with formal qualification is required” (Daly et.al. 2005:5). This “mix” continues to be nurtured through, for example, the recent development of a unit titled “Empowerment and Change” as a component of a Masters degree by coursework in the fields of public health and social sciences. A growth pathway now exists – from entry with experience of a non-accredited course, through Stages 1 to 5 of Family WellBeing, and ultimately to PhD level studies – a pathway combining experience and achievement with formal recognition. Opening the kind of pathway presented by FWB and the ERP, from VET certificate to tertiary level, demonstrates the breadth of the ERP team’s activity and the degree of creative and critical thinking of which it is capable.

4.1.4 Strategies

As discussed above, Tsey’s earlier work with the Menzies School identified “empowerment” and “control” as potentially significant social determinants of health. Tsey’s opportunity to undertake study of these factors in a participatory action research project emerged initially at Yarrabah, a DOGIT township 54 km south by road from Yarrabah.

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67 Deed of Grant in Trust. Yarrabah was established as an Anglican mission on the coast of Cape York Peninsula in 1892, among the first gazetted Aboriginal reserves. In 1960, the State of Queensland took over its management and in 1984 Yarrabah gained its Deed of Grant in Trust (facilitated by Roy Gray as Chair of the Yarrabah Council), which made the reserve a self-managing local government area. Many of the current residents are the descendants of people who were forcibly removed to the mission/reserve, living alongside the traditional landowning clans of the immediate area (Denigan 2008, McEwan & Tsey et.al. 2009).
Cairns. Yarrabah, population 3000, had experienced a spate of youth suicides in the mid 1980s and again 10 years later (Mitchell 2000). The presence of existing self-management structures and voluntary organisation provided a platform for the Yarrabah people to request and participate in development of the Family WellBeing program in the community. This consisted of working with the Yaba Bimbie (Father/Son) men’s group, formed in 1997 in response to youth suicide, and partnership with the Yarrabah-based and Aboriginal-controlled Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service (McCalman et.al. 2009). This demonstrates an early strategy of the ERP: seeking out Indigenous-controlled groups who have identified, if perhaps not entirely articulated, that training in analytical and problem-solving skills – so as to assume greater control and responsibility over the conditions influencing their lives – is a desirable aspect the group’s role. This is precisely the way in which FWB came to exist in the first instance.

Initially, the intention was to recruit a core group of persons in Yarrabah to be trained as FWB facilitators – that is, to complete the accredited course to Stage 5. This proved to be impractical. Nevertheless, recruitment and training of facilitators remained, and has continued to be a major part of the ERP/FWB strategy. In 2011, a core group of some 10–12 facilitators has been developed in the Cairns district, and as many as 70 people have received training to Certificate II level across Cape York. Whilst the Cairns group continue to be in frequent contact and form a loose, informal support network, the remainder have only their own informal networks for keeping in touch. The ERP has sporadically produced a newsletter to maintain some level of contact, but financial support for maintaining contact and sustaining a network of facilitators has been elusive (McCalman 2011a: research interview).

The focus of the ERP has been on voluntary organisations such as men’s and women’s groups, and on more formal community-controlled organisations, in particular organisations involved in primary health care and/or drug and alcohol rehabilitation. The availability of funds and expertise to support empowerment-based training activities appears limited for voluntary associations such as men’s and women’s groups, and little evidence was found of a continuous FWB program operated by a voluntary association.68 In the Cape York region, apart from the Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service and the Gindaja Treatment and Healing Centre (both at Yarrabah, with its proximity to Cairns and long relationship with the ERP), it appears to have been

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68 Tangentyere Council appears as the major exception, offering FWB since 1997 as part of its social support and research program.
difficult to convince health and other organisations that dedicating resources to employing and maintaining facilitators to deliver empowerment-based training is a worthwhile priority (Kreger 2011: research interview). Consequently, the major core of trained facilitators orbit around the ERP, employed by the university as Research Officers, being instrumental to the conduct of the participatory action research of the ERP. Other organisations can contract these Research Officers to conduct the FWB program, with evaluations and other reports generally appearing as published papers in peer-reviewed journals.

Otherwise, FWB trainees appear to work in relative isolation, with the cost of remote travel and the time constraints imposed by meeting the demands of their workplace performance indicators restricting their ability both to implement and advance the objectives of Family WellBeing (Kreger 2011). These difficulties in implementing a participatory project are not new. Indeed, they recall Alinsky’s assessment of the “Back of the Yards” project – that organisations in remote communities typically are “professional formal agencies which are, first, superimposed upon the community and, second, play a superficial role in the life of the community” (Alinsky 1941).

Such agencies are in stark contrast to the objectives of empowerment and participatory research. Unlike the Pacific groups, there is very limited capacity to support ongoing personal and organisational development through regular briefings or other formalised group processes for existing trainees. Groups can request “refresher” courses; however, this appears different in kind to an opportunity to specifically reflect on FWB implementation in the community, and to work on continued skill development and deeper analysis of, and action on, specific issues arising from implementation. However, there is promising evidence of the Royal Flying Doctor Service expanding continuing support opportunities for the core group of persons it has trained to Stage 5 in the townships of Mornington Island, Doomagee and Normanton (Kreger 2011).

For the ERP, the development and maintenance of key partnerships is essential. As well as often being a requirement for funding and research ethics approval, demonstrating as it does a relationship with a recipient community, the ERP requires a community entry platform for implementation of the FWB program. This again recalls Alinsky, and the time and effort spent on organising local coalitions to act as the platform for activities. In the Australian context, and in the context of the ERP, time constraints related to funding have been a bar to this kind of effort.
It is apparent that for the ERP, if there is not an existing platform prepared to act as an implementation base, it is difficult to advance. This was one of the significant constraints in expanding the experience gained at Yarrabah to other communities (McCalman et.al. 2009; McCalman 2011a: research interview). The “Building Bridges” project, designed to share experience and expand the FWB program to more remote Cape York locations, had a two-year time frame. In the author’s experience, one could easily spend the entire two years building sufficient trust and understanding to develop a worthwhile working partnership or coalition as the basis for proceeding to further develop and expand a specific program. In the efforts described in the Pacific, or for that matter described by Alinksy in the United States, this use of time and resources appears unexceptional. In Australia, however, it has proved most difficult.  

4.1.5 Tools and Methodologies  

The Family WellBeing Certificate II in Counselling is a structured course typical of the vocational education system. Each lesson has a specified content plan and specified learning objectives. Each course participant is expected to maintain a journal throughout the course, recording his or her responses to specific questions participants are asked to reflect on, and to write down other reflections or difficulties encountered inside and outside the learning environment. It is worth providing a topic list from the shortened “Leadership and Empowerment” course as indicative of the content:

- Basic human qualities (looks at leadership, who we admire and why);
- Basic human needs (conceptualises basic needs in terms of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs);
- Life journey (develop a personal timeline to understand how each individual has dealt with life challenges in the past);
- Conflict resolution (provides a framework for understanding conflict and ways to reduce tension in conflict situations);
- Understanding emotions (understanding emotions as potential determinants of health, and finding healthy ways to express emotion);
- Understanding crisis (ways to deal with crisis, and understanding that crisis can also provide opportunities for transformation);
- Loss and grief (understanding the process of loss and grief);

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69 This is a matter of considerable practical interest, and may help to explain the lack of empowerment programs in Indigenous Australia. The apparent inability of government programs to develop worthwhile relationships, and the weakness of the non-government sector in Australia, may go some way towards an explanation. This, however, could be the topic for another thesis.
• Beliefs and attitudes (understanding and appreciating different perspectives, and how beliefs and attitudes constrain or facilitate change);
• Personal and group work (considering how to use the skills and knowledge gained during the course at home, in the workplace, and in the community);
• Developing your leadership style (identifying personal leadership roles and the qualities each brings to them).

To deliver the course effectively, a great deal relies on the abilities of the facilitator to build trust and a shared sense of confidence within the group. As with the other groups examined in earlier chapters, the facilitator’s place as role model stands out.

FWB facilitators have all emphasised the importance of the initial “group agreement” in establishing trust and solidarity (Brown 2011: research interview). This is the process whereby the group decides on the rules under which the group will operate. The group agreement establishes a safe environment for participants, and teaches respect for maintaining mutual agreements (Whiteside et.al. 2006). Discussions with facilitators have stressed that the group agreement must be allocated plenty of time, as it is essential to give the group control from the outset (Brown 2011: research interview; Reilly 2011: research interview). Generally, any group will develop an appropriate list of agreements without much prompting. The facilitator only needs to prompt to ensure essential items such as confidentiality, mutual respect, attendance, mutual support, use of time and so on are included.

As noted above, FWB and the ERP have had difficulty in providing opportunities for facilitators to come together to debrief, share experiences and further develop skills and techniques. As a consequence, the individual style of each facilitator tends to stand out, and there is a lot of variability in delivery. However, in addition to the Group Agreement, facilitators all make use of “ice breakers” for getting started and “energisers” for those slow afternoon sessions. The use of these trust-building tools, in the view of this author, shows the indispensible role of Indigenous facilitators. The judgement about what will or will not be a culturally appropriate game for a group of Indigenous adults is one requiring a lot of experience. Perhaps as a consequence of the lack of debriefing opportunities, the FWB facilitators make limited use of active learning strategies such as role plays or structured activities. By comparison with the Bismark Ramu Group or the Social Empowerment Education Program, the lack of
opportunities to continue to build facilitator skills and confidence by regularly bringing facilitators together stands out as a critical weakness in building capacity to deliver FWB.

Risks also arise from this situation. FWB facilitators are often working in highly stressful situations. The trust-building process in many instances requires the facilitator to “go first” early in the Stage 1 process, sharing his or her own struggles and difficulties at the same time as working with the group. In 2011, there were FWB facilitators working with prison inmates. Every FWB session, regardless of the setting, has the potential to throw up ethical dilemmas for facilitators, particularly around sensitive issues such as children and violence. Facilitators must have completed all FWB modules, plus the facilitator module and 150 hours of supervised facilitation with an experienced person. Groups are always co-facilitated by two workers, and there is access to counselling if called for. However, given the lack of centralised coordination and the diffuse nature of FWB facilitation, people do not always take advantage of the guidelines that are provided. More usually it appears that facilitators “debrief in the car on the way back” (Reilly 2011: research interview).

As with the Pacific organisations, the skill and dedication of the facilitators stands out. They work because “we love to see the change in people from where they start to where they finish” (Reilly 2011: research interview; Wargent 2011: research interview). The qualities sought after in the paraprofessionals of the previous chapters are absolutely present: leadership, fearlessness, strongly held core values. Also present is a sense of a FWB community: people who have shared a special experience of seeing others grow through allowing themselves to be vulnerable; coming to understand themselves and others in a process of healing and renewal. Like the Ghandi quote from Chapter 3, Dr Roxanne Bainbridge of the ERP comments that the facilitator must “embody the program yourself”, modelling the intended behaviours. The FWB facilitators and the ERP team are a community, the people who “get it” when it comes to seeing why empowerment is an essential part of bringing new life to crippling social circumstances (Bainbridge et.al. 2011). As one indication of the creative energy of the facilitators, Lyndon Reilly and Rachael Wargent, two experienced and skilled facilitators, developed the following acrostic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brainstorm</th>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Reflect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact</td>
<td>Integrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen/Learn</td>
<td>Deliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lyndon and Rachael’s acrostic reflects an additional element of the FWB program as practiced by the ERP: it involves more than just learning. Following Zimmerman and Wallerstein (Zimmerman 2000; Wallerstein & Duran 2006), the ERP identifies empowerment as a multi-level construct consisting of individual, community and social levels. Consequently, the practice of the ERP includes a “2-step approach”. The first step is to build individual empowerment and group solidarity. The Family WellBeing training is the primary vehicle for this step. The second step is to practice that new-found pride to “collectively address priority structural issues identified from the personal development training” (Whiteside et.al. 2005).

While organizing of this type is an element that has been aspired to throughout the program, its achievement has been hampered by the availability of funds that can be used for this purpose, in the knowledge that effective organizing requires an open-ended period of continuing contact. At its best, the second step has appeared as Alinsky-style organizing. Review of the FWB/ERP literature and reporting shows this was unequivocally achieved twice, in Yarrabah and Hopevale. In the absence of organizing capacity within the ERP, there has grown a view that the ERP will contribute to community and social levels of change through individual empowerment and group solidarity having a wider flow-on, or “ripple”, effect for employees in organisations or for members in a community (McCalman 2011a: research interview). Like SIDT, there is the view that social-level change will ultimately occur through contact with a “critical mass” of participants (Tsey & Every 2000). However, as alluded to above, even maintaining a loose network of trained facilitators has been difficult, and falls short of the aspirations of the ERP.

The published literature on the Empowerment Research Program shows that empowerment and control are essential to enhancing Indigenous wellbeing at an individual level, and that for Aboriginal people these determinants are constrained by broader structural forces at community and social levels. This highlights the need for empowerment processes that extend beyond the individual and the group. Unlike the organisations in the previous chapters, this has been extraordinarily difficult to achieve in the Australian context.

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70 This was in one of the early FWB/ERP trials at Yarrabah, recorded in the report “We’re the Talk of the Town” (2005). The organised action involved marginalised Yarrabah residents in achieving greater access to local council services and better security of their land-holdings.
4.2 Part II – Analysis: Empowerment, Research and Basic Human Need

4.2.1 Empowerment in Australia and the Pacific

As indicated earlier, the Family WellBeing program was chosen to provide a comparison with the Pacific groups as a way of responding to a question about whether the Pacific techniques and methodologies were applicable in Indigenous Australia. In the previous chapters we have seen that the Pacific organisations and their programs have some continuity, through personnel and the transfer of tools and techniques. Over the period 1982 to 2010, collectively the Pacific organisations have demonstrated the adaptability of an approach to empowerment using a particular set of tools and techniques, delivered by paraprofessionals in a community setting.

There is no such continuity between the Pacific groups and Family WellBeing or the Empowerment Research Program. These latter two have evolved in the context of Aboriginal Australia. In addition, they have evolved in response to community problems that revolve around subjects such as family healing, youth suicide, and abuse of alcohol and other drugs. This appears quite unlike the development scenarios considered in the Pacific.

The initial research question for the present study asked about the applicability of the Pacific tools and techniques to Aboriginal Australia. In finding the Family WellBeing program, the question of the applicability of programs developed to build personal and community empowerment and control was answered in the affirmative. The operation of the FWB program by the James Cook University research team added the ingredient of an organised approach. Looking to the above profile, the following points of similarity emerge:

- a program developed with Indigenous control of the program content;
- a structured set of learning tools that aim to anchor people in their own experience as a valid source of knowledge;
- the critical importance of the quality of the paraprofessionals, with these practitioners requiring skills in group facilitation and the ability to provide a behavioural role model;
- an organisation that organizes, maintaining an overall coherence and consistency of approach;
- an organisation and its personnel that forms an identifiable reflexive community;
• reliance on intrinsic motivation in the learning group, and a voluntary organisational platform within the recipient community.

There are also important points of difference, as well as specific challenges. It appears likely that many of these differences arise in the context of Australian Indigenous townships. This is an important topic, which the author will pursue further in later work, separate to the present study. For now, these points of difference are iterated with some brief comment:

• The problem of sustaining a group. FWB participant evaluation reports show participant support for the program, but also show that numbers attending sessions decline quickly, and that relatively few people are able to complete a comprehensive set of FWB materials. It is often proposed that the level of trauma and lack of control over life incidents in Aboriginal Australian townships makes it very hard to sustain consistent participation by a group. The many funerals and other major incidents such as hospitalisation of a family member often pull people away;

• Lack of interest in another “new program”. FWB reports show the difficulty of initiating programs in Aboriginal townships. Whereas in the Pacific curiosity tends to be generated by the relatively rare event of a group of strangers coming to the community, in Australia there is participation and program burn-out. Politicians and public servants fly in and out, new programs are announced, new “community consultations” held, and meanwhile, little changes on the ground. There is an understandably high level of cynicism about anything novel;

• The welfare “safety net” provides an individual alternative to finding community solutions. The Pacific nations mentioned have very limited systems of state welfare. This may be one reason the overseas-funded non-government sector is so large in these nations. By comparison, individual welfare payments decrease the need for wider cooperation to meet basic needs. There is a decreased need for voluntary association;

• Pervasive hopelessness. Evidence of this is to be found in the course content of the Family WellBeing program. Recalling that the course was developed by Aboriginal people, the inclusion of understanding crisis, dealing with loss and grief, family violence and abuse as the major themes in a generalised course for Aboriginal counsellors suggests the extent of the challenges they face.
There are also differences in program delivery:

- Fragmentary funding. The Empowerment Research Program relies on a patchwork of funding to support the overall program. A significant amount of time is therefore spent on applications, approvals, reporting and general administration. This appeared earlier as one of the weaknesses of the Solomon Islands Development Trust;
- Separation of organisation and program. As noted, the ERP employs the FWB program as a vehicle for research. This has led to some difficulties when dealing with potential client organisations wishing to adopt the FWB program, as program delivery is not really a function of the ERP. Its function is research;
- The “paraprofessionals” in this case have a nationally recognised vocational qualification.\(^7^1\)

In spite of these differences, what is significant for the current study is that here is an empowerment-based program that has been operating in Australia since 1993, and for the last 10 years has been promulgated in an organised way in the Cape York region. The question as to whether the Pacific techniques are applicable in Aboriginal Australia can be answered in the affirmative. Given that this is the case, it is now possible to also consider the contribution of the Family WellBeing program and the Empowerment Research Program to what subsequently became the central concern of the present study: empowerment, and the organisational requirements for delivery of empowerment programs as interventions.

4.2.2 Social and Emotional Wellbeing and the Control Factor

In Australia, empowerment is associated with the field of health, and in particular that sub-field known as “social and emotional wellbeing”. While the notion of “social wellbeing” has immediate resonance with the SIDT model from Chapter 1, the addition of a health perspective, and research on a medical model, adds a new dimension to this exploration of empowerment techniques and methodologies.

\(^7^1\) A Cert III is considered a minimum professional qualification. The four units of FWB plus the “Train the Trainer” module and 150 hours of supervised practice no longer meets the national standard because, according to the VET provider, “the Cert III now embedded into Cert II – basically the Cert III did not have enough hours under the VET packaging rules to justify it as a level of its own so the ‘one’ course now exists like this. If you do the first 8 units you immediately qualify to get a certificate called Cert II in Family Wellbeing. If you continue on and do the facilitator subset you then get another issue of testamur called The Family WellBeing Facilitator Skill Set.” (Brown, C. email response). Another example of the way the formal qualification system can be obstructive.
The Introduction refers to the work of Michael Marmot and the Whitehall II study, which demonstrated a social gradient of health. At least since Frederick Engels and his 1844 work, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, there has been a known association between poverty and poor health. What Marmot’s study showed was that even at higher levels of the social scale, where sufficient money, good housing, education, employment and access to services were the norm, there remained a visible gradient of health. The Whitehall I study, which found an inverse social gradient for coronary heart disease (CHD), also found that this gradient remained after adjusting for known risk factors (smoking, obesity, blood pressure, height, cholesterol). The Whitehall II study set out to test the hypothesis that this observed gradient was due to psychosocial factors, in particular those associated with work. The study found that “control, but not high demand, at work is associated with increased risk of CHD, independent of measures of socioeconomic status” (Marmot et.al. 1997:235). Put simply, Marmot’s findings suggested that it is healthy to be able to influence the events that affect one’s life.

Syme (1998) extends Marmot’s work with the finding that “the social class gradient exists throughout most of the industrialized world and applies to almost all diseases”. Furthermore, he suggests that there is little that is new in the use of control and empowerment in the behavioural sciences, and that “researchers have been applying concepts like mastery, self-efficacy, locus of control, sense of control, powerlessness, competence, and hardiness to their studies of health and other problems” since the early 1970s (Syme 1998:495).

Syme’s contribution is to focus on the problem of interventions that address social disparities. By making the assumption that “control of destiny” best explains the social gradient of health, Syme is led to focus on acquiring “problem-solving skills and access to resources” to deal with life challenges, and consequently to improve health. Drawing on work begun in the 1960s with preschool children of poor, black parents who were admitted to special preschool programs emphasising problem solving based on trial and error, Syme shows the importance of the ability to deal with failure

72 More specifically, the study found that while control and socioeconomic status are correlated, they are also separable. While other risk factors such as low social supports, hostility, sedentary lifestyle, smoking and car access also correlated with socioeconomic status, no factor explained the social gradient of health as well as control (Marmot et.al. 1997:238).

73 In this instance, by “resources” Syme is not referring to, for example, access to health services, welfare, or even economic or political power. His focus is on resources that contribute to problem-solving skills that in turn improve people’s sense of personal control and empowerment, and hence an ability to better manage life stress.
without sinking into hopelessness. “Hope and mastery are related to better health”, he says, whereas “giving up” is an unhealthy way to deal with major life challenges (Syme 1998:499).

While he does not entirely dismiss the idea of social revolution as a measure to reduce health disparities, the intervention ultimately developed by Syme and others is contained in a modest guidebook, *The Wellness Guide*. It was ultimately developed – with extensive community participation, evolving over eight years – with substantial differences between the first “top-down” draft and later versions. Using simple English and Spanish, the *Guide* traverses major life events from pregnancy and birth to old age and death. The *Guide* is not a lecture on how to be healthy in the usual vein of public health information (eat well, don’t smoke, exercise, and so on). Instead, it is distinctive in two ways: first, it emphasises that in every life situation there are choices; secondly, it lists resources that are available to people to help make those choices. With respect to using those resources, it advises that patience and persistence are part of dealing with state agencies, and gives advice on how to think about, phrase and write down questions before picking up the telephone. It is this focus on problem-solving techniques and how to deal with frustration in the face of initial failure that set the *Guide* apart (Schwab et.al. 1992). Syme’s view that access to resources is an essential part of asserting control links well with Mankowski and Rappaport’s view that personal and community narratives should be regarded as a resource (Mankowski & Rappaport 1995).

Tsey cites both Marmot and Syme as providing one of the basic theoretical perspectives of the Empowerment Research Program (Tsey 2011: research interview). This is visible in the literature on Family WellBeing, which emphasises the “control factor” and supporting Indigenous individuals, families and groups to “develop relevant skills and the capacity to deal with the day-to-day challenges of life” (Tsey 2010). It was these “narratives of change”, as recorded through FWB evaluation processes, that were subsequently used to develop the Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM) to measure processes and outcomes of psychological and social empowerment. Family WellBeing provides a framework for developing these new narratives in the context of the other aspect of empowering practice identified by Syme: that of learning generic problem-solving skills. Tsey takes this one step further in seeing FWB as:
strengths-based or solution-focussed cognitive reframing, helping participants to identify opportunities to work around the challenges […] the ability to use generic problem solving skills to deal with day to day life challenges without being overwhelmed by them, a key factor in addressing the social determinants of health (Tsey 2010).

It is difficult to overstate the social consequences of colonisation for Aboriginal Australians. A large and continually growing literature discusses endemic interpersonal violence, self-harm and suicide, homicide, alcohol and drug abuse, incarceration and lack of employment – these in relation to social determinants that include dispossession, the removal of children, forced separation and inter-generational trauma. The volumes containing reviews by Henderson (Henderson et.al. 2007) and Atkinson (Atkinson et.al. 2010) are but two recent examples of this literature, which in addition to peer-reviewed work includes substantial government-sponsored investigations and reports.74

With respect to Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing, two salient points emerge from this literature. First, a health system, including public health initiatives, that focuses on individuals and individual behaviour has not achieved improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal Australian, despite “decades of effort and biomedical advancement” (Henderson 2007:140). Second, that in terms of both an Indigenous perspective on health, which values an holistic view encompassing social and spiritual dimensions (Grieves 2009), and in terms of the acute social and cultural changes rapidly forced upon Aboriginal people, loss of power and control appear as central determinants of social and emotional wellbeing. Rapidly changing policies of exploitation, protection, removal, integration, assimilation, self-determination and guardianship continue to erode Aboriginal Australians’ power over and control of the circumstances of their lives. In this author’s view, it does not understate the case to say that even at its most benevolent, the Australian state is perceived by many Aboriginal Australians as a coercive, authoritarian regime. The work of Marmot and Syme makes it clear that this has health consequences. Further, those health consequences must be

74 The milestone reports are: Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991); Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families, “Bringing Them Home” (1997); Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse, Ampe Akelyerneman Meke Mekarle “Little Children are Sacred” (2007).
addressed as social phenomena, and will not be susceptible to change on the basis of individual medical interventions alone.

4.2.3 Family WellBeing and Basic Human Need

As has been developed in the previous chapters, empowerment must be regarded as a group phenomenon. Family WellBeing meets this requirement by being a group intervention. This was most perspicaciously noted by Anne Kreger of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (Keger 2011) as one factor that sets FWB apart from a medical intervention model. By providing a structured means for a group of individuals to share and bond, FWB creates a coherent community able to practise a range of interpersonal skills and assert control in a safe environment. As discussed in Chapter 3 (SEEP), FWB is meeting the requirements for “the creation of new settings that may serve a legitimation function for people to tell their own stories” (Rappaport 1995:799). The first step in this is clearly the group agreement, which gives permission for the group to take charge of itself. From here, the group is guided through sets of resources that build on this initial experience. These resources provide a framework, with participants providing the course content from their own experience. As in the previous chapter, here is the indication that FWB is about developing and sustaining new narratives by creating settings.

Taking the cue from Habermas, the question that can be asked about this framework is: what aspects of the lifeworld are made thematic? In the case of Family WellBeing, primarily what is objectified is the self. This is clearly reflected in the course outline shown earlier: basic human qualities; basic human needs; life journey; conflict resolution; understanding emotions; understanding crisis; loss and grief; beliefs and attitudes. This framework for consideration of the self is composed of two fundamental aspects. First, that every person’s own answers to any challenges are already within him or her, and that solutions should never be imposed. The person can be guided to find his or her own answers through an analytical framework. Second, that there is available to us a universal analytical framework of human needs that are so basic that “whenever any of them are not met, there is a loss within us and we learn to behave in other ways to compensate so that the need will be met” (Tsey et.al. 2006). In FWB, these needs have been categorised into “physical, emotional, mental and spiritual” types (Figure 8).
In the field of psychosocial studies, this idea of basic need as a driver of adaptive behaviour can be traced to two sources. First is Abraham Maslow’s 1943 work, *A Theory of Human Motivation* (Maslow 1943). Maslow’s lasting contribution was recognising that there are both somatic and psychological basic human needs that are met in the healthy person. He proposed that these needs could be represented by these classes: physiological, safety, belongingness/love, esteem, and self-actualisation. He organised these classes into a hierarchy, with physiological need at the base and self-actualisation (and later also self-transcendence) at the top. Maslow proposed this hierarchy as a means to deal with a specific theoretical problem. His primary object was to develop a theory of motivation for which the “integrated wholeness of the organism must be one of the foundation stones”. He was also of the view that the highly material or somatic needs were atypical in as much as they were conscious and localisable, but he had to accept that “a person who is lacking food, safety, love and esteem would most probably hunger for food more strongly than for anything else” (Maslow 1943:370–373). It was this recognition of the primacy of somatic need that, in spite of the fact that he believed it to be atypical, led Maslow to propose that need must to some extent be organised in a hierarchy.

By 1959, Maslow had moved on to the point where he envisaged the full realisation of the human person in the same “naturalistic, scientific sense that an acorn may be said to be ‘pressing toward’ being an oak tree” (Maslow 1959:130). He now situates basic need as the movement towards the more or less unconscious unifying goal of human self-actualisation. Crucially, he identifies that the failure to meet the basic need for self-actualisation leads to psychopathology. Maslow hypothesises that, contrary to the Freudians, evil natures are not basic to human personality, but that aggression, hostility, hatred and destructiveness are “an ever-present reaction to the frustration of basic needs”. He points out that professional psychotherapists as a matter of course “change and improve human nature, help people to become more strong, virtuous,
creative, kind, loving, altruistic and serene” as a consequence of improved self-knowledge and self-acceptance. Maslow wants us to understand what can be good in the human person, and where to find and actualise the source of that goodness. Variously called self-actualisation, self-realisation, integration, psychological health, individuation, autonomy, growth, maturation, creativity or productivity, this amounts to “realizing the potentialities of the person, that is to say, becoming fully human, everything that a person can become” (Maslow 1959:135). The fundamental importance of Maslow’s contribution is the recognition that there are both material and non-material basic human needs, common to all persons, and that these needs are concerned with human growth defined as increasing self-actualisation.

A second psychosocial approach to adaptive behaviour is Paul Sites and his 1973 work Control, the Basis of Social Order. It is in Sites’s work that the emphasis Marmot and Syme place on the social phenomenon of control is interwoven with this psychological understanding of basic human need. Sites builds much of his work on Maslow’s initial research, in particular Maslow’s 1954 work Motivation and Personality. Sites emphasises the development and definition of need in the context of childhood socialisation. He ranges across the work of Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, and out to the fringes with Erich Fromm, and also draws on authors examining the animal precedents of human behaviour – Robert Ardrey, The Territorial Imperative, and Desmond Morris, The Naked Ape. His purpose in so doing is to establish the fundamental and even potentially genetic nature of need, and the existence of both material and non-material aspects to need. Although Durkheim and Parsons do not specifically discuss basic needs, Sites infers needs from their conclusions. Thus, he sees that Durkheim’s characterisations of anomic, egoistic, altruistic and fatalistic suicide having their explanatory framework in needs such as identity, security, attachment and stimulation. Contrary to a functionalist view of the relationship between persons and society – which stresses the “assumption of the a priori existence of a social system to which (individuals and/or groups) supposedly adapt” (Sites 1973:1), maintaining the system over time and granting little autonomy to the individual – Sites concurs with Maslow in seeing culture as an adaptive tool with an evolutionary purpose, “one of whose functions is to make the physiological emergencies come less often” (Maslow 1943:374). Culture is regarded by Sites as the means evolved to ensure that as many basic needs as the environmental field permits get regularly and reliably met.
Central to Sites’s thesis is the concept of control, or “power in action”, whereby the individual, either on his own or in coalition with others, attempts to control the situational context by controlling the behaviour of others as well as his own, thus making control the most important dynamic of social as well as individual life (Sites 1973:1).

Control replaces the concept of adaptation, while maintaining a developmental and evolutionary approach. Based on Ardrey and Morris, Sites argues that increased control of the environment increases potential survival possibilities, and that “the individual seeks to control the environment (physical and social) in order to obtain gratification of his needs and to maintain himself” (Sites 1973:3). In contrast to a functionalist approach that treats the developing human as a *tabula rasa* who is socialised to the needs of society through internalising his or her norms and values from parents and others, it is the dialectical dynamic of control that is significant. The infant’s behaviour can be said to control the parent as much as the converse is also true. Sites is concerned about the apparent circularity of such reasoning, and therefore posits that the needs we are talking about “must be understood as standing outside of a particular society” (Sites 1973:33) – that is, that they are universal human needs. What is apparent in Sites’s concern is that it is essential from a theoretical point of view to separate needs from wants. If any intensely felt desire becomes defined as basic, the utility of the basic needs approach is undermined, tending towards social or cultural relativism as socially determined wants become increasingly defined as needs. Sites acknowledges that there are many ways for individuals and collectives to meet basic needs within particular social situations, so that while the need remains fundamental, the social recipes for its gratification are potentially very varied. So, rather than seeing norms, values and culture in a functionalist or normative way, Sites establishes that these should be viewed instead as tools and opportunities the individual employs to meet basic needs. Sites posits the individual as theoretically prior to society, and his notion of control as basic to individual and social interactions means that the individual “uses, and indeed at times produces culture for the sake of himself and significant others, as he defines them” (Sites 1973:11). Citing evidence from studies of delinquent gangs, he suggests that the best evidence of this is the willingness of individuals to engage in deviant behaviour, in spite of the social cost involved. Society is only useful to the individual to the extent that it can be used to meet basic needs, and that
it conquers him only to the degree that his needs are met or to the extent that he sees the possibility of meeting his needs within its context, calculated in terms of the potential cost of going outside (Sites 1973:11).

In this sense, tradition is not a static norm that is implanted in the individual by society, but instead is recreated anew with each generation as needs and their gratification are renegotiated through communicative action.

In the context of Aboriginal Australia, control and narrative emerge as vital issues. Reflecting on 10 years of research, the James Cook University team comment that Aboriginal people who have participated in Family WellBeing understand empowerment as a social action process in the context of their lived experiences: healing/coming to terms with past and present situation; dealing with the pain; gaining control; becoming strong; finding your voice; participating in change; and working together for a strong community (Bainbridge et.al. 2011:16).

Noongar man Kim Scott, twice winner of the Miles Franklin Literary Award for Australian fiction, and associate professor in Indigenous health at the Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute, said in a radio interview:

I feel like we’re on the cusp of important narratives. We’ve played over a few decades with – in my mind, I think of there’s a Stolen Generation narrative which is very important. There’s a continuity narrative which is much to do with Native Title. I’d like to think there’s a whole recovery narrative which is to do with healing for all of us, and we’re yet to begin articulating that sort of thing (Scott 2011).

Family WellBeing, based initially on the experience of Stolen Generation persons, and now employed in the public health field in relation to suicide prevention, drug and alcohol abuse and counselling, employs the framework of basic human need to provide one means to grow this narrative of recovery and healing.

4.2.4 Participatory Action Research

As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, a background in participatory action research (PAR) provided the framework for writing these chapters, engaging the author in a cycle of action and reflection. A variety of nomenclature is used to identify research that is engaged with activity by the research subject. The use of participatory
action research here is taken from the Southern tradition, which defines PAR as a research methodology which

claims to further change processes in constructive non-violent ways due to its emphases on awareness-building processes [...] Such processes of radical change include scientific research, adult education and political action combined (Fals-Borda 1987:329).

The term Participatory Action Research serves to emphasise the three fundamental aspects of these “change processes”. First, it must be concerned with “the who, the what and the how” of participation, as discussed in Chapter 1. Genuine participation engenders personal responsibility and demands of the self that action be taken. Thus, secondly, PAR must be concerned with the specific actions that will follow from participation. Taking action to change the circumstances under study is an expression of power over, or control of, one’s circumstances. Finally, it is concerned with knowledge and its creation, which is the purpose of research. Integrating the native epistemology of the group is essential to create valid knowledge that can be the basis for action. What this view shares with participatory principles in public health is that it is cyclical and iterative; it builds on existing strengths and resources, including the psychological resource of narrative; and it is a long-term process with a commitment to consistency.

In the public health field, it is this tradition that is drawn on by Minkler and Wallerstein in Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008). CBPR is defined as a collaborative approach to research [...] CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change to improve community health and eliminate health disparities (Wallerstein & Duran 2006:312).

The Empowerment Research Program draws extensively on the work of Nina Wallerstein in the way it understands and operationalises empowerment research (Bainbridge et.al. 2011). For its practitioners, CBPR is not a particular methodology but rather a set of “principles”, a “philosophy” or an “orientation”. In the tradition of Saul Alinsky, for whom “the word ‘academic’ is a synonym for irrelevant” (Alinsky 1969, quoted in Stoeker 2008:107) organizer Randy Stoeker clarifies this by seeing that the problem is definitional: there is difficulty in being more concrete because academic thinking is based on “a conception that CBPR is a research project. It’s not.
It is a social change project of which research is one piece” (Stoeker 2008:111). Tsey concurs. Speaking of work with the Yarrabah men’s group, he says the project “is not academic investigator driven research” (Tsey et.al. 2002:279).

Examining the principles of CBPR set down by Barbara Israel and others (Israel et.al. 2008), most problematic is the definition of “community”. Whilst agreeing that community is a unit of identity, CBPR here relies on identifying predetermined communities of identity, defined geographically or by, for example, identifiers such as lesbian or gay, Hispanic or black. This approach has its roots in a traditional public health methodology. The case studies presented here show that the systematic application of processes that build empowerment actually creates the community, which self-defines. When it comes to empowerment, in the first instance the community is a group that comes together with the intention of coming to agreement on action to address a discontent.

This is a particularly useful perspective in Aboriginal Australian “communities”. Often, as for example in Yarrabah, a group of geographically co-located Aboriginal people may not in the first instance (or, indeed, ever) see themselves as having common interests that would serve to define them as a community. Mission reserves were the place where people of disparate nations and clans were swept together by force, not by choice. When the Aboriginal “community” self-defines, it may be different in different circumstances. While some cultural obligations will draw together warring factions, the possibility of inducing change and innovation through “becoming empowered” draws together in the first instance those who see that the responsibility for change already rests with them (Mitchell 2000; Tsey et.al. 2002).

4.3 Summary

There is good evidence that the empowerment methodologies and techniques employed in the Pacific organisations are broadly applicable in Aboriginal Australia. However, there are also significant differences that arise from the particular environment of Aboriginal Australia. Australia is a country where the colonisers did not go home, and continuing colonisation maintains an active and direct effect on individual lives, families and communities.

Organisationally, like the Pacific, in Australia there is a reliance on the presence of voluntary organisation or existing self-management structures to provide a platform for community entry. The background research for the present study, and the ERP/FWB case study, show that Australia is well behind the Pacific in terms of there being a
body of experience and evidence to draw on to promote empowerment as an intervention. There is also a lack of mature relationships with funding agencies – that is, ones where there is a level of trust that provides scope for trial and error, and where there is long-term commitment to achieving outcomes.

In this context, the Family WellBeing program shows a greater emphasis than the Pacific groups on the self as the thematic object of investigation. This is achieved through a learning framework rooted in a conception of basic human need. These basic needs are both material and non-material, and so central to human functioning that there are health and behavioural consequences if they are not met. The concept of basic need provides an open-ended and aspirational framework with the telos of self-actualisation. In addition to this framework, the FWB learning process places emphasis on resilience – that is, dealing effectively with frustration in the face of initial failure – and generic problem-solving abilities. The most basic expression of this is to say that in every life situation, there are choices.

This approach of using basic human need as a framework for critical consciousness, referred to above as “making the self thematic”, was the initial marker by which the author identified the ERP/FWB program as one that may share other important characteristics with the Pacific groups and their practices. As these case studies have shown, this program does share many important features in common with the organisation and program methodologies profiled and analysed in the previous chapters. Basic human need was a theme introduced from an international development perspective in Chapter 1. Design of the Development Wheel, or the very durable Social Cosmology Chart and “Question Man”, drew on Galtung’s ideas about basic human need. Galtung too considered basic human need as an important unifying concept. In Galtung’s “Goals, Processes and Indictors in Development” (GPID) project, participatory action research also appeared as a methodology employing basic human need as a guiding concept. In the current chapter, a very closely allied idea has been employed as a participatory action research tool in a primary health-care setting.

This chapter concludes the presentation and analysis of the case study organisations and their programs. As was said at the outset, there was intentionally no definition of empowerment and other important language used here in the opening parts of this thesis. The purpose was to examine how these organisations organize, and to seek out those characteristics that they share as groups and programs. These characteristics have been related to relevant theoretical interpretations.
The following chapters, which form the second part of the present study, will use the material now developed from the case studies to respond to the central issue raised by Rappaport and Zimmerman in Chapter 3, that of empowerment as a “multi-level construct” that necessarily brings together the fields of psychology, organisation, and social change.
Part 2

Theoretical Synthesis
Chapter 5

Universal Human Need

“One can intuitively distinguish between the objectivity of external nature, the normative character of society, the intersubjectivity of language, and the subjectivity of internal nature.”

Jurgen Habermas, Theory and Society, 3 (1976:155)

5.1 Introduction

As the previous chapters have shown, the subject matter of empowerment appears across a range of disciplines, from international development and political theory to management, education, gender studies, organizing, community psychology and public health. Based on the actual experience of practising organisations, these fields have been explored for the applicability of their theoretical perspectives to real life. In this process, some tools and general characteristics have emerged with which to consider the process of empowerment. In sum, these are: Galtung’s vocabulary of equity, participation and autonomy, actors and structures; Habermas’s theory of communicative action; Lash’s definition of a modern community through hermeneutic reflexivity, including dissent and risk as part of that community; voluntarism; Rappaport’s perspective on narrative; basic human need; and finally the action research perspective that empowerment obviously and necessarily implies a disparity of power that must be addressed. In the next three chapters, these tools and general characteristics will be placed in a framework of personal, community and social empowerment.

First, a quick review. It is clear that beginning with Lewin in the Northern tradition, and Freire in the Southern, empowerment is about people improving their situation by themselves making change to their external circumstances. So it is that empowerment is seen as being a process that spans the range from individual to society. As has been seen, in the Handbook of Community Psychology (2000) Marc Zimmerman defines empowerment as having three levels of analysis: personal, organizational and community (Zimmerman 2000). Julian Rappaport in his 1987 paper Terms of Empowerment/Exemplars of Prevention: Toward a Theory for Community Psychology identifies
empowerment as “a multilevel construct applicable to individual citizens as well as to organizations and neighborhoods” (Rappaport 1987:121). In spite of Rappaport urging the need for research on “organizational processes, citizen participation, change in general and social change in particular, networks, social skills, and the psychological sense of community” (Rappaport 1987:135), from a theoretical viewpoint, community psychology and the related area of action research has had difficulty in moving beyond individual perspectives. While Zimmerman probes criteria such as “resource mobilization” and “citizen participation” in his “nomological network” for psychological empowerment, his perspective remains focused on individual psychology (Zimmerman 1995). Also as referred to earlier, Boyd and Angelique (Boyd & Angelique 2007) point out that this has been a persistent problem in the field.

Sociology is a field that has long considered this issue. Framed variously as a “micro-macro”, “agency-structure” or “subject-object” problem, it is expressed in the struggle between functionalist, structuralist and hermeneutic traditions. Georg Simmel, Talcott Parsons, Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, Anthony Giddens and others all produced important works on just this problem. The problem can be simply stated as the paradox that, on the one hand, individuals are apparently able to act autonomously as freely-choosing actors, possessing the quality of “agency”, and on the other, society is ordered in patterns and hierarchies, “structures” to which individuals adhere in ways that conserve those patterns. In sociology, the problem is generally dealt with either by making it by definition a non-problem, as does Giddens’s theory of “structuration”, which is concerned with “neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any societal totality, but social practices ordered across space and time” in a “duality of structure” (Giddens 1984:2), or by seeing the relationship between actor and structure as a dialectical one whereby “the product acts back upon the producer” through the processes of externalisation and objectification on the one hand, and internalisation “by which the objectivated social world is retrojected into consciousness” on the other (Berger & Luckmann 1966:78). From what has been observed in this study regarding empowering praxis, it is this latter, dialectical approach that stands out as the preferred framework, because it is clear that a

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75 N. Petersen and M. Zimmerman make some progress on this in a 2004 article, “Beyond the Individual: Toward a Nomological Network of Organisational Empowerment”, to be discussed in Chapter 6.
conception of the individual is required simultaneously with an interactional, group-oriented component. It was this group “subject-subject” interaction that in the present study first drew attention to the potential usefulness of Habermas’s theory of communicative action.

Finding a position that can encompass both the individual and his or her social environment is further complicated by the fact that, as has been observed in quantum physics, the “act of observation is itself a part of the phenomena being observed and therefore needs to be explained” (Goldspink & Kay 2004:598). This creates the further problem that a theory of society becomes stranded as a critical enterprise, unable to formulate criteria upon which it can base critique, as seen in Foucault’s conception of power. If, as Rappaport suggests, empowerment really is a “multi-level construct” able to span individual and social phenomena, then an understanding of what constitutes empowerment and the processes that drive it must incorporate approaches that overcome this problem. Again, it is Habermas who sought to restore critical perspective through his initial focus on how linguistic meaning is arrived at, and “the idea of participants in communication coming to an understanding about something in the world” (Habermas 1984:397).

It is apparent from the case studies that a certain consistency has emerged in the practical methodologies and actions upon which the process of empowerment rests. It follows from this that it is incumbent upon the present study to take a stance independent of culture and society in order to fully comprehend the phenomena that are observable in the case studies. In other words, to consider the nature of empowerment, it is necessary to consider what is universal to humanity and the human condition. This task begins with an exploration of what it is to be human, and that most quintessentially human quality, human values, the “basis upon which to choose one course rather than another, judged as better or worse, right or wrong” (Lee 1959:165).

5.2 The Search for a Theory of Value

On 4 October 1957, a remarkable group of 14 men and one woman came together at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The group included members of German, Polish, Japanese and American extraction. They were the leaders in their disciplines, and their fields of enquiry ranged across psychology, psychoanalysis, creative arts, anthropology, mathematics, biology, economics and theology. Many had first come to prominence in the 1920s, and all had witnessed the human holocaust that began in
1914 and ended with the birth of nuclear war. One, Dr Jacob Bronowski, a mathematician, spent World War I in Germany, had served in 1945 as the Scientific Deputy to the British Chiefs of Staff Mission to Japan, and wrote the mission’s report *The Effects of the Atomic Bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. Another, Pitirim Sorokin, the first chair of sociology at St Petersburg University, was imprisoned by both czarist and communist regimes, condemned to death and then pardoned by Lenin, and finally exiled by the Soviet government in 1922. He later became Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Harvard, and was also the Director of the Harvard Research Centre for Creative Altruism, the organisation which initiated the conference (Maslow 1959).

The group came together in the belief that knowledge of human values was central to the future of humankind; for them, “moral transformation” was “the most important item on today’s agenda of history” (Sorokin 1959:3). Their collective experience of war, death, destruction and oppression underlay a sense of urgency about their task. The chairperson of the conference was Dr Abraham Maslow. Maslow was a clinical research psychologist who rose to be elected as a fellow of the American Psychological Association in the divisions of Abnormal and Clinical Psychology, Esthetics, and the Division of Personality and Social Psychology, of which he was president. He believed that traditional value systems had failed humankind, and that:

> Wealth and prosperity, technological advance, widespread education, democratic political reforms, even honestly good intentions and avowals of good will have, by their failure to produce peace, brotherhood, serenity and happiness, confronted us nakedly and unavoidably with the profundities that mankind has been avoiding by its busy-ness with the superficial (Maslow 1959:vii).

The participants hoped to begin the work of developing a system of values “based squarely upon valid knowledge of the nature of man, of his society, and of his works” (Maslow 1959:viii). The papers presented fell into one of three categories of scientific (called “naturalistic” in the conference commentaries), psychological (called “humanistic”), and “ontological”. The three approaches, described below, typify the overall consensus of the conference in terms of these classifications.

As regards the scientific, the conference was not without substantial conflict and disagreement. Dr Bronowski launched an attack on what he saw as a fundamental error in the approach of many of his colleagues, who denied the efficacy of scientific
method to achieve an appreciation of values. His attack was motivated by claims that science was bereft of values, and subject only to the “tyranny of facts”, providing no guide to human aspirations. It is wrong, he said, to assume that because the scientific method seeks to objectively describe the world in terms of neutral facts, that scientists themselves “have no spiritual urges and no human scruples” (Bronowski 1959:53). The ultimate value of science is its search for truth, as judged by the criterion of being empirically true to the facts. Bronowski argued that this scientific search for truth is an evolutionary process, in contrast to societies that accept that revealed truth, whether it be political or religious, is a dogma to be imposed. These, he says, are authoritarian societies. Further, if a society believes that the truth has been found, it resists all change, for there is no reason to change. When, as a society, we say that we seek truth through a process of discovery, we also accept that society itself will change and evolve with the growth of our knowledge of facts and the frameworks of truth that sustain that knowledge. If the search for truth is regarded as an ultimate value, it follows that no belief will survive if it conflicts with factual truth. We can no longer accept that the earth is flat, or that it is the centre of the universe, because the facts do not bear this out. As a scientific society, we necessarily accept the possibility of change, and acknowledge that social values are, “at bottom, a mechanism by which society arranges that it shall evolve” (Bronowski 1959:58). In Bronowski’s view, as necessary conditions of that process we must value individual independence above simple reference to authority, as well as valuing originality as the tool of discovery. It follows that dissent, and therefore tolerance, are also necessary to the progress of the age of reason.

What Bronowski’s argument alerts us to is the significance of the use of words like “independence” and “freedom” as at least potentially being the language only of the scientific society. By starting from a position of being an individual scientist searching for truth, he constructs a value system unique to his place in a society of scientists and in a society at large that recognises the utility of science. His construction of values does not touch the human person, but is built as a set of necessary conditions for a particular society to have stability and also to evolve. From Bronowski’s reasoning, it is not possible to suggest that independence or freedom have any special status as universal values, nor would he suggest so. As he says, such a suggestion is “not science”. The consequence of this view – that values must be dealt with as facts – is that values come to be regarded as “relative and culture-bound” (Weisskopf 1959:107).
Others at the conference, Maslow among them, adopted the second, psychological or “humanistic” perspective. In his enthusiasm for a defence of science, Bronowski had found himself out of step with the majority of the conference participants. Maslow and others were focused on discovering values that are absolute human values – common values that can be asserted with confidence for all people. Their experience in psychology and psychoanalysis gave Maslow, Fromm and others at the conference the understanding that human health requires certain physiological and psychological needs of the individual to be satisfied. Their approach was first and foremost human-centred. The fundamental importance of Maslow’s contribution, discussed in Chapter 4, was the recognition that there are definitely basic human needs common to all persons, beyond simple physiological needs, and that these needs are concerned with human growth defined as increasing self-actualisation. He sees needs and values as related through the spectrum of illness to health. Basic needs are persistently yearned for; deficiency in meeting basic needs leads to illness or stunted growth; gratifying basic need is therapeutic; healthy people are gratified and do not have these deficiencies. “We shall call people who are satisfied in these needs, basically satisfied people, and it is from these that we may expect the fullest (and healthiest) creativeness” (Maslow 1943:383). The question is not what should or ought to be ultimate values, but rather, what are the values of the healthy human being? Good values like transcendence of self, altruism, the fusion of truth and beauty with goodness, wisdom, honesty, and spontaneity are the traits of the psychologically healthy person, and are the result of conscious striving for self-actualisation. According to Maslow, all basic needs refer to this ultimate value-end of achieving authentic being.

All of this is in stark contrast to Bronowski’s argument. The two perspectives lay bare the contrast between structure on the one hand, and agency on the other. Values seemingly cannot be both culturally determined and intrinsic to human nature. Each can be viewed separately as a realistic scheme, but they are themselves incongruent, and lead to different conclusions. Objectively, values are the set of conditions required for societies to function productively. Their derivation is in social structures that provide enough stability to have at least internal peace, if not external war, and enough dynamism to avoid stagnation and to evolve. On the other hand, the subjective person appears to have no static, discoverable, factual truth in relation to basic values. The needy subject is a constantly shifting profile, dependent upon the degree of need.
satisfaction. The estimate of value is the extent to which that profile meets the end of self-actualisation.

Another conference participant, Walter Weisskopf, addressed himself to this problem of the irreconcilability of subject and object by adopting an ontological position. Weisskopf had been a lawyer in Vienna until 1938, when he moved to the United States. At the time of the conference he was Professor of Economics at Roosevelt University, Chicago. He drew attention to the existential structure of being. He proposed that the contradictions between the two conclusions could be accepted when the subject and object were regarded in a dialectical relationship, a relationship where one conditioned the other. Experience always contains a dichotomy between the subject that experiences and an object that is experienced, he maintained. To this he added the image of polarity between subject and object, implying that they are interdependent, that one cannot be without the other. In this sense, subject and object become ontologically one. Weisskopf compares this existential image of dichotomy, polarity and unity with the familiar sign of the Tao. This characterisation of being is a function of consciousness. The person both is, and is conscious of being, and so “is able to transcend any given situation because he is aware of it”.

By transcending the given situation through his consciousness man frees himself within certain limits from the necessities of the situation. This opens up alternatives; the dimension of actuality is left behind and the realm of potentiality is entered, creating the possibility of choice and the necessity of decision based on guiding values. (Weisskopf 1959:109)

For Weisskopf, “transcendence through consciousness is the basis of human freedom.” Weisskopf’s argument suggests that transcendence and union can be seen as basic human needs, being forms of self-actualisation, and that these require freedom to be satisfied. Values are a concomitant of freedom, a freedom that arises from the nature of consciousness and the necessity of choice. This trinitarian existential dialectic of dichotomy, polarity and unity is the “ground of being”. So while values themselves are determined by historical conditions, society and culture, the necessity to have values is rooted in the ultimate ground of being. Universal values are represented by symbols for the ground of being: God, nature, the universe. Union with the ground of being is the basis of values. Values disintegrate when the relationship with the ground of being is lost. Alienation is the absence of integration and union. Weisskopf uses this platform from which to mount his attack on the “competitive acquisitiveness” of the
marketplace, which “permeates social and human relations”. Economic theory that equated freedom and choice with the free market in fact eliminated real freedom and “all spontaneous, emotional, nonutilitarian behaviour” (Weisskopf 1959:116). The prototype of alienated man is “economic man”. Since the goals of the needs of consciousness cannot be unequivocally given, and so in this economic sense, “no calculable relationship exists between means and ends which could serve as a guide for action” (Weisskopf 1959:117). For Weisskopf, friendship, love, charity, creative activity and aesthetic and religious experiences have become valueless because they cannot be calculated on economic principles. According to Weisskopf, the dominance of the values of economic calculation alienates us from the ground of being, and reduces human action to a small part of its potential. Weisskopf’s argument, while intuitively attractive, suffers from a reliance on mysticism as its basis, and mysticism by definition is not open to criticism.\(^76\)

What is visible in each of these three different perspectives of the scientific, humanistic and mystical is the effort to develop a rational framework for talking about values. None of these perspectives can be necessarily labelled as wrong or false. Each has its own kind of rightness. The fact is, they simply take up different aspects of human experience.

5.3 Habermas and the “Rationalisation of the Lifeworld”

Jurgen Habermas identifies the way to bring these different facets of experience together. He argues that the problem lies in the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness, which dictates that there shall be a conscious subject who experiences, and a real object that is experienced. For Habermas, what is central is the “intersubjective relation that speaking and acting subjects take up”, to together create shared meaning that can lead to action (Habermas 1984:392).

If we assume that the human species maintains itself through the socially coordinated activities of its members and that this coordination has to be established through communication – and in certain central spheres through communication aimed at reaching agreement – then the reproduction of the species also requires satisfying the conditions of a rationality that is inherent in communicative action (Habermas 1984:397).

\(^{76}\) Habermas describes this as the undifferentiated lifeworld, to be discussed below.
Where Habermas would take issue with Bronowski is exactly the same ground upon which the other conference participants disagreed with him. That is, science is only one kind of rationality, not the kind, and it is of a type that prohibits the introduction of other kinds of rationality that are necessary for theory’s “claim of providing orientation in right action” (Habermas 1974:330). As the 1959 conference participants recognised, it is important to grasp the moral dimension of action. According to Habermas, subjects in communication establish their own sense, developing a “communicative rationality” of shared meaning able to coordinate social action. Coming to an understanding in this way is “a process of mutually convincing one another in which the actions of participants are coordinated on the basis of [uncoerced] motivation by reasons” (Habermas 1984:392). This process of convincing draws on the “worlds”, discussed in Chapter 2 – the usually unspoken, everyday, commonsense notions which correspond to the three types of arguments put at Maslow’s 1957 conference: the utilitarian, the normative and the subjective.

Further, Habermas sees social change as occurring through “the linguistification of the sacred”, meaning the demystification of the lifeworld as its contents are progressively differentiated and made explicit as the basis for increasingly rational social action. He writes, “the further the structural components of the lifeworld and the processes that contribute to them get differentiated, the more interaction contexts come under conditions of rationally motivated mutual understanding (Habermas 1987:145). Remember, of course, that “rational” must be understood here in wider terms than just scientific rationality. Normative correctness and subjective sincerity are also, necessarily, discursively redeemable validity claims that must be recognised in constructing what is ultimately considered to be the better argument. It is beautifully, sometimes tragically human that we are swayed as much by strong feelings or a sense of duty as by cold hard facts. “[C]ognitive-instrumental rationality” (Habermas 1984:392) does not always win. This multiple view of rationality allows Habermas to propose this as a universal structure that is not culture bound.

This universality of the validity claims which are embedded in the structure of speech can now be explained by means of the systematic locus of language. In speech there is consistent reference to all four domains – external nature, society, internal nature, and speech itself (Habermas 1976:160).
There is evidence for this in the frequent misunderstandings that occur when communicating between cultures. In foreign climes, what is everyday and accepted by participants in communication must sometimes be made explicit to achieve mutual understanding. As will be recalled, this universality of application is one criterion for theorising empowerment.

However, as with Giddens’s “duality of structure”, what is found in Habermas can be regarded as a duality of agency, where the subject-subject relation is made central. While emphasising the space between subjects, where communication is made meaningful and actionable, at the level of the individual (the actor), the scope for a psychological understanding of empowerment has been restricted. This can be rectified by reference to Habermas’s types of social action referred to in Chapter 3, which draw on progressively more complex presuppositions. Teleological action presupposes solely “relations between an actor and a world of existing states of affairs” (Habermas 1984:1,87). Normative action presupposes relations between an actor, an objective world and a social world. Here members of a group expect that each “will orient his action to values normatively prescribed for all concerned”. These values, says Habermas, contribute to “action motivating force” to the extent that they have become norms and “represent the standards according to which, in the circle of addressees, needs are interpreted and developed […] into need dispositions (Habermas 1984:89).

Finally, in dramaturgical action, subjective desires and feelings are “rooted in needs”, the same needs that inform values and the norms from which they are derived (Habermas 1984:92).

Woven through these categories of action, coupled with values and norms through communicative action, is a further category of human need. It is this category of need that can be experienced as having real existence in the individual person. Habermas leaves this notion of need unaddressed as he pursues the phenomenology of actors in motion. Yet, since a theory of empowerment is required to operate at the levels of the individual, organisation and community, it follows that an ontologically justifiable image of what it is to be human must also be part of this approach. This image must fulfil the previous criteria of both universality and a dialectical relationship with the world outside one’s skin. This image is to be found in an explication of human need.

5.4 Existential Need

In *The Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Jean-Paul Sartre takes the view that the existential human condition is defined by need. The nature of being human is
constructed by the experience of need. Need is the fundamental relationship between what is inside one’s skin and everything else:

everything is to be explained by need; need is the first totalizing relation between the material being, man, and the material ensemble of which he is a part. This relation is univocal, and of interiority. (Sartre 1983:80, italics in original).

The image of the growing human in relation to a changing world is one of a developing totalisation, a dialectical process that is always evolving and never complete. That need is singular (le besoin) expresses its being unified in the person. All kinds of need are always present, and are continuously emergent as they are progressively satisfied. As Nussbaum observes, “we cannot satisfy the need for one [basic human capability] by giving a larger amount of another. All are of central importance, and all are distinct in quality” (Nussbaum 1995:76). All need that is basic matters all the time. This is one meaning of “basic”.

In contrast to the way in which need is of the individual, it has also been said that, being basic, a need will be universally shared by all individuals. Taken together these contrasting definitions validate the view that reflecting on one’s own experience of need and satisfaction is a legitimate field of enquiry in understanding the total human experience. This supports Habermas’s analysis of the rationalisation of the lifeworld. Sartre expresses it this way:

Critical investigation […] is a real moment of the developing totalisation in so far as this is embodied in all its parts and is realized as synthetic knowledge of itself through the mediation of certain of those parts […] In practice, this means that the critical investigation can and must be anyone’s reflexive experience (Sartre 1983:48).

Another way in which need can be said to be basic is that it is necessary to being human, “something that has to be satisfied to some extent for the need-subject to function as a human being” (Galtung 1976). In other words, the lack of satisfaction of a basic need will result in decline of the human organism. Like Sartre, Galtung also visualises need and satisfaction in a dialectical relationship. Individual need requires a social context to be satisfied, and the social context conditions the definition of need in “the image of what is necessary to be human” (Galtung 1976). It follows that even if there are types of basic need that can be known to be universal, the social conditions required to meet need are not universal. There is obviously no single recipe for
defining the satisfiers that will meet universal need at the level of an individual life or at the level of a society. Human history in each generation constantly produces and reproduces a multiplicity of ways of meeting people’s needs.

This philosophical underpinning presents us with an image of human need that is on the one hand internal and subjective, unified in the person, and on the other hand satisfied by factors that are external, objective and culturally and historically variant. By definition, failure to satisfy basic need at the individual level will appear as, for example, increased mortality and morbidity. Also, since the social context is a major source of need satisfaction, failure to meet basic need may show up first as social disintegration – for example, decay of values and traditions. The fact that some aspects of basic need are met through social organisation means that a failure to satisfy the social conditions for fulfilling need will result in overall decline, and will contribute to undermining the individual’s capacity to meet his or her basic need. Note, however, that not all decay is necessarily bad. Some forms of conflict and disintegration may herald the necessary emergence of something new.

Need is of the person, and there is no assumption that people are conscious of their needs. Needs do not have to be conscious and articulated in order to exist. In fact, it is the case that basic needs are generally unconscious motivators of behaviour, an example of the way in which physiological or “somatic” need is atypical. This can be one thing that differentiates needs from wishes or wants. The latter are experienced and articulated: they may express needs, but there may be other needs that are not expressed, both conscious and unconscious. We are not normally aware of our need for love, and may only become aware of it when the lack of being loved, and of loving oneself, takes on the form of a physical or mental condition. Based on these outline requirements for need, it is now possible to proceed to consider the specific content of need.

5.5 Need in Human Development

As will be recalled from Chapter 1, and the use of Galtung above, need has made an appearance in the field of international development. In this context, human development paradigms, broadly classified as needs, rights and capabilities approaches, began as a response to the domination of development policy by economic incentives and measures. From Paul Streeten in 1977 (The Distinctive Features of a Basic Needs Approach to Development) to Amartya Sen in 1995 (Inequality Re-examined, an extension of work begun in 1973), the motivations of proponents of human
development have changed little. Human-centred approaches to development share the view that measures such as per capita income, employment and GDP fail to take account of the potential human cost of economic growth, and that development policy must focus on what people themselves value, taking account of the quality of human life.

The International Labor Organisation (ILO) World Employment Conference of 1976 is seen as a turning point for a human-centred approach to development, one that put the actual circumstances of people as a first priority. Published as *Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A One-World Problem*, the ILO conference called for a basic needs strategy in development policy. In 1977, Paul Streeten defined the basic needs approach as one that “starts from the objective of providing the opportunities for the full physical, mental and social development of the human personality and then derives the ways of achieving this objective” (Streeten 1997:50). At the time, Streeten was quite clear that the spectrum of basic human needs embraced both material needs for nutrition, sanitation and shelter, and non-material needs for self-determination, including mobilisation of social and political power (Streeten 1997:50). Streeten warns us about the problem of choosing to reduce the needs basket to embrace only minimum physiological and security needs for survival. It is, he said, morally easy and politically expedient as a way to get people on board with the program, but it is not an adequate response. As Streeten observes, a well-run prison delivers the basic needs basket efficiently to target groups, but basic *human* needs are not met (Streeten 1981:34).

Nevertheless, this reduction to minimum needs appears to be exactly what happened as basic need development theory was translated into practice. For the purpose of policy implementation, basic human need became defined in the development aid arena as a set of *minimum* and particular needs capable of being delivered by the State to particular groups, and included nutrition, water and sanitation, housing, health services and education. As economic and political narratives shifted in the 1980s, the original intent of the basic needs approach as inclusive of non-material needs was misinterpreted and misrepresented in a way that focused on these “commodity bundles”, and excluded more abstract and non-material needs for love, personal worth, choice and power (Deneulin 2009). This narrow focus left the basic needs approach open to the criticism that it was primarily a critique of the distributive capability of the free market and that from a theoretical point of view it failed to establish quantifiable limits to individual need that could form the basis for policy decisions about
distribution of resources. Although a later Kantian theoretical formulation of basic need by Len Doyal and Ian Gough (Doyal & Gough 1991) reintroduced the non-material concept of autonomy as central, the liberal view continued to focus on the requirement to define “the empirical content of basic need-satisfaction” (Wetherly 1996:49).

Paul Wetherly, in his critique of Doyal and Gough, acknowledges that “the specification of survival and autonomy as basic needs is virtually a commonplace truth”. However, he believes that the analysis founders on the problem of these universal human characteristics having socially derived and therefore culturally relativistic satisfiers. In Wetherly’s view, it therefore becomes “difficult to understand what perfect physical health and unrestricted autonomy would mean in practice” (Wetherly 1996:50).

Basic needs have been represented in human rights analysis in a similar way: first, as primarily an economic issue, and secondly as being unbounded. According to Rolf Kunneman, a basic need analysis of economic, social and cultural rights defines every situation of deprivation as a breach of economic rights upon which States should be required to act. His critique of a basic need analysis quite rightly points out that this leads to a discussion of rights whereby “economic rights are reduced in effect to mere aspirational statements” about potentially unlimited needs, which cannot be operationalised and which confuse needs and rights in an unhelpful way (Kunneman 1995:334). In being operationalised, the original concept of basic human need as it was employed in an international development context has been done a disservice over the years. The goal of the “full physical, mental and social development of the human personality” was lost, just as Streeten had warned it might be.

This problem of how to operationalise the actual circumstances of people in ways that provide a means of comparative assessment and evaluation has been taken up by Amartya Sen. Sen acknowledges that approaches that focus on people’s “actual living” are not new, and refers in particular to the work of Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq, a co-author with Streeten on human development and basic need (Sen 1999:73). Sen draws particular attention to the “substantive freedoms” or capabilities “to choose a life that one has reason to value”. His concept of “functionings” reflects the “various things a person may value doing or being” (Sen 1999:75) and, through his emphasis on 77 Habermas would cover the area of rights under his approach to system rather than lifeworld. Called “juridification”, this will be discussed in the next chapter.
freedom, acknowledges that these valued functions may differ from the elementary ones usually considered as the commodity packages that constitute minimum needs.

Sen states that his capabilities perspective is “inescapably pluralist”. Different functionings will be valued in different ways by different individuals and societies. Individual freedom itself is “quintessentially a social product” dependent upon “the interactive formation of public perceptions and on collaborative comprehension of problems and remedies” (Sen 1999:31). Individuals or groups of individuals acting as agents must be able to define the priorities they value, as well as choose and act on the best means to achieve them. Sen’s freedom is premised on the proposition that there is a “basic value that the people must be allowed to decide freely” (Sen 1999:32), and admits also that we are unable to rely on the edicts of cultural guardians, experts or rulers to help resolve cultural boundaries.

There is no doubt that Sen argues for empowerment and participation – these are essential functionings that contribute to agency – but in spite of devoting a chapter of Development as Freedom to the agency of women in particular, Sen gives few hints as to what specific actions might be appropriate to actually expand the individual’s opportunities to achieve these functionings. Sen is locked in passivity by his requirement to respect what others might value, for fear of breaching their freedom. Sen’s pluralism works against engagement. His primary concern is with assessment, not intervention. Yet Sen’s call for democratic and participatory resolution of cultural barriers to “the advantages of modernity” (Sen 1999:32) claims, as a basic value, the desirability of democratic freedoms. He believes these freedoms must be the basis for conscious reflection to define what is valued, to set priorities, to choose and to act.

Furthmore, democratic freedom is a structure that does not of itself bring about change. Change must be driven by actors, since people are, after all, the only actors we know of in human affairs. Basic human need begins with the actor that is the driver of change; it begins with the person or “agent”. This is what Martha Nussbaum calls Aristotelian “essentialism”, the necessity to “begin with the human being: with the capacities and needs that join all humans, across barriers of gender and class and race and nation” (Nussbaum 1995:61).

5.6 Universal Human Need

A conception of universal need must provide a framework for making sense of the chaos of daily life and the vagaries of human behaviour – the rationalisation of the lifeworld. As has been seen, this type of critical scrutiny by people, based on their own
perceptions and values, constitutes the form of communication that engenders empowerment. It has frequently been the author’s experience that, when speaking of “basic human need”, this is most often understood as meaning the minimum needs for survival, as explained by Streeten. Yet across the many boundaries of culture and race, each of us can recognise another as being human. A universalist approach asks us to focus more broadly on what is common to all, rather than on differences “and to see some capabilities and functions as more central, more at the core of human life, than others” (Nussbaum 1995:63). In order to avoid any suggestion that “basic” can be equated with “minimum” needs, the present study has adopted the term universal human need to refer to the complete spectrum of material and non-material basic need.

Opponents of a universalist view argue, like Sen, that any attempt to pick out some elements of human life as more fundamental than others is bound to be insufficiently respectful of historical and cultural differences. People appear to understand human life in widely different ways. Any attempt to produce a list of the most fundamental human qualities is bound to promote particular values over others. Usually, this takes the form of “enshrining the understanding of a dominant group at the expense of minority understandings” (Nussbaum 1995:70). Yet right action in intervention implies external actors exercising their agency in the interests of creating what they judge to be a more just and equitable society. It is not just what a given actor has reason to value that is significant. Being in possession of an abundance of freedom, function and capability, Sen’s position implies that an individual is complicit in the unfreedom of others if he or she does not use those benefits to contribute to “collaborative comprehension of problems and remedies”. If, as Sen says, the expansion of substantive freedom is dependent on using individual freedoms to make social arrangements more amenable to expanding all freedom in a two-way relation between the individual and society, then an individual is indeed obliged to use his or her agency in this way. Any intervention which cannot be justified on the basis of a defensible universal conception is necessarily value-laden, and assumes the preference of one set of values – those of agent – over the values of the other, reinforcing his or her status as patient. A just intervention to relieve the plight of another must rely on reference to a universalist understanding of the human condition.

Universalism is not incompatible with freedom of choice. There is nothing wrong with proposing that values can be questioned, provided this is done within a framework that is committed to respecting people’s autonomy. Cultures and societies are dynamic, and
values are tested and contested every day, and in every generation. By proposing that there are universal qualities that are *sui generis* valued by humans encourages everyone to ask, “whose interests are served by proposing particular values, and whose resistance and misery are being effaced” (Nussbaum 2000:38).

5.7 Needs Lists and Need Classes

In order to establish what needs might be regarded as universal, the next task is to start to fill in some specific needs. What is immediately evident is that each and every individual could, with reflection, compile a list of needs, and the variety of lists would be potentially as large as a population. This matter of making lists has been debated extensively (Robeyns 2005). Based on the framework we have already covered, each list would aim to encompass what the person regards as basic to being human – not just at the level of survival, but also in terms of what is required to discover and express his or her highest potential. Of the lists people might generate, no list would itself be definitive as a universal list, but as more and more lists were generated, what was common to all would become more evident. In this sense it is at least theoretically possible to define the universal list, given enough sample lists from sample populations. Practically, however, this is not going to happen, so we need another approach.

Galtung suggests three possible approaches to reducing needs-lists: exclusion, amalgamation and abstraction (Galtung 1976). First, each individual has a personal list, and all being human, it is certain that individuals will share many of the items on this list. The particular needs-list of the person will vary between cultural, racial and geographic domains, and as the number of lists grows, greater diversity becomes the norm. It follows that as the number of individual lists increases, the number of needs common to each list will shrink. By excluding all items not common to all lists, we arrive at a minimum set of needs for human functioning.

Secondly, lists can be reduced by amalgamation. Assuming all persons will have some common items on their needs-lists, then there will also be many that similar social groups share. As new domains are added, whenever a new need can be identified it is added to the list. As the number of domains increases, the likelihood of there being further additions to the list gets less. In this way it possible to see that the amalgamated list, while it may grow and change, is finite, defining a potential maxima for need. This kind of list reduction assists us to see where areas of conflict will occur. People of the capitalist West may need growth and expansion in the sense that if this need is not
fulfilled, disintegration will occur. But this cannot be the last word. This need may conflict with others meeting their need to maintain a particular culture or tradition. It becomes debatable which items can be legitimately added to the amalgamated list. This is where the meanings of need become contested, and need is differentiated from want.

Finally, a single list can be compiled from many by abstraction. Some items on different needs-lists will be of like kind – for example, the need to be able to exercise some kinds of choice. This gives us the opportunity to narrow the search for a comprehensive understanding of need to that set of categories for which none will be empty – every category will have at least some needs in it. The question now becomes how we might arrive at an agreed set of categories to guide the task of assisting the individual to affirm the satisfiers of basic need particular to the domain he or she occupies, and to use these as a challenge to contested conceptions and values.

It is certainly possible to consider these processes as a practical workshop exercise for a group. The next section identifies some sample lists to undertake such an exercise, with the intention of reaching certain conclusions about the dimensions of universal human need.

5.8 Universal Need Lists

In order to identify some sample lists, I turn to the various authors cited above: Abraham Maslow (clinical psychology), Johan Galtung (international development and peace studies), Paul Sites (sociology), Paul Streeten (international development), Len Doyal and Ian Gough (political economy), and Martha Nussbaum (international development and philosophy). All have major works devoted to exploring the scope of common humanity and universal need, and all develop lists that they regard as being comprehensive enough to capture the definition they seek. In addition, each author contributes conceptually to our understanding of the nature of need.

5.8.1 Maslow

Abraham Maslow proposed that needs could be represented in the classes of physiological, safety, belongingness/love, esteem, and self-actualisation (Maslow 1943). He organised these classes into a hierarchy, with the class of physiological need at the base, and the class of self-actualisation (and later self-transcendence) at the top. Once a lower need is satisfied, it ceases to be significant in terms of motivation and
exists in potential only, “prepotent” and lying in wait as the organism moves on. The human organism is dominated, and its behaviour organised, only by unsatisfied need.

Much is made of “Maslow’s Hierarchy” of need. Recalling Streeten’s warning about restricting basic need to minimum needs for survival, a drawback of Maslow’s hierarchy as a way to think about need is that some types of need can be seen as more basic than others. However, Maslow was clear that his hierarchy was “not nearly as rigid as we have implied”, and asserted that the hierarchy was not a step function whereby a lower class of need must be fully met before a higher class asserts itself. “In actual fact,” he said, “most members of our society who are normal, are partially satisfied in all their basic needs and partially unsatisfied in all their basic needs at the same time” (Maslow 1943:338).

Maslow’s comment suggests that rather than a hierarchy, needs are fluid and variable, and for each individual there will be times when minimum needs take priority and other times when satisfying needs like self-esteem will be central to motivated behaviour and to maintaining health. To focus on one at the expense of another is to deny Malsow’s holistic vision of human growth as being like the progression “from acorn to oak”.

5.8.2 Galtung

Johan Galtung (Galtung 1976) identified that basic need is material and non-material, like Maslow’s somatic and psychological need. Further, Galtung proposed that there are individual needs-lists, and a social context for need satisfaction. In his view, it follows that need is both actor-and structure-dependent. Table 1 shows how Galtung represents these dimensions in a matrix to arrive at four classes of need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Actor-dependent</th>
<th>Structure-dependent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>SECURITY (survival – freedom from)</td>
<td>WELFARE (wellbeing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-material</td>
<td>FREEDOM (to)</td>
<td>IDENTITY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By way of clarification, Galtung links these needs with their opposites: security needs are to avoid violence, welfare needs are to avoid misery, identity needs are to avoid alienation, and freedom needs are to avoid repression.
5.8.3 Sites

Behavioural sociologist Paul Sites describes the emergence of need within the socialisation process. As discussed in the previous chapter, he emphasises the importance of control in adaptive behaviour. For Sites, need is the socialised expression of four dynamics that are necessary to the socialisation process. These four essential dynamics are consistency in the response of the adult towards the child, stimulation of the senses, security, and recognition. Thus, in terms of the needs that develop as a consequence of these processes, he says,

we find emerging a need for response, a need for stimulation or new experience, a need for security and belongingness and love, and a need for recognition which should be interpreted to include a need for esteem and, in Maslow’s terms, self-actualisation (Sites 1973:40).

5.8.4 Doyal and Gough

Len Doyal and Ian Gough introduce basic need to political economy. In their 1990 work *A Theory of Human Need*, they reconstruct the entire approach to understanding basic human need. Uncomfortable with an existential view of the world, they opt instead for Kant’s minimum requirements of physical and mental capacity: “at the very least a body which is alive and which is governed by all the relevant causal processes and the mental competence to deliberate and choose” (Doyal 1990:52, italics in original). Doyal and Gough identify this capacity for choice with “the existence of the most basic level of personal autonomy”. Thus, for them, basic need consists of physical health and autonomy of agency. Needs for food, water and shelter are seen as intermediate need satisfiers that only have to be optimised as inputs to the outputs of physical health and autonomy. It is the intermediate “needs” that then sit in a set of social preconditions. In common with Maslow and Sites, Doyal and Gough take an evolutionary view of the goal of need as the avoidance of serious harm, so that culturally specific satisfiers can be regarded as the reification of the individual preferences of effective choosers – a process that allows for both universal, objective need and subjective, experientially grounded knowledge. In common with Galtung, Streeten and Sen, they agree that both subjective preference and bureaucratic dictate are suspect in determining particular needs-lists, and that the answer lies in effective participation based on dialogue, experience and praxis.
5.8.5 Nussbaum

Martha Nussbaum is a more recent author to argue in favour of an approach that sees naming some basic human characteristics as essential to gaining a systematic critical understanding of each person and his or her situation (Nussbaum 2000). Akin to these other authors seeking a common basis for understanding humanity, Nussbaum proposes a list of 10 items that aim to “evaluate components of lives, asking which ones are so important that we would not call a life human without them” (Nussbaum 1995:81).

In her 1995 formulation, Nussbaum uses a two-step process to develop her list. The first step names a set of features that are “experiential and historical”, drawing on cross-cultural conversations and reflection as the means to develop the list. In the second step she translates these features of “the shape of the human form of life” into sets of capabilities that this “shape” requires. While Nussbaum applies her list within the context of Sen’s capabilities approach, it is apparent that her first list is neither a list of functionings, nor capabilities, but something else – a set of features that are human needs. Indeed, she begins from “the intuitive idea of a creature who is both capable and needy” to develop “a story about what seems to be part of any life we will count as a human life” (Nussbaum 1995:75). These 10 items, along with the basic needs identified by preceding authors, are shown in Table 2.

5.9 Universal Need Classes

Consider the lists provided by these authors as shown in Table 2. The next task is to sort these lists using Galtung’s process of abstraction, and arrive at a set of classes of universal need. In order to sort the lists it is necessary to consider the heading for each class group. These classes of need must meet the following criteria:

- They are universal, and can be subject to verification through individual reflection.
- Each is discrete, and no category will be empty when we consider a well-functioning human being.
- The lack of adequate satisfaction in any one class will affect the ability of the individual to satisfy need in other classes, either through dysfunction and maladjustment of the individual, or disintegration of social structures.
5.9.1 Physical

Starting with Maslow’s view that somatic needs are atypical in as much as the needs and their satisfiers are localisable and specific, these are therefore in a separate class. The person who lacks sufficient food experiences hunger as a localised and specific response, whereas the person who lacks identity or choice may not experience such a lack in any specific, controllable way.

Table 2: Summary of Needs Lists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Characterisation of basic human need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maslow</td>
<td>Physiological&lt;br&gt;Safety&lt;br&gt;Belongingness/Love&lt;br&gt;Esteem&lt;br&gt;Self-actualisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galtung</td>
<td>Welfare&lt;br&gt;Security (freedom from)&lt;br&gt;Identity&lt;br&gt;Freedom (to)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites</td>
<td>Consistency of response&lt;br&gt;Stimulation&lt;br&gt;Security&lt;br&gt;Recognition&lt;br&gt;Meaning&lt;br&gt;Rationality&lt;br&gt;Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streeten</td>
<td>Minimum (shelter, nutrition, health, education)&lt;br&gt;Opportunity for a full life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doyal and Gough</td>
<td>Physical health&lt;br&gt;Autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nussbaum</td>
<td>Life&lt;br&gt;Bodily health&lt;br&gt;Bodily integrity (security)&lt;br&gt;Senses, imagination and thought&lt;br&gt;Emotions&lt;br&gt;Practical reason&lt;br&gt;Affiliation&lt;br&gt;Concern for other species&lt;br&gt;Play and humour&lt;br&gt;Control of one’s environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is this that underlies Sites’s exclusion of physiological needs from his analysis, as he focuses exclusively on social satisfiers. Although at first glance it might appear that Galtung also does not consider somatic needs, for him these are embraced under the more general heading of “welfare” or sufficiency needs, and include nutrition, protection against the elements, protection against disease, and education to build self-expression and dialogue. This broader category includes all of Streeten’s minimum, health and education needs. Galtung’s use of education in this context is perhaps better explained by Sites, who discusses the importance of stimulation in development. Stimulation is more easily understood as a physiological need of the senses than education, which carries with it the meaning of structured learning. This leaves us with a subset list of needs classed as physiological. These are: nutrition, protection from environmental hazards, and stimulation.

5.9.2 Security

Secondly, every author considers security to be a basic category. Streeten considers security in terms of enforcement of law and order – another service, along with health and education, capable of being delivered by the State on his basic needs formula. Galtung, who defines security largely in terms of freedom from violence and aggression, agrees that police and military can be relevant satisfiers in some societies.

On the other hand, Sites believes that security is founded in maternal love and is necessary to the socialisation process in providing a safe context for setting limits to behaviour through consistent reward and punishment. This consistency is necessary for the world to become reasonable and rational for the developing person. Maslow’s view of “safety” needs is also largely based on infant studies, although he is emphatic that security needs are basic to adult behaviour. In terms of a progression from physiological needs, it can be seen that security needs grow in the intimate relationships that are part of meeting physiological needs.

5.9.3 Identity

A third class of need can be defined as identity. Maslow does not use the language of identity at all. Instead, he uses two concepts: love, or a sense of belongingness, and esteem. The first is based in family and close relationships, including sexuality, and is similar to Sites’s definition of security. However, Maslow uses the same sense of belongingness to mean “a place in his group”, and also refers to the extensive social mores that surround love and its practice. In this way, Maslow gives a social dimension to belongingness that is viewed by Sites as a component of identity, which
is dependent on socially derived satisfiers. On the other hand, Maslow’s notion of esteem is clearly in accord with the definition of identity used by these other authors. He uses expressions such as “self-esteem” and “self-respect” based on “real capacity, achievement and respect from others” (Maslow 1943:381). These, says Maslow, are the basis for confidence, independence and freedom.

Sites does not use the term identity as a descriptor, drawing directly on Maslow’s second aspect of esteem, recognition. While punishment and reward operate in the context of security, recognition is only positive and is necessary to give the individual direction for growth. The person lacking esteem is beset with helplessness and basic discouragement. This negative definition concurs with Galtung’s use of identity. Both use Durkheim’s terminology of alienation and anomie to describe the consequences of failure to meet identity needs.

5.9.4 Autonomy

Beyond identity, these authors claim a need for purpose in life, variously called personal development, self-actualisation, freedom to, and opportunity for a full life. The difficulty is in framing a goal-directed activity, “the image of what it is to be human”, without using language that specifies the goal. To overcome this difficulty, it is reasonable go back to the existential view that choice is a necessary consequence of consciousness. Awareness of our situation enables our abstraction from it, and we enter the realm of potentialities and Weiskopf’s “necessity for decision based on guiding values”. Political discourse often draws on the self-evident fact of choice to frame choices in quite specific ways. This is one definition used by Streeten, the choice exercised by the informed and consensual party. But what is the choice that is defined by others, or by the necessity of circumstances? “Sophie’s Choice” (Styron 1979) is no choice at all because what is lacking is personal autonomy in dealing with the fact of choice. A life choice is only a choice when based on conscious reflection, and when violence is not done to other classes of need. This “positive liberty” derives, according to Isiah Berlin, from “the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master” (Berlin 1969:131).

William Connolly, in *The Terms of Political Discourse* (1974), also places autonomy as fundamental to conscious choice. Connolly advances the following formulation that connects agents (X) and their acts (z) to autonomy:
X is free with respect to z if (or to the extent that) he is unconstrained from conceiving or choosing z and if (to the extent that), were he to choose z, he would not be constrained from doing or becoming z.

X acts freely in doing z when (or to the extent that) he acts without constraint upon his unconstrained and reflective choice with respect to z (Connolly 1974:157, italics in original).

Says Connolly, a person is autonomous “to the extent that his conduct is informed by his own reflective assessment of his situation”. Constraints on freedom operate on one’s ability to conceive or formulate a life project, as well as the opportunity to carry out that project. Along with basic need theorists like Galtung, Connolly sees the necessity of acknowledging the “actual desires of concrete individuals” in order to prevent political elites from including as part of freedom the very forms of coercion and manipulation the idea is supposed to expose. Reflection and dialogue are essential processes to achieve this. Consequently, processes of reflection, dialogue and personal growth are grouped as contributing to the need to become autonomous. A framework of values is essential to this process as a source of satisfiers. Aware of choice, we must make a decision based on guiding values. Autonomy is the basic need class that defines whether freedom or other significant values exist in practice.

The needs-lists from Table 2 can now be sorted into four classes:

- Physical – to maintain the life and health of the body, and have awareness through the senses
- Security – to maintain the integrity of the body in a physically and psychologically safe environment
- Identity – to know who one is, and have a sense of one’s place in the world
- Autonomy – to make the choices and decisions that arise from self-consciousness; to have purpose

These classes of basic need represent a continuum from left to right of most material to most non-material. Satisfiers and consequences of deficiency follow the same pattern. The processes of need satisfaction are dialectic: the individual subject and the external object each condition the other. As a consequence, there is also a continuum from need dependent on the individual for satisfaction, called “actor dependent”, and need met through social structures, called “structure dependent”. This is shown in Table 3.
5.10 Need and Lifeworld

The intent of the above analysis is to provide an image of the self – what it is to be human. Returning now to the rationalisation of the lifeworld, this representation of universal human need coincides with Habermas’s categorisation of the segments of the lifeworld.

Table 3: Universal Human Need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universal needs classes</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• internal</td>
<td>Life, health</td>
<td>Love, emotions</td>
<td>Personal worth</td>
<td>Practical reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• unified</td>
<td>Localised and specific (hunger, cold, illness)</td>
<td>Consistency of response (reward and discipline)</td>
<td>Affiliation</td>
<td>Personal growth, consciousness, self-actualisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the self</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Rationality</td>
<td>Group identification</td>
<td>Reflection based on symbolic representation (spirituality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic needs lists</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Freedom from</td>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>Exercise of self-judgment in choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor dependent</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Control (political and material)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure dependent</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of primary satisfiers</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(lifeworld segments)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Material</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of deficiency</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to avoid</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators of development</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality, morbidity</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontrolled conflict, violence</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychopathology</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation, anomie</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatalism, apathy, submission</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of meaning</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Stimulation, senses, imagination, play (learning)</td>
<td>Connection (other species, sense of place, land)</td>
<td>Freedom to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Excluding the category of physical need because it is atypical, the remaining three categories of satisfiers for these classes of need, ontologically located in the self, reflect the structural components of the lifeworld required for reproduction: “cultural values”, society and personality (Habermas 1987:137). Habermas is of the view that with respect to these components, communicative action serves:

- to transmit and renew culturally valid knowledge;
- to facilitate social integration and the establishment of solidarity;
- to enhance the interactive capabilities of the individual (Habermas 1987:142).

Habermas concurs with the above analysis of need with respect to the consequences of deficiency, characterising these as “psychopathologies” (person), “anomie” (society) and “loss of meaning” (values) (Habermas 1987:143). Thus it can be seen that, to employ Berger and Luckmann’s terminology of “introjection”, the person, society and values are in a dialectical relationship with these universal needs of security, identity and autonomy respectively. This implies that the requirement for individual empowerment as part of an intervention is determined by the individual’s ability to meet basic need in these classes.

Usefully, Habermas also provides an evaluative component to each aspect of the lifeworld dialectic, as in communicative action each source of validation plays its measured part, “according to the degree of structural differentiation in the lifeworld” – in other words, according to the degree to which each “unthought category” is made part of conscious discourse. According to Habermas, the “reproduction processes can be evaluated according to standards of the rationality of knowledge, the solidarity of members and the responsibility of the adult personality” (Habermas 1987:141, italics in original). What is more, in line with Maslow’s conception of need as “prepotent” and ever present in its various forms, this degree of differentiation of the lifeworld “also determines how great the need for consensual knowledge, legitimate orders, and personal autonomy is at any given time” (Habermas 1987:142).

This image of being human that is based in these four classes of need is limited in two related ways. First, it deals with need as a subject-object relation, and secondly, as a consequence, it lacks a clear relational component. To rectify this, and to further extend the development of a model of empowerment into the sphere of the group, the next chapter applies communicative action to develop a view of empowerment in organised groups.
Chapter 6

The Dissent Group

“We are irreducibly social beings.”

David West, *Authenticity and Empowerment* (1990:68)

6.1 Introduction

The study of organisation is present in many different fields, employing many different intellectual approaches. For example, political science (Michels 1962; Mulgan 1990; West 1990; Colebatch & Lamour 1993), sociology (Weber 1947; Parsons 1956; Grunsky 1970), management (Taylor 1923; Barnard 1951; Clark & Wilson 1961) and civil society studies (Korten 1987; Vakil 1997) have all contributed to conceptual development of organisational theories. Yet, in this large body of work, there is little that deals directly with the kind of social change organisations considered in this study, the reason being that much of this literature deals with large social conglomerations: bureaucracy, corporations, institutional forms of politics, hospitals or universities. The literature also is frequently concerned with the internal functions of organisations, uncritically accepting the social environment as a given set of values. Alternatively, those approaches that consider organisation for social change (Olson 1965; Zald & McCarty 1975; Davis et.al. 2005), while useful for providing perspectives on organisations participating in social movements, tend to be more concerned with processes of social change than the nuts and bolts of how groups are able to effect such change. An exception to this general outlook is the field of community psychology, which, as has been seen, makes individual, organisational and social levels of empowerment its matter of central interest. As a field, however, it has struggled with the shift from individual psychology to an “ecological” approach that addresses the wider levels of the group and society (Boyd & Angelique 2007).

In the same way that community psychology identifies three levels of empowerment, theories of organisation also operate at different levels: organisations as groups of actors; organisations as functioning entities in society; organisations as their effect on the social environment. The study of organisations at small scales borders on psychology; at large scales it approaches the study of society itself. The field of organisational studies presents no clearly defined limits to the scope of study. From
interpretations of civil society, social capital, capacity and capability, to actors, logics, governance and mobilisation, the conceptual tools of organisation theory are many and varied. From the company and the institution to the “NGO” and “the community”, the subject matter is diverse. To bring some order to this diversity, here, theories of organisation are first broadly considered.

6.2 Theories of Organisation

Modern theories in the field of human organisation begin with philosopher David Hume and his allegorical tale of “draining the meadow”, written in 1739 (Hume 1911). Hume’s story draws attention to the problems of scale in collective action, and the potential conflicts between self-interest and collective interest – another version of the “micro-macro” problem. Colebatch and Larmour (Colebatch & Lamour 1993) present this and other classic dilemmas of organisation theory: the Tragedy of the Commons (Hardin), the Free Rider problem (Olson), and the Prisoner’s Dilemma (Luce and Raiffa). These hypothetical situations call for collective action to solve a problem. They represent the largest branch of organisation theory: rational choice theory. Rational choice theory takes the liberal concept of costs and benefits into a broader field of enquiry, with all the concomitant assumptions of actors possessing full and unambiguous information. In this view, actors will always seek to maximise, or at least seek minimum satisfactory outcomes, on the basis of “rational” (meaning utilitarian) choice. Colebatch and Larmour propose that organisations can be broadly classified as “market, bureaucracy and community”, reflecting organising principles based on self-interest and private ownership, rule- and regulation-based authority, and “collective self restraint” that draws on norms, values and affiliations (Colebatch & Lamour 1993:17). While this initially appears as a useful classification, it has two major difficulties. One is that markets and bureaucracies are also driven by norms and values. Their point of difference from a “community” is that these are not necessarily made overt in organisational transactions. In terms of the language used by Habermas, market and bureaucracy represent aspects of “system” in contrast to the communal “lifeworld”, a perspective to be pursued below. While the allegorical tale of the Tragedy of the Commons is typical of this utilitarian approach, it does not have to be regarded as a fait accompli, the ultimate tragedy of humanity’s collective fate. Instead, it is but a particular view of the strategies and tactics employed to achieve a contested outcome within a particular setting. The second difficulty is that many organisations show aspects of all three classifications. The education system presents one example of
this. The organisational relationship between teacher and student sits within the class as a learning community, regulated by the school as an institution in competition with others, and contested assumptions about a hierarchy of knowledge, its value and appropriate means of transmission.

Rather than beginning with a classification of organisations as a means of solving the conflicts between self and collective interests, another approach is functional. Chester Barnard in *The Functions of the Executive* proposed that the elements that define organisation are “(1) communication; (2) willingness to serve; and (3) common purpose” (Barnard 1951:82). Such a view is encouraging in its simplicity, and opens interesting lines of enquiry. For the purpose of the present study, the emphasis on “communication” immediately suggests Habermas and his view of the speech act as foundational in social relations. “Willingness” appears as a potentially multi-faceted construct, contingent on goal-rational, normative and psychological elements. “Common purpose” is satisfyingly simple, but to what extent does an employee experience the common purpose of a corporation? Responding to this question leads to further literature on coercive and seductive incentives for individuals to participate in collectives. In a smaller, self-motivated group with clearly shared aims, having common purpose still begs the question as to how that purpose gets defined, and whether it gets expressed in organisational tasks.

From the 1960s comes “open systems” theory, typified by Katz and Kahn in *The Social Psychology of Organizations*. Adopting models from the biological sciences, organisations are here regarded as entropic. An energy input is converted into both intrinsic and extrinsic output. The energy to drive the system is achieved through transactions between the organisation and its environment, in “patterned activity”. The criteria for identifying a discrete social entity and determining its function are (1) the presence of this patterned exchange of energy that results in output; and (2) how that output reactivates the organisation. The major components forming the template for patterned activity are roles/behaviours, norms/prescriptive sanctions, and values. With the sociologist’s interest in social reproduction, they define organisation as a sustained effort at self-maintenance. Katz and Kahn apply their theory at large scales, identifying maintenance structures that mediate between task demand and human needs (Katz & Khan 1966).

In the field of community psychology, and specifically related to organisations with an empowerment component, Maton and Salem in *Organizational Characteristics of*
Empowering Community Settings describe the organisation that is engaged in empowerment as a “setting” that commonly features:

(a) a belief system that inspires growth, is strengths-based, and is focused beyond the self; (b) an opportunity role structure that is pervasive, highly accessible, and multifunctional; (c) a support system that is encompassing, peer-based, and provides a sense of community; and (d) leadership that is inspiring, talented, shared, and committed to both setting and members (Maton & Salem 1995:631).

Consistent with much of the Northern tradition, the case study organisations Maton and Salem analyse serve primarily to help people integrate with society. Their interest is in organisational characteristics that enable individuals to “enhance psychological sense of control and achieve personal goals” (Maton 1995:632). While their findings are again of interest, the definition of empowerment used may have limited the scope of enquiry at an organisational level, more particularly when the organisational concern is with its effects in the external environment. The high standard set by Maton and Salem may be a useful goal, but it is also useful to know more about how to get there.

More consistent with the present study, and still in the field of community psychology, Perkins and others enlarge on Maton and Salem by drawing on work from the 1970s to classify “non-profit community organizations” as involved in “first order (incremental or ameliorative)” and “second order (transformative)” change (Perkins et.al. 2007:310). They express their specific interest in “organizational learning” as a process and the “learning organization” as an ideal type that can contribute to “systemic community change” by “empowered organizations” (Perkins et.al. 2007). The case studies show that organisational learning requires conscious effort and is facilitated by the use of tools, including the same reflective tools and participatory processes employed with the client part of the community. Community psychology identifies “individual learning” and “organisational learning” among “key diagnostic variables” differentiating transformative and ameliorative organisations (Perkins et.al. 2007:310).

Given such a wide diversity of perspectives, it is little wonder that community psychology has struggled with its “ecological” approach to organisation and empowerment. To clarify the relationship of such divergent views, it is possible to suggest that the same phenomenon is at play here as in the perspectives of Bronowski,
Maslow and Weisskopf from the previous chapter. That is, these different approaches show different aspects of human intersubjectivity. The classic scholars of organisation have a utilitarian, goal-rational foundation to their work. Likewise, the large-scale sociological approach of Katz and Khan gives pre-eminence to the identification of norms and values, and the normative “patterning” of interactions as the means to identify where organisation exists. Finally, Maton and Salem identify the elements of subjective experience that support individuals in a group. And, of course, all must include an interactional component, be it communication, patterns of exchange, or learning and participatory process.

In order to take these varying perspectives to a point where they can be integrated, it has been proposed in the present study that there are two complementary ways of looking at organisations: as groups of actors, and as structures. First, consider the nature of the actor in a group.

6.3 Actors in Organisation

Regardless of the specific language used to describe an organisation, be it a community, interest association, gang, corporation or institution, first and foremost all are types of bounded groups of actors. The present study is concerned with the particular type of group of actors for whom gaining control – that is, acquiring the capability to exercise “power in action” (Sites 1973) – is a necessary part of fulfilling their universal need in the classes of security, identity and autonomy. However, this in itself is not sufficiently definitive, for as Zimmerman and others have pointed out, empowerment as a necessary part of human development can operate at multiple levels. That is, for those who are in a position of relative powerlessness, this necessity for control through empowerment can be operational in different ways. While a group that seeks to empower its members and its clients will be likely to possess at least some of the characteristics Maton and Salem identify, there is also a clear difference between, for example, mutual-help “GROW”78 group and the organisations described in this study.

From the organisational literature, it is possible to distinguish three circumstances in which an empowering intervention is employed. In mutual support groups such as those analysed by Maton and Salem, the necessity for control is manifest as a

78 One of Maton and Salem's case studies, GROW Inc. is a mutual help organisation for persons with a mental illness. GROW has three program components: weekly group meetings; an extensive organisational literature, including the “Blue Book” developed from participant experiences; and a “sharing and caring community”.

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phenomenon of the self. The power to heal oneself, such as is derived from the mutual support group or counselling relationship, relies on the internalisation of a narrative of strength created and inculcated by the interactions of the group (Rappaport 1995). Next, while the aim in the mutual-help setting may be better individual integration with society, under conditions of the inability for a group to meet universal need from the dominant society, this narrative also necessarily requires the construction of recognisable group identity as a product of the group. In these circumstances, the group can bound itself by establishing a separate identity through the gang, the group of peers, or by, for example, ethnic or class identity, carving out an autonomous social space. Lastly, where there is a structural component to a disparity of control that cannot be dealt with by a group turning inward and away from society, the group must develop its own discourse of values to launch a social critique aimed at structural change. In each of these circumstances, the relationships between actors have fundamentally the same objective: the enhancement of control. This is referred to in Table 4 (at the end of the chapter) as the group control orientation.

So, while these different types of empowering setting have in common the objective of control, clarifying the nature of the differences in empowerment at the level of organisational practice is necessary. Defining the differences in these settings again directs attention to the field of community psychology. These differences can be defined by their relational, or subject-subject characteristics. Brian Christens, in his 2011 paper *Toward Relational Empowerment* (Christens 2011), expands Zimmerman’s earlier nomological network (Zimmerman 1995). Christen’s conclusions from his analysis are striking because of the similarity to Habermas’s categories of communicative rationality. As shown in Figure 9, the two sets of categories can be overlayed. Christens identifies four components of psychological empowerment: emotional, cognitive, relational and behavioural. These correspond to the categories that Habermas proposes can be intuitively distinguished, being the subjective, objective and normative “worlds” and the intersubjectivity of language.
Whereas in the nomological network, the “hypothesised elements” are accompanied by lists of variables for each component, Habermas takes the components and uses them to derive the structural components of the lifeworld, personality, society and culture, and their respective social reproductive processes of socialisation, social integration and cultural reproduction (Habermas 1987:142).

Basing his thinking in the childhood development studies of Jean Piaget (Habermas 1984:68), Habermas argues that the different approaches to theorising social reproduction – as framed by Berger and Luckmann, Durkheim, Parsons and Mead – each give precedence to only one aspect of the lifeworld, to the exclusion of others. His fundamental disagreement with these authors is that the foundation of their work rests in a particular philosophical “theory of consciousness”. Habermas rejects the “familiar psychological and sociological models of the isolated actor” (Habermas 1987:129), the subjective consciousness in interaction with an objective world. His view is that this image traps our thinking in the goal-rational, teleological world of the ancients. Instead, he begins by adopting the “unexpected” view proposed by Karl Popper in his 1967 address “Epistemology Without a Knowing Subject”, which identifies:
first the world of physical objects or physical states; secondly, the world of states of consciousness, or of mental states or perhaps of behavioural dispositions to act; and thirdly the world of objective contents of thought, especially of scientific and poetic thoughts and of works of art (Popper in Habermas 1984:76).

Popper provided the seed for Habermas’s conception of a three-dimensional lifeworld reproduced in intersubjectivity by language. In this way, the Theory of Communicative Action is radically communal in its epistemology, while still recognising the subjectivity of actors. This communality is the antidote to the individualistic perspective of the previous chapter, which was concerned primarily with an image of the self. Through his focus on language and communication as being the basis of the subject-subject or group relation, Habermas draws together the perspectives of these earlier classic authors as three aspects of a single process, based on the following three-dimensional structure of the lifeworld:

Under the functional aspect of mutual understanding, communicative action serves to transmit and renew cultural knowledge; under the aspect of coordinating action, it serves social integration and the establishment of solidarity; finally, under the aspect of socialisation, communicative action serves the formation of personal identities. The symbolic contents of the lifeworld are reproduced by way of the continuation of valid knowledge, stabilization of group solidarity, and socialisation of responsible actors (Habermas 1987:137).

The emphasis on communication provides the opportunity to expand the view of narrative as discussed in Chapter 3. Rappaport identified the use of the narrative form of communication as an “endeavour consistent with the development of empowerment” (Rappaport 1995:802). For Habermas, engagement with narrative allows participants to reach beyond the “horizon-forming context” imposed by a particular action situation. Adopting narrative as the form of speech endows narrators with a perspective that bases description “on an everyday concept of the lifeworld as a cognitive reference system” (Habermas 1987:136, italics in original). Narrative objectifies the lifeworld, serving the mutual understanding of actors coordinating common tasks, at the same time as it serves the self-understanding of persons. This is

Note that the term “lifeworld” is not unique to Habermas. It is a term used by Durkheim, and also Shutz and Luckmann (The Structure of the Lifeworld, 1973), which was influential for Habermas.
because the lifeworld is not only private, but also intersubjective, the linguistically recreated structure of a shared personal and group reality. By adopting the perspective of narrators in the communicative context of a group, actors cease to be participants and become the agents of their own destiny. In this sense, organisational empowerment can be understood as the communicative process by which individuals and groups develop from their own experience a narrative of competence, cooperation and control.

As discussed in the previous chapter, communicative action rests on speakers and hearers using “the reference system of the three worlds as an interpretive framework within which they work out their common situational definitions” (Habermas 1987,120). These tripartite actor-world relations give rise to Habermas’s pure types of social action oriented to mutual understanding, being teleological, normative, and dramaturgical action, as limit cases of communicative action (Habermas, 1984,85 and II,120). If organisation for empowerment is defined as intentionally creating settings in which narrative is the chosen form, then it follows that these types of action can be used to describe the particular dynamics inherent in different group objectives, as all are forms of communicative action. Thus, the mutual help group is primarily one where the participants in interaction constitute a public for one another. Speakers and hearers seek the intersubjective recognition of the validity of personal experience in the context of a group setting. Each agent can monitor public access to the attitudes, feelings and desires to which he or she has privileged access in a progressive unveiling of the self. This form is defined as dramaturgical action. Next, the peer group can be identified with normative action. Among peers, the group project is primarily to reinforce identity through constructing a shared narrative of behavioural norms that serve to orient the action of the group. The inherent group self-consciousness serves to highlight the us/them boundaries of the group engaged in normative action. Finally, teleological action is geared towards bringing about a particular state of affairs by choosing strategic means that promise success in bringing about the necessary change. Teleological action emphasises the group processes for coming to a decision, that is, the structural process for choosing among alternative courses of action.

For actors, the processes of building empowerment are the same. They all involve communicative action, whereby “the actors seek to reach an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to coordinate their action by way of agreement” (Habermas 1984:86). As discussed in the previous chapter, personal empowerment is achieved in communicative action through the process of the
rationalisation of lifeworld. Similarly, at the second step, for actors engaged in organisational empowerment, each form of social action involves differentiation of the specific kinds of validity claims at the level of discourse. In this discourse, as the referent lifeworld segment moves from what is personal to what is social to what is cultural, the form of action moves from dramaturgical to normative to teleological. It is this element of discourse that introduces the requirement for organisation, in as much as discourse is a particular form of communication requiring conscious effort, and one enabled by the performance of narrative. Both require particular settings that do not tend to arise spontaneously. The forms of social action are shown in Table 4, corresponding to each group control orientation.

Actors in the empowering group step outside their everyday communicative practice, owing their “mutual understanding to their own interpretive performances” as speakers and hearers (Habermas 1987:133, italics in original). Thus, they open the way for the creation of collective consciousness uniquely owned and controlled by the group members. This is the foundation of the reflexive community described by Lash, which emerged as another necessary characteristic displayed by the case study organisations. Based on this understanding of the process by which the group takes on identity, it is now possible to move on to consider the structural form of the group itself, and the constraints and opportunities that this offers for the second-order effects of individual and collective action.

6.4 The Organisation as Entity: Size, Structure and Communication

6.4.1 Size

An initial important way to consider structure is in terms of scale. The size of an organized community qualitatively changes subsystems in simple numerical ways. The ratio of the number of members to, for example, the available decision-making positions is a structural parameter that can be assessed as a measure of participation (Brown et.al. 2007). In The Logic of Collective Action (1965), Mancur Olson examined the logic of structures that apply at different scales of groups to develop a taxonomy of size.

In common with most authors in the organisation field, Olson is concerned with large, usually market-oriented organisations rather than small groups. Nevertheless, he aims to construct a unified theory of organization-based rational choice that explains the dynamics of groups large and small, market and non-market, inclusive and exclusive. Olson confronts some difficult problems for rational choice, and in the process
employs some interesting vocabulary. In addition to clarifying the “public good” (Olson 1965:14), the important conceptual tools he uses with reference to group behaviour include, in the non-market sector, his taxonomy of groups based on size from small to large of “privileged”, “intermediate” and “latent” (Olson 1965:48); and in the same sector, “selective incentives” (Olson 1965:51).

A large group is defined as a group in which the effect of a single actor is not noticeable: you can do nothing and still get the benefit of the public good. In large groups, says Olson, “it is certain that a collective good will not be provided unless there is coercion or some outside inducements” (Olson 1965:44, italics in original). Olson calls these large groups “latent”. They are groups in which the actors have no self-interested reason to act to provide a group benefit. An example could be the employee of a large corporation. Whereas shareholders obtain benefit from membership, the employee must be provided with incentive. The employee gets the benefit of the existence of the company, but his or her individual effort is not noticeable in its effect on the dividend. Formal organisation of the group is necessary to the extent that the incentive of obtaining the benefits of group membership is made selective, that is, available only to group members. According to Olson, this is essential for the public good to be delivered in the large or “latent” group.

In a small group, called by Olson “privileged”, coercion or inducement is not required for the public good to be delivered. The group is so small that the benefits of the public good can be obtained without formal organization. In this group, the contribution of every party is voluntary, and rules for the operation of the group are embedded within the activity itself. Individual motivation is a necessary condition for meeting group need. An example of this group could be a student household. The dishes must eventually get washed, or there will be no bowls or spoons to eat breakfast. What is crucial is that while one householder must eventually wash up, the lack of contribution of other householders will be noticeable.

Between large and small is the “intermediate” group, in which no single member gets a share of the benefit sufficient to give him an incentive to provide the good himself, but

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80 The public good defines group products, the group consumable. It is a “good” in the same sense that a store has goods, but in this case it is a group consumable. “Public” is defined by Olson as any good “such that, if any person in a group consumes it, it cannot feasibly be withheld from others in that group” (Olson 1965:14). The use of public goods as the group product is in contrast to defining groups, for example, in terms of achievement of their stated aims and objectives.
which does not have so many members that no one will notice whether any other member is or is not helping (Olson 1965:50). Olson states:

The standard for determining whether a group will have the capacity to act [without incentives, i.e. voluntarily] depends on whether the individual actions of one or more members in a group are noticeable to any other individuals in the group (Olson 1965:45).

What is significant for the present study is that the criterion Olson uses to scale his taxonomy of groups is the extent to which the contributions of actors are *noticeable* to others in the group. As groups get larger, the contribution of each individual makes a smaller difference to the overall outcome, and it is harder to maintain effective communication with everyone.\(^{81}\) It follows that each individual has less stake in what happens. In a large group, you can do nothing, still get the benefit of the group’s purpose, and it doesn't matter that you did not contribute because your lack of effort goes unnoticed. In a small group, by definition, anyone’s lack of contribution to the group’s purpose gets noticed by all other group members. This is further linked to each individual’s motivation to provide the public good. Self-motivation or voluntarism is essential to the purpose of both privileged and intermediate size groups, through the push to achieve the purpose, and the pull of getting noticed for contributing or not. The point here for the present study is that the process driving the structural differences described by Olson is communicative, a matter of being able to notice everyone’s contribution. Furthermore, Olson’s taxonomy suggests the possibility of numerical limits to empowering organisation.

A suggestion of the likely figure of the numerical size applicable to privileged and intermediate groups comes from looking at the ability of a group to act. Olson points out that the empirical studies show that small groups, on average six members, get things done. The same studies show that larger groups, beginning from about 14 participants, are better for looking for points of view, reactions and debate (James 1951). Evolutionary biologist Robin Dunbar has collated findings in relation to small group numbers with similar results, and goes further by proposing that the largest group in which a “stable interpersonal relationship” can be maintained is about 150. Interestingly, Dunbar links this relatively large group size to the evolution of language

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\(^{81}\) The question of what constitutes “effective communication” in an organisational setting is dealt with below in the discussion of Chester Barnard.
Group size any larger than this enters the realm of abstract definitions of group identity and the socially defined latent group. While these figures are not definitive in terms of the degree of formal organisation required to maintain group solidarity and effectiveness, what they do suggest is that the ability to generate communicatively shared understanding – that is, for everyone’s contribution to be noticeable and acknowledged through interpersonal exchange, coupled with effective action – is feasible in groups of less than about 150. Clearly, the larger the group, the more formal organisation will be required to maintain effective communication, defined here as each and every individual being both noticed and accountable in terms of the production of the public good.

6.4.2 Structure - Incentive and Motivation.
For an initial specification of structure, the early literature of organisation considers organisational structures largely in terms of incentives. For example, Clark and Wilson (1961) elaborate types of incentives, and try to bring the problem of objective versus subjective incentives under the one roof in a causal model. Their basic hypothesis is that the incentive system is the “principle variable affecting organizational behaviour” and that rather than having to persuade the recalcitrant of the value of participation, organisations change the incentive system in response to changes in “the apparent motives of contributors, or potential contributors, to the organization”. Clark and Wilson differentiate three types of incentives: material, solidary and purposive (Clark & Wilson 1961:130). Material incentives are tangible rewards, including wages and salaries and also including financial or other tangible benefits that derive from association, such as membership of a labour union. Solidary incentives are intangible, and are derived from group membership – fun, belonging, maintenance of social distinctions, and so on. Solidary incentives do not rely directly on the goals of the organisation except in the broadest sense. While goals may exist, they are flexible and can be transitory without damage to the organisation. Finally, purpose incentives are also intangible, but derive from the goals of the organisation. The incentive comes from the necessity to have organization in order to achieve the stated aim, such as changing a law, or having a national park declared. It follows that achievement of the aim is likely to result in the dissolution of the organisation, depending on how broadly the aim is stated. “Fighting globalisation” is a reason some organisations exist, but the aim is not likely to be achieved in the short term.

In this view, incentives are there to appeal to individuals in order to encourage collective behaviour. They represent the micro side of the picture and are an attempt to describe the potential lures likely to be attractive to a range of “men” of a “certain state of mind”. What Clark and Wilson do next is to suggest that at the macro level these incentives correspond to different organisational types. Business firms, labour unions and political machines are described as utilitarian organisations. They rely primarily on material incentives to sustain “willingness”. By and large, they predict that for the participants, organisational goals will be secondary to incentives. They take the view that goals are the responsibility of the executive and, presumably in the well-functioning organisation there will be clearly defined working procedures and processes of accountability. The next group are the service-oriented voluntary organisations and social clubs. The organisational goals of these institutions are non-controversial and socially acceptable. Finally, to make a neat set, there are purposive organisations. These rely on their stated goals to attract and retain people. It can be said that the perfect placement for such an organisation to continue is to be able to make visible progress towards the goal, without ever actually getting there. For example, ending hunger or saving the planet can only keep so many people going for so long before other priorities are likely to intervene. In other words, if the attainment of the goal cannot be seen to be getting any closer, people will lose interest. If the goal is too vague, or the appeal is to a small minority, then the incentive to participate is weak or the pool of potential members is too small. In these instances organization will fail.

Olson also gave extensive attention to incentives. Rational choice demands that a latent group has power and the capacity for action that is only realised or mobilised through incentives that are necessarily “selective”. In contrast to a collective good, an incentive is a selective good. Whereas a collective good is indiscriminate and available to every group member, a selective good means that only those actors that join in acting for the collective get the individual good. These incentives can be positive or negative; seductive or coercive. Olson gives some examples of selective incentives as “a desire to win prestige, respect, or friendship”. He is of the view that using social incentives to mobilise a latent group action is consistent with rational choice because “social status and social acceptance are individual, non-collective goods” (Olson 1965:61). Social incentives are selective because they can distinguish between those individuals who will support action in the common interest, and those who will not. These selective incentives can come in all shapes and sizes. As well as monetary and
social incentives, there can be “erotic incentives, psychological incentives, moral incentives and so on”. As we have seen, Olson’s definition – that the size of a group is based on the feasibility of exclusion from the products of the group – requires that incentives to contribute to the group can be applied selectively. Selective incentives “distinguish between those individuals who support action in the common interest and those who do not” (Olson 1965:61).

Applying this notion of selective incentives to the organisational community, it appears as another way in which to delimit the field of the group. The hypothetical situations of Hume or Hardin emphasise that “a core problem for organization [sic] is divergence between individual self-interest and the requirements of collective action” (Colebatch & Lamour 1993:15). However, it also appears that at the scale of the privileged to intermediate group, self-interest and an interest in collective action become one. Motivation and incentive become two sides of a single coin. The application of rational choice reaches its limit and it is the voluntarism of actors that becomes important. Olsen’s proposition that “moral incentives” can be selective makes the assumption that all social incentives necessarily occur as phenomena external to the group, and are part of the objective world. In the case of the empowering group, just the opposite argument has been made in the present study. That is, here, group norms and values are developed as part of a group narrative in a creative act of interpretation. Olson acknowledges that rational logics become indeterminate at the level of actors. Indeterminancy arises when an actor in a group reaches the point of deciding whether he or she might or might not contribute or withhold activity to generate the public good. That is, when an actor has a choice, and is able to exercise that in choosing (the definition of autonomy) rational choice theory will not help predict that choice. Says Olson, “there seems to be no way at present of getting a general, valid and determinate solution at the level of abstract of this chapter” (Olson 1965:43), meaning at the level of actors. The individual motives for making one choice or another come into operation, and because those motives are, from a “rational” view, unknowable to other parties in the group, and multivariant in terms of being satisfiers of needs, a rational choice analysis will not further our understanding. It is only by considering all three rationalities of the lifeworld that the question of choice is given moral force. In terms of the non-material need of the group, normative and subjective worlds are also subject to validity claims in deciding to contribute to a group. These aspects of the lifeworld are not unknowable, merely inaccessible for the purpose of
rational choice theory. Olson’s groups account for the logic of structures but not for the dynamism of actors.

However, Olson’s growing list of possible incentives looks remarkably like a needs list, with needs for autonomy (through reference to a moral code and values), identity (through reference to friendships, social status) and security (through reference to erotic and psychological incentives) all appearing (Olson 1965:61). In keeping with the universal need approach, Olson’s list could be amalgamated into the classes of security, identity and autonomy.

Olson is not concerned about the particularities of a moral code. It is not the quality or content of the code that matters to him, but the fact of having one that can serve as a selective incentive. This is ultimately how Olson gets around the problem of indeterminancy. Rational choice predicts that when circumstances demand individual sacrifice to obtain a collective good, no-one will make the sacrifice. So it matters for rational choice to place the emphasis not on the sacrifice, but on the values that make sacrifice a selective incentive.

Knowing the limits of rational choice, a theory of motivation, as presented in the previous chapter, is necessary to complete the picture of an intermediate-sized group. This may be particularly true of groups towards the smaller end of this class, because having self-motivated actors is a necessary condition of the privileged group. Groups are a means to satisfy the needs of the members. Empowering groups meet needs that require cooperative structures and abstract values in order to be satisfied. Rational choice does allow for groups to act without coercion or inducement. As shown, these are likely to be small- to intermediate-sized groups where communication is sufficient to ensure that the contribution of every person to the group purpose is noticeable by other group members.

What is of interest here for the present study is the process involved in what determines the group size – this balance of motivation and the contribution of each person being noticeable and acknowledged, coupled with a selective incentive as a way to describe motivation at the level of organisation. Group size does condition the way that the public good is produced. Olson’s use of being noticed as the criteria for group size draws attention to how people get noticed and acknowledged in groups. This may be through all kinds of different incentives, and through behaviour that draws attention; it may be through provision of material goods or bestowal of status; it may be concrete or symbolic. The public goods of values and a stock of images to
convey them are the tools that are used for the process of communication that is necessary for this noticing that satisfies universal need and so is linked to motivation. Finally, it is the quality of intersubjectivity, aided by tools and organisational habits, that conditions the group size for which action based on meaningful communication is possible.

6.4.3 Meaningful Communication

The tools used by the case study groups demonstrate the characteristics of a setting wherein “the subjective worlds of participants could serve as mirror surfaces […] to adopt in common the perspective of a third person or a nonparticipant” (Habermas 1984:69). The tools show the important place of providing an evidential framework for the group’s narrative. As discussed in Chapter 3, it is important that this framework is formed not as a counterfactual artefact, but rather a means of explication and ordering, one that provides for firmly grasping what is already intuitively understood. The lifeworld is the ultimate setting for everything, and as such, as expressed by Shutz and Luckmann (Shutz 1973), is “immunised” against total revision. That the lifeworldly stock of information may not be adequate to the task of its own interpretation is a different matter. Lived experience has its limitations, but the lifeworld itself “in principle cannot be exhausted” (Habermas 1984:133). It is always available to be added to as a stock of knowledge in general. In terms of the use of tools, the narrative for which they provide a framework is a form that permits users to step beyond the horizon of “situation oriented actors caught up in the communicative practice of everyday life” opening up “a further stock of meaning, which, while it calls for explication, is already intuitively familiar” (Habermas 1984:133). It is this process that allows each individual to grasp the limitations of a lifeworld that, in one of its structural aspects, is dependent upon a particular cultural stock of knowledge. At the same time, that knowledge is expanded and made increasingly complex by drawing on the other structural aspects of the lifeworld. It is this that has been referred to as the “Ah-Hah” moment in empowerment (Howlett 1985). This is not a challenge to the lifeworld but, rather, an augmentation of it. The framework provided by a reflective tool anticipates the “hermeneutic reflexivity” described by Lash. It is the investigative process, SIDT’s “questioning”, that in itself constitutes part of this new knowledge. As Habermas and Lash agree, it is a distinctive feature of modernity that normatively regulated interpretive frameworks can be exposed to methodical testing.
The question of what constitutes meaningful communication in an organisational context was pursued early on in the study of organisation by Chester Barnard in *The Functions of the Executive* (1951). This is worthwhile looking at, because Barnard places his definition of “authoritative communication” in the context of an organisation where a small decision-making group, the “executive”, generates commands that require assent for the purpose of the organization to exist and be maintained. We can examine the characteristics of the group that performs this executive function with Olson’s taxonomy of group size. For example, reaching back to Michels and the “iron law of oligarchy”, both Barnard and Olson would agree that decision-making is best achieved in small groups of roughly less than 10 members, and that as groups grow, there must be a division of functions within the group. We would expect that a group of decision-making size is bordering on being what Olson calls “privileged”, where the contribution of every member is critical to provision of a public good – in this case, the decisions of the group that are made for the whole organisation. As the title states, Barnard’s procedure takes a functional approach to the examination of structure. Barnard adds to the vocabulary of organisation in his approach to the minimum requirements for organisation to exist as a recognisable entity. Apart from the fact that there can be no organisation without persons, in addition to “willingness to serve”, to be discussed further below, Barnard considers his other fundamentals to be communication and common purpose. Both are dealt with by Barnard in a quite brief and matter-of-fact way.

Barnard’s primary condition for an organisation to exist as an entity is communication. In the context of Olson’s requirement for being noticed, and given the universal emphasis placed on communication in the literature of organisations, this is worthy of some attention. He puts the view that “the structure, extensiveness and scope of organization are almost entirely determined by communication techniques” (Barnard 1951:91). In his introduction to the topic, Barnard only briefly elaborates on these techniques as being written, oral and “observational feeling”. What he is concerned about is communication per se. It is defined as the dynamic by which “the possibility of accomplishing a common purpose and the existence of persons whose desires might constitute motives for contributing toward such a common purpose” are brought together in organisation. Barnard gives further attention to what else is included among these communication techniques in his development of a theory of authority. This is because he regards it as critical that the communication of the executive be authoritative. In a group, under what conditions would an individual accept
communication as authoritative? Barnard’s perspective on this question is interesting because it does not imply a definition of organizational authority that is based in structures, particularly hierarchical structures, and the stasis that managerial structural analysis is prone to. Instead, Barnard provides a functional definition of communication that is concerned with the technical quality of communication as an effective process for the subjective acceptance of the content of that communication in an organisational context. Communication is authoritative when:

- it can be understood;
- it is not inconsistent with the purpose of the organisation;
- it is compatible with personal interest;
- compliance is physically possible (Barnard 1947:165).

Communication that does not meet these criteria will not contribute to group definition and maintenance. There are many forms of communication, but it is this particular type of communication that defines a group as an entity. Of course, not all communication is sifted by the recipients in a rational way using these standards. There are many communications that the recipient assents to unquestionably. Membership of an organisation does require acceptance of the rules and authority of the group, and many aspects of communication will fall within “the range that in a general way was anticipated at the time of undertaking the connection with the organization” (Barnard 1951:169). It is only when there is doubt about whether the instructions of the organisation are adequate to the recipient that assent and cooperation may not be secured.

Furthermore, this communication serves the function of bringing together persons with a common purpose. Barnard divides organizational purpose into first the purpose that comes with willingness to cooperate, and secondly the subjective purposes of the individuals involved in a group activity. The reason for this division is that:

purpose can serve as an element of the cooperative system only so long as the participants do not recognize that there are serious divergences in their understanding of the purpose as the object of cooperation (Barnard 1951:87).

Each individual has his or her own motives and experience, and responds to different incentives to decide to contribute willingly to the group. An objective purpose, ‘out there’, that can serve as an expression of the group’s identity, need only be one that is believed by the contributors to be the determined purpose of the organisation. When
much of the managerial and capabilities literature looks at purpose, the generally intended meaning is of a goal, the production of some outcome from group effort. It is interesting that for Barnard, purpose is quite different. For him, it is enough that everyone believes in the efforts of the group. He thinks that often the stated aim of the group will be something quite different from the purpose. Aims can change, and organisations that seek to perpetuate themselves may change the apparent reason for their existence without abandoning the willingness of the members. Purpose is simply a unifying principle that tells you a group exists as an entity.

To summarise the foregoing discussion, it should be clear that groups where empowerment is possible will be of privileged to intermediate size. Groups of this size possess a particular logic to their structures and the nature of the participation of their actors. As conditioned by their size, four elements can now be defined as essential to the structures and actors of the groups under discussion in the present study:

- Motivation/Incentive (push/pull) – everyone has a legitimate reason for participating that is personal and is reinforced by the solidary and purposive outcomes of participation;
- Communication – the effort and contribution of every person to the production of public goods is noticeable and acknowledged;
- Common purpose – everyone in the group has a belief in the real existence of a common purpose that explains why they are there together;
- Adaptability – everyone understands that the purpose of the group is different from the aim, and can respond positively when aims are not achieved, provided the purpose remains consistent.

There is a further factor that conditions the nature of the empowering group. In the organisational literature considered so far there is no discussion of dissent. However, this is of particular interest for interpretation from the case studies, because dissent emerged from the case studies as a defining characteristic of an empowering group. Having first looked at the consequences of size, dissent now needs to be considered in terms of the structural conditions it imposes on the group of actors. This provides the opportunity to further flesh out the four elements proposed above.

### 6.5 The Modern Structure of Dissent

From the above discussion, three types of empowering group emerged, each associated with a different type of social action. It also emerged that these groups will display a hierarchy of increasing organisational complexity from mutual help group to minority
identity group to social movement organisation. Furthermore, groups must codify their practices as the amount of complexity increases. For structures, in terms of the requirements for formal organisation, what can be seen to be different for each form of action are the consequences of action for structure. As the social scope of action widens, from self-help to formation of group identity to social change, the requirement for formal organisation – that is, governance by rules\(^83\) – increases, finally becoming an obligatory part of group interactions. In terms of the organisational requirements for empowerment, these are dictated by the action orientation, as defined by the particular objectives of the group.

To begin with what is structurally common to all, it became clear from the case studies that intentionality is essential to the way these groups of actors have come together – that is, the group is self-defining or “reflexive”. It follows that unlike a corporation or institution that can operate independently of communicatively structured contexts, these groups must be oriented to action based on communicatively developed shared understanding. The expanded world concepts and corresponding validity claims provide the “formal scaffolding with which those acting communicatively order problematic contexts of situations” (Habermas 1984:70). It is this scaffolding which serves to demarcate group boundaries and which is the structural element common to all types of empowering groups.

It is the narrative setting that characterises the relationships between actors in the intentionally bounded group as having the structural characteristics, the “scaffolding”, of Habermas’s ideal speech situation, the home of discourse aimed at generating action through uncompelled consensus. This setting is defined by tripartite communicative claims to validity as true to reality, normatively right and subjectively sincere. This discourse is related to action through ideas: theory and praxis. Quoting Hegel’s university roommate, Joseph Schelling, Habermas wrote:

\[
\text{… ideas alone lend firmness and moral significance to action. Only knowledge which has been freed from mere practical concerns and has been centered around ideas, which has, in other words, acquired a theoretical basis, is able to provide the right setting for action (Habermas 1966:285).}
\]

\(^{83}\) This is called by Habermas a “media-steered subsystem” (Habermas 1987:309). See below for further discussion.
However, as discussed above, these ideas are not posited counterfactually but reflexively, in line with Lash’s definition of the modern community. In Chapter 2 the modern community was defined in terms of Hegelian *Sittlichkeit*, “concrete ethical life” (Lash 1994:148), expressed in *Sitten*, accepted practices or habit. Furthermore, the idea was developed that dissent is necessarily a characteristic of the modern reflexive community as it reclaims social space in contradiction to the colonisation of the lifeworld. This communal dissent is an expression of power that is derived from the praxis of Lash’s “hermeneutic reflexivity”. In this community,

> Everyday activities in the “we” are about the routine achievement of meaning: about the production of substantive goods, and guided by an understanding of more generally what is substantively good by the community (Lash 1994:157).

As Lash says, it is important to iterate here that this community is not about shared interests, as in interest groups, nor about shared properties, as in gay or lesbian. It is about the products of a “field”, in the sense that religion, politics, science, art or (as is the case with the Bismark Ramu Group) campaigning and organizing are fields.84 In the context of modernity, these specialists and the community of which they are a part are “social actors” that are “as much producers of a cultural product as consumers” (Lash 1994:161), whose goods are received in society in general as cultural artefacts. In terms of organisation for social action, the specialist field and its community can be imagined as a soccer team playing to a stadium. The team is regulated by teleological action – that is, its job is to score goals and win, subject to fixed rules. As specialists, members or the team turn up and play regardless. The crowd, however, is organised by normative action. They depend on the specialists to be there, producing the cultural good of the match they have come to watch. The crowd transforms the highly regulated field of the players into an artefact received in society at large, be it “soccer hooligans” or “grand final week”. Similarly, empowering organisations and their clients are bound together as a community while acting in different ways. Together with members of the specialist field, these “social actors” constitute a community in having:

- shared meaning and practices;
- affective involvement with the products of the field;

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• internally generated standards, telos and ends;
• felt obligations, the characteristic “habitus” of the field.

These communities are reflexive in that:

• one is not born or thrown into them, but throws oneself into them;
• they may be widely stretched over abstract space;
• they consciously pose themselves the problem of their own creation;
• their tools (Zeuge) and products tend to be not material ones but abstract and cultural ones (after Lash 1995:161).

It has emerged from the case studies that these characteristics are applicable to empowering groups. They are practices of actors on the one hand – the shared meanings of the community – and on the other hand have the structural characteristics of the particular type of bounded group, called here specialists and clients or supporters.

Being structural, the circumstances of an oppressed community are governed by the dominant system. The group is affected by events that occur elsewhere, in a centre-periphery type relationship as discussed in Chapter 1. As the group turns outwards to analyse the world, the reality that the social order reproduces disparities of power generates critical consciousness as a necessary part of the community. As has been discussed, Galtung and Sites highlight that need is structure-dependent. For Galtung, this is because many satisfiers are socially organised. For Sites, it is because in circumstances where classes of need are not being met by the dominant way things are organized, then it is necessary to find other ways to organize to meet those needs. The alcoholics who meet by the willow tree are organized in their own way, as are graffiti artists. Both are an expression of a kind of power, in as much as both dissent from the dominant normative standard. Each objectifies what is dominant in that each is formed in opposition to dominant values. They are self-motivating and bounded by their dissent. What Sites shows is that it is in the everyday acts of the reproduction of the dissent group that independent control becomes necessary. Control is what makes the difference between a group bounded by fatalism and one that can organize to meet its needs. Ryan and Deci, who relate motivation to an intrinsic need for self-determination, support this view. They see this intrinsic motivation as a “natural inclination towards assimilation, mastery, spontaneous interest, and exploration that is […] essential to cognitive and social development” (Ryan & Deci 2000:70). This view has been supported by the case studies. As an organising principle, universal need can
be a tool to help motivate people to have control. For individuals, control gives the sense of having choice in life is essential to health.

Dissent can put on a deliberate face as withdrawal to shared group boundaries, or it can represent active opposition with a view to changing society. The point here is to see that under the conditions of modernity, the production of goods such as identity and autonomy are creative acts by a group of actors that have an effect in the social field. Under conditions of modernity, structurally these public goods are constituted autonomously, independently of tradition, and so possess the quality of structural innovation. The necessity of this innovation in the current age is established by the existence of global risk. This point is important because when a structural disparity of power exists between actors – one of the three conditions under which empowerment is a necessary part of intervention\(^{85}\) – transformative change can only come about through structural innovation.\(^{86}\) This change comes about with the achievement of critical consciousness at the level of the group. It is this requirement for structural innovation that means actors must organize, precisely because the required change is structural.\(^{87}\)

6.6 Synthesis: Group Control

The persistent existence of a visible grouping, bounded by its shared values, is a means necessary to the end of social change. This is the “patterning” described by Katz and Khan. The characteristic bounding pattern of the empowering group has been identified as dissent. To have dissent as an implied purpose requires being conscious of socially produced meanings. Convention implies that these meanings are common-sense schemata applied to the world, and, in the circumstances of a disparity of power, that they are the product of a dominant group. Questioning common sense is therefore

\(^{85}\) Corresponding to the group control orientation as shown in Table 4.
\(^{86}\) The use of aircraft as missiles by organised militants, leading to the use of the term “asymmetrical warfare”, would have to be a leading example of this. It is in this sense that terrorism is very “modern”. That this “warfare” has affected the consciousness of millions would seem beyond doubt. So too would it seem beyond doubt that members of these extremist groups feel empowered in their actions, possessing strong identity and autonomous control.
\(^{87}\) For the dissent organisation this should always be problematic. There is a longstanding tendency to avoid the language of hierarchy in describing the functional division of the group. Titles such as ‘coordinator’ or ‘facilitator’ replace the more usual nomenclature of ‘director’ or ‘manager’. Emphasis in principle is placed on coordinating the freely chosen activities of the members of the wider group, rather than on giving instructions to be followed. When the consent of the entire group matters to group cohesiveness – that is, when motivation rather than incentive is the primary driver of knowing the purpose of the group and maintaining cohesion – it is necessary for authoritative communication that it is compatible with the personal interests of individual members. Communication must ensure that everyone shares and indeed generates the values of the group in their motives for participation.
one activity of a dissent group. This questioning occurs at every level, from the person’s own needs and motivations, to the nature of the group as a cohesive entity, to questioning as an expression of dissent from social norms. This is a task that involves risk to both persons and the group, and therefore in the empowering setting must be subject to the tripartite test of objective, normative and subjective validity for action to follow. It has also been noted that, when dissent does take the form of specific action, it does not have to be in the shape of active transgression or civil disobedience. In some circumstances existing institutions can serve the cause of dissent. Dissent can also take the form of a group creating its own norms or value space, and of withdrawal. The principle task in the bounded dissent group is the achievement of meaning to meet need for security, identity and autonomy. Whereas universal human need focused on persons, and the necessary conditions for having health and fulfilling human potential, in the present chapter, in addition to actors there is a further focus on the necessary structural conditions for achieving increased human potential in an empowering group. Three types of groups that support empowering settings are identified: the mutual help group, the collective identity group and the social change group. Following from Sites, the present study identifies these as the control orientation of the group. That is, each is defined by the sphere of control that is required to meet the universal need of actors in the group. For actors, empowering groups are a means to assert control over particular parts of the environment – at the minimum, the group itself. In the present study, these parts have been identified with Habermas’s lifeworld segments, and subsequently with forms of communicative action, being dramaturgical, normative and teleological action. In this way, the actors in the group are placed in their dynamic relations. The significance of narrative has re-emerged as the particular linguistic form of the empowering group. Providing a setting for people to tell their stories takes participants out of their everyday communicative practice. However, unlike Rappaport, who sees narrative as a resource, narrative appears here as a form of communicative action, and hence is part of dynamic interrelations. The resource from which narrative operates is the lifeworld. However, the narrative tools used by the case study groups do provide the framework for a cognitive reference system based on their own interpretive efforts. The effectiveness of this form is true of all types of empowering group. If, as Habermas suggests, social evolution comes about through the increasing rationalisation of the lifeworld, it follows that tools which allow participants in action

88 Perhaps “lifeworld” is closer to Rappaport’s meaning. Here, “narrative” is used in a more linguistic, operational sense.
to interpret and analyse the lifeworld contribute to empowerment by allowing people
to assert their own claim to the validity of their actions – that is, to satisfy need for
autonomy in a social choice.

Furthermore, it has been identified above that a way to consider groups in general is as
producers of public goods. Organisations are conditioned by the means of producing
these goods. Empowering groups have different action orientations, dependent upon
the requirement for different lifeworld segments to be made the central theme of the
narrative setting. As the action orientation shifts from dramaturgical to normative to
teleological, the increasing necessity for rationalisation of the lifeworld is
accompanied by increasing systemic complexity, which ultimately requires
codification in a subsystem steered by regulation of group boundaries in terms of rules
of governance. Constraining the relations of actors, this perspective imposes a
particular logic on a group, since to produce a public good it must exist as an entity
composed of people with willingness, common purpose and communicative ability. In
the three types of empowering organisation, the experience of the case studies shows
that the public goods produced correspond to risk and trust, critical consciousness, and
structural innovation.

In the context of universal need, production of these goods has been linked to the push
of motivation rather than the pull of incentives placing it. This is justified because in
privileged and intermediate-sized groups, willingness will depend more on motivation
and less on incentive. All such groups have been broadly categorised in terms of social
dissent. In the dissent group, these three aspects of an entity – personal motivation, the
public goods produced, and the form of social action – are structurally within the ambit
of the group’s control. This is summarised in Table 4.

For each control orientation, the matrix shown in Table 4 links the person to the group
through need and the production of public goods. In turn, each type of public good can
be related to a form of social action. By making these linkages, between persons,
actions and public goods, the group is seen as the locus of control between persons and
the social resources for meeting need.

It is these social resources for meeting need that will be discussed in the following
chapter. The present chapter has been concerned with the internal dynamics of group
control, and developing a model of empowering entities. However, there is, in this
Habermasian space, too great an emphasis on consensus. The group as it is portrayed
here is empowering to the extent that it has power to. But is can never be forgotten that
for the case study organisations, the necessity for intervention practices that empower
is a consequence of the historical disparities of colonisation. There is systematic power
over the lives of the community attempting to meet need in all classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of social action</th>
<th>Group control orientation</th>
<th>Social change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual help</td>
<td>Collective identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramaturgical</td>
<td></td>
<td>Normative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Goods</td>
<td>Trust/Risk</td>
<td>Critical consciousness</td>
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<td>Structural innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Motivation</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
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Table 4: The Dissent Group

To take the view of empowerment as a multi-level construct to the next stage, the
following chapter must consider these entities in their interaction with society. The
themes of incentives, common purpose and dissent will be developed in the social
context of empowerment in terms of self-reliance, framing and mobilisation of
contentious action.
Chapter 7

Civil Action

“Dream, improvise, weave, stumble, curse, above all, hope.”


7.1 The “s” and the “z”

Continuing the progression from universal need to organised groups, the present chapter now considers the third requirement: empowering organisations as instruments of social change. In the previous chapter, empowering groups were defined in terms of the control orientation of the group and whether this was primarily oriented to self-healing, formation of collective identity, or social change. These types of empowering groups imply a particular form of social action, being dramaturgical, normative and teleological. It was said that these action orientations represented limit cases of forms of communicative action, and that all types of empowering groups rely on restoration of communicative action for their effectiveness. In so doing, all groups share some of the characteristics of the limit cases. The self-help group evolved as a structural innovation to break down the disparity of power inherent in the mental health professional/patient relationship. Similarly, the case studies show that the social change group relies on an accumulation of trust and establishment of practices to build the relationships necessary for the risks involved in undertaking social action campaigns. In the present chapter, the focus is on groups acting as agencies of change in society. The final requirement of empowerment is to act to change structures that maintain a damaging disparity of power.

This chapter gives attention to the social movement literature from the United States, known as the Northern Tradition. This is so for three reasons. First, the comment was made in the previous chapter that study of social change organisations is sparse, with work in the field weighted towards study of bureaucracy, corporations and institutional forms of politics. The Northern Tradition is the exception to this. Secondly, two Americans, John Roughan and Barry Lalley, have been influential in three of the four case-study organisations that have been presented here. The case-study organisations have characteristics that reflect their cultural background, and it is consequently necessary to give
attention to literature from that tradition for the purpose of this research. Thirdly, in the course of interaction with academics for the present study, it was the author’s experience that few Australian scholars in relevant fields are familiar with this Northern Tradition of social movement activism and the accompanying literature. Alinsky, for example, is not well known in Australia in the author’s experience. In the political context of the Westminster system, and in Australia with its compulsory voting, much political debate focuses on policy as it relates to the quality of government service delivery. From this perspective, it is difficult to grasp the power of concentrated wealth that can support Republicans to, for example, reject universal health care. In the context of Australian Westminster, where it is more often the politics of taxpayers than of citizens that matters, it is hard to imagine how such a proposal would ever appear on the electoral radar. From an Australian reading of the Northern literature, it appears that this Northern conservatism and its necessity of organized citizen action to achieve basic conditions and services governs much about the way organisations representing marginal interests operate in the United States, as recorded in this Northern literature (Alinsky 1971; Zald & McCarthy 1975; Piven & Cloward 1977; Tilly 1991; Stoeker 2008; Wallerstein & Duran 2008; Opp 2009). This cultural difference is highlighted by ambiguity in the use of “s” or “z” in organisation and organizing, a matter alluded to in Chapter 3. There, it was proposed that organisation refer to a structure of doing, and organization to the task at hand, and as far as possible, this usage is continued to highlight the difference. Organizing is intentionally engaged with social change, has ramifications for organisations, and must engage with the question of power as it exists outside the collectivity.

An introduction to this literature from the United States is therefore useful for the Australian audience for whom the present study is intended, and is also necessary for the complete interpretation of the case studies. Furthermore, at the final “level” of empowerment, this literature provides the entry point for the present study’s interpretation of empowerment as social action and its interaction with organisational structures.

89 In respect of this, Dr. Janet Hunt, a panellist for this thesis, comments that this work was better known in Australia in the 1970s than it is today.
7.2 The Northern Tradition

In the 1980s, neo-liberalism swept the globe with a new religion of the virtues of free trade, flexible labour and active individualism, providing the template for competitive globalisation. With the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in 1981, neo-liberalism was installed as the ideal for the state apparatus, becoming the “dominant ideological rationalization for globalization and contemporary state reform” (Peck & Tickell 2002:381). In the course of the present study it has been noticeable that, with the exception of the fields of health and psychology and to a lesser extent management and education, talk of empowerment and the construction of alternative futures was greatly attenuated at this time. It is for this reason that much of the literature that provides the base for this study is from the 1970s, with a gap to more recent work in fewer fields. This is so much so that it has become one purpose of this study to revive a little of the work that was done at that time, such as that in the area of basic human need. This is in light of the fact that the bravado of neo-liberalism is on the wane in the face of decades of evidence showing global transformation that is both uncontrolled and anthropogenic, with consequences that are not predictable on current knowledge. As the new millennium is yet young, it is time to consider again how to embrace the future with alternatives to the free market and the minimalist state.

In the 1960s, civil rights activism in the United States inspired a new vein of academic literature that showed a deep interest in the participation of ordinary people in the process of making knowledge through the popular rise of oral history, collective biography and participatory action research (Tilly 1991). As alluded to earlier in this study, this interest was present across the globe as new constructions of the process of international development were promoted in the global South, and also in Asia and the Pacific (Freire 1970; Streethen 1981; Howlett 1985; Roughan 1986; Fals-Borda 1987; Uphoff 1988; Rahman 1993). By the 1970s, authors such as Johann Galtung, Erich Fromm, E.F. Schumacher, Bertrand Russell, Paul Erlich, and Ivan Illich were putting the people of the North on notice about the limited nature of a modern future. The language of grassroots development, bottom-up process and empowerment reached its height. Today, it can best be said of this intellectual effort that it now has “its ranks thinned and
sometimes limping” (Tilly 1991:593). Much credit is due to those in the fields of health and psychology for keeping the spirit alive in professional practice (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008).

The highly developed literature of organisation and organizing in the Northern Tradition provides a basis from which to explore social change in the present study. In the Northern Tradition, these groups have been broadly characterised as “social movement organizations” (Zald & Ash 1966).

7.2.1 Zald and Ash – A Starting Point

The year after Mancur Olson wrote The Logic of Collective Action discussed in Chapter 6, Mayer Zald and Roberta Ash contributed their investigation of social movement organisations with a critique of the “Weber-Michels model” of “goal transformation, a shift to organizational maintenance and oligarchization” (Zald & Ash 1966:327). Zald and Ash drew on Selznick, who was interested in organisation as a consensual “cooperative system” (Selznick 1948:28). Selznick viewed formal organisation as “the structural expression of rational action”. This expression is “an economy; at the same time it is an adaptive social structure” that has both “rational” and “non-rational” dimensions (Selznick 1948:25, italics in original). For Zald and Ash, social movement organisations are defined by:

- goals to change society;
- purposive incentives predominate, solidary incentives are secondary;
- membership recruitment that can be:
  - inclusive (low participation threshold, "a pledge") or
  - exclusive (high participation and commitment, “subject to organizational discipline and orders”) (Zald & Ash 1966:331).

The environment of the organisation is made up of its members and backers, including financial supporters, other organisations in the field and “the larger society” which “may contain the target structures or norms which the movement organization wishes to change” (Zald & Ash 1966:330). This is consistent with the view of the modern community developed in the previous chapter.

Zald and Ash’s definition was important because it was broad enough to include “proselytizing and usually messianic religious groups, meliorative political groups and conspiratorial parties” (Zald & Ash 1966:329), placing the view of
organisation and its purpose in a field other than business, management or bureaucracy.

7.2.2  

McCarthy and Zald – Resource Mobilisation

Later, McCarthy and Zald (McCarthy & Zald 1977) introduced their influential “resource mobilization” approach to organizing. This approach places greater emphasis on organisation per se because it makes a closer examination of the structures in organisations that give expression to grievances, rather than the gripe itself. This is because they found “little or no support for expected relationships between objective or subjective deprivation and the outbreak of movement phenomena and willingness to participate in collective action” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1214).

Finding a weak correlation between the existence of grievance and social movements, McCarthy and Zald assume “the ubiquity and constancy of mobilizing grievances” (quoted in Snow et.al. 1986:465). Having an assumption that discontent has causes that are structurally part of society, the task of organization is to give expression to this discontent. Described as dissent in the present study, it is a phenomenon that flows “directly out of a population's central political processes” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1215). Having the vehicle for the independent expression of dissent is essential to mobilisation.90

For McCarthy and Zald, organisation is necessary to aggregate resources. This requires:

- a minimal form of organisation;
- involvement on the part of individuals and organisations from outside the collectivity:
  - “crude” supply and demand model is sometimes applied to the flow of resources toward and away from specific social movements;
- sensitivity to the importance of costs and rewards in explaining individual and organizational involvement (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1216).91

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90 The author notes from experience, supported by the Family WellBeing case study, that the lack of independent Indigenous organizational vehicles in Australia is a substantial barrier to promoting empowering practice. The ubiquitous presence of government in the lives of Aboriginal people continues to be as debilitating as the original acts of colonisation.

91 This recalls Rappaport and narrative in empowerment as a resource, to be discussed further below.
This work is in the Left tradition of the United States, concerned with “organization”, “tactics”, “mobilization” and “targets” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1217). This brings attention to “processes by which persons and institutions from outside of the collectivity under consideration become involved” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1215). This recalls the boundary established by Lash between the players and supporters in a field, and the contribution of each to the way a public good is received in society. That is, through the specialist rules of the players (Selznick’s economy), and as the supporters in the stands who convey how the event is received in society (the adaptive social structure). The question of production of public good also recalls Olson from the previous chapter, who is cited by McCarthy and Zald. They propose resource mobilisation as an alternative to the “challenge” of the “traditional” view of Olson (Olson 1965), with its reliance on incentives, cost reduction and other benefits to explain collective behaviour. Olson’s logic predicts that each individual with a grievance will wait for someone else to take the risks and pay the price of generating the public good of opposition, and thus highlights the obstacles to conflict group formation. The resource mobilisation approach of McCarthy and Zald builds on the work of Oberschall, who viewed mobilisation of collective action as “concerned with how people with little individual power collectively resist or challenge established and organized groups that have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo” (Oberschall 1973:102). Oberschall drew attention to the role of organisations in mobilising grievance – through being a source of “outside help, both in the form of leadership and material resources” (Oberschall 1973:115) – as the means to explain how mass opposition in the form of a social movement comes about. From this perspective, Oberschall extends Olson’s emphasis on incentives by proposing that within the organised collective, “individual goods and selective incentives [...] account for the emergence of leaders and activists in high risk situations” (Oberschall 1973:116).

Incentives continue to play an important part in the argument of McCarthy and Zald, and, in spite of their efforts to the contrary, they open the door for Michel’s oligarchy to become evident. Professional cadre, professional staff, workers and transitory teams are classifications they develop based on individual access to decision-making and commitment of time. They use these classifications to define the necessary incentives applicable to each class, from selective material
incentives (for those essential to organisational maintenance and therefore continuity of resources) to solidary incentives ("selective benefits of a non-material sort" for those with more limited participation). This view has been supported empirically for the United States by Bailis (1974) and Gamson (1975), as cited by McCarthy and Zald.

From the point of view of the present study, Olson was employed in making a taxonomy of groups, and his classifications have been applied with some efficacy at that level in the previous chapter. The challenge presented by Olson bears on the truth that “many, if not most, sets of people who share a grievance or interest fail to act on it” (McAdam et.al. 2001:15). As discussed in relation to incentives in the previous chapter, it is the view of this study that the social model adopted by Olson, placing as it does so much emphasis on incentives of myriad kinds, is not perfectly useful in understanding the modern social movement. While paying employees and contractors to perform the tasks of the organisation is part of the operations of the case-study organisations, this is not primarily offered as incentive but rather as recompense for time forgone from other economic activity. The use of the term “stipend” to describe the payment received by the Solomon Island Development Trust paraprofessionals emphasises this. The Lak experience clearly demonstrated that “incentives” can mean very different things to different people, and that their effectiveness is subject to competition. As discussed in the previous chapters, in the circumstances of a group that requires power to meet its social needs, motivation is a necessary condition for successfully empowering beneficiaries, the push factor rather than the pull. This is why this thesis has begun from an image of the person, for motivation must be accounted for in individual psychology.

However, the resource mobilisation approach also has some benefits for the interpretation of the case studies. The emphasis on aggregation of resources brings the matter of fundraising and donors to the fore, in terms of both quantum and the quality of the relationship. Involvement with those outside the collectivity includes a relationship of donors and supporters as constituents, called “conscience adherents”. McCarthy and Zald define a social movement organisation as “a complex, or formal, organization [sic], which identifies its goals

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92 If Aboriginal Australians are to be players on the field of white Australian politics, then the votes of conscience adherents are essential to their cause, as they lack electoral power as a group.
with the preferences of a social movement” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1218). This appears to be some distance from the “minimal form” required for aggregation of resources, but it is the emphasis on goals that is being noted. At first appearance, the emphasis on organization having “target goals” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1220, italics in original) and achieving them is not strongly evident in the documentation of the case-study organisations. The case studies suggest that in the circumstances of a disparity of power, organization necessarily comes first from the structural innovation of participants in a group. This innovation is cognitive, linguistic and enlightening. While the proposal that discontent is always present and only requires a vehicle for its expression appears sound, from the point of view of motivation, it must also be true that mobilisation of a client or “beneficiary” base through an exchange of power requires relinquishing some kinds of organisational goals. As has been shown by the case studies, at the social level the empowering organisation must convey to beneficiaries evidence of the organisation’s structural innovation that can give the beneficiary power in decision-making about organisational goals specific to his or her constituency. The case studies show that it is a purpose of the empowering organisational vehicle to provide means and access to resources, but not to set specific goals on behalf of constituents.

To clarify the meaning of target goals in the Northern Tradition, it is necessary to move from organisational goals (in the sense of objectives) to tasks. These tasks are oriented to organisational maintenance through the ability to attract “conscience adherents”, including “mobilizing supporters, neutralizing and/or transforming mass and elite publics into sympathizers, achieving change in targets” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1217)\(^9\). It can be seen that specific target goals should always be able to shift and change in the successful campaign organisation. For the case study organisations, the goal referred to is not a target but is instead the organisational identification with those having a grievance. This is the use of an organisation’s collective power to speak with the voice of those who are marginalised. It is this organisational goal of advocacy that stands out as having a bearing on the case studies. In the empowering organisation, the task is that of assembling a narrative to give voice to those who are silenced by feeling

\(^9\) McCarthy and Zald quite rightly point out that this level of organisation requires a substantial amount of money and a massive collective effort.
powerless. In the case-study organisations, promulgating this narrative through tools built the base that gave a mandate for advocacy. It was an important characteristic to seek out for recruitment those who were motivated to want change – whom McCarthy and Zald refer to as “adherents”, those who then make up an “exclusive” group. The importance of the paraprofessional as a role model, the organizer, is underlined in McCarthy and Zald as the means by which the organisation identifies with an existing grievance, providing the basis for creation of a social movement.

Lastly, McCarthy and Zald propose that a social movement consists of groups that can be identified as “mass or elite and conscience or beneficiary bystander publics, adherents, constituents, and opponents” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1223). They take the economic path and view social movement organisations as parts of an industry and like an economic sector, their “crude supply and demand model” applied to “issue entrepreneurs and organizations” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1215). Looking at this from a European perspective, it begins to look like Bourdieu’s “field” as cited by Lash.

7.2.3 Snow, Rochford, Worden, Benford – Frame Alignment
The psychological aspect of support for and participation in social movement organisations is pursued by Snow and others in a further influential move forward in the social movement field (Snow et.al. 1986). Snow et al. draw attention to the fact that the resource mobilisation approach avoids the analysis of discontent by assuming grievance as a given. Not that they believe the proposition is false. Instead, quoting a conference paper presented by Doug McAdam in 1982, as with the psychological aspect of incentives and their interpretation, Snow et al. propose that the assumption ignores “the enormous variability in the subjective meanings people attach to their objective situations” (Snow et.al. 1986:466). This is a view supported by the present study.

Snow and others assert that McCarthy and Zald’s proposal that “a social movement is a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society” (McCarthy & Zald 1977:1217) is not adequate. The process of identifying preference is an interpretive task in which individuals and groups “frame the world in which they are acting”. This process affects the organisation’s choice of strategic action, resource acquisition and temporal
viability (Snow et.al. 1986:466). Building on Goffman (Goffman 1974), they propose four types of “frame alignment”, being frame bridging, frame amplification (which involves both values and beliefs), frame extension and frame transformation (which engenders a shift from “fatalism or self-blaming to structure-blaming, from victim-blaming to system blaming”) (Snow et.al. 1986:474). In one variety or another, a frame alignment between an organisation and “a particular domain of life” of its proposed beneficiaries is necessary for movement participation. Frame alignment processes give “consideration of both social psychological and structural/organizational factors” (Snow et.al. 1986:464). Again building on previous influential work, they cite Piven and Cloward, who emphasise that

> for a protest movement to arise out of the traumas of everyday life, people have to perceive the deprivation and disorganization they experience as both wrong and subject to redress. The social arrangements that are ordinarily perceived as just and immutable must come to seem both unjust and mutable (Piven & Cloward 1977:12).

This “interpretive task” appears remarkably similar to what the Southern tradition would call “conscientization”. As has been shown, conscientization is linked to understanding power relationships and individual empowerment, introducing empowerment as crucial to group organisation aimed at social change. “Framing” is another word for Freire’s literacy. In the present study, it is regarded as the outcome of communicative action that provides for the validated mutual understanding necessary for people to act and participate.

### 7.2.4 McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly – Contention

Finally, the work of these previous authors in the Northern Tradition is given general application through the Northern study of social movements not only in the United States, but also those past movements occurring on a national scale in Europe, the former Soviet Union, Africa, the Subcontinent and South and Central

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94 Snow here provides an example of the use of “organization” as a potential source of confusion for those outside of the Northern Tradition. Snow refers to “structural/organizational factors”. It does not appear he is talking about organisations in the sense used in the present study. In the studies of cults and the peace movement by Snow and others, it is the phenomenon of effective movement mobilisation – organizing – that is of central interest. For those of us outside the Northern Tradition, it is important to always bear in mind the Northern culture of civil action when reading the language of the North.
America (Tarrow 1998; McAdam et al. 2001). Sidney Tarrow draws attention to “collective challenge” or “contention” as central to defining social change organization. In the present study, this has been defined as dissent. He identifies contention as possibly “the only resource movements control” (Tarrow 1998:5). Recalling Chester Barnard’s common purpose, willingness and communication, to define the social movement, Tarrow nominates “common purpose” – meaning “common or overlapping interests and values”, “solidarity and collective identity”, the “deep-rooted feelings” that are tapped into by movement leaders, and “sustained contentious politics” – as his essential components. He proposes that the outcome of cycles of contention generated by the interaction of insurgents and elites is dependent not on the justice or persuasive power of a movement, but on its breadth and on the reaction of elites and other groups (Tarrow 1998:7).

With respect to Snow et al.’s concept of framing, Tarrow identifies the organisational work of framing, which is cognitive and evaluative, in addition to framing fulfilling the need for “emotional energy” in social change. As was shown in the case studies, no significant transformation of talk into action can occur without emotional energy. Quoting Verta Taylor (Taylor 1995), he writes, “emotions are the site for articulating the links between cultural ideas, structural inequality, and individual action” (Tarrow 1998:111). Once again, this emotional charge highlights the importance of having that “image of being human” in a construction of social change organisations to forge the links between individual psychology, motivation and concerted collective action. Lastly, Tarrow contributes the idea that societies have “repertoires of contention” that are “culturally inscribed and socially communicated” (Tarrow 1998:20). Workers strike, Parisians build barricades, peasants break machines or seize property. These are cultural resources that are available to movements; mobilisation through repertoires of contention is deeply linked to social identity.

Thus, this “classical” social movement agenda in the Northern Tradition shows a progressive move towards inclusion of psychosocial factors in mobilising constituencies through organisations and organizing. It considers the following factors:
• social change processes;
• political opportunities and constraints;
• forms of organisation;
• framing;
• repertoires of contention (McAdam et.al. 2001:41).

McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly took these factors to the next stage by employing their “touchstone” episodes of contention: the American Civil Rights movement, the French revolution, and the French and Italian student movements, along with twelve other outbreaks of social change across time and from around the globe. Regarded as “arguably the most important book on social movements written in the past two decades” (Tindall 2003:481), their work Dynamics of Contention brings organization firmly into the realms of sociology and political science. In moving towards a dynamic model of mobilisation, they seek to identify “the dynamic mechanisms that bring [the above list of] variables into relation with one another and with other significant actors” (McAdam et.al. 2001:43). Furthermore, they do so from a relational perspective – that is, “interpersonal networks, interpersonal communication and [...] the negotiation of identities” figure centrally in their focus “not on the boxes, but on the arrows that join them”. In common with this study, they view “social interaction, social ties, communication and conversation not merely as expressions of structure, rationality, consciousness or culture, but as active sites of creation and change” (McAdam et.al. 2001:22). Like many before them, they take this approach as a means to overcome the micro-macro divide in understanding actors, identity and action. They solve the problem with an object-object type approach. In their view, actors are seen as “networks” of shared “histories, cultures and collective connections with other actors” (McAdam et.al. 2001:132).

The work establishes a large and evaluatively useful vocabulary of contention, including attribution of threats and opportunities, social appropriation, identity shift, category formation, radicalisation, repression, convergence, infringement of elite interests, opportunity/threat spirals, co-optation, network dissolution, diffusion, emulation, brokerage, attribution of similarity, and more. The work has been criticised for not adequately showing how this panoply of mechanisms is connected (Tindall 2003). Without entering into that debate, the present study sees this work as useful because it draws “rough parallels between contentious
politics and conversation” (McAdam et.al. 2001:142). This brings attention to what is linguistically conative in building contention, making a parallel with the discussion of Habermas in the previous chapters. They provide good evidence of the significance of “newly-identified political actors” who “employ innovative collective action” in social change. This is closely allied to the discussion of structural innovation that arose from the case studies. These collective actors define the difference between institutionalised contention and that which is “transgressive” (McAdam et.al. 2001:8). McAdam et al. place innovation in relation to repertoires of contention, drawing attention to contention as social “performances – as scripted interactions in the improvisatory manner of jazz or street theatre” (McAdam et.al. 2001:49) that provide the opportunity for appropriation and creation of symbolic meanings. Expressing this in the terms employed in the previous chapter, the public good of structural innovation produced by the group leads through teleological action to performance. Socially, this performance in turn leads to further mobilization – provided the organisation exists to sustain contention.

McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly’s relational approach as sociologists places strong emphasis on the interpretive efforts of groups of actors. Thus they move from the structural and strategic language of political opportunity, forms, frames and repertoires to a view of mobilisation that, “like all social life”, is “suffused throughout with collective efforts and interpretation and social construction” (McAdam et.al. 2001:48).

So, the path to arrive at this dynamic and relational view of organisation and social movements from the earlier emphasis on goals and incentives is clear. What is also clear is that this evidence-based trend invites further sociological approaches to understanding organisation and its function in social change. What has emerged from the Northern Tradition is both a set of mechanisms, the “boxes”, and dynamic processes, the “arrows that connect them”. One does not replace the other but sets the known mechanisms in motion. That is, there is a logic of organization, Selznick’s “economy”, and there is a set of interpretive dynamics that are communicative, the “adaptive social structure”. As already indicated, this route leads back to Jurgen Habermas.
7.3 New Social Movements

When looking across the fields that seek to engage with social change in the Northern Tradition – from community psychology and community health to social movement studies – Jurgen Habermas makes a surprisingly limited appearance. As referred to in the introduction to this thesis, and in what seems to be an isolated instance, Habermas appears in community-based participatory research, in the field of community health (Minkler & Wallerstein 2008). Here, the concepts of system and lifeworld are used to caution researchers about their relationship with communities, as researchers “often reinforce community member roles as clients and consumers”, these being derived from system aspects of the relationship (Wallerstein & Duran 2008:30). Habermas is employed conclusively to justify statements such as, for example, that dialogue “begins to shape a new social reality” (Springett & Wallerstein 2008:204) or that emancipatory process emerges from people “speaking, reasoning, and coordinating action together, unconstrained and uncoerced” (Bradbury & Reason 2008:229). Given that the Theory of Communicative Action claims to provide a general social theory that has been shown to be applicable to empowerment, it seems appropriate to attempt to progress a more comprehensive application of this work to the conceptual understanding of social change.

In his essay New Social Movements, Habermas uses a snapshot of an “objectified, descriptive nature” to show “various trends in the Federal Republic of Germany” to which he applies some of the concepts he would later elucidate in the Theory of Communicative Action. He begins with an approach to the “new social movement” that mirrors the concerns raised by McCarthy and Zald (Habermas 1981). In seeking to understand social movements, McCarthy and Zald turned away from a view that emphasises deprivation and grievance to one that emphasises resources for mobilisation. It is Habermas’s view that this change in theoretical orientation was present in a social change that had already occurred, and that “new conflicts are not sparked by problems of distribution, but concern the grammar of forms of life” (Habermas 1981:33, italics in original). Unlike previous social change movements that were “offensive” in character – such as the American civil rights movement, “long since concluded in the particularistic self-affirmation of black sub-cultures”, and feminism, “deeply rooted in the acknowledged universalist foundations of morality and legality” – the new
movements are ones of “resistance and retreat”. These movements “seek to stem or block the formal, organised spheres of action in favour of communicative structures” (Habermas 1981:34). These resistance movements are either conservative and preoccupied with the defence of “traditional and social property”, or of a distinctive kind that is “a defensive which already operates on the basis of a rationalized life-world and tries out new forms of cooperation and community”. However, both are concerned with the novel problem of the critique of growth, which has been brought about by global risks that “explode the dimensions of the lifeworld”. Habermas suggests that previous movements have not provided a repertoire for this type of protest. Instead, it must consist of, in the language of McAdam et al., “innovative collective action”. It is precisely “the roles of the employed and the consumer, the client and the citizen” that are the target of protest (Habermas 1981:35). These phenomena, says Habermas, “correspond to the hypothesis of internal colonization”, which arises at “the seam between system and lifeworld” (Habermas 1981:36). In the Theory of Communicative Action, this is developed into “colonization of the lifeworld”.

7.3.1 Colonisation of the Lifeworld

In his exposition of the process of social evolution, Habermas refers to the means by which system and lifeworld become differentiated “in the sense that the complexity of the one and the rationality of the other grow”, each becoming differentiated from the other at the same time (Habermas 1987:153). The place of communicative action in social evolution is that it serves the transmission and renewal of cultural knowledge, the continuation of stable institutions and the socialisation of accountable persons through the reproduction of the symbolic structures of the lifeworld.

He identifies that new social structures take shape at “higher levels of integration” – that is, in the circumstances where the lifeworld is increasingly rationalised into “formally organised action systems” (Habermas 1987:154). These systems are ultimately institutionalised as “media-steered subsystems” that take on the aspect of a “natural symbol” (Douglas 1970), such that members behave towards them as if they possessed a natural reality. Money and power, in particular judicial process, are Habermas’s cases in point. As complexity

95 “Retreat” in the sense of withdrawal.
increases, everyday language “gets overloaded in the end and replaced by delinguistified media” (Habermas 1987:155) in order to relieve communicative action of the burden of continually establishing mutual understanding. In this process, communicative action – that is, action oriented to mutual understanding – gains increasing independence from normative contexts. Recalling Michels’s “iron law of oligarchy” (Michels 1962), for Habermas

“[t]he irresistible irony of the world-historical process of enlightenment becomes evident: the rationalisation of the lifeworld makes possible a heightening of systemic complexity, which becomes so hypertrophied that it unleashes system imperatives that burst the capacity of the lifeworld they instrumentalise (Habermas 1987:155).

However, unlike Michels, for Habermas this is no iron law. To the extent that normative validity claims are institutionalised, they are also objectified, and so made subject to the application of the critical potential of speech. Media-steered subsystems are “no longer legitimated per se through religious and metaphysical worldviews”. Habermas allows action aimed at empowerment to be freed from normative restrictions to “the extent that it becomes linked to flows of information from the scientific system” (Habermas 1987:196). That is, to the extent that the group narrative is evidence-based. The exemplar that emerged from the case studies was the use of a timeline. This is the foundation of the effectiveness of existential consciousness. Every utterance that emerges from habit rather than the evidence of the moment must be subject to the test of reality.

Thus it can be seen that as communicative action is progressively relieved by systematic organisation, a growing complexity arises from the increasing rationalisation of the lifeworld. Relating this framework to organisation based on the forms of social action described above, as different structures of the lifeworld (person, society and culture) are made thematic, the forms of action (dramaturgical, normative, teleological) demand increasingly complex use of steering media, in particular relationships of power to facilitate decision-making, money to sustain operations, and rules of governance to relieve linguistically developed mutual agreement. Habermas “call[s] ‘formally organized’ all social relations located in media-steered subsystems so far as these relations are first generated by positive law” (Habermas 1987:309, italics in original). This view
identifies organisation as an entity with rules and procedures in which the groups have codified some of their practices. However, what is also evident is that if the structural complexity of these media-steered subsystems is to maintain its anchors in the lifeworld, their apparent normative quality must be subject to discourse. This is the cycle of action and reflection so often linked to empowerment. It is essential because it subverts the institutionalisation of normative validity claims based on the structural quality of steering media.96

For all empowering groups, the restoration of communicative action – that is, the achievement of shared understanding based on tripartite validity claims anchored in the lifeworld – is the outcome. Put another way, one common purpose is to achieve a narrative anchored in experience. This narrative makes transparent that the structural force of system imperatives is based on the apparent normative validity97 of subsystems, such as money, power or ideology. This purpose is a necessary condition of the empowering group seeking to achieve social change. The specific actions and/or results that follow from this are second-order aims. Also, in practice, the case studies show the force of the potential influence of sources of funds and the accompanying power relations in shaping the organisations themselves. Under these circumstances, it is the common values of donors and recipients that are emphasised. However, when these take the form of formal organisation, they have the characteristics of media-steered subsystems. That steering media in general do not present an “iron law” is shown in the case studies by the rules and codes of behaviour of those organisations, which are anchored in the lifeworld of members as personally held values. This is seen in the essential characteristic of the paraprofessionals as role models. The tripartite claim to validity must include subjective sincerity, and thus the essential public goods of trust and risk. In the procedures of teleological action, codes of behaviour are given priority over guiding statements and goal orientations for the organisation; it is the question of who is “on the bus” as opposed to where is the bus going. Only by emphasising values as the basis for action is the potential created for structural innovation, a public good that is a requirement for the exercise of social empowerment.

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96 The tension resulting from this was evident in the Bismarck Ramu Group. Less established members identified the core group as management, “boss”. Time and again, this mindset produced struggle with management.

97 Freire’s placement of “false consciousness”.
7.4 Power and Empowerment

However, while Habermas is well-regarded for his views on procedures, it is in relation to his account of power that he has been criticised (Flyvbjerg 1998). While the importance of shared values has been emphasised up to here, it cannot be denied that the encounter of the collective with others outside is an encounter that is centrally about power. Thus far, the present study has placed power in the context of understanding motivated participation, called control. In terms of control, this power is realised in communicative action as consensus. The social encounter, however, requires an expansion of the “scope of the concept of power” (Lukes 2005:72).

This discussion of power returns first to the work of the Northern Tradition. For the collective acting for social change, the Northern Tradition contributes an idea about injustice. Groups “frame the world in which they are acting” as unjust through an interpretive task in which what is accepted is instead seen as wrong, mutable and capable of correction by agency outside of the collective. Stephen Lukes also finds this view definitive. “If we think of powerlessness as an injustice,” he says, we do so because “we believe there are those in a position to relieve or remedy it” (Lukes 2005:68). It is these agents the collective seeks to influence, bringing those inside and outside the collective into a power relation. Lukes specifies that this involves:

- assessments of the extent of the agents’ power overall;
- comparisons of its varying extent over time (increase/decline);
- comparisons of the overall power of different agents (Lukes 2005:72).

Making such assessments requires understanding what is meant by power in empowerment not only in terms of control, but also in terms of disparity. As Lukes points out, power is “one of those concepts that is ineradicably value laden” (Lukes 2005:30). Grasping contending meanings of power is not helped by the way in which the single word “power” is, in English, commonly used in such a variety of ways and contexts: the power of the body to heal itself; the power of the ascetic to resist pain or privation; the power of resources of wealth or military might; the visible power of making decisions; the invisible power of social structures and power as conflict or struggle ... one word for a great many meanings.
7.4.1 The Scope of the Concept of Power

Power being such a contested concept in Western cosmology begs the question whether anything can usefully be said about the nature of power relations that is universal. As a universalist approach has been the basis of this thesis so far, this is a matter of importance. In looking at the cultural contexts of the case-study organisations, great differences emerge. As would be expected, these differences bear particularly on the relations between the organisational community and those outside of it. Because these centrally involve relationships of power, a way must be found to specify these relations.

In their examination of power relations, Freire, Foucault, Bourdieu and Lukes all interrogate the matter of cognitive and moral relativism, a matter that emerges in the consideration of interests as a dimension of power (Freire 1970; Lukes 1974; Habermas 1984; Lash 1994; Flyvbjerg 1998; Lukes 2005). It is an issue that divides them. In considering social empowerment in a cross-cultural setting, this is an essential issue to study in greater depth. To examine this problem, it is useful to first recall the case studies and their analysis to date.

The question that is the primary concern of these authors is stated thus: “how do the powerful secure the compliance of those they dominate?” (Lukes 2005:110). This approach draws attention to the invasion not only of physical but also ideational space. The two Melanesian examples show solid evidence of this. This invasion has its most vivid manifestation in the cargo cult. Both of the Melanesian-based organisations place strong emphasis on “changing cargo thinking” as essential to restoring self-reliance. But Fiji and Australia demonstrate something quite different. In Fiji there is good evidence that missionaries actively promoted a false view of Indigenous history, one that took hold in the collective conscious. This was an active use of their control of education and the public media. There were also things in Fijian culture (as it was at the time of the arrival of the missions), such as a caste system, that continue to produce an internal domination of subjects by chiefs; then there is the influence of the churches. This complexity of power relations, and the multiple sources for legitimation of authority, were discussed in Chapter 3. This appears far more complex than the compliant/dominant or oppressor/oppressed view proposed by the authors above. When we look to Australia, the situation is different again. It can be argued that the domination of Aboriginal people was secured first by active physical
force and is now secured by their minority status. Aboriginal Australians have so little numerical power in the polity, they must rely on securing that which can be carried by moral force in the settler population. As a consequence, policy-making deals with the appeasement of settler interests, and well-meaning whitefellas continue to write the rules for "how we should help the Aborigine".

The point to be made here is that the central question of most of these principle authors on power – that of securing compliance – appears difficult to apply to these colonised peoples. Either it appears as not quite the right question because the dichotomy powerful/powerless is an inadequate place to start, or the plurality of possible answers is so large that the question does not serve the interests of understanding beyond emphasising how different circumstances can be in different cultures and settings. This suggests that these authors have a view of power that does not lend itself to being universalised and applied to different cultural contexts. As Flyvbjerg notes, however, Habermas claims himself as the exception to this in seeking “a universally constituted philosophy” (Flyvbjerg 1998:212). This is a matter of interest considering that The Theory of Communicative Action has thus far stood up well as a sociological model of empowerment.

The engagement between pluralist and universalist approaches was first introduced in Chapter 5. In the face of the diversity of contexts experienced by the case-study organisations, this matter again comes to the fore. In his critique of Habermas, Flyvbjerg makes the common objection to universalism: that it “ought to be subject to empirical verification”. The ideal speech situation is just that: “utopian”, and therefore not subject to objective assessment. With no objective way to separate power and rhetoric from consensus in communication, says Flyvbjerg, “the better argument, and with it communicative rationality, is empirically empty”, and “the matter must be settled by the concrete examination of the case at hand” (Flyvbjerg 1998:216). To the contrary, the present study has above cited Habermas in support of the use of evidence, the test of reality in the tradition of Hegel. Flyvbjerg’s objection parallels the objection to universalist approaches made by Wetherly to Doyal in Gough’s proposal for basic human need: that it lacks specification and is therefore unrealisable. Earlier basic human need authors referred to, such as Streeten, pointed out the problem of specification as leading to the basket of needs becoming impoverished for this
reason. Communicative rationality involves radically taking the stance of the community of hearers and speakers, a phenomenon referred to in this chapter in terms of frame alignment and advocacy. The endless plurality of "the case at hand" leaves no obvious space for moral objection, or understanding the nature of right action. Pluralism necessarily proposes the counterfactual and, along with it, "false" consciousness. Universalism, on the other hand, invites reflexivity. The argument in favour of universalism and the necessity of having an image of being human is dealt with most extensively by Martha Nussbaum, in her reconciliation of basic need to Sen’s capabilities approach. With respect to Habermas and ideal types, let it for now be said that ideals do not appear contrary to empowerment. Nevertheless, it is also clearly necessary that the matter of power relations in empowerment be dealt with. However, Habermas’s other failing, says Flyvbjerg, is that communicative rationality “is rooted in an insufficient concept of power” (Flyvbjerg 1998:215).

Flyvbjerg’s criticism rings true. Habermas’s concentration on consensus risks obscuring conflict and the exercise of power. As Flyvbjerg says, “in power terms, we are speaking of ‘strategic’ versus ‘constitution’ thinking, about struggle versus control, conflict versus consensus” (Flyvbjerg 1990:228). In the present study, to date the emphasis has been on the latter, based on the case studies and the additional empirical support that has been presented. It is the “control factor” that has been primarily identified in relation to empowerment. However, at the point where an organisation seeks to influence social outcomes as a requirement of empowerment, at least at this point dissent inevitably involves conflict. The case studies show that in practice, power as the ability to determine the outcome of conflict needs to be considered. There must be recognition of the risks of placing participants in empowerment into situations that are highly resistant to change. These risks demand a good account of conflict and struggle, those matters

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98 In addition to his comments in relation to anthropology in The Theory of Communicative Action, Habermas makes the following observation in New Social Movements: “This chapter addresses the question as to how the issues raised by critical theory in the 1930s can be made relevant again today under different circumstances. This explains the objectified, descriptive nature of my remarks. They are not intended to substitute for a political analysis. Had I wanted to provide the latter, of course, I would have had to write from the vantage point of an active participant” (Habermas 1981:33).

99 The fact that a discussion of power has been delayed this long is perhaps some evidence of this. Thus far, the definition implicit in the present study has been viewing power in terms of “the control factor”.

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of power.

To build this account, and to consider power in the context of communicative rationality, first reconsider the question posed above by these authors on power: “how do the powerful secure the compliance of those they dominate?” Knowing the great diversity of use of the word ‘power’ in the English language, Lukes recommends his readers to first make a judgment about “the scope of the concept of power one is using” as a “lens” to look for power. A judgment must also be made about the “significance of the outcomes agents are capable of bringing about” (Lukes 2005:72). In an account of empowerment, the pressing question in relation to action that requires these judgments is not first in relation to domination, but rather in relation to how people can achieve greater autonomy and control. The question that Lukes suggests, “how can the excluded and marginalized be empowered?”, presents itself as looking at power from the opposite end of the lens from that which is generally used. In his criticism, Flyvbjerg clearly states the perspective:

Habermas’ definitions of discourse ethics and communicative rationality ... ‘establishes a procedure based on presuppositions and designed to guarantee the impartiality of the process of judging’ (Habermas 1990:122). Habermas is a universalistic, ‘top-down’ moralist as concerns process [...] Conversely, as regards content, Habermas is a ‘bottom-up’ situationalist: what is right and true in a given communicative process is determined solely by the participants in that process (Flyvbjerg 1998:214, italics in original).

Leaving the former argument and taking instead this latter virtue as the basis for the concept of power in empowerment emphasises subjective experience as the starting point for analysing power. Consistent with the approach taken throughout this study, “bottom-up” is both an absolute theoretical and practical necessity in empowerment. This view first regards the issues over which the dissent group can determine the outcome. As discussed in Chapter 6, these include control over resources from which the group produces public goods. To this can be added, from the Northern Tradition, issue framing, mobilisation and repertoires of contention, called here “performance” (McAdam et.al. 2001:49).

In the view of the present study, the logical scope of power includes social
resources, social action processes and common purpose. These are highlighted in Table 5, which shows the social products of empowering communities. Common purpose has been used throughout the literature as a defining characteristic of organization. Here, the common purpose of the group is used to consider framing and mobilization together, as positive outcomes of work by the community. This common purpose is achieved through social action, using social resources. This table shows the social resources required for the production of public goods to meet need as those identified in Chapter 5 – kinships, social organization and values. It also shows the social expressions of communicative action as the processes that link resources to common purpose. These processes include the creation of narrative and the development of performance.

7.4.2 The Actor View: Interests as Needs

The particulars of this inverted “scope” can now be considered in relation to Lukes’s second matter for judgment, that of being able to produce a significant outcome. An outcome is significant when it “effects upon the interests of the agents involved”, a concept which “points us towards what is important in people’s lives” (Lukes 2005:80, italics in original). This Sen-like phrase recalls the account of need provided in Chapter 5. Citing Rawls, Dworkin, the “various accounts” of basic needs, Sen and Nussbaum, Lukes agrees that need can be one valid way of interpreting interests, among others. Interestingly, need and power both possess the qualities of passive potential and active exercise. In regards to need, this was expressed in terms of “freedom from” and “freedom to”; as regards power, it can be stated provisionally instead as a matter of “power to” and “power over”. Lukes calls need “welfare interests”, and in favour of a “single, comprehensive [...] concept of power” (Lukes 2005:69) supports the view that welfare interests “are not preference-dependent, and so can be thought of as objective”. Whatever one’s preference, says Lukes, “conditions that damage your health are against your interests” (Lukes 2005:82). As Nussbaum says, it is “whose interests are being served”, not preference, that must be considered, thus necessitating a universal view of what it is to be human as the means of making judgments about interests.

Connolly (Connolly 1974) also considers need in terms of interests. He addresses

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100 In the next chapter, these "social expressions of communicative action" are further defined in this social matrix (Table 5) as "agency".
directly the “tensions and anxieties” experienced by need theorists when considering what might “accompany attainment of the highest postulated states” (Connolly 1974:61). The tension that has again arisen in the present study – between plurality and universalism as exemplified in Chapter 5 by Sen’s capabilities approach versus basic need theorists, and here by Flyvbjerg and Nussbaum – is expressed linguistically by Connolly as a contrast between “need as a noun defined in terms of inclinations” and “needs as a verb construed as those conditions instrumental to the attainment of one’s full development as a person” (Connolly 1974:61). Connolly observes that this conceptual shift emerges as “one advances up the hierarchy of postulated needs”. This is a view the present study rejects. As discussed earlier, human need is seen here as univalent and unlimited, not hierarchical and elitist. In contrast to Connolly, the present study considers that the transformation of noun into verb nicely expresses need as potential, as action waiting to happen – what Maslow called “prepotent”. The present study makes no conceptual equivocation about need; at least in relation to conceptualising power from below, it sees no reason to apply Connolly’s limitation of need as interest to only the verb – that is, “person A needs x in order to (do, be or become) y”, where y, not x, is “the crucial variable” (Connolly 1974:62). Connolly says defining need as a “felt behavioural tendency runs the risk of celebrating uncritically those inclinations cultivated by dominant socialization processes”, a charge similar to that of Flyvbjerg on the impossibility of identifying rationality as separate from power. However, Connolly does accept a place for need in the sense employed by the present study, in the definition of interests. His caveat is that a definition “restricted to felt behavioural tendencies” has application, but is not sufficient to “render intelligible modes of life that are now only dimly glimpsed” (Connolly 1974:62, italics in original). Nevertheless, his final formulation on interests seems not so far from the timbre of the present study: that of the central importance of the image of personhood, because:

a person is pre-eminently a creature who has the capacity or potential to deliberate and to choose reflectively, to remember past experiences and to project future plans, to enter into complex social relationships of mutual recognition and reciprocal responsibility (Connolly 1974:68).

This study has used the concept of universal human need to further specify
Connolly’s image. Additional affirmation of this approach in relation to power and interests comes from the field of political science. David West, another author who works with the application of Habermas (West 1990), considers this relation in terms of authenticity. In common with the authors in the psychology literature discussed earlier, West rejects physical needs, “the appeal to nature” (West 1990:40), as a sufficient basis for understanding interests. For West, the “plural objectivity of interests” is explained by understanding that “interests are not simple sites of satisfaction” (West 1990:53). In West’s view, “the subjective element of intention or desire is essential” to the formation of interests, which he also sees as “holistic” (West 1990:54). This holism is expressed in adopting “a particular identity”, which is “reflected in the ability to undertake deliberately self-transformative action”. The judgment of what is being done for “the sake of interests presumed authentic”, says West, lies in that fact that it “may require us to change ourselves” (West 1990:56). West’s image of a person being aware of the “provisional authenticity of her interests” highlights the fragility of individual authenticity. The necessity of belief suggested by West’s specification of identity has been expressed in Chapter 6 in a similar way. In the dissent group, it is only necessary that there be belief in a common purpose. In this study, identity, founded in a group setting employing the language of narrative, is defined as a class of universal human need. The view held is that the framework of universal human need can be sustained as a way to determine interests in the present specification of power from below. In the continuing modern era, says West, “the choice between alternative values and paths […] involves an effort which is both critical and creative” (West 1990:53). In the present study, this creativity has previously been expressed as narrative and performance that is based on the group’s structural innovation, the public good produced by a group employing teleological action for organization.

These disagreements about the core ideas of what constitutes common humanity can, according to Connolly, be “subject to rational adjudication”. The present study ultimately is in agreement with Connolly – that it is primarily the image of being human, and the extent to which this image, defined in this instance as “certain beliefs about the way persons are to be treated and understood” (Connolly 1974:68) – that is at the core of making judgments about real interests. Furthermore, there is agreement that differences in the interpretation of
personhood vary, dependent upon the extent to which the “assumptions and commitments” understood by terms like “love, trust, resentment and indignation” are based on views about the extent to which these are “programmed into all persons independently of any specific social context” (Connolly 1974:68, italics in original).

In sum, for the purpose of the present study, it is reasonable to continue to propose that in the view from below, an “assessment of the extent of an agent’s power overall” can be based on an interpretation of interests defined by need, and that a significant outcome, and therefore also a measure of power for persons of any ilk, is that of getting need met in all these classes of security, identity and autonomy. These classes are shown as significant interests in Table 5. Here, significant interests are shown as related to their necessary resources, actions and common purposes, reflecting the particular interests being met by the different forms of social action.

7.4.3 The Structure View: Encapsulation

So far, the definition of power from below has been examined in terms of interests, which has led again to persons and need. The argument now progresses to the structural assessment that is required for “comparisons of the overall power of different agents”. In the present study to date, the expression “disparity of power” has been used to describe the circumstances under which empowerment is a necessary part of successful intervention. This requires further clarification.

The case study of the Solomon Islands Development Trust introduced Galtung’s analysis of centre-periphery relations as part of defining self-reliance and its relationship to autonomy. In this view, the relation between centre and periphery is a power relation, and so it is to this view that the present chapter now returns. Returning to Figure 3 in Chapter 1, Galtung, ever the mathematician, has derived his classification of structure using a neat approach (Galtung 1980). Having defined two kinds of structural relations, horizontal and vertical, he considers the possible bilateral and multilateral interactions. This is shown here in Figure 10. The horizontal relation (Figure 10:i) represents relative equity, whereby it can be said that “whatever inequality there is in a society shall not came about as a result of the interaction structure itself” (Galtung 1980:57). This equity is accompanied by a relation of autonomy. In terms of need, autonomy has been regarded in the
present study as “power-over-oneself”; however, in terms of social power, one is said to be “autonomous of” somebody or something (Galtung 1980:58). Galtung proposes that these types of relations also form patterns. A relation of equity supports a pattern of solidarity, and that of autonomy supports a pattern of participation. On the other hand, the vertical relation (Figure 10:ii) is one of inequality.

Figure 10. Galtung’s power relations: equity/solidarity and exploitation/fragmentation (after Galtung 1980:43,61).

The strong, able to aggregate resources, may dominate more than one among the weak, portrayed as a triangular structure (Figure 10:iii). Adding a third dimension introduces other actors in a pyramidal structure (Figure 10:iv). This structure shows that relations of exploitation also contribute to fragmentation of relations of equity. By contrast, solidarity is the result of many relations of equity. This recalls Habermas’s “solidarity of members” as an indicator of social reproduction processes, which he contrasted with anomie. Finally, many vertical relations can be compounded to produce a structure with the weakest at the bottom and the strongest at the top (Figure 10.v). Relations of exploitation also penetrate through this structure. This has an effect on the whole that reinforces the structure of exploitation through further fragmentation. This also leads to
increasing marginalization, or exclusion.

So, these two power relations of equity and exploitation can be characterized by autonomy, solidarity and participation on the one hand, and penetration, fragmentation and exclusion on the other. Galtung's method allows the use of “disparity of power” to now be more clearly identified with the conditions of fragmentation, penetration and exclusion.

One further item of vocabulary is required to complete this structural view of power. The term “encapsulation” is used in Australian anthropological studies to critique the pluralist “two worlds” view of Indigenous and non-Indigenous, “each world with very different governance styles and each having a deficit view of the other” (Martin 2006; Hunt & Smith 2007). This “two worlds” view “disguises the power imbalance operating in Indigenous communities and organisations, whereby one world (non-Indigenous) encapsulates and penetrates the other (Indigenous)” (Hunt & Smith 2007:26). From the point of view of the case studies, it can be said that the views expressed by the organisations represented here are minority ones in their respective polities, but dissenting Islanders appear to have the advantage of being a minority in a polity that is to a large extent their own. They are at least in a position to mobilise on the basis of communicative equity, whereas the powerlessness of Australian Aborigines in the face of a settler invasion has, to the present time, been nearly absolute.

Yet, at a larger scale, there does also appear to be a parallel between Aboriginal Australia and the Pacific. Martin proposes that this image of “the engagement or articulation between such peoples and the societies which encapsulate them” can be applicable “in the contemporary context of globalization” (Martin 2006:4). The proposal is that the power relations in a colonised country with a majority settler population which “encapsulates” a minority Indigenous population can be applied to the effect on Indigenous societies everywhere of the globalisation of capital. In colonising relations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the centre-periphery model was represented in physical space by the West. While it is still true that Honiara or Suva are physical representations of “centres” on the Western development model, as are New York or Beijing, it is also true that the pressures on small Pacific states to conform with exploitation of their resources now come from a multitude of directions rather than from a single coloniser. For small states, the rise of communications technology and the increasingly rapid
physical reach of exploitative power has led to a loss of sovereignty (Baker 2000).

Microstates are becoming increasingly vulnerable to forces outside their control, resulting in their being manipulated by international big business; being open to transit crime such as flows of illegal flight capital and money laundering; and increasingly out-manoeuvred by larger countries and institutions (Hampton 1999, quoted in Baker 2000:10).

The West may be losing influence to Asia in the Pacific, but exploitation remains the rule and purpose of relations. The globalisation of capital and its ideology of exploitation has transformed the centre-periphery relation to one of encapsulation. The expansion of the physical reach of exploitative power is now such that all earth is subject to the consequences, including the isolated pockets of those who bear no past responsibility for their current plight as survivors of a continuing invasion. The global exploitation redefines the centre-periphery relationship as one of encapsulation, characterised by a loss of sovereignty.

It is this structural relation – that of being surrounded and with a shrinking space for the practice of self-reliance – that is shared by both Aboriginal Australians and Pacific Islanders. The globalisation of exploitative power undermines the pluralist “two worlds” view of Indigenous people. Yet these same people are the only ones who bear the burden of their transformation from being survivors to again asserting power and control in their own right. This process is one of the most challenging aspects of human endeavour.

7.4.4 Two Kinds of Power

Galtung makes another useful contribution to the structural understanding of power. The differentiation between actors and structures leads him to define three types of power: being power, resource power (both of which are actor-oriented), and position power (which is structure oriented) (Galtung 1980:64). This suggests two forms of social relations that Habermas examines: relations of exchange and of power (Habermas 1987). Habermas proposes that tribal societies based on kinship are made up of similarly structured units. These units become increasingly segmented and differentiated based primarily on coordination of action via exchange. This exchange is governed by systemic mechanisms that remain “tightly intermeshed with mechanisms of social
integration” that attach to “pregiven social structures, that is, to the kinship system” (Habermas 1987:165). This can be related to Galtung’s horizontal relation of equity. Power, on the other hand, represents a different level of system differentiation, that which produces stratification. This genuinely political power becomes detached from kinship systems when it no longer derives its legitimacy from the prestige of leading descent groups, but from “disposition over judicial means of sanction”, “the crystallizing nucleus of a new institution: the state” (Habermas 1987:165). Habermas proposes that state organisation is incompatible with the social structures of societies organized along kinship lines; the social structure appropriate to [the nation state] is a general political order, within which social strata are assigned their proper places, and to which they are subordinated (Habermas 1987:165).

Here, Galtung’s “exploitation” is expressed in terms of subordination to system imperatives, whereby relations between social actors are defined by their position in an abstracted system rather than by concrete relations such as kinship and land. In the process of the evolution of the nation state, previous relations of exchange are “downgraded and sublated”, being reformed in “symbolically generalized relations” such as is provided by the medium of money. This phenomenon can be observed in the typical conversation Europeans engage in on meeting, where dramaturgical identities introduce the question, “What do you do?” as the prelude to identifying generalised connections in the social field (such as status and income), in contrast to the typical Solomon Islander who asks, “Where are you going?” as the prelude to identifying relationships of kin and place101. That these two types of relation are incompatible and yet interrelated suggests the similar dichotomy between lifeworld and system. Employing the dichotomy of actors and structures, this leads the present study to propose two forms of power: lifeworld power, which is governed by exchange rooted in the bonds of kin, bilateral relations, horizontal forms of social organization and fundamental beliefs that support shared values; and system power, which, for example, in Australia is governed by the stratified power found in state institutions, generalised media of exchange and the claim to legitimacy of judicial

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101 ...or the Indigenous Australian “who’s your family, and where’s your country?”...Examiner comment.
process. The positive power in empowerment is of the lifeworld kind. The transformative effort in society is driven by redefinition of the relations of system power, which is achieved through the countervailing processes of self-reliance, framing and mobilisation. Thus, in empowerment, the “assessment of the overall power of different agents” is based on a concept of power that is not singular. An approach to transformation that is strengths-based begins from the lifeworld and the power it gives the Indigenous survivor as a countervailing force to colonising system imperatives that define the Indigenous actor as problematic. The use in the present study of “disparity of power” can now be seen to refer to the systemic power of the ongoing process of colonisation, which is not context-specific, in contrast to empowerment being the augmentation of the lifeworld, which is based on subjective experience. This perspective raises a further matter that has now been referred to on several occasions in this study – that of belief.

7.4.5 Empowerment and Belief

Above, reference has been made for the requirement to have only belief in the real existence of a common purpose. From West on “authentic interest”, to Tarrow on “overlapping interests and values” and “deep-rooted feelings”, from common purpose as a narrative discussed above, and, through these others of the Northern Tradition, back to Barnard on what “desires” might constitute motives for contributing to an organisation – for all, belief in a common purpose is a distinguishing feature of organisation. What this means in practice is that the common purpose can remain as a tacit appreciation of why the group comes together. It is the belief in existence of common purpose, coupled with the communicative practices of the group, that are important. It follows that communication may not be necessarily, or even primarily, for the articulation of purpose. In an example from the case studies, this appeared most clearly as the Bismarck Ramu Group’s statements of “guidelines”, which showed a difficulty in stating the purpose of the organisation. This was relieved by the negative aim that “BRG does not seek to become an institution”.

The case studies demonstrate belief in terms of the essential importance of shared values, through to procedural codes that require commitment, the

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102 These are the characteristics that Zald and Ash identify with inclusive and exclusive groups. An example of the latter is the use of “stipends”, or perhaps more significantly the requirement for complete honesty and sobriety.
“way” that sets a group apart. In both content and context, faith and belief play a great role in the case studies. From a reflective stance, if empowerment is seen as founded in lifeworld power expressed in terms like “love, trust, resentment and indignation”, then some better account of the belief that inspires such feelings must be given to complete a picture of power in empowerment. In that regard, the account of need, power and identity brings to mind a song by Jimmy Chi and the Kuckles band, from the musical Chi wrote, Bran Nue Dae. Entitled “There is Nothing I Would Rather Be”, with sardonic humour a small part goes:

... nothing gives me greater joy
than to watch you fill each girl and boy...

with your ... superficial ... existential ... shit ...” (Chi 1990).

Chi is right is saying that the sense of belief conveyed so far is hollow, and a remedy should be found for this.

First, it would be hubris to claim to know the beliefs of those who have been raised in another culture. The approach in the present study at this point is to look instead at the effect of relations of power on belief. This is a topic explored by many Aboriginal Australian authors. Kevin Gilbert (Gilbert 1973) states it starkly:

Aborigines have endured a history of land theft, attempted racial extermination, oppression, denial of basic human rights, actual and de facto slavery, ridicule, denigration, inequality and paternalism. Concurrently, we suffered the destruction of our entire way of life – spiritual, emotional, social and economic (Gilbert 1973:2).

In the Family Wellbeing teaching materials, spirituality has been identified by Aboriginal people as a basic human need. Gilbert’s account of the destruction of Aboriginal grammars of life shows why. The power relations of exploitation, fragmentation, penetration and exclusion are all present in Gilbert’s statement. The present study has (admittedly perhaps now rather weakly) placed spirituality in the class of autonomy. That is, spirituality provides symbols upon which to reflect, and this reflection contributes to satisfying autonomous relations. However, it appears that without belief of some kind, the struggle for

103 ...Than to be an Aborigine.
autonomy is going nowhere. Taking a leaf from Galtung’s book,\textsuperscript{104} as well as seeing what things are not, it is always possible to frame the same idea positively. For many, the contemporary Christian church can be a starting point, in as much as providing a grounding in values and codes to live by. After all, the appropriation of Southern Baptist pulpits by campaigners for civil rights shows the power a church organized on Christian beliefs can generate. Gaining one power spiritually through belief and discipline, as well as losing another power through exploitation, are both possibilities that affect autonomy. Church can be a secure retreat for the powerless.\textsuperscript{105} At the same time, the present study believes that no Aboriginal person would deny there is also spirituality embodied in being the land's first people. In this regard, Aileen Moreton-Robinson says Aboriginal ontology and epistemology is

grounded within complex relations derived from the intersubstantiation of ancestral beings, humans and land. In this sense, our sovereignty is carried by the body and differs from Western constructions of sovereignty, which are predicated on the social contract model of a unified supreme authority, territorial integrity and individual rights (Moreton-Robinson 2007:2).

In terms of power, for Moreton-Robinson belief is expressed in the construction of sovereignty, an essential basis in any working polity. Being encapsulated, this construction is engulfed by what Habermas would call a “juridified” conception of sovereignty in the form of the nation state. The subsystem characteristics of judicial power are shown in the way “landowner” or “native title holder” are generalised, system-specified identities that penetrate disputes, increasing fragmentation and excluding the sovereign interests of Aboriginal peoples. These interests include the sustaining beliefs that support links to land, giving system the power to invalidate belief. However, evident too is the countervailing lifeworld force shown in the continual struggle to maintain one’s identity and use this to assert a right to freedom. Vicki Grieves says spirituality supports this struggle.

\textsuperscript{104} ... and BRG's.
\textsuperscript{105} This statement begs the question of whether the same interpretation can be applied to modern Islamic martyrs. By contrast, Janet Hunt, as panellist, comments that Timor Leste gives a positive example of the protective umbrella provided by church institutions during the struggle for self-determination.
Aboriginal Spirituality provides a philosophical baseline for Indigenous knowledges development in Australia. It is Aboriginal knowledges that build the capacity to enhance the social and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal people now living within a colonial regime (Grieves 2009).

What these Aboriginal authors contribute to the present study is showing that if belief is that which is absolutely taken for granted, spirituality asserts belief with a telos; a story, a hope. The expression of this hope contradicts spiritual powerlessness. In asserting this power, based on the work of the Northern Tradition, the community of believers106 bearing this hope expresses itself in society in the forms of narrative and performance, expressions of communicative action that also support empowerment. Repertoires are present. Unlike evolution or the land itself, power – both lifeworld and system – is, like belief, a normative or socially determined construct and not an objective fact. Being like power, belief is mutable, subject only to its validation by the lifeworld. Belief and its spiritual expression are not “inoculated” against invalidation as is the lifeworld, which is built on the past world of subjective experience, that which is “embodied”. For Aboriginal people in the contemporary oppositional world, the contingency of belief can be a source of hope: the hope that the spirituality shattered by invasion can be reconstituted in the bodies of Aboriginal people coming together to act on shared beliefs. In the view of power from below, as Hannah Arendt says, “power corresponds to the human ability not just to act, but to act in concert”(Arendt 1986:64). In the Christian view, gospel says that “where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst” (Matthew 18:20). Even gospel shows that for organization it is necessary to have belief in common purpose.

To complete this view of power, the present study now returns to the typology of empowering groups identified earlier. Of the manifestations of belief seen here, narrative has previously been associated with normative action and the identity group, and performance with structural innovation and organised action done with intent, or teleological action. Continuing the association with Aboriginal Australia, in the field of Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing there has been

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106 “Community” as defined in Chapter 6 related to Bourdieu’s “field”, meaning the group of specialists and their clients.
shown in the case studies the example of men’s and women’s groups, health workers and others who have employed the Family WellBeing framework as a tool. The work of these groups on healing emphasises the third form of social action observed in empowerment: dramaturgical action. This is also a world of performance, but, Janus-faced, one where “the actor, in presenting a view of himself, has to behave toward his own subjective world” (Habermas 1984:91). The person engaged in dramaturgical action “has desires and feelings in the sense that he can at will express these before a public” in which speakers trust the hearers will truly attribute to them the desires and feelings so expressed, and hearers trust the speakers are sincere. Dramaturgical action is suggested by a romantic couple, or the counsellor/client. In larger groups, too, it is healing and transformative to have one’s desires and feelings recognised and validated. As was discussed in Chapter 2, it is in the transformative public good of trust – believing in each other, with its inherent risks – that the bonds are made between personal motivation and collective power. As regards how belief supports a proper stance of the person in relation to power-over-oneself, the present study identifies that empowerment is served by power relations of equity that support solidarity. With evangelical fervour, Freire has insisted that one “must love the people”, for what is there without love? The present study draws on the Buddhist tradition to propose that in dramaturgical action – the public revelation of the stance to the self – right action is guided by lovingkindness, shared joy, compassion and equanimity. In this tradition, these expressions of action, of which every person is capable, are intended to counter relations of exploitation and fragmentation. They therefore can take a place in the practice of empowerment.

Based primarily on the Family WellBeing program, in Table 5, these forms of dramaturgical agency are shown in relation to the requirement for structural self-reliance found in the social resources of kinship and bilateral relationships. The circumstances of Aboriginal people referred to by Gilbert show the deepest disparity in power to meet the spectrum of need, placing the practices of the Family WellBeing program in the class of security.
7.5 Summary
This chapter has examined organisations as entities producing public goods that deliver a social effect. It began with an outline of the Northern Tradition of sociology as it relates to organizing. This outline led to a view of the group as an entity, the “s” concerned with the structure of doing, and as an agency of change, the “z” concerned with the task at hand. An organisation is an entity with rules for decision-making and financial management that consists of members, backers, conscience adherents and other “players” in the field. This entity is necessary as a vehicle for the expression of dissent, operating as a source of support for its clients.

This support is necessary because there is a disparity of system power between the community of players and clients and members of society at large. The tasks of empowering organization at work in society consist of: advocacy (meaning compassionate identification of and with the grievance of the client), interpretation of subjective experience in an evidence-based narrative (otherwise known as “conscientisation”), and performance (being the actions flowing from the first two). This community has belief in its common purpose. This common purpose may remain tacit.

Table 5. The social products of empowering communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant interests</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources for production of public goods</td>
<td>Kin and bilateral relationships</td>
<td>Social organisation</td>
<td>Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of social action</td>
<td>Lovingkindness</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common purpose</td>
<td>Self-reliance</td>
<td>Framing</td>
<td>Mobilisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The achievement of shared understanding communicated in tripartite validity claims anchored in the lifeworld is a sufficient outcome in empowerment. Organisation, the entity for the community of specialists and clients, organizes social change through its people by using communicative process to develop critical analysis of existing conditions, formulate strategies to change the situation, and constantly reflect on the process. This community is structurally encapsulated by its own, and by colonising societies. This encounter is permeated and interpenetrated by relations of power. Power as seen through the significant interests of persons is vested in the resources, action and common purpose of the community. This is summarised in Table 5.

In the view from below, power is seen as being of lifeworld and system kinds, which work in countervailing directions. They are connected, one being evolved from the other, and then mutually exclusive, having different rationalities for deriving their continuing legitimacy. For actors, power has been expressed as the ability to meet need, in as far as this can represent significant interests. In Chapter 5, need was defined as having the classes of security, identity and autonomy. In Chapter 6, the dissent group was seen as an entity in which personal motivation, public goods and the form of social action are the minimum resources personally within the ambit of the group’s control. In this chapter, by extension, a rule-bound community has power structurally in society to build members’ self-reliance, seek opportunities to frame injustice, and create and maintain a continuous repertoire of mobilising performance.

It has been evident in this chapter that the definitions and arguments introduced and developed earlier in the present study have demonstrated their utility in an analysis of power. In the final chapter, the present study comes full circle, beginning by looking again at Galtung's Goals, Processes and Indicators in Development (GPID) project and the contribution of the present study to advancing knowledge of human development and its place in organisation.
Chapter 8

Conclusion: The Field of Community Control

[U]topians should not be discouraged from formulating their proposals…


8.1 Empowerment Defined

The present study began with four questions.

- What are the linkages between an organisation’s practices, its operational philosophy and empowerment?
- How can these linkages be theorised synoptically?
- How do organisational strategies optimise empowerment?
- What organisational elements are necessary and sufficient to a successful empowerment program?

The intention in asking these questions is to arrive at Stanner’s standard of a logical explanation based on a “significant set” of “problematical facts”. This set has been developed in this thesis through the reflections of a practitioner seeking to understand how four organisations have acted to try to achieve personal, group and social change. The subsequent investigation set out from Johan Galtung’s Goals, Processes and Indicators in Development (GPID) project (Galtung 1975; Galtung 1976; Galtung 1996), and his view that “development as such is seen as human development, as development of people in society” (Galtung 1976). Galtung’s conceptual work on the GPID project was used as the basis to create the tools of the Pacific case-study groups. Not only have these been shown to be effective, and have stood the test of time and transference, but also the philosophical underpinnings are independently supported by the Australian example.

This thesis has argued that the formulations of basic human need from the 1970s (and before) remain a good foundation for consideration of persons, groups and society. That they were largely swept away by the global winds of neoliberal ideology does them no discredit. The use of universal human need in the present study is intended to show recognition for this work, while renovating its meaning with contemporary social theory. To aid this task, this study has extracted from a range of disciplines the concepts and vocabulary needed to transcribe what it is that sets the four organisations under examination apart. From the critical sociology of Habermas to the field of
community health, the matter of central interest has been how organisations support people, both inside and outside those organisations, to have greater autonomy and control. This has been shown to be necessary because it contributes to physiological and psychological health, and to social wellbeing.

In their practice as organisations, and in their social analysis as shown in the graphic tools, the four case-study organisations seek to propose alternatives. These alternatives are posed positively in terms of people’s control of their development in society, and negatively as the effect of oppression by structures of power relations. The crucial significance of the effect of power on a positive or negative outcome for human development leads to this need to understand the nature of empowerment in order to know how to support those for whom a disparity of power has a negative outcome. For it is visibly apparent that the world contains gross disparities of power. The evidence is there in social dependency, anomie and stagnation, as well as in personal violence, alienation, fatalism and apathy. Conclusively, powerlessness as the consequence of an encapsulating structural disparity of power is harmful. It is harmful because that powerlessness is part of past and present exploitative, colonising relations. Colonisation is not, as Lukes would say, a matter of preference. Rather, power is expressed in terms of interests (Lukes 2005). It follows that reversing this harm is centrally, as Nussbaum would also have it, a matter of power and a universalist foundation for morality (Nussbaum 2000). A view based on universal human need shows that autonomy and control contribute to reversing the harm of colonisation. Positively, this is expressed as development of people in society, meaning physiological and psychological health and social wellbeing.

However, the colonised are ranged against an established political and economic order of states and capital, both having a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. The force of the argument for change based on the moral presupposition that human health and wellbeing are universal interests is blunted by the requirement that the dominant structure also change. The ability to initiate social change depends on both Indigenous agency and innovation in the structural relationship with the coloniser. Both kinds of actors are necessary to change. However, the choice to act is the prerogative of the minority. This is inherent in autonomy, and essential to guarantee empowerment as motivated action.

107 “Agency” is here understood to refer to the means of transmission of power, as in something being “delivered by divine agency”. It is a term the present study has avoided up to this point, preferring the simpler differentiation of actors and structures. This is discussed further below.
A change in power relations from below, from the powerless, necessarily involves steps of engagement between those inside a group and those outside.\footnote{This recalls the “step-process” of the BRG and FWB case studies. Whiteside (2006) in particular reports on empowerment as a two-step process involving these levels of the group and its environment.} For any of these steps to be transformative for relations of power, the engagement necessarily takes the form of communicative action as previously practised by the group. Communicative action is transformative for relations of power because it is limited to the practices of a setting that allows intersubjectivity removed from habits of the daily round. Empowering agency is therefore also necessarily a phenomenon developed by a group. This group must meet the requirements for the dissent group specified in Chapter 6, being privileged to intermediate in size, motivated, and so on.

Recalling Lash, a group in possession of empowering agency expands its field of control through its supporters. These supporters include beneficiaries, donors and adherents, as discussed in Chapter 7. A group able to attract supporters is necessarily a rule-bound entity because the complexity and goal-orientation of the task requires relief from communicative action. These “players” (Lash 1994), the entity and its exclusive group, together with supporters, can control what is received in the social field. In relation to empowering agency, the collective of players and supporters is called a community, a description defined by modernity. For those who were powerless to choose their situation, and who now struggle to regain the power to change it, the presence of a colonising modernity is an everyday fact that will not go away. Recognising this, appropriation of the modern community and its tools by minority interests must be treated as an opportunity. The modern community is a community that defines itself. This adaptability of the modern community lends itself to minorities struggling to maintain and continue to evolve adaptive social structures from within. From without, the community presents an opportunity for engagement in a setting that makes communicative action possible. For both kinds of actors, inside and out, experiencing communicative engagement is always transformative. Prejudice struggles in the face of personal encounter.

In sum, empowerment is necessary when there is a systemic disparity of power – when those who structurally have little collective power require action from the strong in order to have health and wellbeing. Structurally, empowerment replaces exploitative relations – relations that cause harm – with the practice of equitable ones. Empowerment as intervention to rectify the harm caused by colonisation must be on
the basis of equity.\textsuperscript{109} Equitable relations depend upon both the self-reliance of Indigenous agency, and the values and performance of supporters. Empowerment is not a thing that can be bestowed, nor is it a strategy of amelioration. Power does not stand alone; it is a relationship. Empowerment is the communicative relation that supports human agency, creating the opportunity for change and hope.

To take this definition a step further, towards what can be deployed empirically from this orientation, this study now turns to the “ground” where players and supporters interact. The first thing that is apparent is that when looking for empowerment, one looks for the quality of relationships. The field of those relationships – the personal, community and social extent of the ground – is called here the field of community control.

8.2 The Field of Community Control

The last three chapters set out to present the material for a coherent account of empowerment as a “multi-level construct” (Zimmerman 2000). Chapter 5 considered universal human need, Chapter 6 the logic and dynamics of a group as an entity, and Chapter 7 examined the encounter between this entity and society. The consistent theoretical basis for this account has been the Theory of Communicative Action (Habermas 1984; Habermas 1987). To this has been added a detailed interpretation of human need, and an interpretation of power from below based on seeing interests in terms of need, including belief. This account has been grounded in praxis as an interpretation of the case studies. From each case study first emerged a range of comparative theory selected on that which showed good fit with observation and available data. This material has, in the last three chapters, been placed into the frameworks of the person, group and society.

The consistent theoretical basis of communicative action underpinned by need lends itself to taking a synoptic view of these frameworks. To do so, the present study returns to the scheme of universal human need shown in Table 3, Chapter 5. This scheme recaptures two crucial facts established in the early literature of need. First, that need can be material and non-material, and secondly that there is need that is actor dependent and need that is structure dependent. The specification of universal human need adopted these two dimensions as axes, the former for the classes of need, the latter for need and its satisfiers. In the image of “people in society”, for the person,

\textsuperscript{109} “Whatever imbalance there is in the relationship is not a result of the structure” (Galtung 1976).
need frames the lifeworld as a source of satisfiers, to be drawn on by the person in meeting need. In this way, the lifeworld is embodied through need. In the image of universal human need, shown in Table 3, this embodiment is represented in two dimensions. However, the immanent resources of the lifeworld only become directly available in communicative action, which necessarily introduces the person to the relational structure of a group. Humans are “irreducibly social beings” (West 1990). In order to accommodate this further complexity, consider that the actor-structure axis is now made vertical, with the actor at the base. This has the advantage of placing all need in one base layer, subverting the usual claim to a hierarchy of need as discussed in Chapter 5. The vertical hierarchy in the present model, from actor to structure, is one of scale, from person to group to society. Those structure-dependent satisfiers from the lifeworld that are made available through bilateral relationships, social organization and values are now at the top. Mediating between the two is the group, defined in the present study in the context of the modern community of specialists and supporters. Personal need, this community, and the social effects of collective action, now make up three layers in a three-dimensional representation of the empowering group engaged in communicative action. Having a common basis in the classes of universal human need allows the tables from the previous chapters to be layered, with the classes of need now serving as universal classifications. Each layer is labelled to represent the logical components of the overall field. This is shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11: The Field of Community Control**
At first glance, such a figure looks overly complex. However, consider some of the relationships that it suggests. Taking a slice through Security links this class of need to, in the group: risk and trust as the necessary public good that must be produced; dramaturgical action as the form of social action to achieve this; and personal responsibility as an indicator of progress in avoiding the consequences of deficiency. Socially, risk and trust is related to bilateral relationships; the form of action is related to belief in subjective sincerity with the purpose of having self-reliance. In the social layer, the indicator of personal responsibility in the group points to the opposite of self-reliance, dependency, as a consequence of deficiency. Similarly meaningful dissections can be made for Identity and Autonomy.

With the horizontal dimension containing the universal classes of need, and the vertical dimension the categories of personal need, community, and social effect, the final dimension has been shown in the social layer with the classes of resources, agency and common purpose. The other layers show a similar progression. They correspond in the community layer to the public goods produced by the group, the form of social action, and an indicator of progress, and in the personal layer to need lists, and motivation to achieve desirable states and avoid undesirable ones. What the layers in this dimension share is the transformative process whereby, for example, social resources are transformed by agency into purpose, or needs are transformed by motivation into living desired states. Having linked the layers of persons, community and social effects using the common denominators of security, identity and autonomy, it becomes possible to also consider some further intersections contained in the framework. Agency, for example, is a term often employed to refer to the capability of persons or groups to produce a given outcome. The field of community control serves to unpack the nature of agency by showing novel intersections in the vertical dimension. The framework shows that in different settings, agency draws on different forms of social action, which are grounded in different types of public goods, and will have identifiably different social outcomes depending upon the form of social action. The present study has also provided a view of universal human need that considers power from lifeworld and system perspectives. From a lifeworld perspective, as motivation that links a person to the group through love, connection and control, and
the group to society through relations of equity or exploitation.\textsuperscript{110} This is shown in Figure 12.

**Figure 12: Psychological Empowerment.** Agency progresses from actors to structures in a 2-step process.

On the other hand, power from a system perspective is represented as the agency of a community. Both forms of power bear on actors meeting their significant interests, defined as satisfying need. This is shown in Figure 13.

**Figure 13.** The outcome of agency in achieving significant interests is contingent on the power relation, being either horizontal (equity) or vertical (exploitation).

\textsuperscript{110} In later work, Galtung refines this horizontal and vertical concept of power, calling exploitation an Alpha system, symbolised by a triangle with the apex at the top, and equity a Beta system, symbolised by a circle (Galtung 1996). It is interesting to note the similarity of the account of social evolution based on lifeworld and system given by Habermas, and that which Galtung presents in this later work.
Here, the effect of relations of power are shown both positively and negatively, emphasising that power has consequences. This suggests a progression through time, of things improving or disintegrating, and so can be coupled with an indicator. Both the vertical and depth dimensions are dynamic relations of power, setting the logical components of the framework in motion. This logical framework of the empowering community provides a dynamic lattice of power relations supported by communicative action.

While this framework has, in the context of empowerment, tended to emphasise strengths in the group layer of the lattice, it shows that the reverse can also be true. Dependency, anomie and stasis are certainly alternatives to self-reliance, framing and mobilisation, and indeed are a great deal more prevalent. However, what this framework does is identify goals for individual and common purpose, provide indicators of group progress, and include two separate views of power that determine processes and outcomes. Starting from the outline of basic human need provided by Galtung in the GPID project, the understanding of the relationship between need and power has been elaborated by this framework. As such, it is a further contribution to Galtung’s G PID project, serving the spirit of that project that “human fulfilment, reduction of violence, abolition of misery, reduction of alienation and abolition of repression” be the guiding lights of the exercise.

8.3 Evaluating Empowerment

From an approach seeking to understand the empowerment efforts of the case study organisations, the present study has developed a generalised three-dimensional view of the field of community control incorporating persons, groups as entities, and their social effects. In order for the present study to claim to have met W.E.H. Stanner’s standard of having given a logical account of a “complex, if narrow, set of problematical facts” (Stanner 1958), and that therefore the contents of this framework forms a “significant set”, it needs to be demonstrated that this set lends itself to flexibility of application. In this regard, the use of the expression “logical framework” above is intended. Logical frameworks are an accepted tool in project evaluation
(Gasper 2000). While the accepted format of such frameworks is different, nevertheless the intersecting matrices of the field of community control do suggest possibilities for assessing empowerment. The question of why anyone would want to assess empowerment is an important one. The collection of evidence for empowerment can be driven by a desire to promulgate what appears to be a good program, with the “see, it worked for them” approach, and by the requirements of donors or policy makers for auditable outcomes. These are clearly two different action settings. For the purposes of evaluation, it is important to separate the two. The setting for empowerment as a logical framework is one of trust and learning, in contrast to auditable outcomes that stress ex-post-accountability and therefore favour measurement (Gasper 2000). It is a framework that, to use Gasper’s terms, is “learning-oriented” rather than “accountability-oriented” (Gasper 2000:27). That is, the purpose of such a framework is to assist organisational learning rather than undertake assessment. However, placing any particular organisation in the layer of the site of control, consisting of the community of specialists and supporters, depends upon identifying a rule-bound entity that serves the common interests of this community. Obviously, many entities do not, so finding ones that do is a matter of some interest. Habermas makes it quite clear that this can only be done by identifying with the interests of the community – what Freire would have called being “of the people”. In other words, entities are identified by the values they practice.

In common with the framework of the field of community control, Perkins (Perkins et.al. 2007) separates organisational learning as a process or set of practices from a learning organisation as a goal or ideal. Creativity, critical reflection, the importance of groups or “teams”, communication, the gradient of increasing complexity with increasing social engagement and the crucial significance of power all stand out as common emphases between community psychology and the sociological approach taken by the present study. As such, the framework of the field of community control suggests some alternative ways to assist the “diagnosis” of a learning organisation. The three-dimensional framework developed in the present study varies significantly from that developed by Perkins. One source of this difference is the redefinition of

111 For example, a project matrix generally includes a cascade of goals, purposes, outputs and activities.
112 It is an odd coincidence of the present study that the three-dimensional lattice proposed here was first visualised by the this author the day before locating Perkins’s assessment tool, which is similarly layered as “individual”, “organisational” and “community levels” (Perkins et.al. 2007). This coincidence was a gratifying affirmation.
community as the group of specialists and supporters, rather than as an interest association or by identification of shared properties. By resetting the boundaries in this way, the community and the entity are identified in a single layer. This centre layer of the field identifies those elements over which the community has the ability to exercise control and so is called the site of community control. The framework in the present study points in particular to the dynamic processes that are essential to learning, defined in communicative action as increasing rationalisation of the lifeworld (Habermas 1987). This is indicated by the presence of discursively redeemed validity claims. Such claims are visible in that they make reference to the lifeworld as objectified. A discursively redeemed claim is recognisable as being explanatory, and marked in actors by self-consciousness of the dynamic processes of dramaturgical, normative and teleological action, and the necessity of all in meeting the standards of subjective sincerity, normative rightness and objective truth. All of these qualities are intuitively recognisable, lending themselves to the real-time assessment of group action so important to the facilitator of group learning.

The production of public goods appears as other visible evidence of the style of group activity. The focus on public goods in the present study has served the purpose of constraining the size of potential groups, and making the logical link to the necessary motivations of actors in empowerment. It has also been said that empowerment is a phenomenon of groups, and it has been stressed that isolation carries risks. This is the weakness of a field methodology that relies on a scattergun approach with the aim of achieving a critical mass of exposure. Isolated actors will struggle to reproduce the necessary public goods. Focus on the public goods produced by groups suggests that to maximise the quantity of any good it is more important for a single community to succeed and persist than for many to have contact with a methodology and be subsequently left to continue in environments that are highly resistant to change. This in turn suggests that social change that is reliant on empowerment is better effected by

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113 Recall here that Habermas made use of the work of Piaget in his conceptualisation of communicative action as formative in social relations.
114 For example, reflective use of the first person singular, “I used to ... now I ...” See in particular Tsey (2009).
115 For example, use of a causative, “Because of the grog I used to ...” or, “What I saw as a young person, it made me think ...”
116 This is often marked in Tsey et al. by reference to the program or the program content, “I can use this FWB to make myself better ...”, “… since I know this FWB ...”. It is this quality that sometimes lends an evangelical flavour to empowerment that is seized upon so readily by missionised people. The “SIDT way” is another example of this.
consolidating self-reliant groups in the privileged to intermediate range, with the aim of having a subsequent persistent social effect on intergenerational timescales.

For the entity that identifies as part of this community, evidence of the public goods produced by the empowering group is found in the structures of the group – the field methodology, tools and images of all kinds, time allocation and decision-making routines – all of these serve to display the particular public goods of the group. The production of the range of public goods is associated with the practice of the three different forms of social action. In the progression toward the production of increasingly non-material goods and increasing complexity in an entity, actors necessarily engage in all forms of social action when the aim of the organisation is social change. In empowerment, communicative utterances are self-consciously embedded in all three “world relations” (Habermas 1987:120), in as much as there is recognition of the setting,\(^{117}\) which may thematically stress only one of the three.\(^{118}\)

Evidence that language is instrumental in the production of the non-material public goods required for empowerment is provided by Tsey and his co-workers, who used coding of transcripts to identify consistently recurring themes within “empowerment narrative” (Tsey et.al. 2009).\(^{119}\) This work was supported at an individual level by Haswell’s application of psychometric scales and scenarios (Haswell et.al. 2010).\(^{120}\) As West says, “if Habermas is right the values that inform radical critique are as fundamental as language itself” (West 1990: 43). The framework of the field of community control has the benefit of showing the dynamic relations between the parts of the nomological networks that these approaches identify.\(^{121}\) As shown in Figure 11, these dynamics are power relations that operate in two dimensions. The third dimension is contributed by the person and need, as previously discussed. The field of community control shows the necessary processes to produce the types of public goods often included under thematic headings in the nomological networks\(^ {122}\) of Zimmerman, Tsey and Christens (Zimmerman 2000; Tsey et.al. 2009; Christens

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\(^{117}\) In FWB, this is reflected in the “Group Agreement”, the first session of the course (as discussed in Chapter 4).

\(^{118}\) Echoing Maslow’s view of the healthy person, Habermas says, "In fact, communicative utterances are always embedded in various world relations at the same time" (Habermas 1986:II,120).

\(^{119}\) As indicated, the examples cited in the earlier footnotes are drawn from this published work.

\(^{120}\) Scales (EES) assessing “Self-Capacity; Inner Peace” and Scenarios (12S) assessing “Healing and Enabling Growth, Connection and Purpose”.

\(^{121}\) The work of Tsey and others is here identified with the field of community psychology, in having drawn on the work of Rappaport, Zimmerman and Wallerstein, and also Christens (2011).

\(^{122}\) For example, Tsey (2009) and Christens (2011).
2011), coupled with the consequences of the power relations thereby entered into. The framework proposed by the present study provides the vocabulary to assist with classifying language as a means to identify the dynamic relations embedded in it. Ultimately based on Habermas’s “universal pragmatics” (Habermas 1976), those dynamic relations of dramaturgical, normative and teleological action taken together are indicative of empowering praxis. Recognition of these forms of social action is the core of the field of community control. The rule that must apply here, says Habermas, it that “when a hearer assents to a thematized validity claim, he acknowledges the other two implicitly raised validity claims as well – otherwise he is supposed to make known his dissent” (Habermas 1987:121, italics added). A hearer may accept the objective truth of an assertion but not necessarily the speaker’s reasons for asserting it. Similarly, sincerity does not put one in possession of the facts. For the structurally weaker party, the marker of negation, with the ability of actors in a group to make a counter-claim (and so make an invasive validity claim by the coloniser the subject of discourse), is a further indicator of empowerment in action.

So, drawing on each of the layers in the field of community control, the principle markers of the empowering community appear as:

- Motivation/incentive (push/pull) – a balance of everyone having a legitimate reason for participating that is personal and is reinforced by the solidary and purposive outcomes of participation;
- Communicative action – the effort and contribution of every person to the production of public goods is systematically noticed and acknowledged in the procedures of discourse;
- Public goods produced – risk and trust, critical consciousness, structural innovation;
- Common purpose – everyone in the group has a belief in the real existence of a common purpose that explains why they are working together.

These characteristics are identifiable in the language, and more broadly in the tools, employed by groups. Furthermore, looking to the social layer in the field of community control, the resources required to do these things are found in bilateral relationships, organized social events123 and, coming back to where this section began, the values upon which personal growth depends. Actors positively engaged in this group accrue the benefits of satisfying non-material need.

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123 Defined earlier as “settings”.
8.4 Empowerment as Intervention

Intervention on behalf of another was a topic first considered in Chapter 5, in the discussion of Sen’s “agent” and “patient” (Sen 1999). Sen’s metaphor of the patient suggests one “etherized upon a table”. Such a patient is certainly having his or her interests served by intervention, and is also certainly incapable of independently reversing the harm he or she is suffering from disease or misadventure. On this basis, intervention by those in possession of great capability is justified. In a social sense, Sen’s proposal is that this intervention should serve the cause of freedom, defined in terms of liberal democratic values. The appropriate response of the patient is considered to be one of participation, based on full and informed consent, presupposing the universal acceptance of the value of freedom and the rights of the individual. This is a view that has been questioned in Chapter 5, where it was proposed that a standard based on the liberal democratic values of freedom and rights does not meet the requirement of universality. Instead, the standard that has provided the foundation for this study has been that of individuals being able to meet their needs in the classes of security, identity and autonomy. As a consequence of this, the early discussion of participation as dialogue that was proposed by Roughan (Roughan 1986) has been subsumed by the way in which empowerment has been conceptualised. In following Rappaport (Rappaport 1987), the central theme here has been empowerment, not the quality of participation. Roughan’s concept of participation as dialogue drew on the development theorists of the 1970s, who were the first to look closely at the quality of the dichotomy developed/undeveloped, and regarded participation of people in their own development as essential to reversing the process of colonisation. That is, dialogue was seen as the means of addressing disparities of power by placing actors engaged in intervention on a par with actors as “beneficiaries”, a relationship between actors that has been characterised here as having the structural form of equity. In terms of actors, the present study has examined individual participation as motivated action or psychological empowerment. The actions of motivated participation are judged to directly fulfil human need.

Empowerment is a modern concept of intervention that in the case study organisations aims to address the historical harm caused by the inequity of the power relations of

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124 It is to be noted that in the current Australian policy context, this term is heavily laden by association with the Northern Territory Emergency Response Act (2007), also known as “the intervention”.
125 T.S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”.
126 Also referred to in the present study as “voluntarism”.
colonisation. In practice, the form of participation for empowering intervention has been clearly articulated in the case studies. The way organisations use time and make regular space for cycles of communicative action are indicative of the methods reflected in the case studies. Also indicative is the particular way tools\textsuperscript{127} are employed, echoing Freire in the use of codes, role plays and imagery to generate dialogue as the way to construct knowledge.

However, as an intervention, the problematic of the relationship between agent and patient remains. This can be seen in, for example, the contrast between the Solomon Islands Development Trust and the Bismark Ramu Group in their relationships with donors, or the larger contrast between the Pacific groups in general (funded by international non-government agencies as donor sources) and the Family WellBeing program (funded primarily by government sources). This problematic appears to centre around the question of standards of accountability – between organisations and donors, and between organisations and beneficiaries. The field of community control, by defining donors and beneficiaries as part of a single community based on values, conceals the reality of this problem of accountability. There remains an unresolved tension about the location of these boundaries between persons and groups, players and supporters, the exclusive group and the group of beneficiaries, donors and adherents as they relate to mutual accountability. This tension is created by the conceptual merging of entity, group and community into a single layer of community control. The approach is justified because while the entity made by the exclusive group would appear to set a clear boundary for identifying the “who” in participation, the use of paraprofessional personnel and the emphasis placed on shared values blurs this boundary. The exclusive group, which clearly includes the paraprofessionals, must develop the practices it expects to instil in its supporters. It is up to this community as a whole how those practices are received in society. Supporters are not normally part of the operations of the group, and yet beneficiaries require evidence of their power in decision-making that is specific to his or her particular constituency. Some of this tension appears in the way language is employed. For example, self-reliance is often thought of as a personal quality of actors able to participate – that is, as a capability. By contrast, in the framework of the field of community control it appears as made possible in social structure, being the converse of dependency as originally conceived by the Latin Americans.

\textsuperscript{127} In the sense of “Zeuge” employed by Lash, quoting Heidegger.
This suggests that the problem of accountability can be resolved by reference to the evaluative qualities of the field of community control. Adopting the approach employed throughout the present study, in intervention, accountability of persons should be dealt with in terms of the need of actors. Universal human need supports the ethical position that intervention is justified to reverse the harm of colonisation, and furthermore that both parties are independently necessary to create the change. The moral question of what constitutes right action in intervention that seeks to produce such change has been a matter of central interest here. A concept of empowerment is required to respond to this question, because of the disparity of power in the relationship between colonised and coloniser. This disparity must be taken into consideration in arriving at a response. The moral question of how to act is central here because from the point of view of the coloniser, intervention is grounded in a moral imperative, not necessity. The particular interest in Habermas evident throughout this study was spurred by his position that philosophy should concern itself with orientation to right action. Habermas distinguishes moral questions from evaluative ones. Evaluative categories deal with issues of “the good life”, in the manner of Sen’s “life one has reason to value”. This is an assessment limited to the horizon-forming context of either what is historically determined, or any chosen lifestyle. Moral categories, on the other hand, which are logically necessary in decisive action, can only be decided on rationally determined criteria of justice and a universal concept of interests. For organisations in civil society focussed on transforming inequitable power relations between citizens, markets and the State, these rationally determined criteria have previously been stated in terms of trust and shared values. It has been shown that accountability that is based on values implies equitable relationships. These relationships are formed selectively, as a matter of choice, not out of necessity. This allows for flexibility in aims within a belief in common purpose. Flexibility suggests minimum standards of formal organisation, and recognition of trial and error as necessary when learning. The necessity that change be the result of learning suggests high self-reliance or “autonomy” as a further standard. These standards for empowering organisation, derived from the field of community control, can be extended to propose the practical necessities of intervention that supports empowering organisation. These are summarised in Table 6. By way of contrast, it has been stressed above that empowerment is not a strategy of amelioration. Perkins and Gasper both contrast learning-oriented or transformative organisation and accountability-oriented or ameliorative organisation. In Table 6, transformative organisation is shown.
in contrast to the dominant ameliorative approach that stresses competitive processes to form relationships – contracts built on statements of outcomes and indicators, with low tolerance of error or deficiency and low autonomy. Empowerment cannot be achieved in this environment. While this approach may be suitable to ameliorative service delivery, it cannot engender the systemic change actors in empowerment require in order to participate self-reliantly.

Table 6 – Transformative and ameliorative organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empowerment – transformative</th>
<th>Service Delivery – ameliorative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selective process to form relationship</td>
<td>Competitive tender process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>Contractual obligations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local methods</td>
<td>Experts and professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High trust</td>
<td>Low trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High autonomy</td>
<td>Low autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public dialogue</td>
<td>Executive control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of trial and error</td>
<td>Contractual compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal organisation</td>
<td>Standardised requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum standards</td>
<td>Ex-post measurement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond these organisational mechanisms for establishing accountability, the field of community control also models indicators and outcomes for empowerment. From the point of view of actors, accountability in an empowering setting is judged on the basis of the group meeting universal need for security, identity and autonomy, as reflected in achievement of personal responsibility, solidarity and discourse. When considered from the point of view of structures, accountability is suggested by the structural disparity of power that requires action on the part of the strong, or capable, in addition to the individual agency of local actors. If intervention is called for, this is so because of an historical disparity of power, called exploitation. Reversing the harm of exploitation demands from the coloniser a reflexive response. This response contains acknowledgement that the disparity causes harm, and requires either the coloniser to change, or the colonised to continue to sacrifice their own requirements to meet
universal need\textsuperscript{128}. The fact that it is this harm that calls for intervention in the first instance again raises the persistent moral question of right action in intervention. As the interpretation of the case studies has shown, structurally this takes the form of dissent, understood as innovative social action that is necessary to mobilisation. Intervention in these circumstances is reliant upon the existence of a vehicle that facilitates interaction with a minimum of organisation necessary to its task of generating common purpose. The possible scope of common purpose is determined by the complexity and action-orientation of the group. What is at stake structurally is the production of the specific public goods of trust, critical consciousness and structural innovation, which are in turn dependent upon the power relations of equity.

8.5 Further Research

One objective of the present study has been to unpack the concept of empowerment in order to more clearly define its constituent elements, including individual motivation, the settings in which empowerment takes place, its social dimensions, and the potential outcomes for persons, groups and in society. In this context, it has been concerned primarily with examining theoretically the underlying dynamics of change processes and not just the properties of empowerment as they appear, for example, in the nomological networks of community psychology. In so doing, this study has drawn extensively on the theory of communicative action to conceptualise the pivotal dynamics of persons interacting in groups. In its use of lifeworld and system, the theory of communicative action systematically addresses rational actors, the social construction of reality and individual psychology in terms of objective, normative and subjective worlds and the way these are drawn on in achieving valid communication. Habermas has “clarified the scope of practical discourse” (West 1990:46) – that is, he has defined the procedures of communicative action in a way that effectively captures the effortful cognitive responses that are central to empowerment, differentiating it from the automatic processing of daily habit. Based on the case studies, this thesis has defined empowerment as a communicative relation, demonstrating the usefulness of the theory of communicative action as a tool for understanding empowerment. As discussed in Chapter 7, Habermas has been criticised for proposing that the “ideal speech situation” of discourse can anywhere be identified as separate from relations of power. However, the analysis of the case-study organisations has shown that it is the creation of this Habermasian communicative space that is precisely what makes these

\textsuperscript{128} For example, in the loss of identity caused by assimilation.
organisations exceptional.

Paul Streete, whose work on basic human need was discussed in Chapter 5, has said that:

utopians should not be discouraged from formulating their proposals, and from thinking the unthinkable, unencumbered by the inhibitions and obstacles of political constraints, in the same detail that the defenders of the status quo devote to its elaboration and celebration (Streeten 1995:121).

To develop this detail, the present study has argued that research on reasoning, judgment and choice necessarily proceeds from an image of what it is to be human, those unifying traits that make us recognisable to each other. Further, it has been argued that this image can be grounded in universal human need in the classes of security, identity and autonomy, and that these classes can be used to unify a framework of persons, groups and their social effects. The case studies presented here, and the subsequent framework that has been developed, suggest that the recognition and conceptualisation of empowering organisation can be furthered by testing of the following propositions:

1. That the organisational entity and its beneficiaries and donors form an identifiable community of commonly held values that are demonstrated in shared meanings and practices;
2. That these shared meanings and practices will display common purposes of self-reliance, framing and mobilisation in proportion to the complexity of the organisational entity;
3. That these shared meanings and practices will be based on an analysis of power aimed at the reconstitution of local organisation;
4. That the organisational entity will shift its specific goals in response to the need and preferences of beneficiaries;
5. That the organisational entity will derive its legitimacy from its beneficiaries;
6. That the ability of the organisational entity to shift goals while maintaining common purpose will contribute to its persistence and hence to its longer-term legitimacy;
7. That maintaining common purpose will take precedence over organisational maintenance and growth;
8. That the membership of the community will be driven primarily by solidary incentives, secondarily by purposive incentives, and that material incentives will have only a compensatory role;

9. That the organisational entity, regardless of available resources, will be limited to privileged or intermediate size;

10. That the organisational entity will devolve strategic tasks to beneficiaries;

11. That the tasks of the community will be oriented towards framing a two-step process of mobilising sentiment followed by engagement with society;

12. That an orientation towards questioning dominant sources of authority will lead to ongoing internal tension that assists in maintaining a cycle of organisational action and reflection;

13. That the organisational entity will structure into its activities discretionary time for workers and beneficiaries to engage in cycles of action and reflection;

14. That given the historical shift of resources away from beneficiaries resulting from colonisation, the organisational entity will remain heavily dependent upon resources provided by conscience adherents;

15. That this (14) will contribute to a less stable flow of resources to support the organisational entity.

Furthermore, in the broadest terms, the present study proposes that the continuing study of empowering communities can contribute to further elaboration and deepening of the theory of communicative action as a model of empowerment.

8.6 Conclusions

The critique of growth begun in the 1960s led to the field of international development employing the language of grassroots development, bottom-up process and empowerment. In the present study, this language has been expanded by examining the basis of empowerment in a wide variety of fields, from management to education, community organizing and community psychology. This reflects the range of fields in which an empowering methodology has been employed by the case-study groups: rural development in the Solomon Islands; conservation in Papua New Guinea; civil society in Fiji; and social and emotional wellbeing in Aboriginal Australia. Asking how organisations can support people to have greater autonomy and control has led to the consideration of empowerment as a three-dimensional construct that engages with persons, communities and society. This construct has developed in the context of consideration of who we are as persons as the basis for determining the nature of justice and injustice. For, adopting the approach of Habermas, it must be that action
alone has a moral dimension. The advent of modernity has eroded the value-basis of traditional societies formerly secured by their cosmologies and conceptions of the sacred. It is the explosion of the lifeworld by the globalisation of system imperatives that underlies the contemporary dilemma portrayed in the image of the Question Man.

Deliberation of what constitutes the good life is always subject to the horizon-forming context of the lifeworld, and so is irreducibly pluralist. In the absence of a secure identity, each must now formulate their own response to the question, “How should I live my life?” There is no longer a response to this question that can be grounded in a philosophy of ethics. Instead, Habermas’s ethics of discourse proposes a model of right action based on the consciousness of the community of subjects engaged in discourse. Right action can only be determined on the basis of the group of persons discursively testing the validity of claims that are made to subjective sincerity, normative rightness and objective truth. The field of community control proposed by the present study provides a model for the elaboration of this discourse. The claim to universality made here is limited to the universal applicability of these procedures of discourse in determining the valid interests of persons. The community itself establishes the character of relationships, the form of organisation and the values to be held dear on the basis of this discourse. This provides for the mobilisation of both Indigenous agency and the resources of the coloniser. This mobilisation is a practical necessity to meet minority interests for security, identity and autonomy.

Disparity of power is inherent in the historic outcomes of colonisation. Empowerment is necessarily the just response to this disparity. Empowerment occurs in the transformative domains of risk and trust, critical consciousness and structural innovation that forge the bonds between personal and collective power. Working to reverse the consequences of colonisation with those whose lifeworld has been thrown into turmoil by loss of the anchor of need being met in daily life is one of the most challenging aspects of human endeavour. It challenges all of us to reconsider the basis upon which we make our choice of action. That personal challenge is necessary to begin to transform our societies and overturn the structures that contribute to the loss of life and health and a future so sorely incurred under the exploitative power relations of colonisation.
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Appendix 1 – 1988 Link Calendar: Don’t Complain, Organize.
Appendix 2 – SIDT Development Wheel adapted for northern Australia.

![Development Wheel Diagram](image-url)
### VQLI - Village Quality of Life Index (VQLI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village Level</th>
<th>Family Level</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Adult Well-Being)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-drains (10)</td>
<td>-housing (15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-rubbish removal (10)</td>
<td>a) off ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-sanitation (15)</td>
<td>b) cleaned daily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) no holes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) stove</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) food safe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) cook pots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-water supply (15)</td>
<td>d) eating things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-bush line (10)</td>
<td>-personal goods (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-animals (05)</td>
<td>a) clothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) bed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) cleaning material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) box/case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Child Well-Being)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Health Committee (15)</td>
<td>-mosquito net (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Health Education (15)</td>
<td>first aid box (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Transportation (15)</td>
<td>-bedding (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Medical Box (05)</td>
<td>-clothing (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Aid (10)</td>
<td>plates (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-torch/lamp (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-class/study (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>(Communal Well-Being)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-meeting place (15)</td>
<td>-personal tools (15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-budget (10)</td>
<td>a) garden tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) house tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) hunting and fishing tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-education (15)</td>
<td>-garden (20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-tools (10)</td>
<td>-chickens, pigs (15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ducks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remarks:</strong></td>
<td>Score + 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Number of Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4 – SIDT Social Cosmology Chart
Appendix 7 – Bismark Ramu Group Lines of Communication.
7 Stages In Helping Communities Organise

1. Entry
   * Meet With Leaders
   * Story With Community People
   * CDT Meets To Assess Community

2. Education
   * Community Meeting
     - PNC History & Cultures
     - Emphasise Self-Reliance
   * Story With Community People
   * Arrange A Time To Return

3. Assessment
   * Community Mapping
     - Village History & Culture
     - Emphasise Self-Reliance
     - Give A Man A Fish, Teach A Man To Fish Drama
   * Assessment
     - Community discusses their strengths followed by their problems
   * Story With Community People

4. Analysis
   * Possible Solutions
   * Discuss What To Do Next

5. Planning
   * Assess Community’s Planning
   * Vision
   * Prioritise Problems
   * Discuss What To Do Next
   * Assess Community’s Planning
   * Action

6. Mobilise

7. Follow-up
   * Monitor
   * Encourage
   * Facilitate
Appendix 9: Above and Below the Table