

Mgt 655 Organization Systems & Complexity Theory Seminar

Come pass the [Talking Stick](#) -- TIME 2:35-5:05 PM
Tuesday BC 247

David M. Boje, Ph.D. 532-1693
dboje@nmsu.edu or use SKYPE 'davidboje' for
chat or to talk to me when I am online

Office Hours: 5:05 to 6:05 Tu BC 318
On line VITA - <http://peaceaware.com/vita> for many
articles, chapters, presentations

Quick link menu: [Books](#) | [Course Objectives](#) | [Grading](#)
| [From Old to New Paradigm](#) | [Schedule](#) | [Fine Print](#) |
[Talking Stick Class Project](#) | on line syllabus available
at <http://business.nmsu.edu/dboje/655>

NOTE: We pick and choose each week what to read.
Try to keep it to 1 or 2 pieces per week per student.
We don't stuff ourselves. There is no fun in that.
Would like to enroll Masters and Ph.D. students, and
from every possible discipline at this fine University.

As a class project, we have an opportunity to study the
interorganizational complexity of the Las Cruces Arts
Scene. We will negotiate what our class project will be
and make it participative. In addition you will have
your individual projects that I hope you will make
especially relevant and practical for your individual
fields of study. What follows is the schedule, course
requirements, and an extensive study guide. I hope the
study guide will introduce you to the paradigm shift
that is taking place from systems to complexity
practice and theory. It is a very exciting time to study
this topic - David Boje



SCHEDULE

Abbreviates for books are below. Articles listed otherwise on on the course CD or are Handouts given out the week before

Week	Topics	DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ASSIGNMENTS	Book Readings & Handouts After week 1, Due to discuss on the date listed below. NEVER READ MORE THAN 2 ITEMS A WEEK - YOU PICK THEM:
1	Aug 26 Intro; brief overview of class & syllabus	<p>What are the Old Paradigm Systems Theories? Naïve OT, General Systems Theory (GST), & Language schools by Boje (2004)</p> <p><u>Assignment 1</u> begins - Start to build a scrapbook of the 'systemicity-complexity' of <u>Las Cruces Art Scene</u>. Scrapbooking methodology became Yue Cai's (2006) Dissertation when she was a student at this course. She now is a strategy professor. Guest is Cindi Fargo of Las Cruces Main Steet Confernce call to Ken Baskin about COMPLEXITY AND STORIED SPACES <u>Introduction</u> - Day ONE Each student will contact a systems/complexity researcher for class interview (e.g. Cai, Gardner, Landrum, Baskin, Smith, Kevin Dooley; Ken Baskin; & others TBA).</p>	<p>What's on your 2 Systems/Complexity CDs? What is on the CT Ethics CD? Read Baskin's 2008 Storied Spaces Article, published in Emergence & Complexity Journal <u>CLICK HERE for pdf</u> Read STO intro & ch 1; CTE Intro (<u>see abbreviations below in BOOKS</u>) For more info on scrapbook method, visit Management Office and see</p> <p>NEVER READ MORE THAN 2 ITEMS A WEEK - YOU PICK THEM, BUT IF YOU DO NOT KNOW 2 YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE BEST GRADES IN CLASS</p>
0	<p>Sep 2 - Beyond Naive Systems Theory to Holographic Complexity Theory & Ethics NOTE: Tonight at 6:30 there is a special invitation to go to Las Cruces Downtown MainStreet office to meet with Cindi Fargo (good option for 655</p>	<p>SKYPE Interview call to <u>Yue Cai</u> about her Motorola dissertation.</p> <p>Yue, tell us about scrapbooking method?</p> <p>Class discussion questions: What is the CT Ethics of Systems & Complexity Thinking? What is naive about the Bertallanffy GST? <u>Lecture 1 - levels</u> (I put these short lectures on line) but if the discussion is good I don't talk about them</p>	<p>Cai, Yue. 2006. Story Strategy Dialogisms at Motorola Corporation. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Management Department. New Mexico State University.</p> <p>Read for today: Books, Handouts or from CDs: GST: von Bertalanffy GST readings Ch 6 open system Boulding (hierarchic levels) Pondy (Beyond Open Systems Theory),</p>

	project)	I would like as many class members as possible to participate in the Sept 8, 15, and 22 organizational complexity convention I am organizing. We may have enough of you to switch the next 3 meetings to Mon instead of Wed - this way you can each be facilitators in the events - please study http://talkingstick.info/ (see task forces)	Cooper, Books: STO 1, CTE foreword & Intro
2	Sep 9 Beyond Naive Systems Theory to Holographic complexity models or we may meet Sep 8	<p>Assignment 1 SCRAPBOOK Due tonight (note if we meet sept 8, 15 & 22 for the Convention, then we we will hold this assignment until Sept 30</p> <p>What is the The Naïve OT School of Systems Theory?</p> <p>Lecture 2 - Critique of K&K, Scott, Senge - this might be helpful to you</p> <p>Please use time to build preliminary (not final) scrapbook for local Las Cruces organization you intend to study this term</p> <p>Get to know Course Model: old version of Figure 1 & the systemicity-model in STO Ch 1, i.e.</p> <p>Be able to discuss 3 properties of complexity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. dialogical 2. hologrammatic 3. recursivity. 	<p>More of The Naïve OT School of Systems Theory: Katz & Kahn (1966); Scott (1998); Senge (1990)</p> <p>Beginning of Story Theory work: STO Chap 1</p> <p>Benjamin (The Storyteller, 1936) - read handout next week and be able to discuss them fluently</p> <p>Boje, D. M. 2006. Breaking out of Narrative's Prison: Improper Story in Storytelling Organization. Storytelling, Self, Society: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Storytelling Studies. Vol 2 (2): 28-49. Working paper on line CLICK here</p> <p>REMINDER: NEVER READ MORE THAN 2 ITEMS A WEEK - YOU PICK THEM</p>
3	Sep 16 The Social Construction School or we may meet Sep 15	<p>STO Intro & Read Weick Sensemaking book excerpt handout & tie to SO Intro</p> <p>SKYPE Call with Carolyn L. Gardner - Kutztown University</p> <p>VISIT from our own William L. Smith -New Mexico State</p>	<p>Note: We will pick and choose from following:</p> <p>Boje, D. M. 1991. "The storytelling organization: A study of storytelling performance in an office supply firm." Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 36: pp.106-126.</p>

		<p>University</p> <p>Make sure to pick out article to talk on for next week.</p> <p>Lecture 3 - Organic is Unnatural</p>	<p>Press here</p> <p>Boje, D. M.; Gardner, Carolyn L. & Smith, William L. (2006). (Mis)Using Numbers in the Enron Story Organizational Research Methods Journal, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 456-474. See abstract</p> <p>Maruyama – Venn Diagrams and related systems theory; Volosinov/Bakhtin pp 20-25 language critique of social psych; Pondy & Boje (1980); Maruyama's papers on language and systems theory. Tye (2003)</p>
4	<p>Sep 23 GST or we may meet Set 22 - in which case assignment 2 will not happen till Sep 30</p>	<p>Assignment 2 CRITIQUE USING CT Due tonight Read & use in critique SO 2, NM 1 & 2</p> <p>Your Conference Paper Abstract is due today (part of Assignment 3)</p> <p>Lecture 4 - Gertrude Stein & Systemicity (with Boje's answers to deconstructing von Bertalanffy)</p>	<p>The class will pick out its own readings - from the CD's, from the Syllabus introduction, or one from their own interest area.</p>
5	<p>Sep 30 Pondy & Language School</p>	<p>CONFERENCE CALL (in class) to Stew Leonard Web site(not confirmed). Read NM 5 STO 2 STO 3</p> <p>Boje, D. M. 2005a. Antenarrative in management research. Sage Dictionary, forthcoming. Click here</p> <p>Overview of types of Open systems; beyond open systems</p> <p>Lecture 3B - Ethics & Academy of Management</p>	<p>Review: Pondy & Mitroff (1979) Beyond Open Systems Theory; Pondy (1976) Leadership as a Language Game; Boje 1995 Disney article; Cooper (1989) critique of Pondy; Lowe & Carr 2002 – Are language & systems theory incommensurable? Emery, M's open says theory alive and well (see folder 6)</p> <p>NEVER READ MORE THAN 2 ITEMS A WEEK - YOU PICK THEM</p>
6	<p>Oct 7 Emery & Contextualism</p>	<p>Class visit or SKYPE interview with Rosanna Alvarez</p> <p>Perhaps a 2nd SKYPE call to Ken Baskin</p> <p>NM 3 What is Abduction? Good time to integrate Stein with Emery (outside & inside) and Bakhtin's Philosophy of the Act</p>	<p>Emery & Trist (1966); Pepper (1942) four part model (formist, mechanistic, organic, contextualist). See model ; Boje 1999</p> <p>We will try to arrange Rosanna Alvarez to be our guest.</p> <p>Visit Management Office or Library & See Copy:</p>

		<p>STO 4 Polyphonic and STO 9 (Dialog & Debate)</p> <p>Lecture 5 - Brief History of STS (Socio-Technical System) theory Lecture 6 - Using Contextualism to Get Beyond OST of the Emerys</p>	<p>Alvarez, Rosanna C. 1999. Change in type IV environments : a case study in public natural resources management. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Management Dept, NMSU.</p>
7	Oct 14 Boulding Hierarchy	<p>CONFERENCE CALL (in class) to Kaylynn Twotrees http://www.ktwotrees.org/ http://2treesnotes.blogspot.com/ STO 5 Stylistic STO 6 Chronotopic Boje, D. M. 2005b. Dialogism in management research. Sage Dictionary, forthcoming. Click here</p>	<p>The Skeleton of Science, Boulding 1956; On Purposeful Systems, Ackoff & Emery 1972; Montouri & Purser 1996; -</p>
8	Oct 21 Bakhtin & language School	<p>CONFERENCE CALL (in class) to Ken BaskinSee Bio STO 7 Architectonic Boje's intro to Ethics in CT book (handout) Boje, D. M.; E. Enríquez; M. T. González; & E. Macías. 2005. Architectonics of McDonald's Cohabitation with Wal-Mart: An Exploratory study of Ethnocentricity. Journal, Critical Perspectives on International Business. Click Here Boje, D. M. & C. Rhodes. 2005a. The Leadership of Ronald McDonald: Double Narration and Stylistic Lines of Transformation. Leadership Quarterly journal Click here</p>	<p>Social Heteroglossia: centrifugal & centripetal language forces; Boje 2004 - - Architectonics of Wal-Mart & McDonalds</p>
	Oct 28 Living systems part I	<p>Complexity Workshop for 655 Students Let's talk to Nancy by Skype For fun, try Complex System Term MAP (New England Complex Systems Institute)</p>	<p>See Doctoral Dissertation: Landrum, Nancy Ellen. 2000. Quantitative and qualitative examination of the dynamics of Nike and Reebok storytelling as strategy. Nancy Landrum is a tenured professor at University of Arkansas at</p>

			Little Rock
9	Oct 30	<p>Assignment 3 CONFERENCE TERM PAPER PROPOSAL Due Tonight - Please focus paper as an analysis of your field organization. Can have your own discipline slant but needs to be grounded in course readings.</p> <p>Try to put something Critical into your paper: Critical Theory Resource Guides Main page CT ct CMS</p>	Exploring Complexity, Nicolis & Prigogine, 1989; Self-regulation and Requisite Variety, Ashby, 1956; Principles of the Self-organizing System, Ashby, 1962; Redesigning the Future, Ackoff 1974; Autopoiesis: the organization of living systems, its characterization and a model
10	Nov 4 Social Construction	<p>STO 8 Polypi</p> <p>SKYPE CALL to Nancy Landrum and Carolyn Gardner - about macro issues of spiritual strategy</p>	Berger & Luckmann – Social Construction of Reality; Schwandt review of social construction theory in Handbook Qualitative Research
11	Nov 11 Bakhtin and Chronotopicity	<p>Assignment 4 Due Tonight; Be prepared to do 10 minute presentations, as you would at conference. Your draft of the paper will be sent to peer review. Each person in class reviews to - due by next class</p>	The ten Chronotopes of Bakhtin
12	Nov 18 Living Systems part II	<p>Peer reviews of the papers are due today.</p> <p>STO 11 Living Story Method</p> <p>Skype Conference call to Jo Tyler and Theodore Taptiklis</p>	Can Living systems theory generate testable hypotheses? The Edge of Organization, Marion 1999; Sciences of the Artificial, Simon 1981; Complexity and system descriptions
13	Nov 24 - 28 Dec 2 Marxism and Philosophy of Language	<p>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</p> <p>STO 12 Socratic Symposium or perhaps</p> <p>Introduction to Luhmann's Sociology of Communication Systems:</p> <p>The Self-Organization of the Knowledge-Based Society</p>	BREAK
14	Dec 9	<p>Exam Week</p> <p>Final Paper due (builds on 3 assignments; is done just for this course).</p> <p>Literature Review must contrast System & Systemicity-Complexity theories --- FINAL Paper Due (40%)</p>	Dialogic approach to language - Bakhtin & Dialectic approach of/ Volosinov 1930/1973

There is an annotated bibliography that is just for this course Click [Here](#)

Course Objectives

1. Develop a class project, such as [Las Cruces Arts Scene](#), that allows us to

collaborate and work together to explore the exciting transition from systems theory to complexity theory and practice. In Complexity thinking, we look at how systemicity is unfinalized, fragmenting, and not at all a whole single logic system. In this way we go beyond not only closed systems thinking, but open systems thinking, both of which are trapped in the monologic, bystander logic that has been in place since General Systems Theory was founded during WWII. Your projects need to reflect this important transition.

2. Develop an individual term paper that explores the transition of systems to complexity theory to your own area of expertise and to your field project. It can tie to your discipline area, or to your dissertation. It cannot be the same paper you turn into another course. It must apply articles and books used in the course, along with those of your own discipline. It cannot be a group paper.
3. Submit an abstract of the paper to a conference for presentation. Develop the paper, and if it is accepted present it sometime during the next year. You are strongly encouraged to present your work at the '*Standing Conference for Management & Organization Inquiry*' or to Academy of Management Meetings, or to a conference in your own discipline. The 2009 sc'MOI meeting will be in Orlando Florida – <http://scmoi.org/> Submit your abstract by Oct 1 2008 to this or some system/complexity conference of your choosing.
4. Learn how to do peer reviews of journal articles, and how to respond to feedback you receive on your own work.
5. Pull your load in the seminar discussions. Come to class being prepared in one or two of the assigned readings, and read to engage in discussions. You DO NOT have to read every reading, but YOU DO have to read some of them very thoroughly.

REQUIRED BOOKS are abbreviated in schedule at SO and NM (respectively).

STO - Boje, D. M. 2008. *The Storytelling Organizations*. London: Sage (available Aug 2008). On line version is at <http://storytellingorganization.com/> Ask instructor for secret password

CTE - Boje, D. M. 2008. *Critical Theory Ethics for Business and Public Administration*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Press [See Table of Contents](#)

RECOMMENDED (following book is used in another course, Mgt 685 Story Theory & Consulting. It give you 8 story methods to use on projects).

NM - Boje, D. M. 2001 *Narrative Methods for Organizational & Communication Research*. London: Sage (should be in books store; if not order from Amazon; paperback)

On Line Resource: Annotated Reference Listing

http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/690/annotated_storytelling_org_biblio_boje.htm

GRADING

Assignment 1 - scrapbook & class participation to that point - 15%

Assignment 2 Critical paper on GST & class participation to date - 15%

Assignment 3 - Conference abstract or full paper on Boulding & participation to date - 15%

Assignment 4 - Conference paper rehearsals & 2 reviews; & participation to date - 15%

Final Paper - Journal quality paper in APA format & overall class contributions - 40%

Course Overview

In this course, we will contrast three schools of systems theory: (1) the naïve US school of systems theory, the General Systems Theory School, and the Language School of Systems Theory. Your term paper will be developing the transition of systems to complexity theory to your own area of expertise and to your field project, so be prepared. This is a CORE course for Management Ph.D. majors. It is open to any and all graduate students (Masters or Ph.D. or post-docs) who want advanced training in macro theory, macro research, and the qualitative research methods.

Systems Theory is the Old Paradigm, be it closed, mechanistic, or open and adaptive. Time to move on.

It used to be that an open system or an adaptive system was new. Sorry, it was new in World War II. It was somewhat old when I learned it in Ph.d. training in 1976. Now its pretty old school. Here are three old paradigm images



Figure 1: Systems Theory Images in Old Paradigm

At left, systems are texts, whatever researchers can note about them. In the Center, systems are whatever a systems theorist says they are (be they mechanistic, closed, or open). To the right old models assume that there is a system out there, as if its a 'whole' puzzle just waiting to be solved, identified, or completed. I have used the puzzle analogy when introducing systems thinking. Its a place to start. But the new Complexity paradigm has very different images. You heard the old saw, 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.' For Edgar Morin, that is only one way, the old paradigm way to look at it. Sometimes, there is no whole system. There are just pieces, and overlays, and partially implemented, and partially erased pieces looking for a whole that will never be.



Figure 2: Complexity Theory Images in New Paradigm

At left, the Dali time is bent, and there are many temporalities that compete for attention. In the Escher staircases, the routes keep changing as you move just like in those Harry Potter movies. At right, our complexity comes from living in several worlds at once, as in being in a physical world, a virtual world, and a dinosaur world (or one with ancestors). In short, complexity is not just about sense-making, its about how in 'social construction' the social means that many people have different ways of sense-giving, and these ways form what I call

hollographic complexities.

Complexity Theory is the New Paradigm,

Complexity theory admits to more than one sense-giving is co-present, and focuses ont what I have defined (2008, *The Storytelling Organization* book) as '*systemicity*': unfinishedness, unmergedness, and unfinalizability. Big words. What do they mean? Instead of a finished, merged-part, or whole 'system' there is a multi-layered, multi-refracted, or as I put it, a 'holographic' complexity. Learning to theorize and to empirically study the difference between old school 'system' and new paradigm 'systemicity' will be your fundamental learning objective this term. Be cautious. Just because it's Old School does not mean its gone. Rather, the bureaucratic, mechanistic, and other monologic frames interplay with each other, and with the so-called 'open systems' and the 'adaptive systems' ways of sense-giving.

I was challenging TQM pretty early on. I did not think it was being done according to the New Paradigm. Instead it seemed so very Bureaucratic, a Closed System thinking trying to pretend it was Open Systems, at a time when the theorists were looking ahead to find something Beyond Open Systems thinking. I teamed up with a Marketing Professor and did a critique of TQM for its Systems Thinking.

- Boje, D.M. & Winsor, R. "The Resurrection of Taylorism: Total Quality Management's Hidden Agenda," *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 6, No. 4 1993: 57-70.
http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/papers/Boje_Winsor_Anti_TQM_1993.htm

Is this the Postmodern Turn?

Not really. It would be more accurate to say that we have pre-modern ways of being, and some modern ways of being, and some postmodern ways of being. All of these ways of being are happening all at once. I used to think of them as hybrids. But now I see the multiple ways of sense-giving as a kind of dance of complexity. My issue, as you will learn, is that open systems theory is a monologic solution to very complex problems. It doe shave deviation-counteracting (1st cybernetics) and deviation-amplifying (2nd cybernetics), but fails to deal with what my friend Ken Baskin and I call, '3rd cybernetics.' Here is a quick and easy introduction:

- Boje, D. M. with Ken Baskin. 2005. Emergence of Third Cybernetics. *E:CO Emergence: Complexity & Organization Journal*. Vol. 7 (3-4): v-viii. (not previously listed, part of our special issue). [Click here for our Guest Editor introduction to the special issue](#)

Since you asked about postmodern. There are actually quite a few very different postmoderns. There is one that so like modern TQM or complex adaptive systems thinking, you can not tell them apart. There is another that only tells positive (dare I say 'Appreciative' narratives), or tells 5 positive for every one negative story. Then there are the Critters who tell only negative stories, or five critical stories for every one positive one. Finally, there are the radicals (Baudrillard & Lyotard) who think everything has gone virtual, that as Guy Debord said it before either of them, we live in the Society of the Spectacle. While postmodern turn is waning, there is still good interest out there. I recently cracked the mighty Leadership Quarterly with a piece on Ronald McDonald, all about simulacra.

- Boje, D. M. & C. Rhodes. (2005a). The Leadership of Ronald McDonald: Double Narration and Stylistic Lines of Transformation. *Leadership Quarterly Journal* * Vol 17 (1): 94-103. see pre-publication draft at http://peaceaware.com/McD/papers/Ronald_McDonald_LQ_2005.pdf

What is Complexity Theory Good For?

You can study just about any macro phenomenon. For example, the complexity of an operation, a supply chain, a government agency, how a process is mapped out in production, how marketing occurs in a global economy, how strategy shifts over time & by constituent, how a polyphonic (multi-voiced) strategy works, how to change from one kind of complexity to another, how to research emergence, how leadership is situational in complex adaptive systems, or how Tamara works.

What is Tamara?

Tamara is my word for how there is simultaneous action in different rooms, and people are only in one room at a time, so they are always trying to network with others (face-to-face, or virtually) and figure out what is going on. See also the journal I edit, <http://tamarajournal.com>

What is the Relation of Complexity and Storytelling?

This has been my thirty year quest. I started out studying networking among organizations. Used to teach macro intercommunication system theory course at UCLA in 1979 and into the 1980s. Not going to read any of these, but its a way to tell my story.

- Boje, David M. 1979. Centrality in Interorganizational Networks. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Organizational Behavior, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois. A chapter was published in *Administrative Science Quarterly*.
- Boje, D.M. & Whetten, D.A. 1981. "Effects of Organizational Strategies & Constraints on Centrality & Attributions of Influence in Interorganizational Networks," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 26, pp. 378-397, Sept. Used block modeling of 19 interorganizational networks, total of 316 organizations surveyed with 100% sample return.

It was at UCLA that Stew Leonard Jr. began taking classes from me. I was developing my interest in storytelling. I was teaching a Ph.D. seminar in large systems interorganization networks, and another in storytelling research methods. Stew, and MBA student took them both. Students who took them both began to look at macro issues. How organizations market themselves with storytelling, how storytelling is the preferred sensemaking currency (Boje, 1991: 106), and how multiple organizations might be forming and changing their networking based on storytelling. I worked with several good doctoral students. UCLA had a lot of very bright talent. TK Das asked me for a term paper I wrote in a course I took from Louis R. Pondy when I was at University of Illinois doing my Ph.D. It was a study of the relation of phenomenology and Interorganizational networking. Years later it became an article. Another Ph.D. student at UCLA was working with me to do auto-worker retraining, and change what we at UCLA were calling 'Transmogrification Networks.' I thought this could be done with storytelling. Transorganization development and storytelling, it turns out are quite inter-related. At New Mexico State, when Mark Hillon was a doctoral student, we started working on the project again, relating it to how small businesses network. Not going to read any of these either.

- Das, T.K. & Boje, D.M. "Interorganizational networks: A meaning-based perspective." *The International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, Vol. 1 (2)- April, 1993: 161-183.
- Boje, D.M. & Wolfe, T., "Transorganizational Development: Contributions to Theory & Practice," pp. 733-753. Leavitt, H., Pondy, L.

- R. & Boje, D.M., Readings in Managerial Psychology, Chicago Press, 731 pages, 3rd Edition, 1980 (4th Edition, 1989, 769 pages)
- Boje, D. M. & Hillon, Mark. 2008. Transorganizational Development, Chapter 34, pp. 651-654, in Tom Cummings (Ed) *Handbook of Organizational Change*. Sage. [See book link](#)

I got a big break when in 1991, after not getting tenure at UCLA, *Administrative Science Quarterly* accepted a qualitative study. Funny thing about this article is it keeps being cited (last I looked it was over 350 cites), where as my networking systems work got about 50 cites). It was a longitudinal study of how leaders effect change in the systemic's in what I named, The 'Storytelling Organization' by telling stories. The big discovery and why ASQ cared to publish this piece was (1) People don't tell beginning, middle, & end narrative forms very often, (2) More often they use terse (highly coded) telling, (3) Tellings are distributed across the rooms and across the cities in which this Office Supply Firm operated, and (4) Tellings are swirling around like some kind of whirlpool in a kind of complexity between the organization and its many environments. The study involved hundreds of hours of observation, and hours and hours of taping, transcribing, to try to trace what was this strange relation between complexity and storytelling. By this time, I was getting ten times the requests for the storytelling articles than I was for the macro systems work. Probably read this one.

- Boje, D.M. "Organizations as Storytelling Networks: A Study of Story Performance in an Office-Supply Firm," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 36, 1991: 106-126.*
http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/papers/Boje_Storytelling_ASQ_1991.pdf

I kept studying *Storytelling Organizations*, one by one, or multiple ones interacting. Environments are often made up of other organizations, and even Mother Nature, has organizations disputing every foot of ground. This landed my in *Academy of Management Journal* before it became fashionable to do qualitative work there. With the focus on Disney, how could they resist. The Postmodern movement was taking off, had not peaked, or begun its slide. Its citation rate is growing and may eclipsed the 1991 ASQ article. And we can read this one, since its a hot item once again.

- Boje, D. M. 1995. "Stories of the Storytelling Organization: A Postmodern Analysis of Disney as 'Tamara-land.'" *Academy of Management Journal*. 38(4): 997-1035.*
<http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/papers/DisneyTamaraland.html>

I am doing an All Academy Showcase session at the annual Academy of

Management Meetings and a PDW with my friend Bob Gephart. You are all welcome to attend.

- Boje, D. M. 2008. Academy of Management session: [Questions We Ask Disney Smile Factory](#) for an All Academy Showcase Session. I will be chairing the session and presenting, along with noted Disney scholars John Van Maanen, Mary Yoko Brannen, and one of our former doctoral students, Carolyn Gardner. Session will be in August - in Anaheim. Boje is Chair, session is Tuesday, August 12, 2008 10:30:00 AM - 11:50:00 AM, Anaheim Convention Center, 204B
- Boje, D. M. 2008. Pre-conference workshop, [Not Mickey Mouse: Methodological Writing to Address Qualitative Questions](#). Participant, Sunday, August 10, 2008, 8:00:00 AM - 11:00:00 AM Hilton Anaheim, El Capitan B Gephart is chair.

Is There Anything Practical about Complexity Theory?

There are two practical examples of combining Complexity Theory and Storytelling:

- – <http://storyemergence.org/> has workshop examples and practical focus
- - <http://peaceaware.com/talkingstick> looks at Las Cruces Arts & Cultural Scene, and how to change its current *Storytelling Organization*.

BACKGROUND:

In 2007, our class hosted an International Conference on Story and (System) Complexity. It took place in Old Mesilla at the end of October, and was sold out. A book based on this conference by Ken Baskin and I should be released lat this semester. It combines complexity and story thinking.

DEFINITIONS:

Complex Adaptive Systems - Usually means a unified, whole, complex system that is one-logic (unillogical), with merged-parts that are adapting to a changing, perhaps turbulent environment. There are boundaries and boundary-spanners. This is the OLD PARADIGM thinking.

Dialogical - Edgar Morin defined a “‘dialogical’ relationship... between order, disorder and organization” that is “antagonistic, concurrent and

complementary” (Morin, 1996: 11). "Morin’s complexity ways of looking outside the rule of order into the disorder, self-organization of emergence in everyday practical social communication activity of organizations that is not system parts merged into whole-ness, because the parts do not merge, and the whole never seems to be finalized except in narrative imagination" (Boje, 2008: STO Ch 1). Mikhail Bakhtin defined several dialogisms that can be related to strategy models: polyphonic strategy (many novices co-making strategy) stylistic strategy (many styles that become holographic refractions), chronotopic strategy (many ways of time/space interplays), architectonic (discourses of ethics, aesthetics & cognitive that interanimate), and a new one I am calling 'Polypi" (interplay of all the dialogisms at one time with the Spiritual Strategy).

Systemicity is defined as the dynamic unfinished, unfinalized, and unmergedness, and the interactivity of complexity properties (such as, dialogic, recursion, and holographic yielding emergence & self-organization) constituted by narrative-story processes, in the dance of sensemaking (see introduction). I invoke the word ‘systemicity’ in order to attack the ‘illusion’ that ‘whole system’ exists, because given the paradigm shift to complexity, and the focus on emergence (& self-organization), organizations are continually being reorganized, and never seem to finish long enough to have merged-parts or some kind of fixity of wholeness.

Holographic - Morin (1996: 14) in two sentences specifies a way out of hierarchic order, to let the properties of what I call systemicity interact without the presumption of hierarchy:

The “hologrammatic’ principle highlights the apparent paradox of certain systems where not only is the part present in the whole, but the whole is present in the part: the totality of the genetic heritage is present in each individual cell. In the same way, the individual is part of society but society is present in every individual, through his or here language, culture and standards.

Rather strange vocabulary, but so far I have never used it.

Table 3 Holographic Complexity Chart

Monogon – 1
dimension

Digon – 2 dimensions

Trigon – 3 dimensions

Tetragon – 4
dimensions

Pentagon – 5

dimensions

Hexagon – 6

dimensions

Septagon - 7

dimensions

Octagon – 8

dimensions

Nonagon – 9

dimensions

Decagon – 10

dimensions

Hendecagon – 11

dimensions

Dodecagon – 12

dimensions

Tridecagon – 13

dimensions

Source: Boje (2008) *The Storytelling Organization*. Chapter 1 -

<http://storytellingorganization.com/>

ABBREVIATIONS

STO - The Storytelling Organization book (Sage, 2008) - Order it on line at Amazon

CTE - Critical Theory Ethics for Business & Public Administration (Information Age, 2008) - Order it on line at Amazon

ASSIGNMENT LISTING

(Note, other assignments may be designated by instructor)

Assignment 1 Develop a SCRAPBOOK of organization you propose to study for the term (15%)

. **Scrapbook** should contain multiple styles of systemicity: web, drawing, brochures, report excerpts, photos, living stories, BME narratives, etc. Scrapbook can have sections such as 1 FRAMEWORKS, 2 MECHANISTIC, 3 CONTROL, 4 OPEN, 5 ORGANIC, 6 IMAGE, 7 SYMBOL, 8 NETWORK, 9 TRANSCENDENTAL (Read STO ch 1). Be prepared to present your Scrapbook and a **Critique of Naïve Systems Theory: Oral Critique** of any Naïve systems theory. Prepare a 5 min presentation of your critique. You will need to learn to GET CRITICAL, so read NM ch 1 (Deconstruction).

Assignment 2 Critical paper on General System Theory. (15%) Based upon STO intro, ch 1-3, NM Ch 1, and several other readings from the CD or your own research, please address the following: Write a critique of General System Theory (von Bertalanffy) based (in part) on Boulding, as failure to go beyond level 3 (CONTROL, 1st cybernetics), and (in part) on Bakhtin's concepts of heteroglossia, unfinalizability, and unmergedness (i.e.. SYSTEMICITY versus monophonic system). Use CRITICAL THEORY in your criticism to unpack and deconstruct von Bertalanffy. Must use an actual analytic method such as deconstruction, feminist theory, or CRITICAL THEORY approach in your paper. Use APA style, plus section headings. You are not supposed to do description, you are to apply analytic method, and not do compare and contrast between this author and that author.

Assignment 3 Either submit a conference abstract/paper or Submit Critical paper on Boulding

- 10 page paper (15%) – Topic: moving from hierarchical to holographic complexity models. Look at Boulding. A helpful intro to Boulding – John Martin 2003

<http://systems.open.ac.uk/objects/resources/Boulding.doc>
(2008, STO book) covers the 9 levels of Boulding's

model in comparison to their revision by Pondy. 1 FRAMEWORKS, 2 MECHANISTIC, 3 CONTROL, 4 OPEN, 5 ORGANIC, 6 IMAGE, 7 SYMBOL, 8 NETWORK, 9 TRANSCENDENTAL. Trace how this kind of hierarchic thinking is in system theory writing by Polanyi and by Pirsig. That will get you to C or B- level. For A level, look at hierarchic system -levels assumptions of current journal articles or books on the topic, and then how to move beyond that to holographic theory.

Assignment 4 CONFERENCE PAPER

REHEARSAL – Present rough draft, including abstract, into, lit review, method, analyses, implications, conclusions, references sections. Paper is something that you will submit or did submit (this term) to conference (15%). Must be based on your field study and many of the course readings. You have 10 minutes only and no more than 10 to present, followed by 5 minutes of questions. [See GUIDELINES](#) - As part of the process of developing your paper, these rough drafts will be sent to peer review. Each student will write a 2 page review (single spaced) of a peer's paper. Total grade is for written draft, presentation, and 2 reviews.

Final paper (40%) - TURN YOUR CONFERENCE PAPER INTO A PUBLISHABLE-QUALITY FINAL PAPER. Instead of a final exam, you are required to write a final paper. USE APA STYLE. Structure it as a journal article with all the parts. Please identify an area of organization studies and complexity studies that has been described in the literature as problematic (from language or systems view). Provide literature review of problem aspect in terms of systems/complexity/systemicity theory concepts and provide a detailed description of how such a problem might be changed using systems theory of language. Please collect and analyze field observations of a local organization and its systemicity. The final paper will be presented by you for 15 minutes on last scheduled class day. [See PUBLISHABLE GUIDELINES](#)

READ ALL FINE PRINT

1. Absentee policy: Students with more than two absences will be dropped administratively. Administrative drops will be processed by the October 15 deadline. Any absence (medical, athletic, or whatever other reason) requires a makeup paper (3 page minimum) based upon the assigned readings. Students who miss class, for any reason must do a make-up (see # 4)

2. Academic and non-academic misconduct: rules of classroom behavior: (1) no joint papers; (2) no disrespect to others students or professor (i.e. no blind emails); (3) no plagiarism of others' work (please use proper references; you are responsible to fully understand what is plagiarism). Grade of "F" will appear for violation of rules 1 to 3. See Student Code of Conduct in the NMSU Student Handbook (www.nmsu.edu/~vpss/03-04handkbook.pdf).

3. Multiple submissions: Not legitimate to submit class work in this course that has been submitted in other courses.

4. Make-up work on assignments or final paper: assignments and final paper are due on due date; no exceptions. If you miss a class for some good reason, then you can write a make-up paper (3 to 5 pages) on the readings assigned. Call it distance ed. See absentee policy above.

5. NMSU and the individual members of its faculty, staff, and student body recognize their responsibility for protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects. Please read and understand the [NMSU human subjects guidelines](#).

6. Disabilities/Employee Relations: Call the Director of Institutional Equity at 505.646.3635 with any questions you may have about NMSU's Non-Discrimination Policy & complaints of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Call the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities at 505.646.6840 regarding student issues related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. All medical information will be treated

confidentially.

7. Final Exams: The dates for final exams are published in the NMSU course schedule each semester. The date or time at which the final is offered may not be changed without the unanimous approval of students in the course as well as the approval of the department head. No exam given during the week before Finals Week may be more than one class period in length.

8. Incomplete Grades: Under university policy, incompletes may be given only if a student has a passing grade at mid-semester (the last day to withdraw from a class) and is precluded from successful completion of the second half of the course by a documented illness, documented death, family crisis or other similar circumstances beyond the student's control. An incomplete should not be given to avoid assigning a grade for marginal or failing work. Requirements for removal of the I grade must be clearly stated on the I grade form and a copy of the form must be provided to the student. It is up to the faculty member to determine whether an incomplete is appropriate. Incompletes do not automatically convert to F's if the course is not completed.

9. Record Retention: Instructors or their departments are required to keep grade books or computer records of students' scores, the course grading record, attendance records (when absences are penalized), etc. for two years. In cases involving grade appeals, records should be kept for at least two years after the appeal is adjudicated.

10. Students learn the ethics of story consulting practice and research. This includes following New Mexico State University IRB Human Subjects procedures. Please have anyone doing interviews fill out the following consent form. Please review any material with the client that you intend to appear in any kind of conference paper or publication. [Click here for IRB Approved Consent Form \(Feb 2007; renewed Jan 08\)](#). Please have interviewees complete a [Confidentiality Form](#) (copy to be stored in Boje's office, BC 318; give copy to interviewee)

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| [Schedule](#) | [Fine Print](#)

Referee