

Elaborating the Theory – Practice Space: Professional Competence in Science, Therapy, Consulting and Education

Editors: Ilse Schritteser & Maria Spindler

Ilse Schritteser and Maria Spindler
Editorial
**Between and Beyond Theory
and Practice**
page 739

Ilse Schritteser
**The Theory–Practice Space in
the Professions:
Casework as the Missing Link**
page 744

Ruth Lerchster and Gary Wagenheim
**Hunting elephants in the room:
How bringing theory to practice
helps clients address obvious but
unaddressed issues**
page 756

Tom Brown
**Locating Practical Wisdom in Boisot's
Information Space**
page 768

Matthijs Koopmans
**Large-Scale Studies and Their
Impact on Theory and
Professional Practice**
page 782

Erna Nairz-Wirth and Klaus Feldmann
**Teacher Professionalism:
The Double Field of Tradition
and New Professionalism**
page 796

Ruth Anderwald + Leonhard Grond
Many Have Gone On These Bends
page 813

Maria Spindler
**Being a Unique Misfit
My Life Viewed Through the
Reflective Hybrid Lens**
page 819

Journal “Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids® (COS)”

COS is the first journal to be dedicated to the rapidly growing requirements of reflective hybrids in our complex 21st-century organisations and society. Its international and multidisciplinary approaches balance theory and practice and show a wide range of perspectives in and between organisations and society. Being global and diverse in thinking and acting outside the box are the targets for its authors and readers in management, consulting and science.

Editor-in-Chief: Maria Spindler (AT)
email: m.spindler@cos-journal.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief: Gary Wagenheim (CA), Tonnie van der Zouwen (NL)

Editorial Board: Ann Feyerherm (US), Ilse Schritteser (AT), Maria Spindler (AT), Chris Stary (AT), Gary Wagenheim (CA), Nancy Wallis (US), Tonnie van der Zouwen (NL)

Reviewers: François Breuer, Tom Brown, Silvia Ettl Huber, Jeff Haldeman, Ann Feyerherm, Russell Kerkhoven, Larissa Krainer, Marlies Lenglachner, Ruth Lerchster, Barbara Lesjak, Annette Ostendorf, Richard Pircher, Ilse Schritteser, Claudia Schuchard, Maria Spindler, Christian Stary, Martin Steger, Thomas Stephenson, Martina Ukowitz, Gary Wagenheim, Nancy Wallis, Tonnie van der Zouwen

Proofreading: Deborah Starkey

Layout: www.kronsteiner-lohmer.at

Terms of Publication: Before publication authors are requested to assign copyright to “Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids®”. Beginning one year after initial publication in “Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids®” authors have the right to reuse their papers in other publications. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission from copyright holders for reproducing any illustrations, figures, tables, etc. previously published elsewhere. Authors will receive an e-mailed proof of their articles and a copy of the final version.

Disclaimer: The authors, editors, and publisher take no legal responsibility for errors or omissions that may be made in this issue. The publisher makes no warranty, expressed or implied, regarding the material contained herein.

Copyright: COS . reflective hybrids®, Vienna 2015

Ilse Schrittester

The Theory–Practice Space in the Professions: Casework as the Missing Link

Abstract

Theory seems to be increasingly considered as something that is “nice to have” in the so-called ivory tower of knowledge, but not enormously necessary or helpful for effective decisions in the everyday rat race of occupational pressure. Even universities, the very institutions where theory used to be the foundation of all curricula, are increasingly confronted with the call for more practice-oriented study programmes. In education for professions like medicine, law, business, architecture or – last, but not least – the all-time favourite in this debate, teaching, the value of practice has continued to gain strength, while theory seems to be increasingly losing its appeal. Where concepts of technical rationality reign, research-based theory has long been considered the relevant resource to inform practice, and elaborate techniques based on theory regarded as the instruments to resolve practical problems. These ideas have been shattered by the fact that by the time theory reaches the practitioner in our fast-changing knowledge society, it seems to have already lost its novel impact. Thus, the complexities and pressures of a fast-changing world have shattered the research-to-practice model that long dominated the sciences and the professions in particular. Today, a focus on “what works” and on short-term effects is regarded among practitioners as more rewarding than well-grounded theoretical long-term visions. Moreover, serious research does not provide simple answers to increasingly complex questions and, thus, often appears too abstract and too untrustworthy to practitioners as a practical guide.

In this article, I argue that the current doubts regarding the potential of theory to resolve practical problems are based on a misunderstanding of the relation between theory and practice. This misunderstanding is the result of a technical concept of theory as the direct instruction for practice and

a concept of practice which is completely dependent on theoretical knowledge, a view which Bourdieu refers to as an illusion which “objectivism has to construct in order to constitute the social world as a system of objective relations independent of individual consciousnesses and wills” (Bourdieu 1977, p. 4). On the other side of the coin is the concept of practice as a realm of its own, one in which tacit knowledge reigns and which is too fragilely aligned to theory to favour a reliable relationship. Given the increasing complexity of practical problems, the concept of technical rationality has proved too instrumental, too one-dimensional and, consequently, less helpful than expected. The second concept, i.e. practice as a realm of its own, can be seen as a counter-reaction which claims the quasi-independence of practical solutions from theory, dismissing the latter as too abstract, too esoteric and too inefficient when immediate practical solutions are required.

In contrast, practice theorists like Pierre Bourdieu have tried to complexify the theory–practice relationship as a dialectical pattern where neither one nor the other has the lead (cf. Bourdieu 1977, 1979). Likewise, Anthony Giddens’ structuration theory also offers an alternative approach to this question (Giddens 1984).

Bourdieu’s concept is governed by the notion of habitus, a set of dispositions as a product of history resulting in particular practices. According to Bourdieu, it has to be understood as a “system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations.” (Bourdieu 1990, p. 53). Carrying both practical knowledge and structural properties, the habitus is a generative phenomenon expanding in response to new situations, yet only within certain boundaries. It is an open system subjected to experiences which either reinforce or modify its structures (cf. Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 133). By defining the habitus as the medium through which social reality is created and recreated, Bourdieu offers an alternative to the traditional dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism, between a concept of practice as application of theory and a “what works” idea of practice.

Giddens' structuration theory is based on a similar assumption. Social reality, according to Giddens, is based on the production and reproduction of its structures by human agents who enact and interpret given structures, which are both constraining and enabling. (cf. Giddens 1982, 1984) "One of the main propositions of structuration theory is that the rules and resources drawn upon in the production of social action are at the same time the means of system reproduction (the duality of structure)." (Giddens 1982, p. 19.) This means that the structural properties of social systems "are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize." (ibid., p. 25)

In this way, Bourdieu and Giddens, among other practice theorists, have created a novel approach to the objectivist-subjectivist battle and, through this, help to redefine the theory-practice relationship as a dialectical pattern in which practice fertilises theory just as much as theory can give new meaning to practical knowledge.

For the professions – and the notion of professional expertise in particular – the practice-as-applied-theory model has proved too shallow and has led to a crisis of confidence in professional knowledge. A complete understanding of professionalism requires an understanding of the indeterminate zones of practice, the "micro-practices" (Kanes 2010, p.9), how they relate to knowledge, and how knowledge, in turn, relates to professional expertise. Practice in such an approach has to be essentially understood in the plural, i.e. as "practices", insofar as it involves the varying social interactions between the professional and his/her clients, who should not be perceived as objects to be operated on but as "co-participants in practice" (Kemmis 2010, p. 145). Against this background, the relation between theory and practice in the professions also presents itself as a structured and structuring space, defining and re-defining theory from the practical case perspective. Theory, in turn, represents the horizon before which the various practical decisions must be tested and justified. As a result, we can neither reduce practice to applied theory nor dispense with theory in favour of mere practical effectiveness and a "what works" philosophy. The reason this idea has not found adequate recognition either with practitioners or in the discourse on the professions

may well have to do with the functional perspective on the professions that prevails in the sociology of professions on the one hand and with the increasing complexity in professional practice on the other.

However, the role of professions in society is not – as is assumed in some accounts of professionalism – merely to apply expert knowledge. Nor can professionals simply rely on “what works”. A professional has to draw not only on research-based knowledge but also on a repertoire of skills that fosters case sensitivity (cf. Kaner, 2010, p.6). In addition to their domain-specific expertise, professionals are supposed to comprehend and judge every individual case as unique in its own right based on an ethical code to which each professional is expected to adhere and which is in line with their contract with society (cf. Stichweh 1996, Oevermann 1996). The potential of the individual case lies in the narrative it offers and in its interpretation by the professional. Theory serves as a magnifying glass through which the individual case is examined by drawing on its findings. The idiosyncratic language of the case – its uniqueness – works on the other hand as a test of theoretical assumptions and their robustness.

Over the past two decades, both study programmes at professional schools and professional development further education programmes have increasingly introduced the case study approach, not only to foster problem-solving and decision-making skills by confronting the learners with fuzzy and complex problems, but also to sensitise learners to the importance of meaning and meaning-making in the construction of the case by both the client and the professional. According to the Stanford Newsletter on Teaching, for instance, the case study approach is recommended because “[c]ases can help us organize and bring to life abstract and disparate concepts by forcing students to make difficult decisions about complex human dilemmas.” (Winter 1994, p. 1).

Understanding casework means learning to explore a problem from various points of view and almost playfully taking on the different perspectives inherent in the narrative, while at the same time critically holding it against

the findings of research and theory and understanding it as an example of a more general or even universal question (cf. Schritteser 2014). The specific conflict represented in a law case, for example, might then be translated into more general ethical questions of society. Or take the conflict between Greece, the European Union and the International Monetary Fund as a specific case of economic expertise. The different narratives of the Greek government and the representatives of the European Union and their views of the situation can be used as a starting point to discuss various approaches to a situation of economic crisis, e.g. austerity vs. Keynesian politics. In the course of this discussion, a great deal of economic theory has to be worked through and tested for its validity, while, at the same time, the individual consequences (e.g. high rates of unemployment, lasting economic recession, etc.) of specific economic decisions must be kept in mind. All this constitutes a classic scenario of conflicting interests – and precisely the type of problem (future) professionals will have to deal with and for which they will have to work with their clients to find a sustainable solution.

When translated into real-world problems and then back into theoretical questions, topics are not encountered as abstract ideas, but instead come to life in all their ambiguity and complexity. The focus on the individual narrative against the background of theoretical knowledge encourages exploratory and relational questions instead of technical shortcuts and the application of easy solutions based seemingly on data and truths.

Case orientation demands research-based knowledge, epistemological know-how and practical experience, which makes it an ambitious enterprise: in addition to technical knowledge, it also implies a *receptive and intuitive capability*, which forces professionals to *perceive* and *comprehend* the underlying meaning in a situation, a remark or a gesture and enables them to offer appropriate interpretations and, consequently, adequate solutions. Some researchers prefer to speak here of an art rather than of competences (Argyris & Schön 1974, Schön 1983, 1987, Oevermann 1996) because the interpretation of cases and the solutions derived do not follow strictly logical

steps and are instead often inspired by creative turns and intuition. Schön describes this notion as follows:

“Inherent in the practice of professionals we recognize as unusually competent is a core of artistry. Artistry is an exercise of intelligence, a kind of knowing, though different in crucial respects from our standard model of professional knowledge. [...] In the terrain of professional practice, applied science and research-based technique occupy a critically important though limited territory, bounded on several sides by artistry. There are an art of problem framing, an art of implementation, and an art of improvisation – all necessary to mediate the use in practice of applied science and technique.” (Schön 1987, p. 13).

In this view, professionals have to use their knowledge and expertise to draw up their action plans, but, in turn, also assess these plans artfully with an open mind and a case-sensitive attitude in the context of the specific situation. However, to recognise the particular demands of the specific situation, they require a rigorously *receptive attitude* and interpretative skills to help them become aware of what the individual situation – the “case” – has to tell them (Oevermann, 1996).¹

To learn these skills, such narratives can take the form of stories communicated verbally, in discourse or in fixed or moving images, which means that cases can be taken from real-world qualitative empirical data, such as transcripts of client-professional interactions, videos, audiotapes or pictures

¹ Recent research on expertise comes to a similar conclusion and defines this sensitivity to the “here and now” by the concept of situation awareness (Endsley 2006). The perception of relevant information forms the basis of situation awareness. Yet this involves not only perception but also comprehension, which “demands that people understand the meaning and significance of what they have perceived” (ibid., p. 634). This, in turn, “encompasses how people combine, interpret, store and retain information, integrating multiple pieces of information and arriving at a determination of its relevance.” (ibid.) Finally, the ability to project is developed along with refined perception and comprehension: “The ability to project from current events and dynamics to anticipate future events (and their implications) allows for timely decision making. Experts rely heavily on future projections as a hallmark of skilled performance.” (ibid., p. 635)

capturing critical incidents. They can also be taken from literary texts with all their rich metaphors and condensed meaning, which are particularly suitable for stimulating the power of observation.

Narratives have an unfolding structure and are layered with meaning. Therefore, the interpretative procedures used have to focus on reading between the lines, on paying attention to such details as the images used, the narrative structure, the exact choice of words in their given context and, potentially also to the gaps, i.e. what is not explicitly mentioned or shown (be it in a transcript, video, picture or other form of ethnographic material). There are, of course, various methods available in qualitative research to analyse and interpret narratives and these can be used to provide a methodological framework. In any case, regardless of the interpretation approach chosen, its purpose is to unfold the rich meaning found in a narrative – meaning which sensitises the reader, listener or observer to its obvious and latent messages. The role of theory here should not be to provide a method of interpretation, nor should the cases be turned into applications of theory. Wolfgang Iser, a literary critic, explains the role of theory in the interpretation of art in a way that relates to the interpretation of narrative in general. According to Iser, the cases or examples “are not meant to corroborate the validity of the theory concerned, not least because [...] theories themselves often resort to examples in order to underpin basic arguments at the point where explanation leaves off. The example then functions as a compensation for what the concepts are unable to grasp, and thus is meant to furnish the generalizations which the cognitive frameworks can no longer provide. This is a practice by no means confined to theories of art but one which is widespread in a great many theoretical discourses today.” (Iser 2006, p. X)

In the following, I will conclude by providing two examples to illustrate my line of argument so far. My aim with these examples is to offer an answer to the following question: What is it that makes a case an interesting narrative and gives it the power to inspire interpretation and foster the competences and skills (or artistry) mentioned above?

The short passage below is taken from a narrative by the Canadian author Margaret Atwood. A daughter listens to her 89-year-old mother recounting a recurring dream.

It was around this time – when she was still walking, when she’d begun to fall down – that she told me another thing she’d never told me before. She was having a recurring dream, she said; the same dream over and over. It frightened her and made her sag, although she didn’t say this.

In the dream she was alone in the woods, walking by herself beside a small river. She wasn’t exactly lost, but no one else was around – none of the people who ought to have been there. Not our father, not my brother, not me; none of her own brothers and sisters, or her friends or parents. She didn’t know where they’d gone. Everything was very silent: no birds, no sound of water. Nothing above but the empty blue sky. She came to a high logjam across the river; it was blocking the path. She had to climb up on the slippery logs, hauling herself hand over hand, up and up and up, toward the air.

‘And then what?’ I said.

‘That’s all there is to it,’ she said. ‘It wakes me up. But then I have the same dream all over again.’ (Atwood 2006, p. 220f.)

I chose this example specifically because it offers a rich illustration of what people who have grown old might feel when confronted with the limitations of old age and the losses they have suffered by outliving almost all of their close peers. Working with such literary texts – an approach advocated by the “Narrative Medicine” programmes² – can help medical practitioners and students of medicine to better understand what might be going on inside an elderly person’s mind and how this might influence that person’s well-being. It also trains their attentiveness to the rich patterns of language and its multi-layered meanings in a specific context, thus enhancing their diagnostic

² Cf. <http://ce.columbia.edu/narrative-medicine> or <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/groups/chh/Narrative-Medicine-Conference-/The-Network.aspx>

intuition and reasoning. A close reading of this passage will therefore draw attention to the choice of words (e.g. that the dream is described by the dreamer as ‘*frightening*’; that she misses the people who ‘*ought to have been there*’ and ‘*doesn’t know where they’d gone*’; that she is ‘*alone*’ in the woods with an ‘*empty blue sky*’ stretching above her; that the ground she steps on is ‘*slippery*’; the effort she makes to *haul herself ‘up and up and up*’, etc.).

Having professionals or students work on such a narrative and encouraging them to analyse it closely not only fosters narrative knowledge, i.e. “what one uses to understand the meaning and significance of stories through cognitive, symbolic, and affective means.” (Charon 2001, p.2), it also offers various starting points for a discussion on topics dealing with authentic medical questions (such as how to deal with elderly patients and their specific situation or how to ensure their well-being while at the same time recognising that old age is not an illness in itself that can be cured, etc.). It might also trigger a discussion on the ethical questions raised by the increasing demand in Western societies for nursing care for the elderly.

According to the narrative medicine approach, “growing narrative sophistication has provided medicine with new and useful ways in which to consider patient-physician relationships, diagnostic reasoning, medical ethics, and professional training.” (Charon 2001, p.3)

My second example is taken from a school research project and is an excerpt from data collected through classroom observation.

The morning break has just finished, and the teacher is about to start the next lesson when one of her pupils, Max, raises his hand and tells her that he does not want to sit next to Lucas any more. He wants to swap seats with someone else. The teacher agrees and suggests that he swaps seats with one of the boys in the front row of the class. She asks these pupils if one of them would be prepared to change seats and sit next to Lucas. One of the boys openly refuses to do so and says that he can’t stand Lucas ‘because he always wears strange, old-fashioned clothes’. Several pupils agree. The

teacher asks them to be quiet and continues the discussion by asking the rest of the class for a volunteer to sit next to Lucas. Nobody volunteers. Finally, the teacher asks one boy in particular, but he also refuses and asks if Lucas can't sit on his own 'because nobody wants to sit next to him'. The teacher explains that there is not enough space in the classroom for single desks and asks a girl to change seats with Max. The girl tries to argue with the teacher, but ultimately agrees in the end, albeit unhappily. (Bennewitz, 2012, 207f.)

This narrative triggers a number of speculations concerning the behaviour of the teacher, e.g. how she seeks to find a quick solution to the problem by having Max swap places, the fact that she negotiates who should sit next to Lucas in his presence without consulting or addressing him, that she finally asks a girl to sit next to Lucas, possibly in the assumption that a girl will be more obedient than a boy and will not refuse, etc. This might raise questions like the following: How might Lucas feel in this situation? What are his classmates aiming to achieve? Which other responses to Max's request might be possible and how would they be justified in classroom management terms? It also provides the opportunity to address and discuss crucial theoretical questions, such as what research has to tell us about ostracism at school and its effects on children or adolescents and why teachers (like the one in the story above) tend to stick to their routines without being aware of the severe risk potential of such incidents for the development of children and adolescents.

In conclusion, the theory-practice gap can be turned into a prolific space that inspires both theory and practice through the analysis and interpretation of cases as narratives and the use of case studies as a workable medium for such a process.

In this article, I have endeavoured to demonstrate the potential of this approach, which not only cultivates a receptive, context-sensitive attitude and fosters interpretative skills that are central to monitoring and negotiating the understanding of the case with the client as the co-constructor of

meaning, but also teaches people to learn to generalise about how the case might be viewed from a theory perspective and why it might be considered an example of a more general question in the context of research-based theory. Finally, it also teaches people to learn to feed the novelty of the individual case into current theoretical knowledge and to use this to either support or question such theory.

Working with cases as instances of narratives opens up a space in which neither theory nor practice and routine prevail as sources for sound professional decisions. The narrative and its multiple meanings, shape and latent patterns – all of which can be revealed through careful interpretation – establish a dialogue between theory and practice. This dialogue's potential lies therein that theory and practice cross-fertilise each other, thus creating new knowledge that is derived from practical experience on the one hand and that helps to reassess seemingly natural or self-evident practices through the lens of theory on the other. Finally, casework and narrative unfold their full potential when they become an integral part of the education of professionals and of life-long professional development.

References

- Argyris, Chris & Schön, Donald (1974). *Theory in Practice. Increasing Professional Effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Atwood, Margaret (2008). *Moral Disorder. And Other Stories*. New York: Random House.
- Bennewitz, Hedda (2012). *Der Blick auf Lehrer/-innen [Teachers in Focus]* in de Boer, H. & Reh, S. (Eds.) *Beobachtung in der Schule – Beobachten lernen [Observation in School – Learning to Observe]*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 203 – 214.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1977). *The Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press & (1979). *The Logic of Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1990). *The Logic of Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre & Wacquant, Loic J.D. (1992). *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Charon, Rita (2001). Narrative Medicine. A Model for Empathy, Reflection, Profession, and Trust. [Electronic version] JAMA, Vol 286, No. 15. Retrieved May 2015 from Jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=194300.

Endsley, Mica R. (2006). Expertise and Situation Awareness. In: Ericsson, K.A., Charness, N., Feltovich P. J. & Hoffmann, R. R. The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, pp. 633 – 651.

Giddens, A. (1982), Profiles and Critiques in Social Theory, Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press

Giddens, A. (1984/2009), The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration. Cambridge & Malden: Polity Press

Greenhalgh, Thomas & Hurwitz. Brian Narrative-based medicine. Why study narrative? BMJ. 1999 January 2; 318(7175), pp. 48–50.

Iser, Wolfgang (2006). How to Do Theory. Malden, USA and Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

Kanes, Clive (2010). Elaborating Professionalism. Studies in Practice and Theory. Heidelberg/London/New York: Springer.

Kemmis, Stephen (2010). What is Professional Practice? Recognising and Respecting Diversity in Understandings of Practice. In: Kanes, Clive. Elaborating Professionalism. Studies in Practice and Theory. Heidelberg/London/New York: Springer, pp. 139 – 165.

Oevermann, Ulrich (1996). Theoretische Skizze einer revidierten Theorie professionalisierten Handelns. [A Theoretical Draft of a Revised Theory of Professional Action] In: Combe, A. & W. Helsper (Eds.), Pädagogische Professionalität. Untersuchungen zum Typus pädagogischen Handelns (pp. 70-182). [Professionalism and Pedagogy. Studies in Pedagogical Activity] Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.

Giddens, Anthony (1984). The Constitution of Society. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Schön, Donald A. (1984). The Reflective Practitioner. How Professionals Think in Action. Perseus Books. London: Basic Books Inc.

Schön, Donald A. (1987). Education the Reflective Practitioner. Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Schrittesser, Ilse (2014). The role of case study in teacher education: An attempt to bridge the gap between action and reflection. *Global Education Review*, 1 (4), pp. 14-31

Stichweh, Rudolf (1996). Profession in einer funktional differenzierten Gesellschaft. [Profession in a Functionally Complex Society]. In: Combe, A. & W. Helsper (Eds.), Pädagogische Professionalität. Untersuchungen zum Typus pädagogischen Handelns (pp. 70-182). [Professionalism and Pedagogy. Studies in Pedagogical Activity] Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, pp. 49 – 69

About the Authors

Ruth Anderwald + Leonhard Grond live and work in Vienna as an artist duo. Since 2014 their main focus has been on the artistic research project *Dizziness—A Resource*. Since 2012 they have been curating *HASENHERZ*, a screening and discussion series inspired by Arnold Schönberg's *Society for Private Musical Performances*. From 2013-2014 they worked with the writer and essayist Anna Kim on a wallpaper project. From 2003-2007 they worked on the artist book *Notizen zu einer Küste* (Notes on a Coast), combining their eponymous photo series and the first anthology of contemporary Hebrew lyric poetry ever translated into German. Their numerous exhibitions and screenings include: *What Would Seeing be Without Us?* mumok cinema - Museum of Modern Art, Foundation Ludwig, Vienna (2014); *Trees are Companions*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2013); *Camera Solaris*, Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv (2011) and Museum for Applied Arts, Vienna (2008); *Construction Site As Far As The Eye Can See*, Institute for Art in Public Space Styria, Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz (2011); *Shattered Horizon*, Himalayas Art Museum, Shanghai (2010); *Film Centre Pompidou*, Paris (2009); *Paradise Now! — French Essential Avant-Garde Cinema (1890-2008)* Tate Modern, London (2008), *Notes on a Coast*, Herzlyia Museum of Contemporary Art (2005).

For further information and contact: www.on-dizziness.org

Tom Brown holds an MBA and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Simon Fraser University. He has an academic and practical background in communications, program development and instructional design. His research interests are located at the intersection of university teaching and business ethics with a particular interest in online education. Since 1998 he has held a variety of senior administrative positions in the Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University. Currently he serves as Academic Director of the online Graduate Diploma in Business Administration and the Part-Time MBA programs and teaches business ethics at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Contact: tomb@sfu.ca

Klaus Feldmann is researcher at the Education Sciences Group at the Vienna University of Business and Economics. He was professor of sociology at the University of Hannover from 1980-2004. Since then he has designed and published qualitative studies on habitus, professionalisation and school-dropouts together with Erna Nairz-Wirth.

Matthijs Koopmans joined the faculty at Mercy College in 2011. His areas of interest are cause and effect relationships, complexity theory and quantitative single case designs. He has published papers in numerous refereed journals, and is one of the editors of *Chaos and Complexity in Psychology: The Theory of Nonlinear Dynamical Systems*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2009. His most recent research is on daily high school attendance patterns and the dynamics of school reform. He earned his doctorate at Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1988.

Ruth Erika Lerchster studies Psychology/Group Dynamics and holds a doctorate degree in Intervention Research; she is a lecturer at various universities and has been qualified to train group dynamics for the ÖGGO; she links research and science with her work as organisational consultant. Her consulting topics are leadership culture, team and organisation development and organisational learning. She works as Senior Scientist and Deputy at the Institute of Intervention Research and Cultural Sustainability. Her publications deal with intervention research, consulting, handover of family business and the reflexive use of information and communication technologies in enterprises.

For further information and contact: www.uni-klu.ac.at/iff/ikn/ and Ruth.Lerchster@aau.at

Erna Nairz-Wirth is head of the Education Sciences Group at Vienna University for Economics and Business. She earned the rank of associate professor in 2007 in the course of her habilitation (*venia docendi*) in the field of education sciences and pedagogics. She has published numerous articles in the field of sociology of education. Erna Nairz-Wirth has designed and conducted numerous qualitative and quantitative studies on inequality in

education, habitus, professionalisation and school-dropouts. She was Visiting Scholar at the University of Cambridge in 2013.

Ilse Schritteser is Professor of School Research and Teacher Education at the University of Vienna, Austria. Her main fields of interest are professionalism research and teaching and learning research. She has authored numerous articles in the field of education and professionalism research. Presently, she leads a collaborative research group interested in the intersection between theory and research on the one hand and practice and policy on the other. She is executive editor of the Austrian-German-Swiss Journal of Teacher Education.

For further information and contact: homepage.univie.ac.at/ilse.schritteser/

Maria Spindler has been an international organizational consultant for more than twenty years in economics (banking and production) and at NGOs (universities and foundations) and lectures at universities in Europe and the US. Her topics are creating future, inventing and transforming organizations, structures and leadership cultures. Maria is qualified to train the trainer for the Austrian Association for Group Dynamics & Organization Consulting and serves on their education board. Her books deal with transformation, creating future for leadership and organizations, group dynamics, organizational consulting and research. Maria founded the COS Journal in 2011 and is its chief editor.

For further information and contact: www.maria-spindler.at.

Gary Wagenheim is adjunct management professor at the Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University and Aalto University – Executive Education and former professor of organizational leadership at the School of Technology at Purdue University. His research and teaching interests are reflective practice, individual and organizational change, and organizational behavior. He owns and operates Wagenheim Advisory Group that provides corporate training, coaching and organizational development programs. Dr. Wagenheim received a Ph.D. and a M.A. in Human

and Organizational Systems from Fielding Graduate University, a M.B.A. in Organizational Behavior/Organizational Change and Development from Syracuse University.

SAVE THE DATE – Announcing the 2016 COS CONFERENCE Venice, Italy, 7–9 April 2016

We are happy to announce the second COS conference in Venice in April 2016.
The topic of our gathering is

Flow beyond Systems

**Delightful Development of the Self and of New Systems
through Somatic Intelligence**

Centro Don Orione (www.donorione-venezia.it), Venice, Italy

“Flow beyond Systems” is understood as the creative force of new realities for organisations and society through each of us. The lively nexus between the worlds of organised systems and individual worlds is our main focus: Individual development faces challenges and in return poses challenges to organisations and society. Growing together, step by step, requires facilitating the interplay between individuals and existing organisations and new organisational realities that are waiting to be created.

The way we lead and organise ourselves in collectives is reflected by what organisations, larger social structures and ourselves as parts thereof have become. Freedom and structure do not pre-exist in organised communities but are relationally constructed in the common space to which its (more or less) equal members bring their uniqueness and create something of (more or less) lasting value such as an organisation or larger organised structures. Leadership is momentous for supporting development and meaningful creations beyond known forms.

Reaching beyond is neither a result of will power nor sheer mental excellence, nor can it be made to happen. Such attempts tend to result in forms of mind-body splits, bringing forth unwelcome symptoms or rigid, “more-of-the-same” patterns in the relation of the body and its organised, interactional environment becoming powerful limiting patterns. Changing these realities largely depends on our ability to intentionally bring somatic intelligence to the creation of new larger structures.

The conference offers cutting-edge methodology for bridging inner and outer worlds and serves as a co-creative space for development, transformation and inspiration. The participants engage in rich conversations, deepen relationships with like-minded colleagues, forge collaborative partnerships and have an opportunity to integrate and share insights and learning. We invite you to join a delightful development!

Become a Friend&Member of COS!

Join the COS movement and become a Friend&Member of COS! COS is a home for reflective hybrids and a growing platform for co-creation of meaningful, innovative forms of working and living in and for organisations and society, between and beyond theory and practice. We invite you to become an active member of COS.

As a part of COS you have access to our products and happenings. As a Friend&Member, you carry forward the COS intention of co-creating generative systems through mindful, fresh mind-body action. Let's connect in novel ways around the globe!

Access points for your participation and future contribution are:

- Mutual inspiration and support at the COS conference
- Development and transformation at COS creations seminars
- Creative scientific publishing and reading between and beyond theory and practice
- COS LinkedIn Virtual Community
- And more ...

The Friend&Membership fee is € 200.00 for 18 months. Why 18 months? We synchronise the Friend&Membership cycle with the COS conference rhythm and 3 COS Journal editions.

Your 18-month COS Friend&Membership includes:

- 3 editions of the COS Journal: 2 hard copies each of 3 issues, one for you and one for a friend = a total of 6 hard copies for the value of €169.00.
- Conference fee discount of €150.00.
- COS creations: Special discount of 30% for each seminar you attend.

Send your application for membership to office@cos-journal.com.

Join COS, a Home for Reflective Hybrids

The future is an unknown garment that invites us to weave our lives into it. How these garments will fit, cover, colour, connect and suit us lies in our (collective) hands. Many garments from the past have become too tight, too grey, too something...and the call for new shapes and textures is acknowledged by many. Yet changing clothes leaves one naked, half dressed in between. Let's connect in this creative, vulnerable space and cut, weave and stitch together.

Our target group is reflective hybrids – leaders, scientists, consultants, and researchers from all over the world who dare to be and act complex. Multi-layered topics require multidimensional approaches that are, on the one hand, interdisciplinary and, on the other hand, linked to theory and practice, making the various truths and perspectives mutually useful.

If you feel you are a reflective hybrid you are very welcome to join our COS movement, for instance by:

- Visiting our website: www.cos-journal.com
- Getting in touch with COS-Creations. A space for personal & collective development, transformation and learning. Visit our website: www.cos-journal.com/cos-creations/
- Following our COS-Conference online: www.cos-journal.com/conference2016
- Subscribing to our newsletter: see www.cos-journal.com/newsletter
- Subscribing to the COS Journal: see www.cos-journal.com/buy-subscribe
- Ordering single articles from the COS Journal: www.cos-journal.com/buy-articles-pdf
- Becoming a member of our LinkedIn group: go to www.linkedin.com and type in "Challenging Organisations and Society.reflective hybrids" or contact Tonnie van der Zouwen on t.vanderzouwen@cos-journal.com

Order COS Journals and COS Articles

Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids®

Mental Leaps into Challenging Organisations and Society

Volume 1, Issue 1, October 2012

Editor: Maria Spindler (AT)

Reflective Hybrids in Management and Consulting

Volume 2, Issue 1, May 2013

Editors: Maria Spindler (AT), Gary Wagenheim (CA)

Involving Stakeholders to Develop Change Capacity for More Effective Collaboration and Continuous Change

Volume 2, Issue 2, October 2013

Editor: Tonnie van der Zouwen (NL)

Different Culture, Different Rhythms

Volume 3, Issue 1, May 2014

Editor: Karin Lackner (DE)

On the Move: Patterns, Power, Politics

Volume 3, Issue 2, October 2014

Editors: Maria Spindler (AT) and Tonnie van der Zouwen (NL)

Positive Deviance Dynamics in Social Systems

Volume 4, Issue 1

Editors: Maria Spindler (A) and Gary Wagenheim (CA)

Elaborating the Theory – Practice Space: Professional Competence in Science, Therapy, Consulting and Education

Volume 4, Issue 2

Editors: Ilse Schritteser (A) and Maria Spindler (A)

each € 28,- plus shipping costs

Subscription of the COS Journal

The journal is published semi-annually (May and October). The price of an annual subscription is € 50,-.

Subscription: 2 issues each year € 50,- plus shipping costs each year

The subscription can be terminated until 31.12. for the next year.

Order and subscribe the COS Journal at www.cos-journal.com

www.cos-journal.com/buy-subscribe/

Order single articles of the COS Journal

for € 10,- per article at www.cos-journal.com

www.cos-journal.com/buy-articles-pdf/

Or mail us to order the COS Journal

to sales@cos-journal.com

ANNOUNCEMENT – MAY 2016

Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids®

Volume 5, Issue 1

**Title: Change in Flow: How critical incidents
transform organisations.**

Editors: Nancy Wallis & Maria Spindler

The Journal "Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids® (COS)" is the first journal to be dedicated to the rapidly growing requirements of reflective hybrids in our complex 21st-century organisations and society. Its international and multidisciplinary approaches balance theory and practice and show a wide range of perspectives in and between organisations and society. Being global and diverse in thinking and acting outside the box are the targets for its authors and readers in management, consulting and science.