

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

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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.

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Maria Spindler

Being a Unique Misfit My Life Viewed Through the Reflective Hybrid Lens

My intent in telling my story is to support you as reader in opening up to new perspectives, enlightening your uniqueness and bringing your story to life. I assume telling our stories has the potential to bring us closer to ourselves, our purposes, our identities and each other.

I consider myself as reflective and hybrid and my unique mis-fitness is the basis for my inventive and creative identity and actions. Reflective hybrids are aware of differences and at the same time understand the urge to integrate and transform differences, creating new perspectives, approaches, and solutions. It is my belief that this is one way to strengthen one's own and shared sources of life, livelihood and playfulness.

My own journey observed through the lens of hybridity starts with the feeling of not fitting, of being a misfit, an outcast, a lone wolf. I constantly had the feeling that there was something wrong with me, that I was not myself, not connected, that I was too complex, too different from others, that I wanted too much from life.

My various jobs can be interpreted as attempts to connect to society and myself: farmer, kindergarten teacher, student, action researcher, human resource manager and consultant. After a long journey searching for the right scientific discipline I obtained a doctorate in philosophy, as my dissertation did not fit into any one discipline – it combined new economy, management, IT, organisational development, and group dynamics.

To move on in my life, leaving behind the self-perception of being a misfit and ceasing to apologise for being myself, was a life-changing decision. Over the years I discovered how to love myself as a misfit.

This decision included not to decide but to act between and beyond. It was the decision to be alive and connected to myself instead of following *the one*

truth and the expectations of others. So I integrated theory and practice, different disciplines, different layers of consciousness, different social layers, different approaches, methods and forms. By accepting and integrating them I gained the ability to create and invent them. I was able to invent and create my own approaches, concepts, explanations, feelings and truths.

In summary, my struggles, inventions and solutions for my life as a reflective hybrid have meant:

- Becoming aware that the need to fit in, the desire to belong somewhere and to have a secure professional home means limiting myself.
- Accepting that this does not work for me, and moving on to find my own flow in life.
- Accepting that struggle was a part of my unique life.
- Leaving behind different jobs and some of my friends and family members.
- Creating my own business called “consulting and research”.
- Finding a home through writing, a place which makes me stand still, step back and move on all at the same time, to a deeper, wider and higher level, to a place that supports my reflection by integrating my thinking, feeling and producing.
- Founding and supporting “Challenging Organisations and Society. Reflective Hybrids” as a home for me and other complex people.
- Manifesting the flow of joyful, playful inventing of new forms, platforms, homes for others, books, the journal, a community; products and collaborations that can capture and hold different disciplines and structures that can provide a vessel for complexity and diversity.

It was a great moment in my life when I discovered and became aware that my movement, my flow can be part of our movement, our flow. It was an awakening: there are more reflective hybrids out there; I am not the only one. On this journey of supporting the emergence of the COS collective I

met complex, diverse, integrative, transforming, warm-hearted, purpose-seeking and meaning-seeking, struggling beings. This process manifested COS. Reflective hybrids in the world.

Together with those people (and more to come) I created a form, a platform, a trans-form-space, a movement and a home for reflective hybrids, a collective of reflective hybrids that is a shared learning -> creating -> transforming space.

Now we have the following:

- a COS Journal for reflective hybrids (theory-practice, different disciplines and approaches) www.cos-journal.com
- a COS Conference for reflective hybrids (a shared place for transforming differences) www.cos-journal.com/conference
- COS – Creations for reflective hybrids (doing, acting and changing; not just writing and talking) www.cos-journal.com/creations
- Online COS – Linked in: www.linkedin.com; type in “Challenging Organisations and Society.reflective hybrids”

Why does the world need reflective hybrids? Does the world need reflective hybrids?

When we accept that reflective hybrids have a complex approach and are able to interlink and go beyond differences (disciplines, theory-practice, life approaches, layers of awareness), we realise that they can interlink and hold differences and create solutions for complex answers which we need in our globalised world.

The more differences an entity (human and collective) tries to combine and hold, the more reflection is required in order to integrate.

It is a special form of reflection, diving in and stepping back, that:

- Brings together feeling – thinking – acting – reflecting;
- Integrates and differentiates;
- Dares to embrace hybridity and to misfit in order to have the strength to take part in the transforming with and for all of us.

Welcome, reflective hybrids, to COS. We are interested in your story about being a reflective hybrid. We would like to publish stories of reflective hybrids on our website and perhaps in our COS Journal. Send your story to Maria: m.spindler@cos-journal.com or Gary: wagenhei@sfu.ca.

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).

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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.

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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.

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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 Schrittemser 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.

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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.

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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
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- 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

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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.