

Dragons, Opportunities and Challenges in Intersect Organizations

William Bergquist, Ph.D.

Many years ago, a noted and polarizing American administrator, Donald Rumsfeld, had something important to say about knowledge. He noted that sometimes we are confident about what we know—which means that we know what we know. This is the “gold standard” for expertise. There is a second form of expertise that is not quite as good—but is still usually acceptable. This is the condition when we know that we don’t know something. When this acknowledgement of not-knowing is extending far into the future or far into space, then we can “live with it.” We don’t know what the world will look like 100 years from now or if there is a sentient life form dwelling on some other planet in the universe. This is why many of us take great delight in reading science fiction. It reveals and plays out what we now don’t know.

For Rumsfeld there are two other conditions regarding knowledge—and these are particularly disconcerting and often reside at the heart of our crisis of expertise. There are things that we know but aren’t aware that we know them. This is often where one side accuses the other side of being “stupid,” or “bad faith” or at best “naïve.”

You really don’t know that this won’t work? I think you do know and just won’t admit that it is a bad idea.

In your guts, you know that that is wrong, wrong, wrong.

At other times, this condition is framed in a more reassuring way:

Just relax. It is pretty intuitive.

I wouldn’t worry. You will find that this is pretty much like what you have already been doing.

Sometimes, this condition is acknowledged in a very inspirational manner:

Just turn to (rely on) your intuition (your imagination, your inner wisdom) and it will show you the truth.

Perhaps the best known of these don’t-know-that-you-know inspirational statements comes from Star Wars. It is all about trusting “the force.” One of the famous quotes from a Star War movie comes from Maz Kanata (one of its lesser-known characters: “Close your eyes. Feel it. The light...it’s always been there. It will guide you.”

Regardless of whether this condition is noted in an accusatory or inspirational manner, it implies that expertise is lacking. How can someone be an “expert” if they are unaware of the knowledge (or skill or wisdom) that they already possess. They need a mentor, like Yoda, to bring their knowledge to the fore and make it accessible to this newly minted “expert.”

What about Rumsfeld's fourth condition of knowledge? This is the condition that it most damaging to the reputation of an "expert." It is when we don't know what we don't know that we are in deepest trouble. Rumsfeld had hit it on the head. This fourth condition blocks us from learning about, studying, doing research on, or even spending time in trying to appreciate that which we are unaware is a domain of ignorance for us.

In exploring the nature of Rumsfeld's fourth condition and the attendant opportunities and challenges of expertise, I wish to take guidance and inspiration from the medieval mapmakers in identifying contemporary domains where the dragons of ignorance (and arrogance) tend to dwell and when the crisis of expertise is often most notable. As noted by those drawing maps during the Middle Ages, it is here where "dragons dwell" These domains are what Kenneth Boulding has labeled the "intersect."

Living with Dragons is not necessarily all bad. Living-on-the-edge and in the domain filled with challenging dragons can be exciting and addicting. It is a threshold experience (Turner, 1977). This is what Csikszentmihalyi calls a flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). It brings us into the special realm that resides between boredom and anxiety. It is at the edge or boundary of any system that we find maximum information and maximum unpredictability, for the edge is the point where a system is conducting transactions with the outside world. This is the edge of knowing. Today's dragons, however, differ from those of the Medieval world. Unlike the medieval mapmakers who knew about the domains of the world of which they were unaware (Rumsfeld second condition), we are faced today with an abundance of Rumsfeld's fourth conditions. We don't even know that we don't know. The medieval dragons were not as dangerous as the contemporary dragons of which we are unaware that we are unaware.

In this essay, I wish to provide more precision regarding the nature of the dragons that exist in our world. I propose that edge of knowledge dragons typically reside at the boundaries and in the intersection between different systems and different ways of perceiving and taking action in the world. It is at the edge and in the intersection where we find the greatest opportunity for valuable expertise to prevail and where we find the greatest challenges of credibility and usefulness associated with the engagement of expertise.

Peculiar Intersects

In beginning this exploration of dragons, I will briefly describe the nature of and dynamics of Intersect organizations and then describe several different types of Intersect organizations. We can first point to the origins of the term "intersect". It comes from the analysis provided by Kenneth Boulding, a remarkable, Noble prize-winning economist. Boulding specifically focused on the intersection between different types of organizations. He prophetically noted, almost five decades ago, that a new kind of organization would proliferation and would hold great promise in terms of its ability to solve longstanding problems in our society.

According to Boulding (Boulding, 1973) these Intersect organizations be uniquely beneficial to our contemporary society. However, he also predicted that these "peculiar" organizations would be quite challenging. They would be where dragons dwell and would be subject to what postmodernists (Jameson, 1991) call "troubling ambiguity". According to Boulding (1973, p. 179):

[By the 1970s] many societies have witnessed the development of “peculiar” organizations which did not fall into any of the well-recognized categories. They are not quite government, although they are usually the result of some kind of government action. They are not quite business, although they perform many business functions. They are not quite educational or charitable organizations either, though they may also perform some of these functions. They frequently occupy “cracks” or interstices in the organizational structure of society. They have been named “intersects” because they have some qualities of more than one conventional type of organization.

Many educational and human service agencies in the United States came to exemplify Boulding’s designation of the Intersect organization. During the 1990s an innovative California community college district began to operate a geothermal greenhouse project in cooperation with one of the counties in its region, funded by a California Energy Commission grant. This college also owned an environmental refuge outside its district, which had been deeded with the provision that certain structural maintenance be observed and that it also be used for instructional projects.

Another California institution—an urban hospital in Northern California—began as an elitist institution that primarily served upper class clients. Its founding doctors remained splendidly isolated from the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s; however, as this institution enters the 1990s, the isolation could no longer hold up. The boundaries had fallen. Government regulations dictated what kind of patients must be served by the hospital. This hospital suddenly became an Intersect organization. It was now both private and public, receiving funds from both individual patients and government subsidies. It also was both a service organization and a business that must break even (if not turn a profit. Many health care systems since the 1990s have similarly become Intersect organizations.

Similarly, many health insurance and health maintenance companies have become Intersect organizations, by Boulding’s definition. They operate on behalf of the public—monitoring medical or dental costs, reviewing the performance of professionals in the field—and, as a result, often obtain not-for-profit tax status. These same companies, however, are run like for-profit businesses, and often attempt to influence federal and state legislation through lobbying efforts that typify for-profit companies. These health-oriented companies also often look more like governmental regulatory agencies than either for-profit or not-for-profit organizations. They may control costs and determine the nature of appropriate licensing for the provision of certain professional services (though withholding of payment for services by unqualified personnel). Dragons are plentiful in contemporary health care and intersect organizations are constructed to engage them.

Some Intersect organizations (for example, regional transit districts) serve as buffers and mediators between conflicting organizations, while other Intersect organizations (for example, Amtrak) serve as quasi-governmental agencies that run utility, transportation or communication systems. Other quasi-governmental organizations operate as a joint powers agency or joint powers authority (JPA) These are separate government organizations that are collaborative ventures that created by member agencies but are legally independent from them. A joint powers agency shares powers common to the member agencies, and those powers are outlined in the joint powers agreement. I had the opportunity to serve as a consultant to one of these JPAs. Called the Cooperative Personnel Services (CPS), this JPA, according to one of its managers was:

. . . established to provide personnel and management services to public and nonprofit organizations. It is a “cross-over” organization. It is public, but received no public funding; consequently, it is entrepreneurial. It is not in the business of profit but since its existence is not supported by statute or funding, it is highly concerned with long term financial stability and financial health to support expansion as needed. . . . Even though public, CPS faces similar issues to private organizations: client satisfaction, efficiency, market analysis, etc.

CPS found its market niche through the size and complexity of its client organizations. Some are small and unsophisticated around personnel management, yet have employees, boards, publics, or simply the laws of the land which require some sophistication. CPS provides that. Others were large and complex and had difficulty reacting to immediate needs. CPS was both small and uncomplicated by typical political processes. Consequently, it could provide a nimbleness otherwise unavailable to the client. CPS, like SPA, worked at the intersection between other organizations and the government. It was entrepreneurial, and like SPA could provide rapid response and cut through red tape—the classic advantages of many Intersect organizations. CPS is still operating, more than 20 years since I served as a consultant. Other joint powers administration organizations are still in place. They have similarly operated in a flexible, inter-sect manner.

A Hat Filled with Hubris

Given the emergence (and even potential predominance) of Intersect Organizations and given both the challenges and opportunities inherent in their form and function, we can explore its implications regarding the crisis of expertise and the new challenges and opportunities inherent in the professional coaching process. I will be tracing out these implications in a variety of ways in this essay but wish to begin with a specific example of how expertise gets profoundly messed up when moving across different intersects and claiming expertise in a new sector of society with absolutely no valid reason to be accepted as an expert in this sector. The example I will be using received a fair amount of attention several months ago when performance of the Trump presidency was being reviewed (often critically) by the media.

Crossing the Sector Boundaries

Specially, I wish to consider the multiple roles play by Steven Hatfill as a purported “expert” on several matters that influenced US policy. Hatfill was a 67-year-old immunology professor at George Washington University (in Washington D.C.) who came out of the blue with no credentials or credibility to guide US policy under Trump regarding the delay in COVID response and the false claims about the rigging of the US Presidential election in 2020. How did he become influential and where in the world did he get his very wrong information? Important questions for us to raise in general.

Hatfill became an “expert” advisor to the trade director (Peter Navarro) at the White House. at the time of the emails Hatfill wrote the following to a colleague in October of 2020: “Now with the elections so close, COVID is taking a back-seat, yet the disease is rearing it[s] ugly head again.”

At the time of the US election, COVID-19 cases in the US were on the rise amid a seasonal surge in both hospitalizations and death. There was a “perfect storm”, for not only were COVID cases expanding, but Trump had lost the election. He and his team of lawyers were mounting a campaign to overturn the election results—refusing to concede the election to Joe Biden and urging state election officials to ‘find’

votes that Trump said were meant for him. Multiple sectors of society were in turmoil: health, politics, media, economic—the list goes on. And the sectors were intersecting with one another, thus further exacerbating the crisis. As an apparent “expert” on immunology, Hatfill steps into the crisis-ridden intersect and in this capacity was soon offering advice to the White House that was far beyond his area of expertise.

When a colleague at George Washington University asked Hatfill why he wasn’t ‘fixing the virus,’ Hatfill responded: ‘Because the election thing got out of control. I go where my team goes,’ citing his efforts to help challenge the outcome of the election in Nevada, according to emails obtained by the Washington Post. Hatfill defended his role in election-era spin in a statement to the newspaper:

From my perspective as a Doctor, I was, and continue to be, frustrated with public health being treated as a political football. Moreover, I was disgusted with the destruction of the National Pandemic Plan at the hands of conflicted petty bureaucrats; a plan that focused on early treatment and community outreach, rather than experimental vaccines and panic

Hatfill expanded his domain of advice regarding COVID-related matters. He seemed to promote the President Trump’s COVID drug of choice: hydroxychloroquine.

A September 22 2020 letter to then-Chief of Staff Mark Meadows: “The President has been grossly misadvised by the COVID Task Force on the proper pandemic response to COVID-19.” Hatfill offered a later historical observation (referring to hydroxychloroquine):

I was asked to serve in the Executive Office of the President of the United States in a time of extreme crisis. I accepted this call without reservation, and would do so again, regardless of the political affiliation of the Executive Branch.’

The acceptance of advice from Hatfill during the late months of 2020 is particularly puzzling because this immunologist was not offering his expertise from a spotless perspective. It seems that Hatfill first gained prominence after being accused of taking part in the 2001 anthrax attacks, where letters containing spores of the deadly bacteria were sent to media outlets and lawmakers, killing five and infecting 17 people. At the time, Hatfill’s home was raided by the FBI and his phone was tapped. Hatfill subsequently sued The Justice Department. He was paid \$2.825 million in cash and an annuity of \$150,000 a year for 20 years, according to the New York Times. We see even in this 2001 episode that Hatfill was crossing boundaries between the sectors of health, politics and justice. He was accused of using his knowledge of anthrax (health) to bring about the death of government workers (politics) and eventually turned to the courts (justice) for compensatory damages.

The sectors were being crossed by Hatfill in 2001—and once again in 2020. However, this second crossing of the boundaries occurred not through real or wrongly-accused action but through a much deadlier venue—he was now a highly-influential “expert” that the White House was relying on in the formulation of policy regarding COVID. Furthermore, Hatfill was now being asked to offer advice about and was beginning to offer public statements regarding a totally different matter that was housed in a totally different sector: the “falsification” of presidential election results. After the election, Hatfill wrote that he “shifted over to the election fraud investigation in November” as Trump continued to argue that the election was stolen from him in 2020, a claim that fueled the January 6, 2021 Capitol riot by Trump supporters. He was giving “expert” advice about the election to those in the White House fighting

against the results and offering his expertise in public statements. The Hatfill Fiasco was in full operation and dragons were to be found in abundance.

Hubris and the Imposter Syndrome

A further review of his emails revealed that Hatfill routinely bragged about his role and his proximity to high-powered government officials: “They fly me around sometimes on private jets to sort s out. Seeing the good and the bad and what needs to be fixed.” His growing hubris is revealed in a September 3, 2020 email: “I actually lost it and told Fauci [the head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases who is now Biden’s chief medical advisor] he was full of crap a couple weeks ago.”

How did Hatfill gains credibility regarding matters of health? What made him an expert on many matters that were far beyond the areas in which he was educated and where he had gained experience? The rest of this essay concerns answers to these troubling questions. We need to establish a litany of errant expertise and can first enter the "Hatfill Fiasco", I think his "hat" is filled with Hubris. He is a perfect example of how experts (especially when enabled with prestige and power) can go way beyond the boundaries of their expertise, and then damage trust. We have not heard the end of this story.

At one level, we can identify the role Hatfill was playing as that of the imposter. As Ket de Vries (2003) has noted in his book, *Leaders, Fools and Imposters*, there is a long, troubling history of imposters playing a major role in the formulation of public and organizational policy. It is not only that the imposter must be quite skillful in providing his (often male) advice—recipients of his advice must continue to believe in him and his wisdom even if he is proven to be inaccurate or (worse yet) deceptive.

These are the collusion-related dynamics operating in something called the “imposter syndrome.” This syndrome is operating then it is critical that the recipients of "expert" advice collude with the "expert" (imposter) so that they don't have to admit that they were fooled, stupid, gullible, etc. With the continuing acceptance of the imposter’s advice and guidance comes an increased hubris (and often increasingly misguided advice) on the part of the imposter. A perfect storm exists. Hatfill’s hat is filled with hubris.

I suggest that the perfect storm for Hatfill goes beyond the importer syndrome and the collusive relationship between himself and members of the White House staff. It is important to recognize that Hatfill was operating at the intersection between different types of institutions, different disciplines, different sources of information – and ultimately different political perspectives. It is at the intersection that we find the major challenges to expertise – and the maximum opportunity for the imposter syndrome to flourish. Hatfills reside in abundance at this intersection—even if they are less well-known and less destructive than Steven Hatfill.

Before proceeding further with this often-disheartening analysis, it is important to note that there is also an opportunity for valid, useful and influential expertise to be offered at the intersection, and for this expertise to be engaged in a manner that leads to creativity and what my colleague, Charles Smith, calls “collaborative innovation.” During the remainder of this essay, I will consider both the crises and challenges of expertise at the Intersect, and the remarkable opportunities for new perspectives and practices. My exploration will lead us to a brief description of various Intersect organizations that exist in our 21st Century world.

The Intersection Between Institutional Types

As experts in ecological systems tell us, it is at the boundaries between systems that there is to be found the most abundant life—including an abundance of dragons. Much of the life on our planet, for instance, is to be found at the boundary between sea and land. Environmental richness—the diversity of species—exists where one system collides with another. One of the prominent scholars of complexity, Scott Page, writes extensively about the benefits to be derived from diversity. According to Page (2011), diversity enhances the robustness of complex systems, drives innovation and productivity, makes any system more interesting and absorbs large scale events that would otherwise have a profound impact on the functioning of an ecological system. Perhaps most importantly, diversity in any system, such as New York City, increases complexity.

This is a real challenge for anyone living in a diverse system, for complexity produces ambiguity, bewilderment, anxiety and sheer exhaustion. It is not only because complex (and diverse) systems contain many moving parts (this is a complicated system). It is also because these moving parts are all interconnected. When any one of the parts moves (changes), then all other parts of the system must change. That's what makes complex systems so "tippy" (unstable) and unpredictable—and what makes the establishment of valid and useful expertise in complex systems so tenuous.

Hatfill was in trouble because he was not only ignorant of the issues he was facing. He was in trouble because he was facing multiple issues arising from several sectors: government, healthcare delivery, pharmacology. The work being done (or not done) in each of these sectors impacted on the other sectors. They were tightly interwoven—yielding great complexity and polarization—making quite challenging the ability of anyone to be successful in addressing any one of the issues (even someone with genuine expertise) (Bergquist, 2021).

Shifting Institutional Roles and Functions

I begin with the way in which Boulding makes use of the term Intersect. He focused on the way in which different types of institutions in a society merge and intermingle to form "peculiar" organizations. To understand the growing role to be played by the Intersect organization in contemporary life, we must more broadly understand and appreciate the shifting roles played by four sectors of society: (1) the private, for-profit sector (closely-held businesses, for profit partnerships, corporations), (2) the public, non-profit sector (government and other tax-collecting and expending organizations), (3) the private, non-profit sector (human service agencies, advocacy organizations, philanthropic organizations and foundations) and (4) the intersect.

The first and second sectors in most societies rapidly expanded in size during the modern era (20th Century)—with big business being countered at each stage by big government. Peter Drucker (1999, p. 53) offered an historical perspective:

Government probably has the greatest impact [of any of the 20th Century growth sectors] on the distribution of disposable income. Not because it is a major buyer or user of products and services; except in wartime even the biggest government is only a marginal consumer. But the major economic function of government in a developed country is to redistribute between 30 and 50 percent of the country's national income. Nothing else has therefore as great an impact on the distribution of shares of national income as changes in government policy.

The third sector (“nonprofit”) has also grown—often to supplement the work being done by government (second sector). In fact, as Drucker (1999, p. 9) noted, “[t]he growth sector in the 20th century in developed countries have been in ‘nonbusiness’—in government, in the professions, in health care, in education.” These are all “non businesses” that were primarily provided during the 20th Century by organizations in the second and third sectors.

In recent years, the second sector (government) in many societies has ceased to grow. In some societies (such as the United States) this second sector actually has often begun to decline in size—at least relative to the size of the other three sectors. While there is an effort in the 2020s to once again expand the role of government in the provision (or at least protection) of human welfare, the resistance to this expansion is great. The 1930s New Deal of Franklin Roosevelt or 1960s Great Society of Lyndon Johnson might be relics of the past.

While as Drucker (1999, p.52) noted, the government sector continued to play a powerful role as the redistributor of disposable income, it now plays a diminished role as the direct provider of many services—ranging from education and housing to fire and police protection and even the housing of convicted criminals. As government shrinks, an increasing number of public services have been taken over by the first sector (privatization) or through volunteer services and philanthropy by the third sector (the thousand points of light).

An even greater shift has taken place from the second to the fourth (Intersect) sector. This shift has been less frequently documented, in part because the fourth sector remains relatively invisible or because the second and fourth sectors are often lumped together (even though they operate in quite different ways). In part, the proliferation and growth of Intersect organizations is indicative of the recognition that government agencies *per se* are unable to meet many of the pressing needs of our society. The turn toward private industry in support of public projects has also been precipitated from the growing disenchantment within the public arena of the ways in which business is done in this arena. New solutions are being sought to old, unrelenting organizational problems in public agencies.

A member of the city manager’s office in one American metropolis indicated that his own office “became desperate to make the organization more responsive to a society that demanded more efficient service.” However, these demands are often contradictory and in flux, hence cannot be readily addressed by one large, bureaucratic agency. Furthermore, public institutions rarely have sufficient resources or expertise to address these needs, and the current employees in these bureaucratized organizations often resist and have acquired few skills that are relevant to the new needs. Government administrators are asked to become more collaborative in their dealings with their employees and various public interest groups. Often it is because governmental agencies are unwilling or unable to provide adequate services, that new Intersect organizations have grown up which are small, highly flexible and efficient. City governments are now contracting with private organizations for fire protection, criminal detention facilities, waste disposal, education—and even, potentially, energy.

As early as 1969, Drucker predicted the coming privatization of governmental agencies. Twenty five years later, Drucker (1989, pp. 63, 65) observed that:

A government activity can work only if it is a monopoly. It cannot function if there are other ways to do the job, that is, if there is competition. . . . [If] there are alternative ways to provide the same service, government flounders. . . . Government can do well only if there are no

political pressures. The Post Office and the railroads did well as long as they had a simple purpose. But very soon, perhaps inevitably, the pressure builds to misuse such services to create employment, and especially employment for people who otherwise would find it hard to get jobs. . . And as soon as a government activity has more than one purpose, it degenerates.

Thus, there has been increasingly the need for new kinds of organizations that blend the governmental mandates for the provision of public services with the private capacity to offer these services in a cost-effective manner.

I personally was consulting recently with a major American city. I was asked to be the major speaker at this city's annual meeting of all employees. I agreed to be the speaker but only under the condition that I could provide an appreciative perspective by identifying and speaking about recent successes of this urban government. Rather than offering ways in which this city might improve its functioning (the usual "motivational" speech), I wished to help members of the city government identify ways in which they are already effective so that they might engage this effectiveness even more frequently. If I was going to be an "expert" then it would be as someone who helped identify existing strengths rather than weaknesses.

In preparation for this appreciative speech, I asked chief administrators of this city to convene a series of focus groups to identify major successes during the past year. More than fifty successes were first identified. Then winnowing took place and a final set of eight successes was identified. I asked members of the focal groups to offer presentations on each success during the annual meeting. I concluded this presentation by noting that six of the eight successes involved partnerships with nongovernmental organizations. This came as a major surprise to the leaders of this city government. I produced a "Book of Success" for use in future planning (and new employee orientation) for this city government. This small book offered a brief description of each success and a general pronouncement concerning how this government had already been effective. The theme of intersectional collaboration stood out and it was to influence future priorities of this city government. Dragons did indeed dwell in this city and intersectional strategies were implemented to successfully engage these dragons.

As we look to the form which public and private organizations will take during the mid-21st Century, there are likely to be a rapid expansion in not only the traditional public/nonprofit and private/for profit sectors, but also in the private/nonprofit sector and in the Intersect. While the first sector (public/nonprofit) will continue to provide certain key services in areas that no other sector can serve, it will become a much smaller sector, with government shrinking in size (at least in a relative sense) and many more functions being provided by the other three sectors. We are likely to see government primarily in the business of security and defense, as well as in the business of raising funds (the taxing authority) that are in turn distributed to organizations in one of the three other sectors.

Modern America was filled with big business and big government. The days have passed in which these two sectors (private/for profit and public/nonprofit) dominated the American economy. Solutions to most of the pressing problems of 21st Century America no longer will be coming from either big business or big government—at least not in isolation from the other three sectors. Much of the action in the near future will come from partnerships and consortia comprised of organizations from all four sectors. If Americans look for solutions in any one sector, they are likely to turn to the Intersect. They are likely to invest their trust in peculiar organizations that can readily move across traditional boundaries but also exhibit the troubling ambiguity that is inherent in the flexibility and adaptability of the Intersect.

Implications of The Intersect Organization

A bottom-line mentality is typically not appropriate in the Intersect organization—nor in many other contemporary organizations either. Organizations no longer (if they ever did) exist simply to make money for their owners or stockholders. This is an inadequate statement of intention for any organization, especially one with diffuse or highly flexible boundaries. In essence, a bottom-line mentality tends to hide or distort the founding or driving purpose of the institution and leaves it directionless in a rapidly changing world. In 1989 Peter Drucker (1989, p. 230) concluded: “neither the quantity of output nor the ‘bottom line’ is by itself an adequate measure of the performance of management and enterprise.”

Peter Senge (1990, pp. 147-148) similarly noted at about the same time that a primary emphasis on profit in an organization diminishes the vision of the organization and leads to a focus on means rather than ends:

Many senior executives . . . choose “high market share” as part of their vision. But why? “Because I want our company to be profitable.” Now, you might think that high profits [are] an intrinsic result in and of itself, and indeed it is for some. But for surprisingly many other leaders, profits too are a means toward a still more important result. Why choose high annual profit? “Because I want us to remain an independent company, to keep from being taken over.” Why do you want that? Because I want to keep our integrity and our capacity to be true to our purpose in starting the organization.” While all the goals mentioned are legitimate, the last—being true to our purpose—has the greatest intrinsic significance to this executive. All the rest are means to the end, means which might change in particular circumstances.

Kenneth Boulding predicted that the problems of measurement and evaluation associated with the Intersect organization would become even more common in the future. He was quite accurate in his prediction. When these problems of measurement among intersects are compounded with the measurement problems induced by size then it is not hard to understand the postmodern emphasis on relativistic social and organizational values, and its skepticism regarding clearly perceived and measured “realities.”

The concept of intersecting organizations holds many implications—especially regarding numbers. Boulding indicates that the problems of measurement and evaluation associated with the Intersect organization will become even more common in the future. We are likely to find more of Rumsfeld’s fourth condition where we are unaware that we have no idea as to how intersect success might best be assessed. When these problems of measurement in Intersects are compounded by Rumsfeld’s condition four ignorance, then skepticism regarding clearly perceived and measured realities will arise and expertise is in trouble. The new reality in the Intersect organization is the communication (and collectively constructed reality) that occurs among members of the various constituencies that are incorporated within and served by the organization. Measurement is a negotiated matter and outcomes are perceived similarly from a negotiated perspective. Expertise in the areas of conflict management and problem solving are needed—not traditional expertise in areas of assessment. Dragons of the Internet are slain (or at least kept at bay) by engaging the four elements of what I call the Empowerment Pyramid: communication, conflict management, problem-solving and decision-making (Bergquist, 2004).

Some coaching expertise can also be of great value—especially when coupled with leadership development training. Kenneth Boulding suggested that the Intersect organization must be led and managed in ways that are somewhat different from those used in more traditional organizations. There are often multiple stakeholders (even several different boards that provide guidance), as well as multiple (and at times contradictory) sets of goals, purposes and organizational values. Put simply, the new reality in the Intersect organization is the communication that occurs among members of the various constituencies that are incorporated within and served by the organization. The intersect itself is nothing more (or less) than the messages being sent across boundaries that exist among the diverse constituencies in the intersect. Expertise regarding the social construction of reality and the role of narrative in human relationships can be of great value.

Challenges of the Intersect Organization

Elsewhere (Bergquist, 1993), I have suggested that contemporary organizations must have clear intentions, for they are likely to have unclear boundaries. This being the case, the Intersect organization must be particularly concerned about intentions, given its shattering of traditional boundaries. Leadership of the Intersect Organization must devote a considerable amount of time to communicating about their intentions and to building a consensus regarding mission and purposes among its diverse constituencies and governing board members. This might very well be the place where valid and useful expertise is of greatest value. According to Boulding, intersect managers need mediation and negotiation skills and will rarely be able to make much use of traditional decision-making or problem-solving processes of a rational or linear nature. Experts are needed Hatfill need not apply.

Late in the 20th Century, John Goodman and Gary Loveman (1991) suggested yet another central issue in the management of Intersect organizations—or more precisely, in their case, public functions that have been privatized. This is the blending of public interest and private benefit. They note that “neither public nor private managers will always act in the best interests of their shareholders. Privatization will be effective only if private managers have incentives to act in the public interest, which includes, but is not limited to, efficiency.” (Goodman and Loveman, 1991, p. 28) Thus, if an Intersect leader is to be effective, she must be given the freedom (that is found in private sector organizations) to manipulate the reward systems within the organization to achieve results. Legitimate experts can apply.

Goodman and Loveman (1991, p. 28) also suggest that “profits and the public interest overlap best when the privatized service or asset is in a competitive market. It takes competition from other companies to discipline managerial behavior. . . . When these conditions [incentives and competition] are not met, continued governmental involvement will likely be necessary. The simple transfer of ownership from public to private hands will not necessarily reduce the cost or enhance the quality of services.” These complex and often contradictory conditions would seem to benefit from the nuanced assistance of an experienced expert who recognizes the presence of all four of Rumsfeld’s conditions of knowledge within the organization—with regard to the nature of costs, income and profit, the nature of personal work-related motivation, the ways to improve quality of service and product, etc. [the list is quite long].

Conclusions: Intersectionality

In recent years, the concept of intersect has taken on a somewhat different focus. It is now engaged, as “intersectionality”, to identify the shared challenge faced by diverse groups of people who have

historically been recipients of bias, discrimination, and even violence. This intersection is home to some of the most dangerous and destructive dragons of our times—the dragons of prejudice, hatred and xenophobia. How are the interests, needs and concerns—their perspectives—of these citizens being protected and honored? Emphasis is placed (as the name implies) on interdependency: the concerns of any one group are inherently interwoven with the concerns of other groups (Hancock, 2016). The domain of intersection between these groups is essential to the successful restoration (or even first establishment) of their rights and identity.

Specifically, intersectionality concerns the history of discrimination among groups who have been marginalized because of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, class, or differential ability. It concerns the complex, and cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine in the experience of marginalized individuals or groups. Those involved in intersectionality advocate for Institutions to embrace new perspective and enact new practices concerned with recruitment, performance review and career development programs ensuring that marginalized people are treated in an equitable manner.

Through the initial work of Kimberle Crenshaw and others often identified with critical race theory (Crenshaw, 1996) there is growing awareness that this intersection might be just as important in defining the way an organization (and society) operates as is the intersection between institutional types. There might even be an important intersection between these two types of intersects. Issues related to marginalization and discrimination might best be addressed by the joint actions taken by different types of institutions and by those organizations that blend multiple interests and perspectives.

I suspect that some (perhaps many) of Rumsfeld's not knowing that we don't know have somethings to do with the wants, needs and perspectives of those people who have been set aside in our society. Hatfill's hubris might very well reach out to false expertise in the world of marginalization. It might be that experts who are residing within Intersect Organizations or consulting the leaders of these "peculiar" organizations have something of value to say about how different marginalized groups might best combine their forces and blend their diverse perspectives and practices to bring about a more just society. If mid-21st Century experts can be successful in challenges the malignant dragons that dwell in intersectionality, then they truly deserve our support for they have crucially demonstrated their credibility.

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