

Chapter 1

Getting Started

WHY BOTHER?

To be a person in society, which means to exist at all, you must set purposes and hold values. To achieve anything, you must put a great deal of effort into deciding your purposes and pay close attention to values. To influence other people within an organization, in government or in society generally, you must reflect deeply on values and work with values explicitly.

To be a social scientist or engage in social science of any sort — and I include vocational disciplines like management, medicine, law and journalism in my broad definition — you must not only deal in values but directly confront the essential nature of values and its offshoot, ethics.

Yet there is no accepted theoretical framework of purpose or value. There are no widely agreed definitions to which you can turn.

So each organization and sometimes each manager, each discipline and sometimes each social scientist, develops a unique lexicon of terms for the different notions and shades of meaning required when working with purposes and values.

Does it matter? From one point of view, it does not. People may not know what a value is, but they do know what makes sense to them.

Even if it does matter, we all dislike people interfering with our understanding of things by foisting defined terms on us. So if a common language is really needed, the trick must be to find universal definitions which are intuitively right for most people. The theoretical framework offered in this book is the fruition of many years devoted to just this task.

From a purely practical perspective, the lack of a common language is harmful. It creates confusion in organizations and government, it impedes research and analysis, it interferes with fruitful inter-disciplinary work, and it keeps the general public mystified. The proposed terminology makes any work with values and purposes much easier, partly because of the way that communication is aided and misunderstanding reduced.

But the book is not just about communication, it is about freedom and power. The framework was produced for one purpose only: to help people achieve things. This is its chief merit and justification. All inspiration, all human energies, all social forces, all action can be traced to the effective use of purposes and values. Working with values in a proper and precise way liberates human and social potential and permits extraordinary achievements. This is the secret treasure revealed by the framework, and available to anyone who truly seeks it.

The framework emerged from and was used to guide numerous consultancy projects, often large scale and long term. Success in transforming organizations and producing social change would have been impossible without the ideas. Use of the ideas made the experience for clients utterly unlike that generated by pragmatic management consultants, discipline-based investigators or non-theoretical action researchers.

Whether your concern is with raising standards, designing strategies, evaluating policies, changing an organization's culture, introducing managers to new ideas, establishing identity, using religious notions, making an ethical choice, developing a community, making reforms, strengthening governance, remedying social injustice, furthering a social movement, leading a team, campaigning for a cause, increasing participation, or a myriad of other things in relation to action, ethics, organization or government: this book offers a helpful and practical understanding of what you are about, explains likely pitfalls and mistakes to be avoided, and clarifies how the social context should be handled.

You will not find here a recipe telling you what to do in seven easy steps, but you will be given some essential tools to help you create your own future.

Assessing the Ideas. Discovering and organizing the axioms of purpose and value is not what social sciences or even management disciplines are there for. Each must pursue its own special area of interest and leave wider issues to others. But who? Everyone, every organization, every discipline expects to take such basic intellectual infra-structure for granted as it goes about

its real business of developing, using, maintaining, or studying purposes and values.

Unfortunately, you cannot take even reading, writing or arithmetic for granted until each has been created and tested in practice — and this requires a dedicated effort.

To develop (or rather discover) the necessary ideas, it was essential to use everyday life as a laboratory. I had to learn from many academic disciplines while refusing to identify with any particular one. At all times I pursued the ideas wherever they went, guided generally by a systems philosophy, and more specifically by project demands.¹

I assessed my emerging ideas by their effectiveness and acceptability to people in positions of responsibility. As a coherent and elegant framework slowly emerged, many of its formal features were being clarified and confirmed by concurrent investigations in related topics like decision-making and personal growth.²

It would be unhelpful and tedious to follow the usual academic practice of integrating these ideas within the existing literature because there are too many relevant literatures. In any case, each reader must assess the ideas and test them against what they know and what their discipline teaches. The ideas need to be incorporated and subtly modified within you — but without losing their helpful essence. The point is that this new account of purpose is a true inter-disciplinary or rather trans-disciplinary product. It must of necessity exist as an entity in its own right, standing on its own merits and within your own mind, but outside existing disciplines. The social science corpus is complemented and interpreted, but not challenged or replaced.³

An end to the refinement and elaboration of the framework has continually receded. The time has come to call a temporary halt. The general outline and most parts of the framework have already proved their worth in many consultations and projects. Clients — managers, politicians, social scientists — spontaneously and surprisingly uncomplainingly learn and use its language. The acceptance and appeal of these ideas over many years now suggests that the time is right to offer the framework in its entirety to a wider audience. It needs and deserves further application, testing, refinement and elaboration.

ARTIFICIAL INTUITION

Each of us is aware. We each use our mind. We may also work at using it. Using the mind is not wholly dissimilar to using a computer. Both are multi-function tools requiring creative control. Ease of use of a com-

puter, say for word-processing, depends on the software provided — although this is no guarantee of the quality of the resulting prose. Analogously, the mind depends, say in managing, on implicit or explicit theories — although, again, these give no guarantee of the quality of any decision. If software does not suit the computer's operating system, it will not load and cannot be used. In the same way, if a theory does not suit the operation of the mind, people soon reject or ignore it. Few social, psychological or management theories have been developed with an intense, continuing and over-riding urge to suit the natural workings of the mind. This one has. That is why I call it 'software of the mind'.

Some theories suit certain minds and not others, just as some software runs on some computers and not others. However, the mind is like a universal computer. It therefore invites the creation of theories that are both universal and yet positively support diversity. Most theories avoid that challenge. This theoretical framework sought it out.

Being software of the mind, the framework is really a form of 'artificial intuition'.⁴ Because the framework embodies and supports intuitive processes, its ideas appear natural and unforced when applied in everyday life. When parts of the framework are explained to people, they seem obvious, even axiomatic. Clients in consultations and students in lectures frequently tell me that what I am saying is 'just common sense' or 'terribly neat and simple'. Sometimes they are genuinely puzzled about why they had not seen it themselves. So the framework could be considered to be part of a science of common sense — if that was not a contradiction in terms.

The framework has only reached its present degree of simplicity, coverage and clarity by being altered in response to people's views. I am in debt to the intuitions and arguments of hundreds of managers and professionals seeking to handle everyday work situations better, and to thousands reacting to the ideas and examples in seminars and lectures. Naturally, a debt must also be acknowledged to the analyses and intuitions of great thinkers, East and West; and to the cores of truth in the otherwise conflicting and evolving explanations and theories within the management disciplines and social sciences.

Something designed to suit the mind could equally be termed 'software *for* the mind'. All achievement and community depends on the mind, that is to say on conscious and intuitive efforts rather than mechanical habits. If ideas are going to be used in those efforts, they must both feel right (personally and spontaneously) and be right (practically and logically) or they will be disruptive. This framework has the potential to focus

and clarify what is already natural. It can be easily simplified and explained to children. It should be taught to managers, professionals and politicians.

Because the framework reflects the undisturbed operation of the mind, it feels most real at the moment when it is used. So understanding the framework through reading is an entirely different experience from understanding the framework through using it.

The point is that we do not operate in our daily dealings as if truth lies in a textbook or requires a laboratory. The gulf between the truth we live by and scientifically formulated truth needs to be recognized. Truth is something we experience and come upon in ordinary living. The book can never be such an event, but the framework ought to be. It exists to be lived. It exists because it is lived.

It follows that it is best to read the book with imagination and put what you read in the context of immediate difficult problems or issues requiring your personal action or judgement. This means reflecting on your situation with the new ideas in mind. As an intuitive understanding of the situation fuses with an intuitive understanding of the constraining assumptions of the framework, a sense of a constructive way forward should emerge. Alternatively, you may turn to the book only when faced with a challenge which cannot be handled or a situation which seems to be going wrong — especially if you suspect that your understanding of purpose may be at fault. The need to get something right when others are holding you responsible is a powerful incentive to use and assimilate new ideas.

A SPECIAL-ORDINARY LANGUAGE

At this point I would like you to look at Master-Figure 0 (at the end of the chapter) and compare it to the Table of Contents from Chapter 3 to Chapter 13. You will see that the book is laid out in an orderly fashion with each section assigned a formula, a label, and an epithet.

In the primary hierarchy (with its pattern of circles and lines), you can see seven levels or types of purpose. The upper five levels of purpose are also types of value. Everything else derives from or is related to these seven conceptual entities.⁵

The Master-Figure emphasizes that the language of the framework is primarily a language of formulae. The Table of Contents emphasizes that a controlled yet natural language of concepts is possible and necessary — but it accommodates to the stress of this demand through the use of epithets.

Following application of the ideas in many settings

and after numerous labelling and re-labelling efforts, it has become clear to me that the only truly unambiguous and universally suitable (and therefore scientifically correct) name is a formula or symbol. For example, the most precise way to refer to a value which has the properties of the sixth level is as an ‘L-6 purpose’, not as a ‘value system’ or any other synonym — belief, new idea, ideal, principle, doctrine, ideology, framework, theory, paradigm, school of thought, philosophy — which might appear to be more suitable in a particular situation, organization or discipline.

But the use of formulae can seem mysterious. To write an account of the framework using formulae alone would produce not just awkward sentences, but an utterly impenetrable book. Yet formulae are always used in project work as an adjunct and managers take to them as they become familiar with the ideas. Most people dislike formulae when reading, so I have kept them to a minimum.⁶

However the reality is that *the precision of a formal language was absolutely essential to the discovery and development of a consistent and coherent universal framework*. To avoid formulae altogether would have been wrong because it would have excluded more curious readers from working directly with the underlying code. In the future, formulae may help with inter-organizational, cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural communication.⁷

There was, however, another essential and complementary principle of the research approach. Every entity or process demanded or implied by the theoretical framework had to correspond to everyday reality. This meant that labelling using ordinary language had to be possible. In short, no purely abstract concept or invented jargon was allowed. Everything had to be common currency and make immediate sense. In other words, *natural language was a tool of equal significance in the research process*. This tool helped ensure that the theory could be intuitively perceived as correct.

These two tools, formulae and natural language, emerge from distinguishing and valuing objective and subjective truth. The result has been to produce a completely formal language which is almost indistinguishable from real language in everyday use. The reader can expect to find ordinary meaningful terms underpinned by precise definitions and relationships which enhance their sense.

Natural language labels evolved during the research process. For example, L-3 purposes and values were called ‘political aims’ for a long time: in part following a colleague’s suggestion, in part to capture their controversial quality, and in part because I was consulting with town hall councillors who liked the term. Later I

changed the L-3 label to 'internal priority'. The change was based on pragmatic grounds because I found that managers reacted nervously to the word 'political', on methodological grounds when I began using quantitative and systematic priority-setting techniques in consultations, and on theoretical grounds after I discovered that any type of value could at certain times and in certain situations be political (cf. Master-Matrix 30).

Although it is essential to recognize that L-3 values are always and characteristically wholly internal to an endeavour or organization, 'internal priority' may be shortened in conversation to 'priority'. To improve readability, I will use such abbreviations or even synonyms (e.g. 'emphasis' or 'criteria' for an L-3 value) where the meaning is unambiguous.

Managers also use 'policy' as a synonym for 'internal priority', but 'policy' really needs to be reserved for a specific use. It is common to find 'policy' used rather indiscriminately by managers and academics in reference to a diverse range of purposive entities including priorities, ideals, social values, and desired outcomes. It may not matter at the time, but this practice is harmful in the long term. The reason is that all these terms are not just words but powerful tools. Using them inappropriately blunts them, and their full power cannot then be harnessed. As language becomes confused and debased, people find themselves becoming muddled, irritated, argumentative, anxious and unable to think.

Playing around with labels can lead to an unconscious disconnection of the word from the underlying realities. For example: a social value (shared by different projects or services) is utterly distinct from a principal object (which defines a particular project or service). However, once the term 'need' is habitually used in place of 'social value', then departmental managers in bidding for resources argue in all sincerity that there is a 'need' for their 'service'. In this way, the two concepts are collapsed and it becomes difficult to focus on the 'real needs' (i.e. social values) which may well demand innovative, modified or reduced services from that department.

Deliberately distorting or misapplying concepts is an old political trick in the repertoire of every pragmatic businessman, ambitious politician and academic wheeler-dealer. However, such personally advantageous tricks eventually stop the concept functioning as an effective tool in the wider community. Formulae are the surest prevention. But, just as celibacy is the surest method of birth control, second best may suit people better. The second best is to use the given labels and treat them as univocal concepts.

Of course, in practice, the person familiar with the

framework and at ease in a consultation or in a position of responsibility knows when a looseness of language or its local modification is acceptable and helpful. Rigorous precision and sensitive adaptation are bedfellows in the real world, not opposites. A colleague, completing a project for a city government, consulted me to see if the list of recommendations which concluded his excellent report could be made more incisive. In discussion, we saw that he had intuitively produced all the elements of a programme for growth and development (G-4²). So he restructured the list of recommendations using as headings: Current Needs (which stated the social values); The Main Objective (which explained the principal objects of a new endeavour); The Next Steps (which organized his proposed priorities); and Key Outcomes (which listed strategic objectives). Use of my concepts re-structured and strengthened his conclusions, but strict use of my terminology was not appropriate.

LEARNING AND USING THE FRAMEWORK

The framework, being software of the mind, has properties like the mind. So anyone can intuitively identify with the framework to order and reflect on their assumptions and experiences of values, objectives and ethics.

However, each of us has blind-spots which interfere with this intuitive learning process. Readers will find, as I found, that they catch on to some parts of the framework easily and find others mysterious or even objectionable. Because everyone has different blind-spots, the way to handle them is through group discussion and team learning.

By hammering out the ideas in dialogue, each person will benefit. Indeed, only by explaining the ideas to others in your own words with your own concrete examples can you really be sure that you have understood them. When others challenge and criticize what you have said, you must handle those challenges and criticisms constructively. In this way, you will be repeating the inquiry exercises which produced and refined the framework.

Understanding the framework is about engaging with it. To understand it, you must use it and get used to it. Unless you use it, you cannot get used to it. And then you will never really understand it.

Once you have understood the framework, it will assist you automatically. Its fluidity will complement the fluidity of your own intuitive processes. When the time comes to deal with a situation, you will simply use the relevant ideas. You will neither cumbrously and artificially apply the ideas, nor forget their implications just

at the moment when they are most needed. The concepts will emerge as naturally as words do when you speak. If you try to use the book solely for reference at the crucial moment, it will be as helpful as a dictionary in the middle of a debate.

Although the framework is a general theory, it is not a theory of the conventional sort which proposes to explain realities in the past or the present. The framework has been designed to design the future. So it comes into its own *before* anything has been decided. The challenge met by the theory is creative design not the explanation of facts.

Creativity, like the mind, is a reflexive and fluid process: and so is the framework. The framework is paradoxically both unnervingly precise — one colleague compared it to caging butterflies — and yet utterly protean in its application.

The framework contains itself. It is a value system and an ethical teaching and conforms to the principles and properties that govern such entities. The framework can even be said to define its own creation, because it describes the creation of social reality of which the framework is a part.

The framework was unconsciously and consciously used in producing the theory. It will also be used implicitly as you read about it. Many aspects of values and objectives taken for granted in early chapters are not defined precisely and explained until the final chapters. Intentional processes — decision, idealization, imposition, implementation and so on — can be taken for granted because we live in, with, through, and by them.

The essential fluidity in the everyday use and application of the framework can be disconcerting. To get a handle on abstract ideas, readers naturally think of an example only to find that this example shows rapid shifts in its properties as either its *function* or *frame of reference* alters. Taking function first: the same value as formulated, e.g. ‘providing care for children’, or ‘building houses’ or ‘honesty’, can at one moment or in one situation function as a belief or value system, at the next moment or in another situation as a need or social value, at the next moment or in another situation as an urgent priority for action, and so on.

Shifting the frame of reference can give the (false) impression that the theoretical structure itself is fluid. A reader may note, for example, that a government’s strategy leads to the objects of a new organization being defined: and then argue that this means ‘objects’ are hierarchically below ‘strategy’. It does seem so in social terms, but only because the frame of reference of the organization is within that of the government. Keep

in mind that the framework is a conceptual hierarchy, and that it only maintains its structure within a particular frame of reference. In this case, the strategy is in the frame or reference of the government (and is encompassed by the objects of government), whereas the organization’s objects are in the frame of reference of the organization (and will encompass its strategy).

In order to grasp and apply the framework, it is essential to be clear about the frame of reference in use. Generally the frame in use is an organization, a government or a nation. But I also regularly offer examples using other frames, like a project, a department, a neighbourhood, or a person. This is to make it clear that the ideas apply anywhere that an enduring social boundary can be drawn, and whenever purposes (i.e. values or objectives) are defined.

IT REALLY IS LIKE SOFTWARE

In software terms, this publication is Version 1 (V. 1.0). Beta-versions, as pre-release software is called, have been around since the ideas began gelling in about 1983. These early versions took the form of discussion documents, seminar handouts, aide memoire tables, conference presentations, published papers, drafts of sections and whole chapters of the book. So there has been fairly lengthy and extensive testing to check out the ideas and how to communicate them.

Software is never perfect or complete. The same is true of this framework. Software programs become ever more complicated: users demand more once they have mastered the first version and seen its deficiencies. Similar elaboration is both possible and desirable in regard to this framework.

The framework can (and should) be developed in several directions. First, it can be simplified. Microsoft, for example, sold both a cut-down and a complex application for word-processing to suit different market segments. If this book is welcomed and its value recognized, then shortened and dedicated versions can be developed for managers and others. I encourage teachers and trainers to customize the book for their own purposes to suit their courses and students.

Second, the framework can be written and explained in a form particularly suited for certain domains (like banking, or health care, or public relations). Third, the framework can be elaborated and its usefulness explored further by making new internal connections, and by showing relationships with other similarly constructed frameworks.

Like all complex software, the framework has potentials of which even the author is not fully aware. In trying to produce an account that was neither too

long nor too complicated, I have played down many of the formal analogies and implications which must, by definition, have real world significance. I have been concerned to say enough to make it possible for any reader to get into the framework so as to find new correspondences and linkages and to pursue additional practical applications.

Fixing Bugs. The book contains mistakes. Some are just like software bugs. Such bugs, errors in the framework, must be distinguished from other types of mistake such as errors of fact, errors of presentation, and errors of illustration.

I am acutely embarrassed in advance by errors of fact, which have crept in because of the breadth of the book and the varying depth of understanding I have in different areas. I am naturally embarrassed by errors of expression or presentation. Whenever these sorts of error come to light, they have been or will be corrected.

Errors in the examples are a lesser concern. I would like to compare such errors with those in a word-processing manual in which the capitalization feature is demonstrated on an ungrammatical sentence. It is off-putting, but not crucial. I trust that no examples are so erroneous that the underlying ideas are distorted, but perhaps this is to be over-optimistic.

Many beta-testers criticized various examples as over-simplified or biased. Other readers protested about some which touched on their assumptions and values. Sensitivity was especially high in regard to political, national and religious matters. You may find yourself reacting in the same way. Please keep in mind that the examples are only there to illustrate a general idea. They cannot prove anything, and their precise correctness is rarely relevant. They do not necessarily indicate my own views.

Bugs in the software are either my oversights or my personal blind-spots. Naturally these must be distinguished from blind-spots of the reader. Few readers will find anything that is entirely new and so you will come to the book with ideas shaped by your disciplinary training, your past experience, and your social environment. You will find genuine errors, but be cautious before automatically throwing out my propositions just because they do not accord with your existing notions. When you want to reject something, please suggest an alternative. It may be better. The aim is to build, not destroy. But remember: it all has to hang together. A change in any one part of the framework may demand changes, subtle or major, in many other parts.

Real bugs are what make a computer system crash. In the framework, they correspond to errors of justifi-

cation, errors of formulation, errors in identifying or specifying a property, errors in relations &c. Having put some concepts through twenty or more alterations, I would be foolish to imagine that all are 100% correct now. I am confident that the basic shape of the framework is correct — that the software really works — but I am continually seeking to understand it, to improve the formulations, and to assign properties more precisely. The only way to deal with these errors is to fix them. If the book is well-received and I get sufficient constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement, revisions can be anticipated: a second edition (V. 2.0) and upwards.

HOW TO TACKLE THE BOOK

There are many different ways to read this book: as a whole, in sections, or via topics.

Everyone should read (and maybe even re-read) this chapter. Some may also wish to read Ch. 2, which provides a simple introduction to my research and consultation approach, and indicates how conventional disciplines link to the book. My personal reflections in Ch. 14 can be read now or at any time. Once oriented by these chapters, you can use the book to suit yourself.

Some people, those who like reading manuals or are capable of encyclopaedic coverage of a subject, may simply plough through the book from cover to cover. But each small section could have been a book in itself, and the style is necessarily compressed with new ideas and essential propositions coming one after the other thick and fast.

The present ordering is essentially the order of discovery. I like it because it puts ethical issues at the heart of the book, and so emphasizes the realization of ethical as well as instrumental or managerial values. An alternative ordering of chapters could be: the basics (Ch.s 3 and 4), using values (Ch.s 10 and 13), making choices (Ch. 6), developing social identity (Ch.s 7 to 9), and organizing progress in groups and society (Ch.s 5, 11 and 12).

Another way to work through the whole book is to skim through by reading all the *Introducing...* summaries and explanations at the start of each chapter and main sections, and the *Reviewing...* summaries and transitions at the end of each chapter and section. These are all shown in italics and marked with an arrow (↔) in the Table of Contents.

Anyone intuitively at home with the subject may find that they can glean all they need from the Master-Matrices (Master-Tables/Figures). These are placed at the end of the chapter or section where they are

explained, and are also collected together at the end of the book. The matrices provide an ultra-brief summary and aide memoire of the entire framework. Their primary purpose is to help the reader keep the whole picture in view either while reading about part of the framework, or while applying it, or while improving it.

Although I have written the book as an evolving argument and kept repetition to a minimum, I have also tried to write each chapter, and even each chapter section, so that it can stand alone. As a result, readers may turn immediately to whatever is of interest to them. For example: readers who are specifically interested in the making of ethical choices may read Ch. 6 alone without difficulty. It is perfectly possible to work through different parts of the book in an order that suits you.

The reader can be even more selective by using the Table of Contents, Glossary, Master-Matrices and Index. The Glossary is particularly useful in that it provides a reference to the framework position for over 750 terms (via formulae) and indicates relevant Master-Matrices.

Key concepts (e.g. policy) have their own specific place in the framework (i.e. their own formula: $G-2^2$ for policy), and have chapter sections devoted to them which are usually only a few pages long. Such core concepts are always found in the Table of Contents. If you read the section on policy, you may then wish to turn to the pages which describe the category to which policy belongs — in this case 'direction'. While doing this you might turn to Master-Table 31 to compare and contrast policies with the other five types of direction.

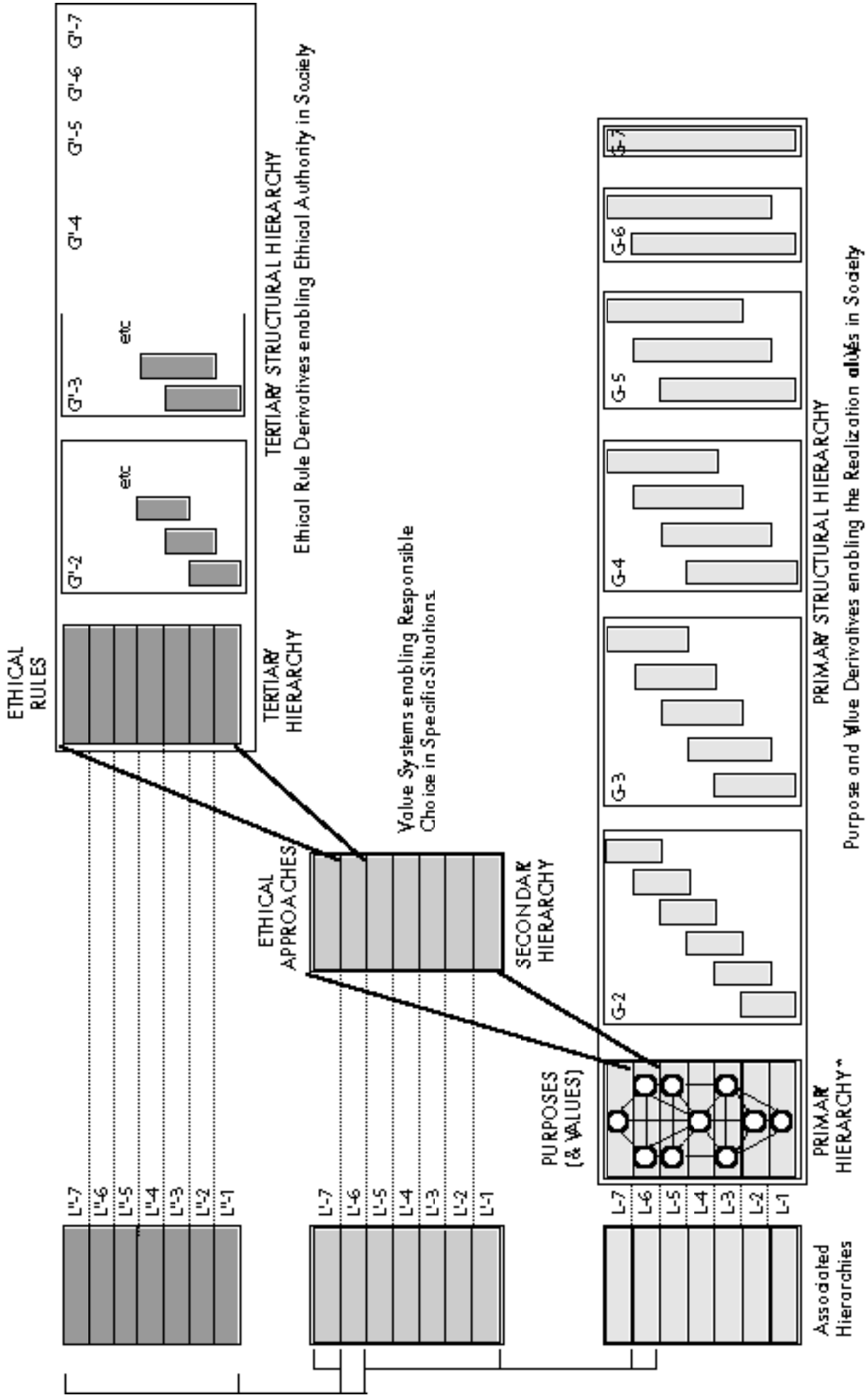
You may discover that you are not really interested in developing or teaching about policy at all, but rather wish to consider approaches. If so, you can then turn to read about them. If devising a policy is what interests you after all, you may wish to discover more about its constituent levels of purpose: internal priorities and strategic objectives — either by turning to the relevant Master-Matrices or parts of Ch. 3 and Ch. 5. Or you may wish to understand the work of governing boards in relation to policies (in Ch. 12), or investigate the dynamics of policy-making further (in Ch. 13). And so on.

If you are interested in an umbrella conception, like standards, which has many different and often muddled meanings, then it is best to start with the Glossary. There you will see the various specific conceptions for which 'standard' is a common synonym. You can explore these initially in the Glossary, turning to the Master-Matrices and text whenever you feel inclined to dig deeper.

Transition. You now know enough about the book to get started anywhere.

The framework leaves you free to determine particular purposes and preferred values to suit you, your situation and your society. But this does not mean it is value-free. The framework is itself built with values and, like any framework, provides the potential for undesirable constraint. So introducing it is ethically problematic. To provide some reassurance, or at least explanation, I will say something about the ethical dimension of my research and consultancy work in Ch. 2. ❁

Master-Figure 0 In this framework, every cell represents an easily recognizable entity in the social world, and can be precisely labelled and defined using ordinary languages. Each entity relates intuitively and logically with every other entity. Entities with similar formulae show formal similarities. The formulae can be interpreted using the Table of Contents.



*The pattern of processes shown within the primary hierarchy can be found within the other hierarchies.

NOTES

1. The usual criticism of systems science is that its models are over-formalized and excessively abstract, or that they state the obvious in an over-complicated and unhelpful way. The present product is both formal and yet pragmatic. The pattern revealed is only obvious once properly appreciated, and then it is extremely useful. The prime epistemological consideration in judging a systems-based theory is whether the model adequately represents the crucial features of the reality being modelled. In pursuing this goal, comprehensiveness consistency and coherence are typically regarded as highly important theoretical requirements, while actual implementation in real world projects is an important methodological requirement. Churchman, Ackoff and other leading systems researchers have emphasized in their writings and lectures that the crucial element omitted in most system science research is the human element, and the major research failure is lack of implementation. By contrast, this research was developed around the human element and has been thoroughly tested through repeated large-scale and long-term organizational and social change projects. See Ch. 2 for further details of the research approach and the projects. Earlier versions of Ch. 3 and Ch. 4 and parts of Ch. 6 and Ch. 12 have appeared in the systems science literature.
2. Virtually identical frameworks (in formal terms) have emerged as practical guides in related domains of human functioning including communication, creativity, change and knowing. A framework of experience and identity development is noted in Ch. 3 and developed in outline in Ch. 7 because it is difficult to appreciate and use values properly without understanding its links to human identity. Frameworks for inquiry and decision-making are touched on when examining methods for ethical choice (Ch. 6). Of course, you would expect to find links between domains of human functioning, but the parallelism is probably not accounted for by my imposition of the ideas on reality. Different parts of the formal pattern in Master-Fig. 0 were discovered independently in different domains at different times and with different colleagues.
3. I have published and lectured in a variety of disciplines, and in those situations referred to the literature of that discipline in accord with academic conventions. My approach here has to be different. I have kept references to a minimum, and incorporated them within Notes at the end of each chapter. References are usually provided either to inform the reader of a source, to elaborate a point, or to indicate my debt to another writer or researcher. The Notes do not acknowledge all major contributions to a topic; nor do they offer a comprehensive bibliography. To ease reading, I frequently use a single note to group references to different points within a paragraph.
4. *Artificial intuition* was a term suggested by Prof. Jimmy Algie, one of the contributors and supporters of my work, to describe his computer applications. With colleagues at Work Sciences (London, UK), he independently developed simple and effective computer-based software applications — for establishing priorities, developing policies, budget planning and control, and workload planning and control — which are built on principles defined by the general theory. This program has sold widely and won the Standard Award for British Business Software. (Further information and software is available from: Work Sciences, 26 Southwood Lawn Rd., London N6, UK.)
5. Findings of others working with the systems science disciplines provides some confirmation for the most basic formal feature of the framework: its seven level structure. For example: the lower five levels seem to have been established by Klir, G. *Architecture of Systems Problem Solving*. New York: Plenum, 1985; Beer, S. *The Brain of the Firm 2nd Ed.* New York: Wiley, 1981; and Jaques, E., Gibson, R.O. & Isaacs, D.J. *Levels of Abstraction in Logic and Human Action*. London: Heinemann, 1978. My two higher levels reflect the use of thought or theory and the creative imagination. The idea that self-consciousness is a meta-system above actuality is now recognized in systems thinking e.g. van Gigch, J.P. *System Design Modeling and Metamodeling*. New York: Plenum, 1991. Empirical research into parts of the framework has commenced in the US and Europe: e.g. Snow, R.M. & Bloom, A.J. Ethical decision-making styles in the work place: Underlying dimensions and their implications. *Systems Research*, 9: 35-45, 1992; Bloom, A.J. & Snow, R.M. Ethical decision making styles in the workplace: Relations to the Keirseley Temperament Sorter. *Systems Research*, 11: 59-63, 1994.
6. The formulae become more mysterious as they get more complex. Consider $G^{n-4^2}_3$. This is the formula referring to the third level in the second of the four-level groupings within the tertiary hierarchy. The G means we are dealing with a grouping of elements; the n means that we are in a tertiary hierarchy; the 4 means we are dealing with a tetrad or grouping of four adjacent levels; the superscript 2 means that it is the second of four tetrads counting upwards; the subscript 3 means that the entity being identified is the third level up in that tetrad. Each of these features has characteristic qualities which apply across frameworks. In the special-ordinary language of the present framework of purpose and value, the formula refers to 'customary or non-legal rights or duties which enable an individual's (i.e. a person's or an organization's) minimum standards to be affirmed dogmatically'.
7. It should not be surprising to recognize that I could not possibly have created this framework without computer aid. I used an Apple Macintosh computer and Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to lay out the complex matrices in a way that assisted in the elaboration of ideas and in the exposure of inconsistencies and incoherences.

Chapter 2

Investigating Ethically

To investigate purpose and value is to investigate social life. To guide the use of purposes and values is to shape people's activities. To work with purposes and values is to participate in organizations and communities. To set purposes and values is to accept responsibility for creating the future. The present account will examine all these things and human identity too. An ethical perspective is essential here, because any interference with who people are, how they think, what they do, why they do it, and the way they organize themselves and their society is a sensitive and controversial matter.

The theoretical framework has been developed and tested through treating organizations and society as research laboratories. This chapter will explain the ethics of such an investigative process, and compare my type of consultancy intervention, called ethical design, with other types. I will indicate what is involved in developing a universal axiom-based framework, emphasizing the need to learn from people and to seek a holistic vision. To put the theoretical work in a practical context, I will also say a little about the particular consultancy project which led to my discovery of the framework. Finally, I will indicate how management, social science, philosophy, law, and religion link to the book, and offer reading suggestions for practitioners and academics identified with these disciplines.

ETHICAL DESIGN

There is one fundamental question for us: where are we all going? Kant unpacked this into: what can we know? what can we hope for? and what should we do? The last is the ethical question. My framework has emerged from 20 years of working with people who were wondering what to do. In my time, I have spent thousands of hours with individuals, attended hundreds of meetings with families and groups, discussed for days on end with managers, argued in heated sessions with professionals, and challenged convinced politicians.

Telling them was assuredly not the answer. Each person knew their situation far better than I did, and was in any case already surrounded by advisers, welcome

and unwelcome. What I could do was focus on helping them personally in a dedicated and disinterested way. Within that context, I found myself offering fundamental insights and principles, while always checking that these felt right to the client. I pushed my client to help me inquire into the nature of these fundamentals.

My client and I had to convince each other and think through divergent points of view. At times, we experienced blank incomprehension of each other. At other times, we engaged in ferocious criticism. Always, we stood up to those fashionable ideas and pseudo-theories which regularly sweep through organizations leaving a trail of confusion and havoc. In this process, I discovered, somewhat unexpectedly, that the best solutions were, broadly speaking, ethical. I found, less surprisingly, that no problem lacked an ethical dimension and that no act was indifferent to ethical judgement. Locke, one of the fathers of modern science suggested that ethics was 'the proper science and business of mankind in general'.¹ Perhaps this is why the strategy of collaborative inquiry works.

Ethical solutions were not about episodic grand choices but about ingraining values into every action, every thought, every decision, every relationship. People generally welcomed ethical clarification, and were slightly surprised by how much they could personally benefit by doing the right thing, and be personally harmed by unthinking avoidance of the issues. (Much later I read Spinoza's unequivocal assertion that 'the effort for self-preservation is the first and only foundation of virtue.'²) Managers and politicians may get nervous when words like values and ethics are mentioned, but they are aware that achievement depends on knowing where you are going and why, that personal integrity matters, and that fulfilment of duty is one yardstick by which they must measure themselves.

It became obvious to me that organizational and social life not only required individuals to be strong and determined, but also to know precisely what their responsibilities and values were. Time and again, I found that people did not know what to expect of themselves or of others. Confusion about intentions and responsibilities meant people were muddled and overwhelmed.

‘Fix it’ was then the only watchword; and ‘tell us what to do’ the only request. Such people seemed to be flapping around in an alligator-filled swamp. Empirical studies mainly measured the splashes and blood in the water; while management gurus taught them how to flap so rapidly that the alligators could be kept at bay. I tried to help my clients reach the high dry land of reflective awareness. From there, managing life or business or family or politics felt very different: not always easy or trouble-free, but a feasible enjoyable and ethical endeavour.

The Freudian revolution, which spearheaded modern man’s inner search, has forever removed self-ignorance as a choice. Like it or not, we now have the task of creating ourselves and our societies with awareness of what we are doing. This is ethics in practice, and the framework is dedicated to people engaged in this great task. I have come to refer to my work as *ethical design*. My research method is *ethical design research*; my consultancy offers an *ethical design approach*; all my frameworks are *ethical design products*.

Intervention in the laboratory of real life is only justified if ethical criteria are met. During interventions, parts of the framework were never offered in the indicative as one possibility among many, but rather in a conditional imperative mode: ‘You are already operating with an implicit framework. Make it explicit and compare it to this one. Only change your present framework if this one is clearer, more true to life, more consistent and more coherent — and so more useful and more beneficial for you.’ This was the challenge my clients paid for, and it is the challenge to which the reader of the book is invited to respond.

Over the years, I have used ethical design to develop a number of helpful theoretical frameworks for different domains of social life. I had to choose one to elaborate fully in detail. This particular framework of purpose was chosen because it provides an explicit and system-

atic understanding of key assumptions underlying the development and use of *any* theoretical framework in social life.

The Logic of Intervention

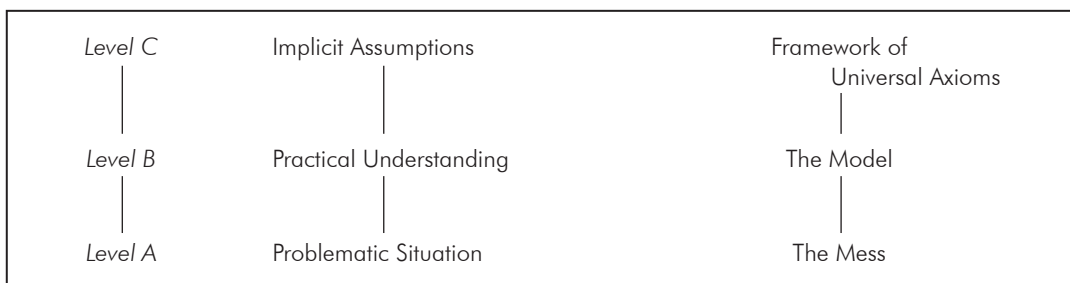
There are three distinct ways to intervene constructively in a social situation. These modes are diagrammatically represented as three hierarchical levels in Fig. 2.1.

The social situation requiring intervention is typically referred to as a problem or a mess (i.e. a system of inter-linked problems). An intervention may be targeted directly at that level (Level A in Fig. 2.1). For example: invoicing may be a mess and the manager may come in on weekends to check and code invoices. Alternatively an outside firm may be called in to do the coding. Many management consultancy firms work in this way: for instance, putting one of their staff inside the accounts department, or developing a marketing strategy for top management.

The level above the problematic situation (Level B in Fig. 2.1) is where a practical understanding forms. This understanding is a model of the situation in Level A developed so as to indicate what to do. In the above example, the understanding might suggest that the backlog of invoice coding was due to the absence of a proper system for handling invoices. The understanding does not say what to do, but it does constrain and channel whatever is done. Managers improve each other’s capability to understand situations through discussion, and by reading and writing down-to-earth accounts of their work. Most management consultants intervene at this level. They review and analyse the mess, draw conclusions, and make recommendations for action. (Weaker firms simply impose the latest fashion, called ‘best practice’, without taking the trouble to penetrate deeply into the nature of the mess.)

Note that intervening at the level of understanding is

Figure 2.1: What is a framework? The hierarchy below illustrates how assumptions constrain any understanding, and how these assumptions are distant from the problematic situation. The terms on the right are systems science equivalents.



design-oriented in the sense that it indicates or constrains what people should be doing in the future. The real issue is whether the design recommendations are ethical, that is to say good and right in principle. To appreciate this, it is necessary to clarify the underlying values and assumptions being used.

Any practical understanding or model is built using various assumptions, which are usually taken for granted and left implicit. These assumptions exist in the top-most level (Level C in Fig. 2.1). They are applicable across situations — that is to say, they are non-specific and potentially universal. Assumptions often come to be held through habit, imitation or experience, rather than through rigorous analysis and validation. However, if the assumptions are not geared to the nature of the situation and also to the nature of people, then they will cause harm. In short, many assumptions are unethical in their application.

If the assumptions in use are simply incorrect, people find that their efforts in practice do not turn out as successfully as they hoped or expected. When organizations get restructured every year, it is likely that top managers (or their consultants) do not know what they are doing. If people lose confidence in their implicit assumptions, they get confused. The alternative approach is to copy what others do: again a common tactic of consultants, managers and politicians. This pragmatic approach may mean that all firms in a sector, say banking, fail simultaneously.

It is possible to intervene at the highest level by introducing new ethically-based assumptions. My consultancy interventions take place at this level. Others intervene here too: politicians, pressure groups, academics, and management gurus often exhort people with worthy ideas. But such moralizing is not situation-based, cannot be classed as design, and is often experienced as intrusive rather than helpful.

Any serious intervention in assumptions needs to use a comprehensive and coherent framework designed to suit the type of situation being handled. I have found that only *ideas unambiguously located within frameworks* can seem (and be) superior to existing habitual or experience-based beliefs.

If a framework is rigorously developed with a constant focus on issues of responsibility, with an effort to accord with human nature and social existence, and with a concern to be intrinsically right and good, then it deserves to be called an ‘ethical framework’ whatever domain it may be ordering. It can then be introduced in good faith and explained in an appealing manner.

DESIGNING A UNIVERSAL FRAMEWORK

Research Assumptions. Note that an understanding of a situation, i.e. a practical understanding, leads to blue-prints for action, but an understanding of principles, i.e. a theoretical understanding or framework of universals, does not. This is the practical person’s disappointment with theory. But the fact that frameworks never say directly what should be done should be seen as a virtue, not as a limitation. Frameworks only constrain and channel the development of understanding. They rule out some models as unworkable or harmful and only in the broadest sense indicate what might be done. So they allow freedom and demand responsibility.

Some people who eternally defend and seek freedom — often artists, therapists, academics — object to the constraints implied by any universal framework. They have a horror of categorization. It is true that reality cannot be captured in categories. But the point is that *in social life* there is *always* a constraining framework. If there were not, communication and social interaction would become impossible. So the real issues are: are you aware of your underlying assumptions and categories? and, how useful and ethical are your frameworks in practice?

If a framework is well-designed, then blue-prints can be developed in which control is not oppressive, spontaneity is preserved, injustices are limited, and organic development is facilitated. The world will go on whether or not our efforts are well-designed, but it will not go on happily if human nature is violated. We are all blueprint makers — managers design their endeavours, politicians design their manifestos, and all of us design important aspects of our own lives — so we can benefit from a framework that accords with human nature. (As to what constitutes human nature, that is a matter for each person to decide. Mistakes can be made and advice can be occasionally sought, but we cannot abdicate our everyday responsibilities to experts or academics.)

Whereas managers or politicians and their consultant advisers can be expected to sort out messes and develop a conventional understanding of them, they cannot be expected to develop frameworks of universals. This is thinkers’ work. Practical people have a right to expect thinkers to construct such an infrastructure, to develop the necessary language and to validate the ideas.

A core assumption of the present approach is that while there is no model for a perfect society or organization, there are frameworks that can helpfully and non-oppressively orient our striving for this ideal.

Any utopian model threatens to justify totalitarian control so as to impose its way of thinking. To escape this trap, we could say that utopia is a society in which the possibility of design and evolutionary progress exists. This is probably the only utopia we can realistically expect. It exists everywhere as a potentiality, and always has existed in this form.

One consequence of ethical design through collaboration and intervention is that any account inevitably confuses description with prescription. Often what is, is what ought to be — so the same statement may be both descriptive and prescriptive. Observing what existed and what did not exist, and what worked and what failed to work was essential to the research approach. So the exposition is descriptive to some degree. How could a framework for something as basic as social life not reflect reality and still be useful? However, because the framework aims to be a guide to ethical living, it must of necessity be prescriptive.³

Testing the Framework. Intervening by introducing a set of new ideas is a complex matter. It is only possible if the ideas seem axiomatic, have intuitive appeal, are personally supportive, and rapidly demonstrate benefits. To the dismay of ivory-tower dwellers, compelling evidence, scholarly erudition and intrinsic logic are far less significant. The reason is simple: intervening in a person's assumptive world and installing a new way of thinking means tampering with their identity. Such activity will not be generally welcomed and absorbed if the frameworks do not seem to be wholesome and to affirm existing identity. A psychotherapeutic-style sensitivity to people is obviously needed as part of the research method.

This is not the place to engage in a detailed account of systemic inquiry methods for ethical design. However, it is necessary for the reader to recognize that conventional empirical and hypothesis-testing inquiry, the commonest conceptions of science, cannot possibly produce useful frameworks of universals. Scientists using these approaches do not attempt such a task. Most of the distinctive principles used in my research are mentioned in the opening chapter and this one. (For a summary, see Box 2.1).

A Holistic Vision

To enter the domain of purpose, values and ethics is to find oneself in a circular antechamber from which a number of doors lead. Each door is labelled with a discipline. Once you pass through a door-way, the door slams irrevocably shut behind you. There is no turning back: your career, your mode of thinking, your friends, your life are all altered forever. The social guardians of

Some Distinctive and Unconventional Research Principles

- Start with complexity.
- Use experiential reality as a reference.
- Expect parallel hierarchies of concepts.
- Define elements precisely.
- Refine ordinary language and reject neologisms.
- Work by progressive approximation.
- Scan all relevant disciplines.
- Accept the validity of all sides in long-standing theoretical debates.
- Distinguish the actual from the potential.
- Understand, then universalize, then apply.
- Strive for completeness, consistency and coherence.
- Relate frameworks where possible.
- Check ideas apply equally well at personal, organizational and societal levels.
- Only apply theories in consultation by invitation, and then solve real problems collaboratively.
- Help people and trust people.
- Give truth priority over method.
- End with simplicity.

Box 2.1

knowledge demand compartmentalization. Beyond the door-way, the rooms are inter-connected, but the guardians permit short visits only.

To summarize what lies behind all the different doors is beyond anyone's expertise. To take account of the conflicting and complex viewpoints, ideas and findings about purposes and values in a proper and fair way, were it possible, would render this book hopelessly obscure.

The intense specialisation within management and social science disciplines has produced depth at the expense of breadth. But a holistic vision is essential to achieve anything substantial. Ignoring a single relevant factor can bring the whole edifice of an endeavour tumbling down. To avoid compartmentalization, interdisciplinary work is proceeding apace. However the academic culture is unchanged, so the result is new and worthy but even more specialized and restricted disciplines or domain-limited efforts. Consider some examples: development economics, business ethics, medical geography, socio-legal studies, media studies, political psychology, educational assessment.

All too often the research establishment mocks efforts to produce a global vision. So the search for universality is not just neglected by academics, it is avoided as being equivalent to career death. As a result,

perspectives and jargon proliferate in contradictory and confusing ways, and any sense of the needs of humanity is lost.

The last word can be handed over to an academic who can be taken as speaking for any of the social sciences anywhere in the world: “What is wrong ... today is that we are over-specialised, fragmented, alienated from the society in which the majority of people live and lacking any vision of our own or humanity’s future.”⁴

By contrast, the framework of purpose is the product of a holistic vision. It extends via action to clarify the design and working of organizations and government, and via experience to clarify the nature of personal identity and moral institutions. All its definitions are offered as universally valid, cross-culturally applicable, integrated within a meaningful system, potentially embedded in existing society, and pointing towards an ultimate goal for humanity.

A holistic vision must handle complexity without being over-complicated. It must be simple if it is to be grasped, and yet avoid being simplistic. Nowhere is complex over-complication and simplistic over-simplification more evident than in the field of ethics.

Over-simplifying Ethics. Ethics, we can say, is about the *obligation* or *duty* to do what is right and good. It relates to what one is *bound* to do (*obligation* etym. L. *obligare* = to bind up, to pledge), or to what *ought* to be done (*duty* etym. M.E. *dew* = to owe). The obligation and duty is both inner, that is to say a motivational force; and outer, that is to say a social demand. In other words, ethics is both personal and societal. For the person in the street, ethics is, in short, about what must be done, what values to hold, and what rules to obey. The ethical ideal is a virtuous person in a just society.

Some have said that mistaking the part for the whole is the essence of heresy. If so, most writers on ethics are heretics. Blandly, they consign to the dustbin whole areas of relevance and centuries of philosophical reflection. Everything before Kant was a mistake says one. Everything after Kant is empty comes the riposte. For some, ethics is essentially a matter of union with God. For others religion is irrelevant and God a metaphysical nonsense. Morals and ethics are words derived from Latin and Greek terms referring to custom, character and behaviour — but most ethicists seem united in regarding such things as outside their scope.⁵

The moral education of children, asserted Kohlberg, an eminent psychologist, should take as its subject matter the settling of conflicts of interest among people to whom equal respect is due.⁶ But this excludes so

much. Surely moral education is also about developing honesty, truthfulness and integrity? And where do rules about gambling, euthanasia, the use of drugs, or sexual fidelity fit into this schema?

These over-simplifications are due to the protean quality and immense size of the ethical domain. We always manage complexity by analysis — which entails breaking the whole up into its parts. However, if the sight of the whole is lost, artificially isolated parts may grow unchecked and deformed, potentially and quite unnecessarily subverting the enterprise. A balanced and effective understanding of any part of ethics requires an image of the whole. Generating this image is my aim: not resolving particular ethical issues. Providing a base for discourse is my task: not participating passionately in that discourse.⁷

Of course, the combination of over-complication and over-simplification is not restricted to ethics. It applies to decision-making, organizational design, social participation, and virtually all areas of social science study.

The favourite simplifying tactic of social scientists is to dichotomize, often into opposites. This is the norm when defining purpose and value. (See the introductory sections to Ch.s 3 and 4 respectively). The next step is to combine two dichotomies into a four-celled two-by-two table (see Fig. 2.2). Using this trick, the illusion of understanding is dramatically increased.

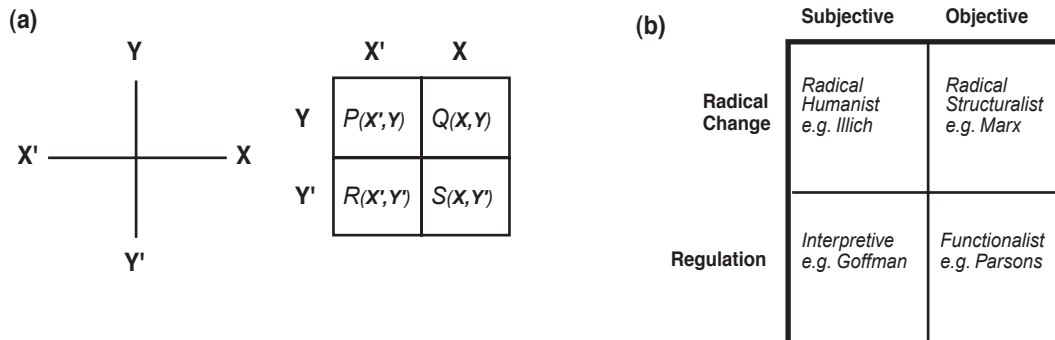
People experience a sense of relief that there is some order in social reality. If well-designed, as in Fig. 2.2(b), 2x2 tables may have some use.⁸ However, their weakness is that they use ideas to order realities. Imposition on reality and the massaging of reality are ever-present tendencies. The present framework, in sharp contrast, is based on using realities to order ideas.

Learning from People

People came first. Out of the experience of living, came the awareness of social existence. And from reflections on social existence came religion, philosophy, law, social science and management studies, approximately in that order. To go back to people’s experiences and to view purposes and values as a product of experience allows us to learn from all these domains.

Pluralism. Social scientists often start by assuming or testing popular beliefs. Even philosophers nowadays try to harmonize their conclusions with what they presume to be everyday thinking by ordinary people. However, such work usually assumes that there is only one common-sense way of thinking and acting. The assumption of unity is the ultimate over-simplification.

Figure 2.2: Dichotomizing: The typical simplification. (a) Cartesian coordinates based on continuous variables and the 2 x 2 table for discrete entities which is derived from it. (b) Distinctive theories of society with key social scientists. Note that the approach to society taken in this book does not easily fit into the table.



Such a mistake is easy to make, partly because we tend to think that people are like ourselves and those with whom we mix, and partly because of an inherent psychological urge to unification. Philosophers, in particular, seem to be prone to pour scathing criticism and unmodified contempt on views with which they disagree.

Reading widely in many disciplines has forced me to accept that there are multiple valid modes of thought and action — only some of which accord with my own personal inclinations. These multiple theoretical approaches cannot be unified into an encompassing ‘super-better’ theory, but they can be grouped, ordered, and made humanly manageable by clarifying their essential relationships. The result, which might be called a meta-theory or meta-paradigm, generates an overview and enables an expansion of awareness.

By confidentially cooperating with people making difficult decisions in disparate settings — and encouraging them to be explicit when doing it their way — I have directly observed the dramatic differences which result when they use different implicit theories. I found that it was often their theoretical approach which made the decision, not themselves. In other words, someone else with the same theory would come to a very similar conclusion. My view is that people not ideas should be in the driving seat. People must experience themselves as responsible for their actions, and this means they must be aware of and personally responsible for the ideas and assumptions they hold.

My work required me to assist and empower people who carried formal responsibility and wished to act with awareness. When the situation is difficult, managers, professionals, politicians and others inquire and reflect on their activities even though their main concern is not generating knowledge. Helping them reflect

is not itself a scientific activity, but it has an advantage over more controlled forms of investigation in that it minimizes the distortion of human nature to suit scientific methods or theoretical preconceptions.

During one phase of consultancy, for example, I explored exactly what was meant and implied when a decision or proposal is described as good (or bad) or right (or wrong). The resulting multiplicity of views and ways of handling controversy were systematically analysed and refined over some years to produce a set of very different approaches to ethical choice (see Ch. 6).

Precise Formulation. The concepts, structures and relationships of purpose and value were tested and validated in an iterative process to make them fit the realities precisely. Ideas were developed so as to be applicable, and application in problematic situations was pursued to test and modify the formulations. I have generally worked with successful people capable of reflecting on their own functioning. Such people do not accept fuzzy jargon or artificial ideas, and are far too sensible to adapt to disciplinary prejudices. They are aware of the evolution of their own attitudes and beliefs, and expect new ideas to be broadly congruent with what experience has taught them.

Of course, even the brightest person looking for help might accept plausible but mistaken ideas. And if the ideas are buzzwords, it becomes positively dangerous to appear behind the times by questioning or rejecting them. Much academic and commercial consultancy seems to build on this human weakness, by deliberately promoting buzzwords while avoiding precise formulations (cf. Box 2.2).

But precision in thinking is needed to construct an effective language for management. Errors multiply

themselves as any grand synthesis proceeds. The present framework would have collapsed at an early stage if valid universals had not been discovered. As the ideas in any one section (and its master-matrix) were hammered out, problems elsewhere were resolved or inconsistencies emerged. So other sections and master-matrices were re-worked and improved. Now, the whole framework is a tightly-linked and reasonably

coherent and consistent structure — though still open to improvement and elaboration.

Socrates drove everyone mad with his impossible demands for precise definition of things like virtue, knowledge and justice. How could I possibly succeed where he failed? The answer lies in the different methods being applied. In the philosophic method, asking questions and maintaining a dialogue are as important as reaching an answer — or even more important. By contrast in the present inquiry, answers were the object of the exercise and their correctness the source of my livelihood. To keep projects going, workable definitions just had to be produced in a way that was socially acceptable, approximately right, and evidently useful to clients.

Something sensible could always be created by defining social entities in terms of their core purpose and relationships. In other words, the way out of the maze was to move from asking (say) ‘What is a faction?’ to ‘What is a faction for?’ and to examine how factions relate to and differ from other forms of social group like communities, associations or work groups. I then used these ideas with the client to help them understand their situation. As formulations were used and re-used, they were modified, focused and refined until they were simple, obvious and unexceptionable.

A client’s conceptions and values were never unduly disrupted or opposed. Clients soon realized that the issue was really one of gaining clarity in their own mind. They recognized that a challenging dialogue with a supportive outsider could be helpful. Common sense told them that things go awry when they and those working to them are confused about what essential words mean or when buzzwords or other key ideas do not fit realities. In all projects, people begin using the language and working with the ideas of my frameworks, perhaps a little stiffly at first, but soon in an easy and natural way.

Confucius was also deeply concerned with the *rectification of names*, and gave a similar reason for his concern to the one I give my clients. ‘If names are not rectified, then language will not be in accord with truth. If language is not in accord with truth, then things cannot be accomplished. If things cannot be accomplished, then ceremonies and music will not flourish [i.e. disrespect and bad feelings will disrupt social relationships]. If ceremonies and music do not flourish, then punishment will not be just. If punishments are not just, then the people will not know how to move hand or foot [i.e. will be inhibited]. Therefore the superior man will give only names that can be described in speech and say only what can be carried out in practice.’⁹

CONCEPT OR BUZZWORD?

The Example of ‘Strategy’

There is little agreement amongst either businessmen or academics about what strategy is. A recent popular article on strategy recognizes it as a buzzword and yet mirrors the confusion it reports. The writer drifts between what a strategy should be in principle, what should guide strategy, and what business strategies should be in practice. The final suggestion is that the secret of success is to let strategy mean whatever you want it to mean (*The Economist*, 20th March 1993, p.106). In short, good-bye to concepts.

The messages about strategy that flow from my approach are quite different. Here are three:

- ☛ Strategy has different connotations based on the approach to work and decision-making taken by the manager (cf. Master-Table 8). This accords with the general principle that all domains allow for a range of different approaches (cf. L-6: Ch.4).
- ☛ Before you try to set a strategy, get a grasp of what a strategy is in principle (cf. Glossary). Make sure you know how strategy links to other forms of purpose and value. Use the word ‘strategy’, like any other tool, with respect. So avoid using it to refer bluntly to purposes in general.
- ☛ No one can tell you what your strategy should be. And do not expect a strategy (or any other tool including the ideas in this book) to carry the burden of your success. Business, like any other aspect of social life, is more complicated than that.

When strategy was the popular buzzword some years ago, it was not wise to suggest that it is perfectly possible to succeed without strategies — and easy to fail with them. But many effective managers, then and now, are pragmatic opportunists for whom objectives are a matter of immediate convenience and concepts a form of brain-ache.

Academics who promote the use of strategy are typically rationalists or systems thinkers who believe in ideas and insist on the importance of knowing where you are going. Managers who find such an approach appealing should feel at home with the definitions and explanations of strategy and related terms provided here (cf. Ch. 3 L-2; Ch. 13).

Box 2.2

THE ORIGINATING PROJECT

My various theoretical frameworks have emerged principally from a 25 year consultancy programme aiming to improve organization and management of the United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS). The NHS, the largest employer in Western Europe, is as complex as any organization in the world. Its one million employees include health professionals in numerous disciplines, managers of many types, and a wide variety of occupational groups ranging from doctors to accountants to gardeners. Its control involves politicians, civil servants and the public. Taking an action-research perspective, I have directed a variety of major organization development projects over the past 15 years, some lasting many years. Over two hundred conferences and seminars have been mounted. New ideas and theories in many areas of management have been pursued with thousands of staff in all tiers of the NHS. The ideas have been fed back to senior managers, and have been followed up over the many changes of public policy, governments, and people at the top of the NHS.¹⁰

The particular stimulus to work on purpose and value came from requests in 1981-2 to improve the working of two District Health Authorities (DHAs). The DHA is a form of governing body or board within the NHS. It was then responsible for comprehensive provision of health services in a defined territory with a population of about 250,000. This responsibility was both legal — it could be sued, and financial — it was allocated an annual budget with which to provide services. The project needed to establish the appropriate work of the DHA, its chairman and members, and to clarify their roles and relations to the top officers and to higher level governance provided by a Regional Health Authority and the Secretary of State. The research contract was not just a theoretical exercise. It required us to assist Authority members and top officers to put our proposals into practice.

This project forced us to develop the notion of levels of purpose and then it became evident that we could design a model of the Authority based on this framework. After testing the ideas further in seminars and projects with other governors, the model was published and disseminated nationally. Both lay governors and top managers found the framework easy to assimilate, and told us that the model felt right and natural. Above all, when put into practice, the ideas actually worked.¹¹

The framework of purpose was subsequently applied and validated in local government. Local government in the UK is responsible for various welfare, education, housing and other services for large communities.

Elections are contested by the major political parties and so the governance process is highly politicized. Here the challenge was to improve council and committee structures and the policy-making process generally, while keeping in mind the councillors' political and democratic role. Again the framework proved to accord with a deep social reality and to be a useful guide for devising and implementing reforms.¹²

Subsequently, the framework was clarified and further elaborated to assist work with values and objectives by executives, and to facilitate social change in projects involving multiple organizations. In this work, links with related frameworks of decision and responsibility were developed. The ideas have also been tested and refined in work with commercial firms, voluntary bodies and churches, carried out in part by colleagues.

An Unavoidable Discovery

What is 'Policy'? Clarifying the nature of purpose was simply unavoidable in the Health Authority project because members and officers repeatedly used purposive terms. Some like priorities, options and plans seemed straightforward. However the most frequent term, policy, was puzzling. We had no precise sense of what policy referred to. Time and again in our field and seminar discussions, participants claimed that policies were not being set, or were inappropriately set, or were too vague, or were too specific, or were not understandable. In confidential discussions, members of Health Authorities expressed puzzlement as to what sort of policy decisions they could realistically make. Top officers also revealed confusion as to their specific contribution to board policy-making, and wondered what distinguished this from purely executive policy-making.

We asked managers and governors to explain what they meant by policy. They replied with synonyms like direction or priority and seemed unsure as to the precise function of policy. Examination of documents which were labelled 'policies', for example, usually revealed a mixture of strongly held values, vague aspirations, specific activities, targets (often grossly unrealistic), directions for change, general procedures, responsibilities, methods, rules, and self-evident or tautological statements. The best one could say of many of these documents was that they met the requirement to have something official in writing.

Two conclusions were drawn: first, an unequivocal and unambiguous definition of policy was required if those on governing bodies were ever to be clear about their responsibilities; second, such a definition required clarity about purposes in general.

Sorting Purposes. To understand purposes, we reflected on their use and misuse in other settings. Several observations immediately impressed themselves on us. People were not clear about what purposes were about — especially purposes which were also values. Perhaps as a consequence, we found an extraordinarily varied number of synonyms for purpose in everyday use. Poor or absent specifications of purposes and inconsistency between purposes were frequent causes of confusion for managers in large organizations.

Over time we came to see that the notion of different types of purpose was important to resolve problems with the setting of purposes. Again, two findings pointed unmistakably to this conclusion. First, distinctly different forms of system breakdown could be linked with absence or confusion of different types of purpose. Second, attempts at evaluation were regularly bedevilled by conflicts between managers, politicians and different breeds of academics, because each viewed different types of purposes as most relevant.

Eventually we realized that there was a good reason why purposes were labelled in so many ways. In organizations, indeed in any deliberate activity, a number of categorically discrete articulations of purpose are absolutely essential. To use them effectively, each requires a distinct name. The situation had become confused because investigators in different fields of human endeavour had, innocently, evolved different names for similar notions or used the same name for differing notions.

For example, the objectives studied by policy analysts related to changes in services, while the objectives stressed by role analysts concerned the nature of enduring functions within the organization. Sociologists noted implicit communal or group values which resulted in the direction taken by services, while managers applied values overtly to make decisions. Entrepreneurs with their lawyers formulated aims to justify setting up enterprises, whilst planners identified aims which determined their operation in the immediate future. Supervisors usually set goals to ensure that things were done on time, while general managers often set goals to which everyone had to work in their own way. And so on. Rectification of names was evidently necessary.

In the event, the enormous number of explicit and implicit objectives derived from a limited number of formally distinct and definable categories (or types) of purpose. The variety of surface labels and classifications of objectives could be retained, reinterpreted and refined using the new deep classification.

I was predisposed to believe that my categories would

form an interconnected structure with an intrinsic coherence. If such an underlying structure of purpose could be clearly articulated, I knew it would be a useful tool for organizational development. However, its extension to encompass ethical choice and social change was not recognized at that stage.

In studies of social services, a colleague, Jimmy Algie, had previously suggested that there might be five distinct categories of purpose forming a conceptual hierarchy.¹³ This insight as to hierarchy was sound and, although the labels have been altered, the definitions modified, and two further levels added, Algie's underlying notions remain. However, the present study emphasises that the hierarchy is not merely conceptual but is linked to existing social practices. It seems that the hierarchy, as I have extended and completed it, is not just another typology, but a framework which touches social reality itself. It is therefore of profound importance for the ethical design of activities, organizations and society.

DISCIPLINARY LINKS

It may be helpful for readers within particular disciplines or interests to have advance notice of my connections with these, and some indication of the parts of the book that might be particularly relevant to them. The areas to be considered here are: management disciplines, social sciences, philosophy, religion and law.

Management Disciplines. Much of my research and consultancy has been concerned with improving management within organizations. Management is all about pursuing purposes, ensuring cooperation, establishing values, and thriving in a wider social context, so management disciplines were a natural starting point. I am indebted to the many management theorists and writers who gave me a base from which to work.

Technical work apart, management has not yet become theory-based. Even a prestigious University like Harvard teaches management in much the same way that morality used to be taught in the middle ages — using case studies and simulations. Empirical research has produced little theory, and much management writing is an unashamed mixture of description and ad hoc precepts. Such theory as exists is simplistic or out of touch with the reality to be managed. Where management theory is precise and mathematical, it is near-impossible to understand and implementation is conspicuously absent.

The absence of theory encourages managers to write popular books about their own experiences, and fosters the phenomenon of the management guru. The result is

a mix of tips and hints buried in a web of illusion. Much writing encourages imitation rather than reflective awareness. The language used aspires to be allusive rather than precise, despite the harmful effects (cf. Box 2.2 and Ex. 3.14 in Ch. 3).

At all times, this book speaks very directly to the needs of managers who wish to be aware of what is going on — in themselves, in their work, in their organization, in their professional associations, in their society. Some parts are particularly relevant to practising managers. Ch.3 which deals with the five purposes needed for action is geared to organizations; and Ch. 10 is about systematically using purposes and values (and their derivatives) in management. Ch. 13 is essential reading for those who believe in value-driven management and like using objectives to get results. To understand governing boards and governance duties, the section in Ch. 12 on executive organization (G-5) is essential. The most useful sections in regard to ethics are: Ch. 6 on ethical decision-making; Ch. 8 on the various of ethical codes; and the section on minimum standards in Ch. 9.

Social Science. Even though the scientific ethos typically excludes itself from any responsibility to provide a direction for activities or a guide to conduct, social scientists realize that purpose and value are central to their disciplines. I have drawn freely across the spectrum of social sciences without pretending expertise in any area (except perhaps systems and psychoanalysis which hardly count as social sciences).

Social scientists have clarified that the drive for improvement, cross-cultural comparisons and reflective awareness are features of modern developed societies which are alien, even inimical, to traditional or primitive societies. Less developed societies are distinguished by their lack of concern with the origins of their ethical assumptions. They abjure change and take the validity of their standards for granted. Only in modern times could the urge to set up organizations, to respect differences in individual view, and to design social life be realized on a sufficient scale to make the discovery and testing of the present framework possible.

Sociologists and anthropologists established by the middle of this century that all human societies have standards of right and wrong and good and bad, and that people in all societies are sensitive to judgements in these terms. Ethical concepts and rules have been shown to be inextricably part of the culture and structure of the society within which they are found. The finding of enormous diversity on the one hand and some real measure of uniformity on the other is of immense significance. It validates the approach that led to this book.¹⁴

I worked throughout on the twin assumptions (a) that our common humanity means that there must be an underlying, invisible and uniform framework for purpose and ethics within which all people and all societies make choices, devise rules and create institutions; and (b) that these choices, rules and institutions would vary depending on every conceivable social influence: economic, historical, political, demographic, geographical, religious, and so on.

Needless to say, all social scientists should find all chapters of some interest. However, readers concerned with society as a whole rather than its organizations or public sector administration may wish to focus on: Ch. 5 dealing with the variety of natural social groups; the second part of Ch.7 dealing with society's natural moral institutions; Ch. 9 examining ethical authorities; Ch. 11 classifying the myriad of organizations in society; and Ch. 12 considering the expression of autonomy, sovereignty and membership of society, including a new approach to popular movements and regulatory authorities. The social aspects of being intentional, as presented in Ch. 13, would also be relevant.

Readers concerned with psychological or personal aspects of social life might prefer to focus on: the exploration of value (Ch. 4), natural social groups (Ch. 5), making ethical choices (Ch. 6), developing identity (the first part of Ch.7), as well as modes of being intentional (Ch. 13).

Philosophy. A great deal of thought but little orthodox philosophy has gone into the formulations of the framework. I take heart from Bertrand Russell who suggested, somewhat pessimistically, that only bad philosophy had any influence in society. To reject the value of good philosophy would be unthinkable, but for a non-philosopher to extract that value is not always easy. Even amongst philosophers, there does seem to be general agreement that application of their ideas is limited. One formal assessment by philosophers of their own courses in business ethics concluded that the great philosophical theories were not useful as teaching devices.¹⁵

From my perspective, the unquestionable value of the past three thousand years of disciplined philosophical analysis comes from its clarification of the basic features of ethics, and its articulation of a variety of distinct approaches and perennial dualities.

From ancient times until the present, ethics has been studied primarily by philosophical analysis rather than by intervening in actual situations and noting the effects. Indeed ethics is often used synonymously with philosophical study: the object of that study being morals or morality.¹⁶

My impression is that the great philosophers have advocated, explicitly or implicitly, adoption of a single approach to ethics, and have focused on how, by following that approach, people should conduct themselves. Many philosophers still see their work as producing knowledge to help people become good or happy, or to do what is right either in general or in specific situations.

Such moralizing is largely avoided by the modern fashion for logical positivism. Its offspring, analytic philosophy, worries over the meaning and objectivity of propositions and concepts used in discourse. From the comfort of their armchairs, philosophers argue with one another about the way in which a particular word is used, and about comparisons and contrasts with other notions commonly associated in thought with it. Superficially, this resembles my concern for the rectification of names.

So philosophers may well look askance at the many definitions and propositions presented in this book. But the framework is primarily about achievement, not about discourse. So its essential elements are formulae representing social realities, not words that people happen to use. Chuang Tzu compared words to nets for catching fish. Once you have understood the reality (caught the fish), then the words (net) used to capture it can be changed or forgotten. Ethical design involves honing ordinary words *to sharpen up just those distinctions that really matter in practice*. The idea that usefulness might be a superordinate guide to truth is generally alien to the philosophic mind (even allowing for the pragmatic tradition).

All philosophers should be interested in the new way that certain perennial dualities in human life are accounted for and theoretically handled (see Ch.s 6, 7 and 13). Moral philosophers will find the analysis of values (Ch. 4), and the different approaches to making an ethical choice (Ch. 6) relevant to their work. Philosophers who enjoy getting their teeth into a grand systemic synthesis may find Chs. 9 and 13 of interest.

Religion. It has been suggested that modern ethical philosophy was brought down to reality and saved by medical ethics. But who led the way in medical ethics? Not philosophers, and not even doctors. Medical ethics was established as a field of concern largely through the work of moral theologians.¹⁷ This should not surprise anyone. Religion has always seen itself as having a central role in guiding social behaviour along the right channels.

A separation of religion from values and ethics is just not possible. Moral theology is the critical work within a religion applying its knowledge of God to ordinary

behaviour. Moral theology apart, traditional creeds provide a framework within which most people work and think without much consideration of its influence.

Without pretending to escape this influence, my concern has been the religious impulse in the mind and in society universally. As the research progressed, this impulse towards the spiritual was revealed in a variety of contexts. The analyses to be presented suggest that a complete divorce of values and ethics from spirituality is impossible. If this understanding is correct, the present growth of ethical reflection in society is likely to be associated with a re-invigoration of transpersonal and transcendental awareness.

Spirituality is hard for secular man to take seriously, so such proposals sound far-fetched. Religion seems to take for granted just what science and much Western culture questions. For example, a central concern of religion is salvation i.e. how the soul, the divine spark within man, is to be united with the Eternal. Science says nothing about this, and even wonders if notions like soul and salvation are sensible or meaningful. However, achieving salvation, redemption, release from suffering, and union of the soul with God are definitions of the ultimate end and good for man recognized and affirmed by all religions.

In my analyses, I distinguish sharply between transpersonal experiences and spiritual forms which are remarkably uniform the world over, and the church organizations, religious dogmas, rituals and value systems which show considerable variation. Spirituality and transpersonal existence seem to be empirical phenomena built into the very structure of human consciousness.¹⁸ I take them for granted as universals while regarding religions and churches as the property of particular tribes and times.

In my work, I have found that most people have the capacity to see issues from a spiritual perspective and feel refreshed by taking this view. However, few were practised in activating this potential themselves. Still fewer found their official religious doctrine an effective guide to handling the complexity of modern society and organizational life. What they urgently required was a new symbolic understanding of the human spirit which could resonate with the ethos of autonomy and scientific precision characteristic of the modern age.

If you are of a religious disposition, or a New Age devotee, or a researcher of religion within a social science, or a theological scholar, then you will be particularly interested in the sixth and seventh levels in all the hierarchies. Comparison with lower levels will be helpful in appreciating and reconciling yourself to mundane temporal perspectives. Use the Table of

Contents to guide your reading.

Law. *Question:* When the Chicago Mercantile Exchange wanted its members to learn about ethics following an FBI indictment of 47 of its brokers and traders for de-frauding customers, where did they turn? *Answer:* Professors at the Chicago-Kent College of law. *Question:* When the British Psychoanalytic Society needed help in constructing its code of ethics, who did they call in? *Answer:* Their solicitors. Presumably philosophers and theologians were thought to lack certain knowledge or communicative skills, or viewed as out of touch with everyday life; or possibly it is just that they charged too little to be taken seriously.

Nobody wants to get entangled with the law. But still, the law is the ultimate social recourse if any of us wishes to assert that something done to us is bad or unfair, or should we wish to defend an action as good and right in the face of accusations to the contrary. The courts of justice are a means whereby what is officially ethical can be publicly argued and decided. Correspondingly the law and jurists have a great deal to say about values in social life. Academic jurists might be expected to offer a theory of values and society, but instead they restrict themselves to the theory of law. The study of the theory of law is known as jurisprudence.

My knowledge of jurisprudence is rudimentary yet I have become fascinated by the law. Legal positivism, the currently dominant trend of thinking in jurisprudence, tends to separate law and morals absolutely. However, from my perspective, law seems to be ethical at core.¹⁹

The governance system which enables legality is given a special status and compared with other natural moral institutions in Ch.7. Laws are viewed as a special form of regulation and compared with other ethical rules in Ch. 8. Different aspects of justice are discussed in Ch.9, where 'the law' is defined. Law is also considered briefly in Ch. 12 in relation to sovereignty.

THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE COMMUNITY

I need to state just one more of my assumptions before proceeding: purposes, values and obligations demand a balanced recognition of 'the individual in the community'.

The Enlightenment's emphases on freedom of thought, scepticism and the value of the individual, for all their benefits, seem to have led to a devaluation of the social order which all individuals need. This movement has fostered an intolerance of the very notion

of certain eternal and unshakeable beliefs on which all ethics absolutely depends. Religious and communalist emphases on the value of the community, mutuality and cooperation, for all their virtue, seem to have gone hand in hand with attempts to limit autonomy, deny diversity and suppress personal initiative and imagination.

Each perspective makes a vital contribution, but in the USA and on the international scene it sometimes seems that a war between the two outlooks is brewing.

Because individuals are the purposeful entities which constitute communities, we must start with them. But because individuals depend on communities for their continuing existence, we must never neglect the social dimension in our explorations.

But what is an individual? It has become acceptable, if a little odd, to use the term to refer to any social entity that is self-contained, self-identified, purposeful and has a legal existence. Such an individual makes decisions, commits resources, and can be held responsible.

There are at least four important categories of individual in this wider sense. First there are people like you and me, operating deliberately or unself-consciously in a variety of social roles. Then there are organizations like firms, public bodies and voluntary associations pursuing their own business. Then there are governments concerned with the security and well-being of society. Finally, there are the churches which represent a moral community.²⁰

It is essential to recognize that organizations, governments and churches are individuals capable of inconceivably more good and harm than persons. In modern society, people do most of their good and harm by virtue of their positions within such powerful and complex individuals. So a practical framework for purposes, values and obligation cannot be restricted to purely personal matters or personal volition: which is the present convention in psychology, philosophy and ethics courses. Nor can it be restricted to purely social phenomena, as is common in most social sciences.

The present framework engages directly with these artificial individuals which are so important in our lives, especially organizations which are the most prolific and most amenable to personal control. Those responsible for designing, operating and regulating organizations need to appreciate what they are about.

Transition. *The introduction is over at last. The need for a framework has been identified. The design process has been explained. The ethical underpinnings of the inquiry have been emphasized. The originating project has been described. Links*

to existing disciplines have been noted. Now we can start. ❀

NOTES

1. Locke's quote can be found in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).
2. Spinoza, B. *The Ethics of Spinoza*. (Ed. by D.D. Runes) Secaucus, NJ: Citadel, 1957, p.94.
3. This descriptive-prescriptive duality relates to the is/ought dilemma, which is the focus of much philosophical debate (e.g. Hudson, W.D. *The Is/Ought Question: A Collection of Papers on the Central Problem in Moral Philosophy*. Macmillan: London, 1969). The dilemma is irrelevant in the present pragmatic context in which all social facts embody an ought in their nature. For example, to say that someone is a father or a friend or a manager directly implies that the person has a certain responsibility and ought to behave in a certain way. In the same way, if a person's intention to buy a car means anything, we take it for granted that the person has the accompanying right and responsibility. Such points have been made by Churchman and others repeatedly (e.g. Churchman, C.W. *The Design of Inquiring Systems*. New York: Basic Books, 1971; Milne, A.J.M. *Human Rights and Human Diversity*. London: Macmillan, 1986). Systems science views dualities as characteristic of systems, and the handling and resolution of dualities is one of the themes of the book (see especially Ch.s 6, 7, 13). However the descriptive-prescriptive duality, which probably belongs somewhere within the framework of inquiry, is not explored.
4. Hart, K. Quoted in *The Times Higher Educational Supplement*, p.V, 28th December 1990. In the same vein, a review of an American Economic Association conference noted that it 'addressed scarcely a word to the world's mounting economic ills', with one speaker being 'publicly admonished for his impropriety' in using the word 'conscience' amongst academics for whom only isolated self-interest has any meaning. (Edward Fulbrook in *The Times Higher Educational Supplement*, March 25, 1994.)
5. Examples of the various views noted are as follows: H.A. Pritchard discounts pre-Kantian ethics (*Moral Obligation*. London: Oxford University Press, 1949) while B. Williams discounts post-Kantian ethics (*Ethics and The Limits of Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). P. Geach presses the religious view (*The Virtues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) while J.L. Mackie ridicules it (*Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977).
6. Kohlberg's studies assessing moral stages in child development have had considerable influence in education and psychology. See: Colby, A. & Kohlberg, L. *Measurement and Moral Judgement: Theoretical Foundations and Research Validation*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
7. Ethical studies typically use limited frameworks which are taken for granted by their authors. Investigators examine the nature of a problematic issue, or the importance and relevance of particular ethical rules, or the various values inherent in possible choices. For example, over 200 articles devoted to medical ethics appear monthly and virtually all address specific problems of what is to be valued or permissible in medical practice and why (Thomasma, D.C. & Pellegrino, E.D. Philosophy of medicine as the source for medical ethics. *Metamedicine*, 2: 5-11, 1981). To examine ethical issues in a community (even via academic journals) is akin to being a manager in a firm. It means becoming a passionate participant and working to become an expert in the area. My aim is rather to clarify what ethics is about. This means determining the framework of general ideas and fundamental assumptions on which all value debate, ethical choice and ethical judgement might (or must) be based whatever the issue, domain or cultural setting.
8. The 2x2 table in Fig. 2.2 has been extracted from: Burrell, G. & Morgan, G. *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*. London: Heinemann, 1979. Holland demonstrates its application to the treatment of mental illness (Holland, R. Sanity, necessary complexities and mental health promotion. *Changes*, 10: 136-145).
9. Confucius. *The Analects*. 13.3. Extracted from: *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Transl. Wing-tsit Chan) Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, p.40.
10. For some of the more significant publications see: Rowbottom, R.W. et al. *Hospital Organization*. London: Heinemann, 1973; Jaques, E. (ed.) *Health Services*. London: Heinemann, 1978; Kinston, W. *The District Health Authority*. London: Brunel University, 1986; Kinston, W. *Stronger Nursing Organisation*. London: Brunel University, 1987; Kinston, W. & Rowbottom, R.W. *Making General Management Work in the National Health Service*. London: Brunel University, 1989; Øvretveit, J. *Health Service Quality*. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1992.
11. The governance model was first published for the NHS (Kinston, W. 1986, op. cit. [10]). The underlying framework of levels was published in the systems literature at the same time (Kinston, W. Purposes and the translation of values into action. *Systems Research*, 3: 147-160, 1986). A more general and elaborate account of the model was published in the academic literature following further study and testing (Kinston, W. Designing the four compartments of organizations: constituting, governing, top officer and executive bodies. *Journal of Applied Systems Analysis*, 18: 3-24, 1991). A slightly reworked abbreviated and generalized version of the model is to be found in Ch. 12, where the emphasis is on executive-led organizations and a comparison with two other types of autonomous endeavour: popular movements and regulatory authorities.
12. An educational booklet was developed and used by the Local Government Training Board: Kinston, W. *Stronger Political Management in Local Government: A Guide*. London: Brunel University, 1988. National and local conferences were provided. (See: Kinston, W. & Wilshire, D. *Discussion Documents for Councillors and Top Officers*. Political Management Programme, Brunel University, 1986-1989.) I also worked with David Wilshire MP on legislation for the reform of local government in 1992, including guidance to the Local Government Commission. (See: Wilshire, D & Kinston, W. A Local Revolution. *The Magazine of the Houses of Parliament*. June 20 1988, p.6; and Wilshire, D. *Re-Designing Local Government. Parts 1-5*. London, 1992.)
13. Algie, J. *Social Values, Objectives and Action*. London: Kogan Page, 1975.
14. See, for example: Westermarck, E. (1906) *The Origin and*

- Development of the Moral Ideas*. 2 vols. (2nd Ed.) London: Macmillan, 1912-1917; and *Ethical Relativity*. London: International Library of Psychology, Kegan Paul, 1932. Also: Hobhouse, L.T. (1906) *Morals in Evolution (7th Ed.)*. London: Chapman Hall, 1951; Ginsberg, M. *On the Diversity of Morals*. London: Mercury, 1962; Edel, A. & Edel, E. *Anthropology and Ethics. (Rev. Ed.)* Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University Press, 1968.
15. Criticism of the practical value of philosophy is made in: DiMarco, J.P. & Fox, R.M. (eds.) *New Directions in Ethics: The Challenge of Applied Ethics*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986, p. 16. Ch. 9 in this collection (Bowie, N. Business ethics) contains the formal assessment of philosophical theories in business ethics courses.
 16. Ethics is equivalent to moral philosophy for many academics. Yet moral philosophy was not restricted to ethics in former times, and covered many matters now regarded as within the domain of psychology and other social sciences. For most people nowadays, ethics is not a form of study but a way to live. In such a context, the terms 'ethical' and 'moral' are sometimes used synonymously and sometimes not. Except in a few places where the sense is unambiguous, I have chosen 'ethical' and 'ethics' as the general terms, and have used 'moral' and 'morality' in a restricted way.
 17. The importance of medical ethics to philosophy was suggested in: S. Toulmin. How medicine saved the life of ethics. Ch. 16 in: DiMarco & Fox op.cit. [15]. The work of moral theologians in medical ethics can be seen in, for example: Kelly, G. *Medico-Moral Problems*. St. Louis: Catholic Hospital Association, 1958; Fletcher, J. *Moral Problems in Medicine*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964; McFadden, C. *Medical Ethics. (6th Ed.)* Philadelphia: F.A. Davis, 1967; Ramsey, P. *The Patient as Person*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.
 18. This proposition is examined and explained more fully in Ch. 7 with references to the psychology and religious studies literature.
 19. I was not invited to assist in any legal projects, but I found myself reading classic texts, especially those published in the 1920's: Goitein, H. (1924). *Primitive Ordeal and Modern Law*. London: Rothman, 1980; Gray, J.C. *The Nature and Sources of the Law*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1916; and Cardozo, B.N. *Nature of the Judicial Process*. Yale: Yale University Press, 1921. From reading modern texts, I have the impression that jurisprudence has become more restricted and mundane. Analytical jurisprudence, the preference of English empiricist jurists, works out arguments about what is right or good in the context of particular cases. Sociological jurisprudence, the preference of American scholars, studies the social factors affecting such judgements and the social consequences of legal decisions. Occasionally, modern jurisprudence takes the plunge and becomes overtly ethical by grappling with universals like: what should the law mean by fault? what should ultimately determine court procedures? e.g. Amselek, P. & MacCormick, N. (eds.) *Controversies about Law's Ontology*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991.
 20. The currently wide definition of an individual is not new. In times past, legal individuals have also included: supernatural beings and dead people — so people would make archangels or Christ their heirs; animals — in the middle ages they were summoned, arrested, imprisoned, defended, sentenced and executed; and things — temples, ships and weapons were assigned rights and duties in ancient Greece, and proceedings against them were not infrequent. (Gray