

From the UoM Draft Sustainability Charter to ThriveAbility

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On December 16, 2015, I attended a public meeting at the University of Melbourne about the development of its Sustainability Charter.

Perhaps surfing a rising tide of new possibilities for more appropriate action on climate change coming out of the recent Paris conference, some people were excited about the current iteration of the draft Sustainability Charter, whereas others were much less enthusiastic. So much so, that one group within UoM had already created an alternative Sustainability Charter.

Unsurprisingly, neither the draft nor the alternative Sustainability Charter is acceptable in the context of Integral Meta-Theory. Both documents need to be criticised due to their many important absences, some of which are introduced below.

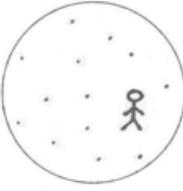
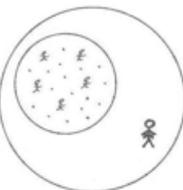
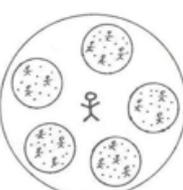
At the 2015 Integral Theory Conference, Zak Stein provided a meta-theoretical approach to *Desperate Measures: The Global Crises of Measurement and their Meta-Theoretical Solutions*. Stein summarises his perspective in his blog *Global Crises of Measurement: Whose Measures, Whose Future?* <http://www.zakstein.org/global-crises-of-measurement-whose-measures-whose-future-video/>.

Here is his abstract from his conference paper:

Abstract: Measurement infrastructures come in many forms and impact our lives in many ways, from the intimacy of psychometrics and biometrics, to the anonymity of econometrics and global climate change indicators. This paper explores the need for meta-theoretical approaches that address measurement infrastructures in terms of the ethical, political, and metaphysical aspects of our current global crises of measurement. This term—global crises of measurement—is meant to convey the fact that, despite appearances, the majority of our global challenges revolve around measurement infrastructures. For example, the recent economic crisis was largely the result of inadequate and deceptive econometric practices (e.g., the ratings applied to collateralized debt obligations), while the ecological crisis continues to revolve around disputes over, and innovations in, measurement (e.g., calculations of global temperature changes). Measurement infrastructures function to generate (and impose) a shared understanding of the world, and in so doing literally create realities; whether these realities are true, good, and beautiful is another matter. Measures and their related standards also facilitate complexly coordinated social actions and set the terms by which a wide range of evaluative judgments are made, from those about the self (bathroom scale; IQ) to those about whole countries (GDP). Recent decades have brought a rapid proliferation of measurement infrastructures and related forms of standardization, which impact the most intimate details of our lives and the most significant planetary initiatives. A meta-theoretical approach is needed that can expose the false realities created by inadequate and oppressive measurement practices as well as inform the creation of new approaches to the representation of complex global realities, including transactions involving non-monetary value, psychological interiority, and non-linear dynamical systems. This paper takes the first steps toward outlining just such a meta-theory of measurement, drawing heavily on the work of Ken Wilber and Roy Bhaskar.

Stein in his aforementioned blog and video provides an overview of six crises:

1. *Economic crisis: poverty, inequality, and econometrics*
2. *Ecological crisis: the politics of measurement and complex systems*
3. *Educational crisis: testing, standards, and marketization*
4. *Political crisis: voting, polling, and the representation of interiors*
5. *Health care crisis: biometrics, diagnostic categories, and the future of medicine*
6. *Personality crisis: the hyper-reality and hyper-reflectivity of the over-measured lifestyle*

Developmental Stage/ Order of Mind (typical ages)	What can be seen as <i>object</i> (the content of one's knowing)	What one is <i>subject</i> to (the structure of one's knowing)	Underlying Structure of Meaning-Making
1st Order: Impulsive Mind (~2-6 years-old)	one's reflexes	one's impulses, perceptions	Single Point 
2nd Order: Instrumental Mind (~6 years-old through adolescence)	one's impulses, perceptions	one's needs, interests, desires	Categories 
3rd Order: Socialized Mind (post-adolescence)	one's needs, interests, desires	interpersonal relationships, mutuality	Across Categories 
4th Order: Self-Authoring Mind (variable, if achieved)	interpersonal relationships, mutuality	self-authorship, identity, ideology	Systemic 
5th Order: Self-Transforming Mind (typically > ~40, if achieved)	self-authorship, identity, ideology	the dialectic between ideologies	System of Systems 

Adapted from Robert Kegan, *In Over Our Heads: the Mental Demands of Modern Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 314-315 by Peter W. Prunyn, <http://developmentalobserver.blog.com>.

Stein recently completed his Doctor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He is deeply versed in the dynamics of adult development. One of his HGSE colleagues is Robert Kegan, who describes, as shown above, Five Orders of Consciousness, which is based on his 30+ years of research in adult development.

Taking on board the sub-title of Stein's blog, I ask, in our global interconnecting crises, [whose sustainability, whose measures, whose futures?](#)

Looks like neither draft nor alternative Sustainability Charters are products of 5th Order Self-Transforming Minds. Both documents are ideological. Neither considers in breadth and depth the dialectics between and amongst ideologies.

The draft Sustainability Charter champions scientific materialism with no indication of the importance of consciousness studies (Kegan, Torbert’s Action-Logics, et al.), nor of the exercise of various forms of collaborative power (not the usual forms of unilateral power) (Hilary Bradbury & Bill Torbert). Nor is there any mention of 1st Order living conditions, 2nd Order tribal cultures, nor 3rd Order law and order societies, nor 5th Order communities of inquiry into timely action.

Brief Definitions of Eight Types of Power	
Types of Unilateral Power	
1. Coercive power	“Comes from the barrel of a gun.” (Opportunist action-logic)
2. Charming power	Charisma, diplomacy, covert manipulation, self-disclosure, support... (Diplomat)
3. Logistical power	The use of logic, professional disciplines, systems analysis, institutional position or process to get something done. (Expert)
4. Productive power	Actually producing a product, service, or sheer action valuable to self or others, most often in co-ordination with a team. (Achiever)
Types of Collaborative Power	
5. Visioning power	Use of the imaginative, mutually-trust-building faculties and disciplines, alone in nature or with committed colleagues or friends in society, to create a new vision for this conversation, meeting, organisation, etc. (Redefining)
6. Praxis power	The collaborative, inquiring power, with others, to occasionally spot, to sometimes articulate, and to at best correct incongruities among visioning, strategising, performing, and assessing outcomes). (Transforming)
7. Mutually-transforming power	The first- and second-person practices of vigilant and vulnerable presence to one another that generates power via love and inquiry more than via force, money, expertise, or institutional position. (Alchemical)
8. The power of liberating disciplines	A leadership team – interweaving the foregoing seven kinds of power in timely ways – generates third-person structures, task boundaries, and action inquiry challenges that improve organisational or communal outcomes, offer practice in exercising mutual power, and thus help members and subdivisions transform toward increasing integrity, mutuality, and sustainability. (Ironic)

Adapted from Hilary Bradbury & William Torbert, *Eros/Power: Love in the Spirit of Inquiry* (Tucson, AZ: Integral Publishers, 2016).

The alternative Sustainability Charter gives an account of our socio-environmental emergency. Amongst many significant absences there is no mention of adult vertical development (e.g. Kegan’s 5 Orders of Consciousness), no meta-theoretical understanding of the subjective world of ‘being’, intersubjective world of ‘relating’, and objective world of ‘doing’ in our multiple crises (Alan Watkins’ 4D Leadership), and no account of our questionable uses of metrics (Stein).

Just as Australia is a clear laggard in dealing with climate change, the draft Sustainability Charter is a clear laggard in dealing with sustainability, or better said at some recent sustainability conferences, thriveability.

This change in terms from sustainability to thriveability has come about because despite many decades of sustainability initiatives, as all of us can see with the Great Acceleration graphs, these efforts have generally produced more unsustainability. Why? (See Bill Baue, Ralph Thurm & Robin Wood's 'An Intro to ThriveAbility: The Next Stage of Development for Sustainability' at www.sustainablebrands.com, & Bill Baue & Robin Wood's 'Leveraging Integral Leadership to Shift Sustainability Mindsets into a ThriveAbility Paradigm' at www.integralleadershipreview.com).

I invite you to engage with the work of Zak Stein and other key meta-theorists in *Meta-Theory for the 21st Century: Critical Realism and Integral Theory in Dialogue*, Robin Wood and the ThriveAbility Foundation's *A Leader's Guide to ThriveAbility: A Multi-Capital Operating System for a Regenerative Inclusive Economy*, Alan Watkins *4D Leadership: Competitive Advantage through Vertical Leadership Development*, and Hilary Bradbury and Bill Torbert's *Love/Eros: Love in the Spirit of Inquiry*.

With all of that on board, I hope, the next iteration of UoM's Sustainability Charter will be much better attuned to emerging living conditions in the 21st century than the current inadequate document.

I say that in our times of interconnecting global emergencies ignorance about absences is no longer acceptable. No more mere presencing of our favourite games nor mere playing with others in interconnecting our favourite games, the whole cosmic game needs to be fully seen and needs to be fully served.

In an Action Inquiry community,

“We commit to enacting a vision of THRIVEABILITY: TIMELY ACTION INQUIRY that grows Personal INTEGRITY, Relational MUTUALITY and mutually-transforming COLLABORATIVE POWER, as well as non-violent, ecological SUSTAINABILITY across generations.”