Applied Communicology in Organizational PR and R&D: Peirce on Synechism, Fuller on Synergetics, Gordon on Synectics, and Alinsky on Socialism

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Abstract

American semiotics derives much of its success with applied communication because it is grounded in Peircian logic and rhetoric theory. Peirce believes human communication is a semiotic relation that we commonly name “creativity”. The logic combines Probability (Tychism), Continuity (Synechism), and our capacity to be mistaken (Fallibilism). The theory is illustrated by a review of the Peircian logic and its contemporary model used by Michel Foucault. The applied aspects are explicated through the methodology models of the architect Buckminster Fuller, the business organization consultant William Gordon, and the community organizer Saul Alinsky. The problematic of “cultural perception” in creativity is addressed using Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty who suggest how perspective shifts as between East and West.

Keywords: communication, creativity, Foucault, public relations, research development, social semiotics

“Technical Skill is Bereft without Culture”
Swansea University motto
Research often reveals the fascinating conjunction of activities thought to be inherently **oppositional**, yet they often constitute the very **apposition** of creativity choice (similarity; both/and) that escapes the paradox of polar opposite dilemmas (difference; either/or). One of the more dramatic appositional conjunctions like this in the Philosophy of Communication (in both France and the USA) has been the convergence of Semiology and Phenomenology as methodological insights for analyzing human communication. Such discernment constitutes the human sciences account of the **rational** Self as a hermeneutic of the lived-world of the **irrational** Other. One domain of our presence in the world with others ("être-au-monde") emerges in the appositions of person and group (metaphysics), self and other people (epistemology), sameness and deviance in the physical environment (axiology). This classic problematic in Culturology (applied logic) manifests dramatically in its contemporary **form** as Personal Consumption (other ideas, things, symbols) contextualized by the **structure** of Corporate Capitalism (monetize, manufacture, mesmerize the other). Such an embodied problematic offers its conjunctive embodied **thematic** as the manifest need to communicate and the constitutive **desire** to be understood.

Resolving just such a case of need and desire constitutes the function of a Public Relations division versus a Research and Development division in any contemporary organization, especially in the power driven world of business, industry, and government (the administrative, corporate state). While NGOs (non-governmental/professional organizations) might be a legal exception, they are surely not an ethical exception. So, the goal of **public relations** is the need to communicate quickly, clearly and concisely (factually) to the general public about the desire to understand the perceived irrationality of a given person, situation, or event [data¹]. Whereas, the goal of a **research and development** department in any organization is to communicate slowly, carefully (technically), and contextually (truthfully) about the perceived rationality of a taken perspective, situation, or event [capta].²

Semiotics offers an intriguing example of these two goal-intended (teleology) directions coming together as the goal-directed (teleonomy) practical methodology for creativity in problem-stating and problem-solving. Problem-stating is the domain of PR, while problem-solving is the goal of R&D. I propose to introduce this "odd couple" (i.e., PR and R&D) to you by way of suggesting a doctrine first put forward by Charles Sanders Peirce in his discussion of semiotic phenomenology as an
approach to normative action embodied as comportment (praxeology) best known by the name *Pragmatism*.

Peirce’s definition of communication is the confluences of three doctrines: Synechism [συνῆχεια = continuity], Tychism [τύχη = probability], and Fallibilism [fallibilis = able to err]. He called his principal doctrine *synechism* or the “Law of Mind” and contextualized it with *tychism* and *fallibilism* as the very definition of communication (Brent, 1993, p. 210; Lanigan, 2014). The Peircian influence is historically dramatic, but since this is an article and not a book, I shall make only one brief mention related to Research and Development, and, one extended mention of Public Relations. The brief mention is to Buckminster Fuller, one-time Distinguished Professor of Design at my own institution, Southern Illinois University. The extended mention is to William Gordon, some-time Professor at the Harvard Business School and, as far as I know, a life-long stranger to my university. Let me turn initially to the theory suggested by Peirce (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. The creativity model of communicology

1. The Laws of Mind: Peirce’s Doctrines of Synechism, Fallibilism, and Tychism

Signification, for Peirce, is called the *Doctrine of Synechism*, or “the doctrine that
all that exists is continuous” (1.172). It is the analysis of possibilities where codes contain messages. This doctrine holds that all problems can be solved because there is an absolute continuity among things that can be generalized as such. “Synechism is founded on the notion that the coalescence, the becoming continuous, the becoming governed by laws, the becoming instinct with general ideas, are but phases of one and the same process of the growth of reasonableness” (5.4). Peirce is echoing the Greek belief that continuity [synécheia] is a synthesis of continuing material existence [megethos] and psychic existence [sympatheia], hence our common understanding of magnitude as coordinated change in difference by kind combined with difference by degree—for Peirce, the human capacity of reasonableness [eulógos].

The formal doctrine of Synechism proposed by Peirce may be summarized in two key elements of motivation, i.e., a two-step methodology:

1. “The general motive is to avoid the hypothesis that this or that is inexplicable”; and,
2. “Continuity is nothing but perfect generality of a law of relationship.” (6.171-172).

To support Peirce’s life-long talent for explaining things in terms that can be understood, let me first talk about the problem confronting us, especially the problem facing us in the form of communication. As human beings, we have some problems that we can solve (we have learned Rules). These problems are typically referred to as rational issues, i.e., the expression rules do give the expected results. In contemporary communicology theory, we know synechism as Gestaltung [form-creation] or more generally as a “structure sense” or visually as the “Zebra effect” (see Note 3 below).

Yet, we have some problems that we cannot solve readily—problems that are grounded in vagueness. These are irrational problems (as Foucault and Greimas remind us, this category also entails the un-rational and non-rational; Fig. 2), i.e., the perception effect unexpectedly does not follow from the cause (we have learned that exceptions make the Rule). Peirce explains it this way:

Logicians have long neglected the study of vagueness, not suspecting the important part it plays in mathematical thought. It is the antithetical analogue of generality. A sign is objectively general, in so far as, leaving its effective interpretation indeterminate, it surrenders to the interpreter the right of completing the determination for himself. “Man is mortal.” “What man?” “Any man you like.” A sign is objectively vague, in so far as
having its interpretation more or less indeterminate, it reserves for some other possible
sign or experience the function of completing the determination. (5.505; on generality, see
Zalamea, 2012; my emphasis).

Figure 2. Michel Foucault’s quadratic model of rationality

So contextualized by the irrationality of vagueness, how do you solve a problem
that apparently has no solution? This is the task that confronts most Research
and Development professionals. Second, how do you explain what seems to be
inexplicable? This is the job of the Public Relations professional. Well, what should the R&D or PR practitioner do? Follow Peirce’s two recommendations. Do not assume there is no answer, no explanation. Do assume there is a continuity between the problems you do not have ( = resolvable) and the problems you do have ( = manageable). In turn secondly, assume that unknown solutions will work just as well, if not better, than, known solutions that do not. Re—Solution requires the creativity that is to be found in the continuity of generalizing relationship.

This “two step” notion of Rules and Results constitutes a short form of Peirce’s argument cycle of logics (Lanigan, 1995, p. 58; Fig. 3). Do assume there is a generalizable continuity between explanations you have and those you don’t. There is a key ingredient in all of this, and that is communication that explicates (clarifies rules by interpretation), rather than explains (re-presents effects in more detail, more referents). Remember, a “notion” is Kant’s category for the form and structure of a pure concept of reason (choice making judgment) that is given a priori in consciousness (Lanigan, 2019a).

Let me say it clearly: A notion is a Rule that you know before you experience it as a Result. Contrary to modern views of scientism, a rule is not a cause and a result is not an effect. This to say, we cannot confuse conscious expression (encoding; Rule → Result) with experience perception (decoding; Cause → Effect). To sort out the ambiguity and contingency of expression and perception, human communication always moves in a hierarchy from intrapersonal thinking (Peirce’s abduction logic) to the interpersonal dialogue (induction logic) and frequently achieves more in a small group discussion (deduction logic) before it is stabilized as a large group action habit of cultural norm (adduction logic). This is to say, there is Rule continuity in conversation [presupposition], and, there is Result generalization in shared dialogue [analogy], both of which are antithetical to vagueness and indeterminacy.
Figure 3. Charles S. Peirce argument cycle for logics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logic Typology</th>
<th>Epistemological Definition</th>
<th>Category Distribution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abduction</td>
<td>Rule + Result [Acta] = Case [Capta]</td>
<td>Particular (Synthetic A Posteriori [Token &gt; Tone]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adduction</td>
<td>Rule + Result [Acta] = Case [Capta]</td>
<td>Universal (Synthetic A Priori [Type &gt; Tone]</td>
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</tbody>
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Conceptual Evolution from Abduction to Adduction
( Historical Evolution of Peirce’s Terminology )

Ontological Categories of Quality are Type > Token > Tone.
Ontological Categories of Quantity are Universal > Particular > Singular.
Judgments are Analytic or Synthetic and A Posteriori or A Priori.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Rule + Result = Case</th>
<th>Singular A Posteriori [Token]</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Rule + Result = Case</td>
<td>Particular A Posteriori [Token &gt; Tone]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Rule + Result = Case</td>
<td>Universal A Priori [Token &gt; Type]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Rule + Result = Case</td>
<td>Universal A Priori [Type &gt; Tone]</td>
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Figure 4. Edmund Husserl’s model of human perception

Figure 5. Husserl’s Model as West—East cultural perception
Figure 6. Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of binocular visual perception
Figure 7. Merleau-Ponty illustration of West cultural perception (horizontal; isometric)
Figure 8. Merleau-Ponty illustration of East cultural perception (diagonal; axonometric)
In short, communication about the irrational and inexplicable can describe its own solution and explication. In theory construction, this is known as a problematic: a description of a problem [Result] that contains the criteria for a solution [Rule]. The trick, if you will, is to describe the problem again—do not assume you have a complete and correct description—because you do not. Descriptions are not explanations. A correct depiction points to the criteria by which a problem has apparent solutions [Husserl’s bracketing]. Such a specific description is called a thematic (Lanigan, 1988, p. 158; 1992, p. 167, p. 223). Thus, depictions (new descriptions/generalizations) always thematize problems in ways (Kant’s notion) that allow new, unique solutions to emerge (by continuity) as a correct problematic.

For example, such a notion depiction process is exactly what a good health care physician does. The medical doctor examines your account (description) of symptoms as a possible depiction (among others that are known = notions) and prescribes an action to be taken, e.g., medicine or therapy. Sometimes, it does no good. The doctor re-examines, or a new doctor examines [bracketing], your symptoms (a new depiction of the same old thing) and prescribes, e.g., rest. It does some good. Rest is a thematic for illness, because illness is a problematic for health. Communication is the creative key here. Having a conversation about your illness (Same/Self; see Note 3) turns into a dialogue about your health (Other/Self). It is still just your body (Same/Other), but the explication eventually changes the lived-body for the better (Different/Self). Both you and the doctor possess the notion that rest cures most bodily complaints, but not all! This is reasonableness in action.

Indeed, Peirce is noted for his philosophic Synechism defined as the belief that probability and possibility are linked to the actual existence of things or that which can become actual. Hence, people inherit the association of realism and pragmatism with a phenomenological test of real-world application that Peirce called the Doctrine of Fallibilism. “For fallibilism is the doctrine that our knowledge is never absolute but always swims, as it were, in a continuum of uncertainty and of indeterminacy. Now the doctrine of continuity is that all things so swim in continua” (1.171). Peirce continues to summarize Synechism for us, “Now, to suppose a thing inexplicable is not only to fail to explain it, and so to make an unjustifiable hypothesis, but, much worse, it is to set up a barrier across the road of science, and to forbid all attempt to understand the phenomenon” (1934/61, 6.171). The unjustifiable hypothesis of no solution, no explication is to cut off communication, to render us mute with only the
expectation of more silence. Rather, we should communicate with one another and share our experiences. Shared experience promotes the continuity of experience. As Peirce further comments, “I carry the doctrine so far as to maintain that continuity governs the whole domain of experience in every element of it” and “a proposition which has no relation whatever to experience is devoid of all meaning” (7.566). So, just how do we answer the questions that cannot be answered? You need a Public Relations trainer. You need William J. J. Gordon. But, you will have to wait a bit for him. Before we get answers, we need to have the wisdom, the creativity, to recognize them and we need some Research and Development for that goal.

2. The Fuller Doctrine of Synergetics: The Law of Wisdom

Earlier, I promised a brief mention of Research and Development. Perhaps on the best-known name, worldwide, for research and development, design and innovation, insight and social progress, is the designer R. Buckminster Fuller, known affectionately by his friends and admirers simply as Bucky. Others know him indirectly as the “geodesic dome guy”. Some of these domes still dot the landscape on my former campus at Carbondale, Illinois. Fuller belongs to the first generation of General Systems theorists, many of whom have turned to a philosophical grounding in semiotic phenomenology (Carter, 2011, 43ff; Lanigan, 2019b). His concerns ranged from biology to physics and beyond, but his business acumen is best symbolized by all the structural designs that his company, Geodesics, Inc. built world-wide. Hence, his work is a perfect example of unlimited semiosis in application.

Let us recall Peirce’s **Doctrine of Tychism**, namely, that absolute chance is real. What is *probable* can be understood as the *possible* distinction among Type, Token, and Tone (4.537). A *type* is a category Peirce called Firstness, the *condition* under which something exists (1.531). A *token* is an *example* illustrating the type and is a case of Secondness (1.532). The *tone* is Thirdness, a unique individual (a paradigm or prototype example) known by the *connection* between the Type and Token (1.532). In short, Firstness and Secondness are two categories held together, related, by Thirdness; this relation in logic is called *apposition*. Thus, Types are more probable than Tokens; Tokens are more probable than Tones.

For example, one’s actual ability to *drive* a car [condition] is more probable than one’s ability to *own* a car [example], but one’s owning a car is more probable
than one’s buying a new Ford [connection]. We often use the magnitude of these probabilities to measure our belief in possibility.\(^5\)

The phenomenological communication process of Tychism for Peirce is the existential experience of learning how to learn (Bateson’s deutero-learning) in a general communication experience where creativity allows an escape from opposition paradox (“there is no solution”) (Lanigan, 2018). When one learns, an Object presents itself to the person’s consciousness as a Sign or Representamen that “is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity” (2.228). An equivalent sign or Interpretant is created in the mind [Kant’s notion] and this new sign stands for the object (1.541). Peirce summarizes: “A representation is that character of a thing by virtue of which, for the production of a certain mental effect, it may stand in place of another thing. The thing having this character I term a representamen, the mental effect, or thought, its interpretant, the thing for which it stands, its object”. How this communication process of representational meaning (phenomenology; messages; consciousness) works is the study of signification (semiotics; codes; experience).

Fuller begins with the notion of synergy. “Synergy means behavior of whole systems unpredicted by the behavior of their parts taken separately” (1975, p. 3; codex 101.01). It does not take much reading in either Peirce or Fuller to see the parallels of creative thought. Peirce worked out much of his thinking about Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness using triangles as interconnecting parts of wholes, keeping in mind that the doubling of a triangle (“mirror effect”) creates a quadratic (tetrahedron; any two triangles in Fig. 9).\(^6\) In like-minded fashion, Fuller uses inner-connecting triangles to build his tetrahedrons (three-sided “pyramids” for us non-experts) which finally evolve into his famous geodesic dome (a roof structure without any supporting columns). Fuller’s accomplishment of Peircian Firstness as research on Thirdness developed as Secondness is summed up in Fuller’s method of synergy. “Synergetics is the exploratory strategy of starting with the whole and the known behavior of some of its parts [Thirdness] and the progressive discovery of the integral unknowns [Secondness] and their progressive comprehension of the hierarchy [Firstness] of generalized principles” (1975, p. 13; codex 152.00; see Merleau-Ponty’s explication in Fig. 5). Fuller counsels us that “the synergetic metaphysical effect produced by the interaction of the known family of generalized principles is probably what is spoken of as wisdom” (1975, p. 13; codex 153.00). In short, Fuller’s notion of “wisdom” is
Incredibly close to Peirce’s foundational concept of synechism—“that tendency of philosophical thought which insists upon the idea of continuity as of prime importance in philosophy and, in particular, upon the necessity of hypotheses involving true continuity” (1934/61, 6.169). So when Peirce says that “I have proposed to make synechism mean the tendency to regard everything as continuous” (7.565), we see the continuity of Peirce’s Law of Mind in the synergy of Fuller’s Law of Wisdom. Peirce called this insight “the remarkable theorem” and illustrated its realism with the triangle $\Delta$ as a structure (Càrdenas, 2018, p. 130).

Figure 9. Illustration of Buckminster Fuller geodesic dome design

3. The Gordon Doctrine of Synectics: The Law of Creativity

Let me now take us out of the geodesic dome and into the corporate building where a distinctive type of behavior occurs. Our focus begins in the 1950s at the Invention Design Unit of the international public relations firm, R. D. Little, Inc. That unit was directed initially by William J. J. Gordon (1961) and then jointly with George M. Prince (1970, 1972). As a synectics trainer and small group communication consultant, Prince, summarizes his years of R&D consulting by saying that the chief obstacle to creativity in business is “the pervasiveness of the judgmental managerial style”. He has three observations about managers:

1. “Even mild rejection has a significant negative effect on people”;
2. “Pointing out flaws in the ideas and actions of others occupies much of the time”; and 
3. “Approval has a positive effect on people and creates a climate for resolution of the problem” (Prince, 1972, p. 48).

These observations suggest why PR consultants are continuously brought into R&D divisions in businesses and organizations large and small, for-profit and non-profit.

How do you train people to explain the inexplicable? You hire someone like William J. J. Gordon or you could sign up for one of his classes at the university (in days now long gone) and learn how to be a creative thinker by communicating. From 1950 to 1960, Gordon split his time between the re-named design unit, the Invention Research Group at Arthur D. Little, Inc., and Harvard University. In short, Gordon had a double life where his time and effort were split between the Harvard Business School and a public relations agency in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Gordon and his associates developed the Invention Research Group, later to become the Synectics Group, as a consulting agency that had a specific pedagogical purpose: a method of directing creative potential in Research and Development. The consulting firm offered “programs in creative group problem solving” (Synectics, Inc., 1972; Williams, 2010; Nolan, 1989). Gordon’s PR company is alive and well. Its corporate name now is SES Associates: The Originators of Synectics. The company has broadened its scope to include “organizational implications of our work with small groups” and “a particular emphasis on the manager/subordinate relationship”. Their main product is a Course in the Anatomy of Team Building. The current iteration of this company is SynecticsWorld, Inc. (online: synecticsworld.com; Nolan, 1989; Williams, 2010).

Originally, William Gordon got his ideas about creativity beyond working with George Prince (I strongly suspect) by reading the (then-unpublished) Peirce Collected Papers in the Houghton Library and University Archives at Harvard University Library. It is easy to trace the connection between Gordon and Peirce when the synechics method of “nine phases” is compared to Peirce’s doctrine of synechism. Recall that Peirce offers two axioms for synechism: (1) “The general motive is to avoid the hypothesis that this or that is inexplicable” and (2) “Continuity is nothing but perfect generality of a law of relationship” (1934/61, 6.171-172). As we shall see (Fig. 5), these two points coincide perfectly with the beginning and end of Gordon’s synechics method (Phase 1—Problem as Given) and (Phase 9—Solution or Research Target).
Before detailing Gordon’s method, let me first suggest that Fig. 10 presents a Peircian process (argument cycle in problem stating and solving) comparison of the synectics method together with the community organizing method (democratic socialism) of Saul Alinsky. I shall not go into detail about the content of Alinsky’s method (I shall tag conceptual parallels with Gordon as we go), but will rather refer you to his book which is rich with examples drawn from real-world success stories, mostly concerned with trade union organizing in Chicago, Illinois. So, I provide this structural comparison by way of suggesting how creative problem-solving is applied directly as a public relations campaign (i.e., community organizing) that gives solutions to political issues that “can’t be resolved” and resolutions to social problems.
that “can’t be solved”.

Let me briefly describe Gordon’s synectics methodology for you (1961, pp. 158-160). It consists of a problem-stating and problem-solving procedure that has nine phases. The problem-stating process involves four psychological states, while the problem-solving process involves four types of analogical and metaphorical thinking. Gordon’s analogue method begins with the problem conception of change-by-kind (What kind of problem is it? = psychological states; encoding) and moves to change-by-degree (How can we perceive it? = capacity for analogy; decoding).

Phase 1: Problem as Given. This phase takes the problem as given, the traditional description we know as data, i.e., evidence that is rational and not subject to dispute. Of course, this fact is the problem that has no solution, the question that defies an answer. What to do? This is Alinsky’s moment of curiosity! Literally, the search for “alternative facts”! So, move on to:

Phase 2: Making the Strange Familiar. At this point the problem-solving group must discover the process of analogy in which Fuller’s known and unknown parts relate to the whole. For Gordon, this is best accomplished by engaging various psychological states that are built on the process of analogy, not truth conditional logic. Remember what analogy is mostly starting with a simile: Something is like or as something else as we see it! Thus, making the strange familiar is to see the problem as taken or capta, i.e., evidence that is irrational and subject to dispute (invites group discussion and controversy about perception). Alinsky calls this stage the act of irreverence to the established order.

At this point, the synectics group is ready to move on to Phase 3: Problem as Understood. The problem is now described anew, or, described accurately for the first time (perspective has shifted). As Fuller would have it, the place of the unknown parts is discovered and discovered in hierarchical relation to the known parts, thus making a new (newly depicted) whole. For Alinsky, this stage is one of imagination or image-making variations that describe a new awareness of reality (reminiscent of Husserl).

The creativity process moves on to Phase 4: Operational Mechanisms and Phase 5: The Familiar Made Strange. These two phases move the group into a metaphor mode of thought. Recall how metaphor is usually defined: Something is something else. As with all metaphors, Alinsky makes use of the stages in creativity whereby a sense of humor (Phase 4) and a blurred vision of a better world (Phase 5) allow the creation of a plausible hypothesis (Peirce’s abduction). Metaphor is accomplished
in group communication by the use of operational mechanisms of problem-solving. Gordon’s list of operational mechanisms includes four types of analogy (tropic argument):

1. Personal Analogy: Personal identification with the elements of a problem releases the individual from viewing the problem in terms of its previously analyzed elements.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Ir-Rational}\]

2. Direct Analogy: Describing the actual comparison of parallel facts, knowledge, or technology.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Rational}\]

3. Symbolic Analogy: Using objective and impersonal images to describe the problem.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Non-Rational}\]

4. Fantasy Analogy: The connection between the person’s motives as a human being and his/her chosen method of gratifying them.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Un-Rational}\]

**Phase 6: Psychological States** basically concerns the group members’ emotional reaction [*páthos*] to the problem-stated situation, i.e., the mind’s attitude toward the problem. Alinsky refers to this stage of creativity as the necessity of an *organized personality*. Synectics groups go through the following five mental processes:

1. Detachment: The feeling of being removed, cut off, way out from the problem.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Mythos}\]

2. Involvement: The closeness implied by the analogy of becoming the object.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Magikos}\]

3. Deferment: The sense that it is difficult, but necessary to avoid a premature attempt at solution; avoiding probability.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Mystos}\]

4. Speculation: The recurrent ability to let the mind run free; seeking a new possibility.
   \[\text{Fig. 2, Logos}\]

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[Fig. 2, Eulogos]

Turning to **Phase 7: Psychological States Integrated with the Problem**, “Once the states have been reached through the mechanisms, the most pertinent analogy is conceptually compared with the problem as understood. In this phase, the problem as understood is liberated from its old rigid form” (Gordon, 1961, p. 159). Or as Alinsky puts it, the creative problem-solver becomes a well-integrated *political schizoid*. This is to say, the anti-normal (personal), non-rational (analogical) solution (argument) becomes a form (possibility) of stating a solution that can work (perceiving capacity).

At **Phase 8: Viewpoint**, the analogy turns into a concrete technical insight. For Alinsky, this is a point of *pure ego* (unreserved confidence) where “the” answer, “the” solution is at hand. Technical experts in the group can now suggest *how to* implement the solutions, especially in terms of producing any technological instrumentation or mechanism that is required.

**Phase 9: Solution or Research Target** is making good on the viewpoint. That is, prototyping the solution and delivering it to the people responsible for production (in business or industry) or implementation (in government or the non-profit sector). As Alinsky summarizes, a free and open mind combines with political relativity to create *[éthos]* the new out of the old (*change* in policy is policy that *works*).

Next, let me briefly suggest that the creativity I have been describing in the work of Alinsky (a PR exemplar) and Gordon (an R&D exemplar) has its profound foundation in the semiotic theory of Peirce. I have already offered a technical account of Peirce’s “normative semiotic models” (his precise terms) as they constitute his abduction cycle of argument for scientific discovery (Lanigan, 1995, pp. 49-70). However, as you can note in Fig. 10, Peircian creativity proceeds to move in nine discrete steps. **Stage One** (steps 1 - 2 - 3) is the use of *Induction* [Case + Result = Rule]. The rule thus generated is used in **Stage Two** (steps 4 - 5 - 6) to ground *Deduction* [Rule + Case = Result]. Finally, in **Stage Three** (steps 7 - 8 - 9) an *Abduction* [Rule + Result = Case] occurs. As can be seen, we start with at (1) with an *old* Case, and arrive at (9) with a *new* Case; this is the cycle of *creativity* found in Peircian *capacity* for reasonableness in the comparative description of persons, situations, and events.

In the overall argument cycle, the normative models coalesce. For example, with
Gordon’s *synectics method*, step three (*Rule*: problem as understood) is combined with step six (*Result*: psychological states) to produce step nine (*Case*: solution or research target). The abduction is embedded in the induction and deduction and, in fact, abduction permits the emergence of the other two logics, hence it is a cycle of argument for Peirce. Most importantly for purposes of creative problem-solving, the cycles demonstrate how, for Peirce, the *Case* [steps 1 — 5 — 9] moves from the impossible to the best possible solution which is the creative solution of the Case. That is for Gordon, [1] the problem as given becomes [5], making the strange familiar so as [9] to solve the problem of the research target [back to (1) in the cycle]. A case solution is possible because process *Results* [steps 2 — 6 — 8] are equally inherent. That is for Gordon, by [2] making the strange familiar, we engage [6] psychological states that give us [8] a useful viewpoint. To make the creative process work, we must be willing to engage the *Rules* of feeling (not thinking!) in steps 3-4-7. This to say, we must [3] take the problem as understood (*capta*), apply our own operational mechanisms [4] so that our psychological states are integrated with the problem [7] as understood (Lanigan 1994 provides a parallel amount of how the Russian psychologist Alexander Luria discovered the flexibility of *reasonableness* in this phenomenological founding implication logic in so called “peasant thinking” incorrectly thought to be “irrational”).

4. **Adductions Are the Identity Creation of Culture**

Let me briefly conclude and summarize my analysis by offering the three assumptions that guided Gordon (1961, p. 5) in the development of the *synectics method* for organizational creative problem solving. Synectics research discovery methodology hinges on the following assumptions:

1. That the creative process in human beings can be described and, further, that sound description should be usable in teaching methodology to increase the creative output of both individuals and groups;
2. That the cultural phenomena of invention in the arts and in science are analogous and are characterized by the same fundamental psychic processes;
3. That individual process in the creative enterprise enjoys a direct analogy in group process.
These three points are a simple and clear explication of Peirce’s belief in the capacity of human habits, namely that they are the source of practical analogy (his retroduction where a universal synthesis gives tone to type by way of token) in the creation of meaning—the communication that we call our culture. Thus, the Peircian assumptions about reasonableness, operationalized by William Gordon, have proven to be true in the realm of Research and Development. A second R&D example is witnessed in the extraordinary social design achievements of R. Buckminster Fuller. And, the assumptions have proven to be true in the domain of Public Relations as evidenced in the profound success of Saul Alinsky’s community development as social progress (Bhattacharyya, 1995). The assumptions, finally, have proven to be a true and continuing implementation of Charles Sanders Peirce’s doctrine of Synechism: “Continuity is nothing but perfect generality of a law of relationship”, in short, the creativity of reasonableness in communication.

Notes
1 Greek discourse was divided into four categories made systematic as forms of tropic logic [Dialectic] by Medieval philosophers—speech tropes (1) as semantics [Rhetoric] were always prior to figures of language (2, 3, 4) as syntactics [Grammar]; modern equivalents were set by Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Roland Barthes.

(1) Parole [speaking] = ( Capta: What is Taken ) \{ parole parlante / speechspeaking \} MMP
(2) Discours [discourse] = ( Acta: What is Done ) \{ signifiant / signifying \} ( Rhetoric ) RB
(3) Langue [dialect] = ( Verba: What is Said ) \{ parole parlée / speech spoken \} MMP
(4) Langage [language] = ( Data: What is Given ) \{ signifié / signified \} ( Ideology ) RB

2 These two fundamental perspectives are derived from the famous distinction, respectively, between community and society drawn by Ferdnand Tönnes, Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft (1887). In short, the function of PR is the restoration of community [gemein], while that of R&D is the preservation of society [Gesell].

3 The most common visual examples of Notion [eidetic rule] are generality experiences of continuity called Gestaltung [form-creation] and Vorgestalt [noematic effect] commonly known in perception science as (1) figure / ground, (2) similarity, (3) proximity, (4) common region, (5) continuity, (6) closure and (7) focal point; all such form-creation or structuring functions have the generalization name “Zebra Effect”. Figs. 4 and 5 illustrates Edmund Husserl’s model of perception as “horizontal intentionality” (Husserl, 1933, § 19; Ihde, 2012; Fuchs, 2018, p. 129), and contextually, Figs. 6, 7, and 8 depicts how such
Gestalten function as chiasm logic generalities of [embodied ego] synergistic continuity [Self : Other :: Same : Different] as explicated by Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

From 1959-1970, Fuller was Distinguished Professor of Design at Southern Illinois University. During this period at SIU, my School of Communication [shaped like two bird wings] stood across the street from Fuller’s School of Art and Design, housed appropriately in three interconnected geodesic domes. From the air, the two structures looked like this: ζ; Symbolically, these alternative “triadic” buildings were quite removed from the more traditional square “quadratic” architecture of the rest of the campus. PhD students from both schools were frequently in class together in both buildings. I was uncommonly fortunate to have known Bucky at this time before I finished my Ph.D. in 1969. Fuller’s original dome-home is now restored as a museum in Carbondale, Illinois.

In the USA, perhaps the supreme text example here is buying a used automobile from a car dealership.

It is important to realize the Fuller’s account of synergy (tetrahedrons) is an exact parallel to Roman Jakobson’s account of Metonymy [whole/parts] and Metaphor [system/hierarchy] transformations (“mirrors”; poetic function) known as the Prague Prism (Lanigan, 2017; Holenstein, 1974).

Prince later left the subsequently formed Synectics Group to found his own consulting company. As he notes (1970, pp. 68-70), he was the leading advocate in the group that view of consciousness based on Freud and Jung was necessary. This model holds that the (1) Conscious mind, and (2) the Unconscious mind, are mediated by (3) the Preconscious mind, wherein cultural habits constitute a “censor” on the preconscious; censors prevent creativity, synectics methods (based on metaphor) overcome the censors.

Gordon attended the University of Pennsylvania (1937-1938), but did not obtain a degree. However, we should note that his Synectics Group offices were directly across the street from Harvard University in Cambridge, MA. He was (apparently) a contract trainer in the university business school workshops.

In the interest of historical accuracy, I must point out that the “synectics methodology” was first articulated in its entirety as the phenomenological method by Edmund Husserl (1973, § 8) describing “the horizon-structure of experience, the typical precognition of every individual object of experience” noting especially that “unfamiliarity is at the same time always a mode of familiarity” (p. 37). See also Husserl (1969, § 19) on “actuality and potentiality of intentional life”. A parallel comment can be made about the phenomenological method of Charles S. Peirce; an excellent introduction is Cárdenas.
Figs. 5, 6, 7, 8 provide a summary example. Yes, these are variations on the Aristotle “logic square” and the subsequent Greimas “semiotic square”; see Lanigan, 2015.

Recall that the Greek notion of analogy [analogía] is to find the mean, the proportion in a ratio.

Acknowledgements


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My special thanks to my colleague and friend, Prof. Jnan Bhattachayya [a former employee of R. D. Little/India], for our years of dialogue about “organization” community, politics and culture, but most especially, for our shared field research on PR in Bangladesh (presentations at Dhaka University, 1987) and in India (presentations at Indian Institute for Languages, Mysore, 1988; and, National Center for Advanced Studies in Philosophy, Jadavpur University, Calcutta, 1988). Last let me note that 1996, I conducted similar PR research as an Expert Consultant, Sichuan State Television (Channels 1 and 2) and worked for a local PR media agency doing TV ads [including as the principal actor in a German beer commercial series] in Chengdu, PR China, 1996.

I should also note that the stimulus for writing my original paper (in 1999) was as a response to the declaration by my then departmental chair that the philosophy of communication had nothing to offer to the “applied modern corporate world”; some twenty years later, we continue the conversation as a dialogue on the human capacity, both “to think outside the box” and “to err”.

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