A fractured fable: *The Three Little Pigs* and using multiple paradigms

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Abstract

Paradigms aid organizational researchers in their quest to find the 'truth' of a particular event, phenomenon, activity, or topic and by providing them a framework with which to make assumptions about the nature of society and reality. According to Burrell and Morgan (1978), organizational researchers use one of four paradigms: functionalist, interpretivist, radical humanist, and radical structuralist. However, there is a growing body of research which postulates that multiple paradigms can be used to interpret organizational phenomenon (Lewis & Grimes, 1999). Nevertheless, truly understanding and applying these four primary paradigms is challenging, so before they can be used in an integrative manner , HRD scholars need to find a means to help professionals learn about and make sense of the concept of paradigms. We contend that a highly effective means of learning about complex phenomena are popular culture artifacts such as fables and fairy tales. Thus, this paper presents a fable of the aftermath of the *Three Little Pigs* fairy tale as a vehicle for presenting the concept of paradigms in an accessible way by relating the four paradigms as presented by Burrell and Morgan (1978) to each of the characters in the fable. The paper then concludes by offering suggestions for using multiple paradigms in sensemaking, teaching and learning, and organizational research.

Keywords

Popular culture, pedagogy, fairy tales

The destiny of the world is determined less by the battles that are lost and won than by the stories it loves and believes in. -Harold Goddard (Christensen, n.d.)

Stories have long been a vehicle for teaching, learning and sensemaking (Hamilton, 2003); one need only think of epic tales such as *Beowulf* or the *Odyssey* for a reminder of lessons taught through stories. A story helps in learning difficult and complex concepts by providing a fun yet informed explanation of the phenomena in question. Stories can be considered "popular culture artifacts" (PCA) –a variety of written and visual media that emerge from the social contexts of our lives (Callahan, Whitener, & Sandlin, 2007). These can include movies, poems, music, fiction and nonfiction, fables, and fairy tales, and many other communication media that are embedded in the social con-

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sciousness. Such PCA help us understand a wide variety of organizational phenomena that are of interest to HRD professionals, including leadership development (Callahan, Whitener, & Sandlin, 2007), expertise development (Grenier, 2010), business ethics (McAdams, 1993), or social processes (West, 2005).

Moving beyond using PCA to teach about tangible behaviors, scholars are now using PCA to understand ways of thinking and knowing (e.g. Kruse, 2010). The concept of a paradigm is one such way to understand how people come to understand (or know or think about) the world (Kuhn, 1996). A modern interpretation of paradigms could be defined as "a conceptual or methodological model underlying the theories and practices of a science or discipline at a particular time" (OED, 2013). In rhetoric, paradigms can be used as an exemplar or as a model in which a comparison is made by resemblance (OED, 2005). A parable or fable is nothing more than a comparison of a fictional story to events that transpire in our social fabric. The characters in the fable are made to resemble those ideals of particular groups or they resemble interpretations of others regarding the world. At the heart of any fable is a moral that teaches us how we 'should' see the world, what we should believe in. Because fables are both stories embedded in our social fabric and learning tools that teach us how our culture expects us to see the world, they become useful PCA vehicles for understanding the complex concept of paradigms. In other words, fairy tales and paradigms are two sides of the same coin—both present a picture of how we 'should' see the world. But fairy tales are inherently more 'user-friendly' because they are part of popular culture. The growing interest in innovative applications of paradigms to explore research and practice is perhaps one of the more complex concepts confronting HRD scholars today. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to use a well-known fable—*The Three Little Pigs*—as a lens to frame an explication of various paradigms (for purposes of teaching and learning) and to set the stage for viewing phenomena using multi-paradigmatic inquiry (for purposes of sensemaking and research).

Organizations and individuals have a need to understand what paradigms are and why they are important for learning and sensemaking. Consider for a moment the complexity of paradigms. Paradigms are complex philosophical constructs that describe the dominant perspectives and beliefs of an individual or an entire field of study (Guba, 1990). They are often difficult to conceptually comprehend. Because of their complexity, deep philosophical roots, and lack of clarity, paradigms are often not a part of common organizational discourse. Now, take into consideration fairy tales. Fairy tales are simplified stories that share a moral. Fairy tales are easy to comprehend because they are often written for a very young audience. Fairy tales have common cultural artifacts that many, if not the majority, of people within a culture, and sometimes even across cultures, are familiar with. Thus, using the simplicity of a fairy tale to describe the complexity of paradigms expedites the teaching and learning of these ideas. Incorporating fairy tales into teaching allows us to simplify some of the complexity inherent in paradigms by presenting them in a more simplified, user–friendly story version. Further, we use the common shared understanding of the fairy tale to make more accessible the often undiscussed perspectives that guide paradigms.

We begin with an overview of Burrell and Morgan's conceptions of four of the most common paradigmatic perspectives. Because the fable of the three little pigs is so well-known, in particular in Western cultures, we use the fable to ground our discussion of making meaning of the concept of paradigms. The three little pigs is a fairy tale that has been retold in similar forms across many cultures (Heiner, 2003), including those told in Italy ('The Three Goslings' or 'The Three Cottages'), in Turkey ('The Three Hares'), in France ('The Three Pullets'), and in India ('Lambikin'). The prevalence of this fable in multiple cultures suggests that the moral of this particular fairy tale is widely relevant. Thus, we re-tell the fable in this article, as seen in the italicized portions of the text, from each of the four perspectives, and conclude with a fifth perspective that incorporates elements of all four paradigms. We then discuss implications of this paradigmatic deconstruction of the fairy tale for sensemaking, teaching and learning, and organizational research for adult educators and HRD professionals.

Paradigmatic Perspectives

Paradigms aid organizational researchers in their quest to find the "truth" of a particular event, phenomenon, activity, and/or topic. Paradigms aid researchers by providing them a framework in which to make assumptions about

the nature of society and reality. The term paradigm, as organizational researchers know it today, was coined by Thomas Kuhn (1996) in the 1960's. Kuhn suggested that a paradigm is a period of time in which one belief about how the world works holds sway over any others. Kuhn looked at the history of science in order to identify these periods of time and postulated that society moves from one perspective to another. This movement occurs when the current perspective can no longer account for all of the world's problems, thus a new view of the world is developed which accommodates all of the current problems. Since the 1960's, social scientists have taken Kuhn's definition of a paradigm and adapted it to describe the way that a researcher views the world.

In their foundational book on sociological paradigms and organizations, Burrell and Morgan (1979) identified four paradigms that social scientists use to interpret the world. Those four paradigms are: functionalist, interpretivist, radical humanist, and radical structuralist. Each paradigm provides the organizational researcher with a different view of the world. Burrell and Morgan further postulate that these four paradigms should be viewed from the perspective of two continua; subjective-objective and radical change-regulation. Each of the four paradigms is set in one dimension of each of the two continuums; thus creating a 2X2 matrix with each paradigm being contained in its own cell. The functionalist paradigm represents an objective view of reality and is interested in regulating organizational life. The interpretivist paradigm views reality from a subjective stance and also seeks to regulate organizational life. The radical humanist paradigm views reality as subjective, but focuses on creating change in and by organizations. Finally, the radical structuralist paradigm approaches reality from an objective standpoint and explores and creates opportunities for change.

Despite the substantial influence of Burrell and Morgan's work, researchers in management have challenged the concept that these four paradigms are sufficient for comprehensive interpretation of social phenomena (e.g., Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Lewis & Grimes, 1999; Schultz & Hatch, 1999). While management scholars have advocated for research that crosses the boundaries of these paradigms, such research is not common; further the field of HRD has done little to explore multi- or meta-paradigmatic scholarship. This is largely because the field appears to be dominated by functionalist and interpretivist research (Callahan, 2007).

This paper will first explain the four core paradigmatic perspectives postulated by Burrell and Morgan (1979) through a retelling of the fairy tale, *The Three Little Pigs*. To accomplish this, we share each of the four paradigms through the narratives of the fable characters. After presenting four distinct paradigms, we conclude the paper by highlighting the concept of multi-paradigms (Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Lewis & Grimes, 1999; Lewis & Kelemen, 2002). Although presenting epistemological concepts in the form of a fable may seem simplistic, the fable or story becomes a familiar vehicle for teaching individuals about both paradigms and multi-paradigms. In this way, the paradigms become more accessible to learners, enabling them to apply the concepts for further sensemaking and research within organizations.

The *Three Little Pigs* Continued

To begin our explanation of paradigms, we present a fable about what happened to the three little pigs after the big bad wolf attempted to blow down their homes.

> *As you may remember, the first little pig (we'll call him 'Tom') built his house out of straw. The second little pig (let's call him 'Franky') built his house out of sticks and the third little pig (and he will be 'Jerry') built his house out of bricks. Then along came the big bad wolf. The wolf went to each house in turn; and huffed, and puffed, and blew the first two houses down. Then the wolf tried this same tactic on the third house, but the house made out of bricks proved to be too strong for the wolf's mighty lungs and the three little pigs were safe inside. Now the rest of the story....*
>
> *Within a matter of minutes Officer Badger pulled up to the house. Now Badger was not a new pup on the street. He had seen his fair share of crime scenes in his 20 years as a police officer, but*

what he witnessed here at the house of bricks was astounding. Outside the house there was a wolf, lying on the ground panting. Inside the house there were three little pigs—the first was visibly and emotionally shaken, the second was raving mad, and the third had a calm cool look about him. Officer Badger couldn't help but think… "Boy, what a long day this is going to be!"

Interpretivist Paradigm – Tom

A central tenet of the interpretive paradigm is that attempts to understand and explain the social world should be grounded in the perspectives of those who are engaged in the social phenomena being explored (Burrell & Morgan, 1979/2005). This paradigm finds its roots in German sociology, especially the work of Weber. The concept of *verstehen* is seen as a primary method for studying the social world; *verstehen* literally means 'to understand' in German. Interpretivism suggests that the study of social processes is inherently influenced by human values and, therefore, could not be understood in terms of universal laws or objective analytic analyses of observable phenomena. The subjective nature of interpretivism focuses on perceptions of thoughts, beliefs, and experiences of individuals. Thus, interpretivists are interested in how "social reality [is] meaningfully constructed and ordered from the point of view of the actors directly involved" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979/2005, p. 254).

Interpretivists are interested in description and explanation as vehicles for identifying and understanding organizational phenomena (Gioia & Pitre, 1990); they see reality as socially constructed through mutual interpretations (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In our fractured fable, Tom the Pig represents the interpretivist paradigm, a paradigm that by definition is "informed by a concern to understand the world as it is, to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experience" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 28). Our story continues…..Enter Tom the Pig:

> *As any good police officer does, Badger had to first get at the heart of the problem and that meant finding out what had happened. He started questioning the first little pig, Tom. "Tell me Tom, what's your story?"*
>
> *"Well it's like this officer Badger, I study sociology. I'm an assistant professor at Farm University and I have a grant which focuses on identifying the patterns and cultural habits of big bad wolves. Now being a pig and thus ranking fairly low on the food chain, I normally wouldn't have left the confines of my office to conduct this research. But I have done as much library work as I can and now I need to observe big bad wolves in their native habitat.*
>
> *In order to gather my observations of the wolves as unobtrusively as possible I constructed a straw house close to the big bad wolf den. You see officer Badger, it is very important that I first view how wolves live without them knowing that I'm observing them. Then once they become comfortable with my presence and I can more easily enter their group.*
>
> *I thought, up until today, that I had done a great job of not letting myself be known to the wolves. I had planned to slowly emerge from the straw house so I could talk to the big bad wolf and find out if my observations are representative of their culture. But I guess that wasn't the case; the wolves were obviously upset with my presence. Early this morning, the big bad wolf in the front yard came and blew my house down. Now I may be a sociologist and research results are important, but I know what pigs are to wolves… so I ran and I've been here ever since.*
>
> *Badger gave a nod of approval, "Er, thank you Tom, we'll get to the bottom of this tragedy." This little pig was a little on the weird side, but his motives didn't hurt anyone and he didn't break the law….*

Tom, first seen by Officer Badger as "visibly and emotionally shaken" from the encounter with the Wolf (which is a different reaction from the other pigs), represents the idea that the experiences people have are subjective and create different meaning for each person. It is easy to see that Tom and his brothers have created multiple realities of how they interpret their experiences with the wolf, each other, and society at large.

Tom sees the world as not having "real" structure and not governed by one absolute truth or set of laws. He is not taking for granted that wolves behave like pigs or view the world the way pigs do. Instead, he is on a quest to discover these answers from the wolf's perspective, to the extent that he can, given that pigs are a potential food source for big bad wolves. Last, Tom typifies the interpretivist's quest for first-hand knowledge, by studying the wolves in their natural setting. By preparing to interview the Big Bad Wolf, Tom shows he understands the importance of engaging 'subjects' or 'participants' in the interpretation process by asking them for their perspective.

Characteristic of interpretive research are ethnographic techniques such as fieldwork. Ethnography concerns itself with data collection that is rooted in first hand observation, and focuses on culture (Merriam, 1998). Tom as the interpretivist researcher, takes on the role of the ethnographer in his quest to learn about wolf culture by "identifying the patterns and cultural habits of big bad wolves". Tom's goal is to not only understand what wolves do, but also what they believe, how they interact with others, sociopolitical and economic systems, etc. In essence, Tom wants to get a "thick, rich description" of wolf culture-- a full and descriptive account of how wolves make sense of the world around them.

Radical Humanist Paradigm – Franky

While interpretivism seeks to understand the subjective experiences of individuals engaged in social processes, radical humanists critique the nature of those social processes (Burrell & Morgan, 1979/2005). Like interpretivism, radical humanism is rooted in German idealism, but there is a greater influence of Hegelian dialectics in this paradigmatic approach. Radical humanists suggest that there are inevitable tensions between opposites, especially with regard to internal individual consciousness and external collective ideological superstructures. The interplay of this individual and collective dialectic constructs our reality and, as a result, individuals must continually challenge the domination by the collective ideology. Thus, radical humanism invites an emancipatory philosophy that encourages individuals to use self-consciousness as a vehicle to break the constraints imposed upon them by society and to re-create the society in which they live.

Radical humanists, then, seek to describe phenomena; but they also seek to change the social milieu through critique (Gioia & Pitre, 1990). To them, reality is socially constructed, but in a distorted way that tends to privilege those in power. In our story, Franky manifests the radical humanist paradigm:

> *Officer Badger thought that perhaps the story would be clarified if he talked to Franky, the little pig from the now demolished stick house. "Now tell me Franky what's your story?" Badger asked.*
>
> *"Badger... that wolf just wanted to eat me!" said a hopping mad Franky. "You see we pigs are an oppressed lot. I can't tell you the number of times that I've heard the term "the other white meat," or "as dirty as a pig," or "he eats like a pig." The world just doesn't like us. It's not because we've done anything wrong....It's because we're pigs! We pigs have gotten a bad name and that wolf just thinks he can come along and take his fill. In fact this whole experience has just proven my point. See Badger, I used to put up with all of the other animals taunts and jeers about being a pig. One day I had enough, I decided to prove them wrong. I moved to the country and built myself a house out of sticks to remind me of the oppression that pigs are continually subjected to. The sticks represent the bars of a virtual cage that pigs the world round are enslaved in. That en-*

slavement happens in the minds of anyone who's not a pig! In fact you probably can't even know the torture of being a pig!

I lived my life on a strict diet; eating only evenly proportioned meals three times a day. This proves that pigs don't eat constantly; that we are not a species destined to be the fat, overeaters that society assumes. I bathe regularly; this proves that pigs can be clean. That we aren't sloven-ly and we don't always smell bad. I have lived my life for these last few years with these principles in mind. Pigs are an oppressed lot and through my actions I will show others that pigs are not what they stereotype us to be.

So you can imagine my surprise, or lack thereof, when a big bad wolf came and blew my house down late this morning. This just proves that the way the wolves view the world can never accom-modate a view where pigs are equals. After my house was unceremoniously destroyed I came here to my brother Jerry's because it's the only place I knew I would be accepted.

This story was getting more confusing by the minute, thought Badger. Perhaps with Jerry's story some sense of what exactly happened to these pigs would emerge.

From the beginning, Franky is exposing the oppression that pigs have experienced. "The other white meat", "dirty as a pig", and "he eats like a pig" are just a few of the examples he uses to expose the way language has been used to oppress or marginalize pigs. Franky's desire to prove to the world that these stereotypes are not true is an exam-ple of his consciousness of those mechanisms used to alienate pigs and prevent them from reaching their full poten-tial. He is also trying to raise the awareness of fellow pigs and the rest of human/animal kind to see that pigs are oppressed.

Franky's construction of a stick home that is representative of the "virtual cage that pigs the world round are en-slaved in" and his argument that non-pigs are enslaved to the stereotype illustrates the concept of hegemony. The pigs and non-pigs are living under the control of the pig stereotype that has been generated by an elite group, in this case, wolves. Franky is trying to expose hegemony and to help pigs and non-pigs recognize that pigs are being op-pressed. He also recognizes that part of the problem is that the pigs do not see how they themselves aid in perpetu-ating the stereotype. Therefore, Franky develops a plan of action to debunk the stereotype. He chooses to eat a healthy diet and to maintain a high level of personal hygiene. He is trying to institute change by his behavior. He is not satisfied with merely unmasking the oppression, he goes one step further and develops a plan that will emanci-pate the pigs and ensure that they are treated as equals with wolves and other members of the animal kingdom.

Franky's reaction to the wolf blowing his stick house down is indicative of his suspicious attitude towards authori-ty. He believes that the only reason the wolf blew his house down was to prove that wolves have power, will con-tinue to oppress the pigs, and are elite. However, it is interesting to note that Franky's action plan could border on being elitist. He has designed a plan to chip away at the stereotype, but it is his design and, if he were to insist that his way was the only way of seeing pigs emancipated, then his own plan could become oppressive. Overall, how-ever, Franky has revealed his radical humanist tendencies by exposing the domination of pigs by wolves, critiquing the way in which this oppression occurs and trying to create an environment that allows pigs to reach their full po-tential.

Radical Structuralist Paradigm – Jerry

Both radical humanists and radical structuralists critique the domination of social forces; however, while radical humansists focus on the consciousness of individuals to understand social processes, radical structuralists empha-size the structural relationships within society to unmask fundamental conflicts in society (Burrell & Morgan, 1979/2005). Three features distinguish radical structuralism from other paradigmatic perspectives: structure, con-

tradition, and crisis. First, structures are configurations of relationships that are natural facts of social existence that exist independently of any social construction by individuals. In other words, this is an objective perspective of the world. Contradiction refers to the dialectical notion that the elements that comprise structures are positioned to be in conflict with one another. Crisis is the inescapable outcome of the change sought by radical structuralists. Change necessarily involves an extreme structural dislocation in which existing structures are challenged and replaced by new structures.

Radical structuralists are interested in identifying sources of domination within existing social structures and guiding others through social change by persuading them to revise the structures in which they find themselves embedded (Gioia & Pitre, 1990). Jerry the Pig tells the tale from a radical structuralist perspective:

> *"Jerry, you're the last of the pigs that I need to get statements from. Could you please explain what happened?" said Badger.*
>
> *Jerry turned to Badger and simply said… "I knew this would happen. I knew that my brothers would one day come to me for help. I knew, that the world around them would come crashing down. You see Badger, for years I've been telling my brothers that we pigs need to stick together. That the world is not so kind to pigs and that the only way we're going to make it is if we work together. That's why I took the time to build this brick house. While Tom was out trying to prove himself professionally, I laid a strong and sound foundation. While Franky was out trying to make pigs not so marginalized, I constructed this home brick by brick. We will now build a place where all pigs can come and contribute; a society where all pigs can flourish. We will all work together as a community to improve all of pigdom.*
>
> *When the Wolf first showed up, he walked all the way around the house… no doubt trying to find the weakest point. Then he knocked on the door and asked if he could blow down the house! From behind the closed door I said, "You dirty, stinky, smelly, old wolf, you go ahead and try to blow down my house! You'll never destroy pigdom! We will prevail!" As I expected, my home… our community, proved to be the stronger. Now, you're here to take the wolf away. This will finally prove to everyone, that pigdom will not stand for this blind hatred anymore. In my mind, the progression of these events makes perfect sense. We are logically building toward a day where all pigs work together to support each other.*
>
> *"This is hands down the strangest pig I've ever met," thought Badger.*

Jerry's situation was such that he knew that eventually he would be needed to solve the problems for the pigs as a 'group', a society. As Jerry said, "he was trying to get his brothers together and to realize that the world is not so kind to pigs". Here we see Jerry trying to help his brothers recognize the oppression of pigs or in other words to raise their awareness of class consciousness. His brick home symbolizes a structure where "all pigs can flourish" and it is a structure that can stand up to the oppressive forces around it. He would ensure a solid foundation for them, not only the house, but life for them, their 'community.' He wants to let them know that all the things that the wolf may have tried, will fail. The pigs will prevail and overcome!

Finally, although the radical structuralist and functionalist fall on the objective side of the continuum, they are quite different. As mentioned previously, the radical structuralist is focused on unmasking the structural forces that dominate and oppose the status quo while the functionalist is focused on explaining the status quo and finding rational explanations for various phenomena.

Functionalist Paradigm – The Big Bad Wolf

Functionalism is the most common paradigmatic approach found in studies of organizational phenomena. It is a pragmatic, problem-centered perspective of understanding social processes and structures with the objective of maintaining order and stability in society (Burrell & Morgan, 1979/2005. The notion of 'functionalism' is connected to the Durkheimian concept that all components of social systems serve some type of purpose, 'function', to maintain the status quo of any given social phenomenon. Biological analogies are common in this perspective as functionalists look to the natural sciences as the standard for conducting research. In functionalism, social systems exist independent of individuals and it is the purview of the observer to see, understand, and interpret phenomena within the social context.

Functionalists believe in regularities of patterns within any social system. Thus, they look for those patterns in order to systematically find ways, through testing, to predict and control the existing patterns (Gioia & Pitre, 1990). They seek cause and effect relationships in order to generalize their findings to broader contexts. The Big Bad Wolf represents our functionalist:

> *Badger realized that if he was ever going to find the truth in these events he would have talk to everyone. So Badger went outside and started talking to the big bad wolf. "Mr. Wolf, could you please tell me what happened here?"*
>
> *"Well first, Officer Badger, I'm innocent. I'm sure you've just spent the last few hours listening to the three little pigs' accounts of how I've tried to eat them. But let me assure you I have not been trying to eat them. I have been conducting a scientific study all day and have unfortunately stumbled onto the three little pigs during each phase of the experiment. It all started early this morning. I went to get a drink and just then the wind picked up and blew a handful of pollen in my face, which caused me to have a tremendous sneeze. To my amazement, that sneeze was so powerful that it blew, what I thought to be a pile of straw, completely away. Lo and behold that pile of straw was the home of a poor little pig. Having just had his home blown away, the poor little guy just stared at me in amazement and then ran as fast as he could in the opposite direction.*
>
> *Having had such a terrific sneeze, it occurred to me that there is a tremendous power within my lungs. I sat down and started to think on this power. If that power could be harnessed then it could be a tremendous benefit. Thus a hypothesis emerged: How much wind force can my lungs exert? I realized in order to test this hypothesis I would need to find material(s) that could both withstand the power of my lungs and yield to them.*
>
> *Knowing that straw was already a material that could yield to my lung power, I next tried wood. That's when I came upon what I though to be a pile of sticks. So I huffed and I puffed and I blew the pile down. Again, I was struck at the sheer misfortune of my testing as it immediately became apparent that this was not a pile of sticks, but rather another poor unfortunate little pig's home. I cursed myself for not inspecting the pile before wielding the power of my mighty lungs. The poor little pig again, just ran off as fast as his little legs could carry him.*
>
> *Given the two misfortunes that have plagued my experiment thus far I almost decided to quit, but then I realized that science can not and should not be stopped. Science requires that we methodically test every situation. I had to find a material that was stronger than both straw and wood. It took most of the day, but at last I found a home made out of brick. Not wanting to repeat the tragedies from earlier in the day, I first inspected the house. It had a strong foundation and good wall structure. This would be prefect to prove my lungs incapable of blowing brick down. Before testing; I knocked on the door to ask the owner their permission to run my test. The response I got*

> *from behind a closed door was and I quote, "…you go ahead and try to blow down my house…" Although, the owner's voice was a little muffled because he was behind a door, I now had the green light from the owner to try. So I huffed and I puffed and I tried, with all my might to blow the house down. But as you can plainly tell, it didn't work. Thus my experiment was a success. I now know that straw and wood will yield to my lungs and brick will not. After exerting all my effort in conducting the experiment I was fairly winded and need to rest for a bit. That's when you pulled up.*

According to Burrell and Morgan (1979/2005), the functionalist's overall approach is to seek rational explanations of social affairs. It is a perspective which is highly pragmatic in orientation and is often problem-orientated in approach. The functionalist's main concern is to provide practical solutions to practical problems. The functionalist approach to social science tends to assume that the social world is composed of relatively concrete empirical artifacts and relationships which can be defined, studied and measured (Burrell & Morgan, 1979/2005).

Functionalists typically have research projects based on cause and effect relationships that build on each other over time. Being a functionalist, the wolf had a problem that he identified and needed to be studied and measured. He believed that if his lungs were strong enough then he could help society by providing his wind to help the citizens. Wolf found an area of interest and decided to build on it through experiment. He has variables for his experiment that he's testing the air in his lungs against straw, then against sticks, and then against the brick. He initally tested his lung strength on what he thought was a pile of straw. Although he was shocked to find that the pile of straw was really a home, his study showed that his lungs were strong enough to blow down the straw house. Thus, he formulated a hypothesis based on past experience. In order to test this hypothesis he needed to test additional material, so he moved on to the next step, wood. Once he had identified what he thought was a stack of wood, he put his study to practice by huffing and puffing and the wood stack blew down. He felt terrible that the stack of wood was, in actuality, a house. However, being the functionalist that he is, he knew he could not stop the experiment of science. In order to prove that he is incapable of blowing down something as sturdy as brick, he moved on to a brick house. Once again he huffed and puffed, but the house did not crumble. The wolf found a solution to his experiment, while his lungs were pretty strong; they were not strong enough to blow down something as strong as brick. Finding out that his breath did not work against bricks, but it will on straw and wood allowed the wolf to conclude his experiment. The wolf viewed his experiment as having the potential to benefit all of the animal kingdom (i.e., society) the societal-serving belief and methodical investigation technic utilized by the wolf typifies the functionalist worldview.

Multiparadigm — Badger's Conclusion

The previously discussed paradigms approach the idea of identifying 'truth' from four different perspectives. Each paradigm describes the 'truth' based on its fundamental assumptions. However, it is important to note that the boundaries between these paradigms are permeable; theories do not necessarily fit cleanly into paradigmatic boxes (Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Schultz & Hatch, 1996). Indeed, Gioia and Pitre (1990) contend that there are transition zones across the continua proposed by Burrell and Morgan (1979/2005) that facilitate looking at phenomena from multiple paradigmatic perspectives. In other words, there are natural connections in the 2X2 matrix proposed by Burrell and Morgan (1979/2005)—each paradigm shares with another either a belief in the nature of society as focused on change or regulation or a belief in the nature of science as subjective or objective. Thus, a researcher can find common perspectives despite using different paradigmatic lenses. Officer Badger is in many ways a representation of the multiparadigm approach. As he has from the beginning of our story, Office Badger believes that he must understand all of the characters stories in order to understand the whole story.

> *Badger pondered the situation for a moment… and for some reason, his mind drifted back to when he was just a pup.*

Badger had always known that he would be a police officer. It was just something instinctual. Bears are the largest and strongest of the animals. Bobcats are the most cunning. Owls have the wisdom of ten. But badgers are none of these. Badgers are known for one thing and one thing alone in the great forest. Badgers are the most ferocious of all animals. It's not their size, or strength, or cunning, or wisdom that makes them ferocious, it's their strength of conviction. Badgers will fight tooth and nail for what they believe in. Although strong and large, bears are lazy; preferring to take the easy way out. Bobcats are cunning but extremely skittish; they prefer to slink around the forest, quiet and unseen. Owls, with all their great wisdom, mostly just avoid all contact; preferring to fly through the sky and survey the world around them. Badgers believe in themselves and believe in what they feel is right.

And so this is how Office Badger was raised. He understood his place in the world. He understood that he was not necessarily the strongest, but that others fulfilled that role. What Badger understood was that the world is made-up of a whole host of different animals, each with their own unique talents and views.

Naturally, these ideals lead Badger to the work of a police officer as it is the police officer who is tasked with understanding and making right the world. They are the guardians of justice. They speak for those who cannot, and, quell those views which are dominant. Badgers bring the strength of conviction and of knowing that there are many views from within which we can interpret the world.

Thus, as officer Badger tried to sort through the myriad of possibilities on what the 'truth' of the day's events were, he was faced with what boils down to a question of paradigms. Tom, the little pig with the straw house, was an interprevist. Franky, the little pig with the stick house, was a radical humanist. Jerry, the little pig in the brick house, was a radical structuralist. And the big bad wolf was a functionalist. Now Badger knew that if he just looked at one of the animal's perspectives it would point him in the wrong direction.

*"Which **is** the truth?.... Or, wait, **is** there a truth?" thought Badger.*

Schultz and Hatch (1996) suggest that there are at least three different ways of understanding multi-paradigmatic research. First, is the traditional perspective that paradigms are mutually exclusive, also known as paradigm incommensurability. Oddly, while Burrell and Morgan (1979/2005) advocate for this view, they simultaneously provide examples of theorists and theories that appear from several different paradigmatic lenses. The second perspective is that of paradigm integration in which similarities among paradigms are synthesized to such an extent that a meta-paradigm emerges. The third perspective is that of paradigm crossing, in which the focus is on awareness of paradigmatic assumptions and challenging them in order to create a richer understanding of a phenomenon and perhaps even a meta-paradigm to address the broader framework of the phenomenon.

Our fractured fable presents an opportunity for a paradigm crossing perspective. Officer Badger began his inquiry by talking with each little Pig independently, these actions allowed him to formulate, clarify, and understand of the whole story. If Badger had he only talked to one of the story characters, his personal view of the day's events would have been skewed towards one perspective over the others. Thus, in trying to determine the truth of the matter he had to challenge his own assumptions about Pigs and Wolves in order to create an awareness of all the perspectives. In doing so, Badger has gained a richer understanding of the paradigms that are represented by the Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf. These actions may help Badger to formulate a meta-paradigm from which he can help others to solve problems.

Interestingly, the pursuit of such a meta-paradigm can take on characteristics of the regulation paradigms or the radical change paradigms. The notion of a meta-paradigm emerging from a confluence of multiple paradigmatic

perspectives may, on the one hand, be seen as the ultimate functionalist perspective. In other words, there is a way of understanding the nature of the phenomenon of interest and a 'grand' paradigm accomplishes that goal. On the other hand, however, a meta-paradigm may also represent a more postmodern perspective that can be reflected by radical humanism and radical structuralism (Schultz & Hatch, 1996). With a postmodernist perspective, the unique contributions of the paradigms are recognized and deconstructed to form a new awareness of how each paradigm contributes to distinctive understandings of a phenomenon.

Discussion

Too often individuals approach situations from only one paradigm. Gioia and Pitre (1990) suggested that all people have what they called a *home paradigm.* The home paradigm is the philosophical perspective that a person feels most comfortable with and the perspective from which a person is most likely to view the world. It could be argued that the *Truth*, as defined by a person, is derived from their home paradigm. Because people see the world from their home paradigm, they will often not consider the potential perspectives of other paradigms and, therefore, may fail to acknowledge the existence of another.

Yet, as our story of Badger and the three little pig's highlights, it is often critical to understand the perspectives and paradigms of all involved. We live in social worlds and study social phenomena which ultimately are created through a diverse set of individual perspectives. The use of fairy tales, fables, and other storytelling genres that are forms of popular culture artifacts has implications for sensemaking, for teaching and learning, and for researching. This section will highlight some key implications of the use of popular culture artifacts, with an emphasis on storytelling for each of the above.

Sensemaking

Sensemaking frameworks provide a relatively stable understanding of contexts that enable us to act; as Weick (1993) noted, these frameworks are our tool kits for helping us define our identities and interpret our surroundings. Sensemaking frameworks make explicit the normative values of our context (Schwandt, 2005).

In turn, fairy tales communicate the normative values of the storyteller (Polletta, 2008). Thus, a fairy tale is a sensemaking framework. For example, Smith and Simmons (1983) describe how the fairy tale Rumpelstiltskin was used by organizational members to make sense of their organizational culture. Fairy tales can be invoked to provide a frame of reference for understanding and communicating what is happening in the organization. Or, as in our case, because they are so familiar, they can be used as a vehicle to challenge common-sense patterns. Sensemaking can reveal "multiple socially constructed realities" (Schwandt, 2005, p. 182). By presenting a well-known fairy tale from multiple different paradigms, HRD professionals can sow the seeds for learning.

Teaching and Learning

Schwandt (2005) highlights how sensemaking and learning need to be simultaneously employed in successful organizations. Learning stimulates change in behavior; it challenges us to question the sensemaking frameworks that may lure us into complacency. Fairy tales, on the surface, are simple; and they are familiar. By grounding learning new ideas and behaviors in a familiar context, the change that occurs with learning is not as daunting. At its most fundamental level, learning is about change (Schwandt, 2005).

What is more, storytelling is fun. As Callahan, Whitener, and Sandlin (2007) noted, the enjoyment we receive from stories helps to engage us, which aids in creating environments where learning and transfer of knowledge is heightened. Transfer is particularly important for organizations that support the development and delivery of training (Noe, 2010). Without transfer, new knowledge and skills gained through training do not get implemented. Trainees waste organizational resources in training only to continue or revert back to their pre-training behaviors. Using

something as simple as a story to engage trainees and make the environment more fun should aid in creating a stronger learning and transfer environment.

Another important consideration of the value of popular culture artifacts, and especially fairy tales and fables, is that they represent a safe space to conjecture about the organization (Callahan, Whitener, & Sandlin, 2007). Fairy tales are a non-threatening, and yet tangible, exemplar for applying learned concepts.

Research in Organizations

Fairy tales are meaningful for organizational research because they are effective sensemaking vehicles and learning tools, as discussed above. But, fairy tales contribute further to research in organizations. Organizational work in areas like conflict management, training, organizational development, change, leadership, and many others, could all benefit from this idea of taking something complex and presenting it in a simplified and more accessible manner. When contention exists between peoples, we need only remember that in many cases a solution can be found in recognizing and acknowledging each person's view. If true understanding is the goal of social science research, then all (or at least multiple) paradigms must be considered in order to understand the world in which we live.

One way to engage fairy tales to facilitate such understanding is to use them as data collection tools. Stories are effective for stimulating data collection "because narratives are seen as an alternative to positivist research" (Polletta, et al, 2011, p. 110). Further, researchers can use fairy tales as examples for how narratives can convey stories about organizations. As a tool for sensemaking, learning, or research, fairy tales are equalizers. In other words, fairy tales are familiar across all socio-economic levels and, therefore, they avoid the highbrow vs. lowbrow dichotomization so frequently seen with popular culture artifacts (Rehn, 2008).

Conclusion

In sum, cultural artifacts, such as stories, fables, and fairy tales aid us in understanding and envisioning how complex ideas might influence us personally. Although our story of Badger and the three little pigs might at first appear to be simplistic, it provides a vehicle for understanding these complex phenomena. It only takes a little imagination for people to envision their lives as Badger does. Consider how many situations you have encountered in your life where there was a clear difference in perspective between two or more people. Perhaps you took Badger's road and considered all of the available perspectives. Or, perhaps you were one of the little pigs; seeing the world through your own views and not recognizing the value of others' views.

Now that our fractured fable has served its role as a vehicle for demonstrating how a phenomenon can be viewed from various paradigmatic perspectives, we suggest that the next step is to more closely explore these multiple paradigmatic perspectives from both functionalist and postmodernist perspectives. But that will have to continue with the next fairy tale…..

> *Then it occurred to Badger that perhaps… at the same time… all of the stories were both the truth and not the truth. Perhaps truth is not as clear as it may seem upon first glance. Given that this whole affair was really just an unfortunate set of circumstances, Badger decided to drop the case. He told the wolf to go home and practice his "science" somewhere other than around pigs. Then he walked inside and convinced the pigs that the wolf wasn't trying to eat them. They were a little hesitant, but eventually came around to Badger's view.*

> *Having resolved the three little pig's problem, Badger went back to his car. As he approached, he heard the radio squeal.*

> *"Officer Badger, Officer Badger, Come in?" said the dispatcher.*

"This is Badger, over."

"Badger, you've got a call in the meadow... Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep and doesn't know where to find them."

"I'm on my way." said Badger.

Badger quickly got in his car and drove off. As he pulled away, he looked in the rear view mirror at the quickly shrinking brick house and couldn't help but think... there is a moral to today's events.

"Truth is just the way you view the world," Badger mused. Then he thought... I wonder how a multi-paradigmatic view will help Bo Peep find her truth?

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