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A Response to the Rejoinder by Darlyne Bailey & Pranab Chatterjee

BY THOMAS PACKARD

I appreciate the thoughtful and important comments made by Darlyne Bailey & Pranab Chatterjee regarding my article on organization development and community development. I find myself agreeing with them almost totally, and will briefly comment on some of their points to help clarify where we are and may not be in agreement.

The relationship between the change agent and the power structure in OD has received increasing attention in recent years, as OD consultants who as a group have historically been influenced by the "truth and love" perspective on change (Bennis, 1969, p. 77) have realized the importance of political and power dynamics (Cobbs & Margulies, 1981). Alinsky's model of social action (Rothman, 1979) clearly supports attention to power issues, and this perspective must be considered in planning a CD intervention, with or without OD technologies. Because locality development characteristics were dominant in the case I discussed, power issues were not paramount, and I chose a collaborative approach. A contingency perspective should always be used in assessment and intervention, using locality development where self help and collaboration are appropriate and social action where power relationships and conflict are salient.

Another aspect of the power issue is the relationship between the practitioner and the power structure. Even though OD consultants say that the whole organization or system is their client, the reality of contracting leads to top management being the key accountability connection. In one sense this is necessary, because, as Boss (1979) and others have emphasized, commitment of power people is necessary for success. Boss also noted that other power groups such as unions must be committed, and I share this philosophy for practical and ideological reasons. Willie Sutton allegedly said he robbed banks because "that's where the money is", and I work with top management not only because they contract with me but because, as many consultants say, that's where most of the problems are. I agree

with Bailey and Chatterjee that the responsibility for change is at the system level, but management warrants more attention usually because management causes most problems or allows them to continue. In the past, in a role as a community activist, I have played a related role, working with the power structure to change it, in a social reform mode (Rothman, 1979), representing client interests and assuming that power is a relevant dynamic. In an oppressive system, OD will not work, with organizations or communities, and other approaches such as union activism or social action should be used.

I still see possible value of OD technologies under power-charged conditions, however. First, OD in some cases partly merges with quality of working life change approaches (French & Bell, 1990) which place heavy emphasis on power sharing between management and labor, and I have done such projects (Packard and Reid, 1990). I have shared power perspectives with both management and labor clients (e.g., Olsen, 1981), so they can explicitly deal with these issues. Second, we can support those in low power positions by providing them with proven OD technologies. Two of my clients have been labor unions, both of whom, I believe, became more effective in assertively representing their members because they had used OD internally.

Trust is a major concern as part of power relationships. I always let clients below top management "pat me down for a wire", checking out my biases, values, and trustworthiness. Any ethical OD consultant would terminate a contract before violating a trust relationship regarding sharing or censoring information.

I differ with one conclusion of Bailey and Chatterjee: OD in nonbusiness settings is not nonexistent but is underreported (Packard & Reid, 1990), and is a growing area.

I agree with their final points regarding adopting OD technologies inappropriately or using them without proper training (I've called this "the sorcerer's apprentice syndrome", remembering Mickey Mouse making a mess of things in *Fantasia*). Perhaps these points warranted more attention in my article, and I appreciate the emphasis by Bailey and Chatterjee.

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