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Communication theory and the construction of meaning : a constructive developmental approach

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COMMUNICATION THEORY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF
MEANING: A CONSTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

A Thesis

Presented to

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of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

Merri L. Fraser

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Abstract

In recent years the field of communication has been experiencing a movement toward newer nontraditional approaches to the study of communication and information. Among these newer approaches is a growing body of research that focuses on interpretive behavior in the communication process.

Brenda Dervin's Sense-Making model of communication/information has been the most widely used interpretive theory of information to date. Sense-Making focuses primarily upon the role of the receiver in the communication process and how individuals construct meaning in specific situations. As a result, Sense-Making has not attended adequately to larger shared frameworks of meaning and the effects that they have upon information seeking and use.

It is the purpose of this thesis to strengthen Dervin's theory of Sense-Making by gaining a deeper view of the individual in the construction process and yet broadening the meaning making context to include structural concerns. The work of William Perry on cognitive and ethical development will be examined and applied to Sense-Making theory and data to provide a more indepth understanding of how individuals construct meaning and use information. As a framework for examining shared structures of meaning, James Fowler's theory of faith development has also been

applied to Sense-Making theory and data with particular emphasis on relational aspects. These theories are applied to Sense-Making in an effort to develop a more complete view of the individual in the communication process.

Acknowledgments

The events in our lives happen in a sequence in time, but in their significance to ourselves they find their own order, a timetable not necessarily--perhaps not possibly--chronological.

--Eudora Welty, "Learning to See"

Perhaps I am one of the few people who can say that my graduate school years were among the most exciting I have yet lived. From a more normative standpoint, I must say that at times those same years were not simply challenging but strenuous. Without the wise and kind support of faculty and family it might have been difficult to make sense of my graduate school experience let alone grow within it. Therefore, as I look back at my time at University of the Pacific it seems fitting to express my thanks to those people who have played important roles in helping me learn through the challenges of that process.

No graduate committee could have been more supportive or encouraging (not to mention patient) while guiding a student through the rigors of thesis research. I extend my most sincere appreciation to my chairman, Dr. Jon F. Schamber, for his careful attention to the structure and design of my research. His willingness to provide feedback and support on invariably short notice were crucial to the completion of this endeavor. Dr. R. Eugene Rice spent innumerable hours assisting in the conceptualization and development of my research topic. Without his breadth of

knowledge this interdisciplinary approach to communication research would have been an even more arduous task. In addition, Dr. Linda Nolan provided invaluable assistance, not only during the production of this thesis but throughout my course of study. Finally, I wish to thank Dr. Randall J. Koper who did more to challenge the very assumptions upon which my understanding of communication is based than all of my other professors combined.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my family--Benson, Cameron, and Aaron--for their undaunted patience and assistance. Without their encouragement it might have been years before I would have mustered the courage to pursue a graduate degree.

Table of Contents

Chapter I:	Introduction	p. 1
Chapter II:	Sense-Making: An Interpretivist Approach to Communication/Information	p. 27
Chapter III:	Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Development: A Constructive Developmental Theory and What it can Contribute to Sense-Making	p. 44
Chapter IV:	Fowler's Theory of Faith Development: A Constructive Developmental Approach to Individual and Shared Meaning Construction	p. 76
Chapter V:	Conclusion	p. 113
	References	p. 135
	Appendices	p. 147

List of Figures

- Figure 1: The Burrell and Morgan paradigmatic matrix p. 10
- Figure 2: Where the theories of Dervin, Perry, and
Fowler fit into the Burrell and Morgan
paradigmatic matrix p. 24

Chapter 1

Introduction

It is the difficult and often illusive task of communication theorists to develop practical frameworks for understanding human communication behavior. As we gain a better understanding of human communication we also create the potential for improving the quality of human institutions, relationships, and individual lives. Communication researchers and practitioners have often been quick to project their own ideas and concerns upon their subjects and slow to listen to the felt concerns and information needs of those individuals. How can communication scientists gain a better understanding of the individual communicator and span the breach between theory and application?

In recent years the field of communication has been experiencing a movement toward newer nontraditional approaches to the study of communication and information. The first significant endeavor to consider the role of the individual in the communication process was set forth by George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism in the 1930s. According to Manis and Meltzer (1978), one of the central tenets of this tradition has been concerned with the meaning component of human conduct, as constructed both individually

and socially. Symbolic interactionism has been catalytic in encouraging the development of alternatives to the dominant positivistic paradigm within the social sciences in general, and communication in particular.

As an outgrowth of symbolic interactionism, the interpretive school of communication began to focus on the individual and the construction of meaning in the communication process. Although the works of a number of theorists express the tenets of the interpretive school of communication, perhaps the theory that has been the most heuristic is the Sense-Making approach of Brenda Dervin. As one of the few interpretive theories of communication which investigates the process of meaning construction, Sense-Making is certainly worthy of consideration. Dervin has also provided a quantitative/qualitative methodology for the measurement and interpretation of Sense-Making behavior that has powerful potential for broad application.

It is paradoxical that one of the greatest strengths of Sense-Making is also one of its potential weaknesses: a focus on the individual as the constructor of meaning. Within the Sense-Making model, reality is viewed as incomplete, filled with discontinuities, and as something that is constantly changing. Hence, within this model, information exists only as a product of human construction. As such, information seeking and use are adaptive activities

that humans engage in to make sense in the presence of incomplete constructions of reality.

It is this author's position that the Sense-Making approach to the study of communication/information could benefit from the theoretical consideration of deeper assumptions of meaning construction provided by other theorists who have also worked within the general rubric of symbolic interactionism. Littlejohn (1983), in Theories of Human Communication, supports this notion stating that, "we should welcome rather than avoid a multitheoretical approach to the complex process of communication" (p. 4).

This thesis is concerned with a labyrinth of issues that reach across a number of disciplines (communication, sociology, developmental psychology, theology, philosophy, etc.). However, this thesis will be limited to a theoretical discussion of how people construct meaning through communication, both individually and socially, with particular application for Sense-Making theory. Littlejohn (1983) says "the basic justification for studying theories of communication is that they provide a set of useful conceptual tools" (p. 4) for understanding human behavior.

This chapter will examine the conceptual premises upon which this study is based and their embeddedness in existing paradigmatic controversies within the field of communication. Particular attention will then be given to the interpretive

paradigm of communication upon which Dervin's Sense-Making model is based. In an endeavor to provide a more comprehensive approach to the construction of meaning within the Sense-Making context, William Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development will be examined and James Fowler's theory of faith development will also be examined to provide a view of constructive developmental concerns. Emerging from this discussion, the problem and framework of this particular research endeavor will then be explicated.

The Dominant Paradigm

From the time of the Enlightenment and until recent years much research in the social sciences has been based upon a positivistic paradigm in which reality is considered as objective and external. This "dominant paradigm" has been characterized by its mechanistic qualities, and has been particularly problematic in its conception of meaning processes. Polanyi (1975), a philosopher, states that this mechanistic approach to social scientific research is based upon the conception that only the objective or factual is real. Other terms that have been used to describe the dominant paradigm are quantitative, factual, functional, objective and scientific (Bellah, 1970; Blumer, 1967; Cooley, 1967; Delia, 1977b; Dervin, 1983; Duncan, 1962;

Kuhn, 1969; Nilan, 1985; Polayni, 1975; Rosengren, 1983; White, 1983).

Within communication research in particular, the dominant paradigm has often overlooked the role of the audience in the communication process because it has assumed that reality, or meaning, has a life of its own and is simply infused into people. As a result, this research has primarily been concerned with communication effects or impacts (Allen, 1985; Dervin, 1983). The deeper issues of meaning and the way in which information/communication are embedded within larger meaning structures has often been overlooked.

Delia (1977b) states that this focus on a simplistic effects model within communication research has resulted in what he calls variable analysis--the examination of discrete factors on communication outcomes or effects. Such research endeavors usually focus on one aspect of the linear model of communication (sender, message, channel, or receiver) and overlook the interrelationships among these variables. Delia ascertains, however, that variable analysis has been unable to adequately conceptualize or measure interpretive or meaning constructive processes. In summary, variable analysis "is necessarily insensitive to the complex relationship existing among the processes participating in human interaction The difficulty

with this procedure is that the processes and events indexed by communication variables are seldom clean and discrete" (Delia, 1977b, p. 73).

Carter (1980) also asserts that communication has been treated scientifically and cautions that hypothesis testing can too easily be manipulated to achieve desired outcomes. Carter likens this reliance upon empiricism to the Aristotelian fallacy of "studying things just as they are found, with particular attention to their frequency" (Carter, 1980, p. 3). The resulting problem is that the positivistic paradigm has proven to be too simplistic to adequately examine the complex nature of communication. The primary limitation of the dominant paradigm, not only in communication research but in social scientific research in general, is that it has failed to acknowledge the subjective basis of knowledge. This problem is summarized by Goodman (1982) as follows:

Science, language, perception, philosophy--none of these can ever be utterly faithful to the world as it is. All make abstractions or conventionalizations of one kind or another, all filter the world through the mind, through concepts, through senses, through language; and all these filtering media in some way distort the world. It is not just that each gives only a partial truth, but that each introduces distortion of its own. We never achieve even in part a really faithful portrayal of the way the world is (p. 130).

Hence, the dominant paradigm is based upon the fallacious premise of scientific objectivity. The paradigm fails to

recognize the interdependence of objective and subjective variables involved in meaning construction.

The dominant, positivistic paradigm has also been accused of systematically perpetuating a false distinction between the natural sciences and the social sciences (Blumer, 1969; Kuhn, 1967; Rosengren, 1983). Again, this is reflective of an Enlightenment view of rationalism as the only road to the discovery of reality. The problem with this approach is that the intuitive or subjective is deemed less real than the rational. Those who level this criticism do so based upon a conception of reality as individually and socially constructed. Furthermore, as Bredo and Feinberg (1982) note, "The problem is that the facts one arrives at are in part a function of the set of distinctions that one makes and the conventions governing the making of those distinctions" (p. 115). In other words, facts are theory laden and relative to the conceptual schemes that are applied to them. This is not to say that "facts" are merely subjective, but rather that they are all based upon measurements which impose some sort of order on the data. All theories are embedded in world views, and methods reflect these theoretical world views as well. Delia (1977b) notes that it is the task of theory to provide valid methodologies and classifications. Delia notes that the dominant paradigm has failed to provide such theories.

On a larger level, paradigms represent communities of theory. As old theories and paradigms are superseded by new ones, our perceptual structures for viewing the world also change. Essentially, the anomalies of the dominant paradigm within the social sciences have become too numerous to be assimilated, and the result has been the current paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1970). Within the field of communication the anomalies of the dominant paradigm (source impacting receiver) have accumulated to the point that the field has begun to shift toward a new receiver-oriented paradigm in which individuals interact together to create meaning (White, 1983).

In communication studies information has been viewed in much the same way as meaning: something to be passed from person to person as an objective entity. In contrast to the stance of the dominant paradigm, Schramm (1973) says that communication is the ability to process information and share it with others. Hence, it is through interaction and information processes that meaning is created. White (1983) also states that information:

Does not have an objective, univocal meaning apart from the universe of meanings held by sources and receivers, but takes on a meaning for a source or a receiver depending on his or her situation. Researchers sharing this perspective locate the process of communication in the attempts of individuals or groups to make sense out of a situation . . . (p. 283).

In summary, the dominant paradigm in communication research has been criticized as linear, mechanistic, and too simplistic to adequately examine the complex structures of meaning involved in the communication process. As a result, the field is currently experiencing a shift toward new paradigmatic ways of examining communication behavior.

New Paradigmatic Approaches to Communication

In Rosengren's (1983) article entitled, "Communication Research: One Paradigm or Four?," the author provides a helpful discussion of Figure 1, a matrix of the paradigms within the social sciences designed by Burrell and Morgan (1979).

The four main paradigms represented on this matrix are as follows: (1) the radical humanist (upper left quadrant), (2) the radical structuralist (upper right quadrant), (3) the interpretive (lower left quadrant), and (4) the dominant functionalist paradigm (lower right quadrant). The horizontal pole on the matrix illustrates the objective/subjective dimension, which represents four pairs of dual assumptions regarding the nature of social science:

- (1) ontology---realism/nominalism
- (2) epistemology---positivism/antipositivism
- (3) human nature---determinism/voluntarism
- (4) methodology---nomothetic/ideographic

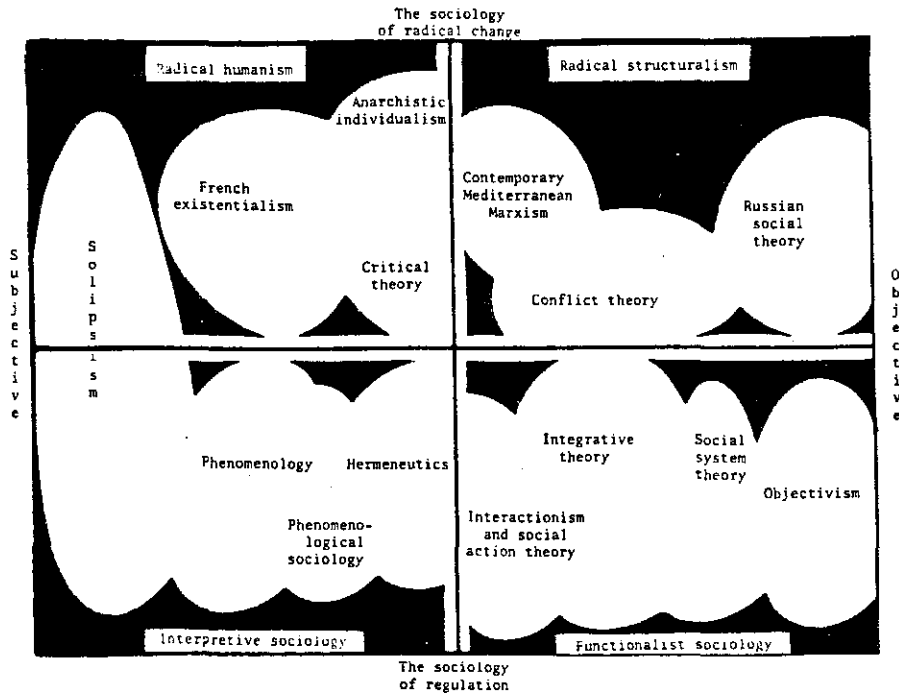


Figure 1. The Burrell and Morgan paradigmatic matrix.
Note. From Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis by G. Burrell and G. Morgan, 1979, London: Heinemann.

The vertical pole on the matrix illustrates the regulation/change dimension, which represents four pairs of dual assumptions regarding the nature of society:

- (1) status quo/radical change
- (2) consensus/domination
- (3) solidarity/emancipation
- (4) actuality/potentiality

The Burrell and Morgan matrix represents both the dominant paradigm (functionalist) and movement toward alternative paradigms within the field of communication research. These alternative paradigms are represented by the critical school of communication (upper left quadrant), the structural school of communication (upper right quadrant), and the interpretive school of communication (lower left quadrant).

The Interpretive School of Communication

It is not within the scope of this thesis to conduct an in depth examination of the structural or critical schools of communication research. Rather, this thesis will focus on the interpretive school which provides a receiver orientation to the construction of meaning within the communication process.

The interpretive approach to communication research provides an alternative to the two major trends within the field: (1) abstract objectivism, and (2) individual subjectivism. Interpretivism provides an approach to communication research that focuses on the interdependence of variables involved in the communication process and endeavors to avoid the dualistic extremes of abstract objectivism and individual subjectivism.

Interpretivists view communication as something that transcends the individual, and gives attention to the relationship between the individual and mediating terms that are present within the social situation. Allen (1985) states that an individual "creates and is created by society and social interaction. There must be shared meaning if communication is to exist" (p. 4).

The interpretive approach to communication research is based primarily upon the works of symbolic interactionists such as Mead (1934), Berger and Luckmann (1966), and Blumer (1967) who suggest that knowledge is rooted within individually and socially constituted symbolic structures. Nilan (1985) adds that, "This heritage emphasizes the creative aspects of individual human communication behavior" (p. 5). Communication meanings are thus created through the process of interpretation.

Interpretation is the meaning-creating activity of communication. Meanings are based upon individual responses to social situations (Delia, 1977b). An individual's communication behavior is seen as an interaction of prior experience and specific situations. Ball (1972) states that, "In order to understand [human] social conduct we must look to existential causality, that is to the meanings of situations and the situated meanings within them as they are phenomenologically experienced by

the actors located within them" (p. 62).

Interpretive communication is based upon the interplay of individual meaning making and the interpretive behavior of the individual within a situation. The goal of interpretive research is to provide an "explication of behavior in terms of the shared knowledge, the linguistic system, and the individual interpretive processes by which the perspective of the group or other is represented as part of each interactant's cognitive organization of the social event" (Delia, 1977b, p. 71). For interpretivists, "the best bet we have for knowing the world is the elaboration of a particular socially fabricated conceptual system giving coherence to experience and transforming observations into knowledge" (Delia, 1977b, p. 81).

The object of interpretation is to make clear or coherent the previously unclear or incoherent, which is based upon the assumption that communication itself is coherent. Bredo and Feinberg (1982) note that interpretation is a circular process:

The criterion for a correct interpretation is not just logical consistency with any particular fact but overall "rightness." Quine, for instance, suggests that knowledge may be thought of as like a spider web (or field) that must be anchored somewhere along some set of twigs (or boundary conditions) but whose overall configuration can vary. A successful web, like coherent knowledge, presumably has relatively low stresses--smaller inconsistencies--which are more or less evenly spread throughout. It is important to note here

that while knowledge--like the web-- is constructed, this does not mean that "anything goes." Rather, the knowledge is tested as vigorously as one may please Acknowledging that any account must utilize some larger pattern and requires interpretation in terms of this pattern is thus not to suggest that an interpretive approach is less rigorous than a positivistic one, but rather that a positivistic one must also involve interpretation if it is ever to be applied to practical circumstances (pp. 125-126).

Positivistic research has been criticized by the interpretive school as not lending itself to practical application because it is based upon a simplistic effects model of communication. The interpretive school, however, has been slow to fill this gap and respond to its own critique largely because of its reliance upon quantitative methods. The interpretive approach has, however, been applied by a growing number of researchers in the field of communication in an endeavor to incorporate "cognitive and interpretive behavior into their conceptual framework" (Nilan, 1985, p. 6).

Delia has been one of the primary researchers within the interpretivist tradition. Delia focuses on multidimensional notions of cognitive complexity. He has also added to our understanding of individual constructive behavior as embedded within social situations. According to Delia it is the:

Primary task for a constructivist theory of social communication . . . to provide an explication of behavior in terms of the shared knowledge, the

linguistic system, and the individual interpretive processes by which the perspective of the group or other is represented as part of each interactant's cognitive organization of the social event (Delia, 1977b, p. 71).

Dervin's Sense-Making model has provided another excellent alternative approach to the study of communication/information. The model addresses issues of complexity within the construction process. Dervin concurs with Delia in the importance of rooting communication behavior within specific situations. However, Dervin's emphasis is directed more toward individual construction and less toward structural concerns. In contrast to a strict interpretive approach which assumes that communication is coherent, Dervin views communication as coherent as the individual makes it coherent within specific communication situations.

Dervin has also been one of the few interpretive researchers to provide an appropriate and useful methodology for analyzing constructive/interpretive behavior (the time-line interview). The methodological rationale of Sense-Making is to capture the interpretive process. Although Sense-Making is still in its infancy, it has been applied to a wide variety of communication concerns and is worthy of further theoretical development (Atwood, 1980; Dervin 1979, 1980a, 1980b, 1982, 1983; Dervin & Fraser, 1985; Dervin, Harlock, Atwood, & Garzona, 1980; Dervin, Jacobson & Nilan,

1982; Dervin & Nilan, 1979; Dervin, Nilan & Jacobson, 1982a, 1982b; Nilan & Krenz, 1982; Nilan, 1985). Delia's approach to communication research is more truly interpretive, yet Dervin's Sense-Making will be the focus of this study due to the strength of its methodology and resulting utility.

Critique of the Interpretive Approach

Perhaps the greatest criticism leveled against the interpretive school of communication is that it focuses too narrowly upon the constructive behavior of the individual. Hence, interpretivism has been criticized as being too relativistic and does not provide a valid base upon which to generalize to larger populations. In other words, larger structural concerns have often been overlooked (Nilan, 1985).

What appears to be most needed at this point in the field of communication is a greater theoretical effort to blend concern for the individual construction of meaning with larger societal/cultural concerns (Bellah, 1970; Grandi, 1983; Kuhn, 1970). Although the interpretivists have done much to move the field along in this direction, perhaps a greater theoretical and methodological focus on intersubjectivity would be helpful.

General Purpose

Dervin has undoubtedly provided the most extensive and practical interpretive theory of communication/information with her Sense-Making model. As previously mentioned, however, Sense-Making focuses primarily upon the receiver in the communication process and individual processes of meaning construction as rooted in a specific situation. As a result, Sense-Making has failed to attend to larger social frameworks of meaning. It is this author's position that Sense-Making could be strengthened if it was grounded upon the deeper assumptions provided within both cognitive developmental and constructive developmental understandings of meaning construction.

It is the purpose of this thesis to examine Dervin's Sense-Making model of communication/information in light of Perry's (1970) work on the individual construction of meaning as related to levels of cognitive complexity. In addition, the thesis will examine Fowler's (1981) work on faith development and its emphasis on the collective construction of meaning.

Dervin's Sense-Making model, Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development, and Fowler's theory of faith development will each be discussed in depth in subsequent chapters. However, Perry and Fowler will now be examined briefly in terms of their compatibility with Sense-

Making and their utility in providing a deeper understanding about meaning construction from cognitive developmental and constructive developmental approaches.

Perry's Cognitive and Ethical Development

Dervin's Sense-Making model "focuses on how individuals use the observations of others as well as their own observations to construct their pictures of reality and use these pictures to guide behavior" (Dervin, 1983, p. 6). Hence, Sense-Making behavior is both internal/cognitive and external/procedural which allows us to construct or design movement through time and space.

Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development focuses on the internal/cognitive aspects of constructive behavior. Kegan (1982), writing about Perry in The Evolving Self, states:

Like the idea of construction, the idea of development liberates us from a static view of phenomena. As the idea of construction directs us to the activity that underlies and generates the form or thingness of a phenomenon, so the idea of development directs us to the origins and processes by which the form came to be and by which it will pass into a new form (p. 13).

Hence, Perry links the activity of meaning construction with development. Furthermore, cognition is viewed as construction. If communicative phenomena are meaningful (full of meaning) then we must learn how meanings are constructed, preserved, understood, revised, etc. According

to Dervin this occurs through the communication process. It is in this manner that the developmental works of Perry can aid us in understanding Dervin's notion of Sense-Making or meaning construction.

Perry (1970) notes that what an organism does is to organize, and what human organisms organize is meaning. This is not so much to say that persons make meanings, but that being a person is the activity of making meaning. Kegan (1982) says that we are the meaning-making context; "we literally make sense" (p. 11).

In Perry's developmental scheme, development is the result of interaction between a person's cognitive structure and experience. Thus, development involves fundamental, qualitative transformations of a person's cognitive structure. Each of Perry's stages of development requires a qualitatively different mode of thinking.

Perry's developmental approach views cognitive and ethical development as moving from a simplistic, categorical view of the world (where authority is external), toward realization of the contingent nature of knowledge, values, and commitments. Perry examines the interface of intellect, ways of understanding the world, the nature of knowledge, and the identity of the individual.

One of the most significant contributions that Perry's work could make to Dervin's Sense-Making model, is in the

link between a person's level of cognitive development and the researcher's ability to understand/interpret that person's communication. Delia (1977b) states:

Obviously, the mode of thought employed in understanding other people, their perspectives, and the social world will directly influence a person's competence in interaction. Since competence at interaction ultimately rests upon individual competencies in social perception and the control of language, variations in communication performance can be understood in terms of differences in the underlying competencies of interactants (p. 72).

As a result, if researchers were aware of a person's or group's level of cognitive development, they could assist practitioners in the development of messages that would be appropriate for that individual or group. Sense-Making would then be able to interpret individual structures of meaning with greater precision and utility.

Fowler's Stages of Faith and the Construction of Meaning

In addition to gaining a deeper view of the individual in the process of meaning construction, the previous discussion has also underscored the importance of attending to larger structures of meaning. James Fowler's theory of faith development attends to both individual and relational aspects of meaning construction. Although Fowler says that faith is not necessarily a religious matter, much of his research has been conducted with religious populations.

Fowler's Faith Development and the Construction of Meaning.

Rather than dealing with institutionalized religion per se, Fowler's work in faith development is based upon the notion that ultimately we all place faith in centers of meaning. Faith gives meaning to our experiences and cohesion to our lives. Furthermore, we construct meaning both individually and relationally in order to make sense of our lives. It is Fowler's presentation of the relational aspects of meaning constructive activity and his attention to ultimate context (world view) that are of particular importance to this thesis.

Faith, according to Fowler and his associates, is not necessarily a religious matter nor based upon doctrinal belief. Rather, it is a:

Way of leaning into life. It points to a way of making sense of one's existence. It denotes a way of giving order and coherence to the force-field of life. It speaks of the investment of life-grounding trust and life orienting commitment (Fowler, 1980, p. 134).

Hence, faith is seen as a universal phenomenon; a way of organizing the phenomenal world. Faith is valuing, committing and knowing (i.e., a constructive activity). This very broad view of faith is derived largely from biblical tradition as interpreted by Paul Tillich and Richard Niebuhr (i.e., a way of seeing the world).

Fowler's primary interest lies in how people develop in faith situations. Hegel once said in the preface of The Phenomenology of the Mind that, "The spirit is never at rest but always engaged in ever progressive motion, in giving itself a new form" (Kegan, 1982, p. 1). Fowler (1980) supports this notion stating that "composition and interpretation of meaning . . . are the inescapable burdens of our species" (p. 135). Dervin (1983) and Carter (1980) concur that it is the human mandate to make sense. Fowler views the development of cognition as the construction of operations of thought and valuing in accordance with our individual perceptions. Whether this process occurs consciously or unconsciously, it is the basis of faith.

Essentially, what Fowler is trying to bring together is how the experiences of individuals interact with the social environment, and then how the convergence of these two contexts of meaning further interact with the divine. Faith development is based upon the premise that as "human beings [we] necessarily engage in constructing frames of meaning for our lives, and we do this, with others, by making tacit and/or explicit commitments to value-and-power centers which promise to sustain our lives and meanings" (Fowler, 1980, p. 137).

Two of the most fundamental ways in which Dervin's Sense-Making could benefit from Fowler's theory of faith

development is in its notion of corporate cognition (i.e., we make sense in communities of faith), and its attention to ultimate context (those centers of value and power upon which we rely). Hence, reality is not something that exists only within the individual, but is something that we construct together based upon our individuality and common life as we interact with the divine. If this broader view of meaning was incorporated into the Sense-Making model it could lend greater understanding to the interpretation of Sense-Making data.

Summary

In order to summarize the theoretical approaches of Dervin, Perry, and Fowler to the construction of meaning, it might be helpful to identify these theories on a matrix similar to Figure 1 which illustrated paradigmatic schools within the social sciences on page 10 of this chapter (see Figure 2).

The functional school of communication (the dominant paradigm of the lower right quadrant) has fallen prey to much criticism from the alternative paradigms represented by the other quadrants. The questions raised by these alternative paradigms, however, often find their answers within the functional quadrant, largely due to their reliance upon quantitative methodologies.

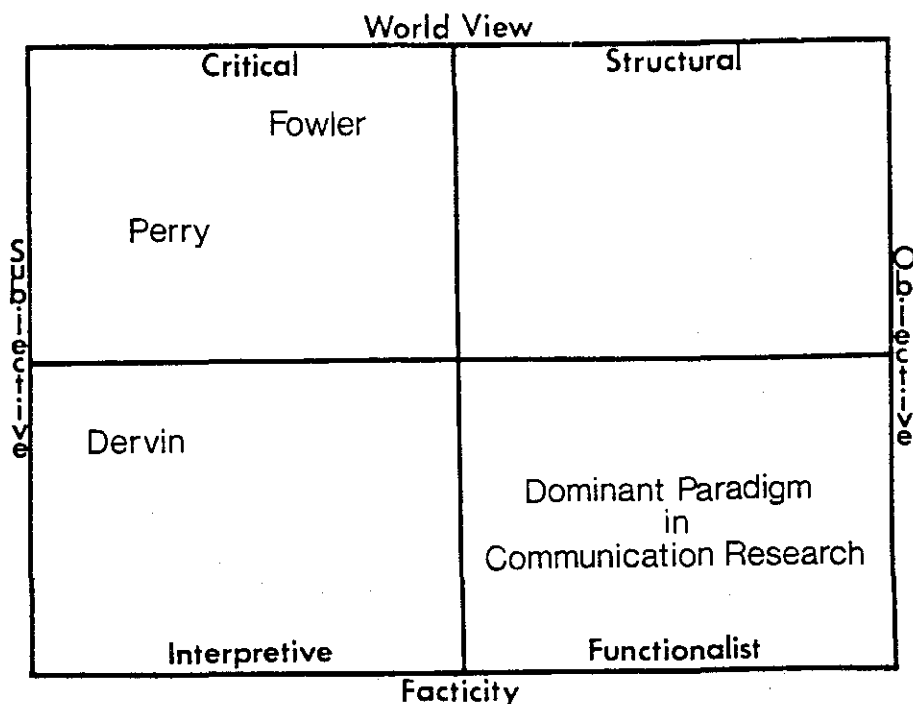


Figure 2. Where the theories of Dervin, Perry and Fowler fit into the paradigmatic matrix of communication.

The theories of Dervin, Perry, and Fowler all fall on the subjective side of the matrix, although they vary in the degree to which the construction of meaning is seen as the responsibility of the individual. Dervin and Perry emphasize individual construction processes; Fowler emphasizes both individual and social construction of meaning. Both Perry and Fowler attend to issues of the

ultimate and necessary (world view concerns) largely because of their attention to the symbolic. Dervin is drawn down toward the empirical/factual because of her quantitative/qualitative methodology (which is none the less one of Sense-Making's greatest strengths).

If Sense-Making incorporated pertinent theoretical implications from Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development, it might provide a more adequate and useful understanding of how individuals construct and use information/communication. As a balance to this deeper understanding of the individual, Fowler's theory of faith development could provide a corporate view of meaning construction. Hence, Sense-Making could be deepened and broadened in its approach to meaning construction.

Chapter One has presented the conceptual framework of this study as well as focusing on the problem. Chapter Two will provide an in depth examination of Dervin's Sense-Making model of communication. Chapter Three will focus on Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development emphasizing what it can contribute to Dervin's Sense-Making model of communication. Fowler's theory of faith development will be examined in Chapter Four, again in light of how it can strengthen Dervin's approach to communication/information with attention to how it also relates to Perry's work. The final chapter of this thesis, Chapter Five,

will provide an integration of Dervin's, Perry's, and
Fowler's theories as well as suggestions for future research.

Chapter II

Sense-Making: An Interpretivist Approach to Communication/Information

Although this thesis is interdisciplinary in approach, Dervin's theory of Sense-Making is its focal concern, and will, therefore, be examined in depth in this chapter. Chapter Two will examine: (1) an introduction to Sense-Making theory, (2) the theoretical roots of Sense-Making as well as its view of the construction of meaning, (3) a description of the major tenets of the theory and the primary methodology that has been utilized to gather Sense-Making data, (4) how Sense-Making research has been applied to communication problems, and finally (5) an evaluation and summary of Sense-Making.

Introduction

Information has been a central concern of the study of communication from as early as the persuasion period of the field. Schramm (1973) says that information is the stuff of communication and that communication is the ability to process information and share it with others. According to Carter, upon whose work Dervin has based her Sense-Making model, it is the "human mandate to construct ideas to bridge gaps as a means of dealing with ever-present discontinuities

in reality" (Dervin, 1983, p. 4).

Many definitions of information view it as something that exists outside of the individual and can be transferred from person to person. This traditional approach to the study of information has been based upon the following three assumptions: (1) information exists outside of the individual, (2) information can potentially provide complete descriptions of reality, and (3) information is measurable on single quantitative, unidimensional scales. The problem with many of these traditional information studies has been that there is a discrepancy between what "sources think they have transmitted informationally and what receivers get" (Dervin, Nilan & Jacobson, 1982b, p. 807). Dervin (1976) says that these are the very assumptions that are the basis of positivistic science; the idea that "the world is discoverable, describable and predictable . . ." (p. 327).

Dervin (1983) has posited an alternative approach to the study of information which is markedly divergent from traditional studies in the following ways: (1) information is viewed as something that can provide only incomplete descriptions of reality, (2) information exists to a significant degree within the individual, and (3) information is measurable in terms of multidimensional qualities. Information, therefore, exists only as the individual constructs it (makes sense) from human

experience; humans are constructors of information rather than receivers of it. In essence, information is defined as anything that enables individuals to answer their questions--the things they want to understand and make sense of as they move through situations (Dervin, Nilan & Martin, 1984). Dervin summarizes this alternative approach to information as follows:

Information is essentially seen as a tool that is valuable and useful to people in their attempts to cope with their lives. Information is seen as something that reduces uncertainty. As the individual moves through . . . the time-space continuum that makes up life . . . it is assumed that information can both describe and predict that reality and thus allow the individual to move more effectively (Dervin, 1977, p. 18).

As previously mentioned, many information studies have focused on the prediction of behavior. These studies have been constrained by a narrow concern with the types of information people are exposed to and how much content they receive. Dervin and her colleagues suggest that communication scientists have been able to predict very little. In addition, what these scientists have been able to predict are those things that are least interesting and useful (e.g., patterns of general media use, but not what someone thinks about an issue). According to Dervin, information should be viewed as a product of human observing. Dervin further asserts that a situational view (interpretivist) of information is more powerful in

predicting behavior than the traditional non-situational view. Essentially, we need to look at message using as well as message making, and Dervin's Sense-Making provides a new theoretical approach with which to do this.

The Theoretical Roots of Sense-Making and
its Approach to the Construction of Meaning

The paradigmatic and theoretical roots of Sense-Making were discussed in Chapter One. To summarize that discussion, Sense-Making is based upon a blend of works by a variety of theorists: works on cognition by Piaget and Bruner; works by communication researchers in critical theory such as Ashcroft, Beltran, and Rolings; philosophical works by Bronowski, Kuhn, and Habermas; and those few communication theorists who take a situational/interpretivist approach to communication behavior such as Delia, Carter, Atwood, Nilan, and Watzlavick. Sense-Making is based upon the premises of the symbolic interactionists, and as such emphasizes the self in the creative aspects of communication behavior. On a social level, Sense-Making is concerned with how individuals manipulate symbols to construct shared reality. Within the larger framework of interpretivism, Grossberg (1982) explained:

The individual is neither an isolated consciousness nor merely an actor within a context of interactions. It is an organism constantly related and oriented to its environment and hence, it is the locus of

particular interpretive processes by which that orientation is accomplished. Meanings are not located within some privileged domain of consciousness but are toward which the individual is oriented Thus "reality" is constituted in a continuous process of interpretation by which the individual makes sense of and acts in the world (p. 83).

Also central to Sense-Making is the notion that the individual constructs sense within specific situations, and is also dependent upon the perceptions of other individuals within those situations (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Goffman, 1974; Mead, 1934). Thus, situation is one of the major tenets of Sense-Making.

Sense-Making: Tenets, Model and Methodology

Major Tenets of Sense-Making

As a reaction to a focus on predictive communication that has looked at impacts wanted by sources of messages, Dervin and her colleagues have developed the Sense-Making approach to the study of information/communication. Sense-Making "focuses on how individuals use the observations of others as well as their own observations to construct their pictures of reality and use these pictures to guide behavior" (Dervin, 1983, p. 6). Sense-Making allows communication practitioners to be able to predict how people will use information. It shows where a system being studied is not meeting sense-making needs. Sense-Making also provides an index of kinds of questions users of systems

have as they move through these systems, and where they get answers to their questions in specific situations. It also allows the researcher to understand how individuals see themselves moving through time and space.

In its broadest form, Sense-Making is defined as behavior (both internal/cognitive and external/procedural) which allows us to construct or design movement through time and space. Thus, Sense-Making behavior is communication behavior. Reality is seen as being incomplete and filled with gaps (discontinuities) and as something that is constantly changing. Hence, information exists only as a product of human observing. Dervin, Jacobson, and Nilan (1981) noted that, "At root, the gap condition is seen as arising from the fact that all things are not connected and that things are constantly changing" (p. 7). Therefore, information seeking and use are adaptive activities that humans do to make sense in the presence of incomplete constructions of reality. Our personal notions of time and space are an individually created, constructive process. Hence Dervin points to the need for multidimensional scales of measurement which seek to reveal similarities of pattern in internal/cognitive structures and situations rather than similarities in content.

The Sense-Making Model

The Sense-Making model focuses on three variables-- situations, gaps and uses. Thus, the unit of analysis in Sense-Making studies is usually smaller than the person (i.e. situations, gaps, or uses). "Situations" are those time and space contexts at which sense is constructed. "Gaps" are seen as questions or discontinuities needing answers as a person constructs sense while moving through time and space. "Uses" are the purposes to which a person puts newly made sense (usually information helps or hurts).

Situation

Dervin's approach places a strong emphasis upon the communication situation. Traditional, positivistic research has been criticized for neglecting to examine the communication situation. In addition, positivistic research has relied upon external structural variables rather than individual constructor variables that exist within specific situations. So, of the three variables that Dervin utilizes in Sense-Making studies, situation is perhaps the most essential. It can, however, be difficult to select appropriate measures of situational variables. Dervin's solution to this problem can be summarized as follows:

The enigma, of course, is that each situation is seen by each participant uniquely. The research

problem becomes how to tap this uniqueness in a way that allows it to be dealt with and, yet, at the same time, does not revert back to nonsituational, absolutist assumptions. The task is one of tapping variable classes . . . in such a way that the resulting measure can be seen as existing in all situations while at the same time tapping the very elements of uniqueness in specific situations (Dervin et al., 1980, p. 00).

Carter (1980) suggests that what is common to all situations is movement through time and space. Dervin concurs with this notion saying that, "Since life is inherently unmanageable, available sense frequently runs out and the individual must ask questions and seek answers in order to design the next movement" (Dervin & Voigt, 1980, p. 103). Hence, we see the need for gap-bridging (i.e., individuals will endeavor to inform themselves when old sense has run out).

Situation has been measured in the Sense-Making framework in a variety of ways. The situational measures that have been used to date are as follows:

- Situation Movement State
- Situation Clarity
- Situation Embeddedness
- Social Embeddedness
- Situation Importance
- Past Experience
- Ability to Deal with Situation
- Power to Change Situation
- Openness to Communication in Situation
- Status in Situation
- Distance into Situation (Dervin, 1983, p. 15).

Appendix A includes brief definitions of each of these situational variables. Of the situational measures

that have been used to date, the most powerful is what Dervin calls "situation movement state." Situation movement state focuses on how the respondent sees himself/herself being blocked in movement through time and space. Situation movement state examines actual life situations as experienced and perceived by individuals rather than hypothetical situations concocted by researchers. One basic assumption about situation movement state is that as movement is blocked it gives rise to question asking behavior. (See Appendix B for specific categories of measurement for situation movement state.) Situation movement state has been measured in three ways: (1) through closed-ended scales, (2) content analytic procedures, or (3) having the respondent code his/her own situation movement state according to a definitive criterion.

Gaps

Gap behavior is generally measured by looking at five different categories of questions based within a situational context: (1) questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how; (2) past, present, or future time; (3) valences such as good, bad, or neutral roads; (4) entities such as objects, self, other, process, and situation; and (5) means of movement from past to present or future situations (Dervin, 1983, p. 16). The gaps variable also examines what

kinds of questions are least often and most often seen as being answered, what barriers are seen to getting answers, and how answers are judged as good or bad.

Additional gap-related measures have attempted to measure the nature of information seeking and success for different kinds of questions. Some of these additional measures are as follows:

- Ease of Answering
- Reasons for Ease of Answering Difficulty
- Question Connectedness
- Nature of Question Connectedness
- Who would Ask
- Importance of Answering
- Reasons for Importance of Answering
- Asking Out Loud or Silently
- Reasons for Not Asking Out Loud
- Answering Success
- Reasons for Lack of Answering Success
- Answer Completeness
- Reasons for Completeness/Partialness
- Answer Sources
- Gap-Bridging Strategies (Dervin, 1983, pp. 16-17).

This set of gap related measures has seldom been used in its entirety, but they have proven powerful in answering questions such as, "What kinds of questions are least likely to be seen as answered? What barriers do people see to getting answers? What are the bases people use for judging answers as good in different situations?" (Dervin, 1983, p. 17). (See Appendix C for more detailed information on gap measures/categories.)

Uses

The uses variable usually focuses on two measures: helps and hurts. Both helps and hurts are seen as uses people make of information. Helps are things that aid movement through time and space. Hurts are things that block movement through time and space. Content analytic procedures have primarily been used in coding "how it [information] facilitates (or blocks) a persons picture-making (seen as required for movement), movement, and gaining of desired ends" (Dervin, 1983, p. 17). As with the gap measure, the entire list of categories for measuring helps and hurts is seldom used in one study. Some of the categories that have been used for measuring helps and hurts are as follows:

- Got Pictures, Ideas, Understanding
- Able to Plan
- Got Skills
- Got Started, Got Motivated
- Kept Going
- Got Control
- Things Got Calmer, Easier
- Got Out of a Bad Situation
- Reached a Goal, Accomplished Things
- Went on to Other Things
- Avoided a Bad Situation
- Took Mind Off Things
- Relaxed, Rested
- Got Pleasure
- Got Support, Reassurance, Confirmation
- Got Connected to Others (Dervin, 1983, p. 17).

In some recent studies, helps and hurts have been measured on closed-ended scales in which the respondents judged the extent to which they saw themselves being helped or hurt.

(See Appendix D for more information on helps/hurts measures.)

As a methodology, Sense-Making is both quantitative and qualitative. Dervin describes Sense-Making as humanistic, dynamic, relativistic, contextually-bound, constructivistic, and wholistic, and yet as a methodology that is clearly based in concepts and methods that are quantitative and analytic.

The Micro-Moment Time-Line Interview

The primary methodology that has been utilized for measurement in Sense-Making studies is the micro-moment time-line interview. It is a very flexible instrument that allows respondents to define time/space and information seeking/use for themselves. The micro-moment time-line interview allows the respondent to describe each time/space moment which they saw themselves moving through in a specific situation. The respondent is free to select the moments that they see comprising that situation, their order, and how they are connected to other time/space movements within the situation. Gaps are operationalized as questions within this methodology. Although these interviews are highly structured, they are virtually as content free as possible; the interviewer provides the structure and the respondent provides the content.

Although the micro-moment time-line interview is a rather lengthy process, it has yielded rich data and has been applied across a wide variety of communication situations. (See Appendix E for an example of the time-line interview used in obtaining data for Dervin's 1982 cancer study).

Application of Sense-Making Research

Sense-Making studies to date have focused on information use or seeking behavior, although Dervin and her colleagues believe that it may also be applied to other areas of study. Some of the studies that have been conducted using the Sense-Making methodology have dealt with the information needs of blood donors (Dervin, Nilan & Jacobson, 1982a), information needs of cancer patients (Dervin, Nilan, & Krenz, 1982), the California Information Needs study which examined situation versus race as a predictor for information seeking/use (Atwood & Dervin, 1982), healthcare information needs of Southeast Asian refugees (Jacobson, 1983), and how Californians use libraries (Dervin & Fraser, 1985). Dervin et al. (1984) comment on the widespread application of Sense-Making as follows:

Sense-Making has also been used successfully with a wide variety of respondents from 5-year-old children to elderly adults, general population and low-income adult samples, respondents with developmental disabilities, and managers of large organizational departments (p. 4).

The Sense-Making approach has primarily been used in situations where individuals have needed to make new sense out of their situations. In addition, the Sense-Making approach has been used when sources have been interested in being more useful to the communication needs of individuals.

Summary and Evaluation of the Sense-Making Approach

Summary

In summary, Sense-Making "focuses on how individuals use the observations of others as well as their own observations to construct their pictures of reality and use these pictures to guide behavior" (Dervin, 1983, p. 6). Sense-Making is a situational approach to the study of information using/constructing behavior which focuses on three conditions: situations, gaps and uses. The primary methodology that has been used in Sense-Making studies is the time-line interview (a series of quantitative/qualitative measures). Sense-Making has been applied to a broad range of research endeavors with a diverse range of populations.

Evaluation

As an interpretive theory of communication, Sense-Making has received many of the same criticisms leveled

against interpretivism. Among these criticisms are: (1) being too relativistic to support useful generalizations, and (2) that in stressing individual constructive processes Sense-Making tends to overlook larger structural concerns.

The first complaint against the interpretive school is pertinent to Sense-Making in that Sense-Making lacks depth in dealing with individual cognitive/developmental concerns that could aid practitioners in constructing more useful messages. Furthermore, the emphasis that Sense-Making places on individual construction processes tends to polarize it from broader, structural concerns (such as race, levels of education, economic indicators, etc.).

The lack of attention the interpretive school has given to structural concerns is the second major criticism that has been leveled against the interpretivists. Dervin seems to have substantiated this complaint in saying that communication is limited in its ability to change structural inequities (i.e., the structures/systems themselves, such as race, economic levels, etc.). Perhaps Dervin takes a more Weberian line in this, indicating that structures are ultimately political. Dervin's inattention to structural concerns is curious in that situational concerns are so important to Sense-Making. How can situation be examined thoroughly without attending to structure? Nilan (1985) endeavored to address this

problem and found that if structural concerns were combined with a situational perspective the result was greater power for predicting information seeking behavior.

In addition to the criticisms leveled against interpretivism in general, its focus on situation has also posed some problems. It has been argued that this focus on situation weakens the researcher's ability to generalize findings to other situations. Dervin, however, has attempted to rectify this problem by focusing on situational variables that are common to a wide variety of time and space concerns (e.g., homophily/heterophily, chronological or non-chronological perception of time, and of course gaps and uses). Several Sense-Making studies (Dervin & Fraser, 1985; Dervin, Nilan & Jacobson, 1982) have examined how people make decisions in particular types of situations, focusing on variables such as homophily or heterophily, concepts of time (linear, circular, random, etc.). None, however, have examined cognitive developmental factors involved in Sense-Making.

One final evaluative consideration of Sense-Making deals with its quantitative/qualitative methodology which has a number of strengths and weaknesses. As a multidimensional measure, the micro-moment time-line interview has gone a long way toward meeting interpretive needs for the quantification of qualitative data. The

quantification of individual behavior is something that symbolic interactionism has failed to achieve in the past, and Sense-Making fills an important need in this regard. One resulting weakness, however, is that the quantification of sense-making behavior tends to pull Sense-Making even further down the paradigmatic matrix toward the factual grounds of positivism (see Figure 2, p. 24). As a result, we see a need for Sense-Making to be able to deepen its concern for the individual while broadening its focus to attend to larger structural concerns. William Perry's cognitive and ethical approach to development will be examined in the next chapter in order to provide this deeper understanding of the individual in the communication process.

Chapter III

Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Development: A Constructive Developmental Theory and What it can Contribute to Sense-Making

Chapter Three will explore what Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development can provide toward establishing a deeper view of the individual and the process of meaning construction. The information needs and uses of the individual will also be examined through a developmental approach to understanding communication. The following concerns will be addressed in this chapter: (1) a discussion of the theoretical roots of Perry's theory, (2) an examination of his approach to the construction of meaning, (3) a description of his theory, (4) methodological considerations, and (5) a summary of pertinent findings and how they can be applied to Dervin's Sense-Making.

Introduction

In Dervin's theory of Sense-Making, the construction of meaning is a combination of cognitive/internal and procedural/external operations that allows us to design movement through time and space. Although Dervin's emphasis has been on the individual as a constructor of meaning, little attention has been given to individual developmental issues regarding cognitive/internal operations. In order to

better identify and meet the information needs of individuals, it would be helpful to know how people construct their pictures of reality and how these pictures guide their behavior.

William Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development provides a useful framework for understanding the cognitive/internal aspects of constructive behavior. Perry links the activity of meaning construction with the notion of development (i.e., cognition is construction). Furthermore, Dervin notes that meanings are constructed through the communication process. How can communication practitioners better meet the information needs of individuals? Perhaps Sense-Making could gain a more accurate and strategically useful view of the individual if it were to attend to the cognitive developmental concerns that Perry's theory explicates.

The Theoretical Roots of Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Development

Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development stems largely from the developmental theories of Piaget. The primary Piagetian concepts that Perry builds upon are horizontal and vertical decalage, decentration, assimilation and accommodation. Whereas Piaget focused primarily on the cognitive operations and development of children, Perry has focused on the cognitive operations and

development of adults via an extension and elaboration of Piaget's work. Dervin's view of the individual as the constructor of meaning is also based largely upon the works of Piaget.

In Perry's research, development is viewed as something that occurs at an irregular rate. Development is the combination of having mastered the tasks of a stage and readiness for new challenge which results in growth. Perry utilizes the Piagetian concept of horizontal decalage to describe growth which occurs within a stage. Horizontal decalage is the notion that each developmental stage contains a wide range of content areas (i.e., movement is not only vertical between stages, but also horizontal within stages). Commenting on the relatively content-free nature of his scheme, Perry (1970) stated:

A person will use a variety of forms of constructing different areas of his experience at any given time. However, we made the assumption . . . that within this variety it is possible to identify a dominant form . . . in which a person addresses knowing, valuing, and responsibility (p. 3).

Piaget's concept of decentration (the ability to generalize from the self to the other--abstraction), is also central to Perry's work. In other words, the degree to which a person can move beyond the self and take the perspective of others can be indicative of a person's level of cognitive and ethical development. Consider, for

instance, the following interview data from Perry's (1970) study on cognitive and ethical development in the college years:

Well, I can't say much except a complete ah, relativistic outlook on everything. I used to be a very militant agnostic in high school, and though I'm no longer militant, I'm . . . still an agnostic. I don't do the debating with anybody any more, probably because I've come to the conclusion that in many respects the other side is quite worthw[h]ile for a great many people . . . and even for me perhaps thirty years from now (p. 179).

This ability to take the perspective of the other--to endeavor to understand that person's view of the world--is decentering, and people vary in their ability to do this.

Finally, Perry builds upon the Piagetian notions of assimilation and accommodation in the individual meaning construction process, which will be examined in the subsequent section on the construction of meaning.

The Individual and the Process of the Construction of Meaning

In discussing the generation of meaning, Perry (1970) says that:

People tend to "make sense," that is, to interpret experience meaningfully. The "meaning" of experience consists of some sort of orderliness found in it, and the nature of this orderliness in a given person's experience can often be deduced by others from the forms of his behavior, including, especially, what he himself has to say on the matter (pp. 41-42).

Perry further states that the making of meaning is the interaction of forms of thought from two pools: (1) the pool of thought forms that are unique to the individual, and (2) the pool of thought forms that are external to the individual and may be perceived in the environment. The work of making sense, then, is the interaction of these thought forms. Assimilation is the process of taking in new information from the environment and fitting it into existing cognitive structures. Accommodation is the process of making new structures within which to place new information that cannot be assimilated into previously existing structures. Piaget's notions of assimilation and accommodation are expressed by Perry as the developmental urge to progress and yet to hold on to some of that which is familiar and comfortable. Hence, Perry's approach to the construction of meaning is also heavily Piagetian.

A Description of Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Development

After discussing the stage-nature of Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development, a variety of types of developmental deflection will be examined. Finally, we will explore the question, "How does development occur?"

Levels of Cognitive and Ethical Development

Perry's theory is a stage theory in the Piagetian tradition, although he prefers to delineate positions of development rather than stages (again, reflecting horizontal decalage). A position "represents a relatively stable pattern, or structure, of thought processes, assumptions, or expectations of a person at a particular time" (Perry, 1970, p. 1). These positions are sequential, hierarchical, and invariant. One position is not necessarily valued as better than another. Development is viewed as movement along a hierarchy marked by periods of transition or instability, toward periods of greater differentiation or complexity. Hence, growth is generally preferable to arrest or regression. Equilibrium is maintained within a stage as long as new information from the environment can be assimilated into existing structures of knowing. Development occurs when new information cannot be assimilated, and a new structure of knowing must be generated to accommodate this information.

What is it that causes a person to grow or develop? According to Perry, disruptions serve to motivate us toward growth. He says that humans have "an urge to make order out of incongruities, dissonances, and anomalies of experience" (Perry, 1970, p. 51). Other motivating factors, according to Perry, are the drive for maturity (whatever the culture

defines as being mature), curiosity, striving for competence, the desire for authenticity in relationships, and the development of identity. Again, development is seen as the result of opposing vectors: the urge to progress and the urge to maintain a sense of continuity.

Like Piaget, Perry's work is based upon extensive interviewing and observation. During the late 1950s and early 1960s Perry and his associates interviewed 400 Harvard and Radcliffe undergraduates with a highly unstructured interview protocol. The data revealed "a progression of forms in which a person construes his experience' and 'makes meaning in successive confrontations with diversity'" (Perry, 1970, p. 3). Like Dervin, structures or forms of knowing were the focus of Perry's data analysis rather than actual content. Perry's structural positions explain the evolution of students' beliefs about the nature of knowledge, truth, fact, and the role of authorities in defining and conveying knowledge. Movement among these positions is from concrete/simplistic thought to abstract/complex thought; from absolute belief systems to relativistic belief systems; and from an external locus of control to an internal locus of control.

Based upon the structural patterns that emerged from Perry's data, he constructed a nine position scheme tracing the evolution of thinking about the nature of knowledge,

truth, values, responsibilities, and the meaning of life.

(See Appendix F for complete chart of Perry positions.)

These nine positions can be collapsed into four major, and sometimes overlapping, divisions: dualism (positions 1 and 2), multiplicity (positions 3 and 4), contextual relativism (position 5), and commitment within relativism (positions 6 - 9) (Moore, 1982).

In Moore's (1982) discussion about Perry levels, dualistic thinking (positions 1 and 2) reflects the idea that doing and being are inevitably connected (i.e., if I do that which is right I will be right). Dualism also holds that all knowledge is known and that authority has the right answers simply because they are authority, rather than by virtue of expertise. To the dualistic thinker, "There are clear and absolute rights and wrongs, and hence no real possibility for interpretation; the focus is on facts and what to learn" (Moore, 1982, p. 4). From a position 2 perspective, other ways of seeing or expressing things are not seen as being legitimate (the good authority/bad authority dialectic). Although "facts can be marshalled and used, [they] are usually not related to one's life" (Moore, 1982, p. 4). For instance, one of the greatest problems that health educators have with teaching teenagers about contraception is that they fail to make the necessary link between knowledge and behavior.

The transition from dualism and multiplicity, positions 3 and 4, often occurs when two good authorities disagree, and hence a new way of viewing the world must be accommodated--that there are multiple ways of viewing the world that could be legitimate. Moore (1982) states that, "This world, instead of being divided into two boxes, right and wrong, is now divided into three: 'right,' 'wrong,' and 'not yet known'" (p. 4). A new emphasis is placed upon finding the way to reach right answers. When moving into position 4 it becomes more important to be able to apply appropriate criteria to decisions/questions (e.g., supportive evidence). A certain feeling that "nobody knows for sure" begins to pervade much of the position 4 person's perspective. This begins to yield to a sense of "anything goes" that often results in confusion. As an individual moves along the developmental scheme, "The right way/s to learn in position 3 become the right way/s to think in position 4" (Moore, 1982, p. 5). Emphasis is placed on the importance of independent thought. In many ways position 4 is a cognitive reflection of position 2; "instead of two boxes of 'rights' and 'wrongs,' there are two boxes of 'rights/wrongs' and 'who knows?'" (Moore, 1982, p. 6).

Position 4 represents the watershed from cognitive to ethical development in Perry's scheme, because people cannot begin to make ethical decisions until they become aware of

the contingent nature of knowledge. Most adults never develop beyond position 4. Perhaps this is because few adults are willing to risk the disequilibrium associated with dealing with the uncertainties of Perry's later positions of development. All positions through level 4 are marked by the extension (accommodation) of old dualistic structures to varying degrees. Position 5, however, is marked by the development of new, relativistic structures of thinking. Just as positions 1 through 4 are based upon forms of dualism, positions 5 through 9 are based upon structures of relativism. Position 4 is certainly the most crucial, lengthy, and complicated of Perry's positions.

The transition from position 4 to position 5 involves increasing diversity and multiplicity. A new sensitivity to contextual constraints is also involved in this transition. People begin to look for a way to think--for rules of adequacy for the situation or context at hand. This is what Perry calls contextual relativism (position 5) and is marked by a "cognitive flip" where dualistic modes of understanding the world become isolated incidences. People begin to see themselves as legitimate makers of meaning (a definite move from the locus of authority being external toward a more internal locus of control) instead of passive receivers of knowledge. The contextually relativistic thinker is

comfortable with subjecting his/her opinions to empirical testing. The confusion of position 5 now becomes invigorating, "We become judgers in structuring the chaos through: (1) rules of adequacy, (2) expertise, and (3) the self. However, it becomes increasingly and uncomfortably clear that not only must we judge, we must also choose" (Moore, 1982, p. 9). It becomes apparent at this point that we make meaning through choosing.

Commitment within relativism (positions 6 through 9) focuses largely on the choices that we make in our relativistic world. Perry's choice of the phrase "commitment in relativism" appears to generate inaccurate connotations for many people. The words "commitment" and "relativism" tend to be contradictory. What Perry seems to have had in mind is almost a broader form of dualism. It is a realization that there are many other valid approaches to understanding the world, but I have chosen to commit myself to certain values and beliefs. Perhaps "commitment in pluralism" would more effectively convey Perry's intended definition of this level of development. These choices are embedded in specific situational contexts. "Reason, rules of adequacy, and qualitative supportive evidence are not sufficient," (Moore, 1982, p. 9) and the need for commitment begins to be realized. Moore (1982), speaking about commitment in relativism, stated:

Through this search for synthesis and the responsibility of experiencing both positive and negative consequences of these Commitments, we seek to find ways to make sense of our lives, and in doing so we provide a means for "recycling" through the earlier positions along the scheme (p. 10).

Thus, Perry's model could be depicted as spiraling growth throughout adulthood.

Types of Developmental Deflection

In addition to the nine positions that Perry and his associates have developed, they have also observed three alternatives to growth that tend to occur at various points during development: retreat, escape and temporizing.

Retreat occurs when a person who is at a more advanced position moves back to the dualistic structures of positions 2 or 3. For instance, growth can be pictured as being wavelike. An individual might explore the implications of a new position and yet find that he/she is unable to meet the challenges it presents. The resulting movement is often retreat to an earlier and "safer" position. "Playing it safe," however, is often just temporary and the person moves forward again when they have enough support to meet the challenges that face them.

Escape can occur during the transition from position 4 to position 5 (the watershed from cognitive to ethical development) through passive or opportunistic alienation (a sort of "time-out"). There is a sense in

which a person no longer actively participates in or chooses to avoid the challenges that might encourage their growth. Escape differs from retreat in that its occurrence is limited to the transition from position 4 to position 5, whereas retreat can occur at later positions as well.

Finally, temporizing is when a person delays in some position for a lengthy period of time, hesitating movement to the next position. This often occurs when a person has neither enough support or enough challenge to move them along the developmental scheme. Consider, for instance, the recent college graduate who chooses to tour Europe for awhile before making a commitment to start a new challenge (like law school).

Kurfiss (1981) has found when using the Perry scheme that most learners regress "to earlier stages of development when entering new environments, assuming new roles and responsibilities, or encountering increased or differing challenges to their self-image or sense of self-esteem" (p. 2). This regression is often temporary, adaptive, and situationally specific. Knefelkamp (1980), another researcher who has done much to advance the Perry scheme, calls this "functional regression."

Development Along the Perry Scheme

How do people move along Perry's developmental scheme? Perry borrows heavily from Sanford (1962) in his belief that there must be a delicate balance between the amount of challenge and the amount of support a person experiences in order to encourage development. In other words, challenging events must occur in an atmosphere of personal caring and support. This type of environment provides maximum opportunity for growth. Knefelkamp, Barna, and Haws (1979) stress the necessity of utilizing a person's strengths as a boon to support in challenging situations. Kohlberg calls this the "+ 1 principle"--stretching the learner one step (not more) beyond his/her own developmental position (i.e., creating a functional type of disequilibrium). Perry further points out the importance of this concept by underscoring the role of the community (student community in his research) to provide support during challenging situations. Perry's original research:

Makes salient the courage required of the student in each step in his development. This demand upon courage implies a reciprocal obligation for the educational community: to recognize the student in his courage and to confirm the membership he achieves as he assumes the risks of each forward movement. This is a creative obligation: to find new ways to encourage. At each step the student senses his option of taking up new responsibilities or of pulling out in retreat or alienation. He must make the decision himself, but if he feels not only alone, but alone in the experience of aloneness, he can draw his only strength from his

past--if he has had a good past (Perry, 1970, p. 215).

Hence, the amount of support and challenge that is present within the community in which a person is involved has a great impact upon how that person will construct meaning as well as the vectors of their development.

Methodological Consideration

This section will focus on the following three concerns: (1) Perry's interviewing protocol and the college populations that he drew his samples from, (2) how Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development has been applied in a variety of research settings, and (3) limitations to Perry's research.

Perry's Interviewing Protocol and Sample Populations

The interviewing protocol that Perry used in obtaining his data is highly qualitative. Generally speaking, his protocol is concerned with meaning-making (ways of knowing). Perry's protocol was highly unstructured. Essentially, he collected data on college students throughout their college years via annual repeated measures which asked students to tell the interviewer what "stood out" for them during the last year of college. Although the first moments of such a highly unstructured situation were initially awkward, the interviews usually yielded two to three hours of

conversational data. Again, Perry was looking for the emergence of patterns of structure from the data rather than actual content.

King (1978) stated that until 1978, eight different procedures had been used in obtaining data for Perry stages. Although the data from the various procedures was supportive of Perry's scheme, Perry's original protocol yielded the most reliable results. No work has been done to check the interface of the various measures that have been used, and no replication of Perry's original research has been completed to date (although there are reportedly several studies in progress). A number of supportive validation studies have been conducted (Clinchy, 1975; Knefelkamp, 1981; Knefelkamp & Cornfeld 1977, 1978; Mentowski, 1981; Perry, 1981; Slepitza, 1982).

Research Applications of Perry's Theory

Perry's developmental scheme has been applied to quite a number of specific content areas. Most prominent among these areas of study has been the application of Perry's developmental findings for classroom instruction (Knefelkamp 1974, 1981; Kurfiss, 1982; Widick 1975; Widick, Knefelkamp & Parker 1975; and others). This particular area of research appears to have the most potential application for this thesis. Developmental instruction focuses on trying to find

a match between the learning environment and the needs of the students (indicated by cognitive/ethical position), with the goal of growth in mind. In order to design this type of learning situation, one must first assess student needs and then design an environment that provides enough support and enough challenge to encourage growth. According to Moore (1982), the following four variables become pivotal in this type of assessment:

- (1) The degree of structure in the learning environment;
- (2) The degree of diversity in the learning tasks (both in terms of quantity and complexity);
- (3) The type of experiential learning that is appropriate given the structure and the tasks (from concrete to vicarious);
- (4) The amount of personalism in the learning environment (p. 20).

Another particularly pertinent study in which Perry's scheme was applied examined the religious development of students attending a private secular college as compared to that of students attending a private religious college (Meyer 1977). Although type of institution was the independent variable in this study, Meyer was also concerned with the effect that content (in this case religious content) might have upon position of development. Meyer indicated in his conclusion that although the developmental vectors of college students varied little by type of

institution, there could be variation across content areas discussed. Meyer's study focused only upon religious content, but it would be helpful to be able to compare this to other types of conversational content. This question, unfortunately, was not pursued in Meyer's study. Hence, until this is examined, we are left with Perry's assertion that his scheme is relatively non-content specific.

Additional areas in which the Perry scheme has proven heuristic are as follows: academic advising (Chickering 1976, Hillman and Lewis 1981), career development (Slepitzka and Knefelkamp 1976), and the design and evaluation of instruction and curriculum (Knefelkamp, 1974, 1981, 1982; Parker and Lawson, 1978; Widick, 1975; and others).

Theoretical Limitations

One limitation of Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development is that it is based solely upon college populations and has not yet been applied to other more diverse populations. There is nothing in the literature that suggests that such extended application is inappropriate, but rather it appears that Perry's scheme has been such a powerful tool for the educational community that most of its application has been focused there.

A second possible limitation is whether Perry's scheme is truly as content-free as he ascertains. (See previous

discussion of 1977 Meyer study in the previous section.)

Summary and Application to Sense-Making

This final section of Chapter Three will provide a brief summary of Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development as well as endeavoring to apply some of the principles of Perry's theory to Sense-Making data and concerns.

Summary of Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Development

In summary, Perry says that what an organism does is to organize, and what human organisms organize is meaning. This is not so much to say that persons make meanings, but that being a person is the activity of making meaning. Kegan (1982) says that, according to Perry, we are the meaning-making context; "we literally make sense" (p. 11). Perry's scheme views cognitive and ethical development as moving from a simplistic, categorical view of the world (where authority is external), toward realization of the contingent nature of knowledge, values, and commitments. Perry examines the interface of intellect, ways of understanding the world, the nature of knowledge, and the identity of the individual.

Application of Perry's Developmental Scheme to
Dervin's Sense-Making

Due to the many similarities between Dervin's Sense-Making and Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development, it appears that the two theories could work together with a great degree of complementarity. Their common roots in Piagetian theory, their similar views of individual in the process of the construction of meaning, their reliance upon qualitatively based methodologies, and their interest in the structures that emerge from this qualitative data are just a few of their similarities. There are, however, a number of apparent contradictions which should also be discussed.

No doubt numerous empirical studies would have to be conducted before we could really begin to explicate how individuals make sense of their worlds and how the cognitive/ethical developmental levels of those individuals affects the ways they make sense. So many questions are simply unanswerable at this point. Although the focus of this thesis is theoretical rather than empirical, it is still important to examine some of these questions, though briefly, in order to demonstrate how Dervin's Sense-Making could actually benefit from Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development. Other questions will simply be presented for future consideration and examination.

Perhaps the most useful way of bringing Perry's theory to bear upon Dervin's is to use Dervin's situation/gaps/uses variables as a framework for the ensuing discussion.

Situations, Gaps, Uses and Perry

One of the main tenets of Sense-Making is that all sense-making activity is situationally specific. It is not intended that this be taken to the extreme of excluding the generalization of sense-making activity from one situation to another similar situation. Instead, Dervin's intent is to emphasize the importance of rooting data in concrete situations as experienced and understood by respondents.

Dervin's research has consistently indicated that situational (across time and space) variables have greater power in predicting information needs and uses than non-situational variables (such as stages, or structural variables such as race, income, level of education, etc.). Nilan (1985), and Atwood and Dervin (1982) found that predictive power was even greater when structural variables (such as race, level of education, economic status, etc.) were coupled with situational variables than when either type of variable was used alone.

The most popular of Dervin's situational measures, situation movement state, is an internally focused

cognitive/structural variable. Although Perry also focuses on cognitive/structural variables (not to be confused with external structural variables such as race, educational level, etc.), it appears that Perry might approach situation a bit differently than Dervin. Dervin would say that sense-making activity could be predicted by situation, whereas Perry would probably say that interpretation of a situation would be indicative of and framed within a person's level of cognitive/ethical development. Perry also indicates that situations can encourage or impede development, and thus influence the sense that people make in those situations.

One question that is related to this discussion is whether Perry levels vary by situation for a given individual, or whether they are constant across situations? For instance, are there certain situations in an individual's experience, such as religious situations, where that individual would display dualistic behaviors whereas in another situation, such as a work situation, that same individual might display contextually relativistic behavior? Furthermore, are there certain types of situations that tend to be inherently dualistic and require people to make sense within certain parameters? For instance, do the predictable crises of adulthood such as divorce or unemployment exert particular developmental

constraints, and the unpredictable crises of adult life (such as cancer or heart disease) exert other particular constraints to the types of sense that we make? Do they require, by their very nature, that we think in certain ways? In the first type of situation an individual may see the locus of control as being either internal or external, whereas in the latter situation, the locus of control is inherently external--out of the reach of the individual.

There is some indication within the Perry literature that sensitivity to situation becomes heightened as an individual reaches more complex levels of the developmental scheme. The ability to deal with greater complexity is what contextual relativism and commitment in relativism are all about. Kurfiss (1981) noted that individuals who are at more complex levels of cognitive and intellectual development do tend to regress to more simplistic levels of development in new or threatening situations, but that such regression tends to be situationally specific. The problem that situational regression would present for Sense-Making lies in the domain of generalizability. If the researcher knows that an individual tends to think in a certain way in a particular situation, how can the researcher reliably predict that this same individual will think in a similar way in another situation? Perhaps the individual's behavior was an act of developmental deflection (such as temporizing,

escape or retreat) in response to the situation in which it was embedded. The answer to this dilemma probably lies with the observation of behavioral norms--what the most common response is to a given situation. Again, it appears that it might be helpful to determine if there are certain types of situations (or topics) that tend to encourage people to make sense at a particular level of cognitive/ethical development.

Dervin's gaps measure appears to be highly compatible with the premises of development within Perry's theory. Dervin says that gaps are discontinuities or questions that people experience within specific situations. People seek information to bridge those gaps and make sense of their situations. Perry indicates that developmental movement is marked by periods of instability (or transition), leading toward periods of greater differentiation and complexity. It appears that it is the gaps or discontinuities in our experiences that urge us to develop and also to perceive greater complexity within those experiences. Growth appears to be the product of disruptions. To take this concept one step further, how can practitioners meet peoples' information needs during these times of disruption in such a way that they will be aided in their growth?

As previously noted, one area in which Perry's research has received wide application is the area of developmental

instruction. Knefelkamp (1974, 1981) and Kurfiss (1982) have both conducted research in this area. There is growing body of literature on creating learning environments that provide enough challenge and yet enough support to foster development. In addition to gaining an understanding of the kinds of questions that people ask in these situations, Dervin's uses variable could also be helpful in assessing whether people perceived answers to their questions as helpful or hurtful. The uses variable examines expected answers and actual answers, the source of the answer, and how complete or partial the answer was.

Perhaps it would be helpful to illustrate how Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development might be applied to Dervin's Sense-Making by applying some of these principles to some of Dervin's data. One example comes from Dervin's 1982 study on how cancer patients made sense of their health situations. In looking at the data from time-line interviews that were conducted with chemotherapy and radiation treatment patients, it is readily apparent that the situation itself calls for an external focus on locus of control. Consider the following excerpt from one of the respondents in this study in which the respondent was asked what types of gaps (questions) they experienced during their cancer treatment at a university hospital. One of the many gaps that comprised this respondent's situation was

transcribed as follows (R = respondent; I = interviewer):

R--Question: After all the doctors, was he really
[GAP] a doctor or a specialist? Is he still
in training?

I--What were you trying to do (cope with, understand,
accomplish, figure out, survive, endure, tolerate)
when you asked this question?

R--I wanted to be reassured that I was getting the
proper treatment and that these people were really
qualified to be giving me all these lethal type-
drugs. I was kind of insecure and this was all
really new and I just wanted to be reassured that
this was really good for me.

I--Did you see yourself as blocked or hindered in any
way when you asked this question? How?

R--Yes. My state of mind mainly because I was nervous
about it. I was feeling insecure and frightened.

I--Is there anything else you could tell us that
explains why you asked this question?

R--Only that were [we] were told that they had
finished their tour of duty so to speak and that
the part that they were moving on made me wonder
if this was just a training session to them and
they weren't really specialists, and I wanted a
specialist.

I--Did this question stand alone or was it related to
other questions? What questions? How were they
connected?

R--Related to other questions. Was he really taking
care of my case? I just wasn't sure their
positions were, what they were in the whole set-up.
Were they doctors that were looking at my case and
deciding on the medicine or did they just repeat
things to some other doctor and get the answers
somewhere else? Were they qualified to make these
decisions or did they have to go to somebody else.
I'm not sure that is what you want.

I--If other people were in a situation like this, how
many of them do you think would ask this same

question in their minds. All/A lot/About half/
Just a few/None.

R--A lot.

I--How easy did it seem to get an answer to this question? (Scale: 1= very hard to 10= very easy) Why did you see it this way?

R--1. Because I never asked it out loud to anyone who could answer it.

I--Did getting an answer ever seem harder or easier? (Same/harder/easier) (if harder or easier) Where did it move on scale? (if harder or easier) Why did it change?

R--Easier. Moved to 10. Because I finally got the answers, the secure answers.

I--How important was getting an answer to this question at the time when you asked it in your mind? (Scale: 1= very unimportant to 10= very important) Why did you see it this way?

R--9. Because they were giving me some very strong medicine and once I began to doubt their ability then I was worried about it.

I--Did getting an answer ever seem more or less important? (same/less/more) (if more or less) Where did it move on the scale? (if more or less) Why did it change?

R--More. Moved to 10. Because the more I thought about it the more worried I got that I didn't understand the set-up there and I wasn't sure about their abilities.

I--Did you actually ask this question out loud at this time?

R--Yes.

I--Did you get an answer to this question at this time?

R--Yes.

I--Was it complete or partial. What about it made it seem complete/partial?

R--Complete. He explained that their different abilities were that yes, they were really doctors and they were trained specialists and although there were what they considered in training they had been at it for some time. And they were, he assured me, that they were qualified to do what they do and he also told me that they were in consultation with Dr. _____. Always there was never one doctor that made the decision. It was always Dr. _____ in connection with the doctor you were seeing.

I--Did the completeness ever change?

R--No.

I--How did you get the answer?

R--By asking the doctor.

I--Did you expect the answer to help you in any way? If so, how?

R--Yes. By putting me at ease about the quality of people that were treating me.

I--Did the answer actually help you in the way you expected? Did it help you in any other way?

R--Yes. No.

I--Did you expect the answer to hurt you in any way? If so, How?

R--No.

I--Did the answer actually hurt you in any way? If so, how?

R--No.
(Dervin, 1983, pp. 31-33)

Before applying Perry's developmental scheme to this transcript, it should be noted that Dervin has structured

the time-line interview to collect data on all three Sense-Making variables--situation, gaps and uses. The situation is cancer treatment at a university hospital. One gap (question) was selected for in-depth examination, as well as how useful the respondent perceived the answers/uses (helps/hurts) to that question.

In reviewing Perry's levels of development, a dualistic thinker in this situation would not question the doctor because the doctor is the authority merely by virtue of his/her position (competence is not questioned). The locus of control is placed on something outside of the patient, in this case the doctor--he/she is in control of the situation. Furthermore, there are truly right and wrong solutions to this patient's health problems and the doctor is expected to know the right ones.

Perry's multiplistic thinker would approach this situation slightly differently. The doctors seem to be giving conflicting information to the patient. The situation forces the patient to question who is really in authority. Certainly there are right and wrong answers, although some of them just have not been discovered yet. Occasionally the patient wonders, however, if anybody really know for sure.

The contextually relativistic thinker becomes more concerned with understanding criteria for evaluating the

competence or incompetence of the doctors. The patient feels that he/she has a right to know what is happening to his/her body, and feels free to question the doctors in regard to what is happening.

Finally, the patient whom Perry would place at the level of Commitment in Relativism would be willing to accept responsibility for making decisions in his/her own health situation. The locus of control now resides within the individual instead of within external authorities. This patient would be more willing to struggle with making his/her own choice in regard to types of cancer treatment rather than just relying upon medical evidence and the word of the doctors. He/she is able to bring this decision into alignment with other commitments in his/her life.

Now, in examining this specific transcript from Dervin's cancer study, there are a number of things that we can learn about this patient. First, notice that the patient's question revolves around competence and locus of control. Do these doctors know what they are doing, and are they qualified? The patient clearly feels out of control of her own body, and refers to difficulty controlling her own state of mind. Although the patient was willing to question the authority of the doctors in her own mind, she was not willing to verbalize this to the doctors. Eventually, the

patient shifted the question from being one of the doctors' capability to a question of her own ability or inability to understand the situation--they really must have the answers, after all, I just don't understand.

The patient's understanding of the answers she finally got to her questions is somewhat simplistic: "I finally got the answers, the secure answers." The doctor simply has to say that it is so, and it is so. The patient was afraid to ask her question, but indicates that she was not afraid that the answer would hurt her in some way. If the answer to her question had been that the "doctors" who were treating her were first year medical students, would that not have hurt her in some way (e.g., peace of mind), and was she not actually afraid of such disconfirmation? None the less, she perceived the answer that she wanted to perceive--made sense the way she wanted to, based upon her developmental level understanding of the situation. This patient is clearly multiplistic in her thinking in this particular situation. In review, multiplicity is based upon an orientation to authority that exists outside of the individual, and although independent thought is valued, knowledge is still based upon rights and wrongs tempered by an occasional "who knows."

In considering these observations, we must once again bear in mind that it is possible that certain types of

situations (such as unpredictable crises, cancer in this case), may tend to encourage us to respond on a certain level of cognitive and ethical development. Clearly when one is faced with cancer treatment it would be difficult to have a sense of really being in control of one's self and body. In this particular study, Perry's theory might be most useful in determining if particular situations tend to require certain levels of thinking as opposed to focusing on individual and aggregate levels of development for the purposes of providing more useful information. Furthermore, Dervin tempers Perry by pointing to the value of rooting development within specific situations.

The final chapter of this thesis will provide further information concerning what Sense-Making might gain from Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development as well as from James Fowler's theory of faith development.

Chapter IV

Fowler's Theory of Faith Development: A Constructive Developmental Approach to Individual and Shared Constructions of Meaning

Chapter Four will examine James Fowler's theory of faith development and how it might be applied to Dervin's theory of Sense-Making. After introducing Fowler's theory and discussing his definition of faith, the following issues will be examined: (1) the theoretical roots of faith development theory, (2) its approach to the construction of meaning, (3) a description of the theory (including methodological considerations), (4) application of faith development theory to Sense-Making data, and (5) a summary and evaluation of pertinent conclusions.

Introduction

Fowler, in his theory of faith development, views cognition as the construction of thought and valuing in accordance with individual and corporate perceptions. Whether this process occurs consciously or unconsciously, it is the basis of faith. Individual faith occurs when we each place our trust in ultimate centers of value and power (e.g., God, civil religion, democracy, the ascent of humankind, etc.). Corporate faith occurs as we join with others who share our faith orientation. In other words,

faith has both private and shared dimensions. Dervin and Fowler focus on the individual meaning-making context in very similar ways. Dervin, however, has given little attention to the corporate construction of meaning and of issues of ultimate concern (i.e., those centers of value and power in which we place our trust). Hence, Fowler's concept of ultimate context becomes the ground upon which Dervin's concept of situation lies, and as such bears consideration. Perhaps it would lend greater clarity to Fowler's notions of ultimate concern or ultimate environment by describing them as core metaphors that unify an individual's experiences and hopes. As such, these metaphors transcend the realm of empirical reality and look beyond to questions of symbolic reality. Ultimate context provides the structure for meaning making on the corporate level much as Dervin's situation does on the individual level. In words that echo the central premise of Dervin's Sense-Making, Fowler (1980b) states that the "composition and interpretation of meaning . . . are the inescapable burdens of our species" (p. 135).

Defining Faith

Faith, according to Fowler and his associates, is not necessarily a religious matter nor based upon doctrinal belief. Rather, faith is a:

Way of leaning into life. It points to a way of making sense of one's existence. It denotes a way

of giving order and coherence to the force-field of life. It speaks of the investment of life-grounding trust and life orienting commitment (Fowler, 1980b, p. 134).

Hence, faith is viewed as a universal phenomenon; a way of organizing the phenomenal world. Faith is a process of valuing, committing and knowing--a constructive activity. This very broad view of faith is derived largely from biblical tradition as interpreted by Paul Tillich and Richard Niebuhr (i.e., a way of seeing the world).

In Fowler's primary work on faith development, Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning (1981), he provides the following summary of what faith is within the framework of his research:

1. Faith, rather than belief or religion, is the most fundamental category in the human quest for relation to transcendence. Faith, it appears, is generic, a universal feature of human living, recognizably similar everywhere despite the remarkable variety of forms and contents of religious practice and belief.
2. Each of the major religious traditions studied speaks about faith in ways that make the same phenomenon visible. In each and all, faith involves an alignment of the will, a resting of the heart, in accordance with a vision of transcendent value and power, one's ultimate concern.
3. Faith, classically understood, is not a separate dimension of life, a compartmentalized specialty. Faith is an orientation of the total person, giving purpose and goal to one's hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions.
4. The unity and recognizability of faith, despite the myriad variants of religions and beliefs,

support the struggle to maintain and develop a theory of religious relativity in which the religions--and the faith they evoke and shape--are seen as relative apprehensions of our relatedness to that which is universal. This work toward a "universal theory as to the relation between truth articulated in the midst of the relativity of human life and history" represents a rejection of faith in "relativism," (the philosophy or common sense view that religious claims and experience have no necessary validity beyond the bounds of the communities that hold them) and serves a commitment to press the question of truth in the living and in the study of faith (pp. 14-15).

Faith development is viewed largely as a process of meaning construction. Fowler (1980b) says that "We invest trust in powerful images which unify our experience and which order it in accordance with interpretations that serve our acknowledgment of centers of value and power" (p. 135). In other words, we seek to structure and interpret our experiences in ways that are consistent with our faith orientation. Fowler (1980a) underscores that development of the self is preliminary to the ability to place faith in others. Furthermore, the construction of faith is often shared with other persons who serve as links to our environment.

Fowler feels that the earliest steps toward interpretation and meaning are, thus, shared and social. The construction of meaning is often reliant upon interpretive images that cannot be separated from reliance and trust in individuals who share in the process of meaning

construction. Thus:

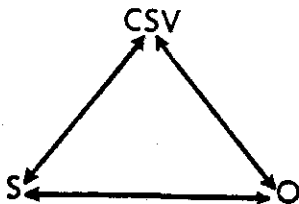
Faith involves, from the beginning our participation in what we may call tacit, covenantal, fiduciary relationships. Put another way, our interpretation of and response to events which disclose the conditions of our existence are formed in the company of co-interpreters and co-respondents whom we trust and to whom we are loyal. Faith is a relational matter . . . the interpretive images by which we make sense of the conditions of our lives inevitably implicate our companions (Fowler, 1980b, pp. 135-136).

Fowler says, therefore, that although faith development is an individual process, it is also reciprocal in the sense that we construct meaning in relational contexts. Faith begins in relationships, and is a dynamic, ongoing process. Commenting further on the relational basis of faith, Fowler (1980a) states:

In communities a self (S) is bound to others (O) by shared trust and loyalty:



But our ties to others are mediated, formed, and deepened by our shared or common trusts in and loyalties to centers of supraordinate value (CSV). Thus:



(Fowler, 1980a, pp. 54-55).

One example of this type of triangular relationship is the faith structure of the university. The university's faith structure is centered in:

Free inquiry and a commitment to truth. Though I may never know personally many of my colleagues in other schools or departments of the university, I presume--until proven otherwise--that they share with me a loyalty to and trust in the central values underlying the university (Fowler, 1980a, p. 55).

Hence, it is apparent that each of us belongs to a series of triangles (each a faith metaphor), as well as a sort of grand triangle to which all of our other triangles are related. The grand triangle is one in which "the self relates to the canvas of meaning itself" (Fowler, 1980a, p. 56). Fowler calls this grand triangle ultimate context (again, that overall orientation toward which we structure our lives and interpret our experiences).

In summary, faith is:

- a disposition of the total self toward the ultimate environment
- in which trust and loyalty are invested in a center or centers of value and power
- which order and give coherence to the force-field of life, and
- which support and sustain (or qualify and relativize) our mundane or everyday commitments and trusts combining to give orientation, courage, meaning, and hope to our lives, and
- to unite us into communities of shared interpretation, loyalty, and trust (Fowler, 1980b, p. 137).

The Theoretical Roots of Faith Development

One of the greatest achievements of Fowler's theory of faith development, according to Rogers (1980), is that it provides an effective integration of a complex variety of theories. Fowler's theory deals with "forms of logic and moral reasoning, modes of theological responsiveness, questions of the locus of authority, and some recognition of the emotional attachments which are related to the structure of meaning" (p. 37).

Much like the theories of Dervin and Perry, Fowler's theory of faith development finds its theoretical roots in the works of Piaget (and others). Along with Dervin and Perry, Fowler is more concerned with the structural aspects of faith than the actual content of interview data. Fowler has also utilized various aspects of Piagetian theory, such as assimilation/accommodation and horizontal/vertical decalage, which were discussed in Chapter Two.

During the 1970s, Fowler was a research associate of Lawrence Kohlberg at Harvard. In his research activity with Kohlberg on moral development, Fowler was perplexed by Kohlberg's assertion that stages of moral development were not necessarily reflective of faith or religion. As a result, Fowler decided to identify and examine the distinctions existing between stages of moral judgment and

stages of faith (see parallel charts of Fowler's Stages of Faith and Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development in Appendix G).

According to Fowler, faith stages are more comprehensive than Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning in that the logic of faith is more comprehensive than that of rational certainty. This is because rational certainty is based upon the idea that knowledge is objective and fails to account for the subjectivity of the knower. The logic of faith, however, steps beyond rational certainty and asserts that moral judgment must first be informed by a knowledge of self (the subjective). Both objectivity and subjectivity then become unified in God or nature (Power & Kohlberg, 1980). Although Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning differ from Fowler's logic of faith, the following four Kohlbergian principles are important to stages of faith: (1) the locus of authority, (2) the bounds of social awareness, (3) the form of world coherence, and (4) the role of symbols.

Individual and Relational Construction of Meaning

Following the traditions of John Dewey, Piaget, and Kohlberg, Fowler equates knowing with meaning construction. From this constructive-developmental perspective (i.e., the development of our construing or meaning making), "knowing means an acting upon and 'composing' of the known" (Fowler,

1980a, p. 57). In essence, we construct our views of the world based upon our knowledge and experience of it. Furthermore, "knowing is adequate or 'true' when the mental ordering of the elements of reality correspond to their relationships as experienced and known by other reliable knowers" (Fowler, 1980a, p. 57). Hence, faith itself is an expression of constructive knowing; "here we have in view the composition or interpretation of the persons, values, communities (constitution), and images of ultimate environments to which we are related in trust (or mistrust) and loyalty (or disloyalty) in faith" (Fowler, 1980a, p. 59). Piaget focused on constructive knowing/meaning construction and separated cognition from affection. Fowler, on the other hand, unites the affective and cognitive (or to use Fowler's terms, the rational and passionate) and extends constructive knowing to encompass the realm of faith. Furthermore, Fowler asserts that meaning-making precedes both reason and emotion and inextricably binds them together, and as such the "composition or modification of the self is an issue" (Fowler, 1980a, p. 61). Modification of the self is based upon our constructions of being and worth. Hence, we interpret and structure our world and experiences in light of these constructions.

The self is continually being composed and modified as the individual assimilates and/or accommodates new information from his/her environment. Again extending the Piaget/Kohlberg paradigm and the work of Kegan (1982), Fowler asserts that we must attend to both logic or rational certainty and a logic of conviction. Moreover, the logic of faith is more comprehensive than rational certainty. Again, this is because it is based upon our notions of self, worth, and being and provides the framework for rational certainty. Thus, we are reminded that logic or rational certainty is just a part of the larger whole (or structure) of faith, rather than juxtaposed to faith. Fowler sees faith as that ultimate relational triangle which is comprised of an individual's collection of centers of value (sub-triangles). Faith reasons in "wholes" (seeks connection/relatedness between those subtriangles) and provides us with a sense of ultimate environment. Fowler (1980a) further notes that through both individual and shared experience "our compositions of an ultimate environment derive unity and coherence by virtue of our attachments, our convictional investments, in power(s) and value(s) of supraordinate significance" (p. 64).

As we return to Fowler's notion that we construct meaning individually and yet in relationships, the importance of these larger meaning structures of faith

becomes focal. Fowler asserts that: "There are five interrelated, integrated, but analytically separable levels of meaning and orientation by which communities of faith form persons and groups for vocational existence" (Fowler, 1984, p. 114). These five levels of meaning and orientation comprise what Fowler calls a faith narrative. As applied to the Christian faith and community, this faith narrative is comprised of the following elements:

1. A shared core story: "To awaken and inform--and to hold accountable--the vocations of its members, a community of faith must shape its identity in relation to a corporately held narrative structure" (Fowler, 1984, p. 114). This core story accounts for the history and pattern of God's disclosure and concealment with mankind and creation.
2. Identification with the central passion of the shared core story: In Christianity these passions focus on the life, death, and person of Jesus. Identification is revealed by how a person lives in relation the central passions of Jesus (Fowler, 1984, p. 115).
3. Formation of the affections: "A person's deep and guiding emotions, the wellsprings of motivation in a person--in accordance with the community's identification with its central passion" (Fowler, 1984, p. 115). In the Christian tradition, these affections may be equated with the fruits of the Spirit.
4. Generation of virtues: "Moral strengths and actional skills that become consistent, constituent dimensions of personal and corporate action. These are strengths of perception, judgment, and action that serve the central passion of the community of faith and give tensile character to the affections" (Fowler, 1984, p. 115).

5. Practical and particular shape of worldly vocation: the interrelatedness of the individual and the community of faith in human partnership with divine action (i.e., mission) (Fowler, 1984, p. 11).

Essentially, what Fowler is trying to bring together is how the direction and shape of the lives of individuals interact with the social environment, and then how the convergence of these two vectors of meaning further interact with the divine. Hence, the faith narrative takes on a triangular and epic quality in which the individual unifies these centers of meaning.

In summary, Fowler's approach to the construction of meaning is constructive-developmental. Faith is:

A core process in the total self-constitutive activity that is ego. Ego development so understood must take account of the integration of and interplay between a logic of rational certainty and a logic of conviction that characterizes the epistemology of faith (Fowler, 1980a, p. 64).

A Description of Fowler's Theory of Faith Development

Although we have discussed Fowler's definition of faith and how we construct faith, how does a person develop in faith? This section will focus on pertinent issues concerning: (1) methodological considerations, (2) movement along Fowler's developmental scheme, (3) stages of faith, and (4) a discussion of pertinent faith development research.

Methodological Considerations

The Sample and Interview

Faith is a very complex phenomenon to examine empirically. Treating faith as a general human phenomenon has enabled Fowler to identify what he considers to be universal structural aspects of faith that can then be quantified.

As a result of extensive semiclinical, unstructured interviews with more than 380 respondents ranging from children throughout all stages of adulthood, Fowler identified six stages of faith development. His sample included slightly more females than males; representative numbers of Protestants, Catholics, Jews, atheists, agnostics, and a few Western members of Eastern religions. It also contained a representative range of persons from various social classes, ethnic variations, and educational standings.

These interviews invited respondents to share something of their life history, feelings, and attitudes about a number of life issues (see Fowler protocol, Appendix H). Fowler (1980a) and his associates endeavored to test "espoused beliefs, values, and attitudes against self-reports of performance and choice in actual situations" (p. 66). The following is a list of issues that were discussed

in these interviews:

Death and afterlife: the limits of knowledge; causation and effectance in personal and historical life; evil and suffering; freedom and determinism; power and agency; meaning of life; ideal manhood or womanhood; the future; grounding of ethical and moral imperatives; communal identifications and belonging; bases of guilt and shame; loyalties and commitment; locus of transcendent beauty, value, or power; objects of reverence or awe; grounds of terror or dread; sin and violation; religious experiences, religious beliefs and practice; specific meaningful religious symbols (Fowler, 1980a, p. 66).

The data from these interviews was content analyzed to yield the structure of an individual's faith structure and then the narrative of a faith community.

Data Analysis

In 1980, Fowler and his associates published information on the analysis of faith interviews in Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning. Information about the sample itself included age group, sex, race, religious orientation, and stage of faith. Other characteristics of the sample, such as social class, have not yet been reported, nor have results from tests of statistical significance or reliability.

Appendix G identifies stages of faith by aspects (such as form of logic, locus of authority, role taking, etc.). These aspects served as the basis for content analysis of the interview data. Stage assignments were determined for

each aspect from the interview data, and then these aspect stage assignments were averaged to determine an overall faith stage assignment.

Movement Along Fowler's Developmental Scheme

Before discussing Fowler's six stages of faith, we need to understand Fowler's conception of a stage. A stage is defined as "One of a sequence of formally describable styles of composing an ultimate environment, of committing the self to centers of value and power, of symbolizing and expressing those commitments, and of relating them to the valued perspectives of others" (Fowler, 1980b, p. 143). Fowler (1980a) notes that "stages describe 'forms' of faith which underlie the great variety of our values, beliefs, and life-styles" (p. 52).

Faith development theory is constructivist, and as such, "successive stages are thought of as manifesting qualitative transformations issuing in more complex inner differentiations, more elaborate operations (operations upon operations), wider comprehensiveness, and greater overall flexibility of functioning" (Fowler, 1980a, p. 74). Thus, each stage progresses from less complex ways of valuing and knowing to more complex ways of valuing and knowing.

Progress from one stage to the next is navigated much as Perry's developmental positions are navigated--through

periods of disruption and transition in which a reorganization of valuing and knowing occurs. Movement through stages of faith is not:

An automatic function of biological maturation, chronological age, psychological development, or mental age. While each of these factors plays a significant role in the "readiness" for stage transition, transition itself occurs when the equilibrium of a given stage is upset by encounters with crises, novelties, and experiences of disclosure and challenge, which threaten the limits of the person's present patterns of constitutive-knowing (Fowler, 1980a, p. 67).

In essence, there is a great deal of agreement between Perry and Fowler in their approach to movement through stages of development in that growth involves an ability to deal with greater complexity and differentiation.

Stages of Faith

Although Fowler's actual stages of faith are not of central concern to this literature review, a brief summary of each of them may be helpful in understanding the thrust of his research.

Fowler's stages of faith begin with what is really considered a preliminary stage--that of Undifferentiated Faith. Undifferentiated Faith is preconceptual, largely prelinguistic, and only conscious in the sense that the infant is forming a predisposition toward the world through his/her interaction with others and the environment. This prestage is foundational to much of what will be

experienced during later stages of faith (basic trust/mistrust, autonomy, hope, courage, etc.). The transition to stage one begins with the development of cognition, speech, and play.

Stage 1, Intuitive-Projective Faith, is based largely upon the visible faith (language, moods, actions) of primary adult caretakers. This stage is most characteristic of the age three to seven child. Transition to stage 2 is marked largely by the emergence of concrete operational thinking (as represented by the child's desire to know and clarify reality for himself/herself).

The Mythic-Literal Faith of Stage 2 ensues when a person begins to align himself/herself with the stories, beliefs, and observances that are symbolic of a particular community (e.g., Catholicism, pentecostal protestantism, civil religion--any community, religious or non-religious, espousing shared value and belief systems). Beliefs and symbols are interpreted literally. Several examples of the literal interpretation of the stories of a faith community are: (1) the biblical story of creation occurred in seven 24 hour days; (2) the Hasidic Jewish practice of binding God's word to the forehead, encapsulated in a small box or "phylactery" in response to the biblical injunction to keep God's word upon your head; and (3) during the days of emperor worship in pre-World War II Japan where the

picture of the emperor was so closely tied to the emperor himself that it was obligatory to protect and give reverence to the symbol just as you would the person. What results is the emergence of a more "linear, narrative construction of coherence and meaning. Story becomes the major way of giving unity and value to experience" (Fowler, 1980b, p. 145). These stories take on mythic or cosmic quality and their characters take on anthropomorphic characteristics (e.g., God as Father and Jesus as Son). Stage 2 represents a world in which fairness and reciprocity reign. The transition to stage 3 is marked by contradictions in these mythic stories and a subsequent search for meaning. "The emergence of mutual interpersonal perspective-taking . . . creates the need for a more personal relationship with the unifying power of the ultimate environment" (Fowler, 1980b, p. 146).

Stage 3, Synthetic-Conventional Faith, begins when one's sphere of experience extends beyond the family. "Faith must provide a coherent orientation in the midst of that more complex and diverse range of involvements. Faith must synthesize values and information [development of an ideology]; it must provide a basis for identity and outlook" (Fowler, 1980b, p. 146). This stage usually occurs during adolescence, but often becomes the permanent stopping place for many adults. Although the reason for this is unclear,

if we were to draw generalizations from other parallel developmental theories, such as Kohlberg's theory of moral development, we might find the following reasons for this arrest in development: (1) this stage represents culturally normative behavior, and (2) few people experience enough challenge coupled with adequate support to progress beyond stage 4. At this stage authority is located in traditional authority roles. Serious clashes in values, traditions, and authority figures which require serious critical reflection often mark the movement to stage 4. Navigating the transition from stage 3 to stage 4 appears to be particularly critical (analogous to Perry's watershed transition from Multiplicity to Contextual Relativism).

Individuative-Reflective Faith, Stage 4, is marked by the realization that one must take responsibility for one's own values, beliefs, commitments, lifestyle, etc. Self-actualization is often at tension with requirements to live in service to others. This stage usually occurs during young adulthood, although as previously mentioned many adults never reach this stage. "Self (identity) and outlook (world view) are differentiated from those of others, and become acknowledged factors in the reactions, interpretations, and judgments one makes on the actions of the self and others" (Fowler, 1980b, p. 147). The urge to move from stage 4 to stage 5 is often marked by a sense of

personal chaos in a variety of areas of the individual's inner self as a result of the tension between trying to be responsible to self as well as to others. The resolution of this tension often moves the person on to the next stage.

Stage 5, Paradoxical-Consolidative Faith, involves much of the orientation of identity and world view of stage 4, but is marked by a reckoning with the divergent voices of one's past. Fowler (1980b) reports that stage 5 faith is perhaps the most difficult to describe:

Unusual before midlife, stage 5 knows the sacrament of defeat and the reality of irrevocable commitments and acts. What the previous stage struggled to clarify, in terms of the boundaries of self and outlook, this stage now makes porous and permeable. Alive to paradox and the truth in apparent contradictions, this stage strives to unify opposites in mind and experience. It generates and maintains vulnerability to the strange truths of those who are "other" (p. 148).

Stage 5 individuals are able to see a variety of perspectives to an issue simultaneously. Furthermore, they search for patterns and relationships between self and outlook, seeking to integrate the two. People at this stage have an understanding and appreciation for both unity and diversity. This stage, however, is marked by division between "transforming vision and loyalties" (the desire and commitment to make the world a better place in some particular way), and "an untransformed world" (the realization of how greatly the world differs from your

vision) (Fowler, 1980b, p. 149). For example, in a recent newspaper article on the involvement of senior citizens in the peace movement, one activist recounted that his friends thought what he was doing was not worthwhile because it would not change anything. Nevertheless, this activist remained devoted to the cause of peace. In a few cases this struggle between commitment to a vision and a divergent reality yields way to stage 6.

Stage 6, Universalizing Faith, is rarely accomplished. In fact, it is so rare that in many ways it is more of a deviation than an actual "capstone" to development. People who represent this stage of development:

Become incarnators and actualizers of the spirit of a fulfilled human community They are "contagious" in the sense that they create zones of liberation from the social, political, economic, and ideological shackles we place and endure on human futurity universalizers are often experienced as subversive of the structures by which we sustain our individual and corporate survival, security, and significance. Many persons in this stage die at the hands of those whom they hope to change. Universalizers are often more honored and revered after death than during their lives Their community is universal in extent (Fowler, 1980b, p.149).

Illustrative of stage 6 faith are people like Mahatma Ghandi, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

In summary, each stage of faith represents a way of forming and reforming the world as the individual knows and experiences it. Finally, each stage formulates its own

conception of ultimate context which is often expressed in longlasting images of ordered meaning and value. Fowler (1981), for instance, cites the following example of conflict between stage 3 and stage 4 approaches to the use of symbols:

For persons in Stage 3 the symbols expressive of their deepest meanings and loyalties are not separable from the what they symbolize. At Stage 4 Meanings can be separated from the symbols that bear them For Stage 3, however, demythologization feels like a fundamental threat to meaning, because meaning and symbol are bound up together. Consider an example. In the 1960s confrontations over the American flag occurred between construction workers and harsh young critics of the Vietnam war. For both groups, I suspect, the flag and its meaning were inextricably and nonnegotiable intertwined. For the construction workers it represented a concatenation of dreams and loyalties that participated in their deepest levels of meaning and identity. Any attack on the flag . . . amounted to an attack on a sacred set of images and myths that grounded identity and worth: "My country, right or wrong." For the protesters the flag similarly stood for a powerful coagulation of images of and feelings toward "America." But for the latter group it symbolized a history and present reality that had to be changed, purged or cleansed (pp. 162-163).

Research Application of Faith Development Theory

Moving beyond the faith development research of Fowler, two studies in particular merit examination. In 1977, Clark Power conducted a validation study on stages of faith within moral development (a blend of Fowler and Kohlberg). Again, the reason why it is important to examine Kohlberg in

conjunction with Fowler is because Fowler's work is actually an outgrowth of Kohlberg's work on moral development.

Essentially, Power identified six commonalities between the two theories:

- (1) Faith serves as an "onlook"--a way of seeing moral situations.
- (2) Faith represents a sense of commitment.
- (3) Faith impacts ethical sensitivity.
- (4) Faith can offer reassurance that all is not useless in an unjust world.
- (5) Faith requires a complementarity with being.
- (6) Faith supports us through the ambiguities of life when we are not in control of actions or outcomes.

Secondly, a study conducted by Eugene J. Mischey (1976) entitled, "Faith Development and Its Relationship to Moral Reasoning and Identity Status of Young Adults," utilized Fowler's and Kohlberg's schemes of development and found a great deal of congruence between stages of faith and stages of moral development. In addition, Mischey's study raised one particularly pertinent question: What actually causes development along both Fowler's and Kohlberg's schemes? Mischey also found that moral stages did not precede faith stages as Kohlberg asserted. Rather, each stage of moral judgment appears to be anchored in and supported by a larger meaning structure of faith. Hence, stages of faith appear to provide general orientations within which moral judgments are based.

Lending further support and clarification to Mischey's (1976) study which examined the relationship between moral development and faith development, Power and Kohlberg (1980) further examined Kohlberg's assertion that moral judgment was necessary but not sufficient for religious reasoning (religion and faith are used synonymously in this study). These researchers examined the relationship between moral questions and religious ones. A religious question:

Is one in which every part of the world takes on meaning from the perspective of the whole which includes them The holistic logic of religion is one which transcends the distinction between the subjectivity of the knower and the objectivity of what is known--the world is brought into unity through God or Nature (Power & Kohlberg, 1980, p. 357).

It was expected that individuals would either develop moral and religious reasoning simultaneously, or that moral reasoning would precede religious reasoning. Hence, a person could use a higher stage of moral reasoning in the context of a lower stage religious problem. The results of this study strongly supported Kohlberg's assertion up until stages four and five. At this critical transition between stages 4 and 5, moral reasoning was sometimes (but not always) as much as one stage higher than religious reasoning. Power and Kohlberg asserted that this may be due to the ability of the individual who is reasoning at a higher stage to cognitively systematize religious and

moral beliefs. This is because people operating at higher stages of cognitive development are able to deal with greater complexity and differentiation than those at lower stages.

The significance for this thesis of Power and Kohlberg's (1980) study centers upon the larger sociological function of faith. Since "society, like God, was greater than the individual and alone capable of inspiring a sense of duty and altruism" (Power & Kohlberg, 1980, p. 367), the power of corporate meaning construction is inextricably linked to individual meaning construction.

Summary and Evaluation

The summary and evaluation of Fowler's theory of faith development will focus on the following concerns: (1) the relational dimensions of meaning-making and the resulting attention to ultimate environment, and (2) what Dervin's theory of Sense-Making can gain from these concerns.

In summary, faith development is based upon the premise that, "Human beings necessarily engage in constructing frames of meaning for our lives, and we do this, with others, by making tacit and/or explicit commitments to value- and-power centers which promise to sustain our lives and meanings" (Fowler, 1980b, p. 137). Hence, sense-making is both relational and individual. Fowler's approach to

the individual construction of meaning is quite similar to Dervin's. Fowler, however, moves beyond Dervin in that he explores the relational aspects of meaning construction as well as how corporate constructions relate to ultimate context.

Fowler's attention to ultimacy (that which is beyond quantification) is what pulls Fowler up into the critical quadrant of the paradigm discussed in Chapter One, page 24. Dervin focuses primarily upon the individual and present situations, whereas Fowler sees the individual and present situations as resting upon the more important underlying ground of ultimate context or situation. This is one important way in which Fowler differs from many other stage theorists; development is viewed as processual and yet occurring within a larger, ultimate context. Hence, stages themselves are not of focal concern but rather the concept of ultimacy that each stage sets forth. In evaluating Fowler, Kegan (1980), a scholar in the area of ego development who worked with Fowler at Harvard, noted:

When the constructive-developmental paradigm makes not the stages the focus but their relation to the process which subtends and creates them, then the paradigm directs us anew to those rhythms of death and rebirth, fall from grace, loss of innocence, eviction from paradise, return and repentance, the leap of faith, saving grace, redemption--those rhythms we find in the hot centers of human history, where men and women have found ways to see beneath the dust of daily life (p. 437).

The problem is, however, that very few theorists have been able to effectively attend to ultimate realities. Fowler has given us the best approach to date (Kegan, 1980, p. 410). As with most stage theories, the developmental changes of the individual as he/she moves through time and space has been given far more attention than that which persists over time. Fowler does, however, attempt to redress this imbalance by attending to notions of ultimacy.

Religious reality (faith) helps us move beyond empirical reality and bridges the tension between that which is preliminary and that which is ultimate. Kegan (1980) says that Fowler's stage theory involves a series of idolatries. Idolatry is taking for ultimate that which is actually preliminary--any given way of knowing the world for the way of knowing. This occurs primarily at earlier levels of faith development which is very similar to Perry's concept of increased ability to appreciate difference at more complex, advanced levels of cognitive and ethical development. Hence, developmental faith contains the seeds of its own destruction. Development along Fowler's faith stages always involves decentering. Decentering always involves some blow to what we thought to be ultimate. For instance, if a young child (presumably at stage 1 on the faith development scheme) had to face the death of a parent (a picture of ultimacy for a child), that child would have

to develop a new concept of ultimacy. Furthermore, this would require a new definition of self since young children have difficulty defining themselves as separate from primal others. This construction of a new reality would take place through the process of decentering.

How is ultimacy conveyed? Although Fowler has identified narrative components that reveal concepts of ultimacy for a given faith community, he does not deal with this as extensively as Kegan (1980) does in his evaluation of faith development research. Kegan (1980) feels that ultimacy is conveyed in cultural contexts:

If the infant's reflex embeddedness goes on in the culture of the mothering one, its impulse embeddedness goes on in the culture of the family (usually, the culture of a marriage); its needs embeddedness goes on in the culture of the peer gang; its interpersonal embeddedness goes on in the culture of dyadic relations . . . ; its institutional embeddedness goes on in the culture of social forms of ideology, tacit or explicit, personal or bureaucratic; and its interindividual embeddedness goes on in the context of intimate human relations. Each of these cultures is a medium of ultimacy, social, and spiritual contexts which re-present the ultimacy each metaevolutionary truce constructs (pp. 431-432).

Each of the cultures in which an individual is embedded combine to form that individual's sense of ultimate environment. Furthermore, an individual's faith triangle (representative of ultimate context for that individual) is intact to the degree that faith is integrated into all.

One of the questions that this raises for Dervin's Sense-Making focuses on her use of situation. As previously mentioned, Dervin asserts that all meaning-making occurs within a situation. Dervin, however, focuses only on the what Fowler would call preliminary situation and gives little attention to ultimate situation--that larger matrix of meaning which, although it is based upon the individual, is also highly relational.

Some theorists feel that Fowler's methodology has been limited by an inability to focus adequately on two issues: (1) the link between preliminary situation and ultimate situation, and (2) the link between individual and relational constructions of meaning. Rogers (1980) summarizes this limitation as follows:

The contributions of depth psychology, while again viewed appreciatively are not incorporated directly into the faith development materials. Aspects of unconscious conflict or paradoxical intention, more specifically areas of self-deception, anxiety and fear of loss of self-esteem, grief and despair, might (and I believe do) confound the apparent statements of meaning and value which are given in quasi-clinical interviews (pp. 38-39).

Rogers is essentially critiquing Fowler's blend of quantitative and qualitative methodologies in faith development interviews. He feels that such a blend lends itself to the superimposition of a predetermined structure (theological, moral and psychodevelopmental) upon

interview data. This critique appears to be based primarily upon an early critique of Fowler's work by McBride (1976). As mentioned in Chapter Two of this thesis, however, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies can actually be an asset rather than a liability. As a result of combining these methodologies Fowler also has the advantage of utilizing actual versus hypothetical situations upon which to base his analysis (as opposed to Kohlberg's reliance upon hypothetical moral dilemmas). This blend of quantitative and qualitative methodologies has also been considered one of the greatest strengths of Dervin's Sense-Making.

Despite possible methodological weaknesses and a Western bias, Fowler's theory of faith development is still the best interdisciplinary approach that we have for looking at the corporate construction of meaning and the notion of ultimate context (ultimate situation).

What Sense-Making Can Gain from Studies of Faith Development

What specifically can Dervin gain from Fowler? Perhaps this question can best be answered by referring back to Kegan's (1980) comment on cultural embeddedness: What is it that lies beneath the "dust of daily life" (p. 437). We need to begin to focus on issues of ultimacy, but how can this be accomplished?

Fowler and Kegan offer a combination of suggestions as to how data can be analyzed to reveal how empirical realities point beyond themselves to ultimate realities. Fowler (1980a) indicates that researchers need to attend to the concept of ultimate environment, or core metaphors, that each stage of faith represents. For Dervin this would call for a broadening of the variable situation to include ultimate concerns to which the preliminary (past or present) situation points. Referring to Fowler's notion of triangulation, situations would be subtriangles. If the researcher were to obtain data on other subtriangles in which a person is embedded the researcher might obtain a larger picture of the individual and his/her notion of ultimacy (that larger triangle which is comprised of the collection of a person's smaller subtriangles).

Perhaps this can be clarified once again by referring to Dervin's study on how cancer patients make sense out of their health situations. Respondents were asked to identify a specific situation within the context of their larger health situation. Along with the specific situation that the respondent has identified is the question of the larger health situation which obviously deals with questions of ultimate concern. It seems apparent that a person's faith orientation and level of faith development would have a great deal of bearing upon the kinds of questions (Dervin's

gaps) they would have within their specific health situation. For instance, the person whose faith is manifested in Christian religion might question why a loving God would allow their present suffering. On the other hand, the Buddhist person might see their health situation as one sequence in a process of regeneration. The person who places their faith in the structure of the health institution and the ability of people to know and provide appropriate care might begin to question that implicit trust that they have placed in the organization and mankind's finite ability to know.

Another in depth examination of the time-line interview on pages 69-71 reveals additional information that can tell us more about the faith stage of that particular interviewee and her approach to dealing with ultimate concerns. Following Fowler's method of data analysis by faith aspects (Appendix G), this cancer patient appears to be at stage 4, Individuative-Reflective Faith.

In analyzing the interview data according to each faith aspect, the interviewee appears to use stage 4 forms of logic (Formal Operation-Dichotomizing). Although form of logic is usually assessed by administering tests of formal operational thinking, Piagetian clues (Fowler, 1985, p. 71) indicate this stage assignment. Dichotomizing formal operation is indicated by the need to establish

one's own boundaries, and the individual often expresses himself/herself in "either/or" terms. The patient in this interview assesses health practitioners in this same either/or manner. Either he really is a doctor or he is not (in other words, he is still in training). It is in this way that the patient strives to maintain her own boundaries regarding her health care situation.

It is difficult to determine from the interview data whether the patient should be given a stage 3 (Mutual Interpersonal) or stage 4 (Mutual, with self-selected group or class) assignment for approach to role-taking. After studying the data carefully, there are a number of indications that stage 3 might be the most appropriate aspect assignment. When asked how many people would ask the same kinds of questions she has asked if they were in a similar situation, the respondent indicates that a lot of people would respond in the same way. This is a fairly mutual-interpersonal approach to role-taking.

A stage 3 assignment of form of moral judgement (Interpersonal expectations and concordance) was also determined from the interview data. The patient clearly questioned the "rightness" of the doctors and hospital structure and the "fairness" of her situation, and these are indicative of the stage 3 form of moral judgement.

This interviewee's bounds of social awareness appear to be in line with stage 4 (ideologically compatible communities with congruence to self-chosen norms and insights). She moves beyond stage 3 awareness that is bound up within interpersonal groups and moves outward comparing the hospital and doctors against scientific and medical norms and expectations.

Movement seems to be taking place from a stage 3 (Consensus of valued groups and in personally worthy representatives of belief-value traditions) to stage 4 (One's own judgement as informed by a self-ratified ideological perspective in which authorities and norms must be congruent) form understanding of locus of authority. The patient is disillusioned with the traditional trust-evoking role of the doctor (indicative of movement from stage 3), and reality, as constructed by this patient, tempers her willingness to confer power upon either the doctor or the institution (indicative of a stage 4 position).

The respondent also indicates that she is no longer willing to live with mystery (i.e., Is this person a doctor or not? Does anyone really know about all of this medication I am taking? etc.). This is clearly representative of a stage 4 form of world coherence (Explicit system, conceptually mediated, clarity about boundaries and inner

connections of system).

Finally, the patient appears to be going through the process of demythologizing the traditional symbols of power and healing in the medical context--doctors, hospitals, medicine. The role of symbols that this woman uses fit into the schema of stage 4 (Symbols separated from symbolized. Translated [reduced] to ideations. Evocative power inheres in "meaning" conveyed by symbols).

After averaging the aspect assignments from this interview data, the patient seems to be operating at a stage 4 level of faith development (Individuative-Reflective). She realizes that she must take responsibility for her own values, beliefs, commitments, etc. None the less, she is reticent to rock the institutional boat by divulging her misgivings. In summary, this analysis gives us a clearer picture of the patient's world view or faith structure.

Faith helps people to bridge discontinuities between the disparities in their lives and ultimate concerns. Fowler also reminds us that development often results from blows to our notions of ultimacy, resulting in the need to make new sense and reform our notions of ultimate environment.

Kegan (1980) has endeavored to identify a number of universal concerns that he feels represent the concepts of ultimacy at all stages of faith development. Three of

these universal concerns that point to concepts of ultimacy are as follows:

1. The universal tension between longing to be included and yet independent.
2. The universal experience of losing and recovering meaning or order.
3. The universal need to be recognized (Kegan, 1980, p. 411).

Kegan (1980) indicates these universal concerns are embedded in an individual's psychological and social structures.

Kegan (1980) illustrates this notion saying:

For example, the young child is embedded in its "impulses"; it "is" its impulses, and the threat of their nonexpression is "ultimate"; that is, it is costly to the very balance of meaning. When this evolutionary truce is transcended, the child no longer "is" its impulses; rather it "has" impulses; they have become preliminary, and can be contained without ultimate risk to meaning (p. 427).

Thus, the various cultures in which a person is embedded--impulses in the previous example--combine to form the concept of ultimacy for the individual.

This author would suggest that these universal concerns of ultimacy and Fowler's aspects of faith can be examined via Dervin's Sense-Making components of situations, gaps and uses. The ground of being (ultimate environment/situation) becomes evident in the way that a respondent understands his/her situation. Furthermore, based upon the centers of superordinate value in which we place our faith, we construct

meaning to bridge the gaps or discontinuities we experience in our situations. The results that we see coming from the ways in which we bridge these discontinuities can then be evaluated as having been either helpful or hurtful (Dervin's uses variable).

In summary, Dervin's Sense-Making could benefit from Fowler's concept of the relational construction of meaning as well as the notion that preliminary situations point beyond themselves to more enduring world view concerns.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Chapter Five of this thesis will summarize and integrate the findings of the previous chapters. Examination of these findings will be discussed in the following three major sections: (1) summaries of the theories of Dervin, Perry, and Fowler; (2) an application section that examines what these three theories might gain from one another; and (3) a concluding section that presents suggestions for future research.

Theoretical Summaries

Dervin's Theory of Sense-Making

Dervin's theory of Sense-Making is an interpretive theory of communication/information that "focuses on how individuals use the observations of others as well as their own observations to construct their pictures of reality and use these pictures to guide behavior" (Dervin, 1983, p. 6). Dervin's approach to the study of information is highly situational, and focuses on what she considers to be three primary, across time/space variables: (1) situations, (2) gaps, and (3) uses. Most Sense-Making studies have utilized some form of Dervin's quantitative/qualitative instrument, the micro-moment time-line interview, for data

collection. Sense-Making has been the most widely applied interpretive theory of communication/information to date.

One of Sense-Making's greatest strengths lies in its innovative quantitative/qualitative methodology. The micro-moment time-line interview provides multidimensional qualitative measures for obtaining data that can then be effectively quantified. This blend of the qualitative and quantitative is part of what makes Sense-Making so distinctive: the quantitative ties it to ground of facticity within communication research, and yet the qualitative allows for a more meaningful analysis of individual and corporate constructive behavior.

Criticism that has been leveled against Sense-Making has been focused in three general areas: (1) that it tends to focus narrowly upon the individual as the constructor of meaning (as well as assuming a relationship between individual meaning construction and behavior), (2) problems that a situational focus poses in terms of the generalizability of research results, and (3) that structural concerns have often been overlooked.

Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Development

Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development provides a useful framework for understanding the cognitive/internal aspects of constructive behavior as

examined by Sense-Making. Perry's theory focuses on constructive development--the pairing of meaning constructive activity and cognitive development. As a stage theorist, Perry has outlined nine levels of cognitive and ethical development through a series of extensive interviews with college students. These levels of development range from simplistic and categorical to complex and contingent ways of understanding and knowing self and world. Perry examines the interface of intellect, ways of understanding the world, the nature of knowledge, and the identity of the individual.

One of the most evident limitations of Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development is that it is based solely upon college populations. It has been most widely and effectively used within higher education. Although validation studies have not yet been completed on Perry's work, its face validity is quite appealing. There is no indication that application of this theory would be inappropriate for application with more diverse populations, but it has as yet been untried.

As with most stage theories, there is the unfortunate indication that more advanced levels of development are more desirable than primary levels. Although Perry would not say that one level was to be valued above others, there is none the less potential danger in trying to hurry people

on in their development. In another sense it is valid to say that higher levels are to be valued more than lower levels because the individual who is functioning at a higher level of cognitive and ethical development is able to deal with a greater degree of complexity.

Another possible problem with the Perry scheme is that it is purported to be content-free, focusing instead on structural concerns. It would be interesting to test if individual developmental levels vary with particular types of situations or content.

Fowler's Theory of Faith Development

Fowler's theory of faith development focuses on the idea that:

Human beings necessarily engage in constructing frames of meaning for our lives, and we do this, with others, by making tacit and/or explicit commitments to value-and-power centers which promise to sustain our lives and meanings (Fowler, 1980b, p. 137).

It must be noted that faith is not necessarily invested in religious centers of value and power, and is therefore not to be confused with religion. Faith is a relational construct, and hinges upon our relatedness to ultimate concerns (what Fowler calls ultimate environment). Although this is also a stage theory, Fowler's focus is placed upon the notion of ultimacy that each stage sets forth rather than stages themselves. In other words, we need to focus

less upon immediate situations and look instead toward the issues of ultimacy that these situations point toward. Six stages of faith have been identified from extensive interview data with a wide variety of respondents, and range from simplistic ways of understanding self and other to more complex ways of being in the world.

As mentioned in the evaluation of Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development, Fowler's theory of faith development also runs the risk of judging certain stages as better than others. Since faith development theory has been widely applied in moral and religious education it is important to note that each stage needs to be recognized and developed to its full potential rather than hastening growth prematurely.

Fowler's theory has also been criticized on methodological grounds (some question the validity of his qualitative/quantitative methodology saying that he superimposed a preconceived framework upon his data). Much of this criticism was voiced earlier in his research efforts, however, following which time he and his associates have collected large amounts of interview data which substantiate faith development theory.

Finally, faith development has been criticized as largely Western and Judeo-Christian in focus. Although Fowler and his associates have included sample data on

people espousing a variety of religious (and agnostic/atheistic) orientations, this claim is true and needs to be addressed by future research efforts.

Similarities and Differences Between the Theories of Dervin, Perry and Fowler

Although the theories of Dervin, Perry, and Fowler have a great deal in common and could no doubt be used together quite effectively, they also have some differences which warrant consideration.

Dervin's Sense-Making, Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development, and Fowler's stages of faith are based upon many common theoretical works. The most pervasive of these roots stems from the great cognitive developmentalist, Jean Piaget. Such Piagetian notions as horizontal and vertical decalage, and accommodation and assimilation are illustrative of this influence (especially upon Perry and Fowler).

One of the most important ties that these three theories have, however, is that they all focus on structures of meaning (i.e., are all constructivist). Dervin, Perry, and Fowler are in strong agreement that the construction of meaning is an essential human activity. We "use the observations of others as well as [our] own observations to construct [our] pictures of reality and use these pictures to guide behavior" (Dervin, 1983, p. 6). In essence,

reality is something that exists as the person constructs it and is relatively nominal in nature.

An important question that the nominal nature of these theories poses is whether such a view of reality is appropriate for application to certain types of populations, situations, and subjects. For instance, religious populations create shared notions of ultimacy which tend to focus on what they consider to be objective truths or realities. In other words, if something is only real as I experience it, reality is continually in a state of change and there really is no objective, concrete reality which exists beyond the individual (i.e., exists only as the individual constructs it). Perry and Fowler attempt to redress this imbalance between nominalism and realism believing that much of our meaning construction takes place in relationships, and hence is larger than the individual. Fowler further develops this idea noting that each stage of faith contains its own notion of ultimacy which often undergoes dynamic change when the individual moves to another stage of faith. Hence, these notions of ultimacy are not just individual but also corporate. Ultimacy changes for the individual as he/she develops in faith. Kegan (1980) calls these stage specific constructions of ultimacy idolatries. Dervin, unlike Perry and Fowler, is very much a nominalist.

Also contained within the previous discussion is the subsidiary question of whether the schemes of Dervin, Perry, and Fowler (especially Perry and Fowler) are really content free. If they are not truly content free, this could confound accurate identification of individuals at various stages. Once again we must ask whether certain types of situations, topics, etc. tend to require certain types of meaning construction. Addressing this question, one of the things that Putnam (1980) asked in his dissertation which examined the development of male identity, is whether the stages of personal development that happen culturally also happen religiously. In other words, how representative of a person's overall development is one particular type of development? Because a person is dualistic in their faith or political orientation, must that person also be dualistic in other aspects of their lives? Perry and Fowler would say "yes" (with the exception of occasional deflection from growth), but there is little evidence to substantiate these claims.

One final consideration regarding theoretical similarity among the theories of Dervin, Perry, and Fowler focuses on their concepts of situation. As previously mentioned, Dervin's Sense-Making is highly situational--people make sense in situations. Situation is also one of the three across time and space variables that

Dervin focuses on in her research. Although Perry concurs with the situational basis of meaning construction, he does not really focus on situation per se. As discussed in the Chapter Three, however, the question was raised of whether certain types of situations call for certain types of thinking (e.g., cancer situation--or perhaps predictable versus unpredictable life crises/situations). Fowler, on the other hand gives a great deal of attention to situation--both preliminary situation and ultimate situation. Again, faith development theory says that the situations that we experience, and how we construct meaning within those situations, point beyond themselves to ultimate situation and concerns with ultimacy (i.e., those metaphors that unite our experiences and hopes and transcend the merely rational). Hence, situation has dual import, encompassing as well as extending beyond the individual.

In addition to being theoretically consistent, these theories also rely upon similar methodological concepts. All of these theories rely primarily upon relatively unstructured, open-ended interviews to obtain their data. Furthermore, since these theories are structural in nature their methodologies are relatively content-free. The preference for the use of structural theories in developmental and information research is no doubt apparent as they allow for individual variation in terms of content.

Application

This section will focus first on what Dervin's theory of Sense-Making can gain from the works of Perry and Fowler, and then secondly upon what Perry and Fowler might gain from Dervin.

What Dervin Can Gain from Perry and Fowler

Dervin and Perry

By bringing Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development to bear upon Dervin's theory of Sense-Making, we are better able to understand how individuals make sense of their worlds and how levels of cognitive and ethical development affect their sense-making. Perry's theory gives us a framework for understanding cognitive operations and stage specific approaches to orientations such as locus of authority, ability to decenter, types of situations that people find it difficult to assimilate into their experiences and as a result spur movement to other stages. What Perry has been able to provide is a framework for deepening our understanding of the individual, and Dervin provides a very useful methodology for doing this.

Research based upon Perry's scheme indicates that an individual's sensitivity to situation increases with more advanced levels of cognitive and ethical development. By

combining Perry and Dervin we might be able to see how an individual's perception of situation changes throughout a stage, or from one stage to the next including stage specific notions of time and space. These notions of time and space become evident in time-line interviews and focus on how a person sees themselves moving through a situation (chronologically, randomly, etc.), as well as what kinds of information assists or impedes their movement.

Thus, as we gain a more accurate understanding of meaning-constructive activity, we will also be better prepared to construct information that people will find useful in meeting their stage specific information needs. Several Sense-Making studies also indicate that by combining situations, gaps, or uses with other structural variables, such as stages or race, the power to predict behavior increased significantly (Atwood & Dervin, 1982; Nilan, 1985).

One final comment is that it should be noted that much of Sense-Making research focuses on what Perry would consider to be transition experiences--those disruptions (gap situations) in which we have to make new sense. These disruptive experiences can either encourage development or cause regression (or some sort of temporary deflection). Perry enables us to put these transitions in a developmental framework that helps us understand

the kinds of information needs a person might have when moving from one particular stage of development to another.

Dervin and Fowler

Fowler's theory of faith development provides two important considerations for Dervin's Sense-Making: (1) attention to relational construction of meaning, and (2) a sensitivity to concerns of ultimacy (ultimate environment).

Faith development theory asserts that we make sense individually, but also corporately within the cultures in which we are embedded. Fowler has suggested that we can understand faith communities by examining narratives of faith within those communities. This notion could be extended beyond faith communities to encompass a variety of cultures of embeddedness, but for the purpose of this thesis we will focus on faith communities. Fowler cites a typical faith narrative for a Christian faith community as focusing upon five narrative components: (1) a shared core story, (2) identification with the central passion of the shared core story, (3) formation of affections, (4) generation of virtues, and (5) practical and particular shape of worldly vocation (see Chapter Four, section on construction of meaning). Alignment with these narratives varies by faith stages and are evident in a number of orientations to concerns such as locus of control, role taking, form of

logic, form of moral judgment, bounds of social awareness, form of world coherence, and the role of symbols (see Appendix G).

Perhaps the greatest way in which Sense-Making could benefit from Fowler's notion of relational meaning construction would be a methodological expansion to tap data on a persons cultures of embeddedness. Structural variables such as race, religious orientation, economic levels, etc., if examined along with some of the aspects cited above such as locus of authority, form of logic, etc. might be one way to tap this data. In essence, this information could provide a larger picture of the individual, and hence greater generalizability.

A second way in which Sense-Making could benefit from faith development theory is in understanding issues of ultimate concern that underlie the more apparent and preliminary concerns that respondents cite. Little effective research has been done examining how present realities point beyond themselves to ultimate or symbolic realities (Kegan, 1980). Kegan (1980), in evaluating faith development research, notes that this might be accomplished by examining the following three ultimate concerns and the cultures in which they are embedded:

- (1) The universal tension between longing to be included and yet independent.

- (2) The universal experience of losing and recovering meaning or order.
- (3) The universal need to be recognized (Kegan, 1980, p. 411).

This information might be gleaned from Sense-Making's three across time/space variables--situations, gaps and uses. Other indicators of faith/cultural orientations might be understood by examining the afore mentioned aspects of faith development theory such as locus of authority.

In summary, by bringing the theories of Perry and Fowler to bear upon Dervin's Sense-Making it could achieve a deeper understanding of the individual and yet a larger view of how they construct meaning.

Applying Perry and Fowler to Dervin's Cancer Study Data

Both Chapter Three and Chapter Four contained sections in which the developmental structures of Perry and Fowler, respectively, were applied to interview data from Dervin's study on how cancer patients make sense of their health situations. What more might we learn from blending these three theories in relationship to the same interview data from the cancer study?

In review, it should be noted that Dervin has structured the time-line interview (see pages 69-71) to collect data on all three Sense-Making variables--situations, gaps and uses. In this particular instance,

the situation is treatment for cancer at a university hospital. One question (gap) was selected from the interview data for in-depth examination, and answers the respondent received to that question were analyzed as helpful or hurtful (uses).

According to Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development, locus of authority seems to be at a critical juncture in this situation. Most of the questions this patient identifies in the interview, either verbally or in her mind, deal with issues of control--are the doctors qualified? Am I really losing control of my own body? Am I losing my ability to control my own mind (to ask appropriate questions)? Fowler's theory supports the centrality of the issue of locus of control within this particular interview. The interviewee is experiencing movement from stage 3 to stage 4 along the faith development continuum. The patient no longer relies fully upon the authority bestowed upon medical practitioners and institutions but questions these traditional sources of authority based upon her own uncertain health situation. Note, however, that the patient is still reticent to make her questions public--to ask for answers.

Additional aspects of faith development that support the designation of this respondent as Multiplistic along the Perry scheme are as follows: (1) her form of world

coherence indicates that she is searching for clear boundaries in a very murky situation--she cannot handle mystery or additional ambiguity; (2) the patient judges the competency of her medical practitioners based upon norms purported by the medical community (the doctor told her that the interns who were treating her were really quite qualified to do the work they were doing)--an issue dealing with the patient's bounds of social awareness; (3) there is a certain sense in which the patient is questioning the "rightness" of the hospital system in which she is enmeshed (indicative of stage 3 of form of moral judgment); (4) if given a similar situation, the patient also believes that most other people would ask the same questions she was asking (indicative of stage 3 role taking); (5) the patient uses a dichotomizing form of logic--there are right and wrong answers to most of her questions; and finally (6) there is considerable indication that growth is occurring in regard to the patient's understanding of the role of symbols (she is willing to demythologize traditional symbols of authority such as doctors, hospitals, and medicine and to question the role they should have in her own life as well as their inherent validity).

Shifting now to Dervin's Sense-Making model, the patient's difficult health situation appears to be influencing movement in at least two aspects of her faith

structure and also within her cognitive developmental level of Multiplicity. These areas of movement deal with locus of authority and the role of symbols.

All of the questions (gaps) this patient expresses deal in some way with issues of control and power. Given her health crisis this should be no surprise; it would tend to accentuate an already present feeling of powerlessness.

Again, reflecting the interviewees inability to handle ambiguity at this juncture in her life, she is searching for "the secure answers" (uses). This search for secure answers indicates that her world is still divided into categories of rights and wrongs, and only an occasional unknown can be tolerated. Furthermore, the patient believes that secure answers are certain to help her, which is a rather naive approach to potentially hurtful news.

In summary, what kinds of information might have been most helpful for this cancer patient given her health situation and her levels of cognitive and faith development? It appears that a lack of information in three areas gave rise to her grave misgivings: (1) a lack of information about the mission and structure of the university hospital in which she was a patient, (2) adequate and understandable information on the medicine she was taking and what they

were doing to her, and (3) inadequate and infrequent information on the status of her cancer situation (no news is not necessary good news but the cause of anxiety). This patient is probably correct in her generalization that most people would ask similar questions given a similar situation.

In answering these questions, medical practitioners would need to focus on giving information that was as concrete as possible and yet understandable to a non-medical audience. "Secure" answers are difficult to produce in situations that are ambiguous by nature, but ambiguity could be minimized by making adequate information available to the patient. Sanford's principle of providing enough support to help people meet the demands of growth producing situations could further minimize the ambiguity. What constitutes support? In this particular instance it might have been frequent interaction with her health care givers and up-to-date information on the status of her illness. This could also be accomplished through the formation of voluntary therapy groups within the hospital situation that might aid in establishing a sense of connection and support among cancer patients. It does not seem as though it would be difficult for medical practitioners to meet these information needs, and in doing so could only contribute to the well-being of their patients.

What Perry and Fowler Can Gain from Dervin

Perry's theory of cognitive and ethical development and Fowler's theory of faith development can gain from Dervin's Sense-Making in similar ways: first, methodologically, and secondly with the application of across time and space variables--situations, gaps and uses.

Whether valid or not, Perry and Fowler have both been criticized upon methodological grounds for superimposing preconceived developmental stage structures upon their interview data. Both of these theories are based upon highly unstructured interview protocols which have yielded qualitative data that was later quantified by developmental schemes. As previously discussed, some researchers see this blend of qualitative and quantitative methodologies as a strength, and others see it as a weakness.

Dervin's Sense-Making provides a unique qualitative/quantitative instrument for data collection--the micro-moment time-line interview which focuses on situations, gaps and uses. By focusing on across time/space variables Perry and Fowler might avoid superimposing predetermined theological or psychodevelopmental structures upon their data.

Both Perry's and Fowler's theories could benefit from gaining an understanding of what kinds of questions people ask at various stages of development, in what kinds of

situations, and where they get helpful answers to these questions. Situation movement states, a measure of situation, could also provide information on how people see themselves moving through their situations as correlated with various stages of development.

In summary, Perry and Fowler could benefit from Dervin's Sense-Making methodologically and by applying across time/space variables.

Implications for Future Research

Dervin's Sense-Making approach to communication/information could be a powerful tool in examining a number of concerns that have surfaced in this thesis. These questions will focus on application so as to address the need within the interpretive school for applied theory (Delia, 1977). Dervin (1982) states:

The value of being able to predict the ways in which people will use messages is obvious. No matter what an institution is attempting to do-- in health communication settings, for example, to teach better health practices, prescribe curative regimes, or obtain volunteers--the ability to predict how messages will be used should, at minimum, provide guidance for planning communication efforts and, ideally, allow messages to be sent more efficiently and successfully (p. 806).

It should be noted that both the theories of Perry and Fowler have been widely applied in instructional settings (Perry's in "developmental instruction" within higher education, and Fowler's in religious and moral education).

Using Sense-Making to examine faith behavior along the lines of faith development theory, it might be helpful to pursue the following research questions: (1) How do people construct their faith narratives (view of time/space)? (2) Do these narratives differ by Perry positions? (3) What types of discontinuities (gaps) help people move along in their faith? (4) How/where do people seek/use answers to these questions during times of disruption or discontinuity (uses)? (5) how reflective is a person's faith narrative of what they perceive to be the faith narrative of their community of faith? If answers to these questions were found, their application could greatly assist faith practitioners (e.g., churches, religious educators, counselors, etc.) as they endeavor to assist people in their faith growth.

Turning now to Perry's scheme of cognitive and ethical development, researchers might ask: (1) Is situation a better predictor of information use/seeking than Perry positions? (2) Do developmental positions vary by situation or question content? (3) What types of correlations emerge between levels of development and perception of situation, questions asked within that situation, and uses that are an outgrowth of it? (4) Can Perry's developmental scheme be effectively applied to non-college populations (such as religious populations)? Answers to these questions could

provide useful information for a wide variety of practitioners seeking to more effectively plan and implement communication/information programs.

As communication researchers continue to explore how people make sense of and use information, seeking new ways to utilize interdisciplinary theories will become increasingly important. This thesis has endeavored to demonstrate one approach toward integration by utilizing the theories of Perry and Fowler to enrich Dervin's Sense-Making theory of communication/information.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Situations

Measures used to describe situations to date have included:

SITUATION MOVEMENT STATE: the way in which the person sees his/her movement through time-space being blocked (full copy of this measure follows in Appendix B).

SITUATION CLARITY: the extent to which the person sees the situation as unclear, as fogged.

SITUATION EMBEDDEDNESS: the extent to which the person sees the situation as related to other situations (a road intersecting with other roads).

SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS: the extent to which the person sees the situation as involving many others in his/her life.

SITUATION IMPORTANCE: the extent to which the person sees the situation as important to self.

PAST EXPERIENCE: the extent to which the person sees the situation as one he/she has experienced before.

ABILITY TO DEAL WITH: the extent to which the person sees the situation as one he/she is able to deal with.

POWER TO CHANGE: the extent to which the person sees the situation as one he/she has power to change.

OPENNESS TO COMMUNICATION: the extent to which the person sees the situation as one in which communication can flow both ways between participants.

STATUS IN SITUATION: whether the person sees his/her status in situation as higher than, lower than, or equal to others in the situation.

DISTANCE INTO SITUATION: whether the person sees the particular time-space moment as being at beginning, middle, or end of total situation or some point in between.

(Dervin, 1983, p, 57)

Appendix B

Situation Movement States

Different studies have treated these states in different ways, sometimes eliminating some, sometimes combining some. The description below is the most expanded version.

DECISION	Being at a point where you need to chose between two or more roads that lie ahead.
PROBLEMMATIC	Being dragged down a road not of your own choosing.
SPIN-OUT	Not having a road.
WASH-OUT	Being on a road and suddenly having it disappear.
BARRIER	Knowing where you want to go but someone or something is blocking the way.
BEING LED	Following someone down a road because he/she knows more and can show you the way.
WAITING	Spending time waiting for something in particular.
PASSING TIME	Spending time without waiting for something in particular.
OUT TO LUNCH	Tuning out.

OBSERVING

Watching without being concerned
with movement.

MOVING

Seeing self as proceeding unblocked
in any way and without need to
observe.

(Dervin, 1983, p 58)

Appendix C

Gaps

Gaps have been defined to date as the questions a person constructs as he/she moves through time-space. Listed below are the different ways in which the qualitative nature of questions have been described. Also included below are the set of additional measures which have been used in different studies to examine in detail the nature of information seeking for different kinds of questions.

5W TEMPLATE: Assessing the question in terms of whether it asks about a gap involving:

WHEN:	the timing of events.
WHERE:	the location of events.
WHY:	the reasons and causes of events, the motives of actors in the events.
HOW:	the procedures or skills for moving from one time-space to another.
WHO:	the identification of others.
WHAT:	the nature of objects, events, situations if not codeable above.

TIME FOCUS TEMPLATE: Assessing the question in terms of whether it asks about a gap involving:

PAST:	a time-space point prior to the point at which the person is not focusing.
PRESENT:	the time-space point which is the current focus.
FUTURE:	a time-space point that has not yet occurred at the time-space point which is the current focus.

VALENCE FOCUS: Assessing the question in terms of whether it asks about a gap involving:

BAD ROAD:	an actual or potential bad road, something not desired or wanted.
GOOD ROAD:	an actual or potential good road, something desired or wanted.

Appendix C
Continued

NEUTRAL ROAD: a question articulated neither in terms of a bad road nor a good one.

ENTITY FOCUS: Assessing the question in terms of whether it asks about a gap involving:

SELF: a gap where the major focus is self.
OTHER: a gap where the major focus is other.
OBJECT: a gap where the major focus is an object.
SITUATION: a gap where the major focus is a process or event.

Additional measures used to examine the nature of information seek for different kinds of questions:

EASE OF ANSWERING: The extent to which the person sees a question as easy, hard, or impossible to answer.

REASONS FOR EASE OF ANSWERING DIFFICULTY: The bases on which the person judges a question as difficult or impossible to answer.

QUESTION CONNECTEDNESS: The extent to which the person sees a question as connected to other questions.

WHO WOULD ASK: The extent to which the person sees the question as one that would be asked by none, a few, some, many, or all others involved in similar situations.

IMPORTANCE OR ANSWERING: The extent to which the person sees getting an answer to the question as important.

REASONS FOR IMPORTANCE: The bases on which the person judges a question as being important to answer.

ASKING OUT LOUD OR SILENTLY: Whether the person asked the question out loud or silently in his/her head.

REASONS FOR NOT ASKING OUT LOUD: The bases on which the person explains his/her not asking a question out loud.

Appendix C
Continued

ANSWERING SUCCESS: Whether an answer was obtained at the time the question was asked, later, or never.

REASONS FOR LACK OF ANSWERING SUCCESS: The bases on which the person explains not getting answer.

ANSWER COMPLETENESS: Whether the person saw the answer as complete or partial.

REASONS FOR COMPLETENESS/PARTIALNESS: The bases on which the person judged an answer as complete or partial.

ANSWER SOURCES: The places from which the person reported getting answers (including self, others, media, and so on).

GAP-BRIDGING STRATEGIES: The different strategies the person used to bridge the gap, including thinking, reading, emoting, comparing, and so on).

(Dervin, 1983, pp. 59-61)

Appendix D

Uses

Uses of information answers have been defined as the helps or hurts the person saw self as obtaining. While all the applications to date have been based on the same theoretic core, different studies have used different major categories. The most detailed list follows presented as helps. When used as hurts, the categories are restated in terms of whether a help was not achieved and in terms of whether a potential help turned out badly (i.e. didn't get a picture or got a bad picture). Usually the categories are applied in content analysis. A close-ended version has also been used.

GOT PICTURES/IDEAS/UNDERSTANDINGS

It is assumed that people need ideas in order to move. This category focuses on getting new or revised understanding, sense, pictures.

ABLE TO PLAN

In order to move, one must have direction. This category includes being able to decide, prepare, plan ahead.

GOT SKILLS

Moving frequently requires skills and this category taps being helped by acquiring them.

GOT STARTED, GOT MOTIVATED

Moving sometimes requires a push to get started. This category includes helps by getting motivated to start or finding ways to start.

KEPT GOING

Sometimes moving is in danger of stopping from lack of self motivation. This category includes helps by getting motivated to keep going.

GOT CONTROL

Here help needed is to gain or regain control.

THINGS GOT CALMER, EASIER

Here the helps involve making the situation easier and/or calmer.

Appendix D
Continued

GOT OUT OF A BAD SITUATION

Sometimes the situation is bad and the help obtained is getting out of it.

REACHED THE GOAL, ACCOMPLISHED THINGS

Here the helps involve achieving goals, arriving places.

WENT ON TO OTHER THINGS

Being able to leave this situation behind and go on to other things.

AVOIDED A BAD SITUATION

Here the helps involve seeing a bad situation ahead and avoiding it.

TOOK MIND OFF THINGS

Here the helps involve being able to put the situation out of mind temporarily or permanently.

RELAXED, RESTED

Here the helps involve obtaining pleasure, happiness, joy, satisfaction, or other pleased emotional states.

GOT SUPPORT, REASSURANCE, CONFIRMATION

Here the helps involve input in which the person feels his/her views are supported or confirmed or he/she feels reassured in some way.

GOT CONNECTED TO OTHERS

Here the helps involve being connected with others, not feeling lonely.

(Dervin, 1983, p. 62)

Appendix E

Micro-Moment Time-Line Interview from Cancer Study

(Dervin, Nilan & Krenz, 1982)

RESPONDENT # _____

CANCER INFORMATION NEEDS

Respondent's phone number: _____
Interview set for: _____
Interview to take place at: _____

FIELDING INFORMATION

Time interview started: _____
Time interview ended: _____
Date of interview: _____
Interviewer: _____

/CIRCLE ONE/

Chemotherapy

Radiation

**NOW GO TO THE FOLLOWING PAGES
AND CIRCLE EITHER CHEMOTHERAPY
OR RADIATION SO YOU WILL BE
SURE TO REMEMBER IT AT THE
INTERVIEW/**

Page 2, Paragraph 1

Page 2, Paragraph 3

Page 2, Paragraph 6

INTRODUCTION

First, I want to thank you for allowing us to interview you. As I told you on the phone, the purpose of this study is to learn how you dealt with a recent situation related to your chemotherapy/radiation treatment.

CONSENT FORM

Before we actually begin the interview, I would like you to read and sign this consent form which gives more details about this study and its purposes.

AFTER RESPONDENT SIGNS THE CONSENT FORM, CONTINUE/**OVERVIEW**

What I would like you to do is to choose a situation relating to your chemotherapy/radiation treatment, one that stands out in your mind. The questionnaire process is one where I'll be travelling with you through this situation. We will be doing this in some detail which is why I told you the process would take 1½ to 3 hours. As we proceed, you may have some memories and we want to hear all of them. We have a questionnaire structure which guides how and when we ask you about different parts of your memories. By using this structure, we can compare your experiences with others', while still allowing you to recall your particular experiences.

LETTING R TALK

As we go through this process, there may be times when you get a lot of ideas bottled up in your mind and you really want to say them all at once. If this happens, just let me know and we'll take time out for me to just listen to you and then we'll return to the questionnaire structure afterwards.

**PERMISSION
TO RECORD**

To help both of us in this process, I would like, with your permission, to tape record the interview. This is only so I won't have to take as many notes while you are talking and the interview can go quicker and more like a conversation. I will use the tape only to help me reconstruct our interview, afterwards it will be erased. At no time will your name or any other identifying characteristic be attached to the tape. Would this be o.k. with you?

THE SITUATION

Now we are going to begin the interview. I want to assure you as we start that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I will be asking. Now what I want you to do is to choose a situation that occurred in the past that related to your chemotherapy/radiation. This situation could be one where you were visiting the doctor or another health practitioner, going to the hospital, doing something at home, or simply an occasion when you were dealing with the treatment and its effects on you personally or your life situation, like your family. I'll give you a minute to get that situation in mind.

**FILE CARD
METHOD**

Now what we are going to do, in essence, is have you tell me everything that happened to you as you went through this situation...by happen I mean things that you and others did and said, and things that just happened. These can be things that happened during the treatment itself or things before or after, at home or at the doctor's office or at the hospital.... all the

things that happened as part of this situation. The easiest way to do this is to think of your situation as a journey that I will be taking with you through the situation, from the beginning until the end, as if we are moving from one place to another, even if this place is just in your head...and we are going to take pictures of everything that happened. I'm going to let one of these file cards equal each one of the pictures and every time you tell me something that happened, I'll write down what you say on a card. To start, think back to the very first thing that happened in this situation. What was that?

/RECORD EVENT ON BLUE CARDS -- NUMBER EVENTS 1 - nn/

QUESTIONS

Pretend now that you are back there when /READ EVENT/. Focusing right there, go back in your mind and what I want is a list of the questions that you had then...by questions, I mean things that you wanted to find out about, learn about, come to understand, unconfuse or make sense out of. It is important that you see that you need not have asked the question out loud, nor need you have found an answer...it is like a hole in your thinking that you faced then. Sometimes these would not even have been in your mind as questions, but rather simply as unclear aspects of your thinking about the situation or your feelings. In these cases what I need you to do is to translate that aspect into a question, or to simply talk about that aspect so together, we can translate it into a question.

EXAMPLE

Let me give you an example as if we are in a grocery store. I just wheeled my cart into the produce department. That is my photograph. My questions might be: Where are the avocados? How can that man wear purple pants in public? Why is that man spraying the lettuce? Are mushrooms still \$3.00 a pound? I wonder if the corn is as good as it looks? Etcetera.

Now let's look at your event /READ EVENT/. Think back, what questions did you have in your mind at this point in time?

/RECORD QUESTIONS ON WHITE CARDS -- NUMBER QUESTIONS 1.1 - 1.n; 2.1 - 2.n; ETC/

What happened next?

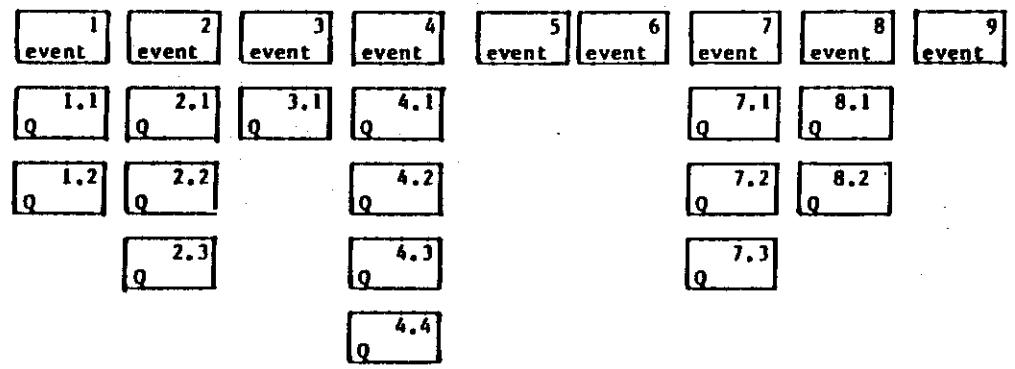
/RECORD EVENT ON NEW BLUE CARD AND NUMBER/

Think back to this point in time. What questions did you have?

/RECORD ON NEW WHITE CARD AND NUMBER/

/CONTINUE UNTILL ALL EVENTS AND QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RECORDED AND NUMBERED/

NOTE: EVENT CARDS AND QUESTION CARDS SHOULD BE LAID OUT IN FRONT OF R ON TABLE, LIKE SO:



THIS RESPONDENT HAS NINE EVENTS AND A TOTAL OF FIFTEEN QUESTIONS.

SITUATION REVIEW

Now that we have these verbal pictures or photographs of your situation laid out, what I want you to do is to think about the events and questions to see if you'd like to add anything. You can do this now... or, if as we proceed you think of something else, you can add it then.

REDUCING TO EIGHT QUESTIONS

Now what we are going to do is explore these questions in more detail. First let me count the number of questions that we have.

/COLLECT THE QUESTION CARDS AND COUNT. LEAVE THE EVENT CARDS LAID OUT AS A MAP OF R'S SITUATION/

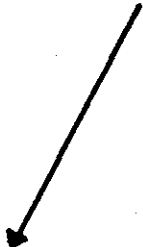
IF 8 QUESTIONS OR FEWER
PROCEED WITH NEXT STEP

IF MORE THAN 8 QUESTIONS, DO RANDOM SELECTION PROCESS
TO REDUCE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS TO EIGHT

We will only have time to explore eight questions in detail so I am going to put all your questions together like a pack of cards and let you help me by randomly picking all but eight of them.

/GO THROUGH DELETION PROCESS/

Now I am going to return the selected questions to their positions under the events they came from so we can analyze them in depth.



REPETITION
PROBLEM

As we analyze each of these questions some of the things I will be asking may seem a bit repetitive...remember though that what we are trying to do is to have me go back through the situation with you and sometimes this requires repetition...and in fact, you may have in your own mind kept returning to the same things during this situation, so this is all right. I want you to think deeply about what did happen and what you thought, and share as much of your thinking as you can. When we are going through the process of the questionnaire, there may be times when you need to think for a few minutes about something. Please let me know if you don't understand one of my questions so that I won't disturb your thinking. If at any time you feel that something you said earlier fits at this moment, tell me.

ANALYSIS OF
THE FIRST
QUESTION

We'll start with this first question....

/COMPLETE ONE "QUESTION ANALYSIS SECTION" FOR EACH QUESTION SELECTED FOR IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS/

QUESTION ANALYSIS SECTION

RESPONDENT # _____
QUESTION # _____

1 WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO DO AT THIS TIME?

The question we are focusing on here is READ QUESTION. People have told us that when they have a question IN THEIR MINDS that there is something that they are trying to cope with, or understand, accomplish, figure out, survive, endure, tolerate.

EXAMPLE

For example, in the grocery store example that we used before, when I turned into the produce department and asked if the mushrooms were still \$3.00 per pound, what I might have been trying to do was to decide whether or not to get some mushrooms for myself because I like them, but I was worried about paying too much. I also might have been just curious because even though I don't like mushrooms, it is interesting to me that people will pay up to \$3.00 per pound, like maybe that guy in the purple pants.

Think back to when you asked REVIEW QUESTION IN YOUR MIND. What was it that you were trying to do by asking this question? It's o.k. to take time to think.

2 WERE YOU HINDERED?

People have told us that they sometimes see themselves unable to cope with, understand, accomplish, figure out, survive, endure, tolerate. When you had this question IN YOUR MIND REVIEW QUESTION did you see yourself as blocked or hindered in some way?

No Yes



3

How did you see yourself blocked? _____

4 WHAT LED TO THIS QUESTION?

Is there anything else you can tell me about what was IN YOUR MIND that explains why you focused on this question?

5 **HOW IS THIS Q CONNECTED?** Sometimes when we have questions IN OUR HEADS they seem to stand alone while at other times they seem connected to a whole lot of other questions we have. Was this question /REVIEW QUESTION/ connected or related IN YOUR MIND to any other questions that you had at this time?

No Yes

6 Which one? _____ 7 How? _____

8 Which one? _____ 9 How? _____

10 Which one? _____ 11 How? _____

12 Which one? _____ 13 How? _____

14 Which one? _____ 15 How? _____

16 **HOW MANY OTHERS WOULD ASK?** If other people were in a situation like this, how many of them do you think would ask this same question IN THEIR MINDS...all of them, a lot of them, about half, just a few, or none?

All A lot About half Just a few None of them

17 **HOW HARD TO GET ANSWER AT THAT TIME?** Think back again to when you asked this question IN YOUR MIND /REVIEW QUESTION/. I'd like you to judge how hard it seemed IN YOUR MIND at this time to get an answer to this question. If a one means that it seemed very hard and a ten means that it seemed very easy, would you say that getting an answer seemed like it would be a one or a ten or somewhere in between?

Very easy / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / Very easy

18 **WHY?** Why did you see it this way? _____

19 **GETTING ANSWER EVER EASIER?** Did getting an answer /REVIEW QUESTION IF NECESSARY/ ever seem harder or easier?

Same as before Harder Easier

20 On that same scale of one to ten, which number did it move to? _____

/RECORD NUMBER/

21 Why did it change? _____

22 AT THAT TIME HOW IMPORTANT?

Think back once again to the moment when you asked this question IN YOUR MIND...and tell me how important getting an answer was to you at that time? If a one means that it was very UNimportant and a ten means that it was very important, would you say that getting an answer to /READ QUESTION/ was a one or a ten or somewhere in between?

Very unimportant / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / Very important

23 WHY?

Why did you see it this way? _____

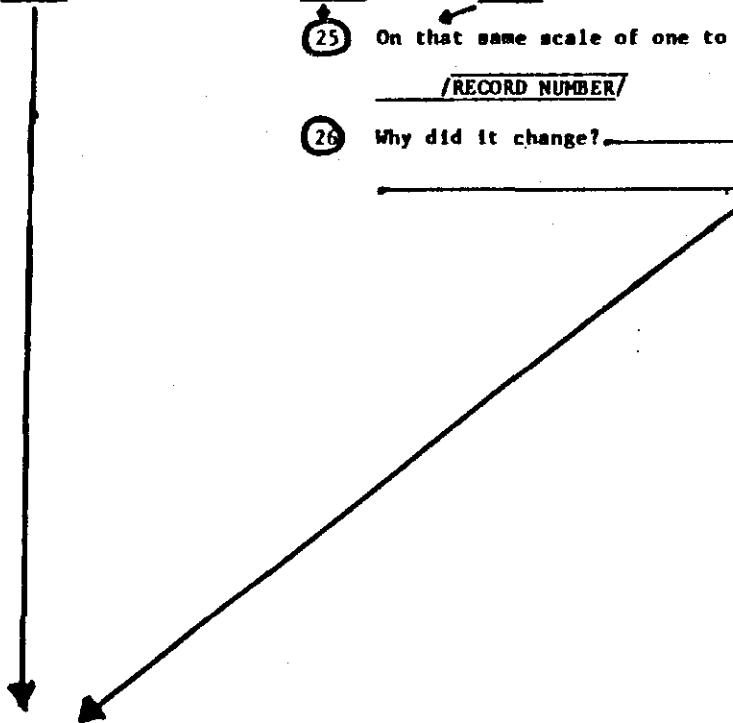
24 GETTING ANSWER EVER MORE IMPORTANT?

Did getting an answer ever seem more or less important?

Same as before Less More

25 On that same scale of one to ten, which number did it move to?
_____/RECORD NUMBER/

26 Why did it change? _____



27

AT THAT TIME ASK OUT LOUD?

Did you actually ask this question /REVIEW QUESTION/ out loud to someone at this time?

Yes

No

28

WHY DIDN'T YOU ASK?

People have given us many reasons for not having asked their questions, such as thinking their question was one that simply had no answer, or that there wasn't anyone around who would be able to answer it, or that their question was too personal, or perhaps they just couldn't think of a way to ask the question. Think back to when you asked /REVIEW QUESTION/ IN YOUR MIND and tell me why you didn't ask this question out loud.

29

EVER ASK OUT LOUD?

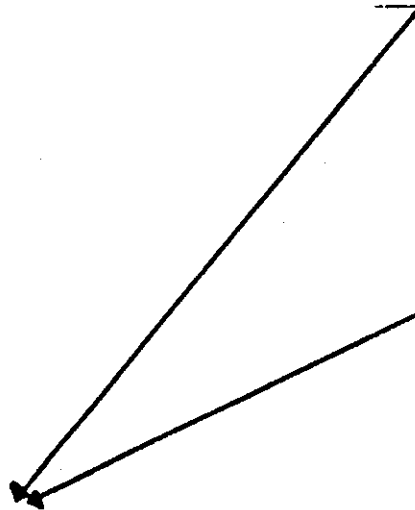
Did you ever ask this question /REVIEW QUESTION IF NECESSARY/ out loud to someone?

Yes

No

30

Why didn't you ever ask this question out loud?



31 GOT ANSWER AT THIS TIME?

Did you get an answer to this question at this time...by answer I mean something which filled the hole that the question represented IN YOUR MIND...the hole could be filled in many ways, for example by something someone said or did, by your own thinking, actions, reading, watching TV, and so on. Did you get an answer to this question when you asked it at this point in time?

No Yes

38 Did you EVER get an answer to this question? /READ QUESTION/

No Yes

39 Was it a complete or partial answer?

Partial Complete

40 What was it about the answer that was partial?

41 What was it about the answer that was complete?

Yes

32 Was the answer complete or partial?

Partial Complete

33 What was it about the answer that made it seem partial?

34 What was it about the answer that made it seem complete?

35 Did your feelings about the completeness of the answer ever change?

No Yes

36 How did it change? Did it become more or less complete?
____ More _____ Less

37 What was it that changed the completeness of it for you?

42 How did you get this answer?

/CONTINUE ON PAGE 6F IN THE SAME COLUMN YOU ARE IN NOW/

/CONTINUE ON PAGE 6F IN THE SAME COLUMN YOU ARE IN NOW/

43 EXPECT HELP? When people look at answers they get to questions, they've told us they can judge the answers in terms of whether the answer helped them in some way. I'd like you to think back to when you asked this question **IN YOUR MIND**. Did you expect an answer to help or facilitate you in some way?

No Yes

44 How? _____

48 DID NOT GETTING ANSWER HELP? Did NOT getting an answer to your question help or facilitate you in some way?

No Yes

49 How? _____

/CONTINUE ON PAGE 6G IN SAME COLUMN AS YOU ARE IN NOW/

45 EXPECT HELP? When people look at answers they get to questions, they've told us they can judge them in terms of whether the answer helped or facilitated them in some way. I'd like you to think back to when you asked this question **IN YOUR MIND**. Did you expect the answer to help or facilitate you in some way?

No Yes

46 How? _____

47 Did the final answer you got help you in the way you expected?

No Yes

50 ANSWER HELP? Did the final answer you got actually help you in any (other) ways?

No Yes

51 How? _____

/CONTINUE ON PAGE 6G IN SAME COLUMN AS YOU ARE IN NOW/

52 EXPECT HURT? People also tell us that they can judge answers to their questions in terms of whether the answer hurt or hindered them in some way and that frequently they see the same answer as hurting them even when it helped. Think back to when you asked this question IN YOUR MIND. Did you expect an answer to hurt or hinder you in some way?

No Yes

53 How? _____

57 DID NOT GETTING ANSWER HURT? Did not getting an answer to your question hurt you in any way?

No Yes

58 How? _____

54 EXPECT HURT? People also tell us that they can judge answers to their questions in terms of whether the answer hurt or hindered them in some way and that frequently they see the same answer as hurting them even when it helped. Think back to when you asked this question IN YOUR MIND. Did you expect an answer to hurt or hinder you in some way?

No Yes

55 How? _____

56 Did the answer you finally got hurt in the way you expected?

No Yes

59 ANSWER HURT? Did the answer you finally got actually hurt you in any (other) ways?

No Yes

60 How? _____

/GO TO THE NEXT QUESTION FOR THIS EVENT/
/LAST QUESTION THIS EVENT? GO TO FIRST QUESTION OF NEXT EVENT/
/LAST QUESTION AND LAST EVENT? GO TO PINK CONCLUDING SECTION/

CONCLUDING SECTION

RESPONDENT # _____

61 That was a long process and I want to thank you for your patience. I have a few more questions about your health situation. As you think back on the entire experience with cancer, what questions would have been most helpful if you HAD gotten answers to them at the time you had the questions?

62 At what point in this entire experience did someone say something or do something that was maximally helpful to you?



Yes

63 What was it that they said or did that was helpful to you?

64 If you had the chance to give other cancer patients some advice, what would that be?

65 Now I have just a few questions about yourself and your household. How many people 18 years of age or older live in your household including yourself?

_____ Adults /GET SPECIFIC ANSWER/

66 How many children, people under 18, live in your household?

_____ Children /GET SPECIFIC ANSWER/

67 Are (or were) you employed outside the home?

___ No ___ Yes

68 What was the highest grade you completed in school? /GET SPECIFIC ANSWER/

Elementary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
High School	9	10	11	12				
College	13	14	15	16				
Post-grad	17+							

69 How old are you?

_____ Years /GET SPECIFIC ANSWER/

70 Finally, would you indicate for me which of the following categories your family income falls into?

/HAND RESPONDENT THE INCOME CARD/

- ___ A. \$4,999 or less
- ___ B. \$5,000 to \$9,999
- ___ C. \$10,000 to \$14,999
- ___ D. \$15,000 to \$19,999
- ___ E. \$20,000 to \$24,999
- ___ F. \$25,000 to \$29,999
- ___ G. \$30,000 or more

CLOSING SCRIPT

I want to thank you very much for doing the interview. I want to leave this postcard with you in case you want a copy of the final report. Just mail it in and you'll be put on our mailing list.

Thank you very much!!

71 INTERVIEWER: Record sex of respondent below.

___ female ___ male

Appendix F

Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Development:
Nine Positions of Development

(Perry, 1970)

MAIN LINE OF DEVELOPMENT

Position 1: The student sees the world in polar terms of we-right-good vs. other-wrong-bad. Right Answers for everything exist in the Absolute, known to Authority³ whose role is to mediate (teach) them. Knowledge and goodness are perceived as quantitative accretions of discrete rightnesses to be collected by hard work and obedience (paradigm: a spelling test).

Position 2: The student perceives diversity of opinion, and uncertainty, and accounts for them as unwarranted confusion in poorly qualified Authorities or as mere exercises set by Authority "so we can learn to find The Answer for ourselves."

Position 3: The student accepts diversity and uncertainty as legitimate but still *temporary* in areas where Authority "hasn't found The Answer yet." He supposes Authority grades him in these areas on "good expression" but remains puzzled as to standards.

Position 4: (a) The student perceives legitimate uncertainty (and therefore diversity of opinion) to be extensive and raises it to the status of an unstructured epistemological realm of its own in which "anyone has a right to his own opinion," a realm which he sets over against Authority's realm where right-wrong still prevails, or (b) the student discovers qualitative contextual relativistic reasoning as a special case of "what They want" within Authority's realm.

Position 5: The student perceives all knowledge and values (including authority's) as contextual and relativistic and subordi-

³The implication of upper-case initials is probably clear enough in context here. Their particular denotations throughout this monograph, especially when paired against lower-case initials (e.g., Authority vis-à-vis authority), are defined in the Glossary next to the foldout Chart of Development at the end of this monograph.

nates dualistic right-wrong functions to the status of a special case, in context.

Position 6: The student apprehends the necessity of orienting himself in a relativistic world through some form of personal Commitment (as distinct from unquestioned or unconsidered commitment to simple belief in certainty).

Position 7: The student makes an initial Commitment in some area.

Position 8: The student experiences the implications of Commitment, and explores the subjective and stylistic issues of responsibility.

Position 9: The student experiences the affirmation of identity among multiple responsibilities and realizes Commitment as an ongoing, unfolding activity through which he expresses his life style.

CONDITIONS OF DELAY, DEFLECTION, AND REGRESSION

Temporizing: The student delays in some Position for a year, exploring its implications or explicitly hesitating to take the next step.

Escape: The student exploits the opportunity for detachment offered by the structures of Positions 4 and 5 to deny responsibility through passive or opportunistic alienation.

Retreat: The student entrenches in the dualistic, absolutistic structures of Positions 2 or 3.

Appendix G

Faith Development Theory by Aspects

(Fowler, 1980b)

TABLE 1: FAITH STAGES BY ASPECTS
(FROM "FAITH AND STRUCTURING OF MEANING")

Aspect Stage	Form of Logic (Piaget)	Role-Taking (Selman)	Form of Moral Judgment (Kohlberg)	Bounds of Social Awareness	Locus of Authority	Form of World Coherence	175 Role of Symbols
0							Undifferentiated combination of basic trust, organismic courage, premonitory hope with admixtures of their opposites—preconceptual, prelinguistic mutuality.
1	Preoperational.	Rudimentary empathy (egocentric).	Punishment—reward.	Family, primal others.	Attachment/dependence relationships. Size, power, visible symbols of authority.	Episodic.	Magical-numinous.
2	Concrete operational.	Simple Perspective taking.	Instrumental hedonism (reciprocal fairness).	"Those like us" (in familial, ethnic, racial, class and religious terms).	Incumbents of authority roles, salience increased by personal relatedness.	Narrative-dramatic.	One-dimensional; literal.
3	Early formal operations.	Mutual Interpersonal.	Interpersonal expectations and concordance.	Composite of groups in which one has interpersonal relationships.	Consensus of valued groups and in personally worthy representatives of belief-value traditions.	Tacit system, felt meanings symbolically mediated, globally held.	Symbols multi-dimensional; evocative power inheres in symbol.
4	Formal Operation. (Dichotomizing)	Mutual, with self-selected group or class (social).	Societal perspective; Reflective Relativism or class-biased universalism.	Ideologically compatible communities with congruence to self-chosen norms and insights.	One's own judgment as informed by a self-ratified ideological perspective. Authorities and norms must be congruent with this.	Explicit system, conceptually mediated, clarity about boundaries and inner connections of system.	Symbols separated from symbolized. Translated (reduced) to ideations. Evocative power inheres in <i>meaning</i> conveyed by symbols.
5	Formal operations. (Dialectical)	Mutual with groups, classes and traditions "other" than one's own.	Prior to society, principled higher law (universal and critical).	Extends beyond class norms and interests. Disciplined ideological vulnerability to "truths" and "claims" of out-groups and other traditions.	Dialectical joining of judgment-experience processes with reflective claims of others and of various expressions of cumulative human wisdom.	Multisystemic symbolic and conceptual mediation.	Postcritical rejoining of irreducible symbolic power and ideational meaning. Evocative power inherent in the reality in and beyond symbol <i>and</i> in the power of unconscious processes in the self.
6	Formal operations. (Synthetic)	Mutual, with the commonwealth of being.	Loyalty to being.	Identification with the species. Trans-narcissistic love of being.	In a personal judgment informed by the experiences and truths of previous stages, purified of egoic striving, and linked by disciplined intuition to the principle of	Unitive actuality felt and participated unity of "One beyond the many."	Evocative power of symbols actualized through unification of reality mediated by symbols and the self.

Appendix H

Faith Development Interview Protocol

(Fowler, 1981)

FAITH DEVELOPMENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

Part I: Life Review

1. Factual Data: Date and place of birth? Number and ages of siblings? Occupation of providing parent or parents? Ethnic, racial and religious identifications? Characterization of social class—family of origin and now?
2. Divide life into chapters: (major) segments created by changes or experiences—“turning points” or general circumstances.
3. In order for me to understand the flow or movement of your life and your way of feeling and thinking about it, what other persons and experiences would be important for me to know about?
4. Thinking about yourself at present: What gives your life meaning? What makes life worth living for you?

Part II: Life-shaping Experiences and Relationships

1. At present, what relationships seem most important for your life? (E.g., intimate, familial or work relationships.)
2. You did/did not mention your father in your mentioning of significant relationships.

When you think of your father as he was during the time you were a child, what stands out? What was his work? What were his special interests? Was he a religious person? Explain.

When you think of your mother . . . [same questions as previous]?

Have your perceptions of your parents changed since you were a child? How?

3. Are there other persons who at earlier times or in the present have been significant in the shaping of your outlook on life?
4. Have you experienced losses, crises or suffering that have changed or “colored” your life in special ways?
5. Have you had moments of joy, ecstasy, peak experience or breakthrough that have shaped or changed your life? (E.g., in nature, in sexual experience or in the presence of inspiring beauty or communication?)
6. What were the taboos in your early life? How have you lived with or out of those taboos? Can you indicate how the taboos in your life have changed? What are the taboos now?
7. What experiences have affirmed your sense of meaning in life? What experiences have shaken or disturbed your sense of meaning?

Part III: Present Values and Commitments

1. Can you describe the beliefs and values or attitudes that are most important in guiding your own life?
2. What is the purpose of human life?
3. Do you feel that some approaches to life are more "true" or right than others? Are there some beliefs or values that all or most people *ought* to hold and act on?
4. Are there symbols or images or rituals that are important to you?
5. What relationships or groups are most important as support for your values and beliefs?
6. You have described some beliefs and values that have become important to you. How important are they? In what ways do these beliefs and values find expression in your life? Can you give some specific examples of how and when they have had effect? (E.g., times of crisis, decisions, groups affiliated with, causes invested in, risks and costs of commitment.)
7. When you have an important decision or choice to make regarding your life, how do you go about deciding? Example?
8. Is there a "plan" for human lives? Are we—individually or as a species—determined or affected in our lives by power beyond human control?
9. When life seems most discouraging and hopeless, what holds you up or renews your hope? Example?
10. When you think about the future, what makes you feel most anxious or uneasy (for yourself and those you love; for society or institutions; for the world)?
11. What does death mean to you? What becomes of us when we die?
12. Why do some persons and groups suffer more than others?
13. Some people believe that we will always have poor people among us, and that in general life rewards people according to their efforts. What are your feelings about this?
14. Do you feel that human life on this planet will go on indefinitely, or do you think it is about to end?

Part IV: Religion

1. Do you have or have you had important religious experiences?
2. What feelings do you have when you think about God?
3. Do you consider yourself a religious person?
4. If you pray, what do you feel is going on when you pray?
5. Do you feel that your religious outlook is "true"? In what sense? Are religious traditions other than your own "true"?
6. What is sin (or sins)? How have your feelings about this changed? How did you feel or think about sin as a child, an adolescent, and so on?
7. Some people believe that without religion morality breaks down. What do you feel about this?
8. Where do you feel that you are changing, growing, struggling or wrestling with doubt in your life at the present time? Where is your growing edge?
9. What is your image (or idea) of mature faith?