

Acknowledgements

I am thankful to Western University for granting me Academic Leave so that I can finally present the Chaos Strategics Planning Process diagram that Kenneth G. Wilkins, BSc, Mathematics (Western), MA Sc, Management Science (Waterloo), my late husband and I worked on over time evolving originally from my Doctoral Dissertation. I dedicate this work to his memory.

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On a personal note I would like to acknowledge Susan Haley MSc, my sister, she encouraged me to be methodical, task-oriented and stay focussed. As a result, I developed thorough outlines and once I started to write the text and ideas began to flow.

I am also grateful for my many friends and colleagues who have joined me providing encouragement and laughter on this writing journey.

Preface

I am thankful to have been granted academic research leave by Western University. To prepare to write I took a course on mindfulness practice at Harvard University and am continuing with my mindful practice on a daily basis. I truly value and enjoy my solitude as it enables me to be reflective and gain energy, and may even share insight. That is for you the reader to determine. This writing project brings together 3 important facets of my professional-and-personal life: my education as a musician; my education as a librarian; and my life-long partnership and conversations with Kenneth G. Wilkins, with whom this manuscript first came into view.

Why am I writing this now?

I am finally ready to write this book having taken time to reflect over my career coupled with my personal reflection following the passing of Kenneth G. Wilkins, my husband and am determined that his thoughtful, creative, and insightful work, on the Chaos Strategic Planning Process which provides an overview to the Chaos Strategic Planning Process be presented for review, discussion and application (represented in the original diagram in Appendix A). This writing and Kenneth's original diagram, will be preserved into perpetuity in open access on Scholarship@Western, the institutional repository of Western University. For this I am truly thankful. It is my belief that this will honor Kenneth's thinking, and his memory. He was a proud graduate of Western University.

Purposeful Voicing

I am writing in first person narrative so that this work and the ideas are active, personal, thoughtful, reflective and authentic. To prepare for my writing journey, I read numerous

volumes to get my head into first person narrative. The writing of numerous authors is most inspiring – Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Philip Glass, Neil Postman to name a few.

My Quest, My Voice, My Music

I am sharing my quest, my story mapped out in a narrative timeline outlining the sequence of events and connections of how the Chaos Strategies Planning Process evolved from my dissertation in 1995, coming full circle to 2018.

Following completion of my dissertation, *The Changing Library Environment* I went through a period of reflective thinking about whether the process and the resulting document was of value to other researchers. Now in 2018, looking back, the dissertation was valuable in terms of both content and process. The research methodology followed the Delphi method, which is used for future oriented study. This enabled and informed my thinking about mapping to future directions. One of the key outcomes of the dissertation was a conceptual summary, a framework with a diagram (Illustration: figure 4). The framework provided a theoretical structure to synthesize symmetrically and thereby capture the perspective of the past, present and future. The use of a diagram helped to focus on the theoretical structure and maintain symmetry for each subset frame of reference. The use of the symmetrical structure for analysis made it possible to identify the transformation factors in order to be able to develop their potential future relevance that influenced the change. Once the transformational factors between the past and present were developed, it was possible to postulate or project the factors affecting the transformation between the present and the future. Succinctly, applying the modeling process enables projection of a probable future. The concept of applying the framing construct to project a probable future is key. This can be broadened from libraries to many organizations.

The future is always my greatest driving interest! Music is my compass and pathway for thinking, but my thinking about chaos as creativity came after the dissertation, and was a spinoff from reading about chaos theory in science and mathematics. I was looking for something greater, more at 30,000 feet and I continue to be interested in the future of libraries and education at 30,000!

My quest for exploring with three decades of ongoing reflection

My exploration of the future of libraries and education began in the early 1990's and I am sharing three decades of ongoing reflection and learning as these decades are how my story unfolds to now!

Crafting the Dissertation

My dissertation resulted in the development of the Frame of Reference for the Changing Library Environment. The Framework was based on key elements within the library environment understood through the lenses of past, present and future timeframes and identification of factors that cause change. The Framework was symmetrical to synthesize the data for the past and present and create a foundation for projection into the future library environment and role of the librarian. The change or transformation factors, allow for both monitoring and a projection capability. It is important to note that the frame of reference does not predict the future however, following its principles it suggests a likely or probable future framework to enable the design of future libraries and training programs for professionals and users. The process of following the

design principles to project a likely or probable future framework is the part of the process that is most meaningful for me and I hope for my readers.

Sharing the Dissertation

It was now time to talk about my dissertation. This was a daunting task as I began to talk about it and the more I talked the more I flowed. I considered these talks as performances and for me—with my Music background--this is “flow”. Once I gave several talks--presentations to professional library and research associations across North America-- I began to consider-- broadening the Frame of Reference to make it applicable to a variety of organizational settings. I realized this process would take time and require more investigation and learning.

Testing my quest

Conducting a Feasibility study with Public and School Libraries (1996) was a fortuitous example of the application of the framework model for assessing the feasibility of collaboration between public and school libraries. Following completion of the Study, I was invited to present my findings to the Canadian Library Association. My quest to test my quest was evolving and I needed to continue to explore the literature further.

Exploring new ideas projecting the future

The 2000's provided time for more exploration and reading the literature about organizational change, strategic planning, organizational behaviour, and chaos theory – in science and mathematics. Chaos theory was an intriguing concept and platform for ideas. “What if” became integral to my thinking and fuelled my quest!

During the 2000's I was leading and learning in my voice and gave numerous talks, that is, performances—using my Music background-- in my voice, to a variety of audiences in libraries, business, research, and education.

My reading interests included organizational change and organizational behaviour from the perspective of the social sciences, and I was seeking literature that made sense within the context of libraries and educational institutions. At the same time, I was reading about chaos theory specifically the writing of James Gleick's, who cites the research on chaos theory of Edward Lorenz and others. Gleick and others write about chaos in relation to science and mathematics. My early understanding of chaos theory then was conceptual relative to science and mathematics; subsequently, I began to explore the literature about chaos in other disciplines, returning to Tom Peter's *Thriving on Chaos* from 1987 and reading broadly from there.

Music continued to be my compass, central to my thinking, with reflective practice and listening serving as a pathway forward.

Thinking from 30,000' my quest in the clouds

Around 2001 I had an idea to explore chaos theory and discuss the idea of looking at chaos terminology in, and applicability across, disciplines and timeframes. My personal assignment at that time was to begin to collect quotations and articles of interest related to chaos. I considered that chaos could be a possible source of ideas like “what if?”, and open new thinking related to change and creativity, within the context of libraries and education.

Mapping the Chaos Strategics framework

In the early 2000's Kenneth and I continued to discuss how the original Frame of reference could be abstractly applied to a variety of organizational situations and settings. He re-crafted and evolved the original framework into the Chaos Strategics Planning Process seen in Appendix A, Figure 3. This diagram continued to evolve, and he integrated his ideas from mathematics for clarity. We discussed this at length and continuously over many years. We wanted the diagram to present an overview of the planning process in such a way that is could be understood by readers at a glance. This meant that the diagram should be able to stand on its own and be understood. Of course, we all see things differently so there were several versions of this Figure and I have included the final version in Appendix A. Figure 3.

Going to Harvard

Completing the Harvard Academic Libraries Leadership Course influenced my thinking and was a stimulating learning process. Two concepts stood out to me: “going to the balcony” and “kaleidoscopic thinking”. “Going to the balcony “is the metaphor for taking stepping out of the room, going to the side-bar getting a view of the big picture of organizational context. Joan Gallos, (Harvard, 2007) suggests that we all have a “blind spot” and we need to identify it and be aware that we may miss things in our analysis of problems and situations. Her metaphor is a helpful reminder and I practice it on a daily basis. At graduation, in his closing remarks, Joseph Zolner (Harvard, 2007) passed around a kaleidoscope, his symbol for the leadership process. He stated that all leaders need to think “kaleidoscopically”, which means thinking on many planes simultaneously. I have come to think that “going to the balcony” enables reflection and may

open pathways to creative thinking. The kaleidoscope concept captures the multiple modes of leadership and change. When I make presentations, I send my kaleidoscope around and share this perspective.

Writing from 30,000' literally

During 2009-10 I was travelling around North America with a group of colleagues involved in a library leadership fellowship program. During this period of travel, we were learning about various research library settings. I spent much of my flying time drafting an article outlining the Chaos Strategies Planning Process. This is the foundation for Chapter 2 of this manuscript.

The music continues with the passing of Kenneth

With the 2013 passing of KGW, my husband, I came into a period of simultaneous reflection and motivation. I was deeply committed to completing the manuscript and motivated to write and publish the Chaos Strategies overview framework to share in an open access platform. I was exploring and learning, and music continued to be my pathway for exploring chaos as creativity.

Exploring chaos, and creativity through music

I dove back into the literature and developed a proposal for Academic Leave and also focussed on playing the piano and listening to music intensely. The scope of my literature search became an exploration of chaos theory and chaos not just across disciplines but also over time periods. As I dove into the literature to explore chaos across disciplines, and over time it became clear to me that chaos is an integral aspect of change opening us to creativity. In my view we actually benefit from and need chaos to open our minds, and thinking to change, and creativity in order to

go forward and create our future, the future we want and deserve. As a result the title for this writing is: Chaos as Creativity.

Today is a new day – Chaos as Creativity

My Academic Leave commenced in June 2017, and I am sharing my story through this wonderful opportunity for new learning, reading, thinking and writing with music as a compass and now an underlying analogous theme. I am purposefully speaking in my voice as a librarian, a generalist and musician. Writing, performing and presenting as forms of dissemination, are through my voice. This creative work is truly energizing! I hope you will be energized as you read and consider ways for exploring new ideas using chaos as creativity in order to create the future you want!