

How Fred and Merrelyn Emery didn't get into *The Palgrave Handbook of Organizational Change Thinkers*

Merrelyn Emery with Don deGuerre and Philip Deering

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This is the story of how the work of Fred and Merrelyn Emery didn't make it into *The Palgrave Handbook of Organizational Change Thinkers*, Szabla, D.B., Passmore, W., Barnes, M., Gipson, A.N. (Eds). (2017). Palgrave Macmillan.

Invitations were extended to us to write two chapters documenting the work of both Fred and Merrelyn but ultimately neither chapter was found acceptable. This story extends over about two years with several twists and turns as the reasons for delaying publication of our contributions changed over time. We publish both chapters here exactly as they were last presented to the editors.

Their final rationale for rejection was that the quality of our writing and grammar is not up to scratch. It would be tempting to be sarcastic about the exacting standards of English spelling and usage for which Americans are renowned but we will resist such unworthy thoughts. We consider their rationale to be risible but we will leave it to readers to judge for themselves the crassness of our grammatical errors and our degree of general ineptitude with the English language.

We did everything possible to comply with editorial requests to achieve publication but it gradually became obvious that it simply wasn't to be. Eventually, just recently, we pulled the plug on the whole venture as it had descended into farce. One of our colleagues who had been following it with us described it as "extraordinary" and we agree. That is why we have decided to write it up as we believe it should see the light of day.

As the action unfolded, the reader will note that despite talk about editor's discussions, there was little evidence of coherence of editorial judgement or policy implementation. Both chapters followed the format and other guidelines down to the letter and constantly attempted to grapple with vaguely worded criticisms that none of the editors could elucidate. We dealt with Mary Barnes as our primary contact and editor and increasingly it became clear that her judgement was under pressure from other editors until finally it was overridden. Towards the end we saw that she had no more idea of what was going on than we did. We all thank her for her work and her honesty.

In the following blow by blow account, I have drawn mainly from the documentation surrounding Fred's profile for the obvious reason of his status in the field and the fact that I have the most time available to devote to the task. However, the process for both chapters followed much the same pattern. Throughout we have collaborated closely not only on the original chapters but on this article as well. It is the work of us all.

As it happened

On 3 January 2016 I received the following email from Bill Passmore, David Szabla and Mary Barnes:

“Dear Merrelyn,

As the editors of a new Palgrave MacMillan handbook entitled “The Enduring Thoughts of the Thinkers of Organizational Change”, we are reaching out to you because we see you as a foremost scholar in the field of organizational change. Our handbook profiles several renowned organizational change thinkers, and we would like to engage you as a contributing author. Don de Guerra shared your email address with us.

The aim of this handbook is to introduce the reader to an assemblage of thought about change in organizations by providing a clear and concise overview of key developments in the field over the last 100 years. The handbook features inspiring and thought-provoking profiles of legendary organizational change thinkers highlighting significant advancements in how organizational change has been conceived, theorized, researched and practiced. This handbook captures in one manuscript the concepts, theories, and models of the sages who invented, built, and advanced the research and practice of change in organizations. Each chapter will be written by a different contributing author and feature the influences and motivations, key contributions, new insights, legacies and unfinished business of a renowned organizational change thinker.

After creating the list of Organizational Change Thinkers, we have identified you as one of the scholars who would be a perfect fit to write a chapter about Fred Emery. We are writing you personally to assess your interests in participating in this project prior to putting out a general call for contributors. We feel your experience and expertise not only in the field of organizational change, but specifically with Fred Emery, will add significant value to the project. We have attached a summary of the book and chapter requirements for your consideration”.

The email went on to document the positive response, the list of “great thinkers”, those who had agreed to write and ended with the normal courtesies about further questions.

I responded on 12.1.16 saying I would be happy to contribute a chapter documenting Fred Emery’s major innovations. On the same day I received a statement of purpose, word limit, “questions to guide your writing”, a suggested chapter outline together with the statement: “you can adjust the outline to suit your Thinker as long as the big picture goals of the chapter are met”. As it happened I found the suggested chapter outline entirely appropriate and used it without adjustment.

The note finished with: “Our list of thinkers is still evolving and currently it is a male dominated group...if you can think of any women that should be included that would be most helpful to us”. Two days later (14.1.16) I wrote “David, I have now had a good look at the list of ‘thinkers’. As discussed in the attached note, there may be reasons for excluding me from that list but I can’t think of them”.

I received a response the next day. “Dear Merrelyn, thank you for your thoughtful note about including you as a legendary thinker in our handbook. Your credentials are certainly impressive and warrant inclusion in our handbook! We are excited to learn that you are willing to be profiled. Please excuse us for overlooking you as a thinker. BIG apologies from us here in America.

Given that you will be profiled, is there a person you would like to engage to write your profile? Many of the thinkers being profiled have suggested colleagues or proteges to write their profiles. Please let us know if you have a willing contributing author, or if you would like us to identify one for you. How about Don de Guerre?

Many thanks and apologies, and we look forward to hearing from you.”

I then (16.1.16) contacted Don deGuerre and Philip Deering, another close colleague in Montreal, thanking Don for recommending me as the author of Fred’s contribution and asking them would they accept a joint authorship of my profile as I knew they were both very busy. I promised full cooperation.

Both responded positively, immediately and the three of us began discussing content.

We begin work (February to November 2016)

About five weeks later (28.2.16) I wrote to Don and Philip explaining that I had adopted the evolutionary approach to Fred’s contribution because “that is the reality of OST (as well as the way Fred worked)” and discussed our cooperation across the chapters to avoid duplication through cross referencing. Throughout March and April, and indeed the whole process, the three of us collaborated to ensure readers had the most comprehensively educative chapters about the work of our subjects.

I sent the first draft of my chapter to Don, Philip and the editors on 17 April, 2016. Don and Philip sent their first draft on 24 April. I received editor’s comments 24 November 2016, revised immediately and sent revision with thanks to Mary Barnes in particular. “Many of the difficulties seem to have been stylistic. It is written in a free flowing, easy to read style but is still accurately referenced throughout. A related difficulty involved the translation of all single quotation marks into doubles. These have been clarified. Generally I think most if not all identified problems and/or questions have been resolved.

Mary, if you are not satisfied or have further concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me again, thanks again.”

At the end of November we swapped drafts and comments and worked over the next week to satisfy reviewers of Don and Philip’s chapter.

On 27 November I received a thank you note from the editors and on 29 was contacted by the publisher: “With this email, we invite you officially to be the author of Fred Emery...”, with instructions on how to submit. This was followed up on 9 January 2017: “**Dr Szabla has re-reviewed and approved your revised contribution** (my emphasis). Can you please upload a clean copy as soon as possible. We will then move it to production”. There were no corrections to be made so I immediately uploaded a clean copy. *At this point everything seemed to be a perfectly normal example of the publishing process.*

Uh oh, we have problems (February – July, 2017)

On Feb 17, 2017, David Szabla wrote: “Dear Don and Philip,

We appreciate all of your effort developing a chapter on M. Emery for our Great Thinkers of Change Handbook

However, after a rigorous review of your manuscript we cannot accept it at this time. We believe that all of the content is there, but the writing lacks clarity and you do not adhere to our guidelines.

One suggestion is to engage a good writer to work with you to develop the chapter so that it meets our expectations.

We have included the writing guidelines and sample chapters so that you understand our expectations.

Please let us know how you would like to proceed.

All our best,”

Don, Philip and I exchanged some emails and I did some editing of their chapter. On 13 March Don asked if I would be the professional writer they asked for. I replied: “I am not sure I should be ‘that good writer person’, doesn’t seem quite right to me, but am doing a bit of editing on the way though to make it a little more of an engaging style... Will get it to you asap, ME”

On 14 March I sent them a clean edited version with “hope this helps”.

Don and Philip sent the revised draft to the editors on 20 March. “I hope the attached version is more acceptable. We tried to follow the guidelines and the exemplars. We very much appreciated your work and all your feedback, particularly Mary Barnes.

Let us know if this one works. Don”

They also waited and waited and on 14 May Don asked Mary whether the revised draft was acceptable or not as David had not responded to his previous email. Mary responded with “Greetings from Morocco. I read it before I left and think it is fabulous. You’ve done a great job of incorporating the input and telling Merrelyn’s story. Hopefully David will get back to you soon. However, I’m certain you won’t have a ton of edits. Nicely done. Thanks!”

We see here that there wasn’t even a hint from Mary Barnes that she saw errors of such gravity that they would sink any possibility of publication, on the contrary!

During the same period of time I was on an even rockier road

On 19.2.17, two days after Don and Philip got their letter, I received this note from Mary Barnes: “Merrelyn,

We are getting close to the end and are revisiting all of the chapters and doing a once over. At that time, we realized that, **while we had invited you to submit earlier, there is still some work to do** (my emphasis). Please see the attached Word doc that includes track changes with some suggestions. One of the major revision requests is that the length exceeds the maximum limit set up in the guidelines”.

Also, I converted all of the models you provided into picture formats so they do not get corrupted as we move forward with formatting into the online book format. Please make sure the new pictures are correct - some of the formatting had already been corrupted and I had to guess in placement with some figures.

If we can get this turned around by the end of the month, we can make sure the chapter is included in the first edition of the print version. Otherwise, it will be published online as soon as we get it and included in the second edition of the print volume.

Thanks so much for the great article - I really enjoyed reading and learning more about Fred and his work!” (my emphasis).

Obviously at this time there was no concern about understanding or grammatical inadequacy. However, something had gone terribly wrong.

So that same day (19.2.17), I wrote back: “Mary, what is going on?

I was informed by the publisher that my chapter had been approved on 9.1.17 and I submitted a clean version on 10.1.17. I have just checked the website which says the chapter is in production

I have not yet read the version I have just received from you but can see already from the first page that there are mistakes in it. Fred received a Doctor of Science as I stated in my earlier version to you

I am more than a little confused and would appreciate an immediate clarification, thanks,”

Mary responded that it sounded like some “version control issues” – she would investigate. I thanked her.

Her response came on 1.3.17. “Merrelyn - Okay - I've taken a look at both documents and the history of events. Best I can tell, you incorporated some of our initial comments but somehow bypassed the final review before uploading to Meteor. This is not your fault.

However, as we were reading all of the chapters as they were going into production, we realized that your chapter was "in production" in the system, even though we, as the editors, had not signed off on final approval [*compare statement from publisher above*].

As we reviewed, we realized you were over the word limit and we also wanted to see more info in the unfinished business section. To make it as easy as possible, I have combined the two documents and there are just a few comments for you to address. The two major comments are to **cut some information from the Key Contributions section and to add some more information in the unfinished business section**. The other comments are really just things to check or reword for clarity (and rereading one more time to make sure you're happy with it). [*Key contributions section is the centrepiece of each chapter and what came to be later dismissed as just “a listing of accomplishments”. I should have smelt a rat right there as in retrospect, these suggestions are designed to play down Fred's contribution.*]

I'm so sorry for the inconvenience. I know how frustrating it is to think a task is checked off the list just for it to pop back up again. Hopefully this is an easy lift and you can send it back to us this week for inclusion. Again, my apologies for all of the confusion and the last minute emergency when you were so responsive in meeting the deadlines. The logistics of 80 contributors and chapters to review has been overwhelming at times. Thanks!”

Again on the same day (1.3.17) to get everything back on track as quickly as possible, I wrote: “Mary, I am resending the last version I sent you. You will note that all your comments have been addressed either by making changes or by further comment or explanation. All references were addressed and made consistent. The Palgrave editor explicitly stated that he accepted all changes and comments.

I have no idea what version you were working from in the attached you sent me but it goes backwards by miles. I do not intend, and have no spare time at the moment, to go back over old ground. And where did the Distinguished Service Cross come from? - it is bizarre.

So let's just forget that last effort from you and work from the one I am sending you again today. How does this shortening process work when it is already in production. That usually means no further changes can be made?

I don't mind bringing it back a little to get closer to the word limit but I won't be lengthening the unfinished business section. It is illogical. No variety of science is ever

finished and certainly a social science that explicitly studies social change could never be, ME”.

I waited two weeks for a response before trying again.

14.3.17. “Mary, I have been waiting for a response from you, particularly in relation to the question of whether changes can still be made. Obviously I don't want to waste my time trying to shorten the chapter if it won't be used so I wonder if you have any further info on that score. Thanks,”

Time was ticking by so on **3 April** I wrote “Hi Mary,

it is now over two weeks since my second request for info regarding my chapter on Fred. I understand you are busy but I would appreciate some answers as to its current status and what is happening to it. Thank you,”

Over three weeks later, (27.4.17) I wrote to all three editors “I am sure you are all frantically busy but could someone please let me know whether I have to edit Fred's chapter for length or not? Thanks,”

Mary responded immediately then: “Merrilyn (sic) - Sorry for the delayed response. I thought I had responded over a week ago, but I can't find the message in my sent box.

We talked about your chapter as an editorial team. The main consensus is that the chapter still needs some work. The two main comments are (1) the length and (2) **the clarity** of the article. The article reads like someone who is brilliant and close to the material wrote it, which is true and by design. However, that means that those of us who only have peripheral knowledge of Fred's research gets lost in the minutia.

Bill offered that maybe bringing in a co-author - someone like Ron Purser from San Francisco State - might help **synthesize the content** to the point where the lay person can understand Fred's contribution to the field **without** getting wrapped around the axle with **the details**.

The article you submitted initially should be your starting point - I'm not sure why we had such a version control issue with your chapter, but the detailed comments were all in an effort to address the larger comments mentioned above. Starting from your initial submission will hopefully resolve those issues and reduce the level of work required by you.

Please let me know if this doesn't make sense or if you have any questions. I am copying my work email as well so that, if you reply all, I will make sure to get the email and respond quickly. Thanks!”

That was the first I had heard of difficulties with clarity or comprehension and again, I should have become suspicious that what they really wanted was all the meat removed but I didn't. I responded cooperatively the next day: “Thanks Mary, that is all fine and I know where I can summarize the details to give a clearer picture. Let me have a go at it first and if that still is unsatisfactory, then we can bring in a third party. I have to finish a research report over the weekend but will get straight onto it then.

Shouldn't take me long, ME”

Mary replied with “Perfect. Thanks so much”.

I sent revised draft on 5 May with “Hi Mary, please see attached. It comes in at 5961 words up to Further Readings.

I have removed most of the confusing details and simplified the sentence structures. I hope I have preserved some understanding of the work, its evolution and the man responsible for most of it. Please let me know if this is satisfactory or whether I need to do more, “

On the same day Mary replied: “Got it - I'll take a look and let you know before Wednesday, May 10”

On 16 May I wrote: “How's it going Mary?”

I then also received “Greetings from Morocco! I read through it and reached out to the others. While it is much better, I still feel like there was something missing. However, I was hoping to get another opinion before I responded because it is really **well written and informative**. I am hoping to hear back from David and Bill shortly”.

So we have now established that “it is well written” and again there don't seem to be any problems with comprehension. There is just some mysterious thing missing.

Time went by again and on **5 July** I asked Mary if there was any chance of hearing from her.

On 6 July I received the following from her: “Yes - I was able to talk to folks this morning. There is consensus that the chapter is not where it needs to be **flow and style-wise** when compared to the other chapters in the book.

Our push back is really to make sure that Fred and your work is able to shine amongst all the other chapters. I still think the issue is that you are such an expert in the work you are sharing that you are able to make mental connections based on your expertise and context that the common reader cannot.

Our suggestion is that you bring on someone to give you that outsider perspective to update the article. We think that it will ensure that your chapter is on par with the other chapters and appropriately highlights the work. Alternatively, if you are satisfied with the chapter as is, despite our concerns, let me know. We can publish it as is as long as you accept the risks/concerns I laid out above.

Let me know how you would like to proceed. Thanks!”

So the chapter has stopped being “well written” as the mysterious missing ingredients have been identified as inadequacies “flow and style-wise”. Similarly, it has stopped being “informative” and will be beyond the “common reader”. But they can still publish it if I am prepared to accept the “risks”.

Two days later (8.7.17) I sent Mary the following note: “Mary, as is my normal practice I sent the original draft of my chapter out to a few others for comment and have kept them in touch with its progress, or the lack of it.

Quite frankly, we are all mystified. Rather than vague statements about flow and style, for which in this particular case, I have been commended, perhaps you could give a couple of examples that might clarify what you are on about. Thanks, ”

I tried again two weeks later (23 July): “Hi Mary, once again I am chasing you for a response. We are all busy but surely a minute or two documenting a couple of examples of what you and other editors mean here would be possible. Thanks, ME”

I received a response the next day: “Merrelyn - As soon as I received your last email, I reached out to Bill to confer. We have not been able to touch base yet. However, as I said in

my last email, if you are comfortable with your shorter article as is, then we will move forward with publishing it as is.

Because the critique is a conceptual one, I'm not sure I can say "the transition between sentence x and sentence y is too ambiguous" or some other specific citation. The thought from the editors was that the storytelling flow of the chapter wasn't there; it was more of a **listing of accomplishments**. That there was some context missing that might seem common sense to you, but that left readers unfamiliar with the work feeling a little lost.

The folks profiling you had a similar critique on their first draft and were able to work together to revise in a way that addressed it and **their article has moved forward without issue**. Perhaps you could read their final version, if you haven't already, to see if you notice a difference in flow and feel? [*The irony here of course is that I did the editing that she is now suggesting I read.*]

At this point, if you are unsure of how to address the, admittedly, more general critique and are happy (and have received compliments) on the shorter article as is, then I suggest you move forward. If that is what you would like to do, let me know and I will make sure you have an invite to submit from the publishers. Thanks!"

I immediately sent back the following: "Thanks Mary, I see now we are operating from different perspectives. I am quite happy that the list of accomplishments are the story, the key contributions as requested.

I have made some very few, and minor changes to the attached so would be grateful if you could move it along. Many thanks". Mary then immediately responded " Will do. I'll reach out to Palgrave today. Thanks!"

On 24 July I also wrote to Don and Philip,

"I gather from Mary Barnes that your write up of me has gone through. She is recommending I read it as an example to follow.

Apparently, FE has too many accomplishments, and not enough story! I would be grateful if you could send me through final draft, ta, ME"

Don immediately responded: "How ridiculous. Here it is". I sent back "Yeah, totally ridiculous and I think hilarious. I am very pleased that it is more accomplishments than story and I know FE would have been too. Thanks for the doc, ME

And then with a long drawn out whimper...

I then waited until 31 August when I sent this: "Sorry to trouble you again Mary but I have been waiting for any contact by the publisher but have received only notification that 'The book" has been published.

The website still listed my paper as it was at the beginning of January.

It would be nice to know exactly what is going on with this project? Thanks,"

Mary responded (1 September): "Merrelyn - It is no trouble and I am so sorry communication continues to slip through the cracks with you. We had an editors call after I last spoke with you and David said he would be reaching out to you so I stopped tracking the status. Here is where we are: [It was a long list of details, timelines etc and included her belief that "the chapter about you was included in that first edition, but not your chapter about

Fred". She finished "If you do not hear from David Szabla about the status of your chapter in more detail by September 8th, let me know and I will do some more digging. Thanks!"

I sent back my thanks.

Another 11 days passed before I sent: "Mary, difficult to believe as it is, here I am once again having to ask for the information that I was supposed to receive from David Szabla by 8th September. Good thing I'm not a raving paranoid isn't it."

Would it be too much to ask for an honest timely response from someone? Thanks, ME"

Mary wrote back: "Merrelyn – it is not too much for you to ask and I can't apologize enough for the lack of communication. I am just as frustrated as you. I have forwarded this email already and will call David on his cell phone first thing tomorrow morning to try to get you an answer as soon possible. Again, I am so sorry..."

That was the last time I heard from Mary Barnes.

I also wrote to Don and Philip on the same day: "do either of you know what is happening with our chapters?

I have been trying to extract info from the editorial 'team' to no avail. I am not normally given to raving paranoia but I can feel it coming on, ME

Don wrote back on 25 September: "...I have not been able to get information either. Saw Bill Passmore at the STS Roundtable but he was not sure either. Here is a guess. I have heard (not in writing) that the print copy will be published in November and that the online version will become available after that. But there seem to be some online now so I am confused and decided to just not worry about it.

I responded that I was not worried but angry, with the incompetence and lack of professionalism. "Anyway, if you do hear anything, please let me know the state of the art of this shambles, ME"

I then waited nearly three months until 9 December when I sent the editors a letter:

Dear Editors

I last contacted any of you when I asked Mary Barnes on 18th September, 2017, if it would be possible to get an honest response to my queries as to what was happening to my chapter on Fred Emery's contribution to organizational change. On 19th September, she advised me that she was going to contact David Szabla by phone to obtain that information.

In what has now become a totally predictable sequence of events, I have received nothing. I gather from my colleague Don deGuerre that he also has been unable to extract any information about the fate of our chapters.

I would remind you all that the work of Fred and Merrelyn Emery and their colleagues around the world actually achieves change, not just the change of a few words on a page but the real thing in organizations and the behavior of people who inhabit them, measurable, tangible and long lasting. That work continues but you certainly wouldn't know it from perusing this Handbook.

After this long drawn out, primarily negative experience which appears to have achieved nothing for reasons which remain unknown, I will refrain from regaling you with a list of adjectives possible of describing the nature of the process to date.

Rather, I would just ask again if you could, now, that you have had a significant period of time to consider a response, actually provide one.

Thank you,

On 18 December 2017 we all received a note from David Szabla:

Dear Merrelyn,

Thank you for the note. I appreciate your concern and all of the editors (Mary, Bill, Asha, and I) believe that both you and Fred should be profiled in the handbook.

To be candid, the writing of the profiles did not meet our standards. The profiles did not precisely follow the format and there were several clarity and grammatical issues with the writing.

I assigned your profile of Fred to a student of mine who is editing your profile and I should have feedback soon to share with you.

Don and Phil, is it possible to get another author engaged with your profile of Merrelyn who has exceptional writing skills and who can develop a profile of the quality to the one attached? Please let us know.

Sorry for the delay in my response, but with some work we should be able to include the two profiles in the current online version of the handbook and the second edition which we are planning to release in 2 years.

All my best,"

Don, Philip and I then exchanged emails as follows:

Don (21.12.17): Comments? What are you going to do? Were you asked to upload your chapter to Meteor? We were and I did. I thought it was published.

What a mess. d'

I replied "Months and about 2 drafts ago, the publisher accepted my chapter but the editors apparently cancelled it. Not asked since.

We are about to start a huge rollout of PDWs and DP2 across the country after weeks of training up an implementation team and all relevant prep (with high level resistance) and scarcely have time to think. I will respond to this mob later probably about end of Jan. Will copy you.

In the meantime we will see what they come up with – my bet is a concept free zone by an unrecognizable man, ME

Nothing happened so on the 4 April, 2018 I sent a note to the editors with copies to Don and Philip:

"Hi David and all,

it is now a while since we corresponded and of course we are all eagerly awaiting the grammatical write up of Fred's contribution.

Would it be possible for you to advise of its ETA?

Many thanks, ME"

There was no response so on 20 August I wrote to Don and Philip informing them of the new website and continuing: "So now back to the 'change thinkers' - as they have obviously

gone to ground and are playing possum, I suggest we alert them to the existence of the new website and will be setting up a new heading called 'news' about developments in OST. Haven't got the precise words yet but we somehow let them know that we will publish our pieces up there with a commentary about the fact that they were deemed unsuitable for their illustrious publication. What do you all reckon? ME

Philip sent me a thumbs up.

The next day (21.8.18), that is four months after our last request for information, we received this:

Dear Merrelyn,

Sorry about the delayed response, but the development of the handbook was put on hold for several months. We are just beginning to work on the second edition which will be launched at AOM next August in Boston.

We plan to include profiles of organizational change thinkers who did not make into the first edition and to add several additional thinkers.

Regarding your chapters, unfortunately, we do not have the work force to restructure profiles, to perform line-by-line editing, and to address sentence and paragraph clarity and grammatical issues. We wish we could help, but we just don't have writers/editors available to complete significant re-writes of the profiles. [*I wonder what happened to the student?*]

I spoke with Oguz Nuri Baburoglu at AOM as I understand he has written with you in the past. I sent him an email to see if he might engage with you to complete the chapters. I have yet to hear back from him.

I sense that the most effective and efficient action would be to engage either co-writers or ghost writers to help with the two chapters.

Attached are the writing guidelines for the second edition as well as sample chapters from the first edition which are well-done that can be used as models for your chapters.

We wish we could be more supportive.

Let us know how you want to proceed.

All the best,

David

None of us responded.

On the 23 August, we also received this: "Hi Merrelyn,

I just received an email from Marc Bonnet who I saw at AOM in Chicago last week. He mentioned that Mark Hillon is interested in writing about Fred in our handbook. Would you be interested in collaborating with Mark on Fred's chapter?

Mark defended a bright doctoral thesis on socio-tech supervised by David Boje and Henri Savall. Please let us know. All my best,

I then wrote to Don and Philip:

"Does this look suspiciously like divide and conquer to you? No mention of you two, ME"

Don responded thus: "I don't like his response ... – David Boje on Fred? Who is Marc Bonnet? Yes, it feels like divide and conquer".

I then sent the draft of this article around for comments and suggestions. On 22 September, 2018, I responded to David Szabla's email above with "David,

Thanks for the offer but it is time to put this whole farcical episode to bed.

Don, Philip and I are publishing both chapters elsewhere. Will inform you of details when finalized, ME".

And so there dear reader, you have the lot, the whole sorry and sad little saga.

To conclude

Mainly we have let the quotes above speak for themselves and have not spent a lot of time speculating about the real reason for rejecting our chapters. However, we think Mary Barnes may have inadvertently given the game away, 24 July, 2017: "The thought from the editors was that the storytelling flow of the chapter wasn't there; it was more of a listing of accomplishments".

As I wrote to Don and Philip early on in the process, both the guidelines and the evolution of Fred's work themselves suggested the profile should be the story of the conceptual development of Fred's theory and practice. In this way the reader could track the integrated conceptual and practical evolution through recent history to reliable, successful action in the field. The list of his accomplishments *is* the 'story'. He didn't just *think* about organizational change, he worked out how to *actually change organizations*, fundamentally, reliably and sustainably for the benefit of the people and organizational performance. That is documented over time and place.

By creating a totally different conceptual framework based on the reality of open rather than closed systems, with the constructs necessary and sufficient to guide action towards active adaptation, Fred rendered much of the current effort of thinking about and tinkering around the edges of organizational change a dead end. Whatever our American friends want to believe, practices built on closed system theories such as Change Management, and on old sociotechnical methods which ignore the genotypical design principles and systemic change, are merely historical curiosities. They are going nowhere.

Perhaps that is the real reason our chapters were rejected?

