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Designing flourishing societies as a practice of cultural futures

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Can we design for a flourishing society?
A practice of cultural futures

Peter Jones, PhD
OCAD University, Toronto
Dialogic Design International

Relating Systems Thinking to Design 4, Banff  Sept 2
Flourishing in the long crisis of the Anthropocene

one mess affects all the other messes
Crimes Against Nature: The Banality of Ethics in the Anthropocene

Among the great crimes of the twentieth century, the most enduring will surely prove to be human disruption of the Earth’s climate.

The effects of human-induced climate change are apparent now and will become severe this century, but the warming is expected to last thousands of years. That is so because extra carbon dioxide persists in the atmosphere for a very long time, but also because changes in the climate are triggering changes in the Earth System as a whole – changes that cannot be undone.

If it is a crime to transform the Earth into a hot and less habitable place, what are the offences committed by those responsible? A panel of eminent jurists this year published some principles to guide us. The Oslo Principles note that “all States and enterprises have an immediate moral and legal duty to prevent the deleterious effects of climate change.”
What do we want from sustainability?

“The possibility that human & other life will flourish on this planet forever”

John Ehrenfeld, MIT

Flourishing – Is this too audacious?

What is it that sustainability sustains over time, and why?
Requirements for Flourishing – A Culture Map

1. Clean air & water
2. Vibrant soil for food
3. **Healthy eco-systems** creating materials for us & rendering our wastes harmless

Organizations co-operate, collaborate & compete to best meet our needs today & in future, while creating the wealth to meet shared needs (education, infrastructure, etc.)

Individuals choosing to flourish emotionally, spiritually, physically, practically, artistically & economically

Trusting relationships focused on well-being with all our fellow citizens (neighbours, communities, cities, regions & countries)

Macro: Natural Sciences

Macro: Cities, Places, Social Systems

Meso: Businesses, Organizations, etc.

Micro: Physiology, Psychology, etc.
The Business Model as Design Planning
Business Model Canvas – the Language of Profit Prioritizing Business

*From “The business model canvas – why and how organizations around the world adopt it – a Field Report”
“A business model is a description of how an organization defines and achieves success over time.”

**Emerging mode of co-creative planning & design**

- Adapting business design artifacts toward flourishing outcomes
- Consistent with systems & social thinkers (Ulrich, Law, Beck, Giddens, Ozbekhan)
- Every stakeholder has perspective, values, relations And opportunity to contribute to *evolutionary design*

- Creates “tri-impact” by being *tri-profitable*
  - Financially rewarding
  - Socially beneficial
  - Environmentally regenerative
A common language to collaboratively sketch, prototype, design, share, measure, diagnose & tell stories about a flourishing business model

Based on 3 years of graduate research + 3 years of practice community R&D.

Ontology & visual canvas – Extending Osterwalder’s successful Business Model Canvas & PhD
Strongly Sustainable Business Model Research Group

International Practice Community

Monthly presentations (2\textsuperscript{nd} Tues)

24+ Workshops since RSD3

Design science approach to iterative development & evaluation of methodology

Publication of supporting ontology & framework

First Explorers using Canvas
An Ontology for Strongly Sustainable Business Models
Defining an Enterprise Framework Compatible With Natural and Social Science

Antony Upward
Peter Jones

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Abstract

Business is increasingly employing sustainability practices, aiming to improve environmental and social responsibility while maintaining and improving profitability. For many organizations, profit-oriented business models are a major constraint impeding progress in sustainability. A formally defined ontology, a model definition, for profit-oriented business models has been employed globally for several years. However, no...
Each and every business relates to all three contexts - The environment that supports a society that creates economies.
Perspectives on a Business Model

What does a business do now and in the future?

How, where & with what does the business do it?

Who does a business do it to, for and with?

Why: How does a business define & measure success? (in Environmental, Social & Monetary units)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
<th>PEOPLE</th>
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<tbody>
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Describe What’s Unique... & Shared
Tiffinday Business Model
A Societal Business Model?

- Can we create a process for participatory systemic civil planning?
- Can we adapt the FBC as a planning tool?
- Would a canvas be sensitive to capturing stakeholders & community proposals?
- Do the *Flourishing* distinctions provide guidance for a sustainability case?
Flourishing Community as a Business Model

Strongly Sustainable Business Model adapted to future design of “Flourishing Cities”

Urban Ecologies 2015 Conference

Canvas + Generative workshop
- Ontological Design
- Convergent & redirective
- Foresight (Anticipatory)
- Boundary Critique
- Rich Picture Models
Both canvases ask 20 Questions:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SSBM Ontology</th>
<th>Flourishing Society Ontology</th>
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<td>3. Stakeholders</td>
<td>Citizens &amp; community participants</td>
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<td>4. Relationships</td>
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<td>5. Channels</td>
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<td>6. Value Propositions</td>
<td>Value Co-Creation /Co-Destruction</td>
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<td>7. Organization</td>
<td>Institutions &amp; organizations</td>
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<td>8. Decisions</td>
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<td>9. Partnerships</td>
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<td>11. Biophysical Stocks</td>
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<td>12. Activities</td>
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<td>13. Ecosystem Services</td>
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<td>14. Success</td>
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<td>16. Valuation method</td>
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<td>17. Processes</td>
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<td>18. Costs</td>
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<td>19. Revenues</td>
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<td>20. Assets</td>
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A city that respects rights of nature
Publicizes values of environmental and animal life care
Establishes home rule regulations protecting local biosphere assets
Strong sustainability enforced by rule, culture, and public policy

Strong social safety nets are co-developed and maintained
Reuse of assets for socially beneficial distribution (shared housing, workspaces, Internet)
Socially innovative law enforcement and asset management
Housing socially novel institutions - promoting new schools, service organizations, business types

Strong support for B Corps and new organizational forms
Turning "sharing economy" on its head by providing support for regionally cooperative services

Value Co-Creation
- VP
  Unique VP of city & culture
  History & continuous culture
  Citizen services & support
  Customary urban services

Unique flourishing values in community:
- Social level business & trade support
- Integrated fabric of natural & built spaces
- Continuous ecosystem integration
- Citizen participatory budgeting
- Neighborhood level value / identity
- Demand-driven citizen co-creation
- Regional health network & care circles
- Startup social safety net for entrepreneurs
- Municipal wifi & wired offices buildings
- Integrated industrial eco-park

RELATIONSHIPS
- Institutions
- Interest groups
- Businesses
- Religious & social orgs
- Sports & recreation orgs
- Universities & colleges
- National & State / Prov

CHANNELS
- Broadcast media
- Online media
- Newspapers / newsletters
- Public agores / walking
- Open meetings
- Public dialogues
- Town hall meetings

ACCOUNTABILITIES
- SUPPORTS
- CIVIC NETWORKS
- ENGAGEMENT
- COMMUNITY
- SOCIAL GROWTH
- BUSINESSES
- REVENUE

SUCCESS
A city that respects rights of nature
Publicizes values of environmental and animal life care
Establishes home rule regulations protecting local biosphere assets
Strong sustainability enforced by rule, culture, and public policy

**BIO- PHYSICAL STOCK**

- Lakes, Rivers, Watershed
- Forests, Wetlands
- Conservation districts
- Air quality
- Arable land, soil quality
- Insect & animal pops
- Unique regional stocks

**ECO- SYSTEM SERVICE**

- Water restoration
- Air filtering & dispersion
- Water pressure flow
- Erosion control systems
- Flood control services
- Sun / heat sink mitigate
Value Co-Creation

+ VP

- Unique VP of city & culture
- History & continuous culture
- Citizen services & support
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.......... Unique flourishing values in community:
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People

RELATIONSHIPS
- Institutions
- Interest groups
- Religious & social orgs
- Sports & recreation orgs
- Universities & colleges
- National & State / Prov

STAKEHOLDERS
- Citizen voters
- Business leaders
- Students
- Employers
- Planners & zoning
- Building & devs
- Farmers & ag
- Educators
- Foreign interests

CHANNELS
- Broadcast media
- Online media
- Newspapers / newsletters
- Public agoras / walking
- Open meetings
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- Town hall meetings

...
Concluding Questions

• How might this model enable conversations for Flourishing?
• What are the relationships between business & social ecologies in a place?
• How might we adapt this approach in policy debates?
• How could this become a practical, useful model for civic engagement in policy making?
• How might we adapt the design process to include the dynamic feedback in an ecosystem model?