Alternative narratives on economic growth: Prototyping change at the system level

Peter, Kimberley

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Alternative Narratives on Economic Growth: Prototyping Change at the System Level

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**Helen Kerr**, Research Advisor, Professor at OCAD University Co-President at KerrSmith Design
Policy Makers
Policy Influencers
Policy Receivers
The economy is a web — connected and interdependent with others, and with nature.

The goal is an economy that allows people to thrive, regardless of whether or not it grows (Raworth, 2017).
GUIDING QUESTIONS ON ‘HOW CHANGE HAPPENS’ (KRYZNARIC, 2007)

Change
Participants
Strategies
Contexts
Pathways
Elements
DOMINATION

Photo by Kimberley Peter, 2018 - RSD
The economy is a frontier of infinite colonies—ever growing and expanding to other territories and, eventually, other planets.

The goal is an economy that needs to grow, regardless of whether or not people thrive (Raworth, 2017).
How might reframing growth enable change to a more desirable alternative?
The economy is a pie—to be shared through participation and made bigger together.

The goal is an economy that expands social participation in the process and benefits of economic growth (WEF, 2015).
Increasing participation will lead to growth and wellbeing for all

SYSTEM ARCHETYPE — RISK DRIFTING GOALS

Overcompensate to the inclusive side of inclusive growth, or growth-first will continue to dominate.
Innovation is the holy grail of (inclusive) growth

SYSTEM ARCHETYPE — RISK
SUCCESS TO THE SUCCESSFUL

Go beyond the STEM to STEAM-D*
Rethink retraining as the focus.
Increase awareness of who is favoured, e.g.,
• the ‘tech-savvy’ (reinforcing the ‘digital divide’)
• people with means to pay for education/retraining
• those included in data collection and reporting
  (reinforcing ‘data poverty’)

* STEM=Science, Technology, Engineering, Math // STEAM-D=STEM + Arts, Design
DOMINATION
GROWTH FIRST

PARTICIPATION
INCLUSIVE GROWTH

FREEDOM
WELLBEING FIRST
The economy is a frontier of INFINITE COLONIES, ever growing and expanding to other territories and, eventually, other planets

The economy is a PIE, to be shared through participation and made bigger together

The economy is a WEB, connected and interdependent with others and with nature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTES</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>N3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market-led, power at the top, trickle-down guided, competition-oriented</td>
<td>Government-facilitated, centralized, market-informed, participation-oriented</td>
<td>Relationship-driven, decentralized, participatory, community-oriented</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VALUES</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>N3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wealth over people, short term gain over long term frame and eschews equality in favour of self interest and dominance-based logic</td>
<td>Participation over redistribution and a strong and growing middle class</td>
<td>Community, a shared narrative, purpose and collective wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>N3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An economy that needs to grow, regardless of whether or not people thrive</td>
<td>An economy that expands social participation in the process + benefits of economic growth</td>
<td>An economy that allows people to thrive, regardless of whether or not it grows</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSES (beginnings)</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>N3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market fundamentalism (and financialization)</td>
<td>Low productivity, aging pop., tech disruption, global connectivity, low commodity prices</td>
<td>Diminishing trust in government, business and media; unemployment; tech change, with increased automation</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESSES (middles)</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>N3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Globalization, technological change, capital shifts and financialization</td>
<td>Innovation, training and education, immigration, infrastructure</td>
<td>Increased activism, public and employee ownership and redistribution models, focus on SRI investing, open gov.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOMES (ends)</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>N3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income + wealth disparity, polarization of society, cyber dependency, national sentiment, aging pop. and climate change</td>
<td>Growing economy with stronger middle class. Key metric of success is an additional $15,000 in median household income by 2030</td>
<td>Collective wellbeing, balanced stories through media, embrace of bottom-up approaches to economy</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMINANT VOICES</th>
<th>N1</th>
<th>N2</th>
<th>N3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The market”, multinational businesses, government and media</td>
<td>Government, investors, businesses, academia and “the market”</td>
<td>(Not explicitly covered in this phase — see workshop results)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUSAL LAYERS</td>
<td>N1: DOMINATION</td>
<td>N2: PARTICIPATION</td>
<td>N3: FREEDOM</td>
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<tr>
<td>LITANY</td>
<td>Disconnect between lived realities of citizens and what government and media report</td>
<td>Reflecting lived realities and guiding decisions</td>
<td>Connecting realities of people and system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(continuous)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYSTEM</td>
<td>Need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting</td>
<td>Measuring and reporting lived realities</td>
<td>Measuring what matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORLDVIEW</td>
<td>Economic growth will ‘float all boats’</td>
<td>Vulnerable populations have more opportunities and voice</td>
<td>What matters to you is what matters most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Decades)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METAPHORS + MYTHS</td>
<td>The economy is a frontier of INFINITE COLONIES (of territories and planets)</td>
<td>The economy is a PIE to be shared and made bigger together (or better, a garden)</td>
<td>The economy is a WEB, connected, interdependent with others and with nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Societal/Civilizational)</td>
<td></td>
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**DECONSTRUCTION**

**RECONSTRUCTION [1]**

**RECONSTRUCTION [2]**

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PHASE I: UNDERSTANDING THE NARRATIVES

PHASE II: EXPLORING CHANGE

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

N3 (SPECULATIVE)

FREEDOM

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Cyrus, Citizen, 1st Gen

Sam, Startup Co-Founder

René, National Reporter

Ellis, Enterprise CEO

Will, Dir. Wellbeing Index

Faithe, Finance Minister
Challenges:
1. On the startup side, funding gaps. Getting funding beyond the first round is a challenge and encourages exits (startups start down, leave to more funding friendly countries, or sell to larger businesses). The goal is to leverage the network and disintermediate co-creation, IA too has struggled to get the funding needed to keep going. Every round of funding presents new challenges and takes significant energy and time.
2. On the investor side: Lack of infrastructure for capital flows to support traditional and non-traditional investors.

Relationships:
Potential allies within group, but not absolute:
Grace, Senior Advisor and Economist, Institute for Global Economic Impact (IGEI)
Cyrus, Citizen and 1st generation immigrant
Well, Director, Wellbeing Index

Potential sponsors within group, but not absolute:
Faithe, National Finance Minister
Ellis, CEO, GroVo Corporation (large enterprise)

Wildcards you may play anytime during the session:
(choose one only):
1. The Illustrator: Get up and illustrate something on the whiteboard, and pull the group’s attention and discussion to your images and words.
2. The Storyteller: Make a point using a short story or anecdote.
3. The Questioner: Ask everyone to pause and consider a particular question or angle, or new frame to an issue.
4. The Sage: Assess the situation and offer advice on how to resolve and move forward.
5. The Pacer: Get up and walk around or back and forth, maybe stretch, during part of the discussion. Consider inviting others to stand with you for a bit.

NAME: Sam

Role + Affiliation: Startup Co-Founder, The Impact Alliance

Interests: Your interest in this session is in how we might stimulate a more sustainable startup and innovation culture within the country that supports both the startup side and the investor side, and contributes to a healthier economic climate and opportunities for more people to participate. You also care deeply about future opportunities for you and others, children.

This is a fictional business.
WHY ROLE PLAY?

Transformational potential
Empower non-experts
Discover potential relationships
Generative source
Rehearsal method
WHY ROLE PLAY?

Transformational potential
Empower non-experts
Discover potential relationships
Generative source
Rehearsal method
ANTICIPATED RELATIONSHIPS
BEFORE ROLE PLAY

(a) Anticipated stakeholder relationships among the six participants planned for the role play.

(b) Anticipated stakeholder relationships with two additional identified in advance as valued but not included.
ANTICIPATED RELATIONSHIPS
BEFORE ROLE PLAY

EMERGENT RELATIONSHIPS
DURING ROLE PLAY

(a) Anticipated stakeholder relationships among the six participants planned for the role play

(b) Anticipated stakeholder relationships with two additional identified in advance as valued but not included

(c) GROUP A – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships among the six participants in the role play

(d) GROUP A – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships with one additional identified by role play team as valued but missing

(e) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships among the six participants in the role play

(f) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships with five additional identified by role play team as valued but missing
ANTICIPATED RELATIONSHIPS
BEFORE ROLE PLAY

EMERGENT RELATIONSHIPS
DURING ROLE PLAY

COMBINED EMERGENT RELATIONSHIPS
AFTER ROLE PLAY

(a) Anticipated stakeholder relationships among the six participants planned for the role play

(b) Anticipated stakeholder relationships with two additional identified in advance as valued but not included

(c) GROUP A – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships among the six participants in the role play

(d) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships among the six participants in the role play

(e) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships among the six participants in the role play

(f) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships with five additional identified by role play team as valued but missing

(g) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships with five additional identified by role play team as valued but missing

(h) COMBINED EMERGENT stakeholder relationships common across two role play teams

Six additional stakeholders identified:
1. Youth
2. Senior
3. Enterprise board members
4. Global advisors
5. Libertarian
6. Indigenous Peoples
1. Build a holistic and inclusive data source
2. Promote a shared narrative that connects people to system
3. Engender a prototyping mindset across government
4. Integrate behavioural approaches into planning and programs
5. Foster positive alternatives to the threat of automation
Engender a prototyping mindset across government

**Goals:** Build empathy by putting a human face to policy development, help people connect to larger system, and foster trust between people, government and industry.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXTS</th>
<th>PATHWAYS</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
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| Augment the FutureSkills Lab with a Participation Lab that involves multiple stakeholders in prototyping. | *Pilot a single workflow*  
Develop new tools and channels to help enable the strategy:  
1. Participation Lab (context)  
2. Sound Futures Platform (channel)  
3. Policy Research & Engagement Map (guide)  
4. Narrative Probes (method)  
Leverage existing practices, e.g., service design, lean UX. | Engage diverse stakeholders based on an understanding of the needs and interactions within the system. Consider who has the dominant voice, who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged. |

**Principles**  
1° Get savvy with systems  
2° See the big picture

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*Kimberley Peter, 2018  .  RSD7*
Causal Layered Analysis + Role Play

FREEDOM
WELLBEING FIRST
Narratives can be used as both representatives of the change desired as well as probes for change, and through (simulated) enactment of the alternative, stakeholders in the system might themselves begin to enact the change in the world.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks to the many people who contributed to this project ...
Thank you.

Questions welcome.

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