

VALUE CONGRUENCES SHAPING MANKIND'S FUTURE

Lynne O'Shea
Arthur Andersen & Co.

Abstract Nine factors emerge from a Q study of 100 respondents selected from 47 countries on six continents. The attitudes represent value congruencies regarding the future, and are comprised of the Mind Cultivator, the Intellectual Pessimist, the Steely-eyed Futurist, the Battle-scarred Optimist, the Egalitarian Optimist, the Malthusian Pragmatist, the Eristic Nationalist, the Here-and-Now Hedonist, and the Discriminating Survivor. The nine visions are summarized, and their implications for the future are discussed.

We keep making the same mistake in cross-cultural communications research. Under the guise of studying consumers' beliefs, we in fact perpetuate the World War II belief in national stereotypes. Most sampling designs *begin* by segmenting consumers vis-a-vis their nation-state boundaries, and in so doing the researcher's metatheoretical assumption that the psyche can be dissected according to imaginary and arbitrary lines around the globe becomes axiomatic to his "findings."

Some 350 countries, territories, colonies, perfectores, protectorates, and dependencies now rub shoulders in McLuhan's "global village" (McLuhan & Fiore,

Operant Subjectivity, 1985(Oct), 9(1), 8-24.

1968). Thus, a facetious extension of these meta-theoretics could give the researcher 350 "lifestyles" to compare, contrast, and correlate. If one wanted to throw in a few additional demographic segmentations like age or sex, plus two or three product usage levels, the cross tabulation on variables would become mind boggling. And, as the saying goes: Garbage in, garbage out.

It has been assumed by practitioners and researchers alike that one cannot market products on anything other than a country-by-country basis. The same product (or service) is handed over to as many communicators as there are target market countries and, although it may be the identical parent advertising agency or client company, each campaign is keyed to global geographical boundaries.

But what about the investigation of global psychic boundaries?

Any such investigation is quarantined, however, because (1) most of us are "vertical" thinkers rather than "horizontal" thinkers, and (2) quantitative research is "better" (i.e., easier to defend) than qualitative research. The vertical thinker, in tackling a problem, immediately begins setting up boundaries defined by various assumptions. "Very often," says de Bono (1968), "the boundaries are imaginary and the solution may lie outside them," a statement that brings to mind the very rigid, but very imaginary, boundaries of nation-states:

The vertical thinker is more interested in seeing on what basis he can pull things apart. The lateral thinker is more interested in seeing on what basis he can pull things together. (de Bono, 1968: 98)

Moreover, one has but a handful of valid and reliable qualitative research tools. One such tool, Q technique, put forth by William Stephenson in 1935, employs factor analysis, and correlates persons not tests (Stephenson, 1953, 1967).

A GLOBAL Q STUDY

In a study completed almost a decade ago (Thybonny, 1978), a P set of 100 respondents from 47 countries on six continents yielded nine Q factors.¹ The study focused on opinions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the "future." Each factor was seen to have value congruence, separate and distinct from all other factors, and each represented a point of view or belief system held by a part of the world's literate population. These factors or "types," expressed in metaphorical language, are:

- (1) the *Mind Cultivator*, a humanistic, pluralistic, generative being who values discovery, surprise, and mental evolution.
- (2) the *Intellectual Pessimist*, a self-styled, erudite critic who can see that man has lost and technology has won.
- (3) the *Steely-eyed Futurist*, a selfless seer who values information, the "facts" of the matter, a decision-maker who tells us that we must move on.
- (4) the *Battle-scarred Optimist*, a bandaged soul sitting by the side of the road ("just resting, you understand") ready to join any cause that will further "peace," partaker of any vision that will unify mankind.
- (5) the *Egalitarian Optimist*, proponent of (only) the humanistic alternative, a rather content fraternity man who envisions himself a moral, principled participant in the "good life."
- (6) the *Malthusian Pragmatist*, a drum majorette whose "just" cause is gaining volunteers skill-

1. Seventy-five percent of the members of the P set had significant loadings on the nine factors; the factor solution encompassed 50% of the total variance.

ed in crating up boxes of "Ovulum 21" and shipping them off to the third and fourth world countries.

- (7) the *Eristic Nationalist*, a khaki-clad veteran of life whose *Batrachomyomachia* pits him against other men in global maneuvers, technological strategies, and (continually) "fighting" one's way through life, holding one's ground.
- (8) the *Here-and-Now Hedonist*, that utilitarian conchie who "lives for today" in *his* log cabin, far away from the din of civilization, so that he can do hand-springs in the front yard, and stop "to smell the flowers."
- (9) the *Discriminating Survivor*, a crafty sage who believes in mankind and in the individual's ability to make "better" choices (than we have in the past), and whose vision encompasses differences as strengths and the future as an option.

Importantly, these factors were not significantly constricted by demographic variables (e.g., sex, age, education, occupation, or race), nor were they constricted by the language facility of each respondent (all Q sorts were conducted in English, Spanish, or German), nor by the cultural or a single nation-state boundary of the respondents.

THE MIND CULTIVATOR²

Factor I, the Mind Cultivator, makes himself quite clear with his first two statements:

We are just beginning to discover the virtually limitless capacities of the mind, including mystical experiences. Out of the broad range of possible states of consciousness, we lock ourselves

2. The artwork epitomizing each factor is by Don Pegler.



The Mind Cultivator

into recognition of only a narrow range of which we then label as "normal." The only way to develop our human potential is to break through this range and integrate a wider spectrum of human consciousness.

I see a new burst of optimism concerning the human potential for good; the recovery of a vital sense of purpose and direction; moral leadership in the world; and the utilization of our national wealth to improve the lot of all mankind.

The Mind Cultivator is looking forward, not in technological or hardware scenario fashion, but rather in a highly personal and quietly reflective manner. There is a strong sense of self, a bit of contemplative chagrin, and a cerebral enthusiasm here. He is change-oriented, optimistic, and confident of attaining a "better" future. And he has a deep belief that "his" way, his somewhat mystical consciousness, is emerging and waxing stronger in our time.

Anonymity was promised all respondents, but the study design enables us to note that the Mind Cultivator was found in seventeen nations: Canada, Chile,

Equador, Panama, France, Great Britain, Holland, India, Japan, Mexico, the Philippines, Poland, Puerto Rico, South Africa, the United States, the USSR, and Saudi Arabia.

THE INTELLECTUAL PESSIMIST

Factor II, the Intellectual Pessimist, believes we are "in the very twilight of individualism":

We are in the very twilight of individualism, the individual growing smaller while institutions and machines wax larger. I feel the enormity of our institutions, the complexity of our economic society. The awesome impact of technology and machines all diminish the size of the individual, so that I cannot even comprehend what is going on around.

The Pessimist is ready for a new social order, and would no doubt welcome it. He is not a "throw-up-the hands" man, however; he is aware of the importance of our decisions. He knows we have fashioned what is dysfunctional in our society, but that we also possess the capability "to develop our human potential." While agreeing that the individual is growing smaller, our Pessimist, when we speak with him again, wants us to know he has one caveat with this statement--he

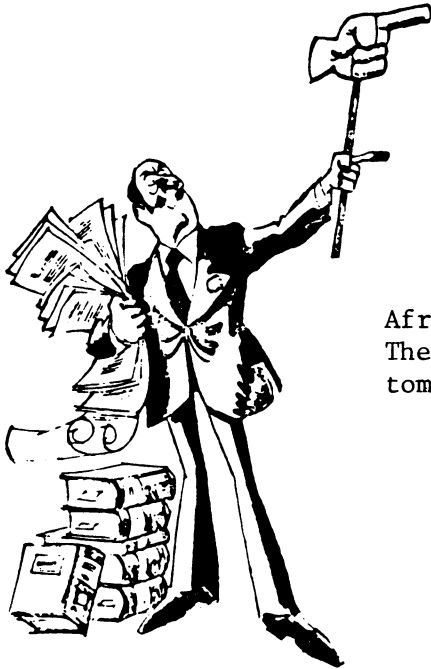


*The
Intellectual
Pessimist*

does comprehend what is going on around him, and he doesn't like it. He is also very clear about his pessimistic nature, for he *alone* of all the factors will disagree that he is "by nature an optimist."

The Intellectual Pessimist was found in Jordan, Ireland, South Africa, Britain, Spain, Argentina, Finland, France, Sweden, Hong Kong, Ceylon, and Japan.

THE STEELY-EYED FUTURIST



*The Steely-eyed
Futurist*

evaluated, and, as far as possible, controlled by international bodies.

As factor III, this steely-eyed fellow is quite conversant in the "realities" of the future. Transcience, multinational conglomerates, selective breeding, and pollution's stranglehold will mark his epitaph, in France, Israel, South Africa, and the United States. The following Q statement epitomizes factor III's view:

In the course of the next two dozen years--always assuming no overwhelming breakdown of world society--more and more of the economy of the globe will come under the control and review of multinational organizations; more and more of the problems of the world will be overseen,

While it was shown that only a few factors condone selective breeding, the Futurist is nonplussed about his advocacy. He is guided through life (and, it should be added, quite successfully) by his left cerebral hemisphere. He is organized, linear, logical--"right-

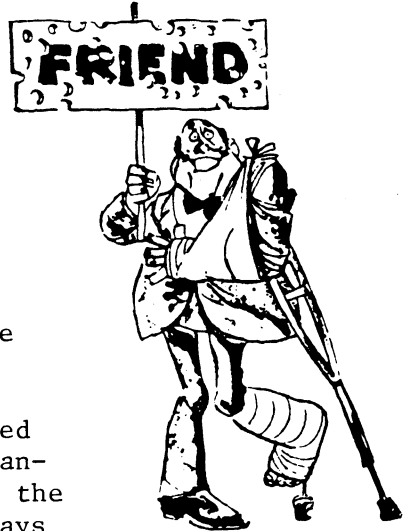
"handed." None of this "left-handed" poppycock for him. "No moralizing," he says. "There is no moral in science. Statements of human potential are best left to the psychologist--or the politician."

THE BATTLE-SCARRED OPTIMIST

This belief system is clearly self-defined by factor IV:

I hope for the reunification of many of the countries that are not divided. And I would like to see the disappearance of hatred that was built up during and after World War II. We need to better understand each other. And forget what happened during the wars.

Since I am by nature an optimist--the bottle is always half full, never half empty--I rarely consider disaster. Thus I have no real fears for my personal future, unless one presumes the arrival of something quite unforeseen.



*The Battle-scarred
Optimist*

There is in the Battle-scarred Optimist a deep sense of humanism: "I have great faith in the power of human intellect," says one: "When properly used it will meet any crisis, especially those caused by other intellects."

The Battle-scarred Optimist is in a way very "here-and-now" oriented. Statements regarding the future are either meaningless (neutral) to him or, if they seem like what he would regard as "anti-human," they evoke his displeasure.

This factor was found in West Germany, Yugoslavia, Poland, China, and Canada. Thus, for this one factor, the schisms of their nation-states seem to have

had a profound psychological effect (although there were also respondents from Denmark, Great Britain, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and the United States on this factor).

THE EGALITARIAN OPTIMIST

Like the Battle-scarred Optimist, this factor placed exceptionally high value on the tenets of reunification, and he (or she) also admits to an optimistic outlook; however, because of his deeply-seated sense of strife, division, and aloneness, the Battle-scarred



The Egalitarian Optimist

Optimist puts greater emphasis on "people wanting the same things." The Egalitarian Optimist, on the other hand, is a more "happy-go-lucky" individual. He assumes, instead of hungers for equality.

The Egalitarian Optimist senses that we are all "one." His is a Pollyanna view, a humanistic view and, for him, even a somewhat mystical view. He is full of feelings, and has wearied of the issues. In sum, he feels genial, reconciled, perhaps self-complacent. He shares with his colleague, the Battle-scarred Optimist, the "knowledge" that humanism will

prevail, yet he senses that *his* optimism is well-founded, even more "factual." Our Egalitarian might even say that his *is* real optimism, while his colleague only "hopes."

This factor had significant respondent loadings from Greece, Lesotho, Spain, and the United States.

THE MALTHUSIAN PRAGMATIST

There is no quicker way to understand factor VII's priorities than to let her tell you her two most (uniquely) favored statements:

So it is *now* rather than later that mankind must come to the realization that from a moral, ethical, social and economic viewpoint: It is better to plan for a limited number of healthy people than be saddled with an unlimited number of starving or dying masses.

I think people should have a birth control program which would limit this outrageous growth we see on our planet, and which would also be based on selectivity towards a better, more intelligent and healthier being.



The birth control issue clearly dominates her thinking: "We will become dehumanized if there are too many of us," she seems to say: "We've just got to decide. And *they*'ll have to stop their incessant breeding." (Tellingly, she lives in Italy, West Germany, and

the United States.) "There's a simple medical answer to the world's problems," she asserts. "I don't know why it's taken so long." The Pragmatist's abdication of personal responsibility and reliance on "others" is more highly pronounced, versus other factors, as she herself says:

I hope that the scientists will be able to solve the problems, like energy and all that nuclear force. It's up to them to do it.

THE ERISTIC NATIONALIST

The dominance of another single issue belonged to factor VII:

I am international oriented. But I cannot bear the idea of being anything else but from my country. I cannot live without my country. The more I travel, the more I feel typical of my country.

We must provide the leadership for the world. If we do not do it, no one else will.

Little wonder, though, that the territorial clashes continue, for our "Nationalists" come from Australia, Equador, Nigeria, and Puerto Rico as well as the United States. And the "necessity" of pride for the Nationalist seems apparent:

I would like to see us more proud of being what we are. Of course, that only happens when our standards are better. It's a chicken-and-egg situation, but an increase in our standards will produce an increase in our pride.

Besides, "there's really nothing new under the sun,"



*The Eristic
Nationalist*

he says on one hand. Yet, eristically, he won't concede that the world *won't* change. The pivotal distinction for him must be that while "we" don't change, the "world" has a separate evolution: "The power balances shift, but the soldiers remain the same," he might say. And the world could "become a better place" if we had the balance in *our* favor.

THE HERE-AND-NOW HEDONIST

If thinking about thinking about the future was only more palpable, it might have brought out the Epicureans or Cyrenaics amongst us. Alas, it is a touchy but hardly tactile subject, and our only glimpse of the hedonist is his here-and-now utilitarianism.



The Here-and-Now Hedonist

The future used to be 5 years, 10 years. But now it's tomorrow. Live today. Be grateful. And then tackle tomorrow.

I have no fears or worries about the future. "Fears" and "worries" are emotional responses to given situations. And I don't presume to know what the future holds for me. So why should I make up fears and worries about it.

Factor VIII, the most difficult one to interpret, suffers from the weight of the issue under investigation. But, as if trying to "get out from under" it, the Hedonist tells us to "stop frowning," "to keep that spring in our hearts and our minds."

I haven't a picture of the world in a bad situation ten years from now. That just won't happen. The "Daruma doll" (so to speak) can be knocked down nine times and will always come up ten. That's the world. We've got to keep that spring in our hearts and our minds.

His sentiment is not like that of our "optimists," though: *They* thought values were the same, while our Hedonist knows that (unfortunately) not everyone shares his set of aesthetics.

His utilitarian side tells him to survive, at all costs, as he disagrees (most strongly) with the following statement:

Survival isn't important. What matters is how you survive. Every long-term survival plan conceived by our think tanks and scientists and social strategies involves variations on totalitarianism --anthill or beehive-type societies. I think it's better that mankind dies out than resorts to a totalitarian survival lifestyle.

He seems to be telling us it doesn't matter how you live, or where you live, but that you live. The Hedonist was found living in Saudi Arabia, Belgium, France, Switzerland, West Germany, and the United States.

THE DISCRIMINATING SURVIVOR

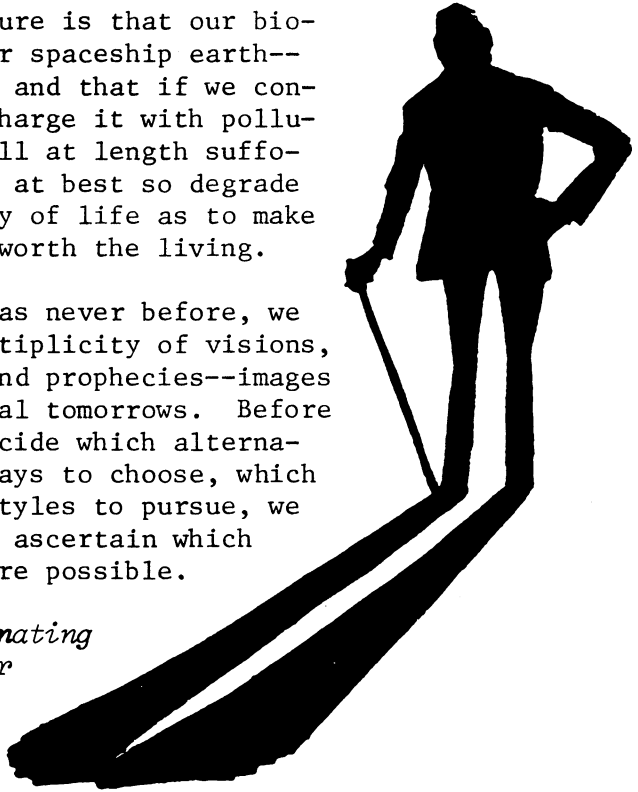
The belief that we had a hedonist before (above) and a real survivor (below) is based on the *lack of issues* in the Hedonist's profile: His vision seemed very "empty," whereas survival is "willful" or more of a maneuver. Our ninth factor, the Discriminating Survivor, speaks of things, issues that are important to

him. He is contemplative and judicial when asked about the future.

The future is that our biosphere--our spaceship earth--is finite and that if we continue to charge it with pollution it will at length suffocate us or at best so degrade the quality of life as to make it hardly worth the living.

Today, as never before, we need a multiplicity of visions, dreams, and prophecies--images of potential tomorrows. Before we will decide which alternative pathways to choose, which cultural styles to pursue, we must first ascertain which pathways are possible.

*The Discriminating
Survivor*



He or she has a sense of self, and a sense of self in the future. The Survivor will never admit that we cannot change, that we cannot evolve, for that is how he "survived"--as an American Indian along with additional factor IX respondents from Hong Kong, Japan, Finland, and the United States.

CONCLUSION

From a theoretical point of view, the subject matter under study here was not only the "future," but the global citizenry as well--or, more pointedly, one's lifestyle, one's way of living, that characteristic operant mode that synthesizes one's past, present, and future beliefs has been under "our microscope," life-

style by lifestyle--or type by type.

Lazer (1964), one of the first to study and define a "lifestyle," conceived of it as a systems concept:

It refers to the distinctive or characteristic mode of living in its aggregate and broadest sense It is concerned with those unique ingredients or qualities that describe the style of life or some culture or group, and distinguishes it from others. It embodies the patterns that develop and emerge from the dynamics of living.... (Lazer, 1964: 130)

Man's behavior *is* systematic, yet "world system models" have omitted human systems and psychic typologies.

Yet one's psychic is his only world, his only reality. One may have specific visual images, or simply visceral feelings, but everyone has a schema, an orientation, a belief system, a value congruency, or a conceptual framework that operates selectively--noticing some things but ignoring others. The communicator must work within the operative systems of the populace, or go unheard. And those who plan for our future must know what we value, for that is where "the future" begins.

POSTSCRIPT

In the final decades of this century, mankind's vision is becoming global in scope, for by the year 2000 "Spaceship Earth," so named by the late Barbara Ward (1966) and Kenneth Boulding (1966), will house 6 billion voyagers increasingly intertwined with their usage of the resources aboard the craft.

It is my hypothesis that only three of our types will find their numbers increase once we pass the year 2000: The Mind Cultivator, the Here-and-Now Hedonist, and the Discriminating Survivor. For, as is known, just at the moment a belief system begins to explode, its adherents scream the loudest. The Eristic Nationalist, for example, is screaming the loudest now. "I must come from somewhere," he says at the exact moment

he knows that it no longer matters. He tatoos his body to have a handle on his soul, when "handles" have become meaningless, and there is nothing left to hold. The Intellectual Pessimist is only now bemoaning technocentric transgressions, because they have trapped him. But he will build more, looking for diversion, hoping the noise of it will keep him from really hearing that his beliefs have strangled him. The Egalitarian Optimist keeps telling us that it is working, that we have come to our "senses" just as a few begin to wonder if we have our senses left. "Life tastes good," he proclaims, just as his homogenization theory has soured. The Malthusian Pragmatist, a uniquely European-American breed, is worried about overpopulation precisely at the moment the world's population (more pointedly, the Western world's population) has begun to fall off. She talks numbers, when it is specific multisyllabic names that scare her. Finally, the Steely-eyed Futurist is reading about reality when reality is obsolete. "Well over 90% of our present discussions and writings are irrelevant," says noted futurist Robert Theobald, "for they try to preserve a socioeconomic system which has vanished beyond recall" (cited in "An Alternative," [1977: 189]).

Japan's Magoroh Maruyama (1971) seems partially right: The "old values" of technocentric transgression, material efficiency, and leadership mandate have the "screamers" on their side today, but the Discriminating Survivor has a "new value" of sharing, the Mind Cultivator is the new pluralist, and the Here-and-Now Hedonist will value life under any conditions. These three types, therefore, will copilot our Space-ship Earth in the next century.

And yet, we know precious little about them.

Lynne O'Shea, Arthur Andersen & Co., 69 West Washington Street, Chicago IL 60602

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*What a gulf between impression and expression!
That's our ironic fate--to have Shakespearean feelings
and (unless by some billion-to-one chance we happen to
be Shakespeare) to talk about them like automobile
salesmen or teenagers or college professors. We prac-
tice alchemy in reverse--touch gold and it turns into
lead; touch the pure lyrics of experience, and they
turn into the verbal equivalents of tripe and hogwash.
(Aldous Huxley)*