THE ARTISTRY OF MODEL-BUILDING

1 Model-building is humanness itself
2 Model-building is revolutionary rationality
3 Model-building is artful form
4 Model-building is the releasing of the spirit

The Human Meaning of Model-Building

1. Model-building as an instrument of the spirit movement is a life method, in which the values and presuppositions used have been so permeated by the word in Jesus Christ that the use of the methodology itself demands total revolutionary creativity.

2. Every man is a model builder, that is, he makes decisions out of a contextual analysis of his situation, and builds tactics to implement his decisions. The social methods bring intentionality to this process of deciding your relationship to history. There is no mechanical process which will build a good model, only sheer human creativity. The model hews out a pathway between the no-longer and the not-yet. Every model is a human invention, and we know it to be temporal and finite, giving no security nor certainty.

3. Your model is your relationship to history, not just a rational scheme for explaining things. Model-building is a way to get ahold of the irrationality in your life in such a way that you can stand and make decisions before that irrationality. The discipline of articulating human problems in their sociological manifestations presupposes the radical stance of the structural revolutionary. He articulates the central sociological contradiction in the midst of a multitude of human problems, and goes on to invent the structural forms that will unblock depth humanness.

4. A model enables you to stand present to what you already know, and enables you to appropriate new data, or even to know whether data that suddenly confronts you is, or is not, new data. The model-builder is the one who intentionally constructs and continually reshapes the whole universe in which he lives.

5. Without the power to build a model, a man stands as a victim to his situation. The power to grasp, with inclusive images and gestalts, any situation he shows up

in releases a man to be his total freedom. A depth grounding in the methodology of model-building creates men of iron discipline, who can wait and watch, like the cobra, sensing to the bottom of every situation, and strike with fierce intentionality at the required moment. The power of his intentionality lies in the fact that his discipline demands that he build a model out of which to act.

6.   Model-building is not just a way of organizing information, but rather when a community gets its model built, it has created its own new vision of the future, and every person participating in that process has reprogrammed himself to embody that vision. Model-building is a relationship to history, creation of the future, and it is an act of selfhood. It is the act before action that transforms all acts, the act by which the world is released to have a revolution.

7.   The presuppositions and values which you decide to hold in building your model determine your stance. The man of faith begins his model by not only defining the sociological arena of his concern, but by relating that arena to the globe and the whole of human history. Thus the first presupposition of the 5th City model is to work in a delimited geographical area, and to raise up that community as a sign for the world. In deciding to deal with all of the people and all of the problems of a community, the man of faith acts out his decision to love God, that is, to stand before and to receive all of reality as it is given to him. The key to sociological analysis for the Spirit Movement has been to decide to deal with the depth human problem, the problem behind all the problems. In 5th City all political, economic, and cultural problems are seen in the light of the insight that the victim-image is the central contradiction in the black community, which blocks and will continue to block all attempts to solve any other particular problems until the self-image of the men and women of 5th City has been shifted, and they come to see themselves as creators, with total freedom and a significant destiny in history.

8.   Finally, the key to revolutionary action for the spirit movement has been the understanding of the power of symbols to shift human images and release human creativity. In the end, all authentic revolutionary action is pure symbol. As new stories, drama, and signs impact 5th City, the community has begun to pick up the task of reformulating the structures which will sustain and intensify human life. Here lies the secret of the power of model-building, that the model

is nothing but an intentionally constructed symbol of the revolutionary impera-
tive. Rational clarity and imaginal groundedness give power to a model. Its
power is intensified in internal consistency, both of the mode of expression
(language, syntax...) and the level of abstraction employed in any section.

9. The man with the model is the man who decides to say yes to every situation.
There is no demand that history presents that he cannot meet, and there is no
situation in which he must find himself a victim. In model building the man of
faith concretely acts out his stance of love to the world. His model informs
him of the comprehensiveness of his responsibility, and tells him where it is
that his death is demanded. Knowing that his model is never perfect, and is
constantly being overturned by the Lord of History, he nevertheless expends his
total life in the concrete tactical implementation of his model.

10. When you visit the 5th City Preschool, one of the first things that you will
notice is the grids on the wall, huge grids of the world, the U.S., 5th City, etc.
We know that getting adequate grids into peoples' heads is a crucial dimension of
imaginal education. But what is crucial there is not getting some dogmatic
wooden grid brainwashed into those kids, but teaching them the methodology behind
that grid, so they can build their own grids. That method has got to be drilled
into their bones, so that the first thing they do when they walk into a room is
to grid it -- in 3 seconds flat.

11. In the same way, the whole business of building any sociological model is
sheer transparent methodology. If your methods are sloppy, your model will be
sloppy. Comprehensive, elegant, powerful models embodying inclusive rational
clarity and practical applicability get built from methodology embodying those
qualities. Revolutionary models that work in the 20th Century get built when
your method begins by grounding your whole project concretely through gridding
and analysis, and proceeds through identifying problems and articulating goals,
defining strategies and tactics, and projecting the enabling instruments and
forces onto an operating timeline.

12. Beginning with a grid allows you to define the area in which you are going
to do your model-building and to ground that model concretely in the lives of
human beings. By beginning with the universal (a world grid, for instance) and
working to the particular (metro, parish, congregation, etc.) you articulate the

context of your action. The geo-social analysis then pushes both at the socio-
logical relationships of your particular arena to the whole, and at the dynamics
operating with the particular situation. Further, the analysis needs to push
to the future, articulating relevant historical trends and the destinal gifts
which must be released for the world. You don't work in 5th City because it's
got problems; you work there because it's one of the most oppressive urban areas
in the globe, and its destinal role as a sign of possibility for all men is
blocked by inadequate structures and self-images.

13. The primary problem in building a problemat lies in getting said to yourself
that your situation, the human condition, is not your problem. Your situation
is just that: the ongoing reality of life. If you decide that your situation
is your problem, then your enemy is reality itself, and when you decide to fight
the way life finally is, then you ARE going to have problems. When you articulate
sociological problems, you want to be pointing at where and how groups or people
have fallen out or are not included in the structures that sustain life. Prob-
lems need to be articulated as inadequate human relationships to the givenness
of the situation. Finally, before your problemat is complete, you need to push
it until you can articulate the one problem behind all the problems, the central
and key contradiction to the total situation. This is no exercise in flashy
abstractionism or inspiring poetry, nor is it picking out the problem that bugs
you the most. But until you can discern and reveal where the human spirit has
at the bottom refused to be its freedom in history, you are only putting band-
aids on the symptoms of a fatal illness. Once the central contradiction gets
stated, your problemat is revealed to you as a comprehensive gridding of the
manifestations of that contradiction, or an inclusive picture of the battle-
fronts on which the war must be waged. Although by the time you have adequately
stated your problemat, you may have a pretty clear picture of your goals, goals
must be articulated not simply as the reverse of the problem, but as a positive
statement of the new relationship which must be assumed in order for the problem
to be overcome. Although each specific goal is aimed at a specific problem or
cluster of problems, every goal must be seen as addressing the central contra-
diction from another angle. Finally, every goal, in order to be helpful to revol-
utionary action, must be articulated in such a way that you know how to decide
whether or when that goal has been accomplished.

14. Your goals chart provides you with a futuric context for strategic action. Strategies are functional structures which overcome the blocks to the goals, and through which the goals are reached. It is the strategies that are left standing after any revolution as the structural residue of the revolutionary movement and the skeletal form of the new social order and religious mode. Thus the strategies must be conceived as structural forms which operate as the vehicle of a new and demanded relationship to history; they have no value in themselves, but are crucial only insofar as they operate to reach the goals. You then must decide on your tactics, as those systems of concrete actional steps by which you will implement your strategic objectives. Tactics are critical and functional, selected on the basis of their necessity in building strategic structures, and formed into systems which reflect your goals, so that from the first day of the battle, you are dramatizing the totally new relationship of all of history demanded by all of life in your particular moment.

15. Once the tactics are determined, you must decide on the concrete tools which will need to be employed to operate the tactics, and the available troops and forces who can do the tactics. The training of the troops to enable them to appropriate the context of action, to operate the instruments, and to stand as the movemental embodiment of your revolutionary objectives must be considered and planned. Your time-line, which must be constructed for each particular step, as well as for the whole sweep of the battle, allows you to orchestrate and to coordinate troops, instruments, training and tactical action. Practically, your time line not only is a plan of action, but as a set of predictions about the future based on your model, allows you to continually review and evaluate that model, discerning where you have had reduced vision and inadequate responses, and where you are being called to new creativity and risk. But more than that, in creating your time-line you are carving your cross, discerning the necessary point and style of the expending of your life, and at the same time you are creating an art-form, a symbol that holds you before the singleness of your thrust, in the midst of the complexity of practical action.

Dynamical Symphony

16.   Where you begin building your model and where you end the effort depends
on whether you are creating a community reformulation battle plan, an adult edu-
cation curriculum or a lecture 4x4x4. In each case the steps will be different,
appropriate to the task at hand. But the interior process of model building,
the human dynamic of the methodology itself, remains the same. The steps are
as follows:

1. setting the context
2. brainstorming the data
3. gestalting the group's wisdom
4. deciding the consensus, which sets the context for the next step.

This is the rhythm that is the key to grasping and implementing the social
methodology of the spirit movement. Yet this is the dimension of the method
that we have been the least clear about, and have taught with the least effec-
tiveness in our curriculum. The building of adequate models for the church and
the social order of the future are utterly dependent on our being crystal clear
about this process in our teaching, and fanatically obedient to it in our
model building.

17. The first step for any group building any model whatsoever is to set the
context, that is to specify and focus attention to the particular sociological
arena that is of concern. This arena needs to be related historically to the
whole sweep of human history, and to the contemporary world of which it is a
part, and grounded particularly in the life-issues and destinal concerns of
that particular group. As model building proceeds, your previous work forms a
part of the context for your next step; thus your problemat gives you the
context for working on goals, and tactics are planned in the context of stra-
tegic objectives. The context needs to be set in such a way that the group's
imagination is pushed to the limits, yet to specify the arena of concern ade-
quately enough to reduce the amount of irrelevant data to a minimum.

18.   Brainstorming is the process by which the group calls forth all of the
data available to it on a particular question. At this point in the process,
you expect wild tangents and speculations, personal concerns and "axes to
grind," and the stance to be taken should be that all contributions are received
and helpful. One well-meaning pedagogical push for grounding, for instance,

may be enough to bog the whole group down into safe, unimaginative, pedantic
thinking. Here the test of the pedagogue is severe: will you trust the
methodology, knowing that the data will be pushed later, and adopt the stance
of "no arguments", or will you act out of the immediacy of one piece of data
that rubs you the wrong way, and abort the possibility of creative brainstorming.
If you are getting bad data, it's not the group's fault, but most likely has to
do with how you set the context and asked the question. But the push in brain-
storming, through restating the context and the question, and asking questions
that push and probe around the arena of concern is, for broad imagination and
inclusiveness "what have we left out so far?" The use of large numbers and
short periods of time are helpful to (1) push the group to see that they know
more than they thought they did, (2) push the group beyond their intuitive and
unselfconscious gestalts and analysis, to get out the data of relatively non-
intellectualized experience. Brainstorming should continue even past the point
where the list seems exhaustive, until the group is nearly but not completely,
exhausted with the game. Although a lot of trash gets out, this can be weeded
out easily, and it is at the limits of old preconceptions that new and creative
insights begin to break loose.

19.   Only when brainstorming is exhausted are you ready to move on to the
next step. The group now must reflect on the data it has gotten out, cleaning
out the trash, clarifying what is unclear and grounding what is ephemeral. Then
you are ready to begin to pull the data together into a gestalted form; inventing
usually 3-5 gestalt categories which hold a meaningful analysis of the data. It
is usually then helpful to organize the data within each category, resulting in
a 3x3, 4x4, 5x4, or similar form. You may even want to do further brainstorming
under each broad category before completing this step, to insure inclusiveness.
In any event, the 2-dimensional gestalt, such as the 4x4 is helpful in pushing
your model to a high degree of interior consistency. The gestalt can be thus
expanded to as many levels as are helpful in holding your data.

20.   Before going any further, it should be said that gestalting is sheer
invention, brain-wracking creative sweat. With all due honor to Father Aristotle,
a list of data does not contain within itself the necessary gestalt, as if you
could fumble through the data, linking those items which seemed to be related,
and come up with the appropriate analysis. This approach does not organize your

data, but simply divides an amorphous mass of unreflected data into several
smaller but equally amorphous masses. Yet, on the other hand, neither can we use the
Platonic method of reaching into the sky for a-priori categories and rationale.
No matter how many times knowing, doing, and being or Political, Cultural, and
Economic have been helpful analytical categories in the past, they may or may
not be helpful this time with this particular set of data. If you are going
to dogmatically insist that the data can be forced, shoved, warped, or twisted
into your preconceived framework, you might as well have skipped brainstorming
entirely and just started with those categories. The danger here is, of course,
ungrounded abstractionism. Effective model building requires the appropriation
of both the Aristotelian AND the Platonic insights, yet it is more than a simple
combination of the two methods. Gestalting is the process of giving form to
real chaos, it is scientific creativity, it is empirically grounded existential
invention. Gestalting involves brooding over the data, rejecting inadequate
preconceptions about what that data means, pushing the group to the kind of
intellectual crisis out of which can emerge a new image, a paradigm shift,
that adequately holds the old wisdom and new insights of the group's thinking.
Again, gestalting is hard work, radical risk, intuitive labor. It may require
several or many "trial runs" before an adequate form is reached. The gestalt
form must be tested in several ways, that it not only include all the data, but
be a meaningful and helpful analysis of the data, that its form be rationally
consistent, and that the categories are stated or imaginally restated to hold
the clarity, power, and insight of the group's work.

21.   Consensus is a natural but necessary step in the model building method.
The rhythm of moving from a corporate context through brainstorming to the
construction of a corporate gestalt is precisely the process that forges con-
sensus. But it may be helpful to allow the group to reflect on the gestalt,
through the use of the method of art-form conversation. This helps to cement
the new image deep into the consciousness of the minds around the table, and
provides a final check for inclusiveness and effective articulation. The
group's model becomes THE model for that group, and for each of its members,
and stands as the temporal and finite yet for-the-moment FINAL word until a
more adequate model is constructed. This consensus needs finally to be
ritualized and celebrated, by singing a song, dancing, Praising God, or some

other way to symbolize the fact that a decision has been made which deepens and intensifies that group's concrete actualization of its corporate responsibility for the world.

22.   The celebration transforms a body of bleeding, beaten warriors into a new army of saints, ready for the next step in building and implementing the social responsibility of the People of God in the world before the Lord of all of History.
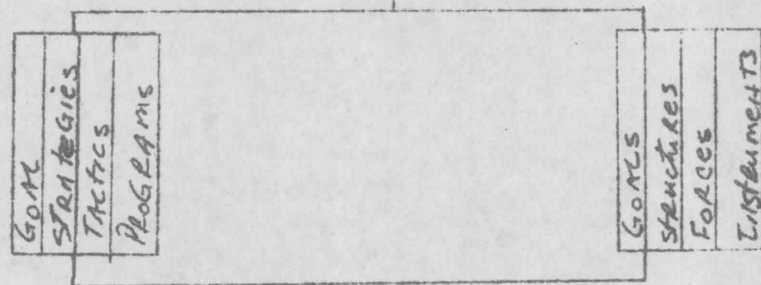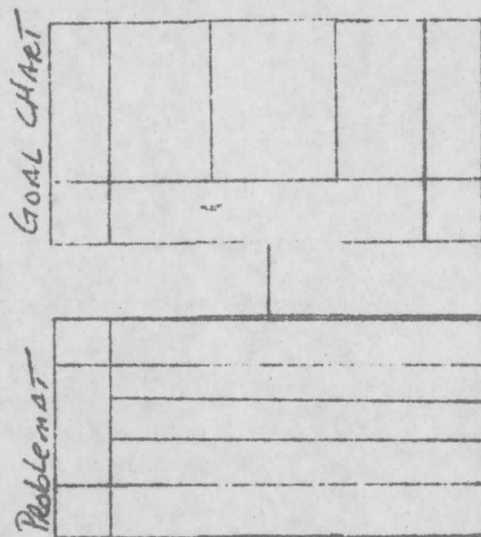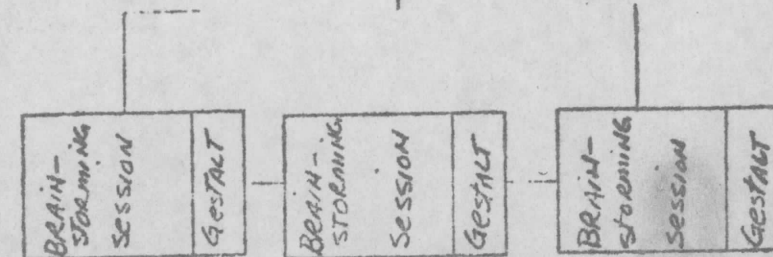
Styling the Whole

23.   The model building workshop needs to be dramatically orchestrated in order to enable full, creative participation. In this context the pace becomes an important consideration. A hard-driving workshop will soon lose people into withdrawal or giddy participation, yet at the same time creativity is often released when people are pushed beyond what they thought they knew and are demanded to do more than they thought they were capable of. Thus the rhythm of the workshop needs to be a balance of hard pushes and then relaxed periods of reflection, whether that be corporate or individual brooding. Periods of individual brooding can be helpfully included in the time-design of the work-shop in order to enable people to detach themselves from the work and at the same time re-engage fully with their interior contexts held fresh before them. Build your time-line to include some flexibility (it always takes longer to build a good model than it first appears) but once your time-line is built, then stick to it. The group will always feel like it needs more time to finish the model, no matter how long you give them. The overall pace needs to be kept lively. A boring workshop indicates either that the problem is not a real one or that the time-design needs to be re-worked.

24.   The second critical tool in the styling of a workshop is the intentional use of symbolic activity. The room needs to be carefully set so that it focuses people's attention on the one task and the decor of the room needs to hold people overagainst both the comprehensive context and the particular model that is being built. Appropriate songs and rites should punctuate the whole session, indicating the beginning and closing of each section of the workshop, and as a tool for giving the group distance on its struggle and re-focusing their attention and participation. The vision of the group should be held up periodically
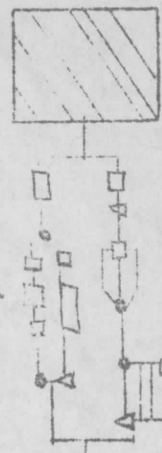
through the use of stories, short courses, and in setting the context for each workshop assignment. Finally, the group needs to symbolize placing their model into history by celebrating what's been done.

25.   Other tools that can be useful in orchestrating the workshop including a diversity of group size, assignments, methods of reflection and instruments. Different parts of the workshop may be done individually, in small groups, or by the entire body. This tool helps to draw out individual insights and forges them into the common mind of the whole group. The type of workshop assignment is generally dictated by the task itself but listing, writing sentences or paragraphs, or answering specific questions provides methodology for dictating the final form of the model. To keep reflection from becoming stale, the art form method can be varied with direct questions and answers, or reporting. The use of the blackboard, butcher paper and markers, imaginal forms, and rational constructs are instruments that the convener can make intentional use of when he plans his workshop orchestration.

26.   Lastly the style of the convener himself needs to be brooded through and decided upon. While the stance is one of participatory colleague, engaged totally in the struggle to create the model, he also needs to maintain his stance of complete control and detachment from the finished product. He must discipline himself in the stance of intentional non-chalance, concerning himself not with the content but with the methodology of the model. Prayerful obedience to the methodology call forth adequate and powerful content and cut across personal blindnesses and naivite in the group. He is not out to teach or to "sell" any preconceived idea or analysis, but intends, through demanding iron discipline of the group, to enable the group to know what they already know. Thus he pushes the group not over-against his ideas and insights, his own analysis and clarity, but over-against the objective need for the model to meet the presuppositions, to be both helpfully abstract and yet deal adequately with the concrete data at hand. It is the objectivity of the method, grounded in the contentless Word of Life that releases a man to invent the forms by which he is called to expend himself in the civilizing process.

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Time Line / Flow Chart

Goal
Strategies
Tactics
Programs

Goals
Structures
Forces
Instruments

Goal Chart

Problemat

Grid Global

Grid Local

Grid Region

Brain-storming Session
Gestalt

Brain-storming Session
Gestalt

Brain-storming Session
Gestalt

Problem areas:

I. ECONOMIC
II. SYMBOLIC
III. EDUCATIONAL
IV. STYLISTIC
V. POLITICAL

| | | I. ECONOMIC | CULTURAL | | | |
			II. SYMBOLIC	III. EDUCATIONAL	IV. STYLISTIC	V. POLITICAL
A	1.	Commission	1. Commission	1. Commission	1. Commission	1. Commission
B	2.	Committee	2. Committee	2. Committee	2. Committee	2. Committee
	3.	Council	3. Council	3. Council	3. Council	3. Council
C	4.	Institute	4. Forum	4. Institute	4. Forum	4. Institute
	5.	Centre	5. Centre	5. Centre	5. Centre	5. Centre

A. Problem area
B. Basic problem and problem solving structure
C. Sub-problems and problem solving structures