Integrity, Lies, and Panarchy

Integrity

As a retired Marine Corps infantry officer, I thought I understood the word "integrity," but I have since learned that my understanding was incomplete. Most think of "integrity" in connection with personal character or honor. That is a partial definition of the word, and not the most important meaning in relation to the larger community of humanity and its spiritual as well as physical well-being.

The most important meaning has to do with the quality or condition of being whole or undivided—in a word, completeness.[1] Below are a few reflections of mine posted after attending a meeting where everyone wanted to avoid being specific about the root cause of across-the-board failures of strategy, policy, acquisition, and operations in the Department of Defense—a lack of integrity.[2]

1. Integrity is not just about honor—it is about wholeness of view, completeness of effort, and accuracy or reliability of all elements of the whole.
2. Industrial-era systems do not adapt because they lack integrity and continue to pay for doing the wrong things righter instead of doing the right

thing. The Pentagon is a classic example of such a system.[3]

3. In the twenty-first century, intelligence, design, and integrity comprise the triad that matters most. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth is the non-negotiable starting position for getting it right, and this is crucially important with respect to the sustainability of the Earth as a home for humanity.

4. Integrity at the top requires clarity, diversity, and balance.

5. Integrity can be compounded or discounted. It is compounded when public understanding demands political accountability and flag officers ultimately understand that they have sworn an oath to uphold the Constitution, not support the chain of command. It is discounted when flag officers are careerists, ascribe to rankism, and generally betray the public interest in favor of personal advancement.

6. Universal access to connectivity and content is a means of accelerating both public access to the truth and the power of the public to offset "rule by secrecy," which inherently lacks integrity at all levels.

In 2008, after first believing in Barack Obama and then recognizing that he was in essence a continuation of the "rule by secrecy" establishment, I wrote a book, *Election*

2008: Lipstick on the Pig.[4] With prefaces from Thom Hartmann and Tom Atlee as well as two others, that book's first chapter discusses what I called "paradigms of failure."

Every major segment of our society—academia, civil society, commerce, government, law enforcement, media, military, and non-government/non-profit—is currently suffering from epidemic lack of integrity, which only gets worse at larger scales of operation, leading to implosion from corruption of intelligence and information-sharing. In *Election 2008* I wrote a section on "legitimate grievances"—on the part of both the U.S. public that has been abused and betrayed by its elected representatives, and the rest of the world where people have suffered unilateral militarism, virtual and actual colonialism, and predatory corporate corruption and looting of every commonwealth on the planet that I know of. Understanding and accepting this sorry state of affairs has been part of my own personal and professional rejection of American exceptionalism and the rule by an elite. This shift in perspective recognizes the need for a new planet-wide consciousness based on open information sharing and direct democracy.

For many years I thought that our elected representatives had been corrupted by corporations and, more recently, by banks (or, I should say, the people who use these structures as veils for their own unethical accumulation of profit). I was in error. As we now know from numerous cases, the most blatant being that of former Congressman Randy Cunningham,[5] it is more often the elected representatives who have been shaking down

banks and corporations in order to fund their own ambitions to remain in power and to profit at the expense of the people. Naturally these "little" people found corruption convenient because our larger system—our financial and economic system that is rooted in "money" and allows a monopoly over the creation of money to banks and governments—made it possible for them to leverage their control of the public treasury (a control we all abdicated by failing to be alert and engaged) into personal wealth.

With a tiny handful of exceptions, among whom I count Dennis Kucinich and Ron Paul in the House of Representatives, and Bernie Sanders in the Senate, I consider all of our elected representatives corrupt. In fact, I advocate turning out into the streets all incumbents seeking re-election to a third or later term, if only by refusing to vote for them again. They have betrayed the public trust.

The Executive branch is just as corrupt as the legislators. The Department of Justice has claimed in writing that it has the right to lie to the Court when it deems lying to be necessary.[6] Almost without exception, every Cabinet department and agency is costing the U.S. taxpayer at least twice as much as they merit, since half of that cost is being wasted or otherwise lost to us. From agriculture to health to water, our government is a model of waste, fraud, and abuse.

I want to address the military very briefly as an example of a corrupt system. Four percent of the force (the infantry) takes eighty percent of the casualties, and costs one percent of the military budget.[7] The other ninety-

nine percent of the budget goes toward "big systems" that never work as promised and always cost a great deal more and require vastly more logistics support in the field (the joke is, one contractor per laptop). The acquisition system is now so bloated and ignorant it cannot design, order, receive, and test a complete ship or aircraft—worse, there is no strategy for what we really need to support the infantry that only costs one percent of the budget. One estimate is that fully half of the other ninety-nine percent of the budget is fraud, waste, or abuse. Any decision to cut tens of thousands of Army and Marine Corps personnel, while actually increasing the budget for "systems," is a perfect representation of all that is wrong with how we give lip service to the concept of a strong national security force. It is not strong and it is not smart.[8]

The industrial era has been starkly aligned with corruption in all its forms, in large part because those we have trusted with the management of our commonwealth have used secrecy, insider relationships, and a lack of accountability to profit personally. Transparency, truth, and trust—this is the only non-violent alternative to what we have now.[9]

This manifesto is a political and intellectual "call to arms" for carrying out a non-violent revolution that restores the sovereignty of We the People. With Oath Keepers gaining ground among law enforcement professionals, and Ron Paul receiving more support from veterans than all other 2012 Presidential candidates combined, it's possible that the police and military can come together with

labor, Occupy, the Tea Party, and Independents to achieve electoral reform and then intelligence, governance, and national security reform.

Lies as Treason

> A man who lies to himself, and believes his own lies, becomes unable to recognize truth, either in himself or in anyone else.
>
> —Fyodor Dostoevsky[10]

Lying is not only unpatriotic, as Ron Paul has said,[11] but lying—any falsification of information—is a corruption of the feedback loop and has consequences within a complex whole-systems environment. Lying is like a cancer—a cancer that is ultimately fatal. If we look at biology, we find that awareness begins at the boundary of the cell, where chemical signals are recognized and either rejected or absorbed into the cell's permeable membrane. If the cell responds to signals that go against the healthy function of the organism, the organism will sicken and die. Similarly, in society we rely on the transmission of accurate and authentic information for the health of the entire social organism. This is why open-source everything is fundamental.

An efficient, innovative, and functional socioeconomic system demands both *intelligence,* defined here as an ability to recognize what information needs to be known to make a sound decision, and *integrity,* an ability to tell the truth

and demand the truth. Lies obscure the truth of the work we have to do as individuals and as a society.

Lack of integrity is composed of culturally rooted assumptions about "what works," together with ideological blinders that shut out professional intelligence (decision-support) and instead permit special interests to press their concerns about selling "inputs" rather than being held accountable for "outcomes."[12]

If you lack intelligence and integrity (as do most governments, corporations, and non-governmental organizations including the United Nations), it is virtually impossible to create a prosperous world at peace—a world in which the sciences, the humanities, and faith come together to harmonize human behavior and decisions and thereby produce what are called "win-win" or "nonzero" outcomes.[13]

An authentic relationship to data and intelligence must become the basis for public discourse if the public and its appointed officials are to make sound decisions in the public interest. Any corruption of the process with lies, omissions, or other forms of misinformation is at best a betrayal of the public trust and at worst outright treason.

A major reason why leaders of any organization—not just military organizations—are so easily deceived or misserved by their own people is because of the "closed" nature of the information delivery system that the CEOs rely on. Absent a completely open and transparent information system, lies and misrepresentations are difficult to identify. They take root and fester, like a cancer within the corporate body.

81

Thirteen Big Lies

Below are thirteen common lies and their countervailing "possible truths" as put together by Jock Gill, a strategic communicator with a strong sense of ethics.[14] It is not possible to appreciate the importance of transparency, truth, and trust without first understanding the deep roots that these thirteen common lies have grown—*The Open-Source Everything Manifesto* is in large part a primal scream against lies and a plea for integrity as a common good.

LIE 1. The Earth is an open system with infinite supplies and sinks. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Earth is a closed system, and changes that used to take ten thousand years now take three. Humanity is "peaking" the entire system.

LIE 2. Everything must be monetized. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Money is an exchange unit and an information unit. In the absence of holistic analytics and "true cost" transparency, money is actually a toxic means of concentrating wealth and depriving communities of their own resources (e.g., land).

LIE 3. The extreme unregulated free market is the only option for a modern economy. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Information asymmetries and "rule by secrecy" have been clearly documented, proving that the free market is neither free nor fair. A modern economy needs to be transparent, resilient, and hence rooted in the local.

LIE 4. Centralized organization is the only and best option; the network begins in the center and radiates out.

POSSIBLE TRUTH: Epoch-A, top-down, hierarchical "leadership" has proven itself to be a failure regardless of its ideology (feudalism, fascism, communism, religious dictatorship). Diversity is the source of agile innovation, and Epoch-B leadership[15] is inherently collective, bottom-up, multicultural, and replete with integrity.

LIE 5. Spectrum (atmospheric frequencies) is a scarce and finite resource best managed by what we knew in the 1920s and '30s. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Open-source everything is "root," and the trifecta for sustainable human evolution is Open Spectrum, Open-Source Software, and Open Data Access.

LIE 6. Houses need furnaces. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Buckminster Fuller, among many others, demonstrated that housing can be created that is self-sufficient in terms of energy, cooling, and heating, and even water catchment and waste disposal.

LIE 7. Power is best generated in remote mega power plants with correspondingly large distribution networks. POSSIBLE TRUTH: *WIRED* magazine outlined how a two-way energy grid that leverages renewable energy across all localities is vastly superior to centralized systems that "bleed" half of the energy while going downstream

LIE 8. Copyright must last longer than a lifetime, and patents must last longer than seventeen years. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Both copyright and patent laws have been manipulated by individuals lacking in integrity. Their efforts to keep useful knowledge from the marketplace have been

especially harmful. The Founding Fathers got it right in the first place: Creative Commons copyright and "use it or lose it" patent protocols are best.

LIE 9. The United States of America has nothing to envy in others; we have the best healthcare, the best education, the best broadband, the best lifestyle. POSSIBLE TRUTH: An educated citizenry is a nation's best defense (Thomas Jefferson). The U.S. is now a Third World nation for all practical purposes, with a ten-percent "elite" that has concentrated wealth and a ninety-percent "animal class" that is losing its housing, its health, its clean water, its entire quality of life.

LIE 10. Corporations are people. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Corporations exist on the basis of public charters. Public charters are being granted and managed by government officials who take direction from politicians who have sacrificed their integrity and fail to represent the public interest.

LIE 11. Inconvenient costs and truths may be treated as externalities that do not need to be carried on our "books." POSSIBLE TRUTH: In the absence of an educated citizenry, the public perception of "truth" can be easily manipulated—fog facts, missing information, lost history, manufacturing consent, propaganda, and most recently, weapons of mass deception. There is no counterweight to "power" that wishes to lie.

LIE 12. More of the same old same old will get us new and better results in plenty of time to avoid environmental disruption. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Among intelligent people with integrity, "doing the right thing" instead of doing the

wrong thing "righter" is clearly beneficial to all. We can create a prosperous world at peace for a fraction of what we now allow to be spent on war and waste. Pollution is a waste product, an indicator of an inefficient process. Those who persist in defending any status quo are certainly lacking in intelligence (decision-support) and, more often than not, also lacking in integrity.

LIE 13: Tax cuts and trickle-down economics work and create good-paying jobs. POSSIBLE TRUTH: Tax cuts favor the one percent who have already concentrated most of the wealth in the USA, and they invest their gains overseas or in assets that appreciate, not via jobs in the USA.

Lies kill. Lies are a like a road sign that says "Detour" but points over a cliff. Lies prevent the larger public from understanding, evaluating, and responding to any given situation with collective intelligence or wisdom. For example, if the lie "nuclear power is totally safe" is combined with a second "we can trust the government to oversee safety, and the energy company to take all necessary precautions," you get—inevitably—a Chernobyl or a Fukushima.

We live in a culture of lies. Information pathologies such as I reviewed in Chapter 1 have been created over centuries to benefit the few at the expense of the inattentive, distracted, and complacent many. This manifesto is our non-violent articulation of how we can stop being exploited and disadvantaged, and restore the sovereignty of We the People.

We currently have a political culture of epidemic corruption, where facts are distorted to serve the interests of a

few,[16] with leaders of both parties, most corporations, and many religions accustomed to deception as a matter of routine.[17] In such a situation, "philosophy" cannot serve its proper function of providing desirable aims and constituting a method based in integrity to fulfill them. In a political culture founded in corruption and deception, it is impossible to achieve balance or stability, and such an inherently unsustainable situation will ultimately collapse.

On the other hand, if one establishes a philosophically grounded culture of clarity, where appreciation for diversity and commitment to integrity are societal norms, one has a promising foundation for progress.

> *Information **costs** money, Intelligence **makes** money.*
> *Intelligence is tailored actionable information.*

All the kum-ba-ya in the world and all the micro-issue think tanks and advocacy groups are ineffective because they lack a strategic analytic model, a process for doing intelligence so as to do informed *activist* democracy, and a call to arms that brings us all together centered on taking back our government or routing completely around it.

Panarchy and Resilience

Complexity demands resilience, and that's what panarchy offers. Resilience in the face of complexity is a challenge even when you apply rigorous intelligence and integrity to develop a coherent and flexible strategy.

On the next few pages I present a few illustrations of panarchy and resilience, followed by several on the "human factor," and finally concluding with some illustrations of the advanced analytic mode of Reflexive Practice—the practice of Buckminster Fuller and Russell Ackoff, and more recently George Soros, Stuart Umpley, and Kent Myers, among others including myself.

We can connect all minds to all information all the time. The "magic" of panarchy is that it combines the wisdom of the crowd, smart mob, here-comes-everybody "cognitive surplus" and "collective intelligence" (two different concepts) with the evolutionary/revolutionary process—the cycle of growth, stasis, break-out, and regeneration with innovation. As an inherently open-source everything system of systems, panarchy exposes fraud, waste, and abuse, eradicates corruption, and in the ideal—at full operational capability—creates infinite wealth in the form of a prosperous world at peace.

The Internet and other advances in telecommunications have made it possible for the public to overcome the information pathologies discussed elsewhere in these pages. This bodes well for humanity.

Two of the best high-level views of panarchy as it pertains to the future of humanity and the Earth are those of Stewart Brand, the arch-father of *Co-Evolution Quarterly, Whole Earth Review,* and so many other things, and Venessa Miemis, co-creator with Doug Rushkoff of the Contact Conference,[18] and a wonderful design talent in her own right.
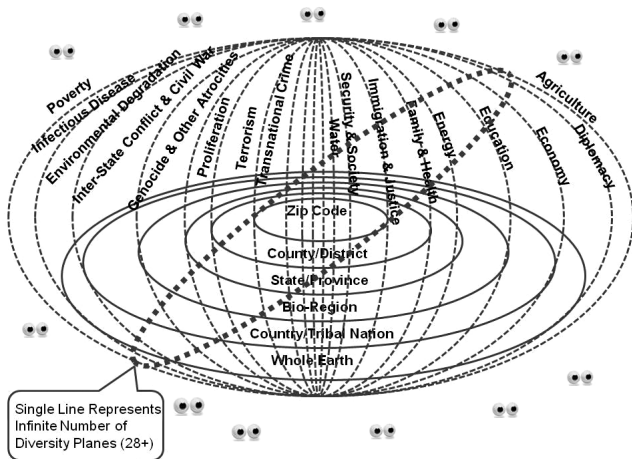
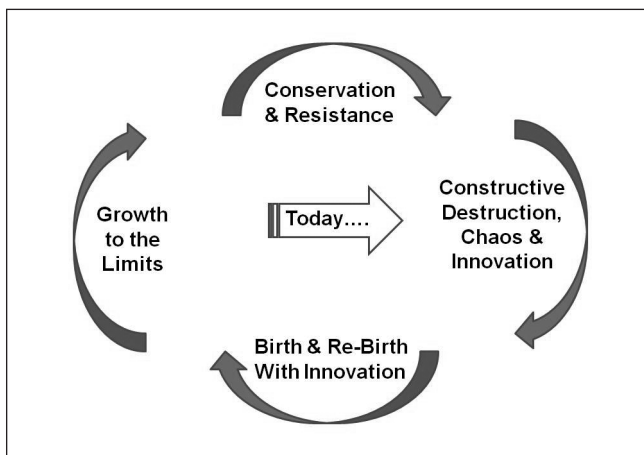**Figure 8: Panarchy Action Model**

Figure 9: The Panarchy Cycle

Lapse

What is fundamental in Figure 10 is the trumping of governance by culture. When governance breaks down, if the culture is strong, resilience is possible. If the culture is not strong, we have a problem.

The next graphic, Figure 11, a graduate project by Venessa Miemis and accessible via her website Emergent by Design,[19] illuminates how every person who is a participant can (perhaps even must) adopt varying roles suited to their personal inclinations and strengths; and how each of the four main passages in the panarchy cycle benefit from different constellations of public personas.

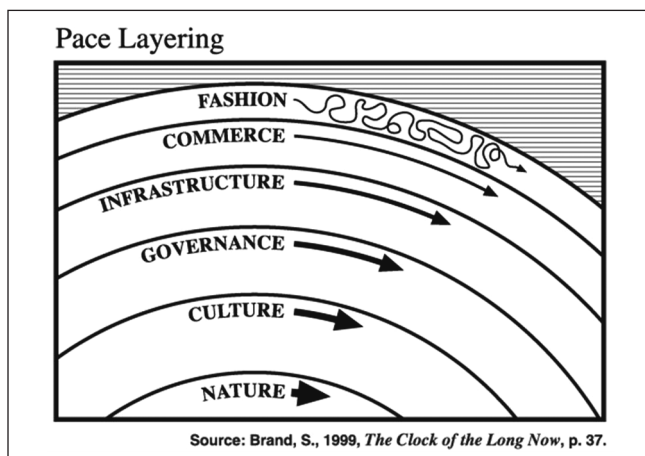One more observation: technology is not a substitute for thinking. I have been saying this for decades and

Pace Layering

FASHION
COMMERCE
INFRASTRUCTURE
GOVERNANCE
CULTURE
NATURE

Source: Brand, S., 1999, *The Clock of the Long Now*, p. 37.

Figure 10: Stewart Brand's Panarchy Time Lapse

finally found a graphic (Figure 12) that makes the point crystal-clear.[20]

Panarchy is enabled by information technology, but it is the human mind that actually creates panarchy across all boundaries. The nature of panarchy is a continuous cycle that leverages human intelligence in all its rich diversity. It is urgent that we leverage every possible mind (with a preference for minds that have been liberated and are not inert) through comprehensive full-spectrum integration—in other words, we have to break down all the stove-pipes among academic disciplines, civil society advocacy organizations, commercial entities, government bureaucracies, and so on.[21]

When you do that, resilience is one of the results.

Lies are like sand in the gears of a very complex, delicate machine. Lies steal from the commonwealth. Lies kill. Lies are a cancer on the body of humanity. Integrity is not just the opposite of lies—integrity is the restoration and maintenance of the whole. Integrity is the cosmic mix of transparency, truth, and trust that creates heaven on Earth. Panarchy is heaven; resilience is the Earth and its humanity in a state of balance.
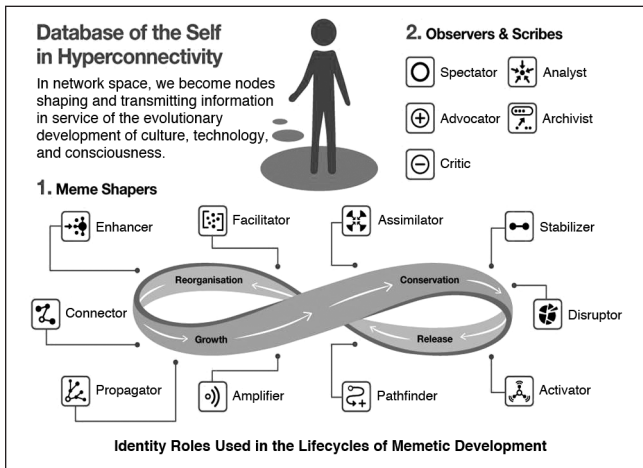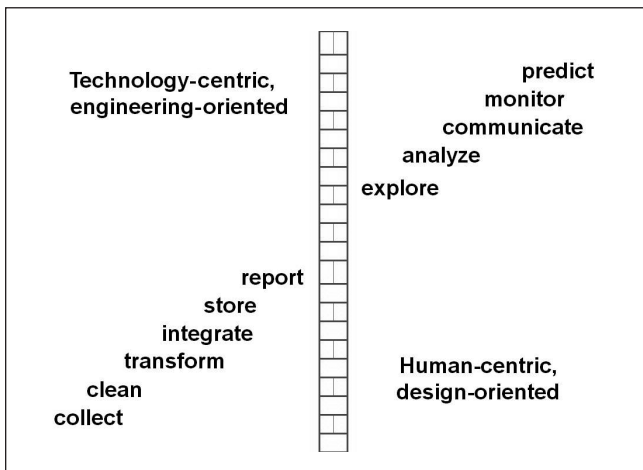
Figure 11: Venessa Miemis on Panarchy

Figure 12: Technology Is Not a Substitute for Thinking