

DIG's & FIG's

Dysfunctional
Interest
Group's

Functional
Interest
Group's

Jeff Setterholm

Version 1.0 July 24th, 2015

© 2015 by Jeffrey M. Setterholm

Supersedes: Version 0.6 August 23rd, 2014 – Appendix "A" added.

See page 5

Web Link: <http://ftp.setterholm.com/WorldPeace/Digs&Figs.pdf>

Save as: Digs&Figs10.pdf

This document may be reproduced, in its entirety, without permission.



The PhilosophyWorks®

Lakeville, Minnesota, U.S.A.

Secular organizations have justification(s) & evolve. If and when the behavior(s) of participants (e.g.: leaders, employees, volunteers, etc.) conflict with the justification(s) for the organization, then “dysfunction” is occurring. *Improve* the justification(s), and/or *mitigate* the dysfunctional behavior(s). Two insightful acronyms:

DIG (Dysfunctional Interest Group) =

“A group of people who *sustain at least one particular dysfunction* which *conflicts with the valid justification(s)* presently empowering that group.”

- & -

FIG (Functional Interest Group) =

“A group of people who *efficiently sustain a function* which has a valid justification.”

DIG's often gain sufficient clout to *eclipse* their justifications; e.g.:

Our projected *unaffordable national defense* is an oxymoron.

The joke could be: “We dig it! Why not surrender now?”

DIG's spew some of the ‘spin’ that has saturated American public discourse, our national election campaigns, and corporate discourse. Factors to aid in recognizing DIG's include:

a. Is an issue a distraction? Controversial ideas in “the news” have frequently been spun by one-or-more DIG's to distract voters from other more pressing issues related to economic & social justice. For example: I doubt that politicians who would deny healthcare coverage to poor people care about anyone else's sexual orientation. So, while gay rights are important, *the opposition* to gay rights functioned as a smokescreen. Trying to dismantle – rather than improve - “ObamaCare” also smells like smoke.

b. Is a “right” being withheld? Example: Was *Women's Voting Rights* a problem that should have taken 120 years for the U.S.A. to resolve? Another example: Thomas Jefferson wrote: “We hold these truths to be self-evident...” but 100 years passed between ending Slavery in the U.S.A. (via the Civil War ~90 years further into our nationhood, with a huge cost in American lives) & passing the Voting Rights Act... ~190 years of willful rejection of the “self-evident”!

Rephrase the question as: Are DIG's stonewalling an obvious outcome?

c. Did the FIG already know best? It's easy to underestimate the skill of FIG's. A lot of ordinary people work very diligently to be FIG's in their area of specialty. The U.S.A. has de-employed some of its finest talent as DIG's have dug in. **FIG's are no match for DIG's in terms of the ability to scheme, maneuver, & spin...** because FIG's are preoccupied with *getting the justified job done*.

Leadership sets the tone within organizations. A key factor in the decline of American competitiveness has been leaders who left behind only the DIG shells of the FIG organizations that were entrusted to their leadership. Caused by: Ignorance? Selfishness? Destructive advice from DIG's? ... All three?

d. Will the words (describing ideas) fail to endure as deeds? Will there be a compelling reason for change? If not, expect no short-term benefits from a model improvement. On the bright side, different societies have different & evolving collections of DIG's & FIG's; **an inherently valid improvement may first take root in an unexpected &/or distant place.**

e. Is "forgetting" a particular factor ill advised? Formulas of functional operation may survive in one nation but not in another – e.g: American automobile manufacturers *forgot the importance* of manufacturing reliable automobiles onshore during the 1980's & 1990's, whereas the Japanese auto manufacturers remembered.

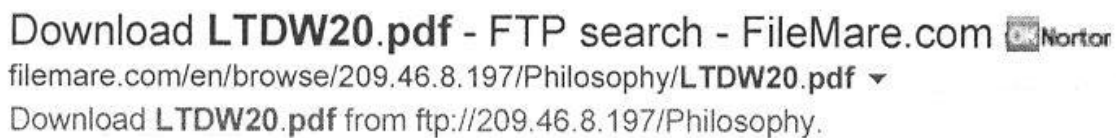
f. Is an exclusion occurring for an invalid reason? Example: A couple of weeks after posting this document, Digs&Figs.pdf has abruptly all-but-disappeared from Google searches, **along with the rest of the links to ftp.setterholm.com** . A salient example of the pervasive change:


For the last decade, you could Google-search "LTDW20.pdf" & be pointed to:

<http://ftp.setterholm.com/Philosophy/LTDW20.pdf>

(LTDW20.pdf = "**L**earning **T**ogether in a **D**iverse **W**orld, version 2.0")

As of today, the search yields the far more cryptic reference:



Download LTDW20.pdf - FTP search - FileMare.com 
filemare.com/en/browse/209.46.8.197/Philosophy/LTDW20.pdf ▾
Download LTDW20.pdf from ftp://209.46.8.197/Philosophy.

Someone/(or some algorithm) is now obscuring access to my peacefully constructive meta-philosophy as well & I'm morphed to: **Jeffrey M. 209.46.8.197 @ nobody.**

Subsequently, Google re-established the interpretation of "209.46.8.197" as "setterholm.com"
g. Is an established foundation being destroyed? An example of structural instability (ref. Wikipedia):

Microsoft Corp. began delivering the computer Operating System (OS) "Windows XP" on October 25, 2001. About a billion copies of the OS (a 25% market share) were in use worldwide by April 8, 2014 when Microsoft "pulled the plug" on the OS... an amazing undercutting of computation infrastructure. [The root cause of the crumble is that copyrights have been allowed to apply to "software tools".]

h Will the losses outweigh the benefits? If DIG's have pushed an entity to the brink of collapse *then* any suggested change might be "the straw that broke the camel's back".

DIG's embrittle organizations – e.g.: America's congressional decision making process is broken.

FIG's provide resilience – e.g.: American farmers produce a vast amount of food.

When FIG's predominate, proposed improvements may be evaluated on merit.

a.–thru-h. (above) are just the tip of the iceberg; a far more troubling reality exists:

Dysfunctional Interest Groups (DIG's) have dominated human history to the present day. In other words, FIG's have always been the exceptions-to-the-rule, not the rule.

Presto: Most of the wars, chaos, cruelty, greed, racism & other negative incomprehensibilities – in short, most of the inhumanities of history - can be comprehended as an: **“Of course!”**, rather than as a complex set of mysteries each in need of an individual explanation.

You need not be surprised when, as part of a robust FIG, you can no longer function effectively in your workplace due to decisions being made by one or more DIG's. (The Sunday comic strip “Dilbert” portrays relevant examples week after week.)

Of course we can't afford to defend ourselves. Of course Congress screws around. Of course many of our citizens don't have healthcare. Of course (in America) the rich are getting richer and other citizens pay the price. Of course our primary & secondary education system lags the best of other nations. Of course we have no means of transporting our astronauts to the International Space Station (*we're excused... because that calls for **rocket science** ☺*). Of course, on national television, our Harvard-Law-educated President declared himself unqualified to pass judgment on the legality of Russia's recent incursion into the Crimean region of Ukraine (deferring to the judgment of the World Court).

Why have DIG's held most of the trump cards of human history? Factors include:

- A. Up until the dawn of personal computers in ~1972, organization of human activities had to reside within human minds, which in turn necessitated having human leaders (in all societies). &
- B. On average, human leaders jealously guarded their prerogatives of power – which included mitigating the means whereby slaves/subjects/citizens could begin to object to the existence of the various roots of the leaders' power bases. &
- C. The consequence of B. is that the political, social, economic, & ethical components of higher education processes, as well as religious doctrines, were riddled with caveats and exclusions which advantaged the leaders with respect to their followers. &
- D. Up until the arrival of the industrial revolution (~1820+), hard manual labor by lots of people was the order of the day (e.g.: The Roman empire wasn't built and rebuilt by volunteers). As mechanization and automation flourished, all of humanity could have benefited. Instead, leaders around the world were blinded by their existing paradigms for keeping followers subjugated, exploiting the human, natural, and agricultural resources of weak opponents, & destabilizing strong opponents, i.e.: DIGdom flourished. &
- E. American Humanities Professors have nurtured the DIGfest by failing to discredit the paradigms of leaders who relied on widespread cruelty to achieve their ends. E.g.: Napoleon was an industrial-strength terrorist; “learning from history” could have focused on picking through the rubble of France's experience to figure out how to thwart future Napoleons; instead:
Germany experienced Hitler,
Russia experienced Stalin (e.g. ref.: History Channel documentary “Stalin Declassified”),
China experienced Mao (e.g. ref.: History Channel documentary “Mao Declassified”),
etc., etc., etc..

When men with the USA's “Founding Fathers” mentality marginalized Native Americans after the War of 1812, and England starved the Irish during the Potato Famine and attacked China in the 1840's in order to purvey opium to the Chinese people, it was high-time to dissect the ethical presumptions of the English speaking world as part of the search of more constructive leadership paradigms.

In other words: Treating each major *failure of social ethics* like a *bridge collapse*... identify the cause(s) of the social failure and redesign the social system to permanently mitigate the cause(s). Let's learn how to nip dysfunction in the bud! &

F. Meddling in the internal politics of other nations for personal, corporate, & national gain is a well-established tradition; e.g.: read the resulting chaotic political histories of the nations of Central America.

The U.S.A.'s national politics is sliding into a *similarly chaotic state*, in part because our Supreme Court now permits unlimited contributions to American political campaigns by foreign entities.

**With a sense of constructive urgency in the face of a pervasive worldwide problem:
Let's figure out how to mitigate DIG's!**

DIG's are dominating the end-game of: American worship at the altar of "competition".

Related reading at setterholm.com:

If you're interested in identifying & mitigating DIG's &/or empowering FIG's, consider:

<http://ftp.setterholm.com/Compassionism.pdf> - "Compassionism"

- e.g. see: 'Perks of Leadership', page 7

**... I now believe that "vibrant reciprocity" has vastly-more promise
than "The Golden Rule" in squelching sociopaths.**

&

<http://ftp.setterholm.com/freedomJS.pdf> - "Commodities Expand 'freedom'"

My framework (meta-philosophy) for *peaceful social adaption* is:

<http://ftp.setterholm.com/Philosophy/LTDW20.pdf>

- "Learning Together in a Diverse World"

- core concepts (in 11 languages): pages 5-15.

- **World peace can be figured out, eh?... see page 30.**

~ A decade later, I'm working on World Peace – Round#1:

<http://ftp.setterholm.com/WorldPeace/SynergyTPW.jpg>

- This paper (**a., b., c., ..., h.**) expands: **0.Cautions 5%**

For a broader survey of my personal biases, see:

<http://ftp.setterholm.com/Philosophy/SocialParasites.pdf> - pages 4 & 5.

**In the future - some present "functions" of our organizations will be judged to be "dysfunctions".
In particular: the functions based on cruelty toward – and/or malicious deception of - other
human beings will not stand the test of time.**

Appendix "A" (on the next page) highlights the extreme dysfunctionality of sociopaths.

A few months ago the cover of a \$7.98 *bargain book* caught my eye...

the sociopath next door

subtitled:

1 in 25 ordinary Americans secretly has no conscience and can do anything at all without feeling guilty. Who is the devil *you* know?

& acclaimed as follows:

“A chillingly accurate portrayal of evil - the decent person’s guide to indecency.”

Author: Martha Stout, ph.d., a Harvard psychologist, 2005, ISBN-13:978-1-60671-131-6

The book is a masterpiece of clinically-based insights... from ten years ago.

The central focus of sociopaths seems to be “winning”. Note that:

When a society’s leaders teach
“winning” as the central objective of life
(and in the U.S.A., that’s how it is!),
those who embrace “winning” religiously
become difficult –or impossible- to differentiate from sociopaths.

The depths of cruelty of some sociopaths can be boundless. Watch:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/memory-of-the-camps/>

...the link to the 1985 documentary on Germany’s WWII concentration camps, serving as proof that sociopaths-in-power can be a grave human social problem rather than a pretend or imaginary problem of some sort.

Hence, in our quest for World Peace, a central question becomes:

**How will humanity *exclude* sociopaths
from national leadership –
worldwide?**

Furthermore, nipping aspiring sociopaths in the bud
may squelch many of the dysfunctions in our various workplaces.