

## THE NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF THE IDEOLOGICAL IDENTITY OF THE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR: THE TENSION BETWEEN JUXTAPOSED DISCOURSES

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### INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the process by which the social entrepreneurial identity can be constructed through narrative. In so doing, we employ a case study analysis of a social entrepreneur who started, and still operates, a refugee support centre in a major Australian city. This research is timely in light of the current state of academic development of social entrepreneurship (SE) which remains an emerging and under-researched field of academic inquiry (Austin, 2006). In a literature review covering the period between 1990 and 2004, Mair, Robinson and Hockerts (2006) were able to uncover only a handful of academic articles on SE in peer-reviewed journals. Johnson (2000) found similar results, with most references contained in journalistic and professional sources, including internet websites. As such the field remains under-theorised, extremely broad, and bedevilled by a plethora of varying definitions. Our review of the SE literature reveals that it is concentrated in four distinct topic areas: (i) the meaning and conceptualisation of SE (Mort, Weerawardena, and Carnegie, 2003; Thompson, Alvy, and Lees, 2000; Waddock and Post, 1991; Roper and Cheney, 2005; Dees, 1998), (ii) the difference between SE and business entrepreneurship (Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern, 2006), (iii) the characteristics, motivations, and personal values of social entrepreneurs (Plater-Zyberk, 2005; Hemingway, 2005), and (iv) the activities of social entrepreneurs (Thompson, 2002; Alvord, Brown, and Letts, 2004).

One of the more recent definitions of SE is advanced by Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern (2006:2) as “innovative, social value creating activity that can occur within or across the non-profit, business, and public sectors”. Thus, SE is not defined by legal form. Rather the key difference between SE and business entrepreneurship is that the generation of social value is the central driving mission for the former. But this still leaves wide discretion for the concept of SE. At one extreme it could include revolutionary leaders with a social agenda. At the other extreme, it can include situations where social innovation is seen as a business opportunity and transformed into a commercial for-profit organisation. Or it can include a non-profit organisation going partially for-profit as for example when it starts selling some goods and services to finance its main activities. Or it can include a non-profit organisation adopting business activities such as strategic planning, professional management, and business control mechanisms in order to increase efficiency within a given budget. Thus, social entrepreneurs can be individual citizens, community activists, or civil servants, stretching across the continuum from Mahatma Gandhi to Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream (Hockerts, 2006).

With these observations in mind our study is framed by three related research questions. First, how do social entrepreneurs position themselves within the different modes of the wider SE movement? Second, what are the beliefs and motivations of social entrepreneurs that lead them to start and operate socially entrepreneurial ventures? Third, how do social entrepreneurs talk about organisational emergence and what meanings and understanding do they give to this concept?

In examining these questions we take a constructivist approach rather than an essentialist approach, and locate our analysis within the framework of identity theory (Cerulo, 1997). In so doing we help to address the recent calls that have been made in the literature for scholars to pay greater attention to the social constructionist approach to entrepreneurial identity, in particular the discourse and narrative genre (Fletcher, 2003; Foss, 2004; Downing, 2005; Cohen and Musson, 2000; Down and Reveley, 2004). This perspective has been called the ‘fifth movement in entrepreneurship research’ by Fletcher (2003) which emphasises a focus on the way in which language and discourse produce entrepreneurial knowledge in the form of understandings and meanings. The implication of such an approach is that researchers abandon attempts to pronounce on what entrepreneurial aspects are “more fundamentally ‘real’ or ‘true’...and instead investigate the processes through which organisational emergence is socially constructed through language” (Fletcher, 2003:128). Discourse analysis has previously been used in the literature to analyse such issues as the factors for success in top managers (Sims, 1993), managing small businesses (Rigg, 2005), and sensemaking of a new-start entrepreneur (Mills and Pawson, 2006). However, studies such as these owe more to a tradition of theme analysis and category discovery in the vein of objectivist grounded theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). In our study we adopt a more performative approach to ‘discourse’ as referring to interrelated sets of texts that “systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972:49). Discourses are defined by Watson (1994:113) as a “connected set of statements, concepts, terms, expressions which constitute a way of talking or writing about a particular issue, thus framing the way people understand and act with respect to that issue”. Hence, by bringing certain phenomenon into being, discourses constitute the social world (Parker, 1992).

Accordingly, discourses provide entrepreneurs with the means of interacting with others and drawing upon linguistic resources and concepts which enable them to construct an understanding of themselves, their identity, their beliefs and the emergence of their businesses. Foss (2004: 102) believes that when entrepreneurs enter into dialogue with researchers in order to tell their stories “it is as much to satisfy their need for making sense of their experiences”.

By taking the approach that entrepreneurs through interaction and dialogue with others create their own meanings of issues that are going on around them, we accept that “entrepreneurial activities, features and characteristics are not ‘objects’ given a fixed or static ontological status...instead they are dynamic and constantly emerging, being realised, shaped and constructed through social processes (Fletcher, 2003:127). We are reminded by Potter and Wetherell (1987) that discourse is manufactured out of many available linguistic resources which can be selected to suit various functions, purposes and audiences, according to the social, political and cultural context one is situated in, and what a person wants to say depending on whom they are talking to and the type of relationship they want to build. Thus, “in language and talk [entrepreneurs] frame what seems right for specific occasions (Fletcher, 2003:130).

### **NARRATIVES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY**

‘Narratives’ constitute one of the different approaches by which discourse analysis can be conducted (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004). In this section we examine how narratives can be used in the construction of identity. Organisations are created by humans by constructing

boundaries which separate out various entities from one another. In other words, the process of organising produces organisations through ‘divisioning’ (Parker, 1997). Divisionings produce identities based on concepts and classifications of both sharing and difference. Davies and Harre (1991) employ the term ‘positioning’ to relate to the manner in which people locate themselves as if they belong in one category and not in another through the use of story lines. Thus identity is constructed from a “pattern of fractures” (Parker, 1997:120) that create individual sites that divide us who do this from them who do that, or identify things as this and not that, or articulate views of what the organisation should be doing, who it should be responsible to, who does what work, and so on. Parker (1997:117) suggests that “deciding what counts as similarity and what counts as difference is the key to drawing boundaries” that bring into existence both organisations and identities. This involves two processes – a claim of separation and a claim of similarity – what Stone (1962:94) calls “apposition and opposition, a bringing together and setting apart”. Thus, divisioning creates identity through “identifying with one social object [and] disidentifying with other social objects that differ from that one” (McCall, 2003:12).

People can create strategies for dividing according to how they wish to orient themselves around particular organisational issues located within particular organisational contexts. Identity and identifications can thus be regarded as resources that people deploy with certain ends in mind. Parker suggests that there are “a huge number of materials that might be used to decide what difference makes a difference – gender, skin colour, dialect, sexuality, clothing, age, yellow armbands...” (1997:117). Thus, organising involves sites of “labouring over divisions” wherein “the deployment of claims to difference is a matter of context” (1997:134).

Thus, identity creation through divisioning suggests that “identity is defined in relation to counter-identities” (Burke, 1980:19). We are reminded by McCall (2003:11) that “identity is a key feature of the self [and] self-identification has traditionally been viewed as attempts to answer the question ‘who am I?’ ” However, Parker’s divisioning concept would also logically suggest that such a process simultaneously constructs the excluded scenario of self-disidentification, viewed as attempts to answer the question ‘who am I not?’ This leads McCall (2003:12) to suggest that “the twinned processes of self-identification and self-disidentification can be regarded as positive and negative poles of identity, perhaps more conveniently labelled the Me and the Not-Me”, and to call for a greater recognition for these two poles within identity theory and research.

Individuals can construct a self-narrative of identity through the medium of autobiographies wherein they construct past events and actions (Czarniawska, 1997; Riesman, 1993). A ‘realist’ view of identity is based on principles of continuity and consistency which echo an essentialist view of characteristics that ‘exist’ and can be discovered (Cerulo, 1997). Newer post-structuralist theories in the socially constructed tradition, however, advocate principles of the “fragmentary, shifting, and dynamic nature” of identity (Foss, 2004: 81), that is “marked by absence as much as an organisationally constituted presence” (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004). According to Foss (2004) the entrepreneurial self is multi-faceted and dynamic and evolves over an individual’s life course. Identity construction is a process of self-reflection as a person moves through their various life environments – a story which creates a person’s retrospective report of past experiences and what they mean to that person. McAdams (1985) views the ‘story’ as one which integrates the individual’s reconstructed past, perceived present, and anticipated future. But in constructing this ‘storied’ creation of self, individuals attempt to emerge “patterns and consistency and coherence with regard to the nature of their identity in relation to others” (Foss, 2004:81). In the same vein, McAdams (1996) regards the life story as residing at a level of identity where the developing self seeks a temporal coherence.

Similarly, Bruner (2004:691) working from the approach that “world-making is the principal function of the mind” takes a constructivist view that “stories do not happen in the real world but rather are constructed in people’s minds”. Thus autobiographies are not a record of what actually happened but should be regarded as a continuing interpretation and reinterpretation of our experience. They are a selective achievement of memory recall, and as such owe more to cognitive, linguistic, and interpretive achievements rather than necessarily being an accurate realist account. This makes autobiographical accounts notoriously unstable. As such the process of narrativisation can assume a sequence of life imitating narrative as much as narrative imitating life. For Bruner, we can ‘become’ the autobiographical narratives by which we tell about our lives, in the sense that eventually “the processes that guide the self-telling of life narratives achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organise memory, and to segment and purpose-build the very events of a life” (2004:694).

Accordingly, we are reminded by Riesman (1993) that human agency and imagination determine how a story is told, what events are included, which are excluded, how events are plotted, and what meanings are ascribed to them. Time and context are crucial variables. So also is how the narrator wants to be portrayed with respect to any particular audience towards whom the story is directed (Polkinghorne, 1996). Thus, in relating a fragment of an autobiography Davies and Harre (1991) note how speakers assign parts and characters in their story, whether explicitly or implicitly, both to themselves and to other people, so that its structure is no different from a fairy tale or other work of narrative fiction. Thus the nature of the narrative product possesses pragmatic, positioning, and performative intentions bound within particular social contexts. Accordingly we should consider any narratives that result from interviews between a narrator and a researcher to be no more than “scientific artefacts” (Foss, 2004:84). Such narratives according to Foss (2004) are no more than stories wherein narrators identify central life elements that the narrator regards as important to share with the researcher. The identity story as it is lived and the story as it is told bear no necessary reconciliation (Polkinghorne, 1996).

### THE CASE

The case relates to an actual organisation set up in Australia to support migrants seeking refugee immigration status in the country. Generically these people were called ‘asylum seekers’ and were often held in detention for extended periods of time whilst their applications for appropriate visas were processed. The refugee centre grew from the initial concern of a group of people committed to the protection of human rights of individuals and groups. Dissatisfied with mainstream initiatives and their underlying philosophies for dealing with disadvantaged refugees the group saw the opportunity to establish their own organisation that would serve the immediate needs of those refugees lacking official support to longer term developmental needs which would assist them to become established members of Australian society without risking exploitation. The organisation was located on the edge of the central business district of a major Australian city. The building was rented for a ‘peppercorn rent’ and basic services were provided to the refugees including food, legal advice, child care, health services, and career development. Several hundred people volunteered to provide their services to the centre. At the time of the setting up of the centre, the issue of refugees entering Australia was a political ‘hot potato’.

The following narrative was related to one of the authors of this paper by the leading figure behind the establishment of the centre (pseudonym Pat). The researcher met Pat at a social entrepreneurship conference in 2004 mainly attended by social entrepreneurs, Government and welfare officials, various types of practitioners, and some academics. The narrative was related shortly afterwards when the researcher met with Pat to conduct an interview. In this interview (which was tape recorded and transcribed) Pat was encouraged to tell the researcher about his beliefs and motivations for undertaking this type of work, and about the nature and emergence of his organisation. Pat was encouraged to talk widely without being led by the researcher. No topics were specifically introduced by the researcher, whose role was

perceived primarily as being to engage in a type of “conversation” that would prompt Pat to “engage in identity work” in the form of a narrative response (Watson, 1997:141). In presenting our data we follow the genre of allowing the narrator to enjoy the primary voice in the form of an extended narrative, a method expounded by researchers such as Lindgren and Wahlin (2001), Foss (2004), and Fletcher (2003).

### **The Narrative**

I came to Australia as a migrant at four years old. My dad, was from [South American country]...At that time the military took over, there was a dictatorship, we weren't directly affected in the political sense, we were not refugees or anything. So my dad felt that this country is going to the shit, I want to get out of here and take my family, because there is no future here at the moment... we came out in seventy-seven. So I went through the whole experience of going through migrant hostels like [a local] detention centre. We stayed there, we were in public housing for the first three or four years ... so I have had that sort of experience. I have also had that experience of being a migrant and the racism at the hands of a whole range of people...being a migrant, being from a working class background.

So my family, they are not political, they are working class, they hate communists, even though they hate capitalists at the same time, My parents, sent me off to the local working class catholic school. So from there I guess, I have got to admit it, because I am an atheist, but a lot of the core humanistic principles of Christianity, you know, treat other people how you would like to be treated, you not hurting others, sort of the core little humanistic principles. I think I learnt a lot at that stage, becoming interested, my parents bought another thing to improve our life, it was encyclopaedia wall books...and from there I was really keen on reading so I started from A and read pretty much to Z ... And at about K I came across a whole section on Martin-Luther King and the US civil rights movement. And I was really quite interested by that, and that sort of... informed me. So I had that upbringing, you know, at home we had that social justice where we were treated fair, So yes, I saw the experiences my parents had, they were injured at work, and they had all those issues, how they were treated by their employers and all that kind of stuff, so they were really informed and their experience informed me... I was interested in doing anything that would be of benefit to the general community.

So I was looking at, you know, studying, I ended up at [university]... doing a social science degree, which I enjoyed myself completely, but did not pass a thing, because I was having so much of a good time, by that time about seventeen I was doing community work, like in a soup kitchen at the sacred heart mission, because they came and visited our school, and I had an interest in the legal area so I, volunteered at the legal centre at about eighteen. By nineteen I was the chairperson of the committee at the legal centre. I started legal studies and things at uni, and said its not for me and went and did a community development course and I am about I think a semester away from finishing, but I am not really into that sort of formal education. I find that like, it is useful to a point where I am learning things, and then when I am out there doing the practice, and ...I find that useful, and if people are going to employ me because some lecturer has marked me off because I know something. If that is important to them, maybe I do not want to work at that place. The piece of paper is not that important. If I have got the practical experience, I think the theory needs to inform that, but that is how it should happen, the theory should inform the practical. The theory should come from the practice, as well. So, anyway I have sort of nearly completed that and I have working mainly in the legal sector for a while...

So with like-minded friends like Con from a working class background and another friend of mine, we sort of got together and said, we really need to create our own organization, things that are going to be innovative, they are going to change things, we need to put the focus back on small grass roots community organisations that will really make a difference and it will be informed from the people they work with and have people that they work with involved in the management. And so from there we said... how are we going to raise money? ... I am one

who believes that the means and the ends should be one and the same, so I thought OK lets try and set up something that is ethical, so we...got around to the environmental movement. The Friends of the Earth who ran the food co-op...we will raise money by running a fruit and veg shop with organic produce. The organic food is specifically produced by small growers, it's safe, workers aren't required to handle dangerous chemicals...it has environmental benefits, a whole range of, you know, the triple bottom line was there as well. So we did that and that was the idea, like a social enterprise to, you know, support innovative social projects...unfortunately we did not have the financial stuff under control...we ended up giving away about \$70,000 worth, so all the individuals who set it up ended up getting personal loans in their names. They gave this to the shop...we got a bookkeeper to come in to provide the financial skills...so we have learned a lot from that financial disaster, even though the social benefits were great.

So I guess my whole life ended up being around social enterprise...just because I feel that need... from a very libertarian perspective... I am informed by Leninism, Marxism and whatever, but I don't believe that we should be organised around the state, but we need to be organised at a much more local level. So libertarian... the word is not used that much, anarchist sort of principles. If you look at the co-ops and Mondragon they come from anarchist, you know philosophy, and very much I personally am about that. And that we need to have communities control the means of production. I don't want to help people, I want people to help themselves. You need to be able to do it yourself. You need to take that power back. So I see this as something, you know, I don't think the world has improved like, you know, we have serfdom, then we have something else and we had...some liberal government... as sort of democracy based on land. You know if you owned land you'd vote. And when capitalism came in, the industrial revolution... I don't think it was an improvement... It was like some of the city-states in medieval, in the renaissance times, were much more participatory and democratic than they are now. Where the guilds would control work, you know they would control the workplace.

You have potentially some people living in hunter-gatherers societies like...some of them would have only work for three or four hours, maybe five hours. Like some of the Aboriginal communities... what a life, they met their basic needs. They developed such a complex spiritual and communal life, which goes far beyond anything we have. I think we can learn a lot from... actually I have got a lot of interest in indigenous communities and I have done other stuff around that. If you remember there was a group of indigenous people that took up arms against the Mexican state, the Zapatistas. Took over a few towns, they took up arms and they were organising in their libertarian way, where people are delegated particular positions, if they don't do it they get the boot and someone else is delegated, and they are very consultative...they have the way to make decisions, it is about participatory democracy...those communities what they had done, they set up health centres, they set up workers cooperatives, they set up schools, all on their own back, not money and just with the idea that we should all be involved in making decisions, and it was amazing actually to see that.

So I guess... I see this as potential...it's not something that...tomorrow...suddenly everyone's going to be in a social enterprise and things are going to change. This is...a process that will take centuries potentially to... get to... I think you need to put it out there and do it. I think it is so easy for people to compromise themselves out of existence. The examples would be [InsuranceCo], you know they were set up as mutual societies.... and what has happened now with the disasters? They were so focussed on profit, like the disasters they had in England, their focus has completely changed. Instead of providing services they are just about providing a buck for the shareholder.

You know five or six years into doing that, I saw that there was a huge issue around how larger and larger organisations, like the big Christian charities, who now, don't get people attending their churches, but are getting a lot of money from the government because, the issues are prioritised, they take up the contracts, pay substandard wages and do quite well out

of it, and now have got quite a lot of say, because they are organisations with such huge turnovers. They have a say on policy like the drug policy is being directed by [CharityCo1] in Australia, who believe that people shouldn't drink and that is it. Not to minimise harm, but the abolition... they work from an abstinence model, whereas most drug services in, in a western country that are working well are run on a harm minimisation approach. So they hold some very conservative viewpoints, based on the interpretation of Christianity they have.

[CharityCo1] are very good at making money and the money that they are making they are actually just hoarding it, just holding on to it...they are a large organization – massive organization. The original aim of [CharityCo1] was to recruit people to Christianity, and that is still a very important part of the work that they do. And one of the ways in which they convert people to Christianity is by offering them support in times of need. So their focus is very different, they can be quite conservative. They hold particular issues around what a family is, and it is not a broad perspective of a family, it's the father, mother and you know, two kids kind of family rather than, you know, the reality of families today.

People who work at [CharityCo1] are highly exploited, the idea is that you are here because you have this broader commitment to what we are doing so you shouldn't necessarily get paid properly. It's a quite hierarchical organization and, you know, there is a lot of hypocrites, they are working with the most disadvantaged people, but the upper echelons of [CharityCo1] drive nice cars have apartments in [upper-class suburbs], so they are not actually community based organizations, they have grown so big and they are so distant from community and the people they work with there is such a gap and a barrier...they drive wages down in order for people to work for them...they are not really incorporating the needs of their clients more the needs of their particular movement. The same with [CharityCo2], it is growing, they are so focused on getting these contracts they will say and do whatever they want to. They are not really providing a community voice to government. So yeh, I think when organizations get so large and so distant and so focused on finances rather than the broader aims they can lose their way.

We are a grassroots organization that the people we work with inform the work and we are constantly striving for that to happen, the idea is to have people actively participating in the running...whereas these other [Christian charities] are so sort of distanced from the people they are working with... the managers making decisions aren't the social workers or the reception at the front desk dealing with the day to day problems. So they are so distanced from the issues that...and their focus is making sure that the organization gets funded or they really lose...they have the potential to lose their way.

We have four hundred volunteers which can...you know... make decisions, because most of them are members and can elect a committee of management...in this organization there is a coordinators meeting where some of those coordinators are paid but the majority are not...so they are people who are responsible for their particular program so their actual program will have their meeting to discuss things, then the program manager goes... to the coordinators meeting and they would take positions that would go to the committee. So there is a process where people have a whole range of potential ways and sometimes when you are just working in a position where you're managing or whatever...you can forget about why you are here in the first place...and I think the volunteers don't let you forget that, because there're here not because they've got a pay packet coming in, but because they are really committed. So yeh it sort of keeps you honest.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Pat's narrative is strongly ideological. He labours hard both to divide and undivide. He constructs his identity in the form of crafted divisionings that create a pattern of fractures articulating two generic discourse types. First, there are discourses that reject mainstream or institutional principles, practices, and philosophies (the 'Not-Me'). Second, there are

discourses that endorse local, participative, grass-roots and community initiatives (the ‘Me’). Together, these two discourses construct Pat’s identity based on the opposition and apposition principles of setting apart (a claim of separation) and bringing together (a claim of similarity).

Pat’s oppositional discourse encompasses most of the institutional arrangements that are ubiquitous in modern society – formal education, institutionalised religion, capitalism, and the large Christian charities. His narrative deals extensively with the manner in which large Christian charities have become co-opted and corrupted into a de facto arm of government. His ‘talk’ concentrates on how such charities have become large, conservative, hierarchical, exploitative, non-participative, distant from the community, and focused on finances and winning contracts to such an extent that they have lost their way in pursuit of their broader aims. He similarly crafts his divisionings to exclude both the profit-seeking ambition of capitalism (that seeks not to provide a service but to earn a buck for shareholders), and the state-imposed dominance of communism. These self-disidentifications (‘who am I not?’) also act to simultaneously construct Pat’s oppositional discourses (‘who am I?’) which are broadly supportive of grass-roots, participative community initiatives and which he positions around the concepts of humanism, social justice, libertarianism, and fairness. Pat calls upon a wide range of philosophies, people, and movements that have informed his thinking and which, by implication, he finds himself supportive of, such as Martin Luther-King, US civil rights movement, Leninism, Marxism, worker co-operatives, Mondragon, democratic city-states, Zapatistas, anarchism, environmentalism, hunter-gatherer societies, and Aboriginal and indigenous communities.

In common with most people who are called upon to construct a self-narrative of their identity, Pat harks back to the influence of his early experiences and family situation. The main shaping influences are depicted as being a migrant, working class, experiencing racism, and living in migrant hostels and public housing. This background set up his interest in social enterprise and doing anything that would empower and benefit the general community. But Pat does not merely want to help people. Rather he wants them to help themselves and in so doing to take back power through their own democratic local initiatives. There is no immediate victory in sight for this over-arching vision. Pat sees only the potential of future success, by setting in process now a movement that will take centuries to realise.

Although we advance these divisionings as representing the way in which Pat constructs his identity we are simultaneously careful not to put any fixed, consistent or essentialist interpretations upon the details of his narrative. His construction is ultimately ‘of the moment’ during which he draws upon various discursive resources from his “culture, social experience and educational history to ‘do identity work’ at a particular time, in a particular place, in conversation with a particular person” (Watson, 1997:144). Both the process and the product of this identity work are influenced and moderated by the limitations of what his memory recall will allow, what items he is willing to share with the researcher, how he wishes to portray and position himself, and how the events are plotted to form an integrated, coherent and non-contradictory progression. In particular, Pat’s relationship with the researcher cannot be discounted as neutral. A number of questions suggest themselves, to which we have no immediate answer. To what extent is Pat’s narrative custom-made for the context and his audience? Does the context of the interview as constituting part of an academic research study lead him to introduce a greater sense of coherence into his narrative than is otherwise the case? Has messy ‘reality’ been sanitised in the pursuit of a good story? Has the researcher’s position as a university academic led Pat to frame his dialogue in terms of philosophical ideas, movements, and people at the expense of more mundane details and operational principles relating to his organisation? Did the researcher’s prior revelation to Pat that his area of interest lies in critical management studies lead Pat to lace his language with specific types of examples? Would Pat have framed his narrative any differently in the

presence of say a government official, a newspaper journalist, or a funding representative? Was the researcher being patronised?

Also integral to the structure of Pat's identity construction are those elements which appear to be under-stated or absent from his narrative. Omissions can 'talk' just as loudly as inclusions. Whilst Pat labours over the ideological divisions that separate the Me from the Not-Me he appears to be relatively silent about the internal operational details of the centre. The crucial role of the profit-making shop in the financial survival and continuation of the centre is tied up in clouded discourse. Pat emphasises his ideological stance that 'the means and the ends should be one and the same thing' and juxtaposes this belief with his succeeding comments about being 'ethical', located within an 'environmental movement' whereby 'organic produce' was provided by 'small growers' supported by the 'triple bottom line'. When the shop failed through lack of financial acumen the initiators of the centre obtained personal loans which they donated to the shop. These actions appear to be perfectly correlated with Pat's earlier ideological identity divisionings and as such they enhance the integrated nature of the overall narrative. The story possesses coherence.

But what about the omissions? Pat admits the event was a 'financial disaster' from which 'we have learned a lot'. This discourse gives the impression that the event was a turning-point in the operation of the centre, but what was learned and what remedial managerial and financial actions were put in place following the disaster to ensure greater organisational efficiency and effectiveness are not elaborated by Pat. The matter remains silent, other than the admission that the centre now employs a bookkeeper to provide financial skills. We can only hypothesise about the reasons underlying this 'absence'. One possibility may lie in Pat's reluctance to reveal too much detail in this direction in view of potential political hostility towards his centre from certain sections of Australian society. However, we would suggest that an alternative explanation owes more to the inherent tension which has to be played out when highly ideological social entrepreneurs are called upon to construct their identity through narrative. We would argue that in painting his ideological narrative the notion of putting social welfare first whilst still being a profitable business can be both counterintuitive and painful for Pat. Commercial operations can easily be perceived as undercutting and undermining the prime social mission. We are reminded by McAdams (1996) that the main function of the narrative story is integration – the creation of a patterned identity that is coherent and unified by linking the past to the present which in turn sets the stage for the future. As such, Pat must safeguard the integrative nature of his narrative by denying any closeness to either profit-seeking capitalist enterprises or to the big Christian charities that he has criticised as 'large, distant, conservative, focused on finances' and populated by 'hypocrites'. Living with and managing the subsequent tensions can introduce ambiguities that ideologically inclined persons like Pat may find uncomfortable. Any attempt by Pat to simultaneously position his 'anti-institutional and pro local democracy' discourses alongside a 'managerialist and organisational efficiency' discourse could seriously detract from the credibility of constructing an integrated narrative. Any such juxtaposition of discourses could raise the spectre of constructing just the form of co-optation, compromise, and corruption that Pat has struggled to avoid through his 'labouring over the divisions' that separate the Me from the Not-Me. In such a situation, 'avoidance' can become a useful cognitive coping manoeuvre, which subsequently may find its way in the form of 'omission' into the framing of narrative identity construction. This safeguards the integrity and consistency of Pat's narrative. But simultaneously it raises a problem for our quest to uncover how social entrepreneurs position themselves within the different modes of the wider SE movement. We would argue that in the case of ideologically inclined social entrepreneurs such as Pat, the need to portray an integrated narrative can possibly block any attempt to introduce compromising discourses such as managerialism and efficiency. These alternate discourses can remain suppressed and omitted, thus giving a specific 'fairy tale' rendition to the notion of a narratively constructed social entrepreneurial identity

We make these observations not in any way to question Pat's integrity. Narratives can be framed wittingly and unwittingly. Continuing interpretations and reinterpretations of life events, whether they are past, emergent, or anticipated, must always seek a temporary coherence at localised periods of time. Perhaps we can say no more than that the fragmented, dynamic, shifting and unstable nature of Pat's identity was given a temporary airing in the form of a scientific artefact through the vehicle of his interview with this particular researcher at a certain point in time. We have no knowledge of on how many occasions Pat has indulged in similar narrativisation with other people. If this is a new scenario for him then perhaps he saw the interview as a way of satisfying his need to make sense of his own experiences and their place in the wider scheme of things. As such, Pat's narrative construction for our researcher lives on into the future, not as a stable rendition of a core and essential social entrepreneurial identity that *is*, but as a shifting theme perpetually in the process of *becoming*, to be further moulded by other circumstances as they unfold.

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