

# The Taos Institute E-Letter - January 2004

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## The Mission of the Taos Institute

*The Taos Institute is a pueblo, or community, of scholars and practitioners working to explore, extend and share the view that through human relationships we construct our realities, moralities, and aspirations. The Institute is a non-profit, educationally oriented organization whose participants collaborate to design and promote creative, appreciative, and relational practices in families, communities, and organizations around the world. We are pleased to share the fruits of our endeavors with others in diverse collaborative modes.*

### In this issue:

- Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner - online journal
- TI Associate Profile
- First International Online Conference for BAWB
- A Social Construction Experiential Exercise
- 2004 Workshop series
- Focus Book series: present and future
- Books For Professional series
- Other Publications of Interest

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## The Taos Institute Sponsors the next issue of the *Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner* - an online journal dedicated to the practice of Appreciative Inquiry

The Taos Institute is sponsoring the February 2004 issue of the *Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner*. The *AI Practitioner* is published quarterly and is edited by Taos Institute associate Anne Radford. The special February 2004 issue of the *AI Practitioner* focuses on the appreciative organization. Our image for the articles in this issue has been inspired by the publication of *The Appreciative Organization* by the Founders of the Taos Institute (Anderson, Cooperrider, Gergen, Gergen, McNamee, and Whitney). Using that volume as a starting point, we invited TI affiliated practitioners to expand upon the ideas presented in the book by offering detailed illustrations, examples, case material, and practice oriented stories. We were curious to learn how the approaches and concepts identified in *The Appreciative Organization* are being lived in organizations and how they are being used to help organizations transform. More than a compilation of strategies and techniques, *The Appreciative Organization*, as a volume, explored ways of thinking and acting in the organization that the authors argued might engage us in practices of realizing (literally, making real) organizational settings built upon appreciation. To us, this is a provocative idea. Is it possible to construct and live within appreciative organizations? We wanted to hear the stories of those who devote their time to turning theory into practice.

To subscribe to the online publication and receive the February 2004 special issue of *The Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner* visit <http://www.aipractitioner.com> .

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## Taos Institute Associate Profile

Over the next several issues of this Taos Institute E-letter, we will be featuring three of our Associates and Advisors in each issue.

**Jennifer Andrews, Ph.D.** is Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling and Family Sciences at Loma Linda University. She is also co-owner of Andrews and Clark Explorations, a video production company. She practices postmodern therapy and teaches and trains postmodern family therapists at graduate schools in Southern California. As part of developing her teaching curriculum she recognized the need for video tapes that present Solution-Focused, Narrative, and Collaborative Language Systems therapies, the new and unique developing methods. Her intention in developing Andrews and Clark Explorations with her partner David Clark, was to bring together tapes of the therapists who have initiated these new methods. Andrews and Clark Explorations has a full series of tapes available on their website dedicated to [Conversations in Social Construction](#) in which thirteen Taos Institute founders, board members and associates are featured.

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<http://www.llu.edu/llu/grad/mfam/faculty/andrews-vita.htm>

Andrews and Clark Video Productions: <http://www.masterswork.com>

**Frank Barrett, Ph.D.** is Associate Professor of Management and Organization Behavior in the Department of Systems Management at the Naval Post Graduate Academy. He is also a faculty member of the Human and Organizational Development Program at Fielding Institute. Frank's professional interests and expertise lie in Appreciative Inquiry, improvisation and organizational innovation, organizational learning, spiritual development, social impact of information technology and information revolution, global studies. He is a consultant to organizations in profit, non-profit, and governmental sectors. He has written and lectured widely on social constructionism, appreciative inquiry, organizational change, jazz improvisation and organizational learning. He has published articles on metaphor, masculinity, improvisation, organizational change and organizational development in the Journal of Applied Behavioral Science; Human Relations; Organization Science, and Organizational Dynamics as well as numerous book chapters. He wrote "Generative Metaphor Intervention: A New Approach to Inter-group Conflict" (with D. Cooperrider) which won the award for best paper from the Organizational Development Division of the Academy of Management in 1988. Frank was co-author of a paper that won the best paper award in the Organizational Development and Change Division of the Academy of Management in 2003. The paper was titled "Planning on Spontaneity: Lessons from Jazz for a Democratic Theory of Change". He is co-editor of Appreciative Inquiry and Organizational Transformation (Vermont: Greenwood Books, 2001). Frank is also an active jazz pianist. In addition to leading his own trios and quartets, he has traveled extensively in the United States, England, and Mexico with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra.

Phone: 831-656-2328, email: [fbarrett@cruzio.com](mailto:fbarrett@cruzio.com)

Websites: <http://www.nps.navy.mil/cpc/director.htm>, Human and Organizational Development Program, Fielding Institute at <http://www.fielding.edu/hod/faculty/barrett.htm>

**Saliha Bava, Ph.D.** is Associate Director at the Houston Galveston Institute. She is coordinator of the Clinical Externship, Instructor for the Practicum in Psychotherapy, and Project Director of the Families Enacting Divorce: Performing Possibilities. Saliha writes and presents extensively on Collaborative Language Systems, Postmodern Therapy, Creating Learning Communities, and Social Construction

Research in Action. In addition to her wonderful background in therapy and counseling, she is also a web designer.

Phone: 713-526-8390, VM 317, Email: [salihabava@earthlink.net](mailto:salihabava@earthlink.net) , Website: <http://www.houstongalvestoninstitute.org>

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## **First International Online Conference for the Business As An Agent of World Benefit January 28-30, 2004 -- via the Internet**

Convened by [Weatherhead School of Management](#) of [Case Western Reserve University](#), [Business as an Agent of World Benefit \(B.A.W.B.\)](#) is a Worldwide Inquiry into organizations with a broad understanding and unique visions for what it means to create a successful business. The World Inquiry is a search for those organizations that see their businesses as part of a larger whole that has impact on the world around it and strives to make that impact a positive one for the generations to follow. Looking at businesses-- both large and small--the World Inquiry is a search using [appreciative inquiry](#) for stories of innovative business practices which can be used as a model for other organizations who strive to go beyond the bottom line, by combining concern for people, profits, and the planet.

In an attempt to begin connecting these groups of "thoughtful, committed citizens" in new ways, this conference launches a new form of interaction for the World Inquiry that will be delivered entirely online through collaboration with our partner [iCohere](#). This unique environment will allow us to explore emerging ideas around Business as an Agent of World Benefit in an exciting new way -- with participants attending from their home or office around the world as their schedules permit. Because the World Inquiry spans five continents, we are excited to be able to offer this virtual space where our network of partners can come together, collaborate, and learn in ways never before possible!

The theme of the first online conference for the World Inquiry is exploring the intersection of business and society in a search for innovative business practices that, if nurtured, could transform the way we do business around the world. The program will include sessions and discussions on:

- How to become involved in the World Inquiry
- What are the innovative business practices that are currently emerging
- How to create a meaningful inquiry into business practices in your region
- The role that research and academic curriculum can play in the World Inquiry

For more details see: <http://www.weatherhead.cwru.edu/bawb/community/upcoming.htm>

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## **LEAP OF FAITH: RE-DISCOVERING THE WONDER-FULL WORLD OF EDUCATION**

Several Taos Institute Associates were instrumental in organizing, planning and participating in a conversation held at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio on November 6 and 7, 2003 to explore the best of the past, present and future of education. The Taos Institute was represented by Dawn

Dole (Executive Director), Marge Schiller (TI Associate and workshop committee member), Jackie Stavros (TI Associate and Focus Book editor), Jane Seiling (TI Associate and Focus Book editor), Miriam Ricketts (TI Associate and Focus Book distributor), and Jim Willis (TI Associate and Focus Book distributor).

The gathering was sponsored by the Positive Change Corps (PCC) and Business as Agent of World Benefit (Weatherhead School of Management). The conversation focused on schools and youth organizations and was designed to explore successful practices, opportunities, what's working, and what's possible when using strength-based whole system change methods with schools and youth organizations. The two-day conversation used the Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Cycle of discovery, dream, design, and destiny. The conversation identified new and exhilarating possibilities that will contribute to positive transformation where schools and youth emerge as agents for community and world benefit. It was an intimate gathering of over 120 educators, administrators, consultants, community professionals, college professors, students, and others who care about education and learning. The dialogue that took place generated lots of excitement around new ideas, aspirations, connections, opportunities, and inspired actions for the future of education and youth programs.

The Positive Change Corps is a network of generosity from individuals and groups who are working in schools and with youth and who want to support education and learning through strength-based, whole system change methodologies. These networks and communities of interest connect personally and virtually throughout the year. The Positive Change Corps's intricate web of interconnectedness spans throughout the world. A symbol of this interconnectedness is the Indra's net. A net made of golden thread and full of sparkling jewels that go on infinitely. Over 80 people are now involved with the PCC and they are the jewels from multiple geographies and perspectives who come together linked by the golden thread of focusing on youth and schools for a positive future.

After the Leap of Faith gathering in November, the PCC members met to set goals for the near and distant future. One impressive goal is to hold 20 more LEAP OF FAITH: RE-DISCOVERING THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF EDUCATION conversations around the world over the next three years. The impact of this will surely effect education and learning for youth around the globe. For more information on the PCC contact Marge Schiller at [margeschiller@yahoo.com](mailto:margeschiller@yahoo.com).

The Taos Institute will begin plans for holding a conference on **Relational Practices in Education**. If you have an interest in this area, please send us your name, address and email. We will keep you in our database for future information on this conference.

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## Taos Institute Newsletter

For the past 10 years, the Taos Institute has published and mailed an annual newsletter highlighting the accomplishments, programs, conferences, and new publications of the Taos Institute founders, board members and associates. We will no longer be mailing this newsletter due to the costs involved with this effort. We will instead be sending out this electronic newsletter to you several times a year. If you know of anyone who has received material from us in the past through postal mail, please inform them of this change. To subscribe to this online E-Letter, ask those interested to go to our website

[www.taosinstitute.net](http://www.taosinstitute.net) and click on the link to join our electronic mailing list or they may send an email to: [join-taosinstitute@go.netatlantic.com](mailto:join-taosinstitute@go.netatlantic.com).

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## **An Experiential Exercise to Demonstrate Social Construction**

We were asked, "Do you have a short (no more than 10 minutes), experiential exercise to help people "get" social constructionism?"

Answer: We have often found it useful to break a group into smaller units, and give each subgroup a slip of paper (privately) that names a profession to which they belong during the exercise. The subgroup's task is to describe the room in which we are working together from the standpoint of their profession. Professions might include: one group serve as "teachers," another as "fire inspectors," another as "interior decorators," another as "janitors" and then, at the end, have one group represent "burglars." When the subgroups have completed their internal discussions they then share with the group as a whole. You will find that each group comes up with entirely different accounts of "what is here." As you explore with the group as a whole, each construction will represent the goals or values of the group in question. Discuss how this impacts the futures of each group and the groups together.

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## **The Taos Institute Workshop Series - 2004**

### **Social Constructionist Theory and Practice Around the World**

The Taos Institute is a non-profit educational institution. The workshop series for 2004 reflects the interests, practices and gifts of our board members, the advisory board members and our associates. All workshop content is in alignment with social construction ideas and is grounded in its theory and practices.

The Taos Institute collaborates with the following organizations to present this workshop series: The Corporation for Positive Change, Appreciative Inquiry Partners, and Appreciative Inquiry Consulting. This creative partnering allows us to offer a depth and breadth of topics and disciplines. It is from these relationships that vitality and creativity springs forth enriching all of our lives.

The presenters of our workshops are members of the Taos Institute or Friends of the institute. Each workshop is individually managed by the presenters. All questions regarding content and registration for a particular workshop should be directed to the contact person identified with each workshop.

### ***Being AI: A Spiritual Retreat for Change Agents***

Presented by Diana Whitney

Taos, New Mexico

February 9-12, 2004

Contact: Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

***The Appreciative Inquiry Summit***

Presented by Diana Whitney and Jim Ludema

Chicago, Illinois

February 23 - 26, 2004

Prerequisite- Foundations of AI

Contact: Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

***The Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry: A Workshop for Leaders and Consultants Engaged in Organization Transformation***

Presented by Frank Barrett and David Cooperrider

Monterey, California

March 8 - 11, 2004

Contact: Dan Field, Phone: 831-625-3606, E-mail: [DanCField@cs.com](mailto:DanCField@cs.com)

***Appreciative Inquiry for Organizational and Community Transformation: Theory, Practice and Application***

Presented by Bernard Mohr, Diane Robbins, Tony Silbert

Whidbey Island, Washington

March 18-22, 2004

Contact: Carolyn North at the Whidbey Institute: 360-341-1884

or email her at: [cnorth@whidbeyinstitute.org](mailto:cnorth@whidbeyinstitute.org)

***The Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry: A Workshop for Leaders and Consultants Engaged in Organization Transformation***

Presented by Diana Whitney and Jim Ludema

Taos, New Mexico

April 19-23, 2004

Contact: Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

***Appreciative Inquiry for Organizational and Community Transformation: Theory, Practice and Application***

Presented by Bernard Mohr, Catherine McKenna, Joanne Daykin

Ottawa, Canada

May 9-13, 2004

Contact: Joanne Daykin, (613)256-7590, email: [jdaykin@ndlearningcentre.com](mailto:jdaykin@ndlearningcentre.com) or

Catherine McKenna, 613 - 838-5161, email: [macmckenna@sympatico.ca](mailto:macmckenna@sympatico.ca)

***Appreciative Leadership Program***

Presented by Diana Whitney and Jim Ludema

Taos, New Mexico

May 10-13, 2004

Prerequisite- Foundations of AI

Contact: Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

***An Advanced Workshop for AI Practitioners Designing for Destiny: Appreciative Organizational Design- Bringing Dreams to Life through Innovations in Social Architecture and Culture***

Presented by Bernard Mohr, Tony Silbert, Ilene Wasserman, Adrian McLean

Washington, DC

May 16-19, 2004

Prerequisite- Foundations of AI

Contact: Tony Silbert: 703-920-0505 or email him at: [tsilbert@comcast.net](mailto:tsilbert@comcast.net)

***The Appreciative Inquiry Summit***

Presented by Diana Whitney and Jim Ludema

Chicago, Illinois

June 1-4, 2004

Prerequisite- Foundations of AI

Contact: Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

***Social Construction, Relational Theory and Change Practices***

Presented by Ken and Mary Gergen

Philadelphia, PA

June 4-6, 2004

Contact: Mary Gergen - 610-566-1825 or email [gv4@psu.edu](mailto:gv4@psu.edu)

***Practices in Social Construction Appreciative Inquiry in Health Care***

Presented by Susan Wood, Jackie Stavros and Amanda Trosten-Bloom

Philadelphia, PA

June 8-10, 2004

Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

***The Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry: A Workshop for Leaders and Consultants Engaged in Organization Transformation***

Presented by Diana Whitney, David Cooperrider

Sweden

June 13-16, 2004

Contact: Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

***Designing for Destiny: Appreciative Organizational Design- Bringing Dreams to Life through Innovations in Social Architecture and Culture***

Presented by Bernard Mohr, Diane Robbins, Tony Silbert

Whidbey Island, Washington

June 14-17, 2004

Prerequisite- Foundations of AI

Contact: Carolyn North at the Whidbey Institute: 360-341-1884 or email her at:

[cnorth@whidbeyinstitute.org](mailto:cnorth@whidbeyinstitute.org)

### ***AI in Action***

Presented by Amanda Trosten-Bloom and Mike Mantel

Boulder, CO

June 15-17, 2004

Prerequisite- Foundations of AI

Corporation for Positive Change - Phone: 505-751-1232

Fax: 505-751-1233, E-mail: [office@positivechange.org](mailto:office@positivechange.org)

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This is a partial listing of our workshops. New workshops are being added throughout the year. Please visit our website at [www.taosinstitute.net](http://www.taosinstitute.net) for full details on these and other special workshops.

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## **The Focus Book Series**

Our Focus Book series has been a wonderful addition to the offerings of the Taos Institute over the past few years. We are excited about our current books and topics for future books are growing everyday. The Taos Institute Publishing's mission is to publish books that support the advancement of knowledge of social constructionism in various disciplines and applications and to enhance the Taos Institute mission of education. The Focus Book series in particular is designed to offer small books (60-75 pages) that capture the essence of or introduce a concept in a reader-friendly format.

Order books online via a secure shopping cart with your credit card from anywhere in the world. Visit the Taos Institute Publishing shopping cart at [www.taosinstitute.net/publishing/publishing.html](http://www.taosinstitute.net/publishing/publishing.html)

*Current books in our Focus Book series include:*

**The Appreciative Inquiry Trilogy** - a packet of the three books listed below. Order all three books in the series for only \$39.99. This is a savings of \$7.86 off the list prices for the three book.

**The Appreciative Organization**, by Harlene Anderson, David Cooperrider, Ken Gergen, Mary Gergen, Sheila McNamee and Diana Whitney. (2001, \$12.95, 55 pages)

**Appreciative Leaders: In the Eye of the Beholder**, edited by Marge Schiller, Bea Mah Holland, and Deanna Riley. (2001, \$19.95, 184 pages)

**Experience AI: A Practitioner's Guide to Integrating Appreciative Inquiry and Experiential Learning**, by Miriam Ricketts and Jim Willis. (2001, \$14.95, 78 pages)

To order any of these books by phone contact 1-888-999-TAOS (toll-free), 1-440-338-6733 or email [focusbooks@taosinstitute.net](mailto:focusbooks@taosinstitute.net).

*New books for the Focus Book series are now in development stage. Be looking for these books on our website in the near future.*

- Appreciative Sharing for Knowledge by Tojo Thatchenkery
- Appreciative Evaluation by Bernard Mohr and Mette Jacobsgaard
- Organizational Improvisation and Learning by Frank Barrett
- An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry by Diana Whitney and David Cooperrider
- An Introduction to Social Construction by Mary Gergen and Ken Gergen
- Appreciative Interactions by Don Austin
- Postmodern/Social Construction Therapy: Deepening and Widening Possibilities by Harlene Anderson
- The Imagine Chicago Story by Bliss Browne

*The new Books for Professionals series is now available.*

A new addition to our publishing efforts this year is the development of the Books for Professionals series. While the popular Focus Book series offers brief, pointed, and practice related works, the Professional series will feature more extensive explorations of their subject matter.

We are delighted to announce the publication of Dr. R.Vance Peavy's *Sociodynamic Counseling, A Practical Approach to Meaning Making*. This volume, by the founder of the Counseling Programme in Educational Psychology at the University of Victoria, Canada, will launch the new Professional Books series. Vance Peavy has been recognized as a leading voice in the profession of counseling in many parts of the world. In 2000 he received the Distinguished Senior Contributor Award from the Counseling Psychology division of the American Psychological Association. Shortly before his death he received an Outstanding Achievement Award at the International Human Science Research conference. The present work represents a culminating effort, and should be of great interest to counseling psychologists, therapists and social workers in particular. Further information will soon be available at: [www.taosinstitute.net](http://www.taosinstitute.net).

The new *A Field Book for Creative Change* by The Institute for Creative Change, Bob and Sharon Cottor will be available by June 2004.

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*Publications of Interest: Taos Dialogues in Print* (These books are available from the publisher. TI is not selling these books. Most of these books are also available on Amazon.com)

**Book Alert:** We wish to call your attention to an excellent book on sustainable organizational practices, co-authored by a Taos/Tilburg PhD student, Mary Altomare. The book, *Dancing with the Tiger - Learning Sustainability Step by Natural Step*, presents a framework for enabling companies, universities, and governments to maintain a healthy relationship with nature and society. A powerful methodology of implementation is described, and illustrated with stories from the work of the authors (Brian Nattrass and Altomare) with such organizations as Nike and Starbucks, and the City of Seattle. As one reader comments, "Unlike many other similar books that picture a small sense of past accomplishment,

this one left me with a wonderful sense of what is to come in the future..." The book was published by New Society Publishers ([www.newsociety.com](http://www.newsociety.com)) in 2002..

**Other Books by the TI board members, associates and advisors:**

- *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry: A Practical Guide to Positive Change*, by Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom
- *Appreciative Inquiry: Change at the Speed of Imagination*, by Bernard Mohr and Jane Watkins
- *The Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: For Leaders of Change*, by David Cooperrider, Jackie Stavros and Diana Whitney
- *The Meaning and Role of Organizational Advocacy: Responsibility and Accountability in the Workplace*, by Jane Seiling
- *Social Construction in Context*, by Kenneth Gergen
- *Feminist Reconstruction in Psychology: Narrative, Gender and Performance*, by Mary Gergen
- *Conversation, Language and Possibilities*, by Harlene Anderson
- *Appreciative Inquiry and Organizational Transformation: Reports from the Field*, by Ron Fry, Frank Barrett, Jane Seiling and Diana Whitney
- *Relational Responsibility*, by Sheila McNamee and Kenneth Gergen

**Contact The Taos Institute**

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*Robert Cottor*  
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*Mary Gergen*  
*Sheila McNamee*  
*Diana Whitney*