EXTENDING SCENARIO PLANNING INTO TRANSVALUATIONS

by

Charles Spinosa, Chauncey Bell, and Maria Flores Letelier

What view of the future did Charles Schwab and Michael Dell get right and thereby put their companies way ahead of competitors? What future did Anita Roddick bet on when she revolutionized the cosmetics industry? What future did Steve Case foresee when he drove AOL to become the largest Internet access provider? We all say that Schwab understood the power of mixing clicks and bricks; Dell developed a low-cost, high-speed business model. Roddick brought together skin care and cosmetics in a fun and morally satisfying mix. Case gambled on the power of network effects by giving away his software product. But they all did something else. They all bet on a significant ethical change in the good life; indeed, they bet on a transvaluation where trivial or even objectionable values become central and honored.[1]

When Charles Schwab and Michael Dell bet that baby-boomers and Gen-Xers would turn into financial and information technology do-it-yourselfers, both fields belonged to highly paid specialists. Anita Roddick bet that independent-minded women would value traditional codes of beauty if they did not feel insulted by the marketing approach. Steve Case bet that by giving his software away he could make being electronically networked 24-7 an important value.

In all of these entrepreneurial cases, there was little evidence that such transvaluations would occur. Yet transvaluations are going on all the time. That will be one of our primary themes. They certainly shift massively at moments of paradigm shift, as James Oglivy argues, but are also shifting year by year.[2] Also, though we are the ones who make value shifts happen, we do it mostly behind

Charles Spinosa *is a group director at VISION Consulting, New York, New York. He can be reached at cspinosa@vision.com.* **Chauncey Bell** *is the CEO of BABDI (Bell+Associates, Business Design for Innovation), Alameda, California. He can be reached at cb@babdi.com.* **Maria Flores**

Letelier *is a senior fellow at CHESKIN, San Pedro Garza Garcia, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. She can be reached mfletelier@cheskin.com.*

our own backs. We start talking about ourselves in slightly novel ways. Like good stories, these ways of talking catch on, and soon some value and the practices associated with it look different. Once the change happens, the old way of seeing and valuing things seems virtually unthinkable. To take an intuitively clear example, both men and women today *see* women vastly differently from 30 years ago. The virtues embodied by women have changed. In old movies, we can see that Marilyn Monroe embodied the virtues of erotic pleasure and diffidence—her man was a hero to her. She embodied the virtue of romantic love and brought sweetness to it, not friendship. She could be cunning, but her calculations were aimed at a wealthy marriage and a gilded life. Today, we understand Marilyn Monroe's combination of virtues as an erotic sugariness. Though still attractive, she has an antique, even ghostly look. Women today embody a richer complex of virtues; they are smart, authoritative, hard-working, athletic, powerful, hip, edgy, good partners, sexy, and so forth. They simply look more real to us.

What does this mean for understanding the future? It means that paying attention to social and economic macro-forces *solely* will blind us to transvaluations.[3] Peter Drucker is clear on the importance of transvaluations. "Every major maker of branded consumer goods knows that few things are as important as the values and the behavior of that great majority of consumers who are *not* buyers of the company's products, and especially information on major changes in the non-customers' values and habits."[4] Predicting value change is tricky. For instance, the trends from the 1970s to the present show increasing numbers of women seeking higher education, working outside the home, and delaying childbirth. Now suppose pre-World War II futurists were shown these data, the futurists would not see equality, though there was an active feminist movement then. They would surely miss the shift from the Artemis (blue stocking, spinster) and Aphrodite (attractive companion) divide. They would read the numbers as a terrible enslavement of women or as indications of some general economic wreckage, requiring women to act like frontier women. Everyone assumed then that the goal of advancing technology and political freedom would be leisure, not more work. Because most transvaluations *shift the context* for making sense of major forces or trends, futurists need methods for getting direct access to these ethical shifts.

Perhaps the best and most rigorous current approach to understanding the future as it emerges in the present is scenario planning.[5] Neither Peter Schwartz, scenario planning's popularizer, nor Pierre Wack, Schwartz's mentor, see scenario planning as an art primarily of prognostication. Understanding the future (or possible futures) comes from getting people "to question their assumptions about the way the world works, so that they could see the world more clearly. The purpose of scenarios is to help yourself change your view of reality."[6] Even better, "Decision scenarios describe different worlds, not just different outcomes in the same world."[7] Since transvaluations change views of reality radically to give us different worlds, identifying and understanding them with rigor goes right to the core of scenario planning.

This article will take up the theoretical and practical dimensions of detecting transvaluations in their infancy, before they become the clear trends that scenario planners now identify. The article will describe two approaches to the future and show why one is appropriate to finding infant transvaluations. Then the article will set out the tools for detecting transvaluations and give some examples of their use.

Some businesses have anticipated the sorts of insights into transvaluation that come from examining little changes in self-description. In the early 2000s, the *San Francisco Chronicle's* editors saw that readers thought about themselves as doers when they read. They were less reflective and acting more like managers. The editors made some changes to make the Sunday paper appeal more to a managerial mindset, and advertisers responded well. Likewise, CEMEX, one the world's largest international cement companies, anticipated a transvaluation among low-income, do-it-yourself homebuilders in Mexico. Inflows of money from relatives working in the US fostered the value of *getting ahead*. In response, CEMEX profitably grew market share with a marketing program dedicated precisely to getting ahead.

SCENARIO PLANNING'S VIEW OF THE FUTURE: THE INEVITABLE FUTURE

Today's scenario planning focuses heavily on identifying current social and economic forces that will certainly last into the future and require responses there. The demographic bulge of the

baby boom is a favorite example. In the coming 50 years, we will see larger numbers of older people than the planet has ever seen before. There will be enormous draws on social security and the health care industry. Enormous vacancies will be left in US industry as those with tacit knowledge age. These effects are inevitable. Various scenarios can be developed on the basis of the trends. Will older people start working longer? Will the government have to socialize healthcare? Will two classes emerge around the health divide, one that can afford to use dramatically new medical advances and one that unpleasantly languishes in old age? As scenario planners work out the various scenarios, they assume mostly today's values and tomorrow's technology and economics.[8]

Certain demographic trends, technological developments, environmental changes, and economic activities do produce certain driving forces that have a long life. A baby boom here will mean a generational bulge there, unless there is a great plague, war, or other calamity. Dams built in rivers now will mean water conservation and electricity in the future, unless climate change, huge earthquakes, or nuclear terrorism disrupt things. Improvements in hygiene will yield longer average life spans. Frequently, identifying the effects of such forces is a matter of looking at site A, determining the forces behind what happened, and then looking at site B where those forces have just appeared to see if there are any significant differences. So long as no significant transvaluation takes place, these projections are accurate. But when transvaluations do occur, then the inevitable happens in a stunningly unexpected way.

Let's look at how our values regarding leisure changed. Early to mid-20th century thinkers and planners converged on the same picture for the end of the century. They did not apply the current best techniques of scenario planning. They did not develop three different scenarios and then give people a set of signs to look for in order to determine which was unfolding. But, like today's scenario planners, they focused heavily on macro-forces.[9] Analyses showed that increasing automation, trends in workforces, unions, and laws, the conglomeration of business and, later, the post-war emphasis on play (as opposed to Depression-era sacrifice) would lead ineluctably to increase in leisure at the end of the 20th century. Whether the coming leisure meant we would all live in a Las Vegas-like environment of hedonism or become artists and scholars was the main uncertainty. Neither scenario happened. People have thrown their lives into work,

so much that it is hard for us even to imagine a time when we wanted unending leisure.

What happened to the leisure state? Advances in heating and cooling homes, refrigeration, dishwashing, and meal preparation certainly changed women's lives. Had we been content with slight increases in material goods or productivity, computers could reduce the workloads for all work requiring calculation. But what has happened? Women went to work outside the home, and all of us attempted to work harder, significantly increasing productivity. A transvaluation occurred. At the turn of the 19th century, more and more people were becoming what would later be called "knowledge workers." Kiekegaard and Nietzsche, who looked at broad changes in our micro-practices—the small ways in which we cope with our lives and tell the story of this—noted the change in the rise of the journalistic and scientific attitude percolating through 19th century life. As Kierkegaard and Nietzsche saw it, we were becoming a culture of critics, of people addicted to truth but also to doubting everything. Nietzsche labeled the rising class "free spirits."[10] This is not the sort of trend that scenario planners currently spot. It is not a macro-force. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche observed and wrote about slight changes in habits of thought and work. Thus, new workaholics emerged in the 1980s and 1990s who were addicted to finding truths and doubting them. They had to re-check, redo, and then push the envelope again. They also said that they wanted balance. This self-criticism never meant that members of the workaholic culture could stop. They had to work to achieve balance and then doubt it. Only continuing to work could relieve people of doubt spawned by their critical facility. By the 1980s, the notion of the good life had changed. Work (knowledge work) became a good that we obsessively sought in order to make our lives matter. Staying home just to enjoy leisure looked strange. The "leisure" pursuits that remained were themselves transformed into energetic ones that resembled work.

Similarly, in the 1940s, futurists predicted that the motion picture would transform education. In the 1950s, it was said that television offered "the greatest opportunity for the advancement of education since the introduction of the printing press."[11] In 1999, John Chambers, CEO of Cisco Systems, announced "The next big killer application for the Internet is going to be education. Education over the Internet is going to be so big; it's going to make e-mail look

like a rounding error."[12] Peter Drucker predicted: "Universities won't survive. The future is outside the traditional campus, outside the traditional classroom. There will be no need for university students to meet face-to-face with their professors since the courses will be overseen by Nobel prize-winning scholars located in some distant space and time."[13] Venture capitalists put huge amounts of money into e-learning start-ups, most of whom lost every penny.

Why has the Internet failed to doom the university? Those who predicted Internet replacements for the University valued it for producing well-informed citizens and highly skilled professionals. A number of values have shifted. Let's look at one. By the 1990s, parents on college campuses were frankly saying that the costs of the education were not worth the intellectual training, which would be provided at work anyway. "I'd send my children here even if there were no professors," was a popular refrain. A university education gave students the opportunity to network rather intensely with peers. Parents valued the late-night sessions their children would have with others to work out the kinds of lives they were going to live. They started to value strongly an ethical search and life design, which they knew would be constrained in their homes and communities. These late night sessions had always had some small value before, but in the 1990s that value crossed an important threshold and became one of the key values saving university education today.

THE TRANSVALUED FUTURE: MICRO-CHANGES

These notable failures of prediction occur because focusing on major forces misses the pervasive micro-changes in ethical understanding that emerge and change behavior in ways that would appear incomprehensible, trivial, or even evil to people living in the earlier ethical regime.[14] Imagine if we were to tell people at the turn of the 20th century that, in a mere 80 years, both men and women would be seeking 55 to 70-hour workweeks outside the home. Such a vision would have seemed a nearly unthinkable new slavery. This repulsion from new ethical regimes is part of what makes them so hard to see. The revulsion is so strong that most who think about ethical change do so as part of advocacy of their ethical positions.[15] How then can we look beyond our own ethical advocacy to see the coming ethical regimes? We must observe how our micro-practices, our casual conversations and interactions are shaping the future.

To see how we can spot transvaluations around the edges of our ethical advocacy, let's take as an instance the ethical advocacy Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and look at the root of the change. MADD grew up in a culture that honored sophisticated play, which included drinking, as a reward for hard work. Consider the ethos of the Rat Pack; consider Dean Martin's famous comic routines, consider James Bond's "shaken not stirred." How was this sense of sophisticated, largely masculine, pleasure and relaxation subverted? Those who were present say, as conventional wisdom would suggest, that a small group with a charismatic leader went through a consciousness-raising experience when considering the terrible injustice of a drunken driver having killed one of their children.[16] They shared this judgment with others and formed a vanguard to change people's habits by persuasion and then law. By the time the vanguard formed, we had a major force. The real question about transvaluations is how ethical orientations change in the first place so that MADD members could see beyond their own baby boomer hedonism? After all, thousands of mothers and fathers lost children to drunken drivers before MADD started. What enabled their change in orientation? How can our values shift before we fully understand what has happened? Malcolm Gladwell, today's most popular writer on such sudden cultural changes, claims that changes in context such as the elimination of graffiti, the influence of people who form connections between others, and the stickiness of certain images and phrases drive transvaluations.[17] Gladwell is surely on the right track, but changes in context are constantly occurring; connectors are constantly putting us in touch with new people; and advertisers, filmmakers, novelists, poets, and others surround us daily with sticky phrases and images. Few create transvaluations.

What is the fuel for successful transvaluations? In listening to the stories baby boomers tell about their value transformation that occurred as they passed to adulthood, there are certain well-known themes that emerge.[18] Baby boomers are justly famous for seeking to follow their hearts. They are also famed for their self-indulgent anger and broken-heartedness over betrayals. Many tell similar stories with different betrayers: the government, particularly the military, spouses, the American dream, and their own hopes. Other sentiments emerge as well. Baby boomers protect themselves from further heartbreak and betrayal by seeking independence. Spouses will keep separate bank accounts and so forth. With independence,

responsibility also arises frequently as a theme. To be sure, the responsibility is not conventional responsibility—having to take care of children, having to make ends meet, having to do civic duty, and so forth. Boomers speak of the responsibility required to be independent. You cannot always follow your heart. You cannot always invest in companies you love. Self-indulgent, follow-your-heart boomers started valuing "independent responsibility" at first as a survival mechanism. It enabled them to value the inhibitions, delayed gratifications, and other forms of self-denial—never quite "sacrifices"—necessary to follow their hearts more broadly. They would say to each other and still say to each other: I found that I had to become more responsible in order to maintain my independence.[19]

MADD surely appealed to the boomers' sense of injustice. Its message was sticky. But even more, it captured the emerging sense that the joys of intoxication came with a certain responsibility: not driving. The fuel for MADD's message catching on was then an element emerging in the stories, mostly incomplete stories, boomers were telling themselves to manage their various values. While forthrightly valuing following your heart, boomers were developing a barely explicit value of independent responsibility. Since this sense of responsibility was silently playing a role in shaping their lives, they could be taken by surprise by MADD. While still admiring the values of sophisticated play and relaxation from their youths, they were helpless against MADD's message of responsibility necessary for such independence. The fuel behind the sticky MADD message that caught fire was the under-articulated boomer value of independent responsibility, which they developed to manage other value conflicts. This new value, under the influence of MADD, subverted the boomer sense of playful indulgence.

Why should a change in some of the narrative elements we use to think and talk about ourselves enable us to undergo changes in ethical orientation before our habits, will, and theorizing have caught up with us? Changes in our narrative elements enable us to engage in a critical form of play that lets us develop new habits and theoretical stances. The famous historian Johan Huizinga has argued rather carefully that many of our most important commercial, judicial, political, and cultural institutions were invented through play of this sort. By including skunk works and pilot projects as play—where people get new and temporary roles, problems, and can toy with

different career outcomes—it is easy to see why Huizinga makes a credible claim.[20] Ethical transvaluations can occur quickly because they only require what it takes to begin to play a new role. What that takes are certain ways of fashioning ourselves narratively.[21]

IDENTIFYING TRANSVALUATIONS: LISTENING FOR NARRATIVE ELEMENTS

Identifying transvaluations in their infancy means looking at the informal stories people tell themselves—playfully—to make sense of their lives.[22] Few people today have full-fledged stories of their lives. But people do keep track of themselves using at least three basic story elements. They have some way of describing themselves as protagonists. They have at least one big problem that they are facing in their lives. And they have an account of the end they are making for themselves although, usually, people describe this end with ambivalence. These three narrative elements—character presentations, life problem presentations, and life resolutions—are sufficient for finding the under-articulated values, which act as the micro-forces of pushing for transvaluations. The interviewing techniques that elicit these narrative elements and thereby reveal new, *valued* ways of coping with oneself look very much like the techniques of a cultural affairs journalist interviewing an artist. Basically, the journalist or the transvaluation seeker listens for two different things at the same time: 1) how people personalize their official story and 2) the emerging story that is coming out of the personalized official story.

LISTENING TO PERSONALIZED OFFICIAL STORIES

Character Presentation

Noting changes in how people present themselves as the main character of their stories shows how the official story is changing. Today's official stories are easy to elicit. Here's one from a back-to-school night: "Please meet Chris, he is Nicholas's dad and an architect." In past centuries people introduced others by the town they lived in and the family they came from. A clear variant of the official story occurs when you hear presentations that personalize the official story: "I am working for the board of education in Atlanta

but always dreamed of living on Lake Shore Drive." "I'm working for a software company but write for a travel magazine on the weekends." "I'm constantly developing buildings in the suburbs; to develop the big ones in cities, you have to be associated with one of the four or five people in the world who can project manage the skyscrapers." While personalizing an official story seems quite casual and a simple sign of warmth, it often shows dissatisfaction with the official story or hints at a change. (Frequently, the change is not the one directly hinted at, moving to Chicago, becoming a writer, and so forth.)

Life Problem Presentation

As with the character presentation, the key for getting a life problem is to elicit the personalized version, not the official version. During the 1960s, the official life problem was coping with unrewarding work. Then, in 1966, Frederick Herzberg published *Work and the Nature of Man,* in which he showed that managers went to work to "make a difference." Such comments had not appeared in their official stories. Serious problems have a different sound today. Today's official problems generally have to do with life-work balance, growing the business, lack of opportunity to express creativity, and so forth. Work is now clearly assumed to be the place where we make our primary difference; our problems concern other commitments or making the full difference we can make. Personalization starts when something not completely understood is arising more and more insistently. "I worked on our new derivatives system for nine months and met every milestone, but then the business shifted the goal posts. That's happening to me all the time now."

Life Resolutions

Listening to how people speak about their life resolutions is the third narrative element for triangulating on emerging transvaluations. Today's official life resolution story goes something like this: "I created a business with a new product and then managed to cash out. I've just become a consultant to help others achieve the same dream." Personalized official stories generally show us more than hints of some new value troubling the story teller's judgment. Here's

one from a 63-year-old chairman of a coffee-roasting company. A multi-millionaire, he sculpts and paints in Florence approximately half the year and the rest of the time leads an on-going strategy conversation with his European and American CEOs. But he says he lives in misery. He wants only to sculpt and paint. "What were all the years of work for?" he exclaims. That is the canned, official part of the story. The answer to his canned question is: "To become a brilliant strategist." He obviously loves challenging his CEOs' strategic thinking. He describes as hateful to his commonsense the dream that he evidently approves: his life's resolution is a divided vocation. This anecdote also shows why we tend to miss the dawning transvaluation. By our conventional lights, the new values are hateful. Transvaluations subvert us.

UNCOVERING THE EMERGING STORY

While listening for and cajoling to get the personalized story with its hints of tension, a transvaluation seeker has also to seek for the "emerging" story. This story is not spoken directly. It is an interpretation arrived at by the interviewer who compares the tensions between two different personalized stories, one of the past and the other of the present. The technique involves keeping conversation moving around to obtain answers to the following five sets of questions:

1. What sorts of things were you seeking five years ago *in the domain under focus (work, wealth, creativity, health, entertainment)*? How did you see your role or job in trying to achieve these goals?
2. What were you trying to accomplish *in life* five years ago? What was your ultimate dream?
3. What are you proud about doing now *in the domain under focus*? What do you regret not accomplishing? What problem keeps you awake at night? How do your colleagues see what you are doing? Do you agree with them? What dream do they think you have? What dream do you have about this domain?
4. What are you proud of having accomplished in your life in general? What haven't you accomplished that you wish you had accomplished? How does your most trusted friend or spouse describe you? Does that make sense to you? How so? What

dream does your family think you have? What is your dream about life?

5. What is left from the past that you are still trying to accomplish? What's entirely new? Why do you retain that piece of the past? How did you come to care about the new?

When strains appear in making sense of how the person or ambitions of the past became the person or the ambitions of today, ask gently provocative questions to ascertain how the person being interviewed tries either to ignore the strain or bring his or her present together with the past. Are the old friends, work colleagues, or others now ignored? Is the interviewee like others who simply laugh at the antics of youth? Frequently, the difference between the values of the past and present will be the light to illuminate a number of things done now with guilty consciences. Those actions represent the kinds of things that will be valued in the emerging value regime. Recall the chairman who paints and sculpts in Florence half the time, leads strategy discussions the other half, and tells people that he is miserable. The value of a divided elder life that mixes intense work and intense creative pursuits is emerging.

A NEW ETHICAL CHANGE: LIFE DESIGN

To show what it sounds like when people start revealing emerging transvaluations, we will look at a couple of quotations from interviews with baby boomers and one from a Generation-Xer. These groups have profoundly different ethical orientations, and each is undergoing its own distinctive change. Noting the stories people tell themselves in both generations gives us a view of the next emerging shift in values.

In reading the quotations below, ask how the speaker sees him- or herself officially? How is the official personalized? What is the emerging characterization? What official/personalized life problem is the speaker facing? What is the emerging life problem? What is the official/personalized dream? What is the emerging dream? What values go with the official emerging dream? The strongest indications of the emerging story often appear as trivial, doubtful afterthoughts or, as in the earlier case, views that the speaker thinks are wrong.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW RESPONSES SHOWING EMERGING TRANSVALUATIONS

Boomer Quotations

> I married a widower and now I am the mother of his four children. We added a couple of kids of our own to the group. We had a few investments on the side. But we ended up splitting up, and I had to get a job. When you are 37 years old, getting a job is difficult. I should not have given up the career. I should have stayed at work. When you are 37 and you want to have a retirement program, it seems unattainable. I could not afford to work for $6.50 an hour.   —Sarah, Atlanta

> As an afterthought, Sarah adds, "I won't lie to you. It would be nice to be a kept woman again."

Sarah officially describes herself as starting out full of idealism, marrying as she wanted and so forth. Then she had to develop independence the hard way. Her personalized official dream is to maintain her independence while keeping some of her happy idealism. As part of the personalizing, she says that career is critical. Then, in an afterthought, she tells us that she would love to be a kept woman. She feels lonely and insecure. Her life problem is regaining love and security. Independence is becoming an irrelevant value. She values nurturing and being nurtured; those are the emerging, subverting values.

> I'm not as idealistic as I used to be. I still hold on to the same beliefs. But I don't follow my heart as much any more. I have gotten more experience. Adversity makes for the best times in life. Through the hardest times you learn the most about yourself and what is around you. When I started my photography business, everyone said that the competition was huge, but I survived and moved on. Tenacity, patience, and perseverance are extremely valuable. I think about when I was younger and what my father thought about me. You forget about how it was being young. Everyone is trying to push the envelope. You have to accept the young, or else you will be a tired old person.   —Steve, San Francisco

Likewise, Steve officially tells the story of driving his life forward with tenacity, patience, and perseverance. He officially dreams of continuing to move on with his business and life, doing the right thing, and not following his heart too much. But, as he talks about perseverance, a cross current of thinking appears. Steve talks about the young, himself when he was young, and the youth today. He says he does not want to be old, but refuses to draw the inference that he is coming to. In the emerging story, Steve is fighting to avoid becoming a tired old person. He does not want to admit it, but he will have to push the envelope again to do that. "Tenacity, patience, and perseverance" are nice, but idealistically pushing the envelope brings value to life. How to do that is his emerging life problem. Pushing the envelope when old is the emerging value. Like Sarah, he is returning to the values of the past in order to create a future.

Generation-Xer Quotations

> My wife and I took premarital counseling. We talked about when we will have kids, when will we have our next dog. The neighborhood community is a huge driving factor as to where we move. We spoke to neighbors before we moved there. We met our back-door neighbors. We would spend numerous nights driving around and waving to neighbors to see how they responded. You can see people walking their kids; that was a huge draw to us, and there is diversity, and the socioeconomic level is all at one level. We looked heavily into the school system.
>
> —Derek, Atlanta

A little later Derek says, "You can sort the data in so many different ways, that is the hardest thing. It is just too much for one person to go through."

Officially, Derek is a classic Generation-X optimizer. He wants it all. He does not focus on a primary love—neighborhood, marriage, career—the way a baby boomer would. He keeps his sights on all the factors that make his life valuable. Because he sees the good life as a problem to solve, he persistently stands back, evaluates, and then makes experimental incursions. His life problem is constantly getting the balance of different factors right, but the dream breaks down as he finds more and more to take into account. Behind the dream of a well-optimized life, which seems overdone, are both a significant

fear of failure and a high evaluation of security. (His concern for making sure that everyone in the neighborhood is like him shows this.) With the dream of security, Derek sees himself as looking to surround himself with people like himself who will offer help: "It is just too much for one person." The crucial emerging value is a life designed to receive support from community.

THE COMING TRANSVALUATION

What is going on with the generation after the baby boomers? Members of this generation, and its successors as well, are coming to see their personal lives and their personal identities as the site of design. No longer is the lesson of every problem, "Follow your heart." Authenticity does remain a very strong value, but it has changed entirely from its roots and from its baby-boomer version. When today's early thirty-somethings talk about getting back to themselves, they talk about having to go through the professional, corporate *part* of their lives, sometimes going through the family *part* of their lives, to get to a creative *part* of their lives. When asked who they are, they tend not to name their career or any vocation alone: "I'm a marketing consultant now, but I'm looking to do something in fashion design." When boomers said things like this, it meant they had not found their vocation. When thirty-somethings say it, they mean nothing of the sort. Thirty-somethings are always developing sidelines, occupations or hobbies that could become central in their lives, that could, in short, subvert their lives. They diversify their lives in order to live. This diversification is design. When one hobby or sideline becomes central, another will emerge. The goal is to keep designing life, not to fall in love with one thing.[23]

Thirty-somethings are different from baby boomers in another way, which will tend to shift the role of design. They want to make a difference by being influential. Sometimes they will say they want to be influential like mavens. Sometimes they say they want to be influential like celebrated actors. And sometimes they will want to be influential like Oprah or even Warren Buffet. They are not trying to achieve a triumph within their discipline or vocation. Whatever triumph they accomplish there is valuable only if it makes them more generally influential. Being influential, which depends on the evaluations of others, is displacing the old vocational notion of an intrinsic good.

What, then, is the coming transvaluation? The boomer values of following your heart, of doing what you love, along with the corresponding emphasis on feelings, inner lives and inner goals will be devalued. As we saw, boomers themselves are trying to rejuvenate these old values in today's ethical circumstances, where instead invention, particularly of a sideline, will be honored. The invention will not come from the heart; its point is to make one influential, even imitated. It therefore has to have an aesthetic appeal, to be cool, hip, surprising, compelling. Lives will be invented to be admired.

Businesses will thrive by building on the desire for design and admiration. They will create networks of mavens who can advise on life design. Imagine Amazon's reviewers becoming the main drivers of the business, not an interesting add-on. Imagine what the consumer experience in banks and other businesses will be once they are organized that Amazon-like way. Boomers will succeed who can rejuvenate their hearts aesthetically.

Designed utopias will bloom like flowers in the 21st century, much as they did in the 19th century, though with aesthetic, not ethical, idealism. The designed communities will promise designed sidelines to subvert the lives of those that have them. If we live long enough, we will wonder what we could have been thinking about in following our hearts. We will be captivated by admirable design.

CONCLUSION

Transvaluations are critical for scenario planners because they are moments where people radically change how they value people, practices, and events. After a transvaluation, people become much more like their enemies than they would ever imagine. As many examples have indicated, transvaluations are constantly occurring. They do not occur only at times of major paradigm shifts. By focusing on micro-practices, particularly those that show changes in story elements people are using to make sense of their lives, emerging transvaluations can be identified, and then scenarios including them can be developed. Like other scenarios, those involving transvaluations will keep us alert to our sense of reality subverting itself. Normative scenario development should remain sensitive to transvaluations and their subversive tendency in order to develop real hopes and reveal workable courses of action.

NOTES

1. "Transvaluation," frequently rendered as "revaluation," is Friedrich Nietzsche's term. For its extended use and development see Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power: An Attempted Transvaluation of All Values* (New York: Gordon Press, 1974) and *Ecce Homo*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1992).

2. James A. Oglivy, *Creating Better Futures* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 6-9, 117-120, 130-132, and especially 149, where Oglivy looks at value change from the perspective of Hegel and the existentialists who tended to see value shifts as happening with big paradigm shifts. Oglivy himself sees that values are shifting all the time, but tends not to focus on the everyday shifts in his published works.

3. Peter Wack speaks most emphatically about the reliance of scenario planning on major forces, trends, and so forth: "The point, to repeat, is not so much to have one scenario that 'gets it right' as to have a set of scenarios that illuminates the major forces driving the system, their interrelationships, and the critical uncertainties." See Pierre Wack, "Scenarios: Shooting the Rapids," *Harvard Business Review,* (November-December, 1985): 9-10.

4. Peter Drucker, "The American CEO," *The Wall Street Journal,* Vol. 244 (December 30, 2004), No. 128: A8. Likewise, Oglivy approvingly quotes Nobel Laureate Roger Sperry in saying that values are "the most strategically powerful causal force." See Oglivy, p. 171.

5. William Strauss and Neil Howe's *Generations* (New York: Quill-William Morrow, 1991) and the follow-on books represent another powerful discipline for understanding the future. With us, they agree that values invisibly shape contexts and responses to events. They agree with us that most wrongly assume that future or past generations will respond to events as we would (Strauss and Howe, 376). Moreover, they see with us that what counts as an event, particularly a crisis, depends on the set of values in play at the moment (382). We differ in taking a more radical view of how much and how invisibly values change even within an epoch. While there might be recurrent generational personality types and moods, we believe that these same moods and personality types miss significant value shifts, which do not show recurrent patterns. Indeed, the everyday value shifts force us to give up much of the stability that

Strauss and Howe depend on. Where Strauss and Howe believe, for instance, that such categories as government and commerce, idealism and pragmatism look pretty much the same across generations, we see how value shifts change the meanings of these seemingly stable categories. So advocacy for increased freedom and civic virtue used to lead to care for political and governmental domains. But now the values surrounding commerce (which no longer is understood in terms of satisfying needs but rather in terms of building communities) have changed. Consequently, advocacy for increased freedom and civic virtue could well lead to care for the commercial and high tech domains and dismissal of the governmental. Social freedom is now a commercial value. Likewise, the pragmatism of James's and Dewey's generations, with its focus on results, is significantly different from the pragmatism of today's Generation-Xers. Today's pragmatism focuses on designing admirable lifestyles and is thus more akin to boomer idealism.

6. Peter Schwartz, *The Art of the Long View* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), p. 9.

7. Pierre Wack, "Scenarios: Shooting the Rapids," *Harvard Business Review* (November-December, 1985): 9.

8. Peter Schwartz, *Inevitable Surprises* (New York: Gotham-Penguin, 2003), pp. 19-45, particularly 44.

9. Peter Schwartz, *The Art of the Long View* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 241-248.

10. For Kierkegaard's analysis, see Søren Kierkegaard, *The Present Age* (New York: Harper, 1962). For Nietzsche's analysis and use of the term "free spirits," see Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science,* trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage-Random House, 1974), sec. 347 (pp. 287-290), sec. 297 (p. 239), and sec. 307 (pp.245-246).

11. Brendan Tuohy, "The Future of Education," Speech April 29, 2004, p. 2.

12. Tuohy, p. 2.

13. Tuohy, p. 2.

14. Michel Foucault powerfully elucidates the twin Nietzschean themes residing in this article: (1) that new ethical beginnings necessarily come from the senseless, even vile, and (2) that there are always numberless micro starting points of any transvaluation. See Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," *The Foucault*

Reader, ed., Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 79, 81, 85, 86.

15. For instance, see how scenario planning helped in ending South Africa's apartheid regime in Thomas J. Chermack and Susan A. Lynham, "Scenario Planning in Critical Science Research," *Futures Research Quarterly,* Vol. 20, No. 2 (Summer 2004): pp. 51-52. See also Oglivy, pp. 291-218.

16. Ralph Reese, who was involved in MADD's various campaigns, writes about the charismatic leader and the new awareness. Ralph Reese, Private Communication, January 29, 2004. See also the account of MADD's history and of Candy Lightner at MADD's website: http://www.madd.org/aboutus/0,1056,1814,00.html.

17. Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 2000), pp. 30-192.

18. This work was conducted as part of research for numerous clients.

19. In contrast to Strauss and Howe's intolerance, austerity, and inner-driven concerns of boomers, we emphasize the heartbreak and betrayal boomers felt, their protective denials of the heart, and their independence. The newly emerging value of independent responsibility—taking responsibility for any indulgences—puts boomers, on our account, closer to Generation-Xers and further from Strauss and Howe's FDR generation Missionaries. See Strauss and Howe, pp. 398-399.

20. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955). See also Arie P. de Geus, "Planning as Learning," *Harvard Business Review on Managing Uncertainty* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Paperback, 1987): pp. 51-65, particularly 59-60 and 63 where he argues for and gives a case in support of the claim that senior managers learn the lessons of scenarios by *playing* with what they would do if the scenario proved true.

21. We still live in the age started by Shakespeare who convinced people in the West (and through colonialism in most of the rest of the world) that each of us has a life story with beginnings, middles, and ends, of which we are protagonists who face problems that define the kind of people we are. Like Shakespeare's tragic heroes, we live for and are sometimes even willing to die for our life's story, our *personal* meaning. Most of us no longer find ourselves telling ourselves our life's story. Rather, in our post-modern (almost post-

Shakespearean) world, we rely on a few narrative fragments, our character, our problem, and our hoped for resolution. This narrative understanding of self is one particular artful construction. We need only read the *Iliad* to find a quite different artful construction of identity. In those ancient times, the issue was bringing oneself in accord with one's fate beautifully, gracefully, with clarity. Ultimately other forms of artful construction are likely to replace the narrative.

22. Oglivy recognizes the importance of such stories. See Oglivy, pp. 140-141 and 157.

23. The design techniques that hedge risk enable Generation-Xers to behave more entrepreneurially. Contrast this view to the findings of Strauss and Howe, whose interpretation of Generation-Xers' entrepreneurialism is hampered by having to line it up with previous reactive generations (331).