

Scenariodrama as a Gender-sensitive Tool for Learning from Futures

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Between 1995-1996 an experiment on gender-sensitive futures-scenarios work with groups of rural village activists was completed in Finland. The results show that there are no difficulties in implementation of the scenariodrama method at a grassroots level. The experiment showed that among the participants there still is some measure of gender segregation and some measure of male dominance in thinking about the futures. The men's scenarios were quite biased towards the male sphere. The women's scenarios were less biased and gave a more holistic picture of the future community. The experiment also indicated that if men and women are allowed to work on futures images in gender groups, the series of scenarios produced cover a wider substance area and is more realistic than if they work in mixed groups. The conclusion is that if we want to improve the quality of futures images, the potential embedded in gender differences has to be taken into account. This probably is also true for many other groups. This article studies the theoretical problems and solutions which led to the construction of a scenariodrama method, and reports on the experiment.

Keywords: scenario, scenariodrama, community futures, grassroots, interactive futures research, communicative futures research, gender

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Introduction

This article focuses on two aspects of futures studies. First I report a method of futures research, scenariodrama, and its implementation together with grassroot actors on local community futures, and second, I discuss the influence of gender in futures scenarios.

One of the roots of this approach in futures research is the work of Elise Boulding, Eleonora Masini, Johan Galtung, Robert Jungk and others, who have developed methods to work with people at the grassroots. The other root is more recent and represented mainly by Ivana Milojevic (1995, 1996) and myself, and is based on gender sensitive and feminist theories and methodologies. The theory of the method draws from extensive cross-scientific studies, which were completed mainly in the 1980s, and have been published mainly in Finnish. The main sources are social scientific and anthropological theories of communities and societies, combined with gender sensitive theories. Some aspects of the theoretical basis have been discussed earlier in English in my articles (Jarva 1994, 1995, 1996a and b, 1998a and b, 1999a and b, 2000).

Eleonora Masini (1993) points out that the function of futures research is not in relation to the future, but in relation to present human action. Action is always future-oriented and that is why our expectations, futures images and futures visions have their present relevance in our way of thinking, perceiving, understanding and making choices and decisions. Osmo Kuusi (2001) emphasizes the learning character of futures research, while both non-learning beings (like air or stones, etc.) as well as learning beings have to be taken into account. The learning character of people influencing the formation of the future has been the focus in the design of the scenariodrama method. Scenariodramas advantages are in the interactive work process where all actors can clarify their expectations, to give structure to them, and be innovative in uncovering new potentials for change, and thus improve their capabilities in creating the future. A short summary of the theory is presented in the description of the method at: <http://www.mol.fi/esf/ennakointi/metodit/JARVMETE.htm>.

The scenariodrama method belongs to the family of qualitative methods of futures research, to be more exact, to the family of qualitative scenarios. With the help of the method it is possible to design cross-cut scenarios describing a state of society or part of it at a defined moment in the future. Its more sophisticated use is the design of path-scenarios, descriptions of possible paths to the defined end states. The scenarios can

be predictive or normative, where a normative target scenario is often called a vision.

Thus the method belongs to the new wave of interactive futures studies methods. It is closer e.g. to the storytelling method and futures workshop than to the traditional scenario applications by specialists. Though, it is possible to create advanced scenariodramas using all the qualitative and quantitative methods available in futures research and science in common as tools. But the interaction of specialists and users is focal in it. The interactive methods of futures research have found their ground especially in communicative planning; Marika Puglisi (2001, 166) presented in WFSF Turku seminar detailing an Italian case. As she describes: "This paper is centrally concerned with a key aspect of interactive approaches: the task of empowering communities to play an active role in planning decisions. In this sense collaborative approaches find their meaning in the production of knowledge (of situations, of causes and effects, of moral values, etc.) and see as precious the place-specific identities and characteristics that oppose homogenous ways of thinking and acting, and which enhance the value of diversity."

Theoretical Problems and Solutions

My interest in futures research grew out of my studies in social and societal planning in the early 1970s. To a social scientist, a scenario method seemed to be the most interesting of the methods offered by futures research that time. When I studied the scenario method more deeply, five causes of dissatisfaction and finding solutions to them became increasingly acute:

Problem 1

The concept of the future was too determined and thus too rigid. In Kuusi's (2001) terms, it consisted only of non-learning beings and their predictable behavior. This was not satisfactory for a description of the human world and its futures.

To solve this problem I had to study some basic concepts in futures research and history. The key concepts seemed to be: causality and determination, time, and the role of the human actor in forming the future.

Causality in the human world (among "learning beings" in Kuusi's terms) does not follow natural laws and therefore cannot be studied on the basis of traditional causality or probability theory. This is a crucial

point: the mistake that is often made in futures research is that of treating societal and social phenomena as if they were natural phenomena. Bertrand de Jouvenel (1967) indicates this as "social physics". To avoid the trap, one has to learn from the theories on man and the social sciences and to learn not to see these theories as linked with probability or natural science.

The German historian Reinhart Koselleck (1985) distinguishes two orientations towards the future. The future is either considered to be closed, determined by past events, a continuation of the earlier flows of events, or, it is open and not determined by the past. The phenomena which influence the formation of any future are events and action. According to Koselleck, the concept of possible futures is based on this distinction. This means, basically, that a futures researcher at his or her best can be good in art of conjecture and create plausible possible or potential futures, in de Jouvenel's terms, "futuribles". However neither the present, the past nor the future can be treated as one entity in linear time, but a multiversum of different futures, presents and pasts, the images of which are dependent on the constructor of an image. This has been well realized in studies of history and it should be realized in questions concerning futures research, too. I have given the images of a future produced by the dramatic scenario method the name "virtual futures", because these at their best, remind one of the virtual realities created with the aid of computer technology.

This is why merely traditional causality or statistical causality concepts cannot be accepted as the basis of futures image; indeed new causal concepts are needed. Osmo Kuusi has formed the rule that traditional or statistical causality principles can be applied concerning "non-learning beings" (like air or a stone) but they cannot be applied in the case of learning beings, which are able to change their behaviour by receiving information, remembering, and being able to process information and act intentionally.

An important causal principle, which is - from my point of view - at least partly descriptive as the activity of human beings is presented by Walter Buckley (1967). He calls it a "true feedback loop", in which a being receives information about the results of his or her activities, is able to process it, and can then change his or her behaviour as a consequence. If this principle is extended to cover several learning beings in connection with each other (directly or indirectly) it can be called an *interactive causality principle*. This implies that more information does not necessarily produce a similar kind of behaviour, but, rather that actors can choose

their own response. The problem of information and communication has already been deeply discussed, e.g. in modern physics, philosophy and sociology (Buckley 1967; Habermas 1989; Nevanlinna 1963; Oppenheimer 1960; Russel 1960; Wendorff 1980: 462). Another important causal principle needed, in order to complement the one by Buckley, is the concept of *teleological causality* (von Wright 1971), which appears as intentionality in the activity of learning beings, such as humans, who are able to formulate goals and act towards them. Even here, however, it must be remarked, that it cannot be a covering teleological causality in the case of learning beings.

The linear concept of time, as applied in both traditional science as well as in traditional futures research, has been found to be inadequate for futures research, as e.g. Erszebet Novaky (2001, 40 - 42) has remarked. There is, though, one outstandingly suitable concept: the Einsteinian space-time concept. In this context it means, that time, movement and space cannot be treated as separate, independent qualities but are intertwined into a space-time whole. One implementation of this space-time concept is proposed by literary researcher Mikhail Bahtin (Bahtin 1979), who uses the term *chronotope* (Greek *kronos* = time, *topos* = place). A chronotope forms the stage of action, the "world" in which the human agent acts in interaction with it (on space-time see e.g. Bohr 1967; Nevanlinna 1963; Russell 1960; Wendorff 1980). The problem of time is tightly intertwined with the concept of causality, as Novaky (2001, 40) has remarked as well: "As we progress from the present to the future, the importance of the deterministic (historically determined) elements of development decreases and that of the teleological (with a definite purpose) elements increases."

If the future is considered open, as well as people's orientation to futures and futures images, expectations and intentions become crucial. People act towards the future according to the way they perceive, understand and want it to be. The idea of an open future is actually the core of modern futures research. This view has been widely accepted since Bertrand de Jouvenel's pioneering work, *L'art de la conjecture* (1967). In this paradigm humans are considered to be active subjects who are able to influence the future through planning, decisions and action and not only simply to adjust to a predetermined future (Novaky 2001; Malaska 1993; Niiniluoto 1993; Bell 1996; Arendt 1961; Sandberg 1975; Leontjev 1977; von Wright 1971; Jarva 1984). Nonetheless, while humans are considered capable of influencing the future, it does not mean that there is a

complete freedom of choice. There are limitations that cannot be overcome, conflicting interests, and unexpected developments. These problems, however, are not discussed here.

Problem 2

Actors and their conflicting interests were mostly missing. This apparent lack led not only to the mystification of developments as anonymous, natural-law-like phenomena, but also to the invention of mythological, false actors, like trends, the global economy, market forces, etc. These types of abstractions, masquerading as "actors", give the illusion that they constitute a class of powerful and determinant phenomena.

To find solutions to this type of problem I turned towards the philosophical and psychological theories of action and sociological consensus-conflict theories.

The Human Actor

When studying phenomena in the human world, the life of human beings, and social as well as societal phenomena - even the entire world system - the focal concept is the human actor. This specific analysis of human action is embedded in the method based on the principles of philosophico-psychological theories of action, as for example von Wright (1971), Tuomela (1983), Leontjev (1977), May (1980), etc., present it. The basic idea is that a human is an intentional being, and activity is formed within this framework as striving towards some particular goals. To reach a goal, moreover, actors (agents) often need several subgoals and use different means (agency) to achieve them. In this sense a theory of action has something in common with the hierarchic analysis of goals and means (the relevance tree), known from the theory of planning (Uusitalo 1974). The actions themselves produce different results, part of which are in favour of the goal, but part of which may not be; such results may be unexpected, even unwished. Some of the obstacles are determined, insofar as an actor cannot influence them and thus has to adjust, to be an object upon which circumstances induce change. Some of the obstacles are removable and a human can take action to abolish them, to be a subject who induces change within circumstances. A human is even able to invent completely new solutions and not merely to choose between existing ones.

The implementation of a human being as an actor or agent is here accepted in the form presented by Rollo May, who indicates that a human being can alternate between the state of object and subject at will. This is a decision which has to be made in many situations - not to forget that

there are situations, in which it is impossible to take the active subject's role. To emphasise the subject character of the agents, the ability to participate in designing the future, the literary form chosen in this method is drama and not epic or lyric. In drama even the oscillation of the actor between subject and object states is taken into account (May 1980; May 1986; Burke 1945; Staiger 1946; Andrew 1976).

Some additional remarks have to be made concerning the concept of an actor or agent. In the social sciences as well as in futures research it is common to refer to such agents as "economy", "society", "trend" and even "future". They are often treated as if they were real actors. The mistake is made because of misunderstanding the "shorthand" character of these terms: they are abstractions drawn out of a certain group of phenomena, which is considered to form a whole. The society does not act, the future itself does not act. A true collective (group or board) can, though, be treated in analysis as an agent. Even a natural phenomenon has been applied as an agent in futures research, because it influences the events in the human sphere, but it would be more accurate to name natural phenomena as factors or events, and to treat them in the same category as other influencing factors.

Consensus or Conflict?

When I wrote my first theoretical papers on the method, I was strongly of the opinion that conflict theory is the only relevant way to study developments in the human world. At that time my idols were social theoreticians representing conflict theory from Darwin and Marx to Huizinga and A.G. Frank. Later, I studied in greater detail the structure of human action and began to suspect that the idea of conflict and competition (expressed as the zero-sum-game in economics) was not the only mode of human action. The final change in my thinking happened when I studied evolution theory in biology (Jacob 1972), Club of Rome ideas of world development (King 1986, 1989, 1991) and women's research ideas on companionship (Eisler 1988). These works led me to understand that the idea of necessity of conflict is a patriarchal idea based on the concepts of power and competition. I thereby extended my method from dealing only with conflict situations to include cooperation situations.

Problem 3

The method was as such applicable only by specialists, high technology, and therefore antidemocratic, making it the third from the five sources of dissatisfaction in my analysis. Federico Mayor stated in his speech in WFSF

Turku seminar that: "we should not allow others to create the future for us". This statement unveils the elitistic character of many efforts in futures research: when specialists create futures images and they are understandable only by specialists, they do exclude the majority of people from the decision-making process concerning their own futures.

Problem 4

As fourth on the list of dissatisfactions with the scenario method, it seldom had much influence in actual decision making, where decision-makers were not committed to the scenarios produced. This I considered a problem of the missing interactive aspect in the method.

Earlier the problem of the human actor was discussed in terms of an individual actor, but this is not satisfactory. Sociology and social psychology have proven convincingly that such an isolated being does not exist. People always make decisions as members of some culture, tradition and group within which they belong. The action of any human being occurs in relationships with other human beings, even in dependency. That is why it is not enough to create futures images for individuals, but for the whole of the group or community the individual belongs in as well, all of these must be taken into consideration as users of a scenario method. (Cooley 1956; Tonnies 1957)

There was a simple way to avoid these two traps: why not let the people create their scenarios themselves in groups, as specialists of the content of the futures images. The futures researcher then takes on the role of a guide into theoretical and methodological skills. This is described in the chapters discussing the experiment.

Problem 5

For the fifth and final criticism of the scenario method, in any case, the form of the report was not given any attention, which means that the communicative aspect was missing. In communication science a basic rule is: when one writes, one has to be aware to whom one is writing, one has to communicate. If the receiver does not understand and accept the message, the message will come across as so much static.

I started to solve these problems first by trying to trace, from whence the scenario method was first taken into futures research. Then I found a comment by Herman Kahn (Kahn - Bruce-Briggs 1972), the famous first generation scenario-builder, that he had taken it from film theory. This was a very useful clue: I began to study theory of film and theory of literature. The division between form and content is considered very relevant in literary science and film theory.

Form and Content (Substance) in the Method

A scientific method is a conceptual tool consisting of operations and rules, with the help of which either a theory can be constructed (like in logic) or the real world studied (like in observation) (Kopnin 1975; Niiniluoto 1980; Buchler 1961). The method in futures research is a tool consisting of operations and rules, with the help of which a virtual future (a future's image) can be designed. A virtual future is a conceptual, partial and coherent description about a hypothetical future. This is because a description of the future is always artefactual and its relevance cannot be verified. In science the closest relative to a virtual future is a historical theory, a man-made conceptual artefact about history, which can be less verifiable the less information we have about the time period in question. (de Jouvenel 1967; Asplund 1979)

When a researcher studies the real world, a method can be compared with a trap into which the real world is captured. In futures research the method is more like a sculptor's chisel with the help of which the form of a virtual future is designed out of raw material.

Any scientific method has form and content (Hempel 1977; Bhaskar 1986). The relationship between form and content in a method are interactive: both influence each other. The entire method is formed in this interaction. The recognition of hidden content is especially important in applications on societal developments and social problems, because they have their own logic, which is different from the logic of natural phenomena.

The content (substance) of a scientific work consists of concepts (names, generalizations and abstractions), definitions (identifying a concept with the help of other concepts), truth-values (true-false, probable), evaluations (important-nonimportant, good-bad), hypotheses on relations of concepts and their dynamics (like causality), and conclusions drawn out of these. The form of a scientific method consists of chosen scientific language with its semantic and syntactic qualities, "the rules of the game" or in other words, statements on which kind of operations are allowed and the logic according to which the operations are constructed. In the scientific method the Oscar Lange (1965) rule is relevant "the whole is more than the sum of its parts". The order of the phases of the method is structured, it is not just any operation in any order.

To study form of the final scenario or series of scenarios, one has to turn to literature research. The question of the whole of the literary product has been discussed more thoroughly in literature research than anywhere

else: the rule is that the product has to be an opus, not a heap of applied rules. In the case of an opus the methodological principle of having a beginning, a middle and an end is valid (the principle of unity, discussed by Buchler 1961).

Drama has been chosen as the form of “scenario opus” because out of the forms of literature, only drama has as its basic characteristic the role of a man as both object and subject. The practical work procedure of scenariodrama writing is applied from the formalist theory of film, as e.g. Eisenstein (Andrew 1976), Balazs (1961), Andrew (1976) and Vale (1973) have expressed it. It follows the synthetico-analytical line: to begin with the whole and proceed to details and finally synthesize a whole opus. Though it is not only synthetico-analytical, but also exploratory and innovative because a scenario is to be created. The work process is divided to each other following and continuous phases (Jarva 1998a). The series of scenarios is usually easiest to construct - after having created the chronotope - one after the another. Here it must be remembered that the first phase is already done when beginning to work with a single scenario.

In drama there is traditionally a dramatic construction. It means, firstly, that there is some kind of suspense either between the present situation of an agent and his goals, or between different agents. Secondly, it means that there is a tension in the flow of events in time and space: the drama has a point of attack, the primal situation, an explication, and a solution which comes just before the end.

After a wide scanning of the literature, I found a framework, which filled the qualifications, both contextual and formal: Kenneth Burke's division into agent, goal, action, scene and agency. To distinguish between a sequence in the flow of events, called ‘scene’ in film theory, Burke's term ‘scene’ is here replaced by the term ‘stage’, to which it refers (Burke 1945).

- The term ‘agent’ in Burke's framework refers to what I have earlier discussed in terms of *actor* and can be applied both in the case of individual actor and collective actors. The problem of natural events and accident remains unclear in Burke's theory, they can be applied as agents or, preferably as factors. But when they are applied as factors, they should be treated as part of the stage better than agents. That is why my solution is to call them events.
- The term *goal* fits the framework of intentional action, that is to say, human actors striving towards a goal.
- The term *action* fits both in the theory of action and in the causality concept employed: history and the future as a result of human action and not of any natural law.

- The term 'scene', as treated by Burke, does, as *stage*, fit in the concept of space-time, the Bahtinian chronotope, and
- The term agency fits in the theory of action referring to both strategies and other *means*, as well as instruments, which the agent uses to reach the goal (Burke 1945; Asplund 1979).

To create futuribles or virtual futures, not forgetting that the result of the work has to be an opus, the construction must begin synoptically, in order to limit the factors and phenomena which are taken within the further analysis and synthesis. Burke's five terms give a sufficient framework for choosing the factors, where the application is simply:

- who are the actors in the future drama,
- which kind of intentions and goals they have,
- which kind of action they take,
- which kind of means, agency they use and
- which is the supposed chronotope, the stage of the flow of events.

These are the ingredients of the story (Jarva 1998a).

The implementation of the method proceeding step-by-step: the next phase is formed after studying what has happened previously and how it has influenced the situation. The foregoing is expressed in methodological description as the idea of a plot of action. Because an *interactive causality* principle implies the concept of sudden unexpected changes, the principle of *discontinuity* is employed.

How to Design Scenariodramas

The end product in a complete work process is a series of futures scenarios (4 to 6 recommended). The results of decision-making depend on the quality of the end products, their application by the decision-makers, the decision-makers' competence in decision-making and the timing in relation to political, and other processes going on at the moment of making such a decision.

Using the method is a learning process in which specialists, decision-makers, and the practical users participate. The substance of the learning involves creating new visions of the possible futures alternatives (*fururibles*), and to evaluate the results of different strategies and actions, combined to give a more realistic ground for decision-making, and uncovering its traps.

Because of its general character and basic simplicity, the method is applicable to all levels and sectors of society - even to the world system as a whole. In the case of the experiment project, reported below, it was implemented in the design of rural village futures.

Constructing the Substance

In some cases it is not possible to do extensive data collection and preliminary elaboration of the information. This is especially true when scenariodrama is used as an educational exercise for futures scenario work. Even in real-world problem solving, scenarios based only on earlier knowledge and experience of the participants can sometimes be very relevant. The participants are then treated as specialists, e.g. village inhabitants are considered as specialists of the village dynamics.

If there is a need to strengthen the reliability of the scenario and do qualified work, the following phases of preliminary work are to be completed: 1. definition of the substance area, 2. identification of the main outside variables of influence, 3. historical analysis of the megatrends of development and policy, 4. analysis of the results of research already gained, 5. analysis of ongoing change and developments, 6. analysis of earlier forecasts, 7. SWOT-diagnosis of the main actors and their strategies in the area, 8. construction of the specific framework for current scenario design. These phases partly precede the final design of the scenarios and partly run parallel to it.

The Design

To create futuribles or virtual futures, without forgetting that the result of the work has to be a scenario, the construction has to begin synoptically, to limit the factors and phenomena, which are part of further analysis and synthesis. Burke's five terms give a sufficient framework within which to choose the factors, where the application is simply: 1. What is supposed to be the stage of the flow of events? 2. Who are the main agents in the future drama? 3. Which kind of intentions and goals do they have? 4. Which kind of action do they take? and 5. What kind of means or agency do they use?

In more restricted problems, like the debt problem, I have employed the flow-chart method from computer science to design the structure of the plot of scenariodrama. This kind of strictly formal method can only be used in problems where the rules of the game are considerably exact, as for example, in legislation (Jarva, 1996).

The Experiment

Between 1995-1996 I had financing for a research and development project of rural village women. Part of this project was to develop an application of the scenario method for the design of rural village futures images.

The motivation of this experiment grew out of practical experience, that the application of methods of futures research too often remains the *regimé* of specialists. There is a lot of talk about the necessity of empowerment and participation of all the people, but dedicated efforts to develop theory and methods for this are few - maybe the only one in extensive use is Robert Jungk's Futures Workshop.

It has been widely recognised that efficient work for sustainable development is not possible without taking the actors at the grassroots level as equal partners in development efforts. But it is not enough to take people as partners in development. Special methods for different groups have to be worked out.

Gender-sensitive and feminist researchers have shown that one of the borderlines among people is gender. It consists not only of gender inequalities but segregated spheres of the economy, community, culture and even worldview and methodology. The human world is deeply divided into two spheres, the masculine and the feminine sphere (Thompson 1992; Hofstede 1991; Sanday 1981; Jarva 1998).

Four groups of rural village activists from different parts of Finland participated in the experiment. Two of them were purely women's groups, and two consisted of both men and women; altogether there were 42 subjects. The majority of participants were women (29). The mixed groups were divided into gender groups for scenario work. In the learning process each group created one future scenario, either for their own village or an imagined village. The women's groups created four and men's groups two scenarios.

One reason for forming groups based on gender was the experience that within mixed groups men usually dominate the process. The other reason was to test whether the method works in a different way in the hands of women than as used in hands of men. Do women create different scenarios than men?

Each group participated in a two-day seminar where the scenario process was completed. It consisted of four sessions, each 4 hours long. The same introduction to the tasks was given to all groups. The work process was divided into five phases.

1. *An introductory exercise: Rural Village 3000.* The purpose of the introductory exercise "Rural Village 3000" was to liberate the participants from everyday ties and realities and activate their imagination. The basic instruction was: do not let the present circumstances restrict your imagination. One rule was given; it was prohibited to say: "this is not

possible". The groups were divided into smaller subgroups on a gender basis. As a result we received scenarios describing everyday life in the imaginary village in the year 3000, where in two of the groups these were presented as sociodramas. It appeared that for the two groups consisting of young people this was much easier than for the older participants.

2. *The analysis of future's values.* The purpose of this second phase of this experiment was to get the participants to recognise and explicate their values concerning future. The analysis of values as basis for a scenario was worked out only in the two young people's groups. In the analysis they commented on values in relation to natural world, societal values and personal values of individuals. Their values in relation to the natural world were in harmony with the principles of sustainable development, societal values emphasized cooperation instead of competitiveness, and personal values emphasized the fulfilment of ones own needs in harmony with the needs of others. The most important values were cooperation and social relations, openness to new phenomena, trust, knowhow and respect for every human individual.

The construction of scenarios proceeded in stages 3 and 4.

3. *Analysis of the strengths of and threats to the village.* The purpose of this exercise was to activate the participants to realise and formulate both the positive and negative factors, friends and enemies of the village future. These are two parts of the method SWOT, used often in business planning.

4. *The actual design of a crosscut village scenario in the year 2030.* The purpose of this focal phase was to give the participants the possibility to create their futures images themselves in communication with others in their peer group. The five elements of the scenariodrama method were presented in the course of instruction. After discussions, all the groups wanted to design a scenario for a desired future, a scenario of hope. In two cases the scenario was designed for an existing rural village, whereas the four others were imaginary - two of them virtual villages. In the process it appeared that two of the women's groups were too shy to write the scenario on paper, so we taped the discussions and my assistant wrote the story on paper and sent it to the group for comments.

5. *Common discussion and analysis of scenarios.* The purpose of this phase was, on the one hand to give the participants an opportunity to share their views and, on the other hand, through comparison of different scenarios to learn more about the process. During the last phase, each small group presented the scenario, and a discussion was led in the entire group on the characteristics and potentials of the scenarios. In the groups which

were divided into gender groups during the work, the discussion took place within the whole mixed group. In one rural village we had a village discussion on the scenario of the group afterwards.

The Results

Two different aspects were studied in the final scenarios using qualitative content analysis: the substance of the scenarios, and the gender aspect in the scenario design.

Drama Analysis: How Different Groups Describe the Five Elements

The points of analysis were first the content of the scenarios, secondly, what kind of substances the groups had discussed, and thirdly what kind of problems and solutions were presented. An evaluation of the relevance of the substances was made as well. The content was analysed according to the method which is actually an application of scenariodrama, drama analysis.

While scenariodrama is intended as a tool for the design of virtual futures, it can also be applied to the analysis of the past or to the construction of artefactual, virtual pasts and presents as well. Here it is implemented in analysis of the scenario texts produced in the experiment.

The study is intended to uncover how the groups in the experiments treated the five elements of the scenario. Do all of them appear in the scenarios? Which kind of application did they create for each, and how did they describe them? And how much importance did they give to each element? A summary of the results is given below.

The Stage. In four of the six scenarios, the stage was a geographically rural village, only one of them was an existing village, while the others were imagined villages. In two scenarios the village was a multi-locational network of people, a virtual village.

The number of the inhabitants varied between 300 and 900. In addition to full-time inhabitants there were part-time inhabitants, including permanent holiday cottage owners and tourists, too. Three of the four geographical scenarios described a village centre, where the services had been concentrated. The inhabitants are described as versatile persons. The harmony of both human and natural economies is important, where organic production dominates. The natural environment of the villages is described mostly as a peaceful environment for living and as a tourist resort. In the virtual villages the village is formed as a result of common interests. The ecological values are focal and the village is formed to empower its members in their own efforts.

The actors. In all the scenarios the village inhabitants are the main actors. The people and institutions outside the village are variably described as supporters (employing people, giving money) or enemies against which the village people have to defend their village. The villages are self-supporting, active and cooperative. In none of the scenarios was any conflict between different groups of inhabitants, not even between the main population and ethnic minorities. This shows some measure of the utopian character of the scenarios. The individual organisation varied from very democratic to more authoritarian models, but as a general rule they were always highly participatory.

The goals. Only in some scenarios were the goals of the village explicated. In others they were reduced into concrete activities and structures. The dominant mode of thinking was that the villages had to serve the common interests of all the inhabitants, that is to serve their welfare. In the virtual villages a prevailing phenomenon was the experiencing and cherishing of commonness.

Action and Means. In the scenarios, action and means cannot be distinguished from one another. They were described in common terms, like industries, education, culture, social and health services, and transport services. The sources of livelihood were many-sided, their core being agriculture and forestry. Other businesses were the service, information and manufacturing industries. Tourism and the manufacturing of food were important. Telework and working outside the village were focal parts of employment. The structure of sources of livelihood was in all cases many-sided and fairly well balanced. The private, public and third sectors were mentioned.

The tension in the culture is formed between self-supporting and openness, tradition and modernity, the production for one's own needs and for markets. Self-support and individuality seem to be important as a counterforce to mass culture - both for the inhabitants themselves and as the image of the village. In one scenario an information network was drafted, in which all the people could participate. Lifelong learning and the common activities of doing and learning of the different age groups were presented. Both traditional skills and modern information skills were valued.

The level of social and health as well as community services was described as good in all the scenarios. They were also sold to outsiders. In addition to basic health-, welfare-, post-, and bank services modern information services were brought into the villages. Services were concentrated in the village centre, but they could be delivered to homes as well.

The mobility of the villagers was emphasized strongly. The internal transport in the village was solved by centralization and public or common transport. In the virtual network villages the information networks were of crucial importance.

Conclusions. The common idea of all the groups seems to be a vision of a common good future where the village inhabitants were proactive designers of their own future, either with support from the outside or without such support. The economic basis drafted was, in most of the cases, fairly realistic in the circumstances of Finland today and in the near future, though the vision was in some measure too optimistic. A proper dramatic conflict between different interest groups inside the village was missing, only the outsiders were treated as opponents in some scenarios. The emphasis was more on sources of livelihood than the individual cultural or social characteristics of the village. There were, however, differences between geographical and age as well as gender groups - the last of which is commented on below.

The Gender Aspect: Segregation and Dominance

The concept of gender, developed in women's research, ties together biological sex and the social role expected from a human being belonging to either sex. Even segregated spheres of societal life can be distinguished, where one role or the other is predominant. This division has been useful in the study of many social and cultural phenomena. In this article it is applied to the study of futures scenarios.

The Finnish social anthropologist, Matti Sarmela (1990, 1994) has studied the Finnish agrarian society during the phase of slash-and-burn agriculture. The slash-and-burn economy gave a relatively safe basis for everyday survival and even produced some surplus value which could be exchanged. Though it was a mixed economy based on a more ancient style of livelihood, new agriculture and its resultant commerce formed an economic whole. Men and women had their segregated, complementary roles. Women took care of the close, local, economy as well as the maintenance of the social community. The men's job was to take care of the distant economy, to hunt and fish, trade with distant people and to shelter the community against outside threat. The division into men's and women's roles, the masculine and the feminine spheres of an economy used as a tool for analysis, has been developed in my earlier works. (Jarva 1999, 2000)

Segregation. The division of labour between men and women, as described in this model, has been shown to be the dominant mode - in dif-

ferent variations and degrees - throughout patriarchal-hierarchical societies. Women's inner circle is the sphere of reproduction and the private, a close or local economy. Men's outer circle is the sphere of production and the public, including commerce with distant people and foreign relations, even warfare, a distant economy or a global economy.

To study the degree of segregation in the design of the scenarios, the preliminary hypotheses are the following: 1. if segregation is complete, men and women will present totally different aspects of the village life in their scenarios, 2. if segregation is partial, there will be some differences between the scenarios designed by each gender, and 3. if segregation no longer exists, differences specific to gender groups would not be found.

The gender differences showed, that:

1. men emphasised the surrounding society more than women,
2. only men mentioned outside actors like the state and the European Union,
3. in the economic sphere women emphasise the public sector and private enterprises, where men also include corporate enterprises (cooperatives),
4. women emphasised the importance of a village centre and the services,
5. only women paid attention to nature and the landscape, tradition, tourism, administration, autonomy, information and joy.

The first two differences indicate that even today the "foreign policy," the contact between the community and the surrounding world, is predominantly a man's sphere. The second difference can at least partially be explained by the phenomenon that men mentioned cooperatives, which have traditionally been part of a man's sphere in Finland. The fourth difference indicates that women pay more attention to social life and the access to services. The fifth difference shows some objects which seem to be less important to men and so they did not mention them.

The analysis of the scenarios gave - for me - an unexpected outcome: women are at least as capable of having a synoptic view on the matters of their village as men. It was unexpected, because according to the gender segregation-based division of the work, the village management belongs to men. Another outcome, instead, was expected on the basis of the traditional division of work between men and women: women created many more solutions to care and everyday survival problems, and reproduction, while men focused on infrastructure, production and "foreign policy."

The conclusion is that men and women represent, in some measure, complementary aspects in local futures visions - but the spheres can no longer be completely segregated. The implied conclusion in relation to futures research is that it is easy to obtain biased futures images for

processes, which are led only by men or their masculine worldview. In other connections I also noticed that if men and women worked in a mixed group, the men and their worldview dominated the discussion.

Dominance. Jacques Attali (1990), the well-known adviser of the French President, forecasts in his book *Lignes d'horizon*, that the power of force will be replaced by the power of commerce - the focal phenomenon of the male sphere of the economy. The dominance of commerce is, in his opinion, a determined, unavoidable future.

Commerce is also highlighted in a classic division into types of society, namely in the theory of the nineteenth-century German social philosopher, Ferdinand Tönnies (1937, 1957). He described two kinds of societies *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. The main source of livelihood in *Gemeinschaft* is agriculture. *Gesellschaft*, on the contrary, is the playground of hunter-warriors competing and fighting with each other. The main industry is commerce. In the Tönnies theory, 'Gesellschaft' tends to subjugate and dominate *Gemeinschaft*. Tönnies does not give any forecast on the future of the contradiction between *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*. Attali, however, gives a clear opinion: *Gesellschaft* is going to win.

If the dominance of the masculine sphere is supposed to be complete even in the studied environment, the hypotheses are: 1. men do not mention matters which belong to the feminine sphere, 2. women do speak only about matters which belong to the masculine sphere (because the feminine sphere is not valued). If the dominance is partial, it has to be supposed, that each gender group would pay more or less attention to both gender spheres.

In the women's scenarios the feminine and the masculine sphere were fairly well balanced, the intertwining of these was recognized, too. In the men's scenarios the women's sphere matters, like care, personal services, and social coherence hardly received any attention. One of the men commented: "We thought about those matters, but we had to do more important things first, and then the time ran out." This indicates that some measure of dominance still exists, where women's matters are considered less important by men.

In the group discussions which followed the presentation of the visions, there was an opportunity for both men and women to extend their understanding of the complexity of rural village futures problems.

In the Tönnies theory, competing and contrasting modes of society exist simultaneously, intertwine, balance and complement each other. The

question Tonnies does not answer is this: can *Gesellschaft* actually exist without *Gemeinschaft*? Or are they preconditions for each other? Feminist economics gives an answer: the masculine sphere of commerce could not exist without the feminine sphere of a non-monetary economy remaining invisible.

If women, within the process of generating their futures scenarios, represent the feminine sphere of society and economy (and maybe if men pay attention to it to some extent) the invisible becomes visible, and thus the future's images will become more realistic and whole. It is easier to understand the dynamics of processes, if as many aspects as possible are made visible. That is why gender differences in futures scenarios are capital and it is also why utilising this characteristic extends understanding of the future's possibilities to a considerable degree.

One can expect that there are other deficiencies in the dominant futures images created mainly by or under the leadership of middle-aged, well-to-do, well educated, Western men. What about the futures images of young and old people, children, or people from cultures other than the Western one, etc.? This is, in my view, a fascinating field of study.

Futures Methodology as Social Design

The term *social design* has been used in diverse connections. In the area of housing and planning it has been used to refer to the social aspect of designing physical structures. In the sphere of social planning it has been used to describe the creation of new social structures. In social psychology it has been used to describe the formation of social structures at the group level, etc. The common characteristic of these different uses is that social design is seen as analogous to a physical design concept, where the users consider social phenomena as objects of human design.

The famous design Professor Viktor Papanek comes close to social design when he claims: "Any attempt to separate design, to make it a thing-by-itself, works counter to the inherent value of design as the primary, underlying matrix of life." (Papanek 1985: 322). He insists that design has to produce things which are useful for the user and not only things with monetary or aesthetic value. He apparently comes close to the approach of Sergei Eisenstein, who considers film only as one *repliqué* in the dialogue between the film regisseur and the public (Andrew 1976). In the same way social design products in futures studies should be only *repliqués* in the dialogue between futures researchers and people.

The distinction between social design and social engineering can be made more evident by considering the following; the basic distinction, that social engineering is one-way communication, is already expressed in the word engine-ering. This implies, in any case, that society is considered a machine which only has to be engineered in the right way. Those who are allowed to do the engineering are called decision-makers; they are supposed to have the power. The others are considered only as objects of engineering or line-workers of the social machine. This division of people into the decision-making elite and ordinary people, expected to obey, has caused social-engineering solutions in most cases to be interventions in the lives of ordinary people. Specialists and politicians dictate what is good for people. In this way, social engineering has basically a violent character.

The dialogic character of social design in a new sense leaves the final decision-making to the people themselves, and the role of the, more or less professional, designers and power-possessors is only to give people tools to complete the needed social design process themselves. If social design is understood in this way, then it actually is *empowering design* rather than social architecture.

The social engineering approach has - even in futures studies - been dominated by social high tech solutions on very complicated theories. This definitely excludes ordinary people from decision-making: they do not have the money, the time or the skill to use such advanced tools. To change over to empowering design also means a change to intermediate and low types of social technology. The tools cannot be too complicated if they are intended for use by the majority of the people. Scenariodrama is one effort to develop a method usable by grassroots people. In short, the assisting methods used in content analysis of the completed scenarios: drama analysis and gender based analysis are useful tools for decision-makers on all levels to procure more information from the scenarios, and they are usable even for grassroots people.

A method can be empowering only if it is designed exactly for the group which uses it as a futures tool. This means that women need different methods than men, and children need different methods than adults. It is in this manner also that rural people need different methods than people in industry, etc. And it means, finally that every application of a method is a new adventure into the human mind, the results of which cannot be deduced beforehand.

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