Wicked problems & Leadership: Enemy of the people?

Keith Grint
Chief Brody (Roy Scheider): Enemy of the People (of Amity)
Richard Dreyfuss: Hooper
Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People*

Norwegian coastal town has invested in new baths, led by Dr Stockmann & his brother, the mayor.

Dr Stockmann realizes that the town tannery is poisoning the baths & suggests delaying opening.

Nobody supports him – he is ‘An enemy of the people’.

Leadership is persuading people to face their own collective problems - this is both dangerous & unpopular.
Enemy of the People

24/2/17

Donald J. Trump Tweeted:
The FAKE NEWS media (failing @nytimes, @CNN, @NBCNews and many more) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American people.
SICK!
Fury over ‘out of touch’ judges who defied 17.4m Brexit voters and could trigger constitutional crisis

ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE

MPS last night tore into an unelected panel of ‘out of touch’ judges for ruling that embittered Remain supporters in Parliament should be allowed to frustrate the overwhelming verdict of the British public.

The Lord Chief Justice and two senior colleagues were accused of putting Britain on course for a ‘constitutional crisis’ by saying Brexit could not be triggered without a Westminister vote.

‘The judgment to Lord Thomas – a founding member of the European Law Institute, a club of lawyers and academics aiming to improve EU law – shows

By James Slack Political Editor
Why might Ibsen be right?

Change as an annual event

The Problem of Change

Richard Pascale
The NHS: ¼ century of change (AKA Restructuring)

1982: Abolition of Area Health Authorities
1982-85: Introduction of general management
1985: Creation of NHS Board at the Dept. of Health
1989-93: Establishment of NHS Trusts
1989-95: Creation of GP Fundholding & Commissioning
1989-95: Setting up NHS Management Executive (later NHS Executive)
1990: Replacement of FPCs (Family Practitioner Clinic) by FHSAs
1991-97: Reconfiguration of Health Authorities
1991: Restructuring of NHS Organisation Boards
1994: Reorganization of RHAs (Regional Health Authorities)
1994: Abolition of FHSAs & incorporation into Health Authorities
1995: Reconfiguration of Acute Services & Trusts
1996: Abolition of RHAs, incorporation into NHS Executive
1997: Abolition of GP fundholding, replacement with PCGs (Primary Care Group)
2000: Abolition of NHS Executive, incorporation into the Dept. of Health
2001: Abolition of NHS Executive Regional Offices, move to Regional DHSCs (Directorate of Health & Social Care) at Dept of Health
2001: Replacement of larger health authorities with SHAs (Strategic Health Authorities)
2001: Replacement of PCGs with PCTs (Primary Care Trusts)
2002: Creation of Foundation NHS Trusts
2002: Creation of Health and Social Care Trusts
2005: Merger of 300 PCTs into 100 larger PCTs
2005: Merger of 28 SHAs into 10 larger SHAs
2006: Reorganization of Dept. of Health to split NHS and DH responsibilities

......

2010 White Paper: abolition of PCT’s & SHAs; decentralization of budgets to GPs & Consortia
This doesn’t just affect large organizations: department of ten academics 2009-2013.

2009: Institute of Governance & Public Management
2010: International Centre of Governance & Public Management
2011: Industrial Relations & Organizational Behaviour
2012: Organizational Behaviour & Industrial Relations
2013: Organization & International Human Resource Management
2013: Organization & Human Resource Management
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Establishment of the Royal Commission on the Police</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>Police Act – establishment of the Tri-Partite Structure for policing</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>Home Office circular encouraging unit beat Policing</td>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>Lord Denning ruling</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>Police Act</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>Fisher Report</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>Home Affairs Select Committee Report on Sus Laws</td>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure, Byford Inquiry – The Yorkshire Ripper</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Home Office circular 114/83 (Financial Management Initiative)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Police and Criminal Evidence Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Home Office Circular 106/88 (new management strategies for Police)</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>Publication of the Operational Policing Review</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>Royal Commission on Criminal Justice</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Audit Commission publishes <em>Helping with Enquiries</em></td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>White Paper on Police Reform</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Publication of the Sheehy Inquiry report</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>Police and Magistrates Court Act</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>Audit Commission publishes <em>Cheques and Balances</em></td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Core and Ancillary Tasks Review – Final Report</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Police Act – Creates PITO and NCIS</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Crime and Disorder Act</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Patten Report – future of Policing in Northern Ireland</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Criminal Justice and Police Act, Cantle Report, Clarke Report,</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Police Reform Act-National Policing Plan, PCSO’s introduced IPCC established</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>HMIC report on workplace modernization, <em>HO report – Neighbourhood Policing</em></td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>Prevention of Terrorism Act, Serious and Organized Crime and Police Act</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Terrorism Act, Police and Justice Act (Establishes the NPIA)</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Flanagan Report</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Policing Green Paper</td>
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MOD changes to personnel 1964-2009

1964 MOD formed from Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry, & Ministry of Defence itself.

Secretary of State for Defence: Nineteen since 1964

Chief of the Defence Staff: Twenty since 1964

Chief of the General Staff: Eighteen since 1964

Chief of the Naval Staff: Eighteen since 1964

Chief of the Air Staff: Fifteen since 1964

Ninety chiefs in 45 years (@ one every 6 months)

HMS QE decision via strategic defence review 1998
In service @ 2018
Government’s Whitehall Restructuring (National Audit Office, 2010)

1980 – 2009: 25 new government depts created (Cf. 2 in USA); 13 of these no longer exist
2005- 2009: 90 reorganizations of central gov & arms length’s bodies, cost: £780m - £1bn
Little attempt to assess VfM for any changes
The Problem of Change

Drowning in the waves of change

BOHICA
Top ten critical change issues

1. An accepted need to change
2. A viable vision/alternative state
3. Change agents in place
4. Sponsorship from above
5. Realistic scale & pace change
6. An integrated transition programme
7. A symbolic end to the status quo
8. A plan for likely resistance
9. Constant advocacy
10. A locally owned benefits plan
The Problem with Change:

@ 75% of change programmes fail in their own terms
The Problem with Change:
Typologies of decision style and problems
The Problem with Change

Do different kinds of problems require different kinds of change?

1. Critical Problems: Commander

2. Tame Problems: Management

3. Wicked Problems: Leadership
Problems, Problems, Problems

Critical Problems: Commander

1. Portrayed as self-evident crisis; often at tactical level
2. General uncertainty – though not ostensibly by commander who provides ‘answer’
3. No time for discussion or dissent
4. Legitimizes coercion as necessary in the circumstances for public good
5. Associated with Command
6. Encouraged through reward

Commander’s Role is to take the required decisive action – that is to: provide the answer to the problem
Plato’s Philosopher-Kings:
Omnipotent and Omniscient Commanders

White Elephants:

1. Albino Elephant: Deity - Omniscient & Omnipotent
2. Expensive & Unnecessary & Foolhardy Expense
Problems, Problems, Problems

Tame Problems: Management –

Problems as PUZZLES – there is a solution
Can be complicated but there is a unilinear solution to them –
these are problems that management can (& has previously) solved

The problem of heart surgery is a Tame problem
It's complicated but there is a process for solving it
& therefore it has a Managerial Solution/Answer

Launching a(nother) new product is a tame problem

Relocating is a tame problem

Management’s role is to engage the appropriate process to solve the TAME problem
Problems, Problems, Problems


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Heifetz: Technical leadership

Management’s role is to engage the appropriate process to solve the TAME problem
Management as a Science

F W Taylor’s engineering:
the application of science to achieve the one best solution
Wicked Problems have no simple solution because:

- Either novel or recalcitrant
- Complex rather than complicated (cannot be solved in isolation)
- Sit outside single hierarchy and across systems – ‘solution’ creates another problem
- They often have no stopping rule – thus no definition of success
- Sometimes the solution precedes the problem analysis
- May be intransigent problems that we have to learn to live with
- Symptoms of deep divisions – contradictory certitudes
- Have no right or wrong solutions but better or worse developments
- Uncertainty & Ambiguity inevitable – cannot be deleted through correct analysis – Keat’s “Negative Capability”
- Heifetz: Adaptive Leadership

Problems for leadership not management; require political collaboration not scientific processes - role is to ask the appropriate question & to engage collaboration.
Wicked Problems tend to be beyond your experience

Hegel’s (1770-1831) Owl of Minerva – only spreads its wings at dusk

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55)

‘Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.’

Walter Benjamin’s (1892-1940) Angel of History: Faces the past but is ‘blown backwards into the future’.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

‘If men could learn from history, what lessons it might teach us! But passion and party blind our eyes, and the light which experience gives us is a lantern on the stern which shines only on the waves behind us’

18/12/1831 Specimens of the Table Talk of by Coleridge
2008: 811,000 people in UK hospitals through alcohol; cost - £2.7bn
2012: 1,000,000 people in UK hospitals through alcohol; cost - £3bn.
Includes 300 children under 11 & 6,500 <18s (majority females; worst Ayrshire/Arran)
Age range most likely to attend: 40-49 (20% admission)
Obesity costs £5bn – 25% adults; most obese adults are overweight by the age of 5

By end 1948 NHS costs were £400 million -more than double predicted costs of £176 million,

Birmingham Total Place Final Report report (2010: 5)

96% of health spend on treating illness only 4% on keeping people well.
The focus on the Tame Problem of efficiency of supply is not enough because medical demand constantly outpaces supply: We need to consider the Wicked Problem of reducing the demand.
That will be 400 please.
NSW Experimental cost of overnight stay in police cell for drunk: $1,200

Results: typical # drunks on Friday: 15
# drunks on first Friday: 12
# drunks on second Friday: 3
+7.5% increase in referrals 2008/9 – 2009/10
Jan 2012: 903 apps to take children into care
Jan 2011: 698 apps to take children into care

2011: 9,300 extra children now in need of fostering

Peter Connelly (AKA "Baby P")

Extra Safeguarding Process

Ed Balls
Children’s Secretary

Sharon Shoesmith
Head Haringey children’s service
Blame Culture or
The Sweep it under the carpet school of leadership

You’ve made a mistake

Will it show? 
YES 
Can you hide it? 
YES 
Conceal it before somebody else finds out

NO 
Bury it

Can you blame someone else, special circumstances or a difficult client?

YES 
Get in first with your version of events

NO 

Could an admission damage your career prospects?

NO 
Sit tight and hope the problem goes away

YES
The other side of the Blame Culture Coin: Prozac Leadership
Prozac Leadership (Collinson, 2011)

Unremittingly positive approach:

1. Encourages leaders to believe their own propaganda
2. Discourages people for raising problems, admitting mistakes, focusing on failure
3. The only people that believe the corporate messages are the corporate leaders
4. Corporate leaders constantly surprised when things go wrong given how well everything seems to be going....
Prozac Military Leadership

Not just mind the internal gap but the external gap. They only live here: what would they know?

2004: International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commander, General Barno, ‘without question 2004 will be a decisive year’
2005: General Abuzaid, ‘2005 will be a decisive year’
2006: General Richards, ‘2006 will be the crunch year for the Taliban’
2008: General Champoux, ‘2008 will be a decisive year’
2009: General McChrystal ‘We are knee deep in the decisive year’
2010: David Miliband, ‘2010 will be a decisive year’
2011: Guido Westerwelle (GRM FM), ‘2011 would be a decisive year’
Hubris Rules OK!

The more powerful you are the more likely you are to make less accurate decisions

‘The detrimental effects of power on confidence, advice taking, and accuracy.’
Morrison, K.E., Rothman, N.B. and Soll, J.B. (2011),

The more powerful you are the more likely you are to ignore advice – from experts and non-experts

‘Power, competitiveness, and advice taking: Why the powerful don’t listen.’
The highway from one merchant town to another shall be cleared so that no cover for malefactors should be allowed for a width of two hundred feet on either side; landlords who do not effect this clearance will be answerable for robberies committed in consequence of their default, and in case of murder they will be in the king’s mercy.
Given at Winchester, October 8, in the thirteenth year of the king's reign.

—Statute of Winchester of 1285, Chapter V, King Edward I
Stierne sneryddes og gruses ikke i denne del af haven.

The paths in this part of the garden will not be cleared of snow and ice.

Slots- og Ejendomsstyrelsen
USS Benfold 1997-1999
Guided missile destroyer

The Problem: the worst performing ship in the US Pacific Fleet
The Problem: the worst performing ship in the US Pacific Fleet

USS Benfold 1997-1999
Guided missile destroyer
3C. BC Emperor Liu Bang held banquet on consolidation of China
Surrounded by nobles, military & political experts.
Guest asked Chen Cen (military expert) why Liu Bang was Emperor.
Chen Cen: ‘What determines the strength of a wheel?’
Guest: ‘The strength of the spokes’
Chen Cen: ‘2 sets of spokes of identical strength did not necessarily make wheels of identical strength. The strength was also affected by the spaces between the spokes, & determining the spaces was the true art of the wheelwright.’
Problems & Power

Crisis
- Coercive
  - Command
- Calculative
- Normative

Tame
- Management

Wicked
- Leadership

Etzioni's typology of compliance
Increasing uncertainty about solution to problem

Normal distribution of situations/problems
But what happens when the problem isn’t solved?
What happens when management fails to tame a problem? First Response: keep doing what you’re doing
Stress Reduction Kit

Bang Head Here

Directions:
1. Place kit on FIRM surface.
2. Follow directions in circle of kit.
3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious.
4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.
What happens when management fails to tame a problem? Second Response: recognize a different category of problem

Increasing uncertainty about solution to problem

Increasing requirement for collaborative compliance/resolution

LEADERSHIP
Ask Questions

MANAGEMENT
Organize Process

COMMAND
Provide Answer

WICKED

TAME

CRITICAL

COERCION/
PHYSICAL
Hard power

CACULATIVE/
RATIONAL

NORMATIVE/
EMOTIONAL
Soft power
Increasing uncertainty about solution to problem

A Critical/Command Response
1. If it’s critical – command the answer
2. Brook no dissent
3. Do what needs to be done to get stability
4. Do it now!

Increasing requirement for collaborative compliance/resolution

COMMAND
Provide Answer

LEADERSHIP
Ask Questions

MANAGEMENT
Organize Process

COERCION/
PHYSICAL
Hard power

CACULATIVE/
RATIONAL

NORMATIVE/
EMOTIONAL
Soft power

WICKED

TAME

CRITICAL
Increasing uncertainty about solution to problem

A Wicked/Leadership Response

Why have we got into this state?
What do we need to agree to stop it recurring?
Let us take this opportunity to rethink this.
Let us not allow the moment of change to pass.

Increasing requirement for collaborative compliance/resolution
Increasing uncertainty about solution to problem

But are we addicted to Command?
And are we allergic to Leadership?

COMMAND: Provide Answer

MANAGEMENT: Organize Process

Increasing requirement for collaborative compliance/resolution

TAME

CRITICAL

COERCION/PHYSICAL
Hard power

CACULATIVE/RATIONAL
1. Fear of Failure

Leading a Wicked Problem implies you don’t know the answer.

Does the absence of an answer imply failure & thus the fear of failure drives people to adopt Command when they should be Leading?

Why might we be Addicted to Command & Allergic to Leadership?
2. The partial role of the media in promoting crisis

30 July 2009 Disorder Fears If Swine Flu Crisis Grows

There have been dire warnings of civil disorder and a breakdown in the basic infrastructure if the worst fears over the imminent swine flu pandemic are realised. NI health officials have briefed hospitals to be prepared for overwhelming volumes of swine flu cases and associated civil disorder.

SWINE FLU CRISIS COULD BRING NHS TO ITS KNEES July 25, 2009
Estimated Annual Global Avoidable Deaths 2003

- RTA: 1,834,920
- HIV/AIDS: 2,818,762
- Diarrhoeal Infections: 3,764,415
- Smoking: 1,766,417
- Terrorism: 3,500,000

Global Deaths From Swine Flu As at 20/8/9: 1,799
I WANT YOU TO SUPPORT THE WAR ON TERROR
I WANT YOU TO SUPPORT THE WAR ON DIARRHOEA
3. Time, Speed & the Adrenaline Rush: *Carpe Diem*
Commanders & commanded as adrenaline junkies

Anxiety over ‘indecision’ – Keats Negative Capability – the time & space to reflect (Versus ‘the first 100 days’ syndrome)

Role of crisis & epic history-making

Lord of the Rings
Harry Potter
Gladiator
Pearl Harbour
Inglourious Basterds
Terminator
4. The followers’ fear of freedom

Erich Fromm (1942)

Fear of freedom – why we have an almost compulsive submission to authority.

Modernity uprooted people from communal relationships & this intolerable loneliness and consequent weight of responsibility drove us to seek solace in the protective arms of authority – fascist or democratic – for only that way could we avoid the fear generated by personal responsibility.

What Bauman calls, ‘the unbearable silence of responsibility’
‘Leadership is disappointing people at a rate they can manage’

After Heifetz
Was Ibsen right?