



Conference

**Chaos Theory and the Arts
in the Context of Social, Economic and Organisational Development
18-21 March, 2000, Pari, Italy**

Chaos theory has attracted wide attention as a new kind of science. A description of large complex systems -- everything from weather to ecologies to populations of neurons and the growth of cities -- chaos appears to have important lessons to teach us about how large groups of intensely interacting people make patterns, create new forms or get stuck in old forms. Chaos is a physicist's description of creativity and the phenomenon of transformation-in-motion. Thus, in curious ways, it has much in common with the arts.

Some organisational consultants and economic and social thinkers have felt that there must be important applications of Chaos Theory, the arts and creativity in general and to the "practical" world of business and society. There appears to be a special attraction to these approaches as an antidote to the increasing amorality and "soullessness", as David Whyte calls it, of modern economic, business and social forms.

The analogy between the creative process of art and the emerging process of organisational and societal transformation is also rich in offering a more holistic picture of "transformation in motion". In capturing the fluidity of the change process and its non-linear progression, Chaos Theory provides alternative perspective to the conventional wisdom of how to conduct change programmes within a firm or a society. It legitimates the concerns for space and time in pattern formation within any given organisational change. The conventional hierarchical model of organisation is also challenged by artistic creativity and by several tenets of chaos theory-- therein lies its attraction.

However, attempts to apply Chaos Theory and artistic creativity to business and society have not been entirely clear or productive.

Are there clear ways to use these creative insights to inspire our organisations to be more like complex organisations in nature and less like feudal kingdoms?

Who should attend? This conference invites a small group of thinkers to a small village in the hills of Tuscany to inquire into the question of whether the kind of creativity implicit in Chaos Theory and the arts can be brought directly and practically to bear on social, economic and organisational development.

How to participate? Conference members may choose to introduce themselves with a short position paper or session, but most of the conference time will be given over to

"self-organising" a conversation about this topic -- and perhaps self-organising a new direction in organisational consulting.

Dates for the conference will be 18 -21 March 2001. The conference will be starting in the afternoon of the 18th March (a time table will be formulated later).

Venue & Cost. This conference will take place at the Pari Center for New Learning, situated in a picturesque, medieval village that now houses 250 inhabitants. Accommodation varies -- from a room in a hotel, or a room with a family , to a shared room/apartment

The cost per **participant** for accommodation and meals during the whole conference will be between US\$ 200.00 -300.00 depending on the choice of accommodation. The cost for an accompanying (**non- participant**) will be US\$ 200.00.

More information on the Pari Center for New Learning is available at <http://www.f davidpeat.com/pcnl/index.htm>

Conference Fee. A conference fee of US\$ 100.00 to cover the cost of meeting rooms, equipments, logistics and conference administration.

Conference Organiser: Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development (CSEND), a not -for -profit organisation specialising in change process design for large and complex systems and in capacity development to support the change process. More informatin on CSEND is available at <http://www.csend.org>

Organisation Prof. John Briggs, Western Connecticut State University
Committee: Dr. David Peat, Pari Center for New Learning
Dr. Raymond Saner, Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development
Dr. Lichia Yiu, Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development
Dr. Lynda Keen, Plectics Consulting

Paper: Please confirm your participation by sending an e-mail to:

Dr. Lichia Yiu at yi u@csend.org for the title of your presentation and paper

Deadling for Registration: **30 December 2000**.

Please fill out the Registration Form and send it to Ms. Maureen Doolan at mdoolan@tiscalinet.it and send a check for the **\$100.00** registration fee by post to:

Pari Center for New Learning, Via Gonfienzo 14, 58040 Pari, (GR) I talia.