

Co-operative Education and Research Where are we? Where do we need to go?

By Ian MacPherson

Director

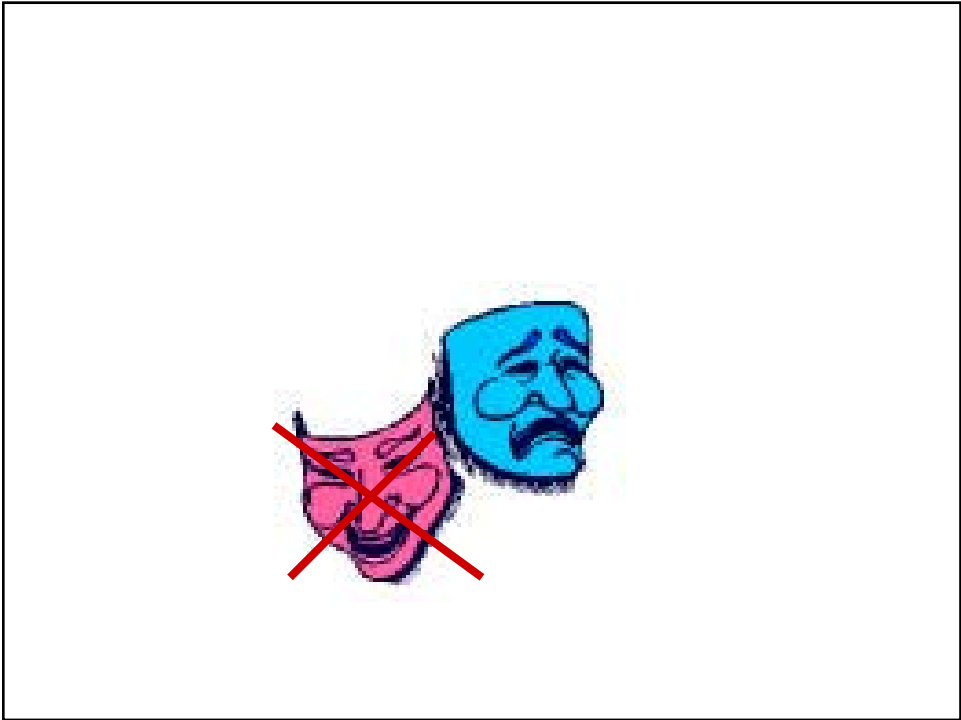
**British Columbia Institute for
Co-operative Studies**

University of Victoria

<http://web.uvic.ca/bcics>

All the world's a stage.....





Where are we?





Where are we?

- There are always co-operatives facing difficulties;
- The difficulties are well publicized;
- Some people will conclude that the difficulties mean that
 - (a) the co-operative movement is dying out, and
 - (b) it does not matter if the movement disappears;
- Many have concluded that successful co-operative enterprises will eventually convert to private enterprise, in fact or in effect;
- Most people who really care about the movement are worried that it never seems to reach its full potential, notably in its inability to follow the sixth principle enjoining co-operatives to co-operate with each other;



Where are we?

- Every 37 hours some co-op leader will say “We need more co-operative education”;
- 52 wise heads will nod in agreement;
- A little more co-operative education will be done through the marketing department;
- HRD budgets will remain the same;



Where are we?

- Every 98 hours a co-op leader will say, “We need more co-operative philosophy”;
- Eleven leaders will start to nod their heads in agreement and then ask (in a low voice) – “What really is co-operative philosophy?”;
- Not much co-operative philosophy will be studied;



Where are we?

- Every third week, some co-operative leader will say – “We need more co-operative research”;
- 172 co-op leaders will nod in agreement;
- Some co-op research will be done as long as it will – (a) help marketing (b) identify new sources of capital (c) enhance the career opportunities of key management figures (d) encourage co-op stakeholders to make the “right” decision;
- Other kinds of research will be done (probably repeatedly) but read by only a few.



Threats

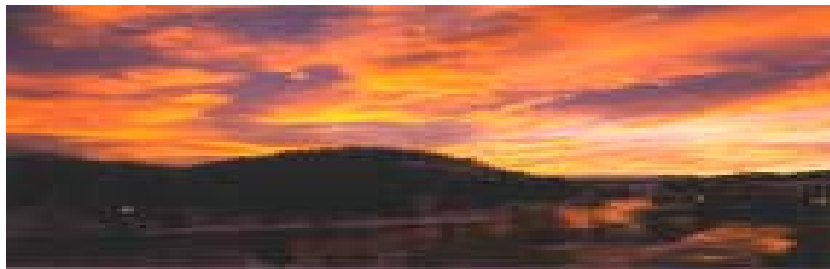
- Globalisation
- Member apathy
- Regulatory change
- Individualism

Impossibilities

- Member enthusiasm
- Renewed vigour
- New synergies
- Co-operation



Where are we?



Opportunities



Opportunities

- Search for values
- Concern about communities
- Demands of the young
- Orneriness of the old



Opportunities

Globalisation

- (a) Niches
- (b) Partnerships
- (c) Revitalisation
- (d) Communications



Opportunities

Speaking out

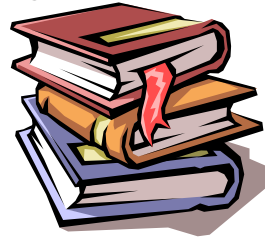
- Be heard
- Be proud
- Build memory
- Be strategic
- Co-ordinate



Opportunities

Co-operative Studies

- (a) Conceptualisation
- (b) Theory and practice
- (c) Challenging received knowledge
- (d) Learning



Opportunities

Greater Coherence

- (a) Analysis
- (b) Research
- (c) Training
- (d) Teaching



Co-operative Learning Centre

A collaborative online resource for the co-operative community



A co-operative venture presented by:



The Co-operative Learning Centre will offer:

- **Training and Teaching Materials**
(i.e. Learning Modules) including multi-media materials that aid in training and teaching.
- **Case Studies and Reports**
describing and analyzing the successes and failures of co-op ventures.
- **Links**
(and associated information) to many co-operative related resources: training and research institutions, youth organisations, libraries, government, and more.
- **Research Materials**
academic, as well as research undertaken by co-operatives and other institutions.
- **Forums and Contact Directories**
for Co-op HRD workers, Co-operative Studies researchers and others to discuss and interact in online discussion forums, as well as by exchanging contact information and documents online.
- **User-submitted information**
allowing site users to submit information about their own co-operatives

Co-operative Learning Centre offers HRD Co-operators:

HRD Co-operators will have access to all the site's resources. In addition, *HRD Co-operators* will have a their own password protected section within the site: the ***Co-op Human Resource Development*** section.

The **Co-op HRD** section offers *HRD Co-operators* the ability to maintain information about themselves and their HRD interests, search the information of other *HRD Co-operators* for people with similar interests, review and download training materials, participate in online discussions, post documents and links, and suggest topics for, and participate in, online polls related to HRD.

Thank You

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