



HUMAN SYSTEMS
DYNAMICS INSTITUTE

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Human Systems Dynamics: Foundations, Discipline, Praxis

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Description

Human systems dynamics (HSD) is a transdisciplinary field that draws theory from nonlinear dynamics and practice from effective action across a wide range of human experience. In this Anthropocene Dialogue, Dr. Glenda Eoyang, founder of the field, will introduce the theoretical underpinnings of HSD. She will also explain how she and her team have applied HSD to intractable issues, including corruption, conflict, sustainability, pedagogy, conservation science, and mass migration. Dialogue will include practice in HSD's inquiry-based problem solving approach and exploration of the diverse disciplines and methods from which HSD emerged.

Biography

Glenda Eoyang works with public and private organizations to help them thrive in the face of overwhelming complexity and uncertainty. She is a pioneer in the applications of complexity science to human systems, and she founded the field of human systems dynamics (HSD). Through Human Systems Dynamics Institute, where she serves as founding executive director, Glenda uses her models and methods to help others see patterns in the chaos that surrounds them, understand the patterns in simple and powerful ways, and take practical steps to shift chaos toward coherence.



The HSD Associate Network includes 650 scholar-practitioners around the world. They are certified to apply her principles of Adaptive Action and Pattern Logic in diverse sectors including education, health care, government, and philanthropy. Her work relates to human systems at all scales and contexts from individual health and wellness to performance evaluation and international patterns of corruption and conflict. Her recent clients include the Finnish Research Institute (VTT); US Environmental Protection Agency; British Columbia Ministry of Health, Canada; Oxfam International, UK; Yukon Territorial Government, Canada; Family Housing Fund; Catholic Charities of the Twin Cities; the McKnight Foundation; and the Association for Medical Education in Europe.

Nothing is intractable.

Glenda received her doctorate in Human Systems Dynamics from the Union Institute and University in 2001, studying under Drs. Donald Klein and Kevin Dooley. There she discovered three fundamental factors that influence the dynamics of self-organizing change in human systems. This research forms the foundation for the body of work that helps individuals, institutions, and communities respond to the challenges and uncertainty of complex change. With colleagues around the world, Glenda delivers a hybrid of education and consulting in the form of Adaptive Action Laboratories. Individuals and teams bring their most wicked problems, learn and practice human systems dynamics approaches, and leave with plans for next wise action. Groups from Vancouver to Helsinki and South Africa have used this method to break through apparently intractable issues.

The HSD Institute hosts a monthly, free webinar in which Glenda shares her current research and emerging learnings. She lectures on college campuses around the world, including University of St. Thomas (St. Paul, MN), Queen's College (Kingston, ON), Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, VA), and Yukon College (Whitehorse, YK). She contributes to a variety of professional networks, including International Ombudsman Association; Society for Chaos Theory in Psychology and the Life Sciences; Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict and Complexity (AC4), Earth Institute, Columbia University; Plexus Institute; National Center for Literacy Education; Organization Design Network; and Organization Development Network. In 2009 she received the Sharing the Wealth award from the Organization Development Network for her commitment to open source access to her work and that of the Institute. She is currently teaching an online course with Dr. Stewart Mennin, *Leadership in Medical Education: Healthcare Workforce for the 21st Century* in the Essentials in Medical Education program of the Association for Medical Education in Europe.

Her published works include scholarly articles in a variety of fields and *Radical Rules for Schools: Adaptive Action for Complex Change* (HSD Institute, March 2013), and *Coping with Chaos: Seven Simple Tools* (Lagumo Press, 1996). Recent chapters focus on organization and personal resilience in uncertainty, systems evaluation in health care, and an emerging praxis in conservation science. Glenda's latest book, with co-author Royce Holladay, is *Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization* (Stanford University Press, April 2013). It is a roadmap for anyone who chooses to work at the intersection of order and chaos.

For more information about Glenda and HSD, visit www.hsdinstitute.org.