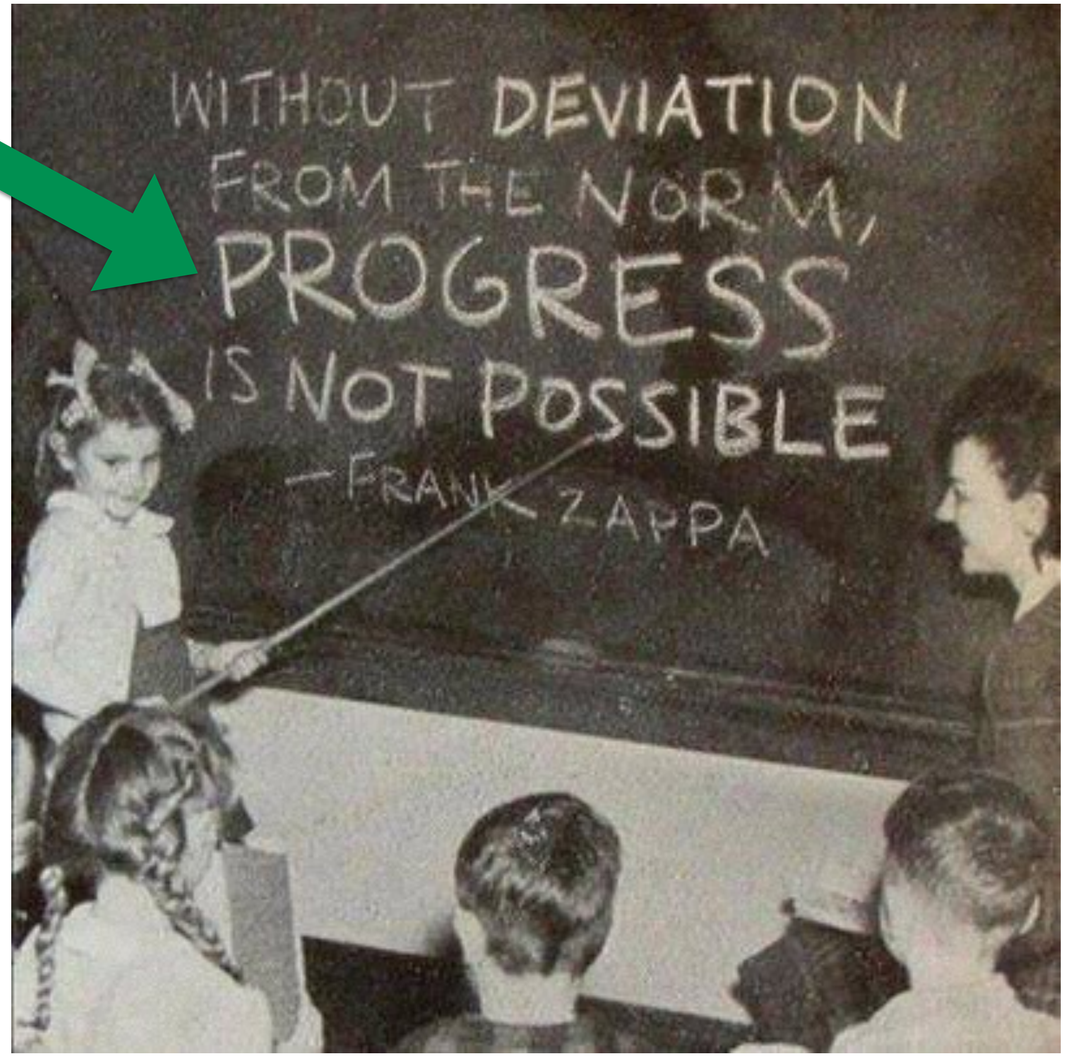
# Minorities and fringe groups are **THE source of new insights**

March 2018

~~growth~~




Creative Fringe
1940 - 1993

Ecological Fringe
1980

# Ecological footprint

*Intelligent behaviour :* ***finding and operating a niche in the living world***

**sick** **at "work"** **chores**

**dead** ⟷ **alive**

**the arts and other autistic pursuits**

**collaborative play and learning**

**sports**

In a world of zero marginal cost the economics of scarcity directly lead to an abundance of waste.
**Competing** to produce and consume more and more stuff **has become a liability.**
**Collaborating** to produce less and less waste **is becoming the imperative.**
Time to relearn very old wisdom and **constrain any attempts to gain power over others.**
Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis, *A Cooperative Species: Human Reciprocity and Its Evolution*, 2011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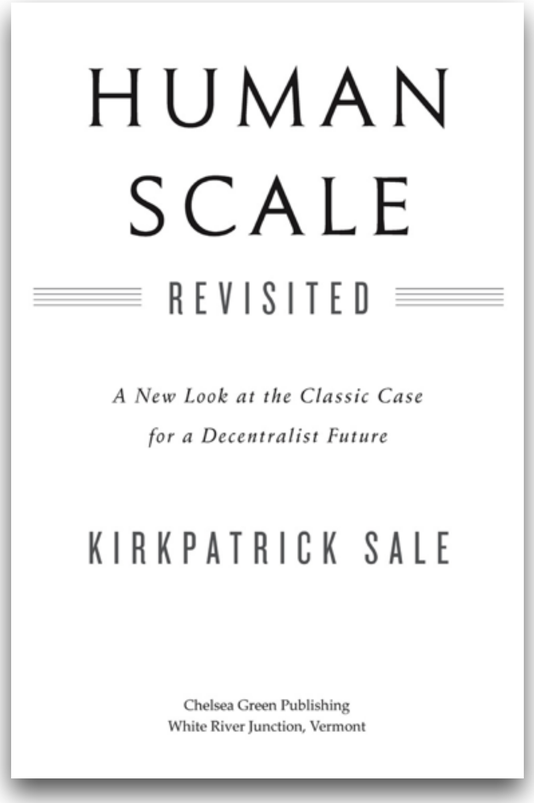
# Creating **human scale** societies and technologies

Creative Fringe
1980




*… if it is not too late, **our only hope would be to reorder and rework our habitats and environments, our lives and civilizations, along such lines as the original Parthenon would suggest, a building built on the principles of the human scale**. Or, if that call is not heeded, and the collapse is inescapable, then I would suggest that it will be only by following the human scale will any successful human society be rebuilt and regenerated after that collapse…*

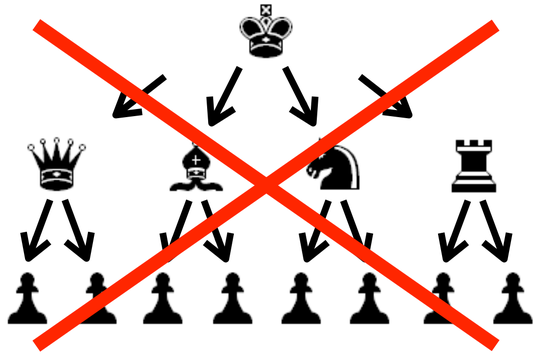
*…the Greeks did not worship omnipotent gods, did not serve almighty kings, did not cluster themselves into faceless urban multitudes. They evolved, for the first time, philosophies and organizations built on **the quite remarkable notion of the freeborn citizen, an individual with an inalienable equality within the community or polis, who was expected to participate in its arts, sciences, athletics, politics, discourses, and games for the betterment not only of the self but for that of the entire population**.*

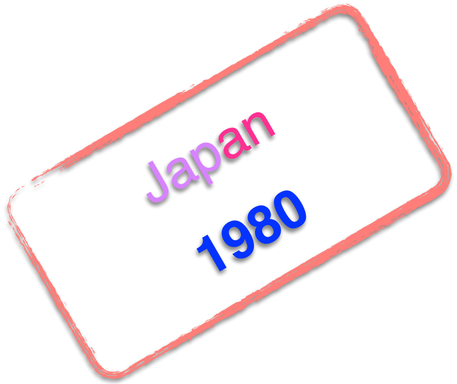
*… as E. F. Schumacher once said, "I called my book Small Is Beautiful not because everything small is beautiful but because everything else is too BIG."*

# Hierarchically stratified societies

All effective approaches for continuous improvement (such as *Kaizen, Toyota Production System, Waigaya*, …) and innovation (*Open Space, collaborative design*, …) share one common principle.

**In order to successfully identify and implement opportunities for improvement and innovation the belief in the existence and relevance of social hierarchies must be suspended**

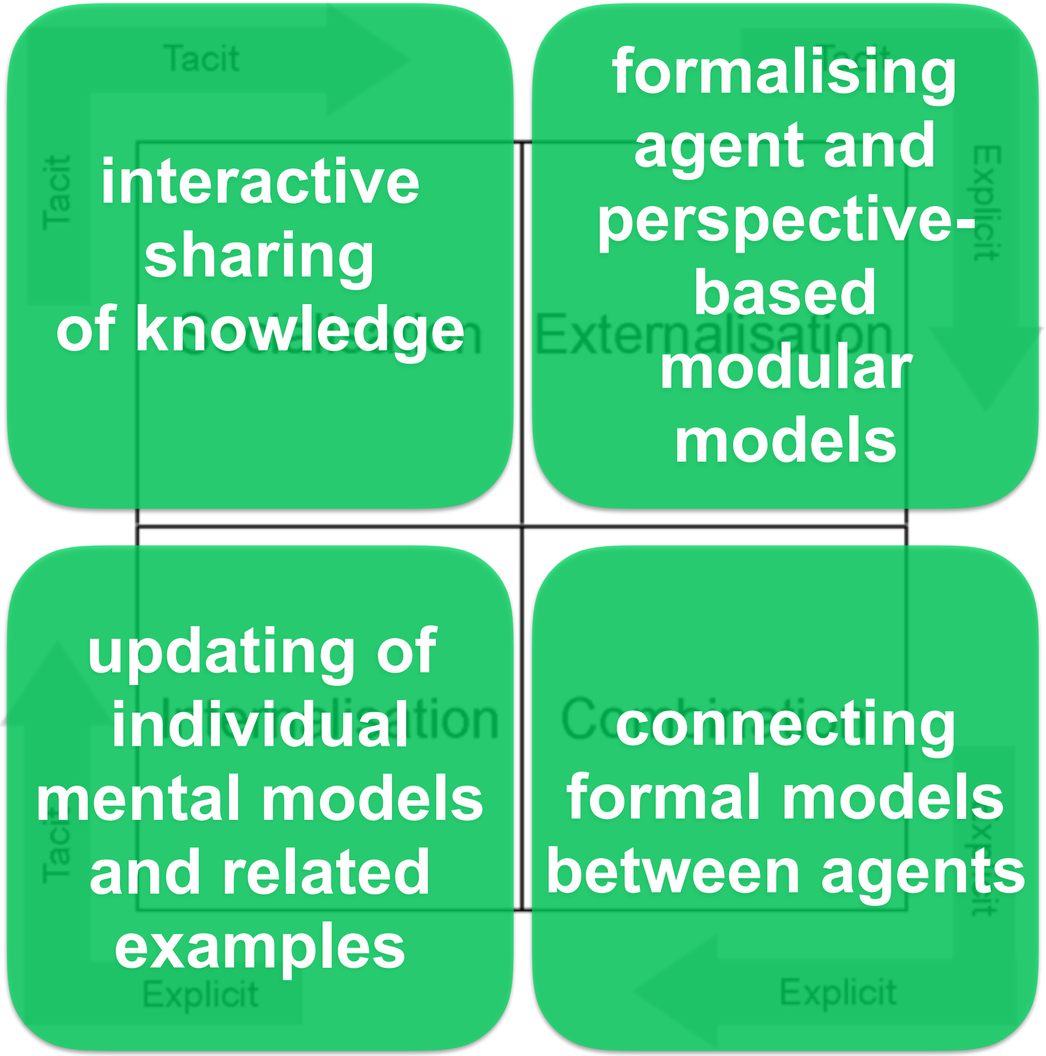





**Why is this the case? What does this tell us about society?**

# Creating **a learning organisation / system**

- The SECI model is a useful conceptual tool for organising and structuring new service / product development, and for **extending the concept of continuous improvement into the realm of digital business and knowledge-intensive processes**
- Takeuchi, Nonaka, The New Product Development Game, https://hbr.org/1986/01/the-new-new-product-development-game , 1986
- Nonaka, Toyama, Hirata, Managing Flow: A Process Theory of the Knowledge-Based Firm, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008





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# Competence vs authority

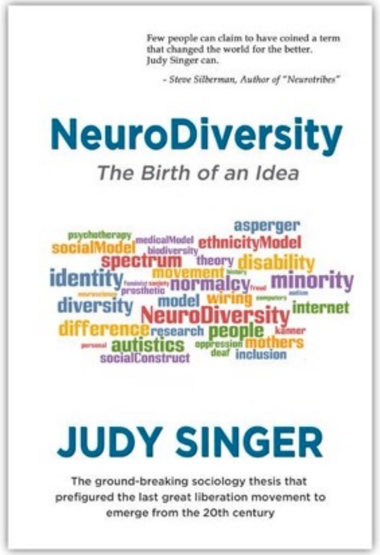
Looking under the hood of any hierarchical organisation and analysing communication and collaboration patterns reveals three social structures:

1. **The official hierarchy**, which defines the scope of various “authorities” within the organisation.

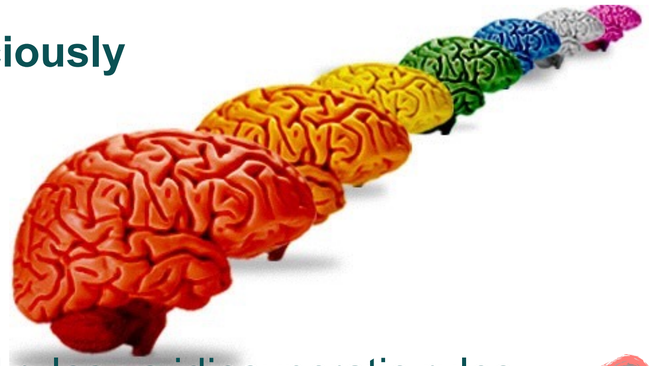
2. **The unofficial hierarchy**, which reflects the actual coercive power structure, which inevitably emerges within all hierarchical structures, and serves as the rank climbing ladder within the hierarchical structure.

3. **The competency network** within the organisation, which is the union of all the multi-dimensional domain-specific competency rankings that individuals allocate to the other members within the group. Each individual independently allocates competency rankings to other group members, leading to a multi-dimensional network rather than a tree based on a unidimensional ranking.

# Neurodiversity = significant differences in **cognitive lenses**

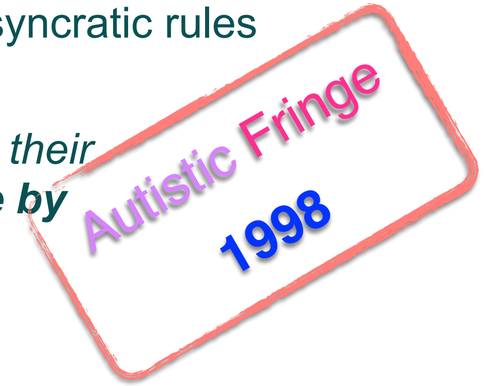



1. **Sensory sensitivity** and ability to selectively ignore sensory inputs
2. Speed and extent of development of [subconscious] **social filters**
3. Triggers of neurochemical rewards – **motivation to understand the world** vs motivation to "succeed" socially
4. Level to which **social cues must be processed and decoded consciously**
5. **Mental effort needed** to decode social cues
6. **Time horizons** of specific personal goals
7. **Attention span**
8. **Ability and effort needed to "function"** according to specific cultural rules vs idiosyncratic rules

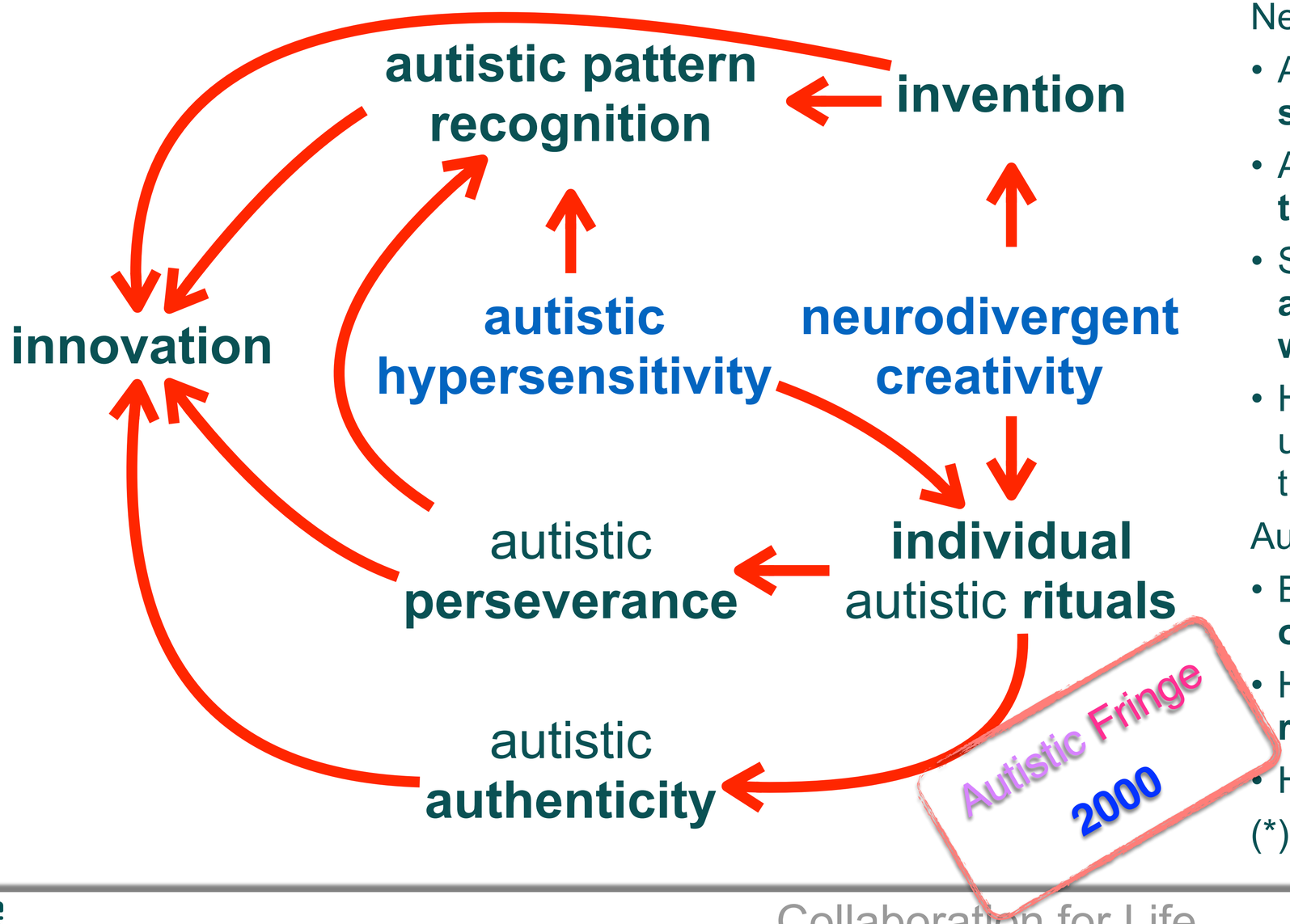


***In the Asch conformity paradigm, those with autism were found to resist*** *changing their spontaneous judgement to an array of graphic lines despite* ***social pressure to change by*** *conforming to the erroneous judgement of* ***an authoritative confederate.***

*http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1751696X.2016.1244949*



# **Creativity =** Having a *"less well functioning mental bureaucrat"* (*)




Neurodivergent people:

- Adhere to **idiosyncratic moral value systems** rather than social norms
- Are okay with **exploring ideas that upset the "social order"**
- Spend **much more time experimenting and implementing ideas that others would consider crazy** or a waste of time
- Have **untypical life goals**: new forms of understanding, making a positive impact, translating ideas into artistic expression

Autists in particular tend to:

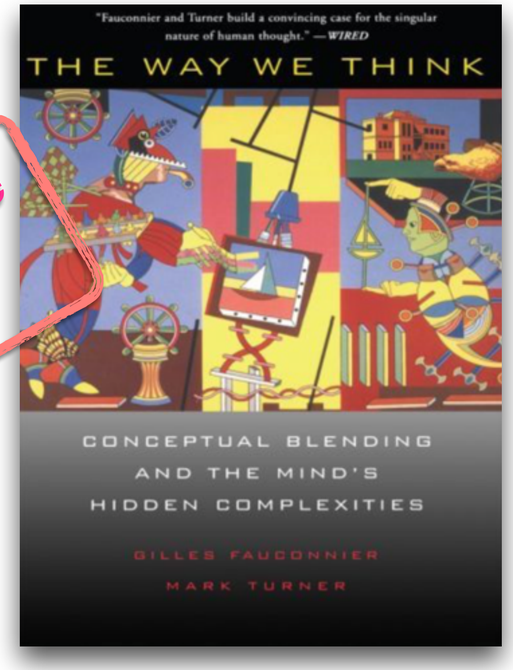
- Easily suffer from **sensory and social overload**
- Have **unusually developed pattern recognition** abilities
- Have an **unusual ability to persevere**

(*) Jeffrey Baumgartner

# **Human scale cognition** and sense making

Cognitive Science

2002




*We argue that* ***conceptual blending is responsible for the origins of language, art, religion, science, and other singular human feats, and that it is indispensable for basic everyday thought as it is for artistic and scientific abilities****. Our goal is to do what has not been done before: to explain the principles and mechanisms of conceptual blending…*

*… People pretend, imitate, lie, fantasise, deceive, delude, consider alternatives, simulate, make models, and pose hypotheses.* ***Our species has an extraordinary ability to operate mentally on the unreal*** *…*

*Because linguistic expressions prompt for meanings rather than represent meanings,* ***linguistic systems do not have to be, and in fact cannot be, analogues of conceptual systems.*** *Prompting for meaning construction is a job they can do; representing meanings is not…*

*Vital relations, which include Cause-Effect, Change, Time, Identity, Intentionality, Representation, and Part-Whole, not only apply across mental spaces, but also define essential topology within mental spaces.* ***One of the overarching goals of compression through conceptual blending is to achieve "human scale" in the blended space…***

A brilliant book on the cognitive foundations of human scale conceptual semantic modelling

# **Spurious** cultural **complexity**

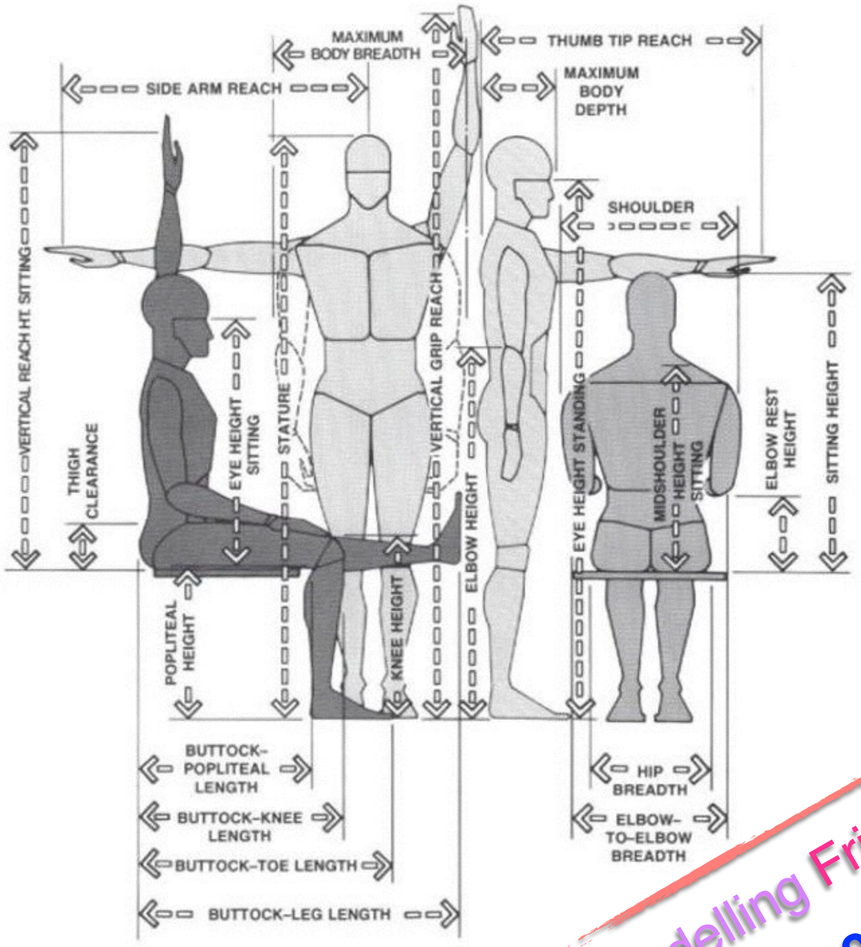
Economic Fringe
2006

**Guard labour** is an increasingly common form of busyness, the term was coined by Arjun Jayadev and Samuel Bowles https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guard_labor

*Guard labor is wage labor and other **activities that are said to maintain (hence "guard") an established system**. Things that are generally characterised as guard labor include: **management**, **guards**, **military** personnel, and **prisoners**.*

*Guard labor is noteworthy because it captures **expenditures based on mistrust** and **does not produce future value.***

# **Creating visual languages and interaction styles**
## that are better than English or any other linear language




Modelling Fringe
2009

***Human scale computing*** can be understood as the elaboration of the role of cognitive characteristics of humans within ergonomics.

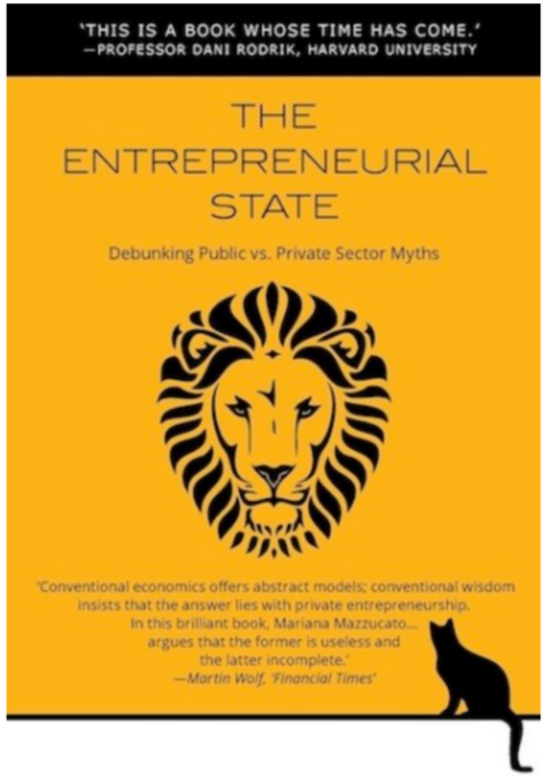
**Systems, models and technologies are only understandable as long as they do not generate cognitive loads that exceed human cognitive limits.**

This observation can only be put to good use if human cognitive limits become a primary concern in the design of human institutions and technologies, in much the same way that human scale physical dimensions and characteristics have shaped the discipline of ergonomics.

http://industrialized-software.wikidot.com/kiss-initiative

# “News” in 2013 : **Rethinking ~~growth~~ progress**

Economics APPROVED




THE ENTREPRENEURIAL STATE

*The Entrepreneurial State: debunking public vs. private sector myths* (Anthem 2013) is stirring up much-needed debate worldwide about the role of the state in fostering long-run innovation led economic growth.

The book comprehensively debunks the myth of a lumbering, bureaucratic state versus a dynamic, innovative private sector. In a series of case studies—from IT, biotech, nanotech to today's emerging green tech—Professor Mazzucato shows that the opposite is true: the private sector only finds the courage to invest after an entrepreneurial state has made the high-risk investments. In an intensely researched chapter, she reveals that every technology that makes the iPhone so 'smart' was government funded: the Internet, GPS, its touch-screen display and the voice-activated Siri.

Mazzucato also controversially argues that in the history of modern capitalism the State has not only fixed market failures, but has also actively shaped and created markets. In doing so, it sometimes wins and sometimes fails. Yet by not admitting the State's role in such active risk taking, and pretending that the state only cheers on the side-lines while the private sector roars, we have ended up creating an 'innovation system' whereby the public sector socializes risks, while rewards are privatized. The book considers how to change this dysfunctional dynamic so that economic growth can be not only 'smart' but also 'inclusive'.

**Financial Governance for Innovation and Social Inclusion**

- https://youtu.be/n9t-ccA6R-8
- https://youtu.be/JIaiATI_3WY?t=34m10s
- Full lecture https://youtu.be/BYU1RcsJKws

**Progress must be:**

- Smart (multi-dimensional)
- Inclusive (socially equitable)
- Green (ecologically beneficial)

**Less is better** when we talk about:

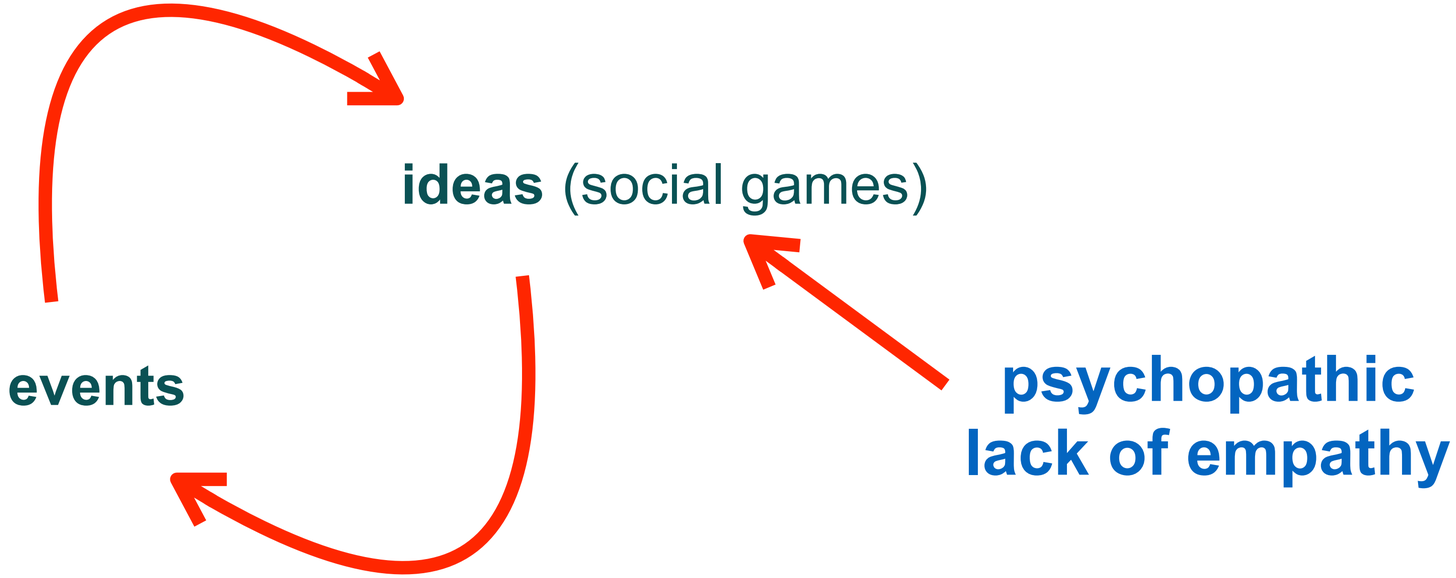
- Financialised household management
- Hierarchically stratified societies
- Ecological footprint

**Less is also better** when we talk about:

- Waste
- Fear
- Reactive healthcare
- Population growth

**Notions such as “growth” and “wealth” are dangerously misleading**

# “News” in 2014 : **Financialised household management**

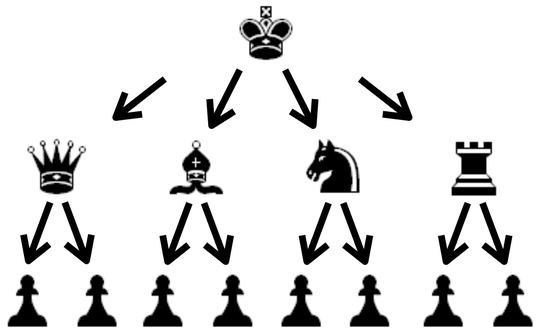


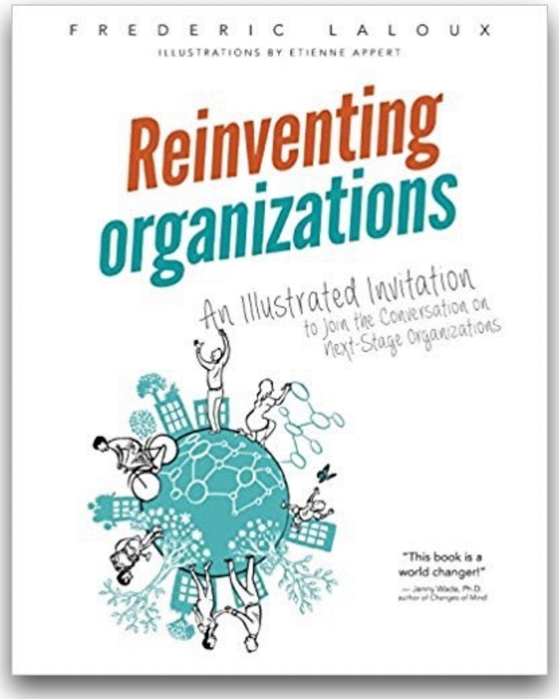

We have perverted the definition of intelligent behaviour

**ability to deceive others** = “intelligent behaviour”

George Soros developed the theory of reflexivity based on the ideas of Karl Popper. Reflexivity posited that **market values are often driven by the fallible ideas of participants**, not only by the economic fundamentals of the situation. Reflexive feedback loops are created where **ideas influence events and events influence ideas**. Soros further argued that **this leads to markets having procyclical "virtuous or vicious" cycles of boom and bust**, in contrast to the equilibrium predictions of more standard neoclassical economics."

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1350178X.2013.859415

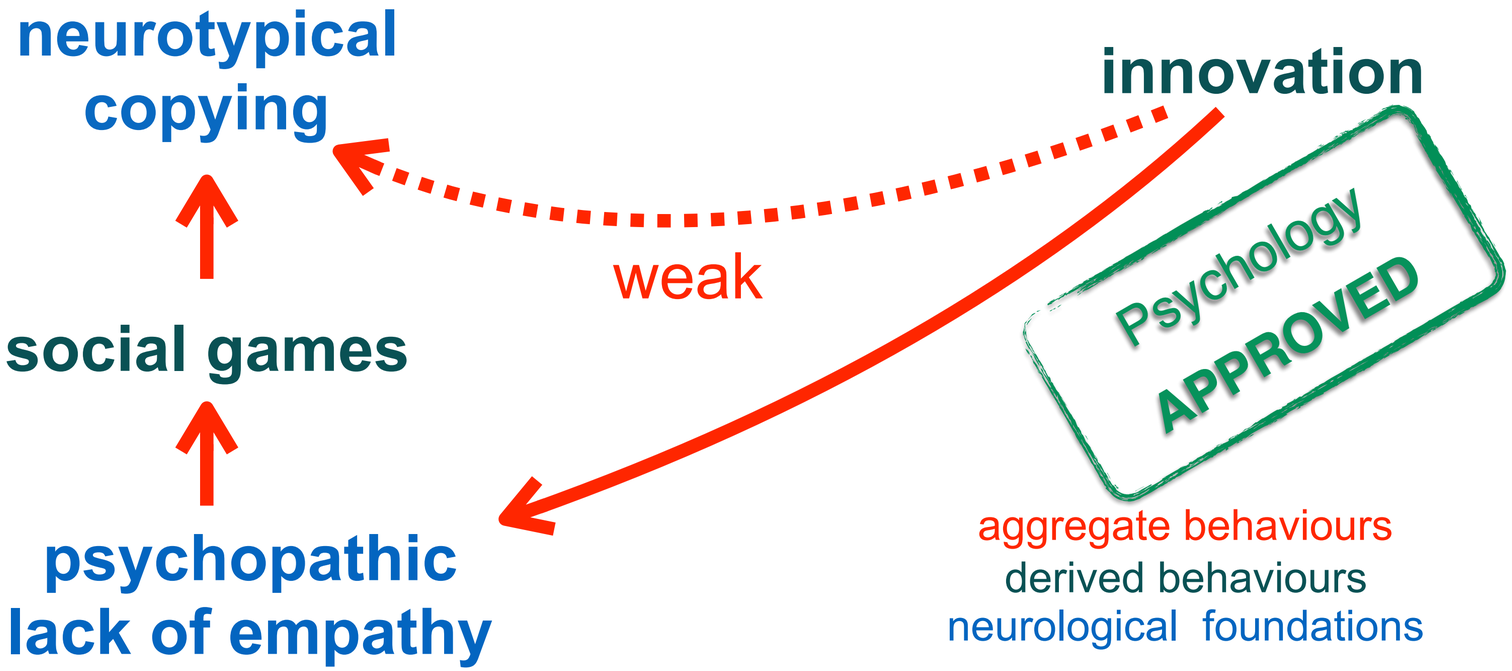





# “News” in 2014 : **An advice process replaces power with learning**

Ex McKinsey
APPROVED

# “News” 2006 - 2016 : **“Gamification”** of society



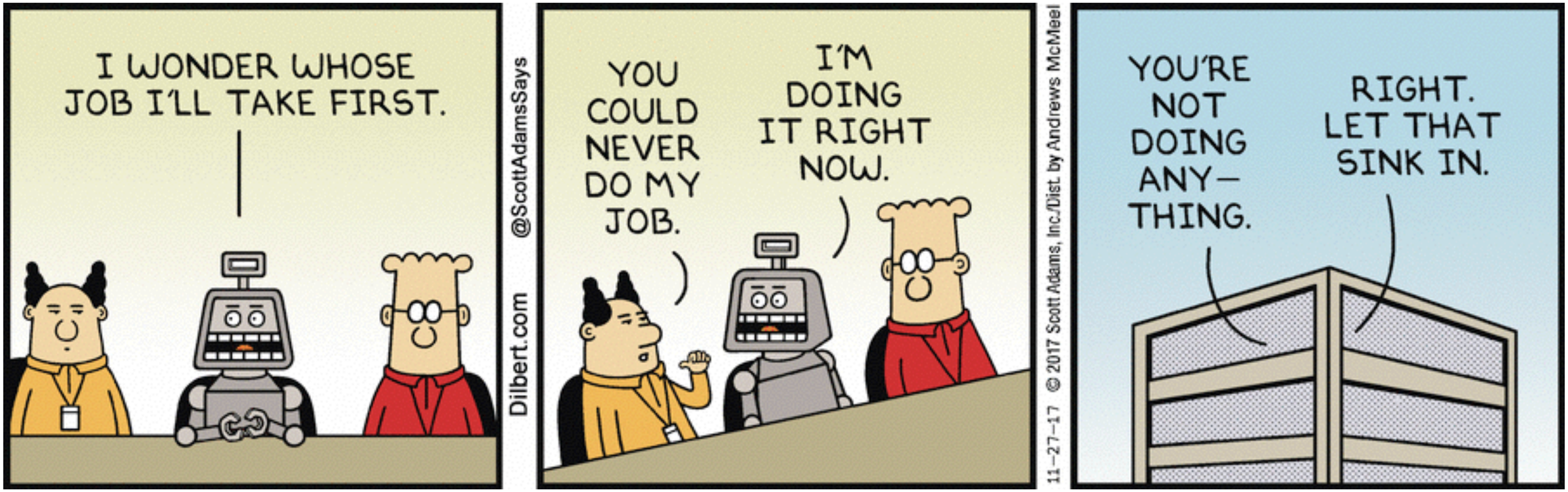

- Paul Babiak and Robert Hare, *Snakes in suits: When psychopaths go to work*, 2006
- Susan Long, *The perverse organisation and its deadly sins*, 2008
- Susan Long, *Socioanalytic methods – Discovering the hidden in organisations and social systems*, 2013
- The Milgram experiment https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g1MJeHYIE0
- The Stanford prison experiment https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZwfNs1pqG0
- The Asch conformity experiment https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYIh4MkcfJA

***psychopathic traits are common in the upper echelons of the corporate world, with a prevalence of between 3% and 21%***

Nathan Brooks, http://www.psychology.org.au/news/media_releases/13September2016/Brooks, 2016

# “News” in 2017 : **The future of management**

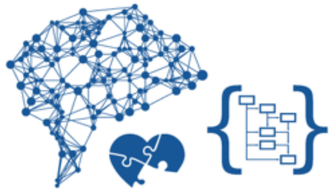
Dilbert APPROVED



# “News” in 2018 : **Valuable human capabilities**

Value is shifting
from social communication
skills to divergent
thinking & creativity

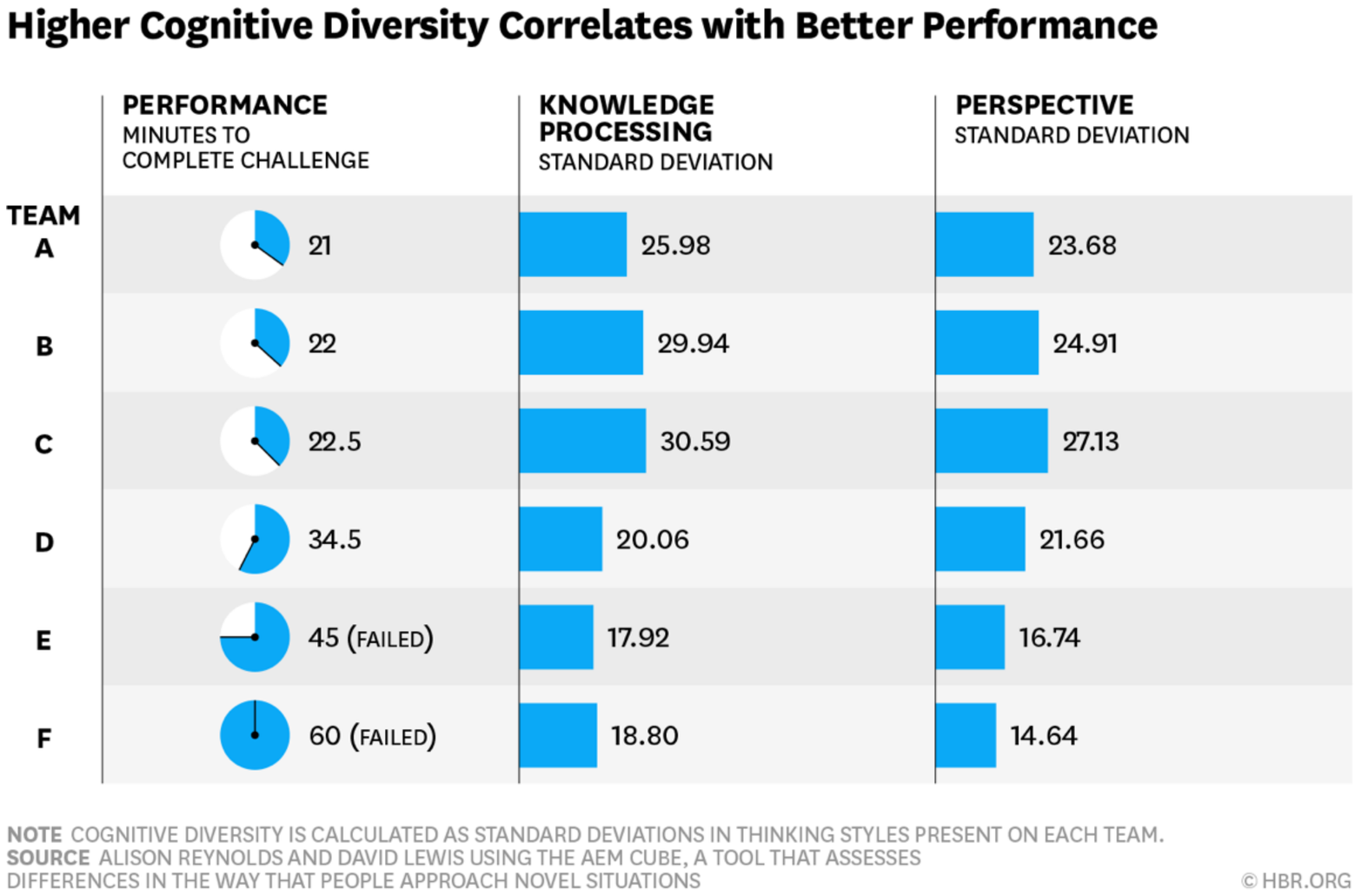
| in 2020 | in 2015 |
|---|---|
| 1. Complex Problem Solving | 1. Complex Problem Solving |
| 2. Critical Thinking | 2. Coordinating with Others |
| 3. Creativity | 3. People Management |
| 4. People Management | 4. Critical Thinking |
| 5. Coordinating with Others | 5. Negotiation |
| 6. Emotional Intelligence | 6. Quality Control |
| 7. Judgment and Decision Making | 7. Service Orientation |
| 8. Service Orientation | 8. Judgment and Decision Making |
| 9. Negotiation | 9. Active Listening |
| 10. Cognitive Flexibility | 10. Creativity |



Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum

# “News” in 2018 : **Teams Solve Problems Faster When They’re More Cognitively Diverse**

HBR APPROVED




***Knowledge processing***: the extent to which individuals prefer to consolidate and deploy existing knowledge, or prefer to generate new knowledge, when facing new situations

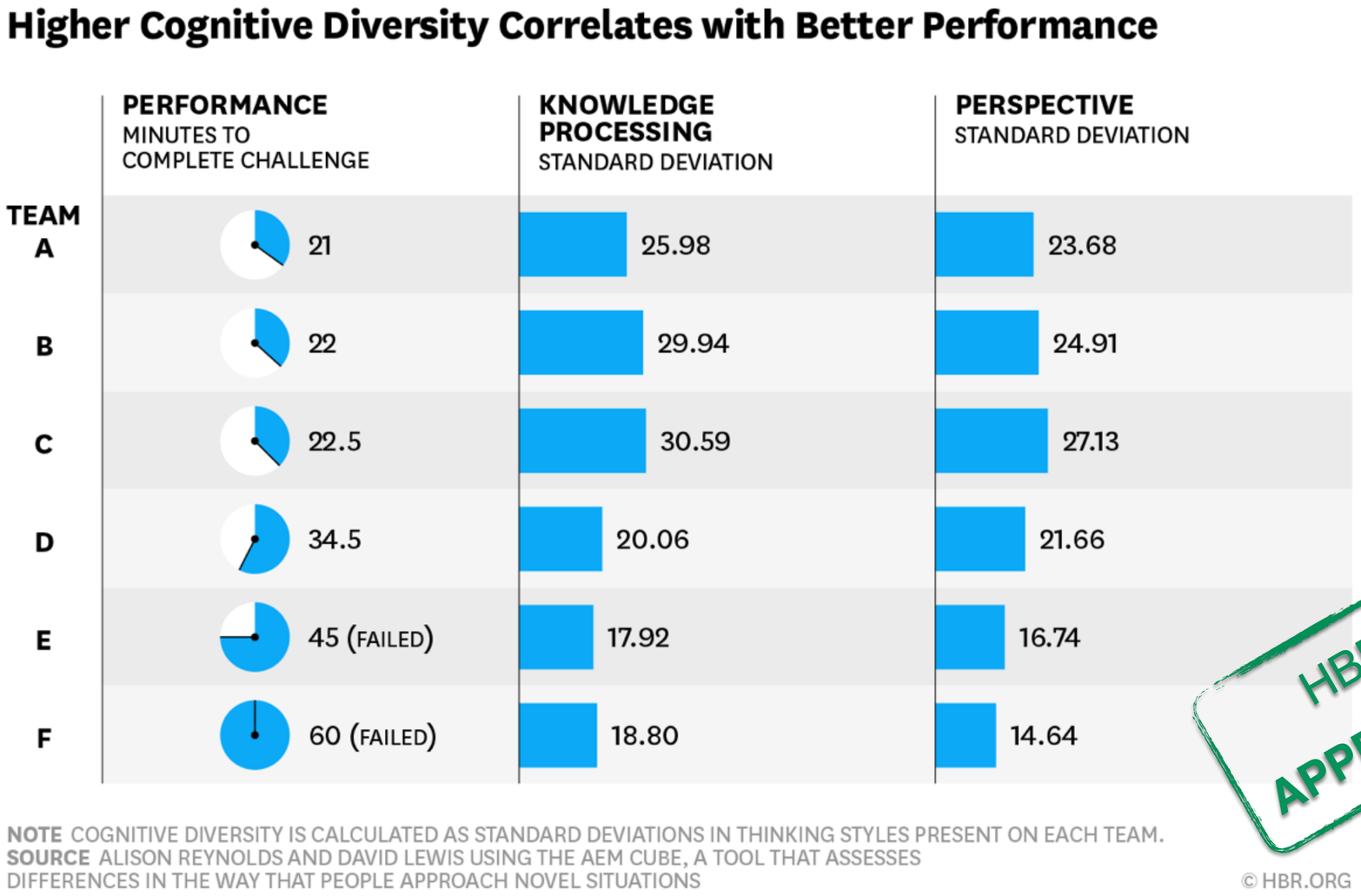
***Perspective***: the extent to which individuals prefer to deploy their own expertise, or prefer to orchestrate the ideas and expertise of others, when facing new situations

**Our analysis across six teams who recently undertook the exercise shows a significant correlation between high cognitive diversity and high performance.**

**Cognitive diversity is less visible** than for example ethnic and gender diversity, and additionally we create cultural barriers that restrict the degree of cognitive diversity, even when we don’t mean to.

**There is a familiar saying: “We recruit in our own image.”** This bias doesn’t end with demographic distinctions like race or gender, or with the recruiting process, for that matter. Colleagues gravitate toward the people who think and express themselves in a similar way. As a result, organizations often end up with like-minded teams. **When this happens, we have what psychologists call functional bias — and low cognitive diversity.**

# “News” in 2018 : **The Two Traits of the Best Problem-Solving Teams: Cognitive Diversity and Psychological Safety**

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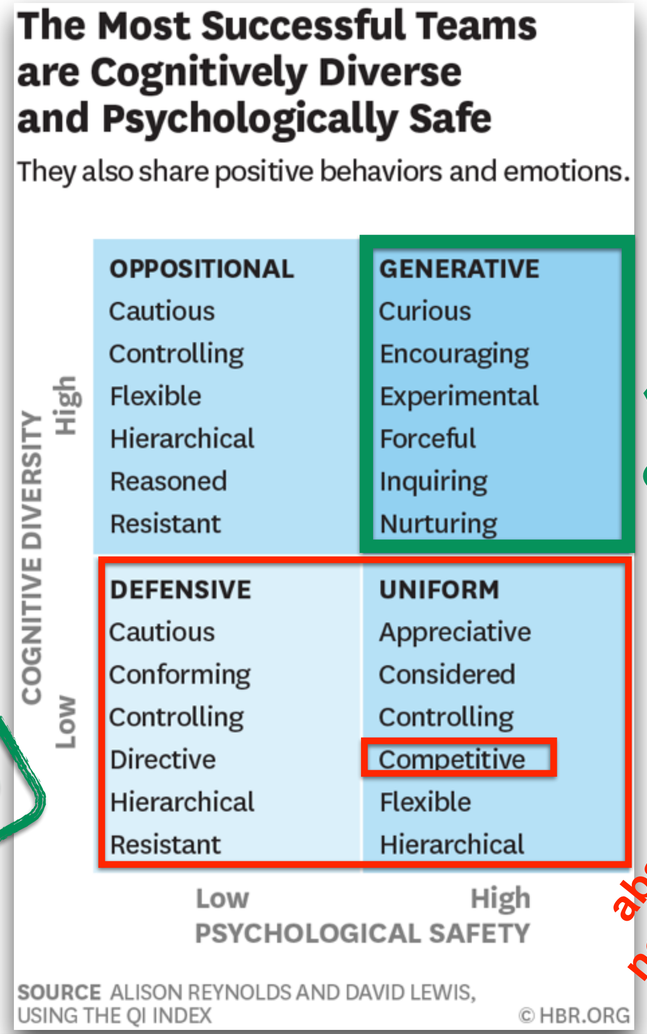



Autistic Collaboration

absence of neurodiversity

# Language is a very powerful tool

Language frames **people's thoughts and emotional response**.
Time to start consistently talking about approaches that actually work:

1. ***Niche construction*** and ***symbiosis*** rather than ~~competition~~ – to create organisations and products that are fit for purpose and of value to the wider community

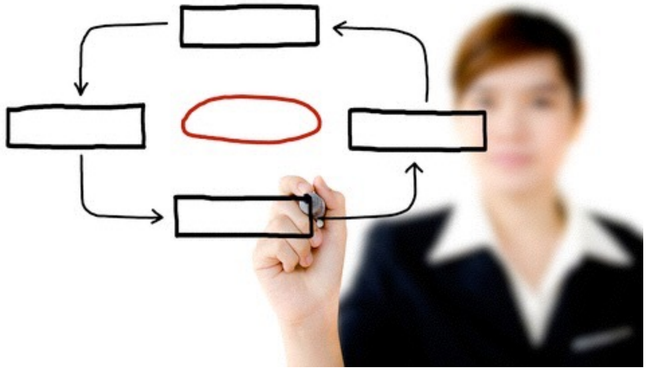
2. ***Competency networks*** rather than ~~leadership~~ – to get things done and distribute decision making to where the knowledge resides

3. ***Coordination*** rather than ~~management~~ – to address all the stuff that can increasingly be automated, management is often the biggest obstacle to automation

4. ***Creativity*** and ***divergent thinking*** rather than ~~best practices~~ – when facing the need to innovate and improve

# Thank you!

**S23M**

info @ s23m.com

*Nothing beats capturing the knowledge flow of leading domain experts to co-create organisations & systems that are understandable by future generations of humans & software tools.*