

★ Exploring the role of participation in
worker co-ops' ecological sustainability

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(a work in progress)

★ Research Question

How does being a highly-participative workplace offer and/or inhibit “green” practices?

★ Why should we care?

- Work... there's no way around it, I'm told
- Ecological sustainability... ditto

...Do they mix well? Well...

★ Green Worker Co-ops

Fairtrade: Equal Exchange, Just Us!, La Siembra

Residential Build/Design: Energreen, Build With Prospect, South Mountain Co.

Agriculture: Open Tech Collaborative, Worker-Owned Vertical Farm Co-op

Housecleaning: WAGES, MANOS, Dahlia Green Cleaning, (and MANY more)

Grocery: Rainbow Grocery, SUMA Wholefoods (UK)

Oh, and the incubator Green Worker Cooperatives!

✦ Plus...

Pretty Green WCs:

Red Rabbit Bakery, Inkworks Press, Alvarado St. Bakery, Union Cab, Republic Windows and Doors, Collective Copies

Aren't WC's, but are worker-owned and -participative, and have some pretty green practices:

King Arthur Flour

Scott Bader Company

★ Definitions (or lack thereof)

“Participation” as volitional involvement in:

- policy-setting,**
- decision-making, and**
- discretionary workplace behaviors**

“Green”: usefully useless

★ I am NOT asking...

- whether WCs *are* greener than non-WCs in reality
 - green-WC overlap would skew this comparison, anyway
 - even if so, doesn't mean that WC-ness -> greenness

✦ I am NOT asking...

- whether the WC model inherently lends itself to greening
 - probably doesn't
 - can(/should?) only represent the values of workers (collectively and individually, whatever those are)
- “best practices”

★ So who do we draw on?

[Paraphrases]

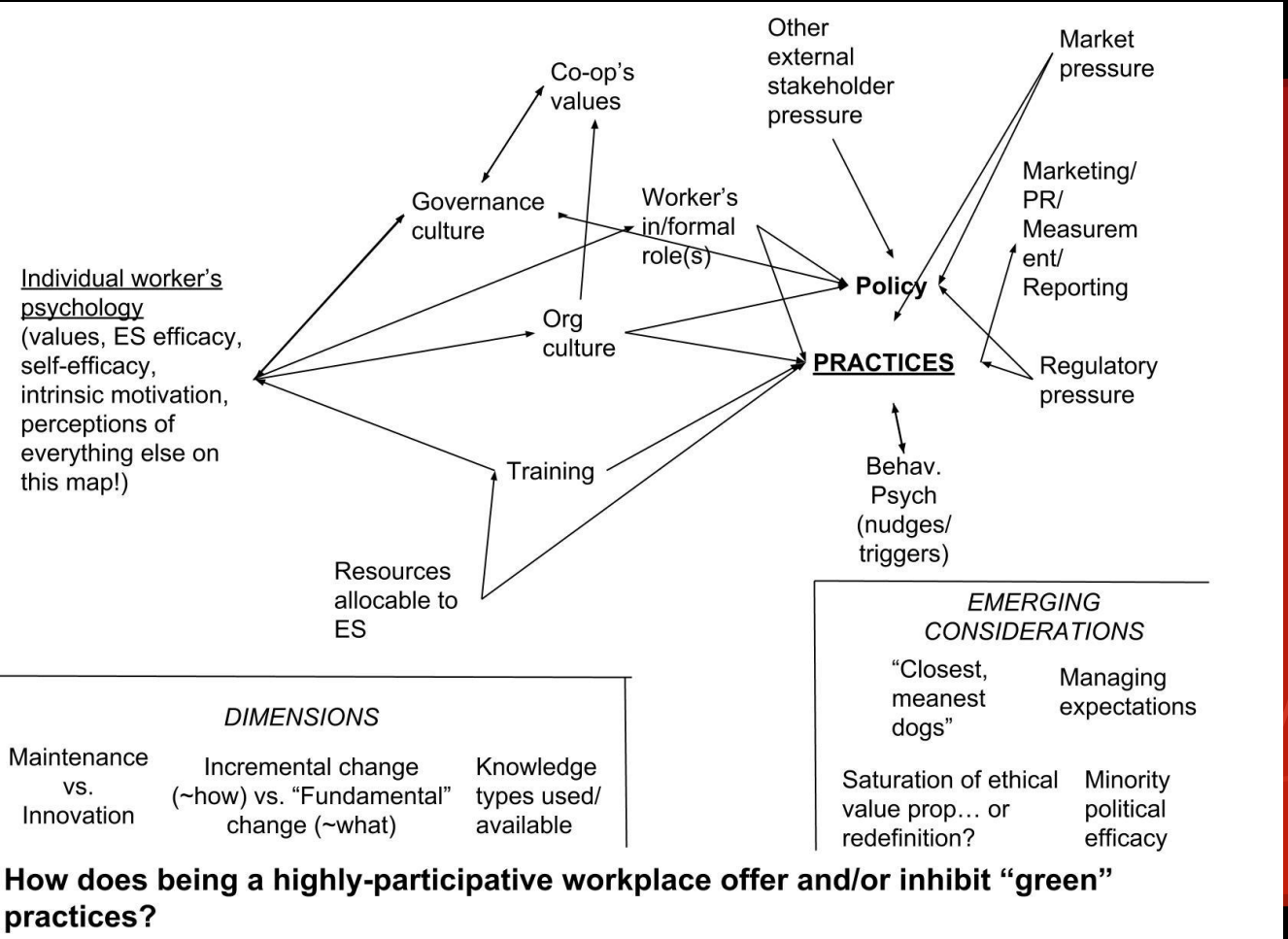
- No one knows how to do sustainability.
- We tried and gave up... it's too complex, and so now we focus on withstanding harm.

✦ Lit Review

- lots of points of information available, but few directly comparable WCs
- discussed in relation to my evolving concept map



Wow,
what a
tangled
web!



★ Key Questions



- Can “green-ness” be considered an indicator of flows of knowledge, decision-making, and ethical engagements throughout a firm generally, or is it a very unique outcome?
 - Does being green require a healthier co-op culture?

★ Thanks!

Questions / Answers?