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Utopian Visions in Radical Communities: Burning Man

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Utopian Visions in Radical Communities: Burning Man

Anthony Colella

PIM 71

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Service,
Leadership, & Management at the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

Spring 2015

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Anthony Colella

April 10, 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

10 Principles: Located in Appendix C - frequently referenced

4PMSA: Four Phased Model for Social Activism (Conceptual Framework)

AIL: All is Love (Conceptual Framework)

BM: Burning Man (BM Community, BM Festival, etc)

BRC: Black Rock City (Located outside Reno, Nevada – Location of BM Festival)

BURNER: Someone who identifies with the culture associated with Burning Man

Radical: Something or someone in opposition to the problems of the status quo, identifying as an agent or source of change in the direction of the ideal; while aiming to push the limits of creativity and social acceptability relating to the radical effort.

Utopia: A non extant, perpetual society or position of striving towards the ideal; embodying radical intention and inclusive participation; held and created by an individual or collective.

ABSTRACT

This research paper is a collection of utopian visions gathered from the Radical Community of Burning Man. The goal of this research is to collect a sample of utopian visions from this community, organize them, and share them in a way that can be effectively used in a professional and/or activist environment. Research was done in the fall of 2013 at the Burning Man Festival, in 2014 at a Regional Burning Man Event: Lakes of Fire, and with the Burner Community around these times. The primary research question is: "What are utopian visions of the 'Burning Man' radical community?" The field question exclusively used to collect all participant responses was: "What is something you'd like to see happening in the future in an Ideal or Utopian Future?" Data was collected from over 300 participant responses. The reason for this research is to provide a view into the radical visions of utopia, using Burning Man as a specific case study. This research provides a basis for both further similar research projects and a foundation for efforts to create a more ideal or utopian society through social activism and community design projects. Limitations are presented, and conceptual frameworks are provided to assist in analysis of the collected data. The cherished component of this research project is the responses from the members of the Burning Man Community, and I am grateful for their time, for their love, and for sharing their visions of utopia.

INTRODUCTION

About Me

When people ask me what I do or who I am, I usually respond by saying that I'm an Ontologist and Revolutionary Activist. I've spent considerable time and effort thinking about what that means to me, to other people, and to the world we live in. As an "Ontologist" I study reality and formulate perspectives that turn my inquiry into practical tools that can be used by myself and others for positive social change, self development, and more. My work as a "Revolutionary Activist" is highly influenced by my ontological tools and understanding, as I use them to actively work on creating a more enjoyable world. This research project serves my interest in learning what radical communities might see as components of a world transformed into a Utopia.

Stated in my learning plan is a detailed explanation and progression of my individual work, but the basic plan has been: 1. Understand the world through extensive study and formal work; 2. Acquire tools that enable me to leverage what I've learned and become, in order to work towards positive social change; and 3. Create an activism platform that actively works towards creating the type of social change that has been identified as needing to happen. My primary success in stage 1 was developing what I call "The Hypothesis of Love," an ontological observation that influences all of my work, including turning it into a conceptual framework for assisting in analysis of capstone data, accomplished during my BA studies. In stage 2, I've developed a variety of skills and tools during my time at SIT that I believe have enabled me to put my theories and plans into action. To get experience doing this, for my practicum I

established and worked through a Low Profit Limited Liability Company, called “All is Love L3C.” Through this entity, I proceeded to do consciousness transformation work while doing ontological research. This gave me a lot of insight and firsthand experience in the kind of work that I plan on doing in the future. I began stage 3 of my plan in January of this year. I've been working in New Orleans to develop a model for movement building by developing a network of participatory communities, and I have been highly influenced by the research and conclusions from this inquiry. I reference collected data from this inquiry, and I continue compiling data in an ongoing project that constitutes what I call my career or life work.

Development of Research Question

Working through my practicum, I realized that even if global consciousness was transformed into one that was more loving, peaceful, and enjoyable, that there would be no clear vision or direction towards the creation of an ideal future society. This led me to focus on what I wanted to research for this inquiry, which is a collection of people's ideas as to what they want to see happening in their utopian or ideal vision of the future. I found myself asking: “What is our Utopian Vision?” and chose to focus on the pursuit of this inquiry for this research paper. I chose to focus on "Radical Communities" because I wanted to get perspectives from people who have consciously chosen to identify as people who are participating in envisioning and working towards an ideal future, but doing so from perspectives radically different than the status quo.

The benefit of envisioning was further made clear to me as I did my Reflective Practice Papers as part of my Reflective Practice Phase. I became interested in something called “the 4 Frame Model for Social Activism,” which highlights the need for a vision in order to consciously pursue activist work. This model illustrates 4 frames: Envisioning, Analyzing, Strategizing, and

Organizing, and an additional recursive learning cycle. I use this model as a conceptual framework for this capstone paper as a way of analyzing the research I did. This model shows how having a vision to work towards is a critical component of activist work, and it also highlights the importance of how this vision is created, especially in terms of where it comes from and how it is developed.

In the literature that I reviewed for this inquiry, I read about a variety of Utopian visions from the past, and I paid special attention to the visionaries behind each of them. I found, for most, that behind each was a single individual or cultural group, and the community they envisioned was something that met the perceived needs of that culture or what the individual(s) behind the vision decided was the needs for the community, rather than asking that community itself. Seeing this, combined with my diverse cultural experiences during my practicum and personal experiences throughout my life, I realized that if I wanted to find a vision for a more inclusive utopian vision, that I needed to focus my inquiry on not only a specific cultural group, but one that welcomed and fostered cultural diversity. This led me to decide that the best possible sample group for this project was among radical activists, and radical activists that were interested in creating, participating, and envisioning their ideal Utopia. Because of limitations of time and the complexity and depth of this assignment, I decided to narrow my research sample to a group of people that could meet my inquiry need of diversity, but also meet my need for finding an accessible community. So the sample I chose is the “Burning Man Community.”

By Burning Man Community, I include the following: the 2013 Black Rock City Festival, the collective annual temporary autonomous zone (Festival) of 50,000+ “Burners” (as members of the BM community are called) in Nevada (Jordan, 2015); a 2014 “Regional Burn,”

an event espousing the principals of BM; and by contacting individual Burners outside of these events. The BM community takes a detailed census (Census, 2015), and there is a wide range of in-depth information that demonstrates that BM is a diverse sample. For example, the census details that although the majority of people who attend the primary festival are from the US, there was at a minimum 20% attendance by people from outside the US in 2014, approximately the same percentage as in 2013. The census also specifies other information about sexual orientation, age, gender, etc. In addition, I recognize the BM community as a “Radical” community not only because of my personal experience with members of the community, but also based on their “Ten Principles,” which are: Radical Inclusion, Gifting, Decommodification, Radical Self-reliance, Radical Self-expression, Communal Effort, Civic Responsibility, Leaving No Trace, Participation, and Immediacy (Harvey, 2015); for a description of these, see Appendix C. These aspects of the BM community demonstrate that this sample adequately fits the needs of my inquiry.

Professional Application of this Inquiry

Applications of the collected data and conclusions made from it can be used by non-profits, for-profits, activists, and the general public. People who participated in my inquiry are: self identified revolutionaries, “every day people,” ultra-wealthy, suffering minorities, business leaders, radical self-expressionists, and people who could be identified in many other ways. Having access to a continually expanding list of utopian visions for a variety of communities and perspectives will be a powerful tool in consciously shaping the direction of our future. My personal use of this inquiry will be put to work in the next phase of my life-plan, as I create an organization for empowering and organizing communities to achieve their goals. I hope to use

the data gathered here, and data from other studies I will perform, to provide a spectrum of possibilities that people can look at in order to expand their worldview of what is possible for ourselves and our communities.

Inquiry Question

The specific inquiry question for this capstone:

- ❖ What are “Utopian Visions” of the Burning Man radical community?

Sub questions include:

- ❖ How can a collective utopian vision exist, considering the diversity that exists between people and cultures?
- ❖ What specific things do people envision for the future?
- ❖ How do these visions of utopia integrate and lead to analyzing, strategizing, and organizing, which are the other three frames of social activism within the 4PMSA model?
- ❖ Using a framework of identifying love within people's visions of utopia, how integral is people's perception or inclusion of love?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to Literature Review

This literature review focuses on two specific areas: (1) Exploring what utopian visions are, by looking at our history of envisioning and attempting to create them ; and (2) Exploring what the BM community is and how it presents us with utopian visions and exemplifies an attempt at utopia. First, it is important to understand what utopian visioning is in order to understand how BM exemplifies and contributes to creating utopian visions. The best way to understand what a utopian vision is, is to explore the definition of utopia, and to take a look at

how we have attempted utopia throughout history and as it applies to Burning Man. A Google search of "Burning Man Utopia" yields a large number of results, but most focus on exploring just the music and art, rather than the structure and conscious social design that facilitate the cultural expression perceived to be utopic. Bringing these two components together, this review intends to paint a picture of what we perceive utopia to be, and to illustrate how Burning Man is an exceptional example of a place to explore utopian visions.

Literature Review: Part 1 Exploring Utopia

The first place I came across the word Utopia was ten years ago as I was reading Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, when I was 20 years old. Since this was the book that put the concept of utopia in my mind, it was the first book that I revisited. More, in 1516, was the first to coin the term, using the Latin word utopia meaning "No Place" or also "Good Place" to define the ideal society illustrated in his book. Although there is debate regarding More's intentions in writing the book, it none the less cast the stage for a continuing history of literature about perspective utopias and real attempts at achieving them. Furthermore, it defined a genre of literature and past historical attempts at achieving utopia that goes back to Roman and theoretical Biblical times (More, Adams, 1975). Works such as *The Republic* by Plato or even the story of "Eden" from The Bible are viewed as highlighting an ideal design of society. Contrasting these two works, however, the question is raised about to what degree do people have agency in utopian design such as in *The Republic*, rather than being at the mercy of a natural or divine design, such as "Eden" was. Although I think questions like that are important, what this review focuses on is the ways that people can work towards creating utopia, rather than a possible intelligent design separate from humanity. Furthermore, since More's first usage of this term, there has

been extensive debate as to what a utopia really is, and I came across many as I reviewed literature.

On a dusty bookshelf in a Chicago Mystic Shop, I found an amazing textbook on *Utopia*, written in 1978 by Ian Tod and Michael Wheeler. Many questions about utopia can be found in this text. Notably, there is discussion about what utopia really is, being chiefly defined therein as "an ideal commonwealth whose inhabitants exist under perfect conditions." It states also that utopian themes have common ideas about how people should live, about human nature, about the meaning and purpose of life, and deals with perennial issues such as: happiness, the state, sex, equality, etc. It is also noted that utopias usually are concerned with relationships between people (democracy and marriage, for example), between people and nature, and people's relationship to "work" (Tod, Wheeler, 1978). This book highlights people's attempts at addressing these topics, searching for an ideal, and expressing that ideal as one component of their brand of utopia.

In my studies as an ontologist, activist, and during the course of my practicum, I've discussed the idea of utopia with many people. Because of this, it has become clear to me that a stronger, clearer, and more healthy definition of utopia needs to exist. The definition I'd like to use for it here I extrapolate from an encyclopedia article on utopia: "A Utopian Vision is an image of society better than the one currently existing" (Sargent, 2005). Thus I consider Utopia be the conscious development of society in accordance with utopian visions in order to continually better society. The key word to me is *continually*, as it resonates with the literal translation from Latin (no place), in that it can never exist because if it existed it would fail to be better than itself (the current society). Therefore, a continual process of envisioning utopia is a

key component, and the striving for utopia is what actually creates the utopian state. In that respect, a constant collection of utopian visions is key to its implementation.

It is important to note that I mention a "collection of people's visions." This illustrates that to some degree that I see utopia as something that requires a collective effort to envision. This idea, although coming from a multitude of places, stemmed from reading about historical attempts at utopia from both the Tod and Wheeler *Utopia* text, as well as the copy of More's *Utopia* that I own. In addition to his translation of More's book, Adams also includes a variety of accompanying resources, such as a background resources and post-written criticisms of *Utopia* from numerous writers. These backgrounds echo the plethora of examples in Tod and Wheeler's book, as both list a variety of utopian efforts from a time before More's book was written. What I found most important from these examples is that the design of the utopias have been the result of one person or a small group of people's visions, opposed to a collective, continual visioning of the community. Additionally common to them all is their relative failure both in their actualization of a happy and good place, but also in that none still exist/survive as a community, if the vision was ever attempted. This fact was a primary reason for my desire to learn about radical utopian visions not from one specific person or group who I highly regarded, but from a large and inclusive community of diverse people.

In part because my focus was not to get a holistic picture of utopia from an individual or a small group, I had to identify how to create a vision of utopia from an open collective of people. This led me to question what exactly then a utopian vision is, and in identifying that the holistic utopian vision is a sum of its parts, what constitutes its parts? Looking back at Tod and Wheeler's *Utopia*, I see that a utopian vision is a collection of perspectives that address the

various social issues that directly impact and actually design the life of the people within society. From that description, I would continue to define a utopian vision as being an individual's desire and dream for a better world, attributed to any or all aspects of their life that aims to better it, with the intention of creating a better society for both the individual and society itself. I could reasonably stop the definition there, but I'd like to add an additional component to it that satisfies the desire put forth in this inquiry. What are radical utopian visions, and how would they differ from every-day utopian visions? In the next section of my literature review I address this.

Literature Review Part 2: Identifying and defining Radical Utopists : Burners

I see society as it is now to be in some part the expression of a human existence-long attempt at creating our own ideal living conditions, our own utopia. Our institutions, culture, and physical environment are all in some way related to someone's vision of how they'd like to see things. But as we all know, not everyone's vision is something that is meant to benefit everyone, or is shared by everyone. Additionally, the way society has been put together has been a disjointed, slow moving, and not entirely conscious design. Because of this, for most global communities, we find ourselves in chaotic co-existence of conflicting ideas, projects, and relationships with one another. On top of that, we clearly do not live in an "Ideal" society. There is rampant suffering, destruction of the environment, and exploitation of one another. All of this I would call the "Status Quo utopia of Society," which can then be contrasted with a "Radical" vision of striving for utopia.

The term "Radical" is somewhat hard to understand, so to clarify, by radical, I mean:

"Radical activists are ... radical. They want largescale, rapid change in society. The radical opposition surveys the existing social world; identifies a set of institutions and practices that currently exist; judges that these institutions and practices are fundamentally flawed in some important way; and demands fundamental change or replacement for these institutions and practices. So the radical activist demands immediate, concerted action to bring this complex state of affairs about. The radical activist is not intellectually committed to proving the feasibility of alternatives; he/she is committed in the heart to the abolition of the present injustice. "

This definition (Little, 2010) introduces the role and the intensity of the radical. In addition, I'd like to add that the radical activist not only demands change, but also often seeks change in ways that are potentially extremely (radically) different than the status quo. There are no boundaries to the radical imagination, but the tradition and culture of society tends to place barriers and to define a "normality" that imposes obstructions to imagination that the radical must potentially overcome.

But who are these "Radicals?" A radical can be anyone, from any field, and from any community: an engineer, a schoolteacher, a woman, a child; anyone who questions the status quo, challenges problems, offers an idea or action to change things for the better. But there are certain people who call themselves radicals specifically, and within this genre of people, I've selected a particular type of radical: Burners. What is a "Burner?" Here's one definition: "To Burn is to act as an agent of possibility: creating a space where something amazing can happen, letting anyone join, and then cleaning up after it when it's done" (Magister, 2012). That definition comes from an article full of debate and self reflection, and aims to altruistically

answer what a Burner is, and so I'll offer a more simple definition for use within this paper. A Burner is someone who participates in the Burning Man Festival, or regional BM events, or consciously represents ones-self as a Burner, embodying the principles that are core to the event. (For more definitions, see: Burners, Me, 2012)

So that's a Burner, but what/where/why is "Burning Man?" Burning Man is a blank canvas. It's a white, alkaline, dry lake bed outside Reno, Nevada, which takes place by forming an intentional community of over 50,000 people, in the form of a city called Black Rock City. The city is created by its participants both in a several month lead-up period for larger camps and art installations, but mostly during the seven day Burning Man Festival that takes place in late August/early September. When Burners are not actively participating in Black Rock City, they are participating in a BM community online, or at regional events, or in their daily lives. Some would say that these people are actively creating their utopia.

Rachael Bowditch is one of these people. The preceding description of burning man comes from her essay *The Somatic City: Rehearsing Utopia at the Burning Man Festival*. She goes on to define the city layout, the intention behind creating the city, and the community's participation in creating the city as an example of creating utopia. She compares it directly to More's and other's Utopias, and her idea of rehearsing utopia, or how the BM community is repeatedly re-envisioned and re-created yearly is especially interesting. Her observations relate back to the problem I highlighted in describing the "Status Quo" society being stuck in a slow crawl of pre-existing infrastructure and social problems.

Status Quo society is a global or local pre-existing society. There is not a time when it doesn't exist, there is no "reset" button like BM seems to have. There is no deconstruction, and

there is always a trace of it left behind. This is not the case with Burning Man, as every year it is constructed and deconstructed. In this fashion, every year the BM community gets the chance to rehearse creating a new vision of how they want to participate in creating utopia. Every year people see what each other has done, and plan for the next year -- learning how they could do things better, getting new ideas for art, music, camps, art cars, and culture (Bowditch, 2010). Although the driving force for this is not explicitly verbalized, it seems to be a mix of participants enjoying their experience and following the ten principles in their desire to participate and build community (Harvey, 2015). Additionally, I see one more component emerging from, but to some degree missing from the literature: Love.

Liam Cooper addresses this in his essay: "Love in the Desert." Cooper, like myself, is a philosophy professor and he espouses that the subject he specializes in is "Love." Agape is the kind of love that he focuses on, which is defined as more of a transformational and growth based love that we share with one another. He highlights how this is an event where no money transactions take place, no bartering, just strictly a gift based economy; and how there is basically no laws, but principles which rely on self enforcement, and talks about the joy of giving, and the joy of taking. All of this takes place at BM, and is attributed to a kind of Agape-Love, and in a sense, a transcended Eros-Love (the pleasure/sex love we might be more familiar with) that turns our erotic passion into the passion to, well, build utopia with one another. From Cooper's article, and from the other information about Burning Man and utopia in general, I see love to be a critical component in both. I can't say that Love was the originating conscious intention of the event or the sole force that facilitated in the emergence of a community that now numbers most likely in the hundreds of thousands (my estimate), but it is something that will be central to my research and observations made at BM.

Literature review: Conclusions

However BM is created, managed, defined, explained, criticized and exalted, I see it as a place full of a very special type of people: Radicals who are perfect for asking about radical utopian visions. As an inquiry practitioner, it is a special opportunity to access and participate in this community, for BM is a type of "Temporary Autonomous Zone," a term coined by Hakim Bey in his book of the same name (Jordan, 2015). This alludes to the temporary nature of the event, and how critical it is to take advantage of the opportunity to research it, and to bring out the best it has to offer while it exists. In my review of literature regarding BM, I did not see people specifically asking about visions of utopia. Although authors like Bowditch report how BM is utopian, these are more in identifying what types of music, performance, and art Burners exhibit, rather than a direct inquiry as to what their visions are. This is something that I see as having a critical value to society outside of BM, and the resulting inquiry herein hopefully will do this justice, because we're at a critical point in history where we need to make radical changes to society. Visions of utopia drive us out of the oblivion of perpetuating the status quo, provide us with ideas to deal with our problems, and give us hope (Tod, Wheeler, 1978).

METHODOLOGY & INQUIRY DESIGN

Approach to the Inquiry Question

In approaching my inquiry question, I firstly had to identify who I wanted to choose to be in my sample. My original desire was in answering "What is Our Utopian Vision," but it was too broad, so I decided to focus on defining "Our" to be the radical community, as radicals are identified as consciously envisioning and working towards at least a part of an ideal future. So, I ended up choosing the radical BM community because it fit the niche of being an inclusive and

diverse group of people, yet a specific and a relatively clearly identified group. Burners are a people who are both actively envisioning an ideal community and also engaging that vision in practice. They are doing this by constructing that ideal community on a yearly basis both at the BM festival, where they build an entire temporary autonomous zone type city (Jordan, 2015). Burners are also active in local communities around the world through regional events, and on an individual level through a radical consciousness that Burners develop and exhibit. Although my original desire was to do a random sample of "The General Public," I feel like my decision to focus on the BM community would yield more productive results. This decision was in part made due to the limitations of length that this capstone assignment imposes, but primarily based on my desire to collect a vision of utopia that is more radical. I would, however, suggest that a broader sample (on a global level) be studied at a future date; or at least when doing similar research on behalf of a particular community that a local sample of that community be made. This global sample is something I am currently working on, as I am doing research in New Orleans and across the United States in an effort to develop a model that incorporates collecting desired visions for community in participatory communities that are encouraged and networked through some type of structure.

Description of Sample - Culture of Inquiry

The general name for the sample studied is the "BM community." This is a diverse community of people, and included some or all of the following: self identified activists; volunteers and employees of the BM organization; nudists; dancers; astrologers; clowns; psychonauts; scientists; teachers ; spiritual progressives; NGO leaders; alcoholics; ultra rich; celebrities; members of the LGBTQ community; non US citizens; men; women; children (BM is a child friendly place); furries; and an inexhaustive variety of others that rally under the title of

“Burners,” or people who agree with and employ the principles of BM (Principles, 2015) in their lives, even if only at the festival (A full list/description of the principles can be found in appendix C). Diversity among these people is extensive, according to the BM Census (Census, 2014), and is exhibited across age, race, sexual orientation, political affiliation, and other demographics. Some individuals that I interviewed outside of the BM festival have never attended it, but consider themselves Burners or at least aligned with the principles of BM to some degree. Many of these people generally associate with other people who consider themselves to be burners, or participate in BM events such as smaller BM themed parties.

Data Gathering Techniques and Instruments

Once I decided on the BM community as my target population, I designed the way I would approach them for my inquiry. I decided to do “Field Research” including a “Case study” of the seven day festival in Black Rock City, and a shorter case study at Lakes of Fire, a regional BM event held in Rothbury, Michigan, at a campground encircling a lake. At these events I was able to perform Direct Observation of the community, while partaking in the event as a member of the community (of which I now consider myself a part). The key observational focus was viewing how people behaved given the relative freedom and intention to radically express themselves as individuals and in creating a community. This gave me a picture of how they embodied individual participation of living as a radical utopist. Additional observations were made on seeing how the population dealt with diversity in a way that was radically inclusive and allowed people to live in difference to one another. As an observer, I participated in all kinds of activities, or watched Burners participate in an activity or in exchanges between one another, or I made general observations of a scene or spontaneous experience.

During the two events, I also conducted various interviews, including a one question survey interview, that collectively, I was able to get 200-300 responses to. All interviews were done without recording the name of the individual in order to preserve anonymity. Also, because of the limited time of these events, I extended my research outside of the events and contacted people in person and on Facebook for interviews, both in-depth and informal. I was also able to perform analysis of written documents both on the BM website, and also of the hand-outs given. All interviews, including the survey style interviews, were framed around the following question: “What is one (or more) thing you’d like to see happening in the future, if it was a utopian or idealistic revolutionary future?” Some alterations and additional descriptions were made to this question, but in general this was the question asked. In-depth interviews generally started with that question, and then additional questions or elaboration on what was answered ensued, both to clarify and to constitute the body of the interview. Complete interviews were not recorded, just important concepts or direct answers to my field question were kept.

On most occasions, I was able to take field notes using a notebook that I carried around at all times. When doing a scheduled interview with someone at the BM festival I also employed a clipboard and paper, which better served my data collection in those instances. Messages that I got on Facebook in response to my inquiry, as well as all data from notebooks, were all transcribed digitally and prepared for presentation and analysis.

Conceptual Framework Used in Analysis

I employed two conceptual frameworks to assist in analysis of the data. One is the “Four Phased Model for Social Activism” (4PMSA) which illustrates four steps to creating social change: envisioning a desired future, analyzing the status quo, strategizing by defining approach

and methods, and organizing people & resources. This is a planning process, and incorporates a recursive change cycle as learning happens. But it can also be used as a conceptual framework, and I employ it here as such. Of key interest within this model is a focus on the envisioning phase, and its critical role in providing direction and definition for Activist Action. Using this framework allows me to analyze collected data both as a means of determining the quality of the data, as well as highlighting how it is integral to Action.

The second conceptual framework focuses on analysis of collected data in a way that is derived from, and specific to, my personal interests and ontological work. This framework I designed, and call “All is Love” (AIL). I use it as a foundation to determine the social benefit of the collected data, and it directly influenced and framed the analysis of the research as it is presented in the following section. Key in this process is asking how visions are loving and create joy in people’s lives, and this concept was fundamental in how I framed, explained, and presented the data in the section to come. The foundation for this framework comes from my work as an ontologist, and I have turned what would otherwise be a collection of informal theories that exist almost solely in my head into a professional conceptual framework that has applicability in the real and professional world.

Through these conceptual frameworks, I employ specific lenses that I use to analyze the collected data. I focused two of my RPQ questions on developing these two conceptual frameworks, and as part of this process, out of which I have created tools that facilitate use of these frameworks. These tools I have included as Appendix A and B. For additional information about these frameworks, please view my RPQ questions.

Limitations of Inquiry Design

The inquiry design that I employed for this project employed diverse data collection tools, and because I was able to approach the sample in different environments and groups, I believe it is rather diverse. I was able to attend the primary community gathering of my target population, and attend a regional gathering, communicate with members of the community outside of these events, and make extensive first hand observations. Furthermore, because the design focused more on developing a collection of data and discovering emergent themes within the collected data, rather than developing a theory, I was able to achieve the goals of my inquiry mostly through direct interaction with study subjects, rather than to defend or prove my own question. The primary limitation is that these community events are short in duration, so a long term case study of the specific event is only possible during the seven day event period (and the short construction periods preceding and following the event). To minimize drawbacks from this limitation, I chose to expand my sample beyond just the main event, but note that a continual yearly study of the main event would be beneficial.

DATA ANALYSIS & PRESENTATION

Explanation of Presentation

The study data is organized in a series of tables as they apply to answering my research subquestions or the primary research. Data presented in each of the subquestion areas is grouped into various categories. These categories, although somewhat different from subquestion to subquestion, are: relationships between people; relationships between people and nature; structural components including government, political aspects, and actual community design; cultural components including particular activities and paradigm shifts; individual development;

and miscellaneous, including technological and various other hard to categorize utopian visions. I present each table along with an explanation and analysis of the data, and employ, directly and indirectly, concepts from conceptual frameworks to help analyze data. Additionally, I support participant responses with observations made in the field as part of my case study. All tables present an individual participant response, unless otherwise noted within each table (such as "3 responses"). Tables are referenced by citing the table number (such as: Table 1.0), and individual cells are referenced by adding descriptive numbers to each table name (such as: Table 1.2.3,5,7 refers to Table 1.2 and cell/row number 3, 5, and 7, which are labeled in each table).

My goal throughout the presentation and analysis of data is to highlight how specific visions of utopia come together to illustrate a specific component of utopia. An example of this is categorizing responses so they can answer questions about dealing with a diversity of different visions, or a collection of responses that highlight a structural component of utopian visioning. Synthesis of findings and specific conclusions follow my presentation of data. Each table consists of a different participant's response or in a very limited amount, a lengthier participant's responses broken down into multiple table cells. All data is presented as a shorthand reply to my field question of: "What is one thing you'd like to see happening in the future, in your ideal society or utopia?" Although some tables might seem to repeat sample data, this is because some people gave the same responses, and these could be used in multiple tables.

Additionally, I include a concise example of using the conceptual frameworks in understanding/analyzing the data in a subsection after the presentation of data in the following sections. And as a final note, the guidelines for this paper specified that tables do not get cut off from page to page; I've done my best to adhere to this, but some tables are quite long (by choice), therefore naturally spread across more than one page.

Participant Profile

Participant responses were collected anonymously and the participants were chosen at random. Tables 1.1,2,3 show how I have organized the participants in three categories, representing my data collection methods – and their corresponding sample. The gender and age that I attribute to the sample participants in Table 1.4 are generalized and taken from the BM census project, some from the 2014 census, as 2013 results are somewhat mis-categorized or unavailable (Census, 2015).

Table 1.1: Participants - In-depth Interview Sample

1. Number of Participants & Collection Method	Approx. 10, interviewed in person (number might be fewer due to interrupted interviews)
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Table 1.2: Participants - Survey Style Sample

1. Number of Participants & Collection Method	200+ surveyed in person, 25 via Facebook
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Table 1.3: Participants - Case Study Sample

1. Number of Participants & Collection Method	69,000+ in attendance of BM Event, approx 2,500 for regional event “Lakes of Fire”
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Table 1.4 General Census Data from Burning Man Festival

2. Gender	Approx. 58% Male, 41% Female, 1% Fluid
3. Age	Infant-Elderly
4. Education	Diverse

Introduction to Case Study: My experience of the Burning Man 2013 Event “Cargo Cult” & 2014 Regional BM Event “Lakes of Fire: Release the Kraken” (Culture of Inquiry)

The Burning Man experience starts well before the annual festival. “Burners,” as BM community members are called, are people who have, in general, consciously chosen to attend the festival and to some degree espouse the 10 principles (Harvey, 2015). Reasons for attending can be diverse: some people want to party (to dance, get naked, dress in costumes, get drunk, take drugs, have sex, etc), some to experience and participate in the artistic aspects of BM (play music, dance, make and share art), others want to experience and participate in creating a radical community based on the 10 principles of BM (See Appendix C for the list) and their own expression of what a radical community is, and some just want a vacation. For me, a “Virgin” Burner (someone who has not visited the festival – in 2014, that was 40% of all attendees), it was an experience of “Going Home” – an observation immediately presented to me by a volunteer greeter shouting “Welcome Home!” as I entered the festival after enjoying a 12 hour wait in a many-mile long line of cars (with people socializing and sleeping along the way). It felt like home, as immediately I got a sense of acceptance, freedom, and love from the community and the place itself, even though it is located in the middle of an alkaline desert in Nevada and I was surrounded by would-be strangers (see pictures in Appendix D).

The process of acquiring a ticket, visioning and developing the type of campsite to create, choosing camp-mates, gathering things to bring, picking outfits/costumes, and deciding on/finding transportation all are part of the journey of Burning Man. To elaborate, tens of thousands of tickets sell out in less than an hour every year, and many people who attend cannot afford the approximately \$400 ticket, so they find a variety of ways to acquire one (for example,

my ticket was gifted to me). People's camps vary from a simple tent next to a car, to theme camps where people participate in creating a mini-community within the greater one, with costs soaring to hundreds of thousands of dollars for some camps (Franklin, 2014), or to a nomadic approach of sleeping where and with whomever you choose. Outfits and costumes range from nude to a plethora of all kinds of "Playa Wear:" vests, boots, furs, colors, sparkles, tails, animal ears, unicorn horns, and anything else that a person is able to stretch their imagination enough to turn into a costume. As for transportation to the event, some people fly in to the BRC airport that is constructed by the community; hang-gliding and skydiving is an option and skydivers are not required to have tickets (a common occurrence); busses of all shapes and colors are employed; thousands of RV's show up; some people hitchhike or find a rideshare; while most seem to drive with friends in any available vehicle.

The daily life of BM starts as one awakes for the day, and important to note, they awake as a member of the community. All around are people that have spent great amounts of time, money, and effort to welcome you and provide you with what they have to offer, for no monetary exchange. There are many gifts, and many services offered, and none are offered for monetary exchange for the duration of the seven day festival (with the exception of ice and some cafe services provided by festival organizers and sold throughout the day). When there is a "price," it is often in the form of asking or requesting something engaging and fun, often designed to prod people's boundaries, especially by the postal workers who provide free stamps and mail service out of BM. Events of all sizes and types are held around the clock, and one can choose to wander and find things to do by chance, or pick events of choice out of a booklet provided at the entrance, which is about 150 pages of event listings arranged by date/time with about 10 listed per page (Throne, 2014). Examples of events/things to do are: spanking

workshops, bike repair, utopian fiction discussions, grilled cheese give-aways, circus shows, art shows, dance parties, spiritual workshops, enjoying a ride on an art car, and workshops on actualizing our utopian visions (coincidentally I was able to attend several of these). And almost all activities, including visits to the various port-o-potties or kissing booth, are full of random encounters with strangers, who easily become new friends and recognized members of your community (something that feels very wonderful). These were some of my observations of the BM festival, which may not hold true for everyone's experience, as daily life is centered around an individual's desire to explore their freedom, manifest experiences, and journey into the unknown.

The primary festival and regional event that I participated in were very similar, and I found most of what I have described to be true for both, with the exception of the geographic location. The Lakes of Fire event was held around a lake in the middle of a forest, whereas the festival is held on The Playa (a flat, alkaline dry lake bed, with the appearance of a giant blank artist's canvas, in the desert outside Reno, NV), surrounded by mountain vistas. In either case, participants are "Burners" and I hope this introduction paints a general picture of the community and environment from which I collected the following data through survey and interviews.

Presentation of Data on the Subquestion: "How can a collective utopian vision exist, considering the diversity that exists between people and cultures?"

This question was developed out of the concern of historical utopian visions or attempts coming from a single and non-inclusive source. This question was raised in researching utopian literature, and from the Four Phased Model for Social Activism (4PMSA) as it highlights the need for visions to be as inclusive as possible, yet built on expanded self interest. Considering

that the data gathered is from a diverse group and represents their individual visions for their future, actualizing them into a single vision for the future seems like a complex matter to tackle. However, that is not the question being asked here, and no answer to that is given. Instead, Tables 1 through 6 focus on responses I feel reflect issues related to "Diversity." I group responses to my inquiry here that I believe relates to addressing the problems associated with envisioning a utopian future for a diverse community with equally diverse visions. Table 2.1 and 2.2 focus on the first grouping of responses that I feel helps to answer my sub question and has to do with both relationships between people and people's relationship to nature.

Table 2.1: Relationships & Diversity - Between People

1. People have compassion and patience
2. People taking care of themselves and others
3. Everyone gets along, regardless of religion, race, etc
4. Deep trust between humans and beings, a world of trustworthiness
5. For the people on our earth to gain empathy/understanding towards each other's very different backgrounds and upbringings and to honor each other with unconditional love!!
6. Mutual respect
7. Where people are wholly aware of their actions on other people and the world. And that they are able to approach making decisions based on that awareness and a love of humanity and the world.
8. Consciousness, love and connection
9. A genuine commitment to looking for our commonalities vs seeking in what ways we are different
10. Love your neighbor
11. General kindness to one another - the love & companionship you feel here
12. People caring about each other more
13. More awareness of the need to express respect to each other
14. Find other ways to connect with people
15. More tolerance
16. Compassion
17. Connectedness
18. Hyper connected people as part of a larger community
19. People caring for one another on a person to person basis, not only support of causes.

Table 2.1 displays data that describes ways in which we can inter-relate as people. More specifically, it displays traits like compassion, connectedness, tolerance, caring for each other, awareness of the need to respect, love for your neighbor, etc. In a prospective utopian community, regardless of the various cultural identities that exist together, these traits illustrate ways that individuals can respectfully reach through their cultural identity and interact peacefully. Regardless of the utopian vision, these qualities seem to be fundamental components to creating healthy interpersonal relationships that burners include in their vision of utopia. There is extreme diversity at the BM Festival, and yet people seem to flow together without extreme or noticeable conflicts. My experiences interacting with people also lead me to believe that a lot of these qualities listed in table 2.1 were exhibited by burners both in their interactions with me and with others.

Also of critical importance to me and to answering my subquestion is our relationship with nature. I don't see nature as separate from people in a utopian vision, and as such, its rights, health, and well being need to be taken into account in as much a way as other people's. Table 2.2 shows how burners saw our relationship with nature in their vision of utopia.

Table 2.2: Relationships & Diversity - between Humans and Nature

1. Gaia Spirit - people who want revolutionary change split from society
2. Permaculture, harmony with plants - intergalactic garden of green love.
3. A ban on most chemicals that disrespect the earth
4. We become vegetarians
5. More permaculture
6. Stopping extraction of water
7. Consciousness, love and connection
8. Realization that you and me and the planet are all the same
9. Be kind, respectful, and conscious of how we treat the environment
10. Include the animals / fair treatment of animals
11. Look at overpopulation (as it effects the environment)
12. Look what we're doing to the ocean, or what's going on in Brazil
13. Ecovillages - spiritually based connection with nature

14. General belief in science and environment a priority

Data from table 2.2.1,2,5,8,and 13 all illustrate that there is a desire for closer human-nature integration. Ecovillages, permaculture, and embracing a Gaia spirit (the spirit of nature) in our ideal society are all seem to be part of an interconnected human-nature relationship. Other results, such as 2.2.3,4,6, 9,10,11,12 all show specific ways that they want to see humanity treating nature, all of which seem to reflect a respectful, environmentally friendly perspective. Although the question asked did not specifically require people to comment about nature, the responses given here came from an emergent theme of deep personal interest/concern with nature. Had I asked specifically about people's vision of nature in a utopian future, I may have gotten responses that may have illustrated a much different and less pro-nature vision. I see the non specific nature of my question as a limitation of this paper, but also as a strength, in highlighting emergent themes.

Table 3 and its sub-tables illustrate structural ways in which people perceive our future that I see as an integral component to answering my question as well. Table 3.1 shows how a political, decision making, or governmental approach to structure might affect how diversity exists within utopia.

Table 3.1: Structural Approach & Diversity – Political, Decision Making, & Governance

1. Equal rights for everyone - everyone deserves fair treatment
2. Government working for the people - not the money or votes - lobbyists
3. Gov't focus on things that actually need regulation, rather than peoples liberties and freedoms
4. Eliminate private interest in government, religions, and businesses
5. Against one government (against the emerging New World Order) – focus on local governments
6. Dismantling the prison system - Jim Crow system is perpetuated and people are still facing similar injustices
7. Justice must be seen though all levels of difference. people deserve equal opportunity and rights, yet people need to be educated and free to associate and think how they want

8. Alternative decision making
9. Freedom
10. Second amendment right - weapon anywhere anytime, like the wild west - to deter crime, allowed but not misused
11. End to the production of weapons and ways that we kill each other
12. No War
13. "Meritocracy"
14. Freedom to be free (liberty in its truest form) & freedom to use any... Freedom.
15. People in Washington get replaced with people that serve our interests
16. Consensus decision making
17. Get elders involved in change

Decision making represents a variety of aspects of a community's structure, and table 3.1.8, 16 and 17 illustrate both an approach at coming to a decision and a focus on inclusion of particular demographics into the decision making and change process. Table 3.1.15, 13, 5, and 2 demonstrate viewpoints that seem to ask for both the existence of some kind of government; and although they do not illustrate what kind of a government, they see it as being designed in a way that serves our interests rather than those of private interest groups or a consolidated power. Table 3.1.14, 12, 11, 10, and others illustrate various aspects of political ideals, including conflicting ideas like the end of the production of weapons and also an emphasis on the US second amendment right, pointing to a vision of more weapons. From this, it shows that complications arise in the conversation regarding specific interests. Also, in the same realm of the political/government, table 3.1.6, 7 show the need for justice, and in 3.1.9 and 14, a vision of freedom is also integral, which would identify the desire for a system of government that is less intrusive/restrictive. Although the community is basically self governed, there is a centralized guiding ethos, the BM 10 principles (Harvey, 2015), and there is a local policing force – "The Rangers" – that helps remind the community to adhere to them, when they observe the need for intervention. The presence of these principles shows that there is a political and governmental

presence within the community – not to mention the possibility of DEA or other Federal agents being present. There are also food safety officials that make sure that food is safe according to Nevada law, as well as a group that makes sure that people are properly informed about issues related to sex (B.E.D – The Bureau of Erotic Discourse); particularly around consent and safe sex issues (B.E.D., 2015).

Beyond the ideologies that provide a philosophical structure to a community, Table 3.2 illustrates a variety of specific aspects of the (mostly physical) design of community, and provides a vision of what it might look like. The idea is that the design of the community has a lot to do with how people are able to culturally integrate. Some of the organizations such as “The Rangers” or B.E.D would fit as an example of institutions designed by a community to oversee the integration of cultural/structural principles, but there must be an expressed need.

Table 3.2: Structural Approach & Diversity – Community Design

1. Unlimited wants being fulfilled/No-one has to be disappointed
2. Invested in local community
3. Earth wide inter-dependence
4. Safety as a child - "Holding" - Community care of children
5. Independence from food and rent
6. Economic re-distribution of wealth
7. End of current money exchange
8. Connection love and open honest exchange of services and goods
9. Base line care level (poverty etc)
10. More places to express yourself freely
11. Provided for before suffering makes the need
12. Less humans in metropolitan areas
13. Everyone working together
14. One giant community
15. The end of illusory borders
16. Less people, more birth control
17. Community, community, from isolation to community (3+ Separate responses)
18. Food, clothing and shelter needs to be a basic human right, as a minimum
19. A world with no money where people do what they love where what we need is provided for

in mutual aid and we have in abundance
20. I want to see us create our society through loving intention
21. Not created with the blood of others or excluded
22. Slow build up of self sufficient and conscious growth
23. Autonomous places where people can be themselves
24. I want it to be post apocalyptic, OR - human extinction

These responses illustrate various aspects of what the actual community would look like. Who is included? How are we divided? How does our labor relate to our standard of living? These are some of the questions related to and answered by participant responses. 3.2.3, and 24 illustrate a vision for a world-integrated community, but represent two ends of a spectrum of inter-dependent people and an apocalypse/human extinction on a global level. However, the lack of responses identifying “who is included” illustrates the possibility that everyone is included in the majority of people’s visions for utopia (keep in mind "Radical Inclusion" is one of the 10 principles) (Harvey, 2015). That said, Table 2.2.1 "relationship between people and nature" does mention that the people who participate in this utopia “Split off from society” and embrace their Gaia vision with a degree of separation from the rest of humanity. And 3.2.15 sees a world where illusory borders would be removed (such as national borders), highlighting again a more inclusive vision. Also of interest to community design is table 3.2.1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,11, 18 and 19, which all illustrate a desire for basic human needs to be met, and many illustrate a communal or mutual aid approach to sharing wealth – and sharing wealth in a variety of ways, with several pointing to the elimination of money itself.

One important observation that I made is that the issue of “Community” was extremely prevalent in most aspects of the BM Festival. Table 3.2.17 illustrates that the response of “community” was given as the sole response to my question on numerous occasions. Although I did follow up with questions as to what was meant by community, I often was met with the

response of “Just community” – with no specific identifiers. Community was the most common word that I found in all the responses (or possibly “Love”), and I believe that had to do with people’s enjoyment and perceived need of actually being part of a community, rather than being an isolated individual surrounded by people who are more strangers than community members.

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 display cultural responses or a cultural lens to envisioning diversity. Culture is something that is both consciously designed by a community and also something that is expressed by a community and can identify as respective cultural traits of that community. Table 4.1 shows some of the cultural activities that take place in some visions of utopia.

Table 4.1: Cultural Approach & Diversity - Activities

1. More spontaneous group singing
2. Community human recognition festival
3. Honesty and open communication between people, and a corresponding decline in gossip, pettiness, and deceit.
4. Less bars & Drinking - more conscious gatherings
5. Communal sharing of enjoyment
6. Peace, peace, peace, no violence (4 separate responses)
7. More community ritual practice that doesn’t have to be about spirituality or religion
8. More people experience "This" (BM)

Activities in Table 4.1 are skewed towards gatherings and communal activities rather than individual or personal activities. I included Table 4.1.3 in this table, although it could be put elsewhere, because I see the qualities of honest and open communication to be a key cultural component for navigating diversity, along with the decrease in gossip, pettiness, and deceit. Also, out of all the collected responses, it is interesting that not many specific examples of future activities were given. Lastly, Table 4.1.6 shows another common response – Peace. If war is an action of culture and community, it is not one that was in anyone’s vision, and rather, many

respondents asked for peace in a variety of ways. Additionally, although specific activities were not given in direct response to my inquiry, as an observer/participant, I was immersed in cultural activity. This included but was not limited to: group yoga (including nude yoga), intentional armed & violent combat (held in the Thunderdome, a safe and contained space specifically created for this), art cars, acts of spontaneity, and many other examples of radical self expression, another one of the 10 principles (Harvey, 2015).

Table 4.2 illustrates responses that ask for a more radical and total shift in culture and consciousness, "a paradigm shift," which is basically defined as a changing of how people perceive something, on a fundamental or foundational level. Many people seem to think there are a lot of very ingrained perspectives that constitute our (most of modern society's) current societal perspectives that could use a paradigm shift. Table 4.2 illustrates some of the changes that participants envisioned for such a change in society and culture. Such changes, given large scale application, would greatly affect the way in which cultures and communities would cohabitate amidst their diversity and constitute a sort of paradigm shift.

Table 4.2: Cultural Approach & Diversity – Paradigm Shift

1. Unity-tolerance-peace
2. Get elders involved in change
3. Worldwide tolerance and compassion - allows freedom
4. End of classism
5. Consent culture
6. More love
7. Gaia Spirit - people who want revolutionary change split from society (Repeated Response)
8. Permaculture, harmony with plants - intergalactic garden of green love. (Repeated Response)
9. Peace, peace, peace, no violence (4 separate responses)
10. Loss of male privilege, with women truly having an equally important role in society and are treated accordingly.
11. Racial justice, look who is around us and see how that forms our views on race
12. "Haves" share with "have nots"
13. Mixing and transcending hardened identities (native, settler, imports)
14. Secular ethic (removal as a problem) "Secular ethic is societies' biggest problem" - D. Lama

15. Don't get lost in technology, comfort, and traps of western life
16. Pay attention to entitlement
17. End violence against women and all people

Responses in Table 4.2 include the most “Negative” responses, but most that negate something also provide an accompanying positive viewpoint with it. In the 4PMSA, one factor of a quality vision is that it be a positive vision rather than one that simply negates or resists, so when things are mentioned such as in Table 4.2.10 – the loss of “male privilege,” the positive aspect brought into this vision is the desire for equality rather than just “smashing patriarchy” and putting someone else in charge. Other visions highlight a deficit of something and encourage “more” of something, such as love, consent, tolerance, and racial justice. Some responses highlight a greater ethos of paradigm shift, such as the shift to a Gaia spirit, or being less trapped in technological western life. Again, people’s call for peace here can be called a paradigm shift, in that instead of dealing with diversity by attacking it, approaching diversity with a peaceful intention is a different foundational approach. Ultimately, none of these responses are suggesting a specific paradigm shift, but each represent one aspect of culture and diversity that are being envisioned in a way that is different from the "Status Quo" and suggest a shift in how we think about the specific issues.

In navigating diversity within a shared vision of humanity, structure of community and community culture are key, but integral to both are individual people. Table 5.1 illustrates a variety of visions that identify types of individual development that could impact our ability to live in a diverse environment because of who we’ve become as individuals.

Table 5.1: Individual Development & Diversity – Consciousness, Spiritual, Physical

1. Human self awareness
2. Using our Full biological potential for Metamorphosis and Transmutation "Homolumen." The old species is suffering severe amnesia.
3. Neurological evolution
4. Telepathic or non verbal communication
5. Self love
6. Stay in touch with humanities real holy & divine self
7. Less jealousy in all regards, more self confidence
8. Follow your passion regardless
9. You can do stuff on your own/individual decision making
10. Personal accountability, don't pass the buck.
11. More introspection
12. Whatever the challenge, face it - leave the comfort zone
13. People living for themselves

Responses in Table 5.1 reflect both that some, such as Table 5.1.2,3,4, envision a physical/metaphysical evolution of humanity, while others focus more on character development and self expression. These evolutionary possibilities might open doors to new ways we can interact with one another and see each other as part of a global or universal community, helping us coexist. Table 5.1.1,5,7,10, and 11 all highlight traits that people could exhibit, such as self love, self awareness, less jealousy, more self confidence, more introspection. Traits that develop our personalities allow us to better deal with other people's personalities, and how our own effect other people. Table 5.1.6 shows that there is also a possible spiritual and divine aspect to self development as well, and I believe this response is one that crosses cultures and respects and identifies the divine within all people, as they perceive it to be within their individual ontological perspectives. From my interactions with people at the BM festival, many people exhibit these traits already, and I see how they facilitate living together peacefully amidst diversity. It takes a degree of personal responsibility and self awareness in order to respond to, appreciate, or even stay away from things that you might not agree with or that may be perceived as "different."

The last aspect of diversity has to do with people's responses of concern. Table 6.1 points out some responses that were either negative or dismissive of the possibility of a utopia, based on a concern that they had about utopian visioning or about a hostile response from the "Status Quo," making a utopian vision possibly unsafe or unattainable.

Table 6.1: Visions of concern

1. There's an infinite number of answers to that question and no single right answer. Everything is based on perspective, so everyone's utopian future would be different.
2. Great change can only happen when a small group gets together to change things
3. Cant stop people from acting insanely because of a tragedy
4. Move movement - Gov't doesn't want us to organize for change – they will kill us

The response in Table 6.1.1 is a good example of the need for raising this question about diversity, and highlights one of the key issues of concern in this paper - designing utopia by a collective effort rather than from an individual for a community. The visions provided in Tables 2-5 seem full of ways in which the difficulties in living in a diverse future could be negated or minimized. Table 6.1.3 illustrates another important concern: that people will react insanely because of real life issues, regardless of attempts to minimize such action, causing a sort of free-radical that could disrupt the community. I believe that concern is also addressed by the preceding visions, in that many of them attempt to develop coping mechanisms of dealing with tragedy (such as creating a community to support injured people, or support various aspects of self development). I think that the idea of a free-radical problem within a society that is trying to evolve or exist in a state of ideal conditions is actually a good thing. As I stated in the literature review, I don't believe a utopia to be a static thing, and if there is anything static about it, it's the ability and need to continually grow, change, and adapt. I saw this happening at the BM Festival as well. At times there would be people who were acting insanely for a variety of reasons, and

when other participants or community members saw this happening, they usually rallied to the person's aid, sometimes in the form of medical assistance, water, a place to calm down, or even bike lights (as many people were acting dangerously by not having proper lights on their bikes). As for Table 6.1.2,4, participants were wary of envisioning an ideal future because of the status-quo/default society stopping them, or thought that it was ineffective to change all of society through the efforts of all of society, and rather focus on empowering a small group to effect change.

Presentation of Data for Subquestion: “What specific things do people envision for the future?”

In addition to the responses in the following tables, it was very clear by observing participants at the BM festivals that they were participating in what they envision for the future, and they exemplified a community based around radical principals and freedom of expression. I have organized responses into four categories: The structure, culture, and individuality of utopia, and also miscellaneous categorized responses. I sorted data in Tables 2-6 similarly, and there is a lot of crossover from those tables into these, but I picked the data for those tables, because they more specifically could be used to address diversity. The following Tables 7-10 represent a more technical response and provide excellent examples of components to a future society.

In Table 7.1 and 7.2, participants provided structural components of designing a utopia. These are responses that appear to hold the structure of utopia together, whereas the following Table 8.1 and 8.2 provide a cultural perspective. I differentiate these by seeing structure as a containing vessel and culture as what fills it; together they constitute society as a whole.

Table 7.1: Structure of Utopia – Political, Decision Making, & Governance

1. The destruction of democracy, Christianity, and the other filth we've grown accustomed to
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2. Autogestation (worker controlled enterprises), democratic decision making
3. Regulating drugs and sexworkers well & reproductive rights
4. Election reform: single payer campaign financing, national holiday on election day, volunteer signature drive nominations, no privatization, no automated ballot counting, media coverage regulated as to quantity
5. Term limits for elected officials, PACs and lobbyists outlawed, legislators must stay and live in areas they represent and attend meetings/vote by skype, assault weapons outlawed, strict controls of selling of guns
6. Make sure Congress produces things – productivity
7. Conflict revolution - finding alternatives to justice system
8. The US government should be overthrown & government workers should be shipped off
9. Socialist/communist future

Participant responses in Table 7.1.1,3,4,5,6,7, 8 loosely represent desire for future government reform. Specific areas are revolutionizing the justice system, and changing the electoral system, particularly so that individuals have equal power in supporting politicians, rather than just the wealthy and lobbyists. And Table 7.1.9,2 both suggest new communal systems for organizing and decision making within governing structures.

Structural responses that specifically define the community design are represented in Table 7.2, and focus on things that people directly want in their community, or want their community to look like.

Table 7.2: Structure of Utopia – Community Design

1. Local co-op healthcare
2. You don't work, you don't eat
3. Ecovillages - spiritually based connection with nature
4. More communal living
5. No 40 hour workweek
6. Women take over the planet
7. Barter system to replace capitalism!!
8. Education funding
9. The release and open use of free energy technologies, and in regards to energy: free the energy, free the people.
10. Free, high-quality health care for everybody
11. No money
12. Local food, co-op food swaps, seed swap/bank

13. Clean water and air, and no nuclear shit
14. Population increase - as part of humanities reaching for the stars - the universe is big enough
15. You don't have to have finance to have nice things
16. Ecofriendly community
17. Birth control children limit, living with nature/permaculture, bartering within the community
18. Pop up environments - scientific, impermanent, collapsible, and mobile.
19. Food and freedom
20. Reclaim common spaces; everyone controls their own space; co ops, land trusts
21. Free transportation
22. Less technology and more nature, and more connecting to nature
23. Communal living
24. Anti industrial revolution and assembly line work/culture; everyone gets a farm, learns medicine, plays outdoors, and green energy
25. Multiple currencies
26. Long term sustainability
27. The end to institutionalized violence and poverty

Participant responses from Table 7.2 include a long list of radical visions for utopia design. They illustrate a wide range of structural aspects of community design: monetary system changes, illustrating needs for social services, and actual community design based off of permaculture or ecovillage designs. Data from this Table, and others, has a lot of future use, and I hope to categorize this data in a more meticulous way that provides me with a collective vision to work towards as an activist (something I found myself seeking during my practicum work).

When all things are said and done, the everyday life and activities of utopians are key. If an ideal society is to be created, it will be the activities and daily life that represent whether or not the change from the status-quo to the ideal has been worthwhile and if it meets with the initial vision of the utopists. Table 8.1 displays responses that I believe illustrate the visions for potential utopian activities.

Table 8.1: Culture of Utopia - Activities

1. Spontaneity
2. Sex is a lovely thing and our bodies are free and sexuality is not hidden (like Bonobo)
3. More happiness
4. A place where people do what they say they are
5. Adults do a better job helping kids develop
6. People stop writing as much, more oral culture
7. People dance more
8. Treatment of elders and ourselves as if we were babies (theory)
9. Show people nature, food, solar power
10. A lot of burning man concepts (spirit of giving from the heart, neighborhoods like BM)
11. A civil discourse between opposing political parties and factions, government staying out of affairs of the heart and reproductive system (while purging the world of sex slavery, human trafficking, etc, obviously)
12. Uniform gathering for people opposed to societal standards
13. If you can't be with the one you love, love the one you're with
14. Ability to send clear messages, privacy/no eavesdropping
15. Have real connection to your reality
16. Share what you have - your art, your love

Responses in table 8.1 illustrate the vision of activity where people share things with one another, where people communicate with one another, dance more, are sexually liberated, and come together to celebrate and participate in events that are meaningful to them. Many of these visions I saw taking place at the BM Festival, and I witnessed people engaging in open relationships, sharing whatever they could, dancing, being spontaneous, and being happy.

The culture of Utopia potentially consists of drastic paradigm shifts, along with structural changes. Table 8.2 lists responses that I found to be linked to paradigm shifts within a cultural-structural context (whereas Table 4.2 focused on Paradigm shift as a means for navigating diversity).

Table 8.2: Culture of Utopia – Paradigm Shift

1. Actively put humanity in front of technology

2. A structure of values
3. Possibility of love at a massive scale
4. I'd like everybody to be free
5. Better execution of the principles of BM
6. When the west and east face each other and form something new
7. Mentors, rights of initiation
8. More women leaders
9. More people working together to understand less understood forms of expression, sexually, morally, physically, and spiritually. Mostly sexually.
10. In creating an organization stick to the initial vision, don't get led down capitalist holes
11. A lot of burning man concepts (spirit of giving from the heart, neighborhoods like BM)
12. Different relationship to food
13. Individual practices that embody cultural values and cultural values that encourage individual development rather than \$\$
14. Divorce from the historical "Progress"
15. Shift from "Energy is the ability to work" to "Energy is eternal delight" - as the governing ethos
16. We don't have to worry about how much money we make

Categories of change that I see within these selected participant responses are various. One primary category can be seen in Table 8.2.1, 13, 14, 15, 16; a basic societal shift from a production and consumer based culture to one that highlights human development, delight, and freedom from burdens associated with money. Other responses in Table 8.2 point to cultural developments, such as greater sexual freedom and expression, relationships with food, having a structure of values as an integral part of culture, and the integration of love within the collective culture. One participant mentioned, in Table 8.2.11, that they wanted to see more integration of Burning Man principles into their vision of utopia. An observation I made that exemplified the ten principles, that fits into this category was the principal of "Gifting." Much like the visions in Table 8.2, there is an anti-capitalist and pro-gifting attitude and aspect of the BM culture. Monetary exchange is not allowed, and you won't see people trying to sell you anything, or ask you for money for anything they give you; instead, things are either given outright, or for a request of creating a spontaneous experience of fun with the gifter.

Culture and Structure are integral parts of creating a society, but Individuals themselves are the most fundamental building block of what constitutes a society. I have categorized table 9.1 to be utopian visions representative of aspects of changes that are transformative on an individual level.

Table 9.1: Individuality of Utopia

1. Live life to the edge, know you have more life than you thought
2. Self care - the ability to practice, knowledge of it, and how to do it.
3. The adoption of personal responsibility for one's own thoughts and feelings by majority, leading to greater personal freedom and less authoritarian rule.
4. I am in utopia now
5. Whatever the challenge, face it - leave the comfort zone
6. Personal accountability, don't pass the buck
7. Fear less
8. Communication - do what you say, say what you think.
9. Being ones artistic self, conscious effort to help when needed, lack of fear

“I am in Utopia now,” was one response that I got, found in table 9.1.4, and I felt similarly, as I participated and observed my fellow burners in radically expressing themselves and participating in the community that I helped to build. Other responses in table 9.1 illustrated visions both internally and externally, such as fearing less, personal responsibility of feelings and thoughts, and facing challenges like pushing one's self out of a "comfort zone." External visions are those of self expression, accountability for one's actions, taking care of one's self, and living life to the edge. These were also observations I made of burners, as they cared for themselves and others and pushed themselves to participate and grow in ways that might not have been comfortable at times.

Some participant visions I have put into a miscellaneous category, and I have arranged it into several categories: Technology, Other, and Dubious. These are found in Table10.1-3.

Table 10.1: Miscellaneous Personal Desires - Technology

1. Self sustaining home units
2. Flying cars, energy feasible lower middle class affordable low pollution air cabs
3. Star trek replicators
4. Clean renewable energy
5. Improve the quality and longevity of products
6. Free energy
7. Transportation machine
8. Teleportation
9. Transportation, instant
10. Laundromats using biodegradable soap and draining water into orchards. I also want all gyms to gather all the energy used in the machines and circulate it for power.

Technological visions are found in Table 10.1 and include numerous desires for clean, renewable, free energy and many requests for new developments in transportation, such as teleporters and flying cars. These technological visions represent people's visions of some kind of invention or improvement on current technology that they felt important in their vision of utopia.

Miscellaneous personal desires are found in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2: Miscellaneous Personal Desires – Other

1. A complete dismantling of capitalism
2. Legalize skateboarding
3. More communes, sustainability, water use sensibility
4. Smash the Central Banking System
5. Get rid of the scumbags
6. Instead of growing corn and other bs, grow edible food and make it more available
7. Equal and easy access to health care, mass transit (free)
8. No more hunger, no more money, peace, eliminate death
9. More communities, more burning man
10. Cosmic enchantment, save burning man, save hot springs
11. Legalize marijuana and free MJ criminals
12. More bicycles, more nudity + freedom, more information - availability and visibility
13. To meet our neighbors. It would put our selfish woes into perspective, if we knew there are altruistic aliens out there!
14. Fewer electronic devices, universal health care, free health care, clean water

15. Get on Facebook and watching videos on YouTube without spending money on VPN and feeling insecure.
16. More elephants

Although many of these responses could be categorized into other Tables, I found that displaying them in Table 10.2 as an “Other” category exemplified some of the extreme diversity of responses.

Responses that didn’t quite fit into the “Other” category, because they were possibly made to be comical or made to fill their need for any response. But to some degree they represent some internal desire, and I encouraged that and still represent their answers in Table 10.3.

Table 10.3: Miscellaneous Personal Desires – Dubious

1. I wish it was hot all the time
2. Plenty of water and salad, in & out burgers everywhere
3. Free pizza Fridays
4. Tootsie rolls & Dr. Pepper (cold)
5. We all turn into animals - but nice ones
6. No lines, instant gratification

I would like to note that the response in 10.3.5 has become one of chief interest to me. As part of my current work, I've been involved with a group called "Wild is Free," and found a new appreciation and understanding of this previously "dubious" response through doing social action to preserve a wild space being turned into a golf course. Turning into wild animals, appreciating the wilds, and embracing our wild animal self has since been an important part of my life. Additionally, this response highlights a desire for us to be free, radically expressive, yet nice and responsible in light of the 10 principles.

Analysis: Conceptual Framework - 4PMSA, addressing the subquestion:

❖ **How do these visions of utopia integrate and lead to analyzing, strategizing, and organizing, which are the other three frames of social activism within the 4PMSA model?**

The Four Frames Model for Social Activism incorporate the following 4 frames: 1. Envisioning a desired future; 2. Analyze the status quo; 3. Strategize the approach & methods; 4. Organize people & resources. Plus, a recursive "learning" self-analysis for the purpose of identifying the success of the activism and implementing change where needed. They work best in this order, as starting with "Visioning" provides direction for analysis, strategy, and organization, although there are exceptions to this. This model is being presented as a conceptual framework and tool for inputting a vision into a process that functions to aid the activist to actualize the vision. The basic system is taking a specific vision, analyzing how it fits into the status quo, strategizing how it could be accomplished, and organizing resources and people to achieve it. See Appendix A for a tool that can be used to facilitate this process.

An example, chosen at random, would be the vision in Table 4.2.8: "Permaculture, harmony with plants - intergalactic garden of green love." I would separate that into two distinct visions. First, consider: "Permaculture, harmony with plants." Upon analysis one might find that there exists a growing permaculture movement that is in direct opposition to non-sustainable farming methods. A strategy could involve teaming up with this current movement, jumping into their pre-existing organizations, and adding one's own unique gifts to the movement. Recursive "learning" might highlight that the current organization of the movement is ineffective and something new needs to be organized. Additionally, consider the second part of this vision: "Intergalactic garden of green love." This might prove to be more of a descriptor to the first part,

but it also might stand alone as someone's unique and important vision that deserves respect and analysis. Some visions might be more difficult than others to input into the system, but it is important to recognize to an appropriate degree that everyone's visions should be held as important and integral in our attempts at co-creating utopia.

Analysis: Conceptual Framework - All is Love, addressing the subquestion:

❖ Using a framework of identifying love within people's visions of utopia, how integral is people's perception or inclusion of love?

All is Love is a conceptual framework that asks the practitioner of inquiry to assess something by asking how it is "Love" and by thorough analysis of its affect on the relationships surrounding it. Used here, a utopian vision can be analyzed specifically through this framework. The Tool in Appendix B was designed to help apply this conceptual framework in analysis of the data presented in this inquiry. As a randomly selected example, I'll take the response in Table 3.2.13 - "Everyone working together" and ask "How is this Loving?" This is done by applying a variety of questions subjective to my individual capacities. I ask: "How does this serve me and the community?" And answer: It "gets people to come together, it gets people to participate in their community, and it builds community by building togetherness. Possibly it helps people to navigate difference and come together in collective solidarity." My reaction to this then, is that this is something that is loving that can be applied to building community, bridging diversity, building collective infrastructure, etc. Built into this conceptual framework is the idea to analyze all visions are loving, and all visions can be put through this framework and analyzed this way. Each practitioner will most likely have a slightly dissimilar answer or series of questions. I will also note that this framework was integral in categorizing and analyzing the presented data.

CONCLUSIONS & PRACTICAL APPLICATION

What I wanted out of this inquiry was a list of visions collected from Burners that exemplified their radical desires and dreams of utopia. From that, I wanted to analyze and organize the data in a way that could be used to help provide activists with a foundation of knowledge that could easily be used to both help define aspects of what a utopia could be, and to address problems and solutions associated with utopias. In this regard, I am happy to present this paper to my fellow activists and agents of social change. The data presented is not exhaustive, and I hope that what I have done will be added to and seen as an open source of radical visions that we can aspire to achieve and participate in co-creating.

Additionally, what I have produced here is from what I can see, one of the first of its kind of examples of a radically envisioned utopia. In as much as it is a cacophonous collection of people's ideas about utopia, in itself, it is an attempt to define and design utopia by putting together a collection of visions from a radically inclusive sample of people. This was the biggest issue I found in my literature review. Historical attempts at utopia were not inclusive in how they were designed, and this paper embodies the solution to that problem, a radically inclusive design and designers. Furthermore, this paper was produced of the spirit in which it exemplifies, in that the data herein was collected spontaneously in the desert while dancing, drinking, loving, making art, and participating in the temporary and autonomously thriving utopia that is Burning Man.

FUTURE RESEARCH & LIMITATIONS

This research was done within the intentional confines of the Burning Man radical community. As such, it is limited in scope to responses from people who identify as Burners or

who were, at a minimum, willing to participate in BM culture. If there is a collective effort to design utopia, to strive for our ideals, and to create community oriented in consciously striving for these efforts, then it is my recommendation to make sure that a global sample of similar design to this research project is made. Even if the goal of the reader is not to create a utopia, but just to help create a "better world" in whatever capacity that they desire, I suggest a similar approach in collecting a large sample of visions that represent public need and desire so as to guide this effort (and be a reoccurring phenomenon within it). For anyone using the data provided herein, please try using the conceptual framework tools that I have provided. The 4PMSA model is a tool for inputting a vision into an enclosed theoretical or real system of social change. It can provide direction for using this data, and as a starting prop for creating additional tools, aiding in social change. The AIL Model is important in helping to remind the reader to seek out the centrality of Love as a fundamental and integral part in envisioning the ideal and in working towards it. As a final personal note, our visions of utopia that come from a conscious intention of Love, rooted in Agape and even an Eros love of each other, seem to be the most universal, the most potent, and most effective in minimizing harm and suffering as we push forward and co-create our utopia.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Conceptual Framework: 4PMSA Model

Framework for Identifying Qualities of Effective Visions	
<u>Description of vision:</u>	
Qualities proposed from the "Four Phase Model for Social Activism"	How does the vision represent aspects of each quality?
A positive action, rather than negation or resistance -Focus the vision on building a desired outcome rather than obstacle removing	
Relevant to perceived needs of the culture or community -Create a vision that represents the need of the community affected by the change	
Fit within the cultural context and history of the culture -The vision should be able to be integrated within the culture	
Realistic and achievable -Is the vision something that can actually be achieved in the long/short term	
Able to link to a strategy with short/long term goals -Are there possible strategies that can be developed/used to achieve this vision	
Clearly stated yet flexible in ability for further development -The vision must be clear and open to possible changes as learning progresses	
Inclusive of the diverse needs of the community -Communities have diverse needs, the vision should be as inclusive as possible	
Based on individual/community self interest -The vision is built on and expands to meet the needs of the community	
Grounded but transcendent of the current social paradigm -Realistically based on the reality of the community, transcends to achieve change	
Empowering -Does the vision empower the community, and who is empowered by it	
Have a credible integrous and committed messenger -Is the individual or organization presenting the vision credible	

(Blank boxes for subjectively assigned qualities - based on analysis of need)

APPENDIX B Conceptual Framework - All is Love

All is Love - As a Critical Framework - Analytical Tool

Step 1: Identify the thing or experience you would like to analyze.
 Step 2: Ask: How is this Love/Loving - how does this create joy?
 Step 3: Answer by using critical thinking, as well as other tools of analysis.
 (like scientific, religious, or spiritual perspectives)
 Step 4: Consciously choose your reaction.

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    graph TD
      A(Experience or Thing) --> B(Ask: How is this Love? What Joy does it create?)
      B --> C(Answer: Use critical thinking and perspectives that can be tools of analysis)
      C --> D(Reaction)
    
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Example Questions to help guide Answer:
 How does it benefit? Is this healthy? How does this help? Does this serve me?
 Is this appropriate behavior? Is this sustainable? Do I need this? Do I want this?
 What are perceived positives and negatives associated with this? ETC.

APPENDIX C: The 10 Principles of Burning Man (Harvey, 2015)

Burning Man co-founder Larry Harvey wrote the Ten Principles in 2004 as guidelines for the newly-formed Regional Network. They were crafted not as a dictate of how people should be and act, but as a reflection of the community's ethos and culture as it had organically developed since the event's inception.

Radical Inclusion

Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community.

Gifting

Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

Decommodification

In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. We resist the substitution of consumption for participatory experience.

Radical Self-reliance

Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise and rely on his or her inner resources.

Radical Self-expression

Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

Communal Effort

Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction.

Civic Responsibility

We value civil society. Community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

Leaving No Trace

Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

Participation

Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work. Everyone is invited to play. We make the world real through actions that open the heart.

Immediacy

Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience.

APPENDIX D - Pictures of Burning Man - (from collective commons if not noted)

Pictured Below: an aerial view of Black Rock City and its almost 60,000 residents:



One of the art installations on the Playa:



Photo from Lakes of Fire, Regional event - Photo credit to: Matt Strzelczyk

