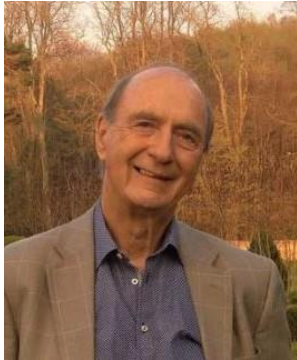


Brief Encounter with the Taos Institute

January 2020



From Hindsight to Insight to Foresight: Entering the New Year with 20/20 Visions

By Ken Gergen, Taos Institute President

Entering the second decade of the century, brings with it a sense of excitement. A new chapter is about to begin... Yet, whatever our gains in optimistic energies they will be urgently needed in the year to come.

We confront a world condition in which antagonism, polarization, and deadly conflict are everywhere at our doorstep. It is to just such conditions that the kinds of activities nourished and shared by Taos Institute participants speak most cogently. A social constructionist orientation invites a certain humility, a tempering of critique with curiosity, and working together across the spectrum of differences in creating a nourishing future.

And we can make a difference! The energetic and creative efforts of the many participants in Taos Institute activities over this past year are formidable. Our educational programs have permitted us to share ideas and practices with learning colleagues the world over. Five participants in the PhD program graduated this year from our collaborating universities in Europe, with dissertations ranging over such topics as relational leading, collaborative process, whole system change, and the construction of trauma. The two-year Diploma program in Social Construction and Professional Practices flourished. The program is especially inviting, as it allows participants to work in tutorial relationship with a Taos advisor on a topic or project of special interest to them - with multiple language options. The International Certificate program in Collaborative-Dialogic Practices (ICCP) remained robust, with 11 different programs offered in 16 countries. The Taos on-line courses and workshops have continued to draw participants from around the world, including our first from Russia.



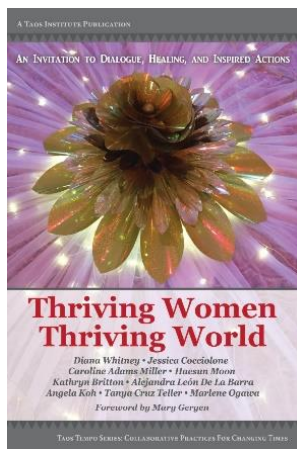
The on-line options for engaging with relevant ideas and practices have also vibrated with energy. The Relational Research Network offered free virtual learning/support calls to researchers wishing to explore their research from a relational perspective.

[See the videos here.](#)

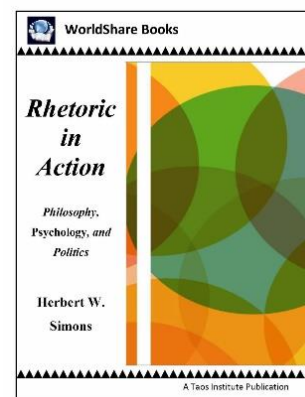


We are especially indebted to Mark Greene of ThinkPlay Partner for putting together a series of 14 videos on relational theory and practice, with interviews in both English and Spanish. The entire series is available on [Youtube](#).

The [WorldShare Books](#) initiative, which offers books in multiple languages, free for downloading, added 5 new works, on such wide ranging topics as working with Syrian refugees, collaborative therapy, systemic consulting, political rhetoric and a book which includes papers from the Taos Institute 25th Anniversary Conference program. The newest book this year, [Thriving Women, Thriving World](#), spearheaded by Diana Whitney, was published to rave reviews.



While officially functioning as a non-profit organization located in the U.S., the Taos Institute is essentially an international network without a geographical center. This was especially apparent in the work of Taos Associates in China, who organized an October conference in Nanjing on constructionist theory and practice; in our collaboration with Joint Action consulting Denmark, in offering a summer conference on relational welfare; and in 4th International ICCP Congress in Brno, Czech Republic. Small grants were also awarded to Associates in Kenya, India, Ecuador, Chile, and Spain for local research and social change projects.



To be sure, there have been many challenges along the way, but outcomes such as these restore both vision and vitality. Let us then, look back with appreciation and ahead with anticipation. We can make a difference!