A Contemporary Commentary on Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life


Abstract
This article presents a conceptual refiguration of action-research based on a “sociorationalist” view of science. The position that is developed can be summarized as follows: For action-research to reach its potential as a vehicle for social innovation it needs to begin advancing theoretical knowledge of consequence; that good theory may be one of the best means human beings have for affecting change in a postindustrial world; that the discipline’s steadfast commitment to a problem-solving view of the world acts as a primary constraint on its imagination and contribution to knowledge; that appreciative inquiry represents a viable complement to conventional forms of action-research; and finally, that through our assumptions and choice of method we largely create the world we later discover.

Citation

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Abstract It's been nearly 30 years since the original articulation of Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life was written in collaboration with my remarkable mentor Suresh Srivastva (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). That article generated more experimentation in the field, more academic excitement, and more innovation than anything we had ever written. As the passage of time has enabled me to look more cl...