AUTONOMY-DEPENDENCY PARADOX IN ORGANIZATION-PUBLIC
RELATIONSHIPS: A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF A UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM

In October 1997, the Brigham Young University Museum of Art, located in Provo, Utah, opened a touring exhibition titled *The Hands of Rodin: A Tribute to B. Gerald Cantor*. This exhibition featured 54 bronze and plaster sculptures that highlighted Auguste Rodin's "fascination with the diverse forms of hands and their expressive capabilities" and his "mastery of portraying the lines of the human hand while communicating their strength, movement and expression" (Past Exhibitions, n.d., ¶ 6). Museum press materials acknowledged that Rodin was "widely regarded as . . . the finest sculptor since Michelangelo" (Winters, 1997, ¶ 1). However, when the exhibition opened at the museum, four sculptures were left in their crates. Among these sculptures were three nude works, including *The Kiss*, one of Rodin's best-known works.

The decision not to show these works caused a number of BYU students to protest what they perceived as censorship. The university's decision was criticized in newspapers across the globe. The museum director "insisted that censorship had not occurred" because not exhibiting those works enhanced the exhibition's attempt to highlight hands in Rodin's work (Kamman, 2006, p. 85). The decision also raised eyebrows in the art world. The curator of the Rodin exhibition was aware that university and museum officials, who belonged to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), "were troubled by both the poses and presentations" of the four Rodin sculptures in question; however, she added that "Rodin's subject matter is the nude, so you can't really not have nudes if you want to have a Rodin show" (Kamman, 2006, p. 85-86).

Others in the local community, especially members of the LDS Church, were supportive of the university administration's decision. A letter to the editor from a member of the community expressing the opinion that the nude pieces weren't necessary to learning about art and that the decision was consistent with the teachings of the university's sponsoring institution, was representative of this group's feelings about the criticism of the university and the museum in the local and national press.

Seven years after the Rodin controversy, the BYU Museum of Art hosted a traveling exhibition from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, about the artistic contributions of the ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman civilizations. The exhibition, titled *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World: Egypt, Greece, Rome*, was designed to educate visitors about the way these cultures influenced each other and continue to influence Western civilization. Once again museum officials were faced with making a decision about displaying nude works with this exhibition. While there were a few nude works, the work that caused the most concern was a marble statue of a nude male torso, especially with large numbers of elementary-school children expected to attend the museum on field trips. In the end, the museum exhibited all of the nude works but mediated the impact of the pieces by contextualizing them within the display. Museum officials also worked closely with the two groups who would be most affected by the decision: the university administration and the Utah State Office of Education. At the end of the exhibition's year-long run at the museum, the museum officials were surprised that they did not receive one complaint about the works.

These two incidents expose the paradox that art museums face when making decisions that have consequences on their stakeholders and publics. If art museums become too dependent

on their governing bodies or their visitors in the decision-making process, they will likely face the protests of a vociferous art community seeking to protect the art museum as an institution of high culture. If art museums feel they are completely autonomous, at liberty to collect and exhibit artworks that are too extreme or avant garde for the communities they represent, they will likely face the prospect of community outcry and possible public sanction. Zolberg (1994) recognized this paradox, explaining that art museums are "praised for collecting and preserving works of art for a discerning public" on one hand, but on the other hand, "they are called upon to draw in to that public a population with little understanding of fine art" (p. 49). According to Zolberg, this paradox forces art museums to make an either/or choice between providing "a safe haven for high art" or "catering to a crowd it [the museum] did not select" (p. 49).

MacDonald (1992) explained that the debate over whether American museums should have autonomy to make decisions based on quality or whether they should recognize their dependence on the market has become a significant battleground. He lamented that both sides of the issue have become so polarized that they see it as an either/or choice: "One of the greatest challenges facing museums today is to reconcile these two elements of our reality" (p. 165).

Museums experience the autonomy-dependency paradox that encompasses so many public organizations. Paradoxes are difficult to experience and often create great anxiety and tension within an organization. Many organizations find themselves choosing one option over the other, resulting in self-destructive defensive mechanisms. Paradoxical tensions also have caused public relations scholars to define the practice in terms of either/or dichotomies, forcing organizations to decide if their communication efforts will be symmetrical or asymmetrical, one-way or two-way, pro-active or reactive, and socially responsible or self-interested (Rawlins & Stoker, 2007a). But understanding the nature of paradoxes and applying divergent thinking can help communication professionals more easily navigate these tensions.

Cameron and Quinn (1988b) suggested that studying paradox allows for "richer analyses in which we are forced to look more deeply than usual, and to ask about the positive opposites that might not be recognized in a given situation" (p. 304). The primary focus of this study is to explore the autonomy-dependency paradox in organization-public relationships by analyzing the two cases presented above. This study will then evaluate how a paradox framework can bring greater depth and understanding to public relations theories about organization-public relationships, specifically those theories that address the paradox of organizations and publics being simultaneously autonomous from and dependent on each other. The study will conclude by evaluating how structuration theory and authenticity can help organizations more effectively manage their behavior and communication in the face of the centripetal and centrifugal tensions of the autonomy-dependency paradox.

Literature Review

The Paradoxical Frame

After a review of the existing paradox literature, Lewis (2000) defined a paradox as "contradictory yet interrelated elements—elements that seem logical in isolation but absurd and irrational when appearing simultaneously" (p. 760). Paradoxes have become important in organizational science because organizations are inherently paradoxical (Cameron & Quinn, 1988a). Ford and Backoff (1988) explained that in the act of organizing "distinctions are drawn

that are oppositional in tendency: differentiation and integration, collectivity and individuality, stability and change, uniformity and complexity, morphostasis, the maintenance of structure, and morphogenesis, creation of new structure" (p. 82). Rapid technological change, globalization, and increased diversity in the workforce are responsible for creating paradoxes that force managers to "increase efficiency and foster creativity, build individualistic teams, and think globally while acting locally" (Lewis, 2000, p. 760).

Paradoxes represent divergent rather than convergent problems (Cameron & Quinn, 1988a). Convergent problems are solvable. Answers to convergent problems tend to converge into a single accepted solution. Paradoxes are divergent problems because they do not have one single accepted solution. In fact, the more paradoxes are studied the more the solutions tend to diverge, or become more contradictory. However the promise of the paradox is that the process of "wrestling with divergent problems" will lead to greater breakthroughs and insights than what can be learned by solving a convergent problem (Cameron & Quinn, 1988a, p. 6).

The simultaneous presence of mutually exclusive opposites causes paradoxical tension (Vince & Broussine, 1996). Paradoxical tension has the potential to lead organizations to breakthroughs and insights. But these tensions can also cause organizations to become trapped in reinforcing cycles that "perpetuate and exacerbate" the tensions caused by the paradox (Lewis, 2000, p. 763). Convergent thinking often leads to a reinforcing cycle by making either/or distinctions—choosing one pole of the paradox while ignoring or rejecting the other (Cameron & Quinn, 1988b). These either/or choices are often defensive routines established by organizations to deal with potential embarrassment or threat posed by paradoxical tensions (Argyris, 1988).

Managing paradox involves "exploring, rather than suppressing, tensions" (Lewis, 2000, p. 764). Vince and Broussine (1996) argued that the only way to derive benefit from a paradox is to embrace it rather than try to resolve it: "Staying with the paradox makes it possible to discover a link between opposing forces and opens up the framework that gives meaning to the apparent contradictions" (p. 4). Handy (1994) suggested that managing paradox in the sense of trying to plan for or control it is itself paradoxical. He argued that the management of paradox should be thought of in terms of coping—the original meaning of the word management.

Organizations need to develop the ability to think paradoxically to transcend a paradox (Lewis, 2000). Paradoxical thinking leads to critical self-reflection that may help managers "reframe their assumptions, learn from existing tensions, and develop a more complicated repertoire of understandings and behaviors that better reflects organizational intricacies" (Lewis, 2000, p. 764). Organizational scholars have identified four methods of dealing with paradox: acceptance, confrontation, compromise, and transcendence (da Cunha, Clegg & e Cunha, 2007; Lewis, 2000). These strategies permit organizations to move beyond the either/or distinctions that lead to reinforcing cycles by enabling them to look at paradox from a both/and perspective (Ford & Backoff, 1988). Acceptance assumes that organizations are aware of the paradox and have learned to live with it (Cameron & Quinn, 1988a; da Cunha et al., 2007; Lewis, 2000; van de Ven & Poole, 1988). Confrontation is a strategy that calls for organizational members to discuss paradoxical tensions in order to "subject their ways of thinking to critique, thereby raising their chances of escaping paralysis" (Lewis, 2000, p. 764). Compromising to paradoxical tensions can take the form of a contingency approach "where the organization chooses the right mix of opposites" (da Cunha et. al., 2007, p. 14). Transcendence involves looking at paradox from new perspectives (Rothenburg, 1979; Poole & van de Ven, 1988; da Cunha et al., 2007).

Paradox in Organization-Public Relationships

The focus on relationships between organizations and publics as the unit of analysis in public relations provides a natural starting point to look for paradoxes in public relations practice. The most obvious paradox that affects the organization-public relationship paradigm is embedded in the very nature of relationships: two parties becoming dependent on each other for the fulfillment of individual needs while, at the same time, they try to influence each other to achieve their individual goals (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Murphy, 1991).

Using a relational dialectic framework, Hung (2007) described how these opposing centripetal and centrifugal relational forces draw relational partners together and push them apart. This paradox has been referred to as interdependence by organizational management researchers, public relations scholars, and social exchange theorists (Canary & Zelley, 2000; Gollner, 1984; Grunig, Grunig & Ehling, 1992; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Provan, 1982) and is a key component to the organization-public relational dynamic (Hung 2007). Grunig, Grunig, and Ehling (1992) explained that "building relationships—managing interdependence—is the substance of public relations" (p. 69).

The approach advocated by public relations scholars to manage interdependence is based on social exchange and resource dependency theories (Broom, Casey, & Ritchey, 1997; Grunig, Grunig & Ehling, 1992; Hung, 2005; Ledingham, Bruning, & Wilson, 1999). Because these theories do not address the autonomy-dependence paradox inherent in organizational-public relationships, they can lead organizations and public relations practitioners to react to paradoxical tensions with defensive mechanisms that could potentially damage relationships or establish hollow quid pro quo relationships (Stoker & Tusinski, 2006).

Social exchange theory holds that social relationships involve the voluntary exchange of resources to accomplish individual goals that can only be achieved through cooperation and reciprocity (Oliver, 1990; Broom, Casey, & Ritchey, 1997; Lawler & Thye, 1999; Ledingham, Bruning, & Wilson, 1999; Leichty, 2005). Oliver (1990) explained that social exchange theory is based on the idea that partners enter into relationships seeking "balance, harmony, equity, and mutual support" (p. 245), and anticipating that the benefits of the relationship will "far exceed the disadvantages, particularly the loss of decision-making latitude and the cost of managing the linkage" (p. 245). However, Lawler and Thye (1999) stated that "*Self-interest* and *interdependence* are central properties of social exchange" (p. 217); and Macy (1991) explained that the tensions between these two paradoxical poles can lead to social traps.

Resource dependence is a theoretical framework that exposes the power dynamics in exchange relationships (Aldrich, 1976; Broom, Casey, & Ritchey, 1997; Cook, 1977; Emerson, 1962; Leichty, 2005; Oliver, 1990). The desired relational outcome of resource dependency theory is autonomy and control, not cooperation and reciprocity (Oliver, 1990). "The more power an organization has, the more influence it has to determine the nature of the interorganizational exchange" (Cook, 1977, p. 66). Control is important because it enables autonomy in organizational decision-making, allowing organizations to manage their environments and avoid uncertainty (Aldrich, 1976; Oliver, 1990; Schermerhorn, 1975).

The relationship management literature acknowledges that organization-public relationships are formed and maintained through a combination of behavior and symbolic communication, which are "intertwined like stands of a rope" (Grunig, 1993, p. 123). When an

organizational decision has consequences on a public it affects the relationship (Grunig 2005; Hon & Grunig, 1999). Relationships are also affected by communication. Ledingham (2006) argued that communication is a tool in the "initiation, nurturing, and maintenance of organization-public relationships" (p. 466). According to Grunig (1993), when an organization and public have a good behavioral relationship, good communication improves that relationship. However, "a poor behavioral relationship can destroy attempts to use communication to build a symbolic relationship or to improve a behavioral relationship" (p. 123).

The organization-public relationship literature primarily focuses on interactions based on the social exchange model, seeking to transcend the autonomy-dependency paradox by establishing mutually beneficial relationships through two-way symmetrical communication (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2006; Hon & Grunig, 1999). The literature also advocates that organizations should manage their relationships to ensure stability by exerting influence on its surrounding environment, which reflects a resource dependency paradigm of control and autonomy (Ledingham, 2006; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). The simultaneous use of both the social exchange and resource dependency paradigms to define organization-public relationship theory underscores the paradox that continues to have a significant influence on public relations theory and practice. Organizations are pulled by the paradoxical tensions caused by their desire to be autonomous and ensure stability and the need to be dependent and cooperate with stakeholders and publics for mutual advantage.

Hon and Grunig (1999) included a variable of this paradox in their relationship measurement tool called control mutuality. Control mutuality acknowledges that while a power imbalance in an organization-public relationship may be normal, the most stable and beneficial relationships are achieved when organizations and publics "have some degree of control over the other" (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 19). The concept of control mutuality implies that stakeholders and publics have the ability to affect relationships with organizations independent of an organization's attempts or manage the relationship (Blewett, 1993; Durham, 2005). According to Blewett (1993), the language used in public relations literature implies that public relations practitioners try to manage—or control—their publics. He argued that public relations professionals can and should manage an organization's communication practices and techniques but they have no control over the outcome of communication with a public (Blewett, 1993). To suppose to control publics does not recognize their autonomy in the relationship.

This research proposes two frameworks that may assist public relations scholars and practitioners in thinking divergently about the autonomy-dependency paradox: structuration theory and authenticity. In combination, these frameworks provide a pathway to divergent thinking about both the behavioral and symbolic-communication components of organizational-public relationships.

Structuration Theory

The two primary sociological paradigms applied in public relations research, structural functionalism and interpretivism, represent opposite extremes of a long running debate that questions "whether human behaviour is determined by the structural institutions of society or if human behaviour creates and determines those structures" (Rawlins & Stoker, 2002, p. 670). Those who adopt a functionalist approach view social reality as objective, orderly, and external to the individual, while those who advocate an interpretivist approach view society as a

construction that grows out of the interactions between individuals (Putnam, 1983). Ultimately, the way in which an organization views the role of human agency in its relationships and the nature of social structures has a significant impact on how that organization responds to the autonomy-dependence paradox.

Researchers have found Anthony Giddens' structuration theory useful in understanding and managing paradox (Harter, 2000; Poole & van de Ven, 1989), in part because it is a theory developed to transcend the structure/action dichotomy reflected in functionalism and interpretivism (Durham, 2005; Edgar, 2007; Falkheimer, 2007; Miller, 2000). Structuration theory attempts to achieve a balance between human agency and structure "by stressing the need to understand interralationhips between the two" by reconceptualizing the structure/action dualism as a duality: the duality of structure (Krone et al, 2005, p. 294). The duality of structure asserts that social structures are "the medium of human agency as well as the outcome of human agency" (Falkheimer, 2009, p. 108). Rawlins and Stoker (2002) explained the concept of duality of structure as accounting for the ability of individuals to produce and reproduce through their actions the very process that will constrain or enable them to repeat those actions. Therefore, from a structuration perspective human agents should not be theorized as autonomously creating structures (the bias of interpretivism), nor should structures be theorized as totally determining human action (the bias of functionalism). Rather human action should be understood as it both enables and is constrained by social structures (Krone et al, 2005).

Giddens defined structure as "an internal construct composed of an agent's memory" (Rawlins & Stoker 2002, p. 271). These structures can be related to the expectations that relational partners have of each other (Coombs, 2000; Ledingham 2006). In structuration theory, individuals have autonomy to either act in accordance with their knowledge of previously learned social norms (Banks & Riley, 1993; Witmer, 2006) or to act in ways that create new social structures (Banks & Riley, 1993; Rawlins & Stoker, 2002). Additionally, structuration theory posits that individuals are capable of actions that are based in self-reflection and motivated by individual goals as well as actions that are based on habitual routines that are generally taken for granted (Banks & Riley, 1993; Rawlins & Stoker, 2002). Rawlins and Stoker (2002) explained that self-reflexive action, referred to as reflexivity, represents an individual's ability to understand and explain the logic and reason of his or her actions.

Banks and Riley (1993) noted that social structures consist of rules and resources that are "formed, codified, memorialized, and concretized" through interactions that occur over time (p. 176). Socially constructed rules are behavioral recipes that provide the definitions of what certain behaviors mean and which behaviors are appropriate in certain circumstances (Harrison, 1994). Structuration theory identifies two types of rule structures: structures of signification, which are created and reproduced through communication and interpretation, and structures of legitimation, which represent relational norms that are legitimized through interaction (Harrison, 1994; Loyal, 2003). Organizations can foster structures of legitimation—or the ethical, legal, and cultural norms of social structures—through structures of signification, or communication (Rawlins & Stoker, 2001). Achieving legitimacy in a relationship "depends upon the morality of what the organization says and does in relationship to the norms that have guided its communications and actions in the past" (Rawlins & Stoker, 2001, p. 273). This type of interaction is capable of producing and reproducing new and lasting relational structures (Rawlins & Stoker, 2001).

A structuration view of organization-public relationships embraces the tensions of the

autonomy-dependency paradox. This view has the ability to shift the focus of public relations from ensuring organizational stability and reducing uncertainty through relational control to enabling organizations to become participants in, rather than managers of, the creation and perpetuation of relationship structures. Durham (2005) noted that structuration theory can assist organizations in reconceptualizing relationships with publics: "Rather than being defined as distinct parts of a power imbalance, institutions and those they would affect are bound to each other within a common social context" (p. 34). Falkheimer (2007) proposed that viewing public relations through the lens of structuration theory means that practitioners should see communication as a process of developing shared meanings and sense making, where organizational members mutually construct a social reality. Cozier and Witmer (2003) commented that "from a structurationist perspective, public relations is a communicative force in society that serves to reproduce and/or transform an organization's dominant ideology, rather than solely adapting to a stakeholder group or public (cited in Falkheimer, 2009, p. 111).

Rawlins and Stoker (2002) argued that organizations cannot unilaterally change their environments because the structures that govern the environment are co-created and reproduced through interaction. Because of the duality of structure, an organization's sense of self and position in the environment is only known in relation to an organization's public and stakeholders: "This position is a result of past interactions with stakeholders and the future expectations of who, what and where the company should be" (Rawlins & Stoker, 2002, p. 272). Rawlins and Stoker argued that organizations should become aware of how their actions will impact their relational partners, and accept their duty to behave in a way that is respectful of their relational partners' agency. To achieve this kind of self-consciousness and respect, Rawlins and Stoker (2002) argued that organizations must come to an understanding and knowledge of themselves "that is, more than a simple sense of their 'position' in their society, a sense of the part their action might play in relation to the parts played by other people's actions in maintaining or progressing their society's aims" (Shotter, 1983, p. 37).

Authenticity

The understanding of self that is necessary for organizations can be explained by the scholarly literature on authenticity. Lionel Trilling (1972) defined sincerity as the congruence between an individual's expressed feelings and their actual feelings. In other words, sincerity is "whether a person represents herself truly and honestly to others" (Erickson, 1995, p. 124). According to Trilling, being true to oneself connotes loyalty, constancy, honesty, and reconciliation with one's self. He acknowledged that attempts to manage one's image with others can lead to insincerity, or the incongruence between expression of feeling and an individual's true feelings, and suggested that true sincerity can be found in authenticity. Gilmore and Pine (2007) proposed two standards of authenticity: 1) being true to your own self, and 2) being who you say you are to others. They argued that individuals and organizations have to contend simultaneously with both the public and the private aspects of being, even "while one of these may overshadow the other" (p. 96).

Based on philosophical observations by Heidegger, Erickson (1995) noted that authenticity is not an either/or experience (p. 122). People are somewhere in-between completely authentic and completely inauthentic because of the "complex, changing, and inconsistent" behaviors enacted by individuals (Erickson, 1995, p. 122). Additionally, individuals become

more authentic when they realize they are partners who must cooperate with other individual agents in the social construction of reality, because the authentic self both shapes and is shaped by social exchanges with others (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Eagly, 2005; Erickson, 1995).

Leaders seeking to guide organizations toward authenticity must develop positive psychological capital, positive moral perspectives, heightened levels of self-awareness, and practice disciplined self-regulation to align their values with their intentions and actions (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Leaders with positive moral perspectives should follow what Avolio and Gardner (2005) describe as "an ethical and transparent decision making process whereby authentic leaders develop and draw upon reserves of moral capacity, efficacy, courage, and resiliency to address ethical issues and achieve authentic and sustained moral actions" (p. 324). Self-awareness is a constant struggle to understand organizational values, identity, and goals. According to Avolio and Gardner (2005), self-regulation is a process of self-control that involves organizations in the alignment of their values with their intentions and actions. This process is composed of three different stages that lead to organizational authenticity, which the authors also term organizational transparency: "(a) setting internal (either existing or newly formulated) standards, (b) assessing discrepancies between these standards and actual or expected outcomes, and (c) identifying intended actions for reconciling these discrepancies" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 325).

As organizations become more transparent about their true endeavors and motivations, individuals who make up the organizations' stakeholders can decide if they are aligned with such purposes and want to be associated the organizations. If these individuals do not share their values they may choose to look elsewhere to fulfill their impulse to be part of an authentic collective. This echoes structuration theory and Blewett's (1993) prescription for organizations to manage their own behavior and communication rather than trying to manage the behavior and communication of their stakeholders and publics.

Methodology

A case study methodology was selected to conduct this research because of the complex nature of studying paradox. Cameron and Quinn (1988b) explained the purpose of their research about organizational paradox was not to develop a "set of specific, testable hypotheses explaining paradox," but to use a paradoxical framework as a "stimulus for asking new and richer questions" (p. 289). Case studies are effective in answering explanatory "how" and "why" questions "about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control" (Yin, 1984, p. 20).

In this study, the influence of paradoxical tensions on organizational decision-making will be studied in the context of the Brigham Young University Museum of Art. The two cases that will be compared in this study are the Brigham Young University Museum of Art's *Hands of Rodin* exhibition in 1997 and *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World: Egypt, Greece, Rome* in 2004. Analysis will compare the cases to identify the methods used by the museum to negotiate the paradox in both cases and to understand what the museum learned from the first case that was applied to the second.

Data were gathered through fourteen semi-structured in-depth interviews with current and former (at the time of this writing) employees of the Brigham Young University Museum of Art. Most interviews began by asking participants what they remembered about the discussions and

events that occurred due to the nude artworks in both of the exhibitions considered in this research. Additional questions were then asked to focus the interviewee on specific areas of interest to this study (see appendix for interview guide). All interviews were recorded on a digital audio recorder and transcribed using Express Scribe software to assure that the interview data considered in the analysis were complete, as well as to enhance the reliability of the data analysis. Transcripts of the interviews were content analyzed to identify the paradoxes, tensions, relationships, pressures, and inconsistencies discussed by each participant.

Data also were gathered from archival documents from the museum that included meeting minutes, internal memoranda, exhibition contracts, exhibition object lists, and exhibition-related materials produced by the museum or the exhibition organizers. Additional data were gathered from news media sources. The museum had an archive of much of this media coverage, but to ensure completeness of the record, searches were performed on Lexis Nexis and ProQuest. Microfilm records housed at Brigham Young University's Harold B. Lee Library were also used to find those media sources not contained in the online databases.

In order to increase the trustworthiness of the research, six interviewees received a copy of the completed case studies to check them for accuracy and researcher bias in a process called member checking (Yin, 2009). In order to increase the dependability of this research, in-text citations in the case study section establish a chain of evidence to give readers access to the same information available to the researcher and to reveal the multiple sources used to construct the case studies.

Case Studies

The following case studies are provided as a means to explore the viability of the propositions of this study. The first case study examines Brigham Young University's decision to withhold four nude Rodin sculptures from a traveling exhibition of the French sculptor's work in October 1997. The second case study examines the BYU Museum of Art's decision to exhibit a handful of nude works in an exhibition on the ancient cultures of Egypt, Greece, and Rome. The cases were developed using secondary sources such as newspaper articles and reports and primary sources through interviews and examination of organizational documents.

The Hands of Rodin: A Tribute to B. Gerald Cantor

Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, was founded in 1903 on the principle that secular learning would be fused with the religious teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A local newspaper article examining the university's history after 100 years of operation explained that despite the growth in enrollment, "remarkably, little has changed in the way of the school's mission" (Walch, 2003). The Museum of Art officially opened on the BYU campus in October 1993. At the time, it was the largest museum facility between Denver, Colorado, and San Francisco, California, containing more than a dozen art galleries and state-of-the-art storage facilities (Reese, 1993).

Administrators at the BYU Museum of Art first heard about the traveling Rodin exhibition organized by the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation in the first few years of the museum's existence and immediately sought to bring the exhibition to Utah. The exhibition was of enough significance that it would be traveling to other major U.S. venues.

Before the scheduled opening of the exhibition in Provo, the university, the Cantor

Foundation, and the museum experienced changes in leadership. The university's Board of Trustees appointed Merrill J. Bateman, the presiding bishop of the LDS Church, as the 11th president of the university in November 1995. On July 3, 1996, 79-year-old B. Gerald Cantor passed away in Los Angeles, California, leaving his wife Iris to assume the leadership responsibilities of the foundation. In November 1996, the university appointed a new director of the art museum. The museum's new director, Campbell Gray, was an Australian citizen with the right qualifications for managing a university art museum, but somewhat unfamiliar with the uniqueness of BYU.

Additionally, in the spring of 1996, officials at the Cantor Foundation decided to honor B. Gerald Cantor by supplementing the exhibition with some larger, more spectacular works from Cantor's collection, including *The Kiss*. With the opening of the exhibition approaching, museum administrators began a serious review of the objects in the exhibition. After carefully looking at images of the works, museum officials were concerned about the possibility of a negative reaction from the community to a few of the nude works because museum personnel had received complaints about less provocative works in the past.

In fact, issues of nudity and pornography had also come to a boiling point in the surrounding community during this time period. In 1996, criminal pornography charges were filed against the owners of a local movie rental chain (Miller, 1996b; Romboy, 1996b), concerned residents formed an anti-pornography group that included local church leaders and city officials (Romboy, 1996a), and parents from the community gathered 2,500 signatures on a petition to oppose what they called "pornographic materials and concern about loosening public morals" (Miller, 1996a, ¶ 9).

Not wanting the university leadership to be surprised by unanticipated complaints from the community about the Rodin exhibition—let alone an organized community protest—museum administrators decided the best way to mitigate this problem was to involve the new university president. Museum administrators sent images of the works in the Rodin exhibition to the new president for review prior to the exhibition opening.

During this same time period, museum employees had been sending out regular updates to the local media to generate excitement for the exhibition. When word came back from the university president that he was uncomfortable with some of the works, communication with the media abruptly stopped. Museum officials assumed that the situation would be resolved rather quickly—one or two discussions at the most—that the exhibition would go on, and that the communication with the media would resume; but the discussions lasted two months. Because of the abrupt silence, it soon became apparent to the media that something was going on, and reporters began to ask questions that museum officials could not answer. The lack of response from the museum sparked the media's curiosity about what was happening with the exhibition.

When the works arrived, the group of university administrators and museum officials who were involved in the discussions about the potentially problematic nude works went to see them at the museum. Ultimately this group made the decision not to exhibit three of the nude figures. On Friday, October 24, 1997, three days before the exhibition was scheduled to open, university and museum officials were ready to make their decision public. Museum administrators called the Cantor Foundation to inform them of the decision (Wertheimer & Brandwynne, 1997).

On Sunday, October 26, 1997, three stories about the Rodin exhibition ran in local

newspapers: one in the Salt Lake Tribune and two in The Daily Herald, Provo's community newspaper. On Monday, October 27, 1997, the opening day of the exhibition, The Daily Herald article about the university's decision, which had been rewritten by the Salt Lake Tribune ("BYU bans," 1997) and distributed by the Associated Press (AP), appeared on the AP Web site ("Nudes from Rodin," 1997), The Seattle Times ("Across the nation," 1997), CNN Online ("University censors," 1997a), and The Chronicle of Higher Education (Wanat, 1997). The first few paragraphs of many of these articles made specific mention that the university was excluding one of the most famous works, *The Kiss*, by one of the most important sculptors of all time.

On Tuesday, October 28, 1997, seven more articles were printed in local and national newspapers about the university's decision. Versions of the AP story ran in the New York Times ("Footlights," 1997) and USA Today ("BYU officials," 1997). By Wednesday, October 29, 1997, the story about the university's decision to keep four works out of the Rodin exhibition was getting more national exposure and was beginning to receive increased global attention. Two days later more than 200 BYU students staged a protest in front of the main administration building on campus (Carter, 1997c; Cole & Sonne, 1997; Meyers, 1997; Van Benthuysen, 1997c; "Y. students," 1997). During the remaining three months of the exhibition, portions of the AP story continued to appear in newspapers across the United States and in other countries.

Shortly after the Rodin controversy was first reported in the news media, letters from passionate writers on either side of the Rodin issue began to pour into the editorial offices of *The Salt Lake Tribune*, *The Deseret News*, *The Daily Herald*, and *The Daily Universe*. These letters continued to be printed for the remaining months of the exhibition's stay in Provo. Additionally, museum personnel received numerous letters, phone calls, and e-mails either applauding the decision to stand up for the standards of the LDS Church or condemning the decision and insulting the people who made it.

Thursday, November 14, 1997, essentially signaled the end of the media coverage of the Rodin decision. The president of the university held a question and answer session with students in which he specifically answered questions about the Rodin decision ("BYU President," 1997; Carter, 1997d). The president took responsibility for making the decision and acknowledged making a mistake in "failing to issue a formal statement about why the statues were being excluded" (Carter, 1997d, ¶ 8). The president explained that the values of the larger community, and not just the university student body, had to be taken into consideration because of the large number of schoolchildren who visit the museum every year ("BYU President," 1997; Carter, 1997d). Finally, he promised that the university would avoid future controversies by not contracting to show exhibits that may contain questionable material.

In the years following the Rodin controversy, under the guidance of the museum's new director, the staff created a new vision for the museum that would try to incorporate the spiritual and academic aims of the university.

Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World: Egypt, Greece, Rome

Sometime between December 2001 and January 2002, museum officials learned about an opportunity to mount a traveling exhibition from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, comprised of artifacts from the three most influential civilizations of the ancient world: Egypt, Greece, and Rome (Thompson, 2004; *Art of the Ancient*, 1999). The exhibition was curated with the intent to demonstrate how these three civilizations "influenced one another throughout their histories"

(*Art of the Ancient*, 1999, p. 17) and how they continue to influence the modern world (BYU Museum of Art, 2004).

      In the spring of 2003, museum officials began to evaluate the exhibition to determine whether or not to take the show (Lambert, 2003b; Thompson, 2004). One of the issues staff members were concerned about during this evaluation period was that a few works in the Greek section of the exhibition were nudes (Lambert, 2003a). Staff members were not surprised that there were nude works in this section of the exhibition; in fact, most staff members expected these kinds of works to be included in an exhibition about the ancient world.

      Early on, museum officials decided that this exhibition was consistent with the retooled academic mission of the museum, and instead of a broad marketing campaign for the show, museum personnel would focus their resources on the groups most likely to benefit from the academic discourse of the exhibition: university students and middle school students in grades 6 through 9. Museum staff members working on the exhibition felt strongly that these particular nude works were integral to the exhibition because the accurate and proportional depiction of the human form was an important cultural and artistic contribution of classical Greece.

      Despite the strong desire to show these works, staff members were still worried about the potential problems associated with elementary school children exploring a gallery with nude works of art, particularly the easily noticeable marble sculpture of the male torso. They were also concerned about not creating another Rodin-like problem for the university.

      Before the contract for the exhibition was signed, museum officials determined that they needed to get support for their decision from the Utah State Office of Education and the university administration. The museum educator assigned to work with the public schools made a phone call to the arts coordinator at the Utah State Office of Education to let this person know about the nude works that would be a part of the exhibition and to get feedback on the decision. Museum staff members also worked closely with university administrators to get their support for showing the nude works. The proposal from the museum was not automatically accepted by the university. In spite of all the museum's proposed efforts to mitigate the problem, university leaders were still concerned that there would be a negative response to these works. However, university leaders felt that museum officials had done about as much as they could to mitigate and minimize the potential for problems with these works and agreed to support the museum's decision.

      In June 2003, museum staff members working on the exhibition held a team meeting to discuss the language that would be used to address concerns about the nudes in the exhibition (Lambert, 2003e). In addition to crafting the language they would use to talk about their decision, museum staff members working on the exhibition thought about ways to contextualize these works within the gallery so visitors could understand the reasons they were included. With support from the pubic school system and the university in place, museum administrators proceeded with the legal negotiations, officially contracting to exhibit the show in November 2003, seven months before it was scheduled to open (Lambert, 2003f).

      After the exhibition opened on June 4, 2004, a large number of school groups began to schedule tours, and museum staff members debated whether or not to alert teachers about the nude works before they brought their classes. In the end, staff members decided to address any questions that teachers asked; however, they decided not to make a big deal of the nude works because they had the support of the State Office of Education.

All museum communication with the media was focused on the educational discourse of the exhibition. The exhibition received significant coverage that included many color images of the major works in the show in Utah's two major daily newspapers, as well as Provo's community newspaper (Clark, 2004; Fellow, 2004); and not a mention was made of the nude works. Other media outlets, including the BYU campus newspaper, *The Daily Universe* (Giles, 2004; Santiago, 2004), *The Church News* (Swenson, 2004; Swenson, 2005) and *BYU Magazine* (Winters, 2004) published positive reviews of the exhibition and the educational programming surrounding the exhibition.

Discussion

Recognizing Paradox

The first proposition of this study was that relationships between organizations and publics are defined by interdependence—or the autonomy-dependence paradox—and that the constant tension generated by the poles of this paradox can influence the decision making of relational partners. A natural consequence of this proposition is that organizational decisions or decisions made by publics can intensify the paradoxical tension in the relationship, increasing the desire of the relational partners to reduce the tension.

The case studies presented in this research clearly demonstrate that BYU Museum of Art employees felt the tensions caused by the autonomy-dependency paradox. The research also shows that these tensions had an effect on organizational decision-making and communication. Additionally, these case studies reveal that the BYU Museum of Art experiences the autonomy-dependency paradox on two distinct but closely related levels, increasing the tension when both levels of the paradox are manifest. The first level of the paradox is common to all art museums and is embedded within art museum culture and practice. The autonomy-dependency paradox at this level is manifest when art museums are forced to reconcile their historical mission of showing the public artworks that museum professionals think the public needs to see with the need to show the public artworks that the public wants to see. In other words, the central question of this level of the paradox is "who or what agency defines and determines a museum's offerings" (Kotler & Kotler, p. 30), the autonomy of the museum or dependence on the market?

The second level of the paradox exists specifically for the BYU Museum of Art because the museum is part of Brigham Young University. The autonomy-dependency paradox at this level has a direct correlation to the university's struggle to integrate secular academic pursuits with the religious principles and values of the LDS Church. This level of the paradox is manifest when museum decisions could be seen to compromise the spiritual and religious mission of the university. The central question of this level of the paradox asks whether the academic mission of the university, which would allow the museum a great deal of autonomy, or the religious mission of the university, which would cause the museum to be more dependent on religious criteria, "defines and determines [the] museum's offerings" (Kotler & Kotler, p. 30). This second level of the paradox may be the most important for the museum because it reflects the essence of Brigham Young University, of which the museum is a part. A BYU official addressing concerns over academic freedom at the university explained that "BYU intends to remain true to its intellectual and spiritual mission. If we abandoned our mission, there would be no reason for us to exist" (Carter, 1997a, ¶ 6- 8).

Museum officials used different paradox management strategies in the two cases reviewed in this study, providing additional insight into their level of understanding of the paradox. One interpretation of the events leading up to the university's decision about the Rodin sculptures is that museum officials adopted a defensive mechanism to deal with the potential embarrassment or threat posed by the paradoxical tensions of the Rodin situation (see Argyris, 1988). When museum officials decided to approach the university administration, they were seeking the administration's support and assistance in dealing with what they saw as a potential negative reaction from the community. It could be argued that the museum's decision to go along with the university's decision, even though some members of the museum staff felt that some of the works should not be excluded, was evidence of first-order thinking characteristic of defensive mechanisms, which are primarily used "to preserve the fundamentals of the existing order of things by changing the non-fundamentals" (Esterhuyse, 2003, p.2). By going along with the university's decision, the museum would be seen institutionally as a team player and not be sanctioned for stepping out of line with the university.

Another interpretation of the events leading to the university's decision about the Rodin sculptures is that museum officials adopted a compromise approach to deal with the paradox. According to da Cunha et al. (2007), compromising to paradoxical tensions can take the form of a contingency approach "where the organization chooses the right mix of opposites" (p. 14). van de Ven and Poole (1988) described this strategy as taking the "role of time into account," (p. 24). Similar to the contingency approach, when looking at paradox from a temporal perspective "one horn of the paradox is assumed to hold at one time and the other at a different time," (van de Ven & Poole, 1988, p. 24). Museum officials enjoyed considerable autonomy in their ability to determine the museum's exhibition program up until the point that museum officials realized that the Rodin exhibition they agreed to exhibit might cause problems for the university and the community. Because museum officials were under the impression that the exhibition had been approved institutionally they felt like they were being responsible in inviting the university president to the opening of the exhibition to assist the museum in quelling any negative response from the public. Once the university president realized that some of these works were more problematic than museum officials thought they were, museum officials abandoned the autonomy horn of the paradox in favor of the dependency horn, subjecting themselves and their decision making to the university to ensure the moral and religious integrity of the institution. After the controversy was over, museum officials returned to the autonomy horn of the paradox, selecting and exhibiting exhibitions without much intervention from the university. In fact many museum staff members felt that their support of the university's decision resulted in increased trust in their decision-making.

The museum's decision to support the university in the Rodin decision did not propel the museum into a self-destructive reinforcing cycle. On the contrary, by the time museum officials began dealing with the nudity issue in the *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World* exhibition, they had learned to recognize the paradox and live within the limits of their autonomy. Being aware of the paradox and learning to live with it constitutes the paradox management strategy of acceptance (Cameron & Quinn, 1988; da Cunha et al., 2007; Lewis, 2000; van de Ven & Poole, 1988). van de Ven and Poole (1988) argued that acceptance is a good first step in dealing with paradox because individuals and organizations "acknowledge that things need not be consistent; that seemingly opposed viewpoints can inform one another" (p. 23). This strategy allowed

museum decision makers to exercise autonomy in deciding to exhibit the nude works, which they felt were an integral part of the exhibition, while at the same time acknowledging that they needed to secure support from the stakeholders that would be affected by their decision. As a result of the university's increased trust in the museum, and the perceived broad autonomy of the museum, in the wake of both the Rodin and the *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World* exhibitions, museum officials seem to be flirting with a strategy for transcendence of the paradox, namely that increased organizational autonomy is directly related to increased recognition of organizational dependence.

The Hands of Rodin case study illustrates the problems that result from a limited understanding of the structuration process (Giddens, 1984). The museum did not understand the relational structures that have been co-created over time and space with stakeholders and publics and failed to acknowledge the agency of these groups to affect those structures. This case study also underscores the danger organizations face when they engage in routine action—assuming that because certain actions have been successful in the past that those actions will continue to be successful in the future. *The Art of the Mediterranean World* case study demonstrates the ability of organizations to work within the parameters of existing relational structures while recognizing the agency of stakeholder and publics to achieve structural change that is mutually accepted by all relational partners. This case study also shows the importance of reflexive action, or the ability to understand and explain the logic and reason of organizational actions.

The Hands of Rodin Case

The Hands of Rodin case study demonstrates that museum officials did not understand the relational structures they had co-created with stakeholder groups when they initially made the decision to host the Rodin exhibition. This case study also demonstrates that museum officials did not recognize the agency of the stakeholder groups that would be affected by this decision. Because museum officials did not understand these relational structures or recognize the agency of stakeholders to affect the structures, the actual outcome of their decisions was very unexpected. Many of the museum personnel interviewed for the case study expressed surprise at the reactions of various stakeholder groups both to the initial decision to host the exhibition and the subsequent decision to withhold the four works from the exhibition.

While museum officials seemed perplexed by the contentious outcome of the situation, it appears that the medium of the museum's interaction and the outcomes of it were, in fact, the same as predicted by Giddens. The museum's actions in contracting for the Rodin exhibition were based on misunderstanding—both of the museum's reasons for wanting to bring the exhibition to BYU and of the expectations of stakeholders about the appropriateness of certain works. Because misunderstanding was the medium of interaction initiated by the museum, the outcome of this interaction was also misunderstanding—misunderstanding with the university administration, with the Cantor Foundation, with BYU students, with professional peers, and with members of the community. Three main factors contributed to the museum's miscalculation of relational structural and the agency of affected stakeholder groups: 1) The museum was a new institution that was still forming relationships with stakeholders and publics; 2) The still-forming relational structures enabling and constraining the museum were subjected to radical change just prior to the Rodin exhibition; and 3) Museum officials were not reflexive about their actions, relying instead on routine actions established before the structural changes occurred.

The interactions between museum officials and university administrators before the Rodin exhibition opened at the museum illustrate how two groups can experience congruent, or legitimate, change that is mutually constructed by two parties. Once museum administrators recognized that there might be a problem with some of the works in the Rodin exhibition, they entered into a two-month long dialog with university officials about how to handle the problematic works. In the end, the university president made the decision to withhold four works from the exhibition, including *The Kiss*. Museum officials supported the decision and defended it publicly. The university president summarized the shared understanding between the university and the museum in the question and answer session for students near the end of the exhibition. He explained that the museum had to take into consideration the values of the larger community, and not just the university student body. He also explained that the university would avoid future controversies by not contracting to show exhibitions that may contain questionable material.

There were also members of the community for whom the university's decision was a legitimation of existing relational structures. This group of people wrote letters to the editor defending the museum, the university, and the decision to withhold the Rodin sculptures. For example, one letter writer asked, "what is wrong with a private, religious institution deciding to display only artwork which is in harmony with the teachings of the religion that sponsors it?" (Ball, 1997, ¶ 1). Another letter writer explained that "it's refreshing to see an institution that stands up for what it believes, regardless of internal and external pressures to conform to society's prevailing attitude" (Jarman, 1997, ¶ 1). Members of this group also sent letters of support and phoned museum personnel to applaud them for standing up for standards of the LDS Church. For this group the decision did not need any explanation. The decision was consistent with the ethical, legal, cultural, and in this case in particular, religious norms to which they expected the university to adhere.

Conversely, museum officials felt that their relationships with the groups that did not agree with the university's Rodin decision, including members of the community, as well as professional and academic peers who have the ability to veto loans of artworks and exhibitions, were damaged. Some of these organizations obviously felt that the museum had stepped far outside the bounds of professional museum practice, expressing surprise and disappointment, and accusing museum officials and university leaders of censorship. These accusations were surprising to members of the museum staff, as one person explained: "I would never in a million years have thought that it would be that big a deal because museum cut pieces out of exhibitions all the time for various reasons."

Museum and university officials failed to recognize the agency of these stakeholder groups. Before the Rodin decision was made, museum officials and university administrators did not consult with any of the groups that reacted negatively when the decision was announced. Most notably absent from the decision discussion was the Cantor Foundation, who was told about the university's final decision three days before the exhibition opened. These groups did not have priority in the initial discussion between university and museum officials about what to do with the questionable Rodin works. The power balancing mechanisms the dissenting groups consisted of protests covered by the media, and opinion pieces and letters to the editor in the local newspapers. For example, the organizer of the student protest explained to the media that the main reason for the protest was that students were not consulted about the decision. He noted that "had students been included in the decision . . . we wouldn't have this protest" (Carter,

1997c, ¶ 13).

After the Rodin controversy ended, it was apparent that museum officials had learned something about the relationship structures that had been created and reproduced with these groups as a result of their interactions during the controversy. In essence, the media coverage of the Rodin controversy enabled interaction between the museum and all of the museum's stakeholders by bringing them into the same space. Additionally, the extended media coverage and three-month run of the exhibition provided the museum with multiple opportunities to interact with these stakeholder groups. In the end, the multiple interactions between the museum and its stakeholders caused museum personnel to become more reflexive about their actions and resulted in museum personnel developing better understanding of their relational structures. One staff member explained: "I think we are even more careful now than we were. I think that we are more sensitive to the fact that we are going to have a part of an audience that is greatly offended by a work of art." Much of what museum staff members learned from the Rodin experience influenced, to a great degree, the development of a new mission and vision for the museum that incorporated both the religious and academic facets of the museum's identity.

The Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World Case

The interaction of museum officials with the stakeholders who would be affected by the decision to show in the *Art of the Mediterranean World* exhibition demonstrated that museum officials had a better understanding of the museum's relationships with its stakeholders and understood the importance of allowing these stakeholders to exercise their agency in co-producing the structures of the relationship. Before museum officials signed the contract to bring this exhibition to the university they actively sought out the stakeholders who would be affected by their decision and discussed the matter of the nude works with them. The result of these discussions was that all of the relevant stakeholders came to agreement that these were the types of works that the museum should be exhibiting. Once again in this case study, the medium and the outcome were the same. Museum officials were sure of their actions, they better understood the potential reaction of their stakeholders, and they approached the issue of exhibiting the nude works with openness, transparency, and genuine dialog. The outcome of this interaction was open and transparent response from the museum's stakeholders and positive response to the resulting exhibition from the media and museum visitors.

From the moment museum officials learned about the possibility of bringing the *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World* exhibition to BYU, they were engaged in reflexive action. Museum officials did not rely on habitual or routine action. They recognized that the museum was "clearly in the post-Rodin era" and always would be because the Rodin controversy was such a "defining moment for the museum." The Rodin experience was so powerful on the minds of the museum staff that one expressed that there was not "any doubt that the Rodin experience has informed everything that we do around the subject [of nudity], ever." The controversy surrounding the Rodin decision helped museum personnel better understand potential community reactions, including the possible "flash points, both on the positive and negative side" of the issue.

After some internal debate, museum personnel determined that the nude works were an integral part of the exhibition. They also determined that the nude works were consistent with the museum's new mission and the university's religious mission. After making this evaluation,

museum personnel began the process of figuring out how to work within their existing relational structures to achieve legitimation for this decision through open and transparent communication and dialog. Museum officials did not try to force their decision on stakeholders by attempting to exercise control through relational resources, rather they acknowledged the agency of these groups to draw their own conclusions about the museum's decision. Museum officials expressed a "deep desire to remain respectful to the feelings of our audience" and made a serious effort to "examine the issues surrounding the appropriateness of making them [the nude works] available to our visitors" (Thompson, 2003, ¶ 2).

Additionally, the museum's positive engagement with stakeholders to create and reproduce relational structures since Rodin has seemed to heal some of the museum's relationships with a few of the stakeholder groups that became defensive during the Rodin controversy. According to museum staff members, there had not been trouble borrowing works or contracting for exhibitions with other art institutions. Museum staff members reported that they had attended many professional conferences and had not been treated poorly by peers. And the museum's director was eventually accepted into the most prestigious association for art museum directors in North America. A few staff members commented that the museum's consistent program of "dynamic, adventurous, provocative, stimulating exhibitions" had built up relationships with a number of these groups over time. However some staff member also noted that there are some groups "whose views are never going to change."

Authenticity

When museum officials achieved a deeper sense of organizational self-awareness and understood the need for self-regulation, they were able to stay in the paradox, exploring its tensions rather than attempting to suppress them. This enabled museum officials to manage the museum's behavior and communication in relation to those tensions rather than resorting to defensive mechanisms focused on control and autonomy that exacerbate tensions for the museum's stakeholders and publics. Additionally, these case studies reveal that self-awareness and authenticity are fundamentally linked to paradox. In these cases, the museum had to understand and reconcile three different layers of its identity to become self-aware: 1) What it means to be an art museum; 2) What it means to be a university art museum; and, 3) What it means to be a university art museum operated by the LDS Church. The simultaneous interaction of these three different identities is the origin of both levels of the autonomy-dependency paradox experienced by the museum. The interaction of the first two layers of the museum's identity defines the first level of the paradox, and the interaction of the second two layers defines the second level of the paradox. Therefore, the paradoxes of museum vs. market and academy vs. religion are embedded into the very fabric of the museum's existence and are integral components of the museum's identity.

Hands of Rodin

The *Hands of Rodin* case study demonstrates that museum officials struggled with self-awareness. Museum officials were not organizationally self-aware because they had not yet come to understand the unique contextual factors that defined the museum's existence. One of those contextual factors was the autonomy-dependency paradox. In the first few years of the museum's existence, museum officials responded to the first level of the autonomy-dependency

paradox by favoring market-dependence over museum autonomy. Museum officials hoped that an exhibition featuring a well-known artist who had created iconic works of art would be exciting opportunity for the surrounding community. At the same time, museum staff members were also interested in the educational value the exhibition could provide for the students and professors on campus, who would have a rare opportunity to learn from these works in person rather than just studying them in a book. These two motivations for agreeing to host the exhibition demonstrate that museum officials were struggling to reconcile the first two levels of organizational self-awareness.

As previously explained, museum officials also struggled with the second level of the autonomy-dependency paradox, which has its roots in the third layer of the museum's identity: the university's affiliation with the LDS Church. Museum staff members were aware that the museum was expected to uphold the same standards of the LDS Church as the rest of the university. They also knew from experience that nude works of art were problematic for some museum visitors who thought an LDS university shouldn't exhibit nude artworks. However, museum officials wanted to show works of art that they thought were important, and they felt that problems with nudity in this exhibition could be overcome because of the iconic nature of the works. One staff member summed up the museum's attempts to deal with these paradoxical tensions by noting that these works were pushing the edge of what could be shown at the museum, even though these works were considered masterpieces.

Explanations of why the museum decided to withhold sculptures also reflected a lack of self-awareness to some stakeholder groups. These explanations were inconsistent with the expectations these groups had of what an art museum should be—the first and second layers of the museum's identity. The explanation for withholding the four works was out of respect for the museum's more conservative and sensitive community members. The most inauthentic statements reported in the media carried an air of paternity and control. This conflicted with what museum leaders thought of the purpose of an art museum, which was to "connect and engage with an audience . . . and expand not only in number but in intellect and appreciation and . . . affection for art" in a way that encourages the appreciation of others and their ideas. This inconsistency between the explanation about why the decision was made and the true nature of the art museum experience was a key factor in the negative response of some stakeholders and publics to the decision. While some groups saw the museum's public explanations of the Rodin decision as inauthentic, other groups felt that the decision and the explanations were completely authentic. The decision and the subsequent explanations were consistent with the expectations these groups had of what an art museum on the campus of an LDS Church-owned university should be—the third layer of the museum's identity. While museum officials mostly talked about concern for museum visitors, university officials explained that the decision was made to uphold the standards of the church. On a few occasions a university spokesman emphasized that BYU was "a peculiar place with a peculiar set of old fashioned values" ("Four Rodin," 1997, ¶ 7).

The *Hands of Rodin* case study also demonstrates that museum officials struggled with self-regulation. Museum officials did not self-regulate because they had not yet set internal standards against which they could assess discrepancies between their standards and the expected outcomes of their decisions. Because museum officials had not figured out how to reconcile the three layers of their identity, it was hard for them to set a standard against which to judge the decision to bring the Rodin exhibition to the museum. The outcome of the case study

demonstrates that the third layer of the museum's identity was the most crucial in setting a standard against which to judge the decision; however, museum officials only appear to have seriously considered the first two layers of the museum's identity in initially judging the appropriateness of their decision.

Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World

The second case study clearly demonstrates that museum officials had become more self-aware of the three layers of the museum's identity. Early in the evaluation of the exhibition, museum officials determined that the nude works in the show were not of the same order as the sensual, provocative works that caused the Rodin controversy. Staff members explained that classical sculpture has a certain air of conservatism because of its age and history of cultural acceptance. They felt that not showing these sculptures would be inconsistent with the mission of the museum and the educational message of the exhibition.

Once museum officials determined that these works were in line with the mission of the museum, now in line with the mission and values of the university, they proceeded to engage stakeholder groups in the decision in open and transparent dialogue that allowed for potential scrutiny regarding their reasons for the decision.. This seems to indicate that museum officials were comfortable enough with the two levels of the paradox at this point that they could help other groups navigate through its tensions. Museum visitors from campus and the community did not seem to see inconsistencies in this decision either as there were no complaints about the works, even though there was ample time in the year-long run of the exhibition for someone to complain. As shown in the *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World* case study, organizations become more authentic when they realize they are partners who must engage other agents in the social construction of reality, because the authentic self both shapes and is shaped by social exchanges with others (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Eagly, 2005; Erickson, 1995).

Based on their experiences in the Rodin exhibition and their new understanding of the mission of the museum, museum officials had set internal standards by the time of the *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World* exhibition. While evaluating the exhibition, they exercised self-control discussing the discrepancies between museum standards and the outcomes of potential decisions, which were influenced by paradoxical tensions. Ultimately, as a result of this process, they identified a way to reconcile internal museum standards with external behavior.

Conclusion

These case studies demonstrate that self-awareness is not a destination point, but an emerging process that is influenced by the paradoxical tensions that define organizations and organization-public relationships. As organizations become self-aware, they have a better ability to self-regulate, which keeps them in the midst of the paradox, to explore its tensions rather then succumb to them. Even though organizations may become self-aware and develop the ability to self-regulate, there may be stakeholders groups or publics that decide that the organization no longer shares their values and may look elsewhere to fulfill their impulse to be part of an authentic collective. This is not an indication that the organization is no longer trustworthy. It is an indication that the organization is not holding anything back. The organization has become the embodiment of its authentic self which has allowed the stakeholder group or public to decide for itself whether it wants to continue the relationship or not. In this situation organizations can

adopt the conflict management strategy identified in the organization-public relationship literature of agreeing to disagree (Hon & Grunig, 1999) instead of trying to force a two-way symmetrical relationship with an uninterested party. However, organizations should always leave the door open for reconciliation with these stakeholder groups should they decide to align themselves with the organization again in the future.

Adopting a structuration perspective can help organizations think divergently about the autonomy-dependency paradox by assisting them in realizing they are dependent on the relationship structures that have been co-created and will be reproduced by interactions with stakeholders and publics (Erickson, 1995; Rawlins & Stoker, 2002), and in recognizing that stakeholders and publics can influence the relational structure through their agency (Eagly, 2005; Rawlins & Stoker, 2002; Stoker & Tusinski, 2006). As such, the case studies support the OPR notion that relationships are defined by interdependence, or the centripetal and centrifugal forces of autonomy and dependence, and that the constant tension between the two poles of this paradox influence the decision making of the relational partners. Organizational acknowledgement of the agency of stakeholders and publics is a key step in moving organizations deeper into paradoxical tension where true breakthroughs can be achieved and reinforcing cycles can be avoided.

Finally, this study showed that organizations that consider their authenticity can more effectively negotiate paradoxical tensions by managing organizational responses to those tensions rather than attempting to manage the behavior of their stakeholders. This perspective also can assist organizations in thinking paradoxically by encouraging organizations to become self-aware (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Rawlins & Stoker, 2002), and to use their knowledge of relational structures along with their understanding of their authentic selves to self-regulate (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Eagly, 2005; Rawlins & Stoker, 2002; Rawlins & Stoker, 2006, March; Stoker & Tusinski, 2006).

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APPENDIX

Interview Questions:

RQ1) Did museum decision makers recognize the paradox and/or the elements contributing to the paradox?

1. When did you first realize that there was a potential problem with the nude artworks in the exhibition?
2. Why did you think it was going to be a problem?
3. Who did you think it was going to be a problem for?
4. What did you think their reaction would be? Why?
5. How would you describe the situation the museum was in because of these artworks?

RQ2) How did museum decision makers experience the tensions of the paradox?

1. Do you remember what it felt like to be in this situation? Can you describe it for me?
2. Were there pressures on the museum to behave a certain way?
3. Where did those pressures come from?
4. How influential on the museum were they?

RQ3) How did organizational decision makers view the organization's relationships with its publics?

1. Once the decision about the artworks was made, how did expect the museum's various publics/stakeholders to react?
2. Why did you feel they would react this way?
3. How did the publics'/stakeholders' actual reactions to the decision about the artworks affect your view of the museum's relationships with them?

RQ4) Did organizational decision makers believe they stayed true to the values and mission of the organization in their decision making?

1. Do you feel that the decision about the artworks was consistent with the mission and values of the museum? Why do you feel that way?
2. Is there anything that could have been done to ensure that this decision was consistent with the mission of the museum and its values?

RQ5) Did organizational decision makers believe their communication with their publics was aligned with their decision making?

1. Do you feel that the way the decision about the artworks was communicated to the museums publics/stakeholders was consistent with the reasons the decision was made? Why do you feel that way?
2. Is there anything that could have been done to improve communication about this decision with the museum's publics/stakeholders?