

How to Use the *Synergetics Dictionary*

The description of the dictionary and instructions for its use are divided into the following sections: Rationale; Captions; Citations; Cross-References; Scope; File Indicators; Tomographic Effect; Enter with Your Word: Exit with Fuller's.

RATIONALE

The design of the dictionary derives from the assumption that Fuller's idiosyncratic style, difficult syntax, and predilection for oral discourse make his message not easily accessible to the average reader. He has a penchant for juggling several themes at once in an interwoven tapestry of exposition. Even his most terse and pithy statements benefit from being read in context. Sometimes an extended metaphor may take him pages to complete while he strings together a provocative pattern of digressions and observations.

For example: "Time is an invention." Certainly this thought is an arresting one. It merits being abstracted for comparison with other Fullerian inventions. But to get the author's full philosophic intent it must be read in context where the dictionary file card indicates it may be found, at both *Twelve Universal Degrees of Freedom*, 29 May '72, and *Timeless*, 1 April '72.

Thus the rationale of the file is to provide the reader with both the short focus on the isolated aphoristic net statement—or definition—as well as the full context from which the word or phrase was abstracted. At the price of redundancy, the dictionary affords both.

Letter to Dale Klaus: On the ninth of February, 1970, Fuller wrote a letter to his administrative assistant at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, which read in part:

Dale:

Please arrange with Constance Abernethy [a free-lance editor in New York] to have an exhaustively cross-referenced, alphabetically coded, first-word indexing of my topical concept files upon which she has been working for several years. I feel it imperative for the World Game computerization of the scenario strategies that this work be completed while I am as yet alive and able to supervise its insinuation into the total playing and to be able to do so at the outset before lines of alternative and less alternative strategems have been hardened—which may preclude the ready insinuation into the grand strategy of the insights and concepts which I have been employing successfully over the years. . . . I want you also to study the means . . . to package up all the concepts for quick retrieval printouts to save me from a fantastic magnitude of repetitive discourse and writing.

Commencing exploration: The best way to judge an atlas is by looking up your home town or some place you are familiar with. What are some phrases that come to mind when you think of Buckminster Fuller? Such phrases or key words should lead you to main entries or a choice of cross-references.

If nothing in particular comes to mind, try starting in at any of the following:

Starting with Universe
Identity
Technocracy
Social Sciences: Analogue to Physical
Sciences
Games

Sex
Dreams
Prognostications about Future of Man
Artist
Walking

CAPTIONS

At the top left-hand corner of every dictionary entry, and above the underlined caption, is the phrase "RBF DEFINITIONS."* The caption itself, whether a word or a phrase or a clause, is always underlined. And the caption is invariably in Fuller's own language wherever it is followed by an excerpted text. Captions which are not representative of Fuller's vocabu-

lary are employed only for purposes of cross-reference.

*Where the phrase "RBF DEFINITIONS" is three to five spaces to the left of the margin, this indicates all extracts included in the Princeton Datafilm microfiche edition of July 1976. In extracts cited since that date the phrase "RBF DEFINITIONS" is directly flush with the left margin.

CITATIONS

Citations are listed as the bottom line or last two lines of the file-card entry. They are from both published and unpublished sources. Published sources list the title of the volume in capital letters, the page number or numbers, and the year of publication. Only a very few unpublished sources are undated; most unpublished citations provide month, day, and year as well as a geographical location. One of the purposes of the precise dating of citations is not only to list them in proper order for cross-reference but to provide a documentation of the evolutions and refinements of Fuller's phraseology of his concepts over a period of many years.

The major published sources for citations in this dictionary are the two volumes *Synergetics* and *Synergetics 2*

published by Macmillan in 1975 and 1979; in these cases, citations are to section number rather than page number. In many cases the cited text will have preceded or anticipated the text of the books as finally published; in these cases section numbers have been provided retrospectively.

Synergetics 2 is sometimes referred to as "Synergetics, 2nd. ed." Section numbers cited in italics (e.g., Sec. 100.020) or preceded by "s" (e.g., Sec. s100.020) also refer to *Synergetics 2*. The abbreviation "I & I" stands for *Ideas and Integrity*; "U or O" stands for *Utopia or Oblivion*. Citations such as these appearing in IBM typeface were prepared specially for the Garland edition of the dictionary.

CROSS-REFERENCES

There are three types of cross-references indicated by a number in parentheses in the upper right-hand corner of the file entry: primary reference (1); secondary reference (2); and third-level reference (3). An effort has been made to provide cross-references that are extensive if not ex-

haustive. However, some entries will have no cross-references, some will have only primary references, many will have both primary and secondary references, and only major subjects will be recapitulated with third-level references. Examples are as follows:

Primary references

Membrane:

(1)

See Diaphragming
Invisible Trampoline
Occulting Membranes
Omnidirectional Shutterable Sieve
Monometric Bubble
Skins
Electromagnetic Membrane

All entries under each cross-reference refer to the caption
Membrane.

Sweepout:

(1)

See Ecology
Deployment: Man's Increasing Deployment Pattern
Human Sense Ranging & Information Gathering
Locomotion: Radius of Man's Locomotion
Man's Universe Penetrations
Man's Degrees of Freedom of Action
Outreach
Radial Reach
Reachability Range
Science-Technology-Industry-Economics-Politics Sequence
Travel in a Human Lifetime

All entries under each cross-reference refer to the caption
Sweepout.

Secondary references

<p><u>Membrane:</u> See Bubbles, (2) Domains of Actions, 21 Dec '71 Privacy, 22 Apr '61</p>	(2)
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Only the specific entry cited in the cross-reference refers to the caption *Membrane*.

When an asterisk (*) appears following a citation in the listing of secondary references, it means that you need not bother to look it up in its primary location, as that particular

reference has already been abstracted and retyped for inclusion (in proper chronological sequence) among the subject captions in the upper left-hand corner.

Third-level references

<p><u>Cosmic: Cosmos: Cosmology:</u> See Cosm Cosmetry Cosmic Accounting Cosmically Bankrupt Cosmic Bridge Cosmic Coherence Cosmic Communication Circuits Cosmic Complementary</p>	(3)
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The third-level cross-reference card recapitulates all the subordinate captions under the major topic.

SCOPE

The editor has attempted to be highly selective and discriminating in compiling this dictionary. Fuller's vocabulary

is unconventional but consistent, in both its employment of invented words and its use of familiar words in a

special way. Wherever possible both the most concise and the most all-embracing definitions are presented, always in the author's own words.

There are two main classes of entries (intermingled by alphabetical accident):

Definitions: The definitions are explicit statements of what RBF means by each word he uses. Some words in the Fuller litany are limited to the most graphic examples. In only a few categories does the file attempt to be exhaustive, mostly with abstract or philosophical concepts. In some cases there appears a fairly exhaustive rec-

ord of the chronological evolution of the author's phraseology.

Metaphors: Sequences: "Metaphors" and "sequences" are the terms used to describe the many frequently recurring narrative passages employed primarily in RBF's oral discourse. These are captioned and indexed under a selected salient phrase, all of which are recapitulated under the file indicator *Sequences*. Sometimes as many as a half-dozen different versions of the same theme are included in the files where there appear to be significant variations.

FILE INDICATORS

The file indicators comprise a virtual fourth level of cross-references in an effort to make every aspect of Fuller's language available to the reader for

easy access. See page xiii of this volume for a list of the principal file indicators with page numbers.

TOMOGRAPHIC EFFECT

To illustrate how the *Dictionary* allows for exploration of the full context of an entry, one of the file entries for *Periodic Experience* is reproduced below. The words for which there are

cross-references have been italicized in this example and references suggesting further planes of meaning have been added vertically.

	(1)	
SUBJECTIVE & OBJECTIVE	<p><u>Periodic Experience:</u></p> <p>"Mathematical concepts of group phenomena may be acquired in principle by the willingness (<i>subjectively</i> initiated) of the <i>individual</i> to be governed by the integrity of progressive conceptioning principle--the <i>objective synchronizations</i> are implicit and unavoidable competence and comprehensive, realizable design will result. Let us pursue further the conceptioning in specifics of <i>group principle</i>.</p> <p>"It is not difficult to understand that the trends to synchronization by <i>harmonic interval</i> of one collection of events can seemingly and sumtotally create an aspect of such superficial incongruity in respect to the sumtotal collected harmonic events of other phases of functional disposition, of the differentiable Universe, as to predispose us to assume that there might never be synchronization of one major collection with another. We obviously incline to this predisposition by virtue of the persistence of the familiar in our own <i>environmental close-up</i>--thought, which causes the <i>dynamic</i> interpenetrations to appear as a <i>static</i>, rather than as a <i>periodic-continuity</i> environment reality.</p> <p>—Cite TOTAL THINKING, I & I, pp. 237-238, May '49</p>	INDIVIDUAL & GROUP PRINCIPLE
THOUGHT		ENVIRONMENTAL CLOSE-UP PERIODIC CONTINUITY DYNAMIC VS. STATIC

**ENTER WITH YOUR
WORD: EXIT WITH
FULLER'S**

Enter with
Helicopter
Artificial
Intelligence
Hell
Infinity
Politics

Words

Amphibious

Exit with
Sky Tug
No Mechanical
Mind
Ultimate Entropy
Nothingness
Social
Economics
Unitary
Communi-
cations Tools
Omnimedium
Transport