

WELCOME TO THE

RED RIVER INSTITUTE



2015 SPRING CONFERENCE

Witchdoctor's Ball





Why the Witchdoctor Lives  
at the Edge of Town ...



Perspectives  
for  
the Postmodern  
Healer



[www.witchdoctorspeaks.com](http://www.witchdoctorspeaks.com)



**Why the Witchdoctor Lives  
at the Edge of T'own ...**



**a tribute to Jay Haley**



**Why the Witchdoctor Lives  
at the Edge of T'own ...**



**a tribute to Jay Haley... 3 CEHs in Diagnosis**





A consortium of mental health practitioners, educators, and policy-makers dedicated to the creation of a healthy professional culture for all mental health practitioners.





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RED RIVER INSTITUTE

2015 SUMMER SYMPOSIUM

AUGUST 21 & 22

# STRATEGIC THERAPY & SUPERVISION

12 CEHs OF APPROVED CONTINUING EDUCATION  
FOR LMFTs & LPCs



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Explore the relationship between the act of diagnosis & the process of healing
- Explore the difference between a diagnosis & a clinical hypothesis
- Explore the ethical & unethical use of conventional diagnoses



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Explore the creative use of labels to facilitate healing— How to become a Witchdoctor In Training!





GOODDIAGNOSISBADTHERAPY

diagnosis&healing

**diagnosis**

the art & science of distinguishing **this** from **that**.

**creating  
a taxonomy**

building a system for sorting and organizing **this** & **that**.

**healing**



A complex process that relieves & restores.

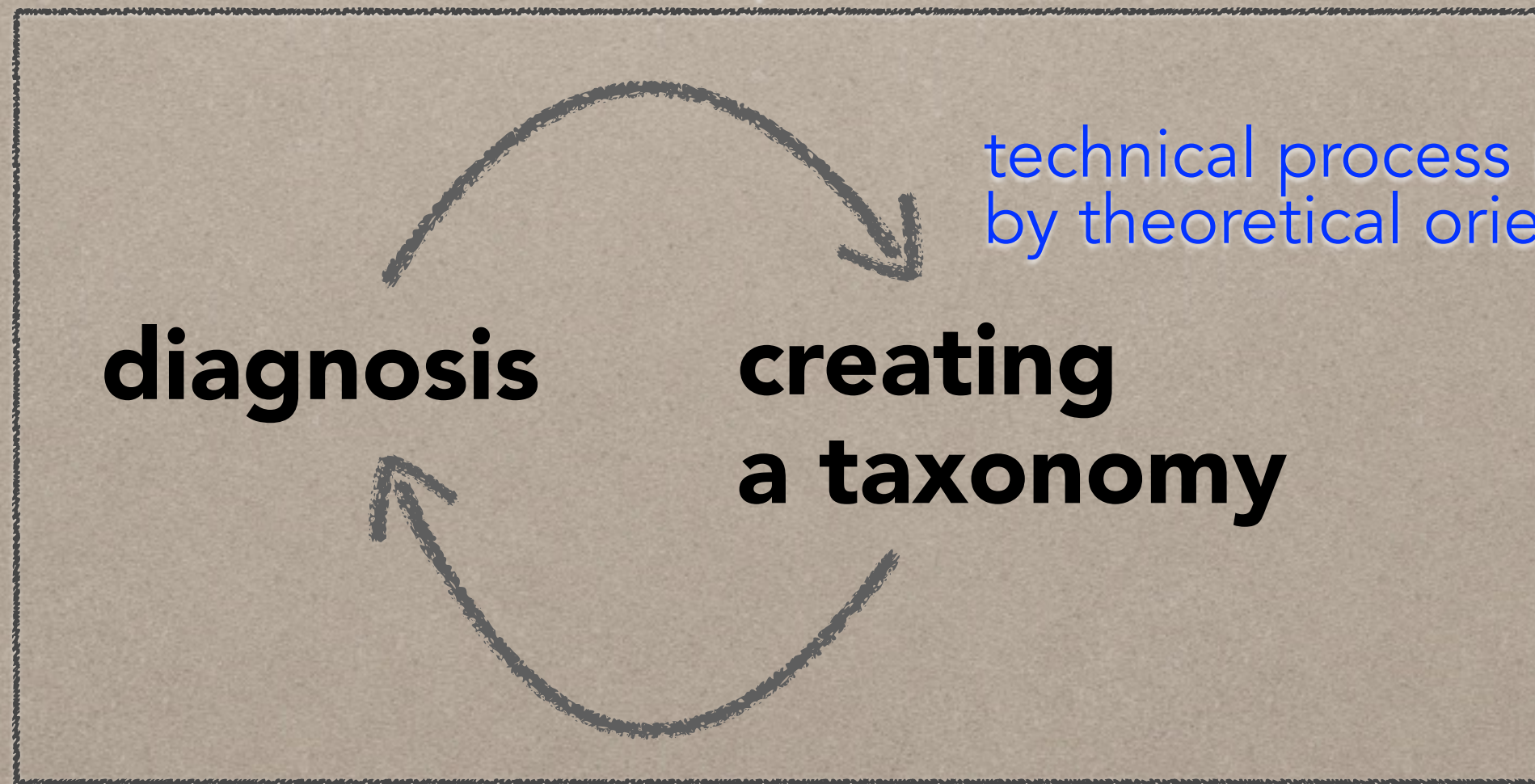


GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

diagnosis & healing

**healing**

transtheoretical, transdisciplinary  
ethical imperative



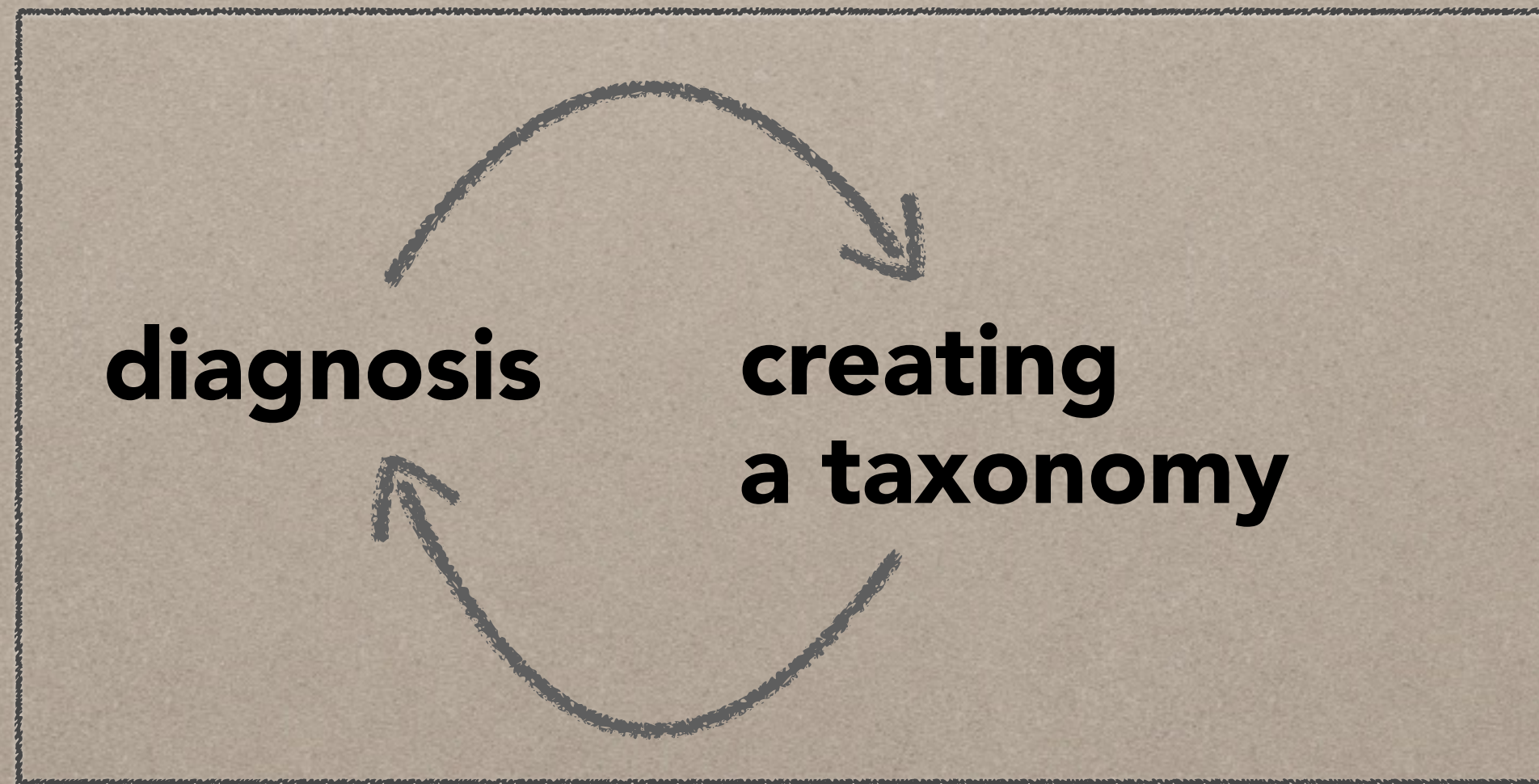
**diagnosis**

**creating  
a taxonomy**



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY  
diagnosis & healing

healing . . ? **profit politics**





GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## diagnosis & healing

- As a human being we cannot not “diagnosis” & create taxonomies.
- As clinicians, we are compelled to create specialized taxonomies informed by our **ideas of problem formation & problem resolution.**
- The act of “diagnosing” is never a neutral act. it carries real-world consequences that either enhance or detract from well-being.



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

diagnosis & healing

- Ethics requires that the clinician diagnose in a manner that leads to **healing action**.



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY  
framing & labelling

## baseball

boy 1 throws ball

boy 2 hits ball



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

framing & labelling

**baseball**

boy 1 throws ball

boy 2 hits ball

boy 2 runs to wicket

*dissonance*





GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

framing & labelling

**cricket** semantic or "second-order"  
description

boy 1 throws ball

boy 2 hits ball

boy 2 runs to wicket

political or "first order"  
description



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## framing & labelling

### cricket

boy 1 throws ball

boy 2 hits ball

boy 2 runs to wicket

director yells cut



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## framing & labelling

### movie about cricket

boy 1 throws ball

boy 2 hits ball

boy 2 runs to wicket

director yells cut

director wakes up



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## framing & labelling

### **dream about cricket movie**

boy 1 throws ball

boy 2 hits ball

boy 2 runs to wicket

director yells cut

director wakes up



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

framing & labelling

**borderline**

wife yells

wife yells at husband



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## framing & labelling

### **spousal conflict**

wife yells

wife yells at husband

husband responds-  
subdues intruder



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## framing & labelling

### **great teamwork**

wife yells

wife yells at husband

husband responds-  
subdues intruder

wife wakes up in  
a panic



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## framing & labelling

### PTSD

wife yells

wife yells at husband

husband responds-  
subdues intruder

wife wakes up in  
a panic



# GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## framing & labeling

- Meaning is derived when there is coherence or **resonance** between semantic & political descriptions of a given frame of reference.
- Resonance will be achieved or maintained by modifying either the semantic or political descriptions of a given frame of reference.
- The clinician's theoretical orientation predisposes the clinician to apply a particular semantic frame to the narrative of the client.



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

framing & labelling



The clinician's frame of reference is forever partial, incomplete, & tentative—and must be kept in flux to maintain its relevance to the needs of the client.



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

diagnosis vs hypothesis

## **DSM Diagnosis**

---

atheoretical description of  
**syndromes**

taxonomic label divorced  
from treatment

used to communicate about  
clusters of symptoms across  
disciplines

## **Clinical Hypothesis**

---

theoretical statement about  
a co-created problem

clinical statement informed  
by theory that suggests a  
solution to a problem

used to generate and test  
clinical interventions



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

diagnosis vs hypothesis

## **DSM Diagnosis**

---

static

## **Clinical Hypothesis**

---

fluid; value is relative to its usefulness in bringing about positive change



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

diagnosis **vs** hypothesis



The skill of the clinician in utilizing the DSM taxonomy to categorize “**symptomology**” is unrelated to his or her skill in facilitating positive change in the life of the client being diagnosed.



Rather, creating positive change is dependent on the clinician’s skill in formulating **clinical hypotheses** consistent with his or her theoretical orientation and testing them with interventions.



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

diagnosis **vs** hypothesis



Utilization of the DSM as a medical book of disorders rather than a taxonomy of syndromes tempts the clinician to **ignore uniquenesses** in the client that often hold the key to facilitating positive change . . .



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

diagnosis vs hypothesis



. . . and also can discourage the clinician from exploring **key contextual elements** in the narrative of the client that may be important in facilitating healing.



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

## ethical **label** management

- Any labels that arise from “godlike certainty” should immediately be scrapped.
- Any labels used by the clinician should result in empowerment and hope for the client and the clinician.
- The clinician must be willing to deconstruct & reframe labels that oppress, discourage, belittle, marginalize, or create disbelief in the client’s ability to change.



GOOD DIAGNOSIS BAD THERAPY

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# Witchdoctor Training Exercise

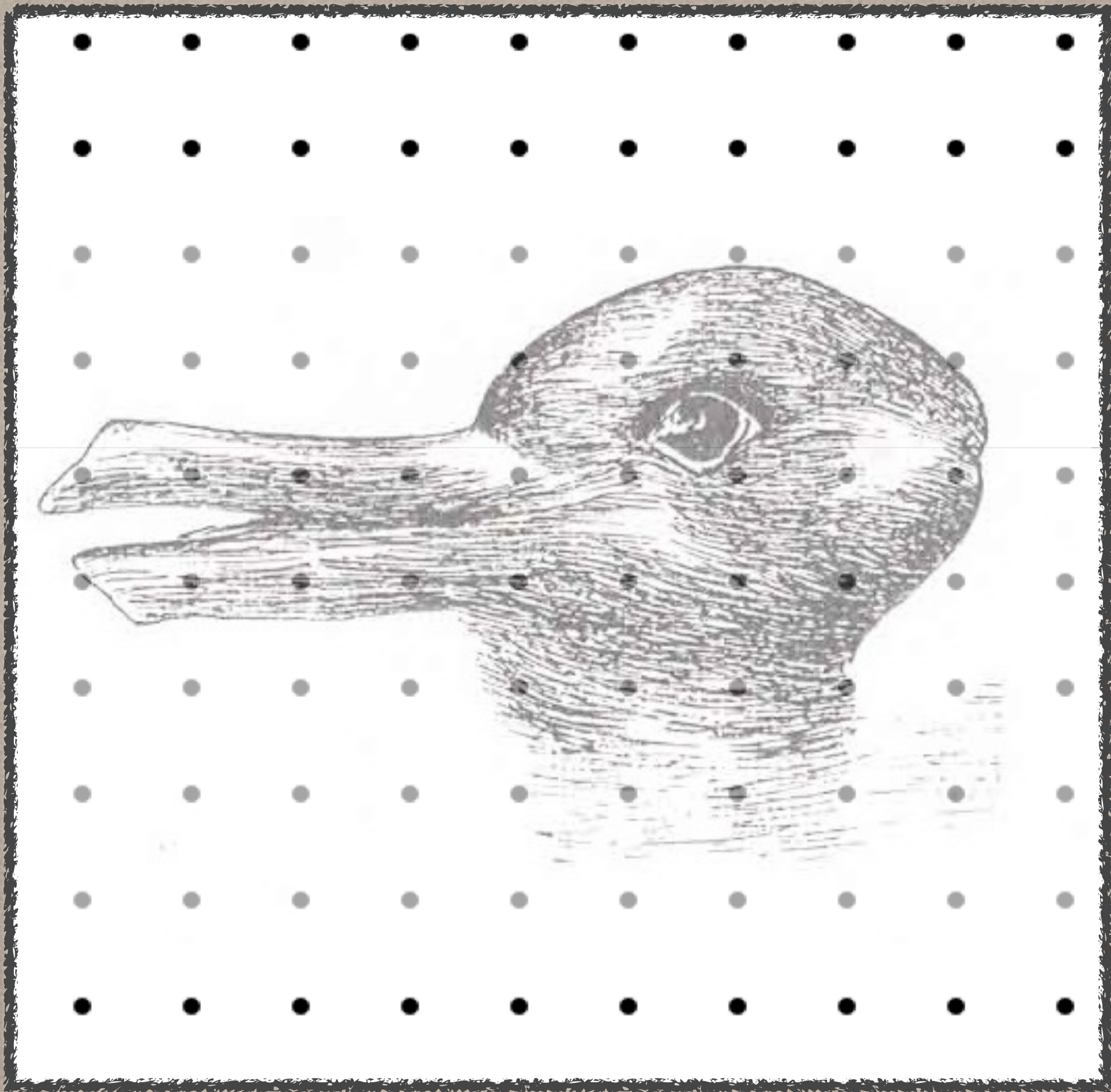






political frame

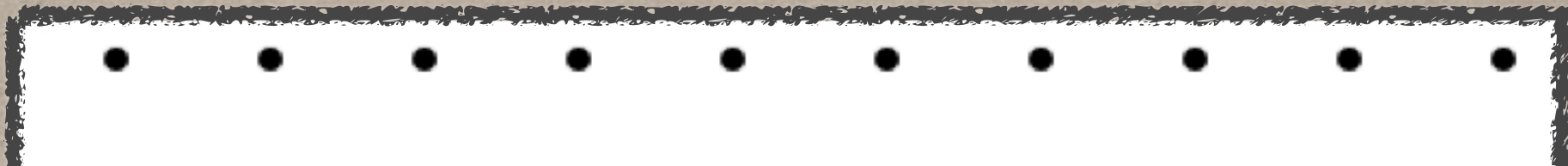














An abstract graphic design featuring a warm color palette of oranges, yellows, and reds. The background consists of several thick, curved, overlapping bands that create a sense of depth and movement, resembling a stylized landscape or a series of flowing ribbons. The overall effect is dynamic and modern.

stay abreast . . .

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