INTRODUCTION

"So, not 'organization', not 'organization theory', not 'organization science' (although our contributors use each and every one of them), but 'organization studies' in order to embrace the many and varied approaches to the study of organizations" (Clegg, Hardy & Nord, 1996, pp. xxiii).

So begins the Handbook of Organization Studies (HOS), published by Sage and edited by Stewart Clegg, Cynthia Hardy, and Walter Nord, with 31 chapters by 46 contributors. Clegg, Hardy, and Nord conceptualized the Handbook "as a project in which the 'terrain' that constituted OS would be mapped to take stock of where it has come from, where it might be going; to offer an account of the major paradigms, histories, issues, debates of concern to organization researchers, practitioners and students....a stocktaking of the diversity of current and emergent approaches, not available elsewhere despite the many excellent journals and textbooks" (p. xxii).

Clegg, Hardy, & Nord set ambitious aims for themselves and their many contributors. These aims in the main have been reached in this timely collection, which will take its place next to Jim March's 1965 Handbook of Organizations on the bookshelves of many libraries and of older organization theorists (see Reading list).

Surprisingly the editors claim the two handbooks are not comparable because of the dramatic changes in the world. Such comparisons are particularly salient to me because my interest in organizations spans the same period, and they are correct. Only three articles from the 1965 handbook are cited in this one. Earlier articles by J.L. Massie (1 cite), A.L. Stinchcombe (4 cites), and K.R. Weick (1 cite) are reflected in four current chapters. Of the 31 authors in the earlier handbook, only K.R. Weick is also a current author.

In this review only one/third of the HOS chapters will be considered. The remaining chapters are examined by Deborah Rood (Asst. Prof Troy State, Pacific Region) and Jenny Hoobler (Phd Student, University of Kentucky) in their two reviews also published by EJROT. We reviewers each selected the chapters we found most interesting as the basis for our three separate reviews.

Clegg & Hardy's "Introduction: Organizations, Organization and Organizing", they hope, provides a map for readers to navigate their own route around OS. They sketch social/political/ economic changes in the world since the mid 1960s and some of their effects--changes in approaches to and concepts about organizations. These begin with the erosion of the assumed unitary and orderly nature of organizations, continue with the development of alternatives like interpretivism and labour process theory, persist with the acceptance of postmodernist critiques, and culminate it would appear in the recognition that diversity is here to stay. Clegg & Hardy "hope to continue the trend in a Handbook that celebrates, rather than denies, variation, diversities and difference" (p.2).

What then are OS? For these authors, conversations among OS researchers publishing in/reading the leading journals (see Reading list) and active in particular scholarly associations, "help to constitute organizations through terms derived from paradigms, methods and assumptions, themselves derived from earlier conversations....[Such conversations] relate to organizations as empirical objects, organization as theoretical discourse, and organizing as social process, and to the intersections and gaps between and within them" (p.3).
Researchers enact, interpret and represent organizations:

"sites of situated social action more or less open both to explicitly organized and formal disciplinary knowledges...and also to conversational practices embedded in the broad social fabric, such as gender, ethnic and other culturally defined social relations....Similarly, this [HOS] is a collection of voices involved in the analysis of organizations, as real objects, where the 'reality' of these objects is constituted through diverse conversations, both of the analysts and the analysands, and where both practices are embedded socially in the ways of being, ways of organizing.

With these conceptualizations of OS, one can strive for reflexivity, by which we allude to ways of seeing which act back on and reflect existing ways of seeing.... Like any good conversation, the dialect is reflexive, interlocutive and oriented, not to ultimate agreement, but to possibilities of understanding” (pp.4-5).

Readers armed with these conceptions and with fashionable metaphors (voice, conversation, map, terrain, route, navigate, contestation) and the like set off to actively read the HOS, to converse with and to write this text and to speak about OS "for themselves in terms of their own choosing” (p.5).

FRAMEWORKS FOR ANALYSES

1.1 Organizational Theorizing: a Historically Contested Terrain, Michael Reed's contribution, exploiting a turn to language, provides an instructive account of the analytical narratives and the ethical discourses shaping OS. Avoiding usual categories and chronology, Reed's framework captures nearly the complete array of theorizing without the current divisiveness of "paradigm sensibilities" awakened in 1979 by Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan and without suggesting his preference for a particular approach. He provides a thoughtful, well-crafted and useful guide for sophisticated exploration of the HOS.

Seeking to tell a history that rejects both the conservatism of paradigm enforcement and the (radical) relativism of paradigm proliferation. Reed provides a third way:

"It attempts to reconstruct the history of OT intellectual development in a way that balances social context with theoretical ideas, and structural conditions with conceptual innovation. It offers the prospect of rediscovering and renewing a sense of historical vision and contextual sensitivity which gives both 'society' and 'ideas' their just deserts. Neither the history of OS nor the way in which that history is told are neutral representations of the past achievement. Indeed, any telling of history to support reconstructions of the present and visions of the future is a controversial and contested interpretation that is always open to refutation. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to map OT as a historically contested terrain within which different languages, approaches and philosophies struggle for recognition and acceptance” (p.33).

Reed parses OT into six analytical meta-narratives, which result from the "shared, although reversible, methodological procedures through which reasoned judgements of competing interpretive frames and explanatory theories are negotiated and debated” (p.33). On these grounds a collective basis exists on which contradictory, though local, knowledge claims can be evaluated. Narratives, or discourses, are Rationality, Integration, Market, Power, Knowledge, and Justice. Each narrative is associated with a corresponding major problematic, respectively: Order, Consensus, Liberty, Domination, Control, and Participation. Each narrative/ problematic couplet has its own exemplary perspectives and contextual transition periods.

Rationality and Integration (a.k.a. classical OT and human relations) are the dominant managerialist approaches, with Market (transaction costs/agency theory) recently joining them in the mainstream of OT. Power, Knowledge and Justice are alternative critique approaches associated in North America
more with OS than with traditional OT. The critical approaches are difficult to untangle, their differences more in epistemology than in concepts and methods.

Reed presents these six alternatives without displaying paradigm mentality and makes it clear, drawing on political theorist William Connolly, the framework he offers is contested.

"The discourse of OT must be considered as a contestable and contested network of concepts and theories which are engaged in a struggle to impose certain meanings rather than others on our shared understandings of organizational life in late modernity. To say that such a network is essentially contestable is to contend that universal criteria of reason, as we now understand them, do not settle these contests definitely" (p.45).

It is the task of theorists who accept OT's contested nature to expose conceptual closure where it has been imposed artificially.

Reed explores the intersections and gaps in his narrative frame. Familiar OT debates (agency/structure, constructivist/ positivist, local/global, and individualism/ collectivism) are found at the intersections. Familiar OT omissions (gender, race and ethnicity) and less familiar omissions (technoscience, global development and underdevelopment) are in the gaps.

With a vision of OT that avoids either a return to conservative orthodoxy or a flight to radical relativism, the chapter claims three current debates may be productive:

"The first is the perceived need to develop a 'theory of the subject' which does not degenerate into the simplicities of reductionism or the absurdities of determinism. The second is a general desire to construct a 'theory of organization' that analytically and methodologically mediates between the restrictions of localism and the blandishments of globalism. The third is the imperative of nurturing a 'theory of (intellectual) development' that resists the constrictions of conservativism and the distortions of relativism" (p.51).

1.2 The Normal Science of Structural Contingency Theory, by Lex Donaldson presents an Integration narrative of OT, a more limited view of OT than Reed's--a difference underscored by HOS proximity. The story begins with the challenge by the human relations movement in North America to scientific/classical management. Classical management prescriptions were characterized by a high degree of decision making and planning at the top levels so behavior of lower levels and of operations were specified in advanced by senior management. By contrast human relations prescriptions focused on the benefits of participative decision making at lowest levels. Around 1950s these views began to be reconciled by some small-group and leadership researchers. Key to their synthesis is the degree of uncertainty involved in particular decisions or operations: the more uncertainty involved in the decision the more decentralization. Thus the contingency--degree of uncertainty--is associated with organization structure--degree of centralization.

Structural contingency theory is a well-theorized and researched OT. Donaldson summarizes its history with landmark research texts and articles, which showed successful firms organized in ways contrary to classical management principles. Much of the theory's research support is the result of an extensive program of survey research, conducted in the UK, during the '60s and '70s at Aston University.

The Aston Studies, which systematically explored a number of contingency factors and several quantitatively measured dimensions of structure, were for many years considered the model of rigorous OT research in both the US and UK. As Donaldson indicates, by 1970 structural contingency research was a well-established research paradigm. Indeed, it instructed two of my technology/structure studies in Academy of Management Journal at that time.
Donaldson reviews his period of replication and generalization of the theory, which he calls, in Thomas Kuhn's sense, its "normal science" phase. Normal science implies that:

"scientific research proceeds within the framework of a paradigm, which specifies the core theoretical ideas, the assumptions, language, method and conventions. The growth of a body of knowledge is marked by paradigm revolutions when one paradigm is overthrown and replaced by another. Such discontinuous changes are radical and infrequent. Most of the time science proceeds in a normal science phase guided by the ruling paradigm. In such a phase research works on problems within the body of the work, such as resolving anomalies, while leaving the paradigm itself unquestioned" (p.58).

He claims to illustrate a discontinuous paradigm revolution in the overthrow in the '70s of classical management by the new paradigm of contingency theory. In Reed's narrative terms Rationality is replaced by Integration. However, the replacement is hardly a paradigm revolution in epistemological terms.

For Donaldson, structural contingency theory is emblematic of normal science. Later alternative (critique) paradigms arose to challenge contingency theory--unsuccessfully in his view--but he recognizes the potential for an alternative to overthrow it.

It's not clear to me how such a revolution could come about given the enforcement of and adherence to the research standards and practices of mainstream/dominant paradigms. Alternative epistemologies and those who accepted such practices would be (and have been) dismissed as 'not scientific.' Here then is terrain without contestation for those who accept both normal science as the exemplar for the standards of scientific practice and the normal science status of contingency theory.

CURRENT ISSUES IN ORGANIZATION STUDIES

2.3 Decision-Making in Organizations by Susan J. Miller, David J. Hickson and David C. Wilson is a refreshing examination of--no, more like a reflection on--research about decision-making in organizations. Why study decision-making? Their answer: complex organizations require key decisions to function; structural functionalism viewed management as concerned with rational decision-making; studies show managers spend a lot of time decision-making; and decisions concern the allocation and exercise of power in organizations.

"There is clearly a contrast here between seeing decision-making as a functional prerequisite of effective organization and seeing it as a maelstrom of political activity and sectional conflict, where power games are played out in an arena which is only partially open to view, and this accounts in part for the differences in approaches to research and discussion" (p.294).

Following Reed, these researchers tell Power/Domination narratives and the opposite-of-Rationality/Order narratives. Rather than the managerialist story of skillful decision-making, they offer a descriptive critique informed by both radical and nonconsequential/norational theories of decision-making. The radical view of power is not well known in North America, and I suspect that nonrational view of decision making with its garbage cans, may not be well known in the UK.

Power as an iceberg? Such an imaginary captures Power: a Radical View by Stephen Lukes who conceives of power in three dimensions: behavioral (visible), structural (partially hidden) and ideological (hidden), with the less visible dimensions providing most of the influence and control in organizations. In this view decision making, shaped by organization structure and culture, unobtrusively influences or controls organization members, and is a central mechanism of power. The existence of ephemeral decision making (e.g., unidentified decision makers, unclear decision criteria) lends plausibility to this hypothesis, while making it more difficult to investigate with traditional behavioral/positivist research tools.
Imagine now a garbage-can into which solutions, problems, participants and choice situations are dumped haphazardly, such that actions do not lead to expected outcomes, are not consequential. Solutions may precede problems. Participants differ in how much energy they allocate in the "can". Problems differ with regard to how much energy is required to solve them. The process is characterized by ambiguity, participants may not have preferences, means and ends are unrelated and alternatives are unknown. When solutions, problems, participants and choice situations somehow come together in the right mix a decision occurs--like when a solution finds a problem. If not, a problem may exit the 'can' with a participant or through oversight.

In this sketch of nonrational decision processes first drawn by Jim March and J.P. Olsen, decision-making is more dependent on context of the process and particular time deadlines than knowledge of the participants. While the image may be bizarre, research supports some predictions from the model, as well as some organizational experience, my own for example.

Miller, Hickson & Wilson's reflections on decision-making suggest a '2 by 2' typology onto which decision-making process research may be mapped: dimensions are research interest (problem solving/political) and decision process action (coherence/chaos). Most of the research they review, including their own, is of the coherence type. Research interest is evenly distributed among problem solving and political types. The garbage can model (chaos type) is indifferent to interest (although the model admits to social construction).

They recommend descriptive research less guided by assumptions of coherence and rationality. Research on decision-making at the managerial apex should extend to organizations in other societies. Conceptual progress needs the stimulus of both non-Western data and non-Western research. Were researchers and theorists to respond successfully to these calls they would not deploy traditional behavioralist methods.

2.4 Cognition in Organizations by Ann E. Tenbrunsel, Tiffany L. Galvin, Margaret A. Neale & Max H. Baserman describes a dramatic shift in the perception of what constitutes OB topics, a shift that incorporates behavioral decision theory (BDT) and processes into theorizing and empirical research designs on more topics. "[T]he tensions between research and practice in business and management schools has resulted in a demand for research in OB that provides managers with more levers for change" (p.313).

In Reed's framework, these authors present an Integration/Consensus narrative in the normal science mode, which is explicitly managerialist. Responding to the persistent criticism of traditional approaches to OB, cognition and BDT researchers deploy sophisticated theorizing from psychology and social psychology; employ descriptive/predictive rather than prescriptive/normative perspectives; and make explicit their guiding assumptions, e.g., "Decisions are a core unit of activity for both understanding and changing individual behavior in organizations" (p.314).

The chapter presents a detailed and comprehensive review of social cognition and BDT research. Social cognition includes such areas as attribution theories, memory, and knowledge structures. It assumes that because our human information processing apparatus is resource-limited, we develop highly abstract knowledge structures that permit us to simplify reality by storing schemata knowledge in broad, inclusive categories rather than on the basis of an individual experience. To apply such knowledge we must first classify a specific event or person into the appropriate category and then generalize from the stored information associated with their schema to the particular case. The downside of this nearly consciousless information processing method is made obvious when the parallels between schema and stereotyping are examined.

BDT, with roots in Herbert Simon's concept of bounded rationality, recognizes that tenets of maximizing self-interest and of rational action are not useful in prescribing or predicting actual choice behavior. Rather the focus is on systematic inconsistencies in the decision-making process that prevent humans from making fully rational decisions.
We rely on heuristics (rules of thumb) when making decisions. These save time, simplify our complex world and usually provide at least partially correct choices. Unfortunately, heuristics lead to predictable biases that result from the way humans store, process and retrieve information from memory. The tendency for estimates of the chance of a plane crash to increase after extensive media crash coverage (TWA 800) is an example of Ease of Recall bias. Researchers tendency to privilege supporting evidence for their hypotheses is an example of The Confirmation Trap bias. (Baserman has published a complete list of these biases.)

DBT approaches have been incorporated into OB research on leadership, motivation, performance appraisals, negotiation, and group decision making. More surprising these approaches have also been impacting OT research. Thus seeing organizations as “interpretation systems”, emphasizing language and symbols, and recognizing how organizational context can influence individual behaviors are becoming part of the BDT narrative:

"There are numerous ways that leaders and other key individuals can influence organizations, including shaping thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and actions of people inside and outside the organization and making decisions that affect the organization. In addition to shaping the set of members who make up the organization, leaders also create conditions that influence members' emotion, behaviors and cognitions. [Studies] suggest that CEOs use self-serving attributions to explain their own behavior by attributing good performance to internal organizational actions and factors and unsuccessful performance to events external to organizations [and] these self-serving attributions affected shareholders' perceptions resulting in improved stock prices” (p.328).

The proximity of the two decision-making chapters also highlights their differences. Mainstream researchers might well attribute differences to discipline or level of analysis. Alternative critique theorists likely think of researcher interest, epistemological, methodological or paradigm differences.

2.5 Diverse Identities in Organizations by Stella M. Nkomo and Taylor Cox, Jr. displays the complexity of their topic--which they call diversity research--and the challenges that confront it. Having gained currency in the last few years because of managers interest in 'managing diversity, diversity research has only recently captured the attention of OS theorists/researchers.

"The current state of theoretical knowledge and research on diversity in organizations might be liken to the situation of discovering the many tributary streams to a larger body of water but being uncertain about the very nature of the larger body of water” (p.338).

Because of the confusion over what constitutes diversity, Nkomo & Cox begin by framing the concept itself. Scholars appear to be referring to "diversity in identities” based on membership in social and demographic groups and to how differences in identities affect social relations in organizations.

"We define diversity as a mixture of people with different group identities within the same social system. The concept of identity appears to be at the core of understanding diversity in organizations. Thus, our discussion ... is centered around the very meaning of identity and its treatment in the study of organizations” (p.339).

They believe in order for theory and research to advance, a critical review of the major diversity orientations is necessary. They review social identity theory, embedded intergroup theory, racioethnicity and gender research, organizational demography, and ethnology. For each they focus on six dimensions of the treatment of identity: explicitly or implicitly defined; physically or culturally defined; proposed measurement; self or other defined; levels of analysis; and effects of diversity (Table 1, p.340).

They are critical of almost all the research for theoretical, methodological and philosophical shortcomings. On the last: "Influence of assimilation theory is evident in the kinds of questions studied
and the solutions proposed. Implicitly for the minority group, successful assimilation means a loss of identity--adapting to the norms and behaviors of the dominant group” (p.345).

Nkomo and Cox's review instructs their reframing of the concept of diversity to advance its theoretical development. They call for theoretical perspectives which:

"(1) explicitly define and measure the group identity of individuals; (2) attend to the cultural, historical, and social meaning of identity; (3) treat identity as a continuous scale measure rather than merely as discrete categories, thereby allowing for members of groups to differ in the extent to which a specific identity is salient for them; (4) address the relevance of the social categorization by others to one's group identity; (5) address affects of identity on multiple levels of analysis (individual, group, organizational, and societal); (6) address explicitly the effects of diversity without assuming the inevitability of negative consequences” (p.348).

Recognizing the potential for dramatic paradigm changes implicit in several methodological issues and dilemmas originating in the diversity literature and its practitioner orientated roots, they close the chapter with additional comments on dichotomous thinking, measurement of identity, and terminology.

Dichotomous, oppositional thinking conceals the extent to which things presented as oppositional are really interdependent and relational. It also implies a hierarchy where superiority and its privilege rest on the suppression of its opposite. Thus:

"Research emphasis should also be placed on ... how organizations produce and reproduce differences between social groups. This requires researchers to understand the social construction of diversity in organizations rather than viewing it as a reflection of natural category differences....the legitimacy and basic values of the organization are not questioned. Organizations are regarded a priori as fundamentally sound and neutral sites. Inevitably, attention must be paid to what sustains and maintains the pattern of power relations in organizations” (p.349).

Measurement of identity in quantitative terms fails to capture the question of what way is identity manifested.

"Researchers need to expand their methodologies to include ethnographic approaches. In traditional research approaches, categorization of groups is seen as a natural phenomenon.... In more linguistically oriented approaches like ethnomethodology and discourse analysis, the interest is in how categories are constituted in everyday discourse and the various functions they satisfy. Language is so structured to mirror power relations that we can see no other ways of being, it structures ideology so that it is difficult to speak both in and against it” (p.350).

Nkomo & Cox make explicit the kinds of epistemological changes they believe are necessary to revamp diversity in OS so as to create approaches that may apprehend more fully its meaning. Or put in Reed's terms, many of the research approaches of diversity tend toward Rationality/Order and Integration/Consensus narratives and the paradigm shifts prescribed by the authors tend toward Power/Domination and Knowledge/Control narratives.

2.6 Putting Group Information Technology in its Place: Communication and Good Work Group Performance, by Arthur D. Shulman examines the research relationship between good work-group performance and communication from perspectives quite removed from normal science modes. In a decidedly and surprisingly linguistic and philosophical turn, signaled by the title, he argues persuasively that prediction and control are not appropriate research objectives for good work-group research because of the inherent indeterminacy of communication. Instead he sketches a paradigm/narrative shift toward Reed's Knowledge/Control and Justice/ Participation narratives.
Shulman's review of seven literature reviews (1986-1996) of work-group literature identifies seven common themes:

"(1) Researchers recognize that good work performance is important, but assume that what is good performance is self-evident. (2) There is a lack of consistency of findings across studies of work group performance. (3) Work groups are multi-functional open systems, but are often defined by researchers as single purpose and closed. (4) Work group performances are dependent upon social and organizational contexts. (5) Temporal contexts shape work group performances. (6) Groups derive their competitive advantage from better sharing and coordination. (7) Group performances are not due solely to the group processes that its members jointly engage in" (pp.357-361).

Information technology/work-group researchers take closed system, open system, and mixed system approaches. Researchers in the first approach "assumed that information technology will lead to increased efficiencies and effectiveness and that the use of information technology would be consistent with formal theories of rational choice. Neither...has received convincing empirical support" (p.364). Researchers in the second approach emphasize the group becoming more self-directed through the availability of empowering information exchanges within the group (groupware information technology) or through electronic mediated exchanges with others outside the group (collaborativeware information systems). Whether these lead to better performance is an open question.

The third approach tends toward structuration theory, developed by Anthony Giddens, where emphasis is placed on humans (as agents) being both enabled and constrained by technical structures, yet these very structures are the result of previous actions. These researchers acknowledge the tangible constraints that information technology may impose, and they account for the adaptation of information technology for emerging purposes. As with the first two approaches, research of the structuration/constructivist approach "offers little guidance as to what is good work group performance or how its occurrence is facilitated by the use of information technology" (p.365).

Shulman argues, "the major consequences of the introduction of new information technologies within organizations has not been better communication, only faster misunderstanding. And the real problems can never be addressed until we discard the technical, instrumental view of communication" (p.367).

He proposes new conceptions of information and communication as correctives to researcher confusions. "Information has the properties of the physical world and exists regardless of our perception of it....information is something independent of humans....incapable of acting or exhibiting agency. Meaning is brought about in the relationship between the reader and the information being read. The mistake in the field of information technology is that meaning is taken as belonging to the category of the physical world, when it actually belongs to the human world" (p.368).

"The communication process incorporates more than one 'reader' and this adds complexity to the meaning generation process. The meanings generated in this process arise from unique patterns of interaction between the participants - patterns beyond control or intention of any individual party. The meanings are also subject to continual modification with the evolving temporal context. As we act into the communication situation we are at the same time changing it by that action.... joint communicative actions and the implicative meanings are always emergent and never finished.... meaning is inherently indeterminate. Meaning cannot be controlled or predicted, but it can be managed and constrained" (p.368).

Finally Shulman adds additional complexity to his argument with a philosophical turn by claiming both communication and research are forms of praxis (moral knowledge). Communication indeterminacy, communication praxis, and research praxis have epistemological implications that call for "engaged" participation research methodology by good work-group, researchers.
2.11 Organizations and the Biosphere: Ecologies and Environments, by Carolyn P. Egri and Lawrence T. Pinfield offer an examination of the relationship between OS and a concern for the quality of the natural environment, an examination which indicates little nexus. Those "concerned" are grouped into three perspectives: the dominant social paradigm (modern industrial society not Reed's mainstream)--creating the degradation of the nature; radical environmentalism--railing (without much success) against the abuse of nature; and reform environmentalism--attempting (with little success) to mitigate the widespread abuse.

The conception of organization 'environment' (ranging from markets all the way to other organizations) is traced in OS. Self-interest and system theory are probed as possible OS avenues to progressive environmental change but are both found wanting.

The authors conclude their exercise arguing the problem of biosphere abuse will continue to demand attention.

"One reason why the environmental challenge to society and its organizations promise to remain and become more prominent is that humans are witnessing and experiencing the deleterious effects of the degradation on the natural environment on a scale and scope unprecedented in human history" (p.477).

Further, consistent with the Gaia principle, "the biosphere of the planet will continue to adapt and change ... the essential question is whether the future biosphere will be one which includes the human species" (p.478). The question the chapter raises for this reviewer: Can OS be harnessed to eliminate environmental degradation?

2.12 Evolution and Revolution: from International Business to Globalization, by Barbara Parker avoids the celebratory excesses that have come to characterize much of the (pre 1998) writing about globalization. In her words:

"This chapter asks more questions than it answers. Rather than document what we know about the comparatively evident field of international business, it points what we do not know about globalization. It tries to clarify some of the profound implications that globalization has for all societies. In pointing out these implications and the tensions they involve, we may be better prepared to consider how a new research agenda might evolve" (p.486).

Post WWII reconstruction gave rise in the US to the study of international business, characterized by US exports and direct foreign investment, and economic explanations for trade between countries. During the period the field (with 27 journals by the 1980s) had an American cast to it: American researchers focused on American firms. Some agreement defined international business:

"The international firm is one whose business activities cross national boundaries or that is involved in business in two or more countries....its headquarters are almost always based in a single country.... Its culture and organizational structure are consistent with the practices and norms of the home or headquarters country. It adopts standardized technologies and business processes throughout its operations, regardless of where they are located and it relies on similar policies especially regarding human resources, worldwide" (p.488).

Such agreements do not now exist about the definition of the "global" firm, its size or defining strategy, a result of its reactions to the changes and events occurring through the world. Parker suggests these firms are described according to their ability to transcend existing boundaries of three kinds: 1) external boundaries of nations, space and time; 2) boundaries such as culture, thought, self (organization) and others; 3) vertical, horizontal and even attitudinal boundaries internal to the global organization. Thus the global enterprise of any size "establishes a worldwide presence in one or more businesses...adopts a worldwide strategy....is able to cross external and internal boundaries" (p.490).
The impact of such (large) firms is pervasive extending beyond the firm to the economy, politics, culture, technology and natural resources. Separating these is artificial, since they interact naturally, but doing so may clarify the national and organizational tensions that result from globalization. Such tensions are much more visible and relevant as these words are written (November, 1998) in Korea and Japan in the midst of nearly global economic turmoil (here a.k.a. as the IMF crisis). The "boundaryless" nature of the nation for example is painfully significant when Korean or Japanese organizational practices and traditions of lifetime employment become the focus of protracted labor strife because of the demands of "international investors" or International Monetary Fund "recommendations" to strengthen the economy. This "boundaryless" nation example becomes even more graphic when it signals a downward economic spiral in the open-market economies themselves.

But what are the implications for students of organizations of the "boundaryless," turbulent, interconnected economic web? Parker considers social responsibility, organizational strategy, and organizational structure. How to insure social responsibility among global firms? What strategy beyond departure from tradition for both East and West? What combination of old and new structure for effective hybrids? In each case, for her -- ambiguity -- the questions are unanswered. Will OS play any role in searching for answers to these questions?

REFLECTIONS ON RESEARCH, THEORY AND PRACTICE

3.1 Data in Organizations, the contribution by Ralph Stablein, directs attention to empiricism, which tends to be muted in the research of those of us practicing alternative approaches to OT. This tendency to privilege theorizing is the focus of much of the criticism of alternative approaches by those committed to normal science.

Stablein shares his hopes for the chapter:

"My closing hope is that this chapter (1) contributes to the understanding and development of our research practices and thus to our insights, and (2) reduces the forces of fragmentation, while denying the need for unification in OS" (p.522).

This thoughtful and well-crafted chapter may well lead to the realization of these aspirations.

Stressing that purpose, audience, and data are commonalities in all modes of research, his focus is on data. Data are representations where the "thing" represented is not the 'real thing', 'out there' waiting to be discovered but a human conception, constituted by the sensemaking of a community of scholars.

"As representations data imply both things that are represented and an accepted process of representing our ideas about empirical 'reality'. Different groups of scholars will have different ideas about different empirical realities and acceptable processes of representation. Successful data require that other scholars understand the reality a researcher's data are trying to represent. The starting point of any data-producing effort must be participation in a shared understanding of the empirical organizational phenomena to be represented" (p.512).

A successful process of representation creates data characterized by a two-way mapping between the data and the organizational reality the data represent. Representation is achieved when one, first, maps the empirical 'thing' that we have conceptualized into a symbolic system ('one-way correspondence') and, second, maps back from the symbolic system to the original empirical system of interest ('two-way correspondence'). OS, with a number of communities of scholars, utilize numerical..."natural language or various technical languages as the symbolic systems which represent the empirical world" (p.514).

This discussion leads up to Stablein's formal definition of data: "Data in OS are representations which maintain a two-way correspondence between an empirical reality and a symbolic system" (p.514). With the definition and conceptualization in place he is able to abandon the quantitative/qualitative
divide and examine survey data, experimental data, ethno-data (various data from 'inquiry from within'), case data, secondary data, and text as data. The exercise displays the commonality between these various form of data. It also suggests the plausibility of Stablein's second hope for the impact of his chapter.

**CONCLUSION**

"Representations," authored by Stewart Clegg and Cynthia Hardy is a dazzling chapter often soaring beyond the contributions (at least in my sections) of the Handbook. With much "High Theory", this stylish chapter is at times elegant, too cute, and somewhat opaque. While exploring a wide range of topics, they focus on the nature of representation of the OS subject(s): the organization, the individual, and us (i.e., OS researchers and theorists).

First, attending to the organization and its new forms, Clegg & Hardy offer some ideas for future research. The most interesting include the new forms of resistance; whether its still a man's, man's, man's world; the impact feminist theory; and the body as subject. Claiming to speak to "mainstream" and "contra" (both critical theory and postmodernist) researchers, often their suggestions are directed toward critical theorists.

Yet for this reviewer, critical theorists would be more interested in determining if "hierarchies, and control premised on them recede in importance" (p.684) in these new organizational forms, particularly at the level of the 'shop floor'; if "the changed organizational environment also offers an improvement in the quality of working life for some, if not all employees" (p.684); and if empowerment increases worker wealth more than worker stress.

Second, they focus on the individual, and, recounting the elitist propensity in contra researchers, explore how both mainstream and contra researchers silence, and thus ignore, individuals through a critique of their representations of themselves and their groups. In this regard, postmodernism and critical theory are not unlike the positivism they seek to resist. All marginalize and silence the people of whom they talk: the one by reducing them to meaningless statistics in which they cannot see themselves, the other by excluding them through esoteric jargon in which they cannot speak themselves (p.693). Handbook contributors appear to be exceptions to this critique of researchers who silence subjects.

Third, turning to how OS researchers/theorists represent themselves, Clegg & Hardy explore how greater reflexivity might be achieved. A prerequisite, they argue, is reducing the gap between theory and practice, which neither critical theory nor postmodernism has bridged with any degree of confidence:

Those theoretical positions able to account, reflexively, for their own theorizing, as well as whatever it is they theorize about, will be the clearest about their own identity, and the extent to which it is partial or formed in dialogue with other positions. On these criteria, it is not the allegedly 'disinterestedness' of a position that makes it worthwhile, but the degree of reflexivity that it exhibits in relation to the conditions of its own existence. Severing the conversational elements that nurture the theory in the first place and which link it to practice makes it harder to attain this reflexivity. Thus we argue for grounding of theoretical claims in local and special circumstances" (p.701).

Thus Clegg & Hardy conclude the Handbook with calls for conversation between different identities (mainstream/contra, theory/practice, etc.) not just to bridge paradigms but also to understand the origins of ones own theorizing, the specific organization practices giving rise to the theory, and to convey these origins to others in particular organization settings who may be subject to the theory. Such conversations will facilitate clarifying ones own identity, evaluating theory, and reducing theory/practice problems.
So we close the circle of conversation imagined by and called for by Clegg & Hardy in their
Introduction: conversation between alternative approaches and the mainstream, between paradigms,
between theory and practice, between chapters, between authors and readers, between readers and text.
A conversation by participants in their own voices. Could such a conversation be achieved?

How does such this conversation differ from the free speech community? If achieved, could this
conversation carry the load envisioned for it?

There is dialogue between mainstream and alternative perspectives in most of the chapters of the HOS
reviewed here. It is explicit in the contributions of Reed; Miller, Hickson & Wilson; Nkomo & Cox;
Shulman; and Stablein; where alternative narratives tend to critique or modify Rationality/Order and
Integration/Consensus narratives.

Precious little dialogue is evident in either the chapter by Donaldson or the chapter by Tenbrunsel,
Galvin, Neale, and Baserman. However, potential exists in the latter for conversation across
mainstream and critical theory boundaries, since many of the BDT (levers for managers) applications
in OT (macro OB) suggest mechanisms for control that are reminiscent of ideological control or faulty
consciousness, mechanisms "shaping thoughts, feelings, perceptions and actions of people inside and
outside the organization and making decisions that affect the organization" (p.328). Are these 'levers'
different than ideology?

Dialogue between reader and author? Readers (re)writing the text? How could we ever know? But
since it's still a man's world, I suspect it's still an author's world, at least until she becomes a reader.

ADDITIONAL READING

(specifically related to reviewed chapters)

INTRODUCTION

the nascent field of OT.)

Leading OS journals (fn. #2, p.25) are: Administrative Science Quarterly, The Academy of
Science, Journal of Management Studies, and Organization. (First three are usually considered
mainstream journals.)

Ch. 1.1

Heinemann. (Introduced epistemological critique paradigms to OT scholars in US.)

Ch. 1.2


Cambridge U. Press. (Triumphalism characterized some of the early cross-paradigm conversations.)

Ch. 2.3


Ch. 2.4


(Comparison of bounded rationality in these reveals much of the difference in mainstream and critique views of decision-making.)

Ch. 2.5


Ch 2.6


Ch. 3.1


Conclusion: Representations
