RELATIVITY WITHOUT RELATIVISM: REFLEXIVITY IN POST PARADIGM ORGANIZATION STUDIES

Cynthia Hardy

**Faculty of Management
McGill University
1001 Sherbrooke West
Montreal, H3A 1G5
Canada**

Stewart Clegg

**Macarthur Campus
PO Box 555
Campbelltown, NSW 2560
Australia**

Introduction

This paper shows how organization studies controls the subject through its use of representational devices. Different theoretical and methodological approaches may appear to offer epistemological guarantees concerning the validity of data about the research subject but they remain representations, beyond which we can know nothing except through representation. Research is not about wrenching truth from a recalcitrant 'reality': the devices it uses to represent its research subject create and control in the way they silence to give voice to aspects of that subject. All data are 'collaborative products' created in accordance with 'the practical procedures and background assumptions of the participating actors' (Knorr-Cetina 1981). Thus the relations between research subject, researcher, and the protocols that comprise the research process both embody and obscure power. For this reason, it is important that theory strive for a high degree of reflexivity (Marcus 1994) in accounting for its own theorizing, as well as whatever it is that it theorizes about.

In this paper, we critically examine different research approaches, including those of Aston. to show how the dangers that arise when research is carried out without regard to reflexivity. We offer some criteria for carrying out reflexive research which, we believe, is one of the major challenges facing post paradigm organization studies. As we shall see, reflexivity shows us how far we have come in the thirty years since Aston.

Who is the Subject?

The question of who, or what, constitutes the subject has increasingly concerned theorists and researchers in organization studies. One reason for this interest in the subject stems from the growth of 'postmodern' work (Jencks 1989). which show the dangers in placing the 'individual', a relatively recent and culturally specific category, at the centre of the social, psychological,

economic, and moral universe. The subject, decentred and relative, is not a stable constellation of essential characteristics, but a socially constituted, socially recognized, category of analysis. As the status of the subject is challenged so, too, is that of the researcher. No longer all-knowing, all-seeing, objective and omnipotent, the researcher is forced to re-examine his or her relation to the research process and the 'knowledge' it produces. Acutely aware of the social and historical positioning of all subjects and the particular intellectual frameworks through which they are rendered visible, the researcher can only produce knowledge already embedded in the power of those very frameworks. No privileged position exists from which analysis might arbitrate. Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 11) refer to such concerns as a 'legitimation crisis', which forces us to question 'whether qualified, competent observers can with objectivity, clarity, and precision report on their own observations of the social world, including the observations of others'; and a 'representation crisis', which challenges notions of 'a real subject, or real individual, who is present in the world and able, in some form, to report on his or her experiences.'

But it is not only postmodern work that is critically re-examining the subject. More mainstream approaches in organization studies are also questioning who the 'subject' is; what constitutes an 'organization, and what role the 'researcher' plays. For example, concerns with 'agency' occupy institutional theorists, psychological approaches, and leadership theorists; managers of 'diversity' debate the social construction of gender, ethnicity and race; global and ecological approaches draw our attention to subjects far removed from our normal span and scope of attention. Contingency theorists, organizational economists and strategists alike note the problematic conceptualization of 'the' organization as it dissipates into cyberspace, permeates its own boundaries, and is razed, inverted and collapsed into flat, empowered hierarchy-less structures. Other theorists struggle with the role of 'science': why can we not find a foolproof recipe to facilitate organizational learning and innovation; how should we apply theories of cognition and decision making to practice; what is the best way to study organizational phenomena, what constitutes data and how can we analyze it? Thus the subject preoccupies, in different ways, the diverse areas and scholars of organization studies (Clegg and Hardy 1996).

Representing the Subject

In this section, we examine different means used to represent, as subject, the individuals and groups of individuals who comprise and surround the organizations that we study, by different groups of researchers. Using the framework provided by Alvesson and Deetz (1996), we explore how the subject is represented in normative, interpretive, critical and dialogic research approaches (Table 1). Each of these theoretical approaches controls the very subjects to whom and for whom they purport to speak.

Normative Approaches

Alvesson and Deetz (1996) describe the normative approach in organizational studies as one which maintains a consensual relationship with the existing social order; whose goal is to establish law-like relations between objects based on nomothetic science; which addresses issues of efficiency, order, and control; which emphasizes scientific, technical, neutral, and objective narrative styles. It is associated with (positivistic) modernism, the instrumentalization of people and nature, the use of scientific-technical knowledge, the method of positivism and the assumptions of normal science. To illustrate how normative approaches represent the subject, we explore the Aston school as an example of a normal

science tradition that can be traced back to the work of Weber and Taylor, and which continues today in the form not only of contingency theory but also in approaches such as population ecology, and organizational economics. We argue that only by silencing the individual subject, in this case managers, were the Aston studies able to achieve the successful series of translations which helped constitute this body of work as 'science'.

According to students of scientific practice (e.g. Callon 1986; Latour 1987; also see Collins 1981; Knorr-Cetina 1981) what makes science is less the moral basis of its practices, according to the normative model, and more the quality of its translations. The ability to translate from the field or laboratory to the printed page marks successful science. Without this translation, science has no transparency, no basis for replicability, no way to persuade. To do; to explain what is done; to understand how it was done and to repeat it elsewhere is the nature of science. Of course, what we can do contingent on what we know.

What was it that the Aston researchers knew that enabled them to do what they did? The Aston researchers knew the psychology of personality constructs, and how methodologies developed in this field had resolved long-standing disputes about the nature of 'structure' in that scientific arena. Why not generalize these methods to organization structure with personality structure as the model for organization structure? Where psychologists had competing theorizations of personality from writers like Freud and Jung, organization theorists had competing theorizations from the likes of Weber, Taylor and Simon. Psychologists had resolved their theoretical disagreements about the nature of personality through recourse to a notion of personality structure, operationally defined. Moreover, Allport and Odbert (1936) reduced more than 4000 words to describe personality traits to some 170 terms, through 'expert judgement' and factor analysis; Cattell (1946) reduced 35 broad clusters of traits to 12 factors. Perhaps Aston could do the same for disagreements concerning the plethora of terms relating to organization structure.

The Aston studies constructed a set of concerns relating to organization structure from texts ranging from the classics of Weber and Taylor to contemporary work, which they then translated into matters relevant to managers of local enterprises in the West Midlands of England, 'Judgement', formed through conversations with managers and administrators, reduced the fifteen tendencies of bureaucracy identified by Weber (1978) to five: specialization of activities; standardization of procedures; formalization of documentation; centralization of authority; configuration of role structure (Pugh and Hickson 1976: 2). Researchers then translated these dimensions into simple instructions that collectively formed their questionnaire, the results of which were translated by factor analysis into data on which statistical manipulations were performed to test the coherence and independence of the posited dimensions, now assumed to be universal attributes of all organizations everywhere. Thus the research process translated whatever subjectivities were found in the field into an instrumentalized intersubjectivity: a research design capable of representing any organization as if it were a variation on any other organization. (See Hickson [1966] and Pugh et al [1971]).

The Aston researchers used a form of inductive empiricism that moved from concept-formation to scale-construction, to data-collection, to factor-analysis, and then to correlational induction, in a seamless process where the measuring instrument constituted the dimensional reality of the measured object. Rather than measuring a pre-constituted reality, the measuring instrument produces these dimensions, irrespective of their ontological status

(see Clegg and Dunkerley 1980: 213-62). Further use of the instrument only 'proves' its reliability; but says nothing about its validity, particularly over time, when managerial experiences might change. One may be forgiven for thinking the constant use of a measure to re-measure the measure to prove that it is a measure is a parody of science (Willer and Willer 1973), albeit one that is iterated many times, in many places (Donaldson 1985).

So, although geographically located in the UK, intellectually the Aston school could have been anywhere. The members of the school make much of the camaraderie forged in a Birmingham basement in the British Midlands (Pugh and Hickson 1976) but, when one inspects their work for signs of regional imprinting, none are visible. As a conception it was immaculately clean of any signs of its own place of genesis. Consequently, bearing the sign of nowhere it was rapidly to travel almost everywhere, as the word spread through the prestigious pages of the *Administrative Science Quarterly* and elsewhere (see Pugh and Hickson [1976] for key original references). The Aston studies were successful precisely because of their lack of distinguishing features. Their portability, their universal appeal, facilitated the translation process that ensured their widespread acceptance.

The protocols of the translation process also helped to prevent managerial discretion from contaminating the results. Unlike the artful construction of a laboratory setting, where scientists can reconstruct the experiment, note any changes, and map any theoretical contingencies, the Aston researchers were forced to deal with a 'living' organization, whose members had an agency quite unlike that of microbes and chemicals trapped in a test tube (although Callon [1986] warns about false dichotomies between natural and social entities). In this case, managers and employees, the research subjects, could change the substance of the environment that the researchers had taken so much trouble to translate. This risk of encroachment was averted by the research protocols: only the researchers knew the organizations in the study, which they preserved in the analytical formaldehyde of 'formalization', 'standardization', 'centralization', 'routinization' and 'configuration' (see Starbuck 1981). By such strategies, the Aston studies silenced the managers of the organizations they studied, denying any agency or intent they had, at least to the academic audience reading the published results of these studies. Thus Aston's translation devices turned the research subjects into a series of mute respondents able to express themselves only through preconceived categories of measurement.

So, while the marginalization of the agency of the managers in the study facilitated the successful academic translation of the Aston studies, it inhibited the translation of these academic studies into practice. As far as we are aware the Aston studies have never been a blueprint for the design of actual organizations (Marsden and Townley 1996). So, despite its supposed managerialist orientation (see Donaldson 1995), the Aston studies, and other work in its mould, failed to serve this particular constituency precisely because they had silenced it.

Interpretive Approaches

Alvesson and Deetz (1996) categorize interpretive approaches as those which draw on hermeneutics and ethnographies to display unified cultures; their aim is the recovery of traditional values; their focus is on the social aspects of organizations and communities; their narrative is romantic and embracing. From an organizational perspective they offer insight into commitment, group dynamics and quality of work life. The authors label them as 'pre-modern' in that they espouse humanist values that pre-date the modernist era. An

example of such an approach in organizations studies is the work on organizational culture, particularly the work that adopts an integrationist perspective (see Martin 1992; Martin and Frost 1996). Interest in organizational culture burgeoned in the United States as books like *In Search of Excellence* (Peters and Waterman 1982) argued that the key to corporate success was the creation of a strong, unified culture. Senior managers could build such a culture by articulating a set of values and then reinforce them through norms, stories, rituals, and jargon. As these values are shared by other organizational members, commitment, productivity and profits are supposed to increase (e.g. Deal and Kennedy 1982; Starbuck 1982; Tichy 1982; Sathe 1983; Wilkins and Ouchi 1983; Bate 1984; Schein 1985; Trice and Beyer 1984 1993; Lorsch 1986; Saffold 1988; Wilkins and Dyer 1988).

As Martin and Frost (1996) point out, these writers saw culture as ‘an area of meaning carved out of a vast mass of meaninglessness, a small clearing of lucidity in a formless, dark, always ominous jungle’ (Berger 1967: 23 quoted in Wuthnow et al 1984: 26). This ‘interpretive’ work on organizational culture does not, however, interpret the meaning of an organizational culture, so much as give meaning to the ‘culture’ in which it presumes organizational members work. Short shrift is given to the complexity and diversity of subcultures that members may experience; while functionalism reigns supreme as writers tinker with the cultural manifestation that best serves ‘the organization’.

Not content just to create certain meanings, these writers also deny other meanings: specifically the political meaning that such strong, unified cultures might have for those trapped in them. Most mainstream writers on organizational culture have gone to considerable length to avoid any association with power and politics (see Smircich 1983; Izraeli and Jick 1986; Mumby 1988). Cultural change is typically presented in neutral terms that suggest that it is to everyone’s advantage (see Willmott 1993). Yet, as Sturm (1985: 142) points out: corporate culture is not ‘innocent’.

It represents serious intent The intent is a promise, namely, that by reinforcing, manipulating, or transforming the culture of their corporations, executives might render the enterprise more effective. They might improve its performance and increase its productivity. They might, to put it bluntly, make it more profitable.

Strong unified cultures, assuming they have the impact on organizational performance that they are supposed to, often work to the advantage of dominant members at the expense of others (Deetz 1985).

A ‘strong’ culture thus combines the dual advantage of minimizing resistance to organizational goals while obscuring the political activity of doing so, something which Lukes (1974) called the third dimension of power and, with Fox (1973), referred to as the radical view of power. Researchers who do not adopt a managerialist tone, subscribing instead to the ‘describe-reality’ approach of an historical-hermeneutic orientation based on ethnographic methods and a hermeneutic epistemology (e.g. Agar 1986; Garfinkel 1967; Goffman 1967; Spradley 1979), are equally neglectful of power. Although they offer a supposedly ‘accurate’ interpretation of their ‘observations’ they do not question fundamentals, let alone challenge, the way power is embedded within that which they

represent (e.g. Barley et al 1988; Louis 1985; Martin and Siehl 1983; see Martin and Frost 1996).

In this interpretive approach, meaning is given here, subtracted there, to forge a workforce best suited to carrying out the organization's needs. In this regard, the organizational ethnographers are similar to the anthropologists they emulate: Denzin and Lincoln (1994) note that the traditional view of the ethnographer during the last fifty years or so has been one of a larger-than-life figure who ventured into the field and returned with stories about 'strange' people. It was assumed that the field worker was capable of creating valid, reliable and objective accounts of these people while, in fact, these researchers created meaning for their subjects: villains were valorized and outsiders were turned into heroes. The only difference is that, as far as mainstream work on culture is concerned, the romantic anthropologist has been replaced by the pragmatic organization analyst. Not for the latter, the deviant-turned-hero or the villain with a heart of gold: too destructive to the organizational mission. No, for these 'value engineers' (see Martin and Frost 1996) the aim is a smooth-running ship, full of hardworking, enthusiastic, committed employees.

Critical Approaches

We use the term 'critical' theory(ies) to encompass a broad body of work (cf Alvesson and Willmott 1992a) that seeks to unmask domination, critique ideology, and reform the social order (Alvesson and Deetz 1996). Traditionally, critical theory had emancipatory principles and was judged by its ability to reveal reflexively the structures of oppression and to offer emancipatory ideas (Alvesson and Willmott 1992a). For example, Gouldner (1954) showed how modernity's institutionalization of technology led to alienation. Through critique came the 'license to know' which, in turn, offered hope of escape from modernity's dominating effects. The Habermasian tradition made similar assumptions as it examined how systematically distorted communication reproduced power relations; while pure communication promised to reveal hidden power structures (see Steffy and Grimes 1986; Mumby 1992). Labour process theorists examined how consent was manufactured through the myriad of invisible workplace controls (e.g. Burawoy 1979; Braverman 1974), and how ostensibly neutral working arrangements mask the means by which workers are dominated (Knights and Willmott 1985 1989; Deetz and Mumby 1990).

Such approaches seek not so much to transcend modernism as to elevate it to a 'critical' or 'high' modernism (Jencks 1989) using the idea of pure communicative competence to forge a new world free of unwarranted domination and distortion. Under the rubric of 'false consciousness' and 'real interests', critical theorists assumed themselves to be autonomous agents, and presumed to judge what their research subjects' best interests were (see Lukes 1974; Giddens 1979; Benton 1981; Knights and Willmott 1982; Hoy 1986; Laclau and Mouffe 1987; Cooper and Burrell 1988; Clegg 1989). In this way, critical theory smuggles in representations of the subject that are constraining and controlling. It enrols a subject whose options are limited. It tells which subjects, what to feel and how to act. The subject who does not act in this way is translated as a cultural idiot who has fallen prey to false consciousness. The subject who does act must do so according to the strictures laid down by critical theory, with scant regard for the costs of such emancipation (Alvesson and Deetz 1992a). Other subjects, such as managers, are not allowed to feel, speak or act at all (Nord and Jermier 1992).

These approaches 'have been criticized for their tendency to impose their voices and values on the groups studied ... and for not being reflexive enough, and for being too theoretical' (Denzin 1994: 509). They have engaged in 'representational essentializing' (Clifford 1992) where one aspect of a group's life is taken to represent them as a whole, rather than addressing the complexity, diversity and ambiguity of experience. They ignore the productive aspects of power which stimulate 'a positive sense of self discipline by transforming individuals into subjects who secure their sense of identity, meaning and reality through participating in [certain] practices' (Knights and Morgan 1995: 194; 1991). In this way, these critical forms of modernism distance themselves from the subjects they purport to serve. For example, in contrasting Freire's (1992) philosophy and teaching method, Taylor (1993) found the latter undermined the former by being anti-dialogic and manipulative, partly as a result of the practical and logistical difficulties involved in translating a thought into action in a way that is consistent with the underpinning philosophy. It is, it appears, one thing to write a coherent critical position, it is another thing to act in its terms.

In summary, the emancipatory ideals of critical theory (see Alvesson and Willmott 1992a; 1992b; Martin and Frost 1996) have often failed to reach the intended constituencies. When these matters are discussed, it is often in such generalized, theoretical, esoteric terminology that it offers little practical help to those who need it; those who do not even recognize the categories into which they have been slotted (Clegg 1989; Parker 1992; Nord and Doherty 1994; Hardy and Clegg 1996). So, despite promising salvation, critical theory often places the subject in constraints as binding as those it seeks to overthrow.

Dialogic Approaches

If critical theory focuses on the incompleteness of, or flaws within, the modernist project, dialogic or postmodern approaches deny the entire thing as inherently problematic (Alvesson and Deetz 1996). At the same time that critical modernists attempted to salvage meaning and modernity through critique, postmodernism announced the death of both (Lee 1994). By challenging ideas concerning grand theory, the fixity of meaning, and the essentialism of the subject, postmodern approaches seek to claim a space for lost voices by deconstructing and reconstructing meaning, history, tradition, organization, often in ironic, ambivalent, playful narratives (Alvesson and Deetz 1996). The self as subject no longer controls its own fate, while the sign as object controls everyone (Lee 1994: 9). The 'freedom' of the speaking subject is illusory. The Durkheimian 'social facticity' of language is reasserted as the subject is reconceived as spoken rather than speaking. It is language that speaks: subjects are simply its conduits.

Postmodernist writers in organization studies responded to the challenges presented by the loss of meaning and the decentering of the subject by focusing on various forms of reflexivity: ways of doing research which reflect back on themselves, especially in terms of the relation of the researcher to the research process. One way such reflexivity has been pursued in organization studies has been through the link between theory and practice. Hassard (1993: 19) argues that 'the essence of theory is not its database but its intelligibility.' But the question inevitably arises: intelligible for whom? Hassard does not answer this question directly, but he does argue that the successful communication of a theory's intelligibility lies in its usefulness. 'The notion of an expert writing from within an institution in social scientific language is one that cannot be sustained if postmodernism is accepted' (Parker 1992: 12). In other words, postmodernism supposedly achieves reflexivity through

critical examination of the assumptions that underline the relation between the trinity of author, text and reader', where the 'reader' might include subjects who experience the phenomena under investigation, generating input to the research process; or subjects who act on the analysis and theories provided by the researcher, consuming the output of the research process.

Terms like 'author', 'text' and 'reader' focus attention on what an academic (the author) writes, in academic journals and books (the text), which are usually read by academics (the reader) rather than by either practitioners or those purportedly 'studied'. Consequently, postmodernist researchers distance themselves from those who experience and consume the phenomena around which they construct their academic endeavours, especially, as Marsden and Townley (1996) point out, not much empirical research is being done. Ironically, the fragility and vulnerability of the 'researcher-as-subject' highlighted by this type of perspective, dissuades scholars from taking on that role. It appears easier to avoid research altogether if it involves messing with the subjectivities of non-academics. So, instead of conducting empirical work, scholars are urged to spend their time with other scholars. For example, Burrell (1994) asks us to be less like social science researchers (carrying out empirical work) and more like philosophers. To do so, we should interact more with 'professional' philosophers.

To confront a professional philosopher is to confront one's own ignorance. Nevertheless, the embarrassment must be endured.... As social scientists, we need to be more like philosophers; as people locked into empiricism we should be more excited by the transcendental; as pursuers of practice we should be more utopian in what we advocate (Burrell 1994: 15).

Thus the written text is assumed to create knowledge which, at its best, is informed by 'professional' philosophers, (who, presumably, are better at philosophizing than the amateurs in organizational studies). Other subjects -- such as the research subject -- remain un-named and nameless.

If the real world does not exist in anything other than discourse, then is the act of writing one interpretation of a discourse a worthwhile pursuit? The problems of (fictional) individuals in (mythical) organizations are safely placed behind philosophical double-glazing and their cries are treated as interesting example of discourse (Parker 1992: 11).

In this way, the conservative role of modern universities, who enable their members to 'double-glaze' themselves from the sound of other voices outside, makes itself evident in the postmodern 'caste of intellectuals' (Derrida 1979; Cooper 1989). Caste work consists of taboos as to who can do what, where, when, with what, and to whom. At the pinnacle stand the scholars, producers of articulate texts published as scholarly words, read and reviewed by professedly articulate colleagues creating a self-contained and hermetically sealed community. The pollution of everyday life is kept at textual length; reducing opportunities for listening and learning from those who experience and consume the process that empirical research produces. It involves a truncated reflexivity, one that involves the death of subjectivities other than that of the privileged author. By subscribing to a reflexivity that is

the preserve of limited theoretical conversation, these scholars not only free themselves from the chore of rendering their theories intelligible to individuals who might find it difficult to decipher the words of a postmodern text, let alone derive any meaning from it; they also absolve themselves of the responsibility for doing so.

Subject-Silence

Pity the poor subject. Neglected for so long in organization studies, particularly where issues of gender, culture and ethnicity have been involved; homogenized by functionalist assumptions in mainstream analysis; pronounced dead on arrival in positions as diverse as Aston (Pugh and Hickson 1976) and 'structural Marxism' (Althusser 1972). Neither critical theory nor postmodernism has, despite good intentions, resuscitated the subject with a great degree of success. In some respects, 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 where they cannot speak themselves. In this way, research controls: by privileging the researcher at the expense of the subject. The 'articulation' of thoughtful, rational views overwhelms the 'exclamation' that communicates the experience of what the subject believes, sees, feels, and senses. Exclamation is translated and channelled into the requisite, articulate categories provided by the well-trained researcher.

Yet most research agendas call for ever more careful and sophisticated articulation, reducing further the limited legitimacy attached to exclamation. Therein lies the dilemma: as researchers 'develop' their understanding, they become further removed from the subject. Normal scientists issue edicts and predictions about appropriate behaviour, as measured by highly sophisticated, quantitative analyses and experimental paraphernalia, from the safety of their laboratories. Subjects to them are like rats in a maze. Practitioner-oriented proselytizers preach at their subjects from the pulpit of commerce, telling them how to be bigger, better, brighter than the rest, while often oblivious to the effects of their recommendations to individuals both inside and outside the organization. The fetish of 'efficiency and effectiveness' survives with no standards to bridge the desired and the desirable, other than contribution to a fictive abstraction called profit¹ (Mangham 1995).

Meanwhile theoreticians who populate much of the critical theory and postmodernist genre engage with the subject mainly in terms of their own subjectivity. Specific attempts to let the subject speak, ironically, often have the opposite effect. For example, attempts to deal with reflexivity through self-critique have also reinforced the voice of the researcher through confessional monologues, whose claim to moral grace is that they are 'more reflexive than thou' (Marcus 1994). As Jeffcutt (1994: 251-2) confesses:

The voice in which these transitions were inscribed was that of a privileged witness. Though I clearly empathized with, sought to empower, and indeed suffered for my support of, the disadvantaged in the setting, my summative

¹ 'Profit' is not an ontological category: it is not real, it does not exist as such. It is the result of the application of accounting conventions, that may be used more or less 'accurate' according to their own rules, but which do not report on any 'real' states of affairs so much as constitute themselves *as if* they were real states of affairs understood through the legitimate conventions. Accounting, as such, is rather more an amoral discourse of a moral order for it acknowledges nothing other than its own conventions.

account was staged as a dramatized monologue. The voices of other indigenous participants in the setting, that I so carefully recorded and transcribed, were indeed extensively presented 'verbatim' in the text. However, the presence of these indigenous voices, though apparently dialogic, was in actuality dramatic, in which their contributions had been selected and staged as typifications of a culture to be represented ... the emotional intensity of the melodrama, as well as the staging of authority and credibility in the quest for persuasion, were inextricably linked to the author's need to successfully withstand the ordeal of an academic rite of passage (i.e. the achievement of completing a doctorate).

Other researchers pursuing reflexivity have turned from lived experience, giving up on field work altogether, and ventured into the humanities, exploring and using fiction, narrative, metaphor, and media in their studies offering yet more 'readings' of diverse 'texts' (Jermier 1985). But what is it that we are reading, and what does it have to do with the subject's 'reading'? Here too, by problematizing the researcher, we draw all the attention to her. As he engages increasingly in forms of experimental writing to achieve reflexivity through such means as fiction, narratives of the self, performance science, polyvocal texts, responsive readings, aphorisms, comedy and satire, visual presentations, and mixed genres (see Richardson 1994), creative and literary skills, the ability to entertain, become paramount.

You can write ... in a literature mode because the subjects do not read your work any more. You are not worried about your audience, which is purely academic (Zald quoted in O'Connor et al 1995: 125).

The living, breathing, thinking, acting subject defers to the playwright, to the novelist and, perhaps if we come full circle, to the puppeteer.

Thus, by encouraging the manufactured in favour of the genuine, articulation instead of exclamation, the emic over the etic (Taylor 1993; Denzin 1994), research processes in organization studies control the research subject and privilege the researcher through the representational devices they use. But, we should not discount the ability of the research subject to resist control. Despite all the strictures that postmodern analysis places on autonomous actors, subjects are not passive receptacles, sites of nothing more than history writ subjectively. As De Certeau (1984) has pointed out, consumption is as much a feature of (post)modern life as production. If those who read an academic text help constitute it, those who experience everyday life also help to constitute it. By examining how the subject is constituted by events and processes beyond any complete control; to understand how he or she is constituted and created in this world of uncertainties, is not to claim victim status. To see the subject as historically constituted is still to see the subject, and to acknowledge the limits of their being also acknowledges the possibilities of their emancipation (Laclau, 1988).

What we have rejected is the idea that humanist values have the metaphysical status of an essence and that they are, therefore, prior to any concrete history and society. However, this is not to deny their validity; it only means that their validity is constructed by means of particular discursive and argumentative practices... It is within this discursive plurality that 'humanist values' are constructed and expanded. And we know well that they are always threatened:

racism, sexism, class discrimination, always limit the emergence and full validity of humanism. To deny to the 'human' the status of essence is to draw attention to the historical conditions that have led to its emergence and to make possible, therefore, a wider degree of realism in the fight for the full realization of those values (Laclau and Mouffe 1987: 102).

Nor should we overlook the fact that the researcher is just another subject, subjected to and resistant against the controls embedded in the research process, of which she or he is a part. In this regard, neither the research subject, nor the researcher-as-subject nor research itself stand outside the research process.

Researchers never leave their own microsituations; what they do is compile summaries by a series of coding and translating procedures until a text is produced which is taken as representing a macroreality, standing above all the microsituations that produced it (Collins 1981: 988).

All are produced at the interstices of research and experience, in the struggle of control and resistance.

Reflexivity: Relativity without Relativism

If there is no real subject; if there is no bedrock of ontology, if there are no epistemological guarantees of validity, does this mean anything goes? We would argue not (also see Laclau & Mouffe 1987). There *are* ways to discriminate between competing representations that do not entail a science fiction where the 'real' and the 'true' are always already there, merely awaiting scientific illumination. The practice of the research process can only ever be its own guarantee, as in those theoretical positions best able to account, reflexively, for their own theorizing. Accordingly, reflexivity depends on criteria internal to theorizing. Reflexive theoretical positions are those best able to account for their own theorizing, as well as whatever it is they theorize about. Our perspective differs from Popperian conceptions of what a science should be, which suggest that it consists of 'objective' knowledge that is 'disinterested' about what it studies (Donaldson 1985). We suggest instead that 'objective' knowledge is knowledge better able to account for its own production, and the production of the phenomena to which it attends. Objectivity inheres in the degree of reflexivity that knowledge exhibits in relation to the conditions of its own existence. So, for instance, we find the work of Callon (1986) compelling in its objectivity, not because it is disinterestedly Popperian in its methodology, aping a normative science model, but because it seeks to be reflexive. It addresses the conditions of its own existence as theory; it addresses the conditions of existence of other interests touched by this theory, and it addresses the conditions of existence as they are theorized by these other interests, both as 'science' and as 'lay practice'.²

Theoretical positions can be judged according to three criteria. The first criteria of *differentiation* relates to the ways in which theories separate themselves from the practices of 'individual(s)' in the 'organization(s)' which sustain them. How does the epistemology of a theoretical position translate into the practical knowledges of those researching and those

² For more on this see Clegg and Hardy (1996a).

being researched? Are these knowledges mediated? If so, on whose terms? For instance, Barley et al (1988) demonstrate how organization theorists' accounts of culture have been progressively interpellated on terms determined by an agenda of consultancy rather than research, even in research work. In this respect, the differentiation of 'culture' from 'practice' has diminished, to the detriment of theorization which is able to account for itself reflexively. Instead, empirically grounded knowledge has given way to research agendas shaped increasingly by prescriptive and normative conceptions of practice; not, please note, by practice itself, but by 'normative' accounts of it that fail to differentiate research and practice. Differentiation means being able to acknowledge the interplay between them by being able to tell the difference between them: research never escapes practice but it is not the same as practice.

The second criteria refers to the ways in which theory knows itself to be the type of theory that it is, and it is not; the *reference images* it uses in fixing its identity. How does the theory recognize itself, and achieve its epistemological self recognition? Is the identity of the theory fixed in reference to other theories, or is it the outcome of a deliberate process of ritualized self reference? For instance, Donaldson (1985) defines the Aston Studies as incorrigible because no other theory has used the protocols and rituals of the Aston Studies to prove otherwise. Of course, to do so would mean that the 'other' theory would already have lost its identity, enrolled into a project whose rituals would make its truths indubitable (an argument addressed at greater length in Clegg 1990). We advocate theorizing that adopts a broad discourse. Not patterns of self citation within discursive communities (e.g. population ecology citing population ecology) but recognition, negative and positive, of and from theoretical 'others'. Theorizing that is nomadic, that ranges across territories of intellectual life is, we believe, more valuable and more interesting than theory which sticks tight to its own knitting, secure within its own conventions and boundaries. Better boundary spanning and extension than boundary maintenance.

Third, theoretical communities that are *pluralistic*, whose members engage in debate among and between themselves are more reflective than those who conform to the conventional wisdom, who ignore dissidents, who reveal theoretical group think. Better the paradigm 'warriors' (e.g. Burrell and Morgan 1979; Donaldson 1985; Reed 1985; Hassard 1988; 1991; Organization Studies 1988; Clegg 1990; Gioia and Pitre 1990; Jackson and Carter 1991; 1993; Parker and McHugh 1991; Marsden 1993; Willmott 1993a; 1993b), like-minded academics in terms of their disdain for the orthodox consensus, who cite, engage, struggle argue with each other, at times vigorously and incisively, than the self-contained Pfefferdigm (Pfeffer 1993) which refers only to Burrell and Morgan (1979); Donaldson (1985); and Marsden (1993).³ It is in the struggle that we learn (see Zald 1994): from the diversity and ambiguity of meaning, not through the recitation of a presumed uniformity, consensus, and unity, given in a way that requires unquestioning acceptance.

Forms of theoretical representation that cannot address criteria such as these are unreflexive about their existence, a lack of reflexivity that augers ill for their 'knowledge' in and of the organizational world. Theories which differentiate between themselves and the practices that sustain them; whose identity is formed with reference to other positions; which recognizes and engages in dialogue and debate is most likely to be reflexive. Self-regarding behaviour in the absence of recognition by and from others is of no value in itself. On these criteria, it is

³ See Clegg and Hardy (1996b) for more details on this debate.

not the alleged 'disinterestedness' of positions like those of Aston and its latter day supporters (e.g. Donaldson, 1985; 1985) that makes it worthwhile, but the degree of reflexivity that it exhibits in relation to the conditions of its own existence.

References

- Agar, M. (1986) *Speaking of Ethnography*. Beverly Hills CA: Sage.
- Altheide, D. L. (1988) Mediating cutbacks in human services: A case study in the negotiated order. *Sociological Quarterly*. 29(3): 339-35.
- Althusser, L. (1971) *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. London: New Left Books.
- Alvesson, M. and Willmott, H. (1992a) On the idea of emancipation in management and organization studies. *Academy of Management Review*. 17(3): 432-464.
- Allport, G. and Odbert, H. S. (1936) *Trait names: a psycholexical study*. Psychological Monograph. 47: 1-171.
- Alvesson, M. and Willmott, H. eds. (1992b) *Critical Management Studies*. London: Sage.
- Alvesson, M. and Deetz, S. (1996) Critical Theory and Postmodernism Approaches to Organizational Studies. *Handbook of Organization Studies*. S. Clegg, C. Hardy and W. Nord, eds., London: Sage.
- Barley, S., Meyer G. and Gash, D. (1988) Cultures of culture: Academics practitioners and the pragmatics of normative control. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 33: 24-61.
- Bate, P. (1984) The impact of organizational culture on approaches to organizational problem-solving. *Organizational Studies*. 5(1): 43-66.
- Benton, T. (1981) Objective' interests and the sociology of power. *Sociology*. 15(2): 161-184.
- Berger, P. (1967) *The Sacred Canopy*. Garden City NY: Doubleday.
- Braverman, H. (1974) *Labour and Monopoly Capital*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Brown, L.D. (1980) Planned Change in Underorganized Systems. *Systems Theory for Organization Development*. T. G. Cummings, ed., New York: Wiley.
- Burawoy, M. (1979) *Manufacturing Consent*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Burrell, G. (1994) Modernism, postmodernism and organizational analysis 4: The contribution of Jurgen Habermas. *Organization Studies*. 15(1): 1-19.
- Burrell, G. and Morgan, G. (1979) *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis*. London: Heinemann.
- Callon, M. (1986) Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fisherman of St. Briene Bay. *Power, Action and Belief: A Sociology of Knowledge*. J. Law, ed., London: Routledge.
- Calás, M.B. and Smircich, L. (1996) From the 'Woman's' Point of View: Feminist Approaches to Organization Studies *Handbook of Organization Studies*. S. Clegg, C. Hardy, and W. Nord, eds., London: Sage.
- Callon, M. and Latour, B. (1981) Unscrewing the Big Leviathan: How Actors Macro-structure Relaity and How Sociologists Help Them To Do So. *Advances in Social Theory and Methodology*. K. Knorr-Cetina and A.V. Cicourel, eds., Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Cattell, J. (1946) *Description and Measurement of Personality*. New York: World Press.
- Clegg, S.R. (1989) *Frameworks of Power*. London: Sage.
- Clegg, S.R. (1990) *Modern Organizations: Organization Studies in the Postmodern World*. London: Sage.
- Clegg, S.R. and Dunkerley, D. (1980) *Organization, Class and Control*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- Clegg, S.R and Hardy, C. (1996a) Representations. Handbook of Organization Studies. S. Clegg, C. Hardy and W. Nord, eds., London: Sage.
- Clegg, S.R and Hardy, C. (1996b) Organization, Organizations and Organizing. Handbook of Organization Studies. S. Clegg, C. Hardy and W. Nord, eds., London: Sage.
- Clifford, J. (1992) Travelling Cultures. Cultural Studies. L. Grossberg Nelson C. and Treichler P.A., eds., New York: Routledge.
- Collins, R. (1981) On the microfoundations of macrosociology. American Journal of Sociology. 86(5): 984-1013.
- Cooper, R. (1989) Modernism postmodernism and organisational analysis. The Contribution of Jaques Derrida. Organization Studies. 10(4): 479-502.
- Cooper, R. and Burrell, G. (1988) Modernism postmodernism and organizational analysis. Organization Studies. 9: 91-112.
- Deal, T. and Kennedy, A. (1982) Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life. Reading MA: Addison-Wesley.
- De Certeau M. (1984) The Practice of Everyday Life. Berkeley CA: University of California Press
- Deetz, S. (1985) Critical-cultural research: New sensibilities and old realities. Journal of Management. 11(2): 121-136.
- Deetz, S. and Mumby, D. (1990) Power, discourse and the workplace: Reclaiming the critical traditions. Communication Yearbook. 13: 18-47.
- Denzin, N. (1994) The Art and Politics of Interpretation Handbook of Qualitative Research. N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln, eds., London: Sage.
- Denzin, N.K and Lincoln, Y.S. (1994) Entering the Field of Qualitative Research Handbook of Qualitative Research. N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln, eds., London: Sage, 1-18.
- Derrida, J. (1978) Writing and Difference. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.
- Donaldson, L. (1985) In Defence of Organization Theory: A Reply to the Critics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Donaldson, L. (1995) American Anti-Management Theories of Organization: A Critique of Paradigm Proliferation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eisenhardt, K.M.(1989 "Building theories from case study research." Academy of Management Review. 14(3): 532-550.
- Fine, M. (1994) Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research. Handbook of Qualitative Research. N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln, eds., London: Sage.
- Foucault, M. (1977) Discipline and Punish. New York: Pantheon.
- Fox, A. (1973) Industrial Relations: A Social Critique of Pluralist Ideology. Man and Organization. J. Child, ed., London: Allen and Unwin.
- Freire, P. (1992) Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Continuum.
- Fugelsang, A. (1973) Applied Communication in Developing Countries. Uppsala: The Dag Hammarskjold Foundation.
- Garfinkel, H. (1967) Studies in Ethnomethodology. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Giddens, A. (1979) Central Problems in Social Theory. Berkeley CA: University of California Press.
- Gioia, D.A. and Pitre, E. (1990) Multiparadigm perspectives on theory building. Academy of Management Review. 15(4): 584-602.
- Gouldner, A.W. (1954) Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy. New York: Free Press
- Gray, B. (1989) Collaborating. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hardy, C. (1994) Underorganized Interorganizational Domains: The Case of Refugee Systems. Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences. 30(3): 278-296, 1994.

- Hardy, C. and Clegg, S. (1996) *Some Dare Call it Power*. S. Clegg, C. Hardy and W. Nord, eds., *Handbook of Organization Studies*. London: Sage.
- Hassard, J. (1988) Overcoming hermeticism in organization theory: An alternative to paradigm incommensurability. *Human Relations*. 41(3): 247-259.
- Hassard, J. (1991) Multiple paradigms and organizational analysis: A case study. *Organization Studies*. 12(2): 275-299.
- Hassard, J. (1993) *Sociology and Organization Theory: Positivism Paradigms and Postmodernity*. London: Sage.
- Hickson, D. J. (1966) A convergence in organization theory. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 11: 224-37.
- Hooks, B. (1989) *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist Thinking Black*. Boston: South End.
- Hoy, D.C. (1986) *Power, Repression, Progress: Foucault, Lukes and the Frankfurt School*. Foucault: A Critical Reader. D.C. Hoy, ed., Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Izraeli, D.M. and Jick, T.D. (1986) The art of Saying no: Linking power to culture *Organization Studies*. 7(2): 171-192.
- Jackson, N. and Carter, P. (1991) In defence of paradigm incommensurability. *Organization Studies*. 12(1): 109-127.
- Jackson, N. and Carter, P. (1993) Paradigm Wars: A response to Hugh Willmott. *Organization Studies*. 14(5): 721-725.
- Jeffcutt, P. (1994) From interpretation to representation in organizational analysis: Postmodernism, ethnography and organizational symbolism *Organization Studies*. 15(2): 241-274.
- Jencks, C. (1989) *What is Post-Modernism?* 3rd ed. rev. enlarged. New York: Academy Editions/St. Martins Press.
- Jermier, J.M. (1985) When the sleeper wakes: A short story extending themes in radical organization theory, *Journal of Management*. 11: 67-80.
- Knights, D. and Morgan, G. (1991) Strategic discourse and subjectivity: towards a critical analysis of corporate strategy in organisations. *Organisation Studies*. 12(3): 251-273.
- Knights, D. and Morgan, G. (1995) Strategy under the microscope: Strategic management and IT in financial services *Journal of Management Studies*. 32(2): 191-213.
- Knights, D. and Willmott, H. (1982) Power, values and relations: A comment on Benton. *Sociology*. 16(4): 578-585.
- Knights, D. and Willmott, H. (1985) Power and identity in theory and practice. *Sociological Review*. 33(1): 22-46.
- Knights, D. and Willmott, H. (1989) Power and subjectivity at work: From degradation to subjugation in social relations. *Sociology*. 23(4): 535-558.
- Knorr-Cetina, K. (1981) The Micro-sociological Challenge of Macro Sociology: Towards a Reconstruction of Social Theory and Methodology. *Advances in Social Theory and Methodology*. K. Knorr-Cetina and A.V. Cicourel, eds., Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1987) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso.
- Latour, B. (1987) *Science In Action: How To Follow Scientists And Engineers Through Society*. Cambridge MA.: Harvard University Press.
- Laumann, E.O. and Knoke, D. (1987) *The Organizational State*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Lee, R.L.M. (1994) Modernization, postmodernism and the Third World. *Current Sociology*. 42(2): 1-66.

- Lorsch, J.W. (1986) Managing culture: The invisible barrier to strategic change. *California Management Review*. 28(2): 95-109.
- Louis, M. (1985) An Investigator's Guide to Workplace Culture. *Organizational Culture*. P. Frost L. Moore M. Louis C. Lundberg and J. Martin, eds., Beverly Hills CA: Sage, 73-94.
- Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*. London: Macmillan.
- Lyotard, J. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition*. Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Mangham, I.L. (1995) McIntyre and the manager *Organization*. 2(2): 181-204.
- Marcus, G.E. (1994) What Comes Just After 'Post'? The Case of Ethnography *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln, eds., London: Sage.
- Marsden, R. (1993) The politics of organizational analysis. *Organization Studies*. 14(1): 92-124.
- Marsden, R. and Townley, B. (1996) The Owl of Minerva: Reflections on Theory in Practice in Clegg S. Hardy C. and Nord W. *Handbook of Organization Studies*. London: Sage.
- Martin, J. (1992) *Cultures in Organizations: Three Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Martin, J. and Frost, P. (1996) The Organizational Culture War Games: A Struggle for Intellectual Dominance in Clegg S. Hardy C. and Nord W. *Handbook of Organization Studies*. London: Sage.
- Martin, J. and Siehl, C. (1983) Organizational culture and counter culture: An uneasy symbiosis. *Organizational Dynamics*. 12: 52-64.
- Mumby, D. (1988) *Communication and Power in Organizations: Discourse Ideology and Domination*. Norwood NJ: Ablex.
- Mumby, D.K. (1992) Two Discourses on Communication Power and the Subject: Jürgen Habermas and Michel Foucault. *Construction of the Self*. G. Levine, ed., New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Nathan, M.L. and Mitroff, I.I. (1991) The Use of Negotiated Order Theory as a Tool for the Analysis and Development of an Interorganizational Field. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*. 27: 163-180.
- Nord, W.R. and Doherty, E.M. (1994) Towards an assertion perspective for empowerment: Blending employee rights and labor process theories. Unpublished paper: College of Business Administration University of South Florida.
- Nord, W.R. and Jermier, J.M. (1992) Critical Social Science for Managers? Promising and Perverse Possibilities. *Critical Management Studies*. M. Alvesson and H. Willmott, eds., London: Sage.
- O'Connor, E.S., Hatch, M.J., White, H.V. and Zald, M.N. (1995) Undisciplining organizational studies: A conversation across domains, methods, and beliefs. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 42: 119-136.
- Oliver, C. (1990) Determinants of interorganizational relationships: integration and future directions. *Academy of Management Review*. 15: 241-265.
- Organization Studies*, (1988) Offence and defence. *Organization Studies*. 9(1): 1-32.
- Parker, M. (1992) Post-modern organisations or postmodern organisation theory? *Organization Studies*. 13: 1-13.
- Parker, M. and McHugh, G. (1991) Five texts in search of an author: A response to John Hassards's 'Multiple paradigms and organizational analysis.' *Organization Studies*. 12(3): 451-456.
- Peters, T. and Waterman, R. (1982) *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies*. New York: Harper and Row.

- Pfeffer, J. (1993) Barriers to the advance of organizational science: Paradigm development as a dependent variable. *Academy of Management Review*. 18(4): 599-620.
- Pugh, D.S. and Hickson, D.J. (1976) *Organizational Structure In Its Context: The Aston Programme*. Farnborough: Saxon House.
- Pugh, D. S., Hickson, D. J. and Hinings, C. R. (1971) *Writers on Organizations*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.
- Reed, M. (1985) *Redirections in Organization Analysis*. London: Tavistock.
- Richardson, L. (1994) Writing: A Method of Inquiry. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, N.K. Denzin, and Y.S. Lincoln, eds., London: Sage, 1994.
- Sacks, H. (1972) An Initial Investigation of Conversational Dada for Doing Sociology. *Studies in Social Interaction*, D. Sudnow, ed., New York: Free Press.
- Saffold, G.S. (1988) Culture, traits, strength and organizational performance: Moving beyond 'strong' culture. *Academy of Management Review*. 13(4): 546-558.
- Sathe, V. (1985) *Culture and Related Corporate Realities: Text Cases and Readings on Organizational Entry Establishment and Change*. Homewood IL: Irwin.
- Schein, E. (1985) *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smircich, L. (1983) Concepts of culture and organizational analysis. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 28: 339-58.
- Spradley, J. (1979) *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt Rinehard and Winston.
- Starbuck, W.H. (1981) A Trip to View the Elephants and the Rattlesnakes in the Garden of Aston. *The Aston Program Perspective. Perspectives on Organisation Design and Behaviour*. A. Van de Ven and W. Joyce, eds., New York: Wiley.
- Starbuck, W.H. (1982) Congealing oil: Inventing ideologies to justify acting ideologies out. *Journal of Management Studies*. 19: 1-27.
- Steffy, B.D. and Grimes, A.J. (1986) A Critical theory of organization science. *Academy of Management Review*. 11(2): 322-336.
- Sturm, D. (1985) Corporate culture and the common good: The need for thick description and critical interpretation. *Thought*. 602(37): 141-60.
- Taylor, P.V. (1993) *The Texts of Paulo Freire*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Tichy, Noel M. (1982) The technical, political and cultural keys to managing change. *Organizational Dynamics*. 11: 59-80.
- Trice, H. and Beyer, J. (1984) Studying organizational cultures through rites and ceremonials. *Academy of Management Review*. 9: 653-69.
- Trice, H. and Beyer, J. (1993) *The Cultures of Work Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Üsdiken, B. and Pasadeos, Y. (1995) Organizational analysis in North America and Europe: A comparison of co-citation networks. *Organization Studies*. 16(3): 503-526.
- Watson, T.J. (1995) Rhetoric, discourse and argument in organizational sense making; A reflexive tale. *Organization Studies*. 16(5): 805-821.
- Weber, M. (1978) *Economy and Society*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Westley, F. and Vredenburg, H. (1991) Strategic bridging: The collaboration between environmentalists and business in the marketing of green products. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*. 27(1): 65-90.
- Wilkins, A.L. and Dyer, W.G. (1988) Toward culturally sensitive theories of cultural change. *Academy of Management Review*. 13(4): 522-533.
- Wilkins, A.L. and Ouchi, W.G. (1983) Efficient cultures: exploring the relationship between culture and organizational performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 28: 468-481.

- Willer, D. and Willer, J. (1973) *Systematic Empiricism: A Critique of Pseudo-Science*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall.
- Willmott, H. (1993a) Breaking the paradigm mentality. *Organization Studies*. 14(5): 681-719.
- Willmott, H. (1993b) Paradigm gridlock: A reply. *Organization Studies*. 14(5): 727-730.
- Willmott, H. (1993c) Strength is ignorance; slavery is freedom: Managing culture in modern organizations. *Journal of Management Studies*. 30: 515-52.
- Wuthnow, R., Hunter, J., Bergesen, A. and Kurzweil, E. (1984) *Cultural Analysis*. Boston MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Zald, M.N. (1994) Organization studies as a scientific and humanistic enterprise: Toward a reconceptualization of the foundations of the field. *Organization Science*. 44: 513-528.

TABLE 1
FEATURES OF FOUR RESEARCH APPROACHES

	Normative	Interpretive	Critical	Postmodern
Basic Goal	demonstrate law-like relations among objects	display unified culture	unmask domination	reclaim conflict
Method	nomothetic science	hermeneutics, ethnography	cultural and ideological critique	deconstruction, genealogy
Problems addressed	inefficiency and disorder	meaningless and illegitimacy	domination and consent	conflict suppression
Narrative style	scientific, technical	romantic, embracing	therapeutic, directive	ironic, ambivalent
Time identity	modern	premodern	late modern	postmodern
Organizational benefits	control, expertise	commitment	participation	diversity
Risks of unreflexive research	silencing managers for whom they 'speak'	engineering 'meaning' for others	offering 'emancipation' on oppressive terms	focussing all attention on the 'researcher'

Adapted from Alvesson and Deetz (1996).

Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:

Hardy, C;Clegg, S

Title:

Relativity Without Relativism: Reflexivity in Post-Paradigm Organization Studies

Date:

1997-01-01

Citation:

Hardy, C. & Clegg, S. (1997). Relativity Without Relativism: Reflexivity in Post-Paradigm Organization Studies. British Journal of Management, 8 (2 SPEC. ISS.), pp.5-17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.8.s1.2>.

Persistent Link:

<http://hdl.handle.net/11343/116093>