

# Organization: On the Theory and Practice of Excess

ALF REHN\* and DAMIAN O'DOHERTY\*\*

\*Department of Industrial Management, Royal Institute of Technology, Lindstedtsvägen 30, 10044 Stockholm, Sweden \*\*Manchester Business School, Booth Street West, University of Manchester, Manchester, M60 1QD

Can organization theory truly grasp excess, or is this a constant paradoxical other of organization, a permanently elusive remainder? As a phenomenon might it mark out the contours of a configuration that points to an aporia of organization that scholarship and research in organization has yet to confront? In posing these questions we note that excess has proven notoriously tricky to handle through conventional modes of analytical scholarship, and has thus often been ignored when discussing contemporary economy. However, excess has much to teach about organization. In order to respond to this challenge the article discusses the possibilities and problems of theorizing excess and presents/exhibits an argument for developing the theory of general economy in order to open up and extend the persistent restricted economy of organization studies.

**Key words:** Excess; Theory; Organization; General Economy; Bataille

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the recent interest in an 'experience economy' and the 'post-industrial society', the world of organizations is still, unfortunately, predominantly seen in terms of a restricted agenda of economic calculation and efficiency. Whilst there are some who will acknowledge substantive irrationalities and the non- or extra-economic values associated with the various political and social agendas that are played out in organization, the notion still persists that organization is somehow, by logical necessity, simply about saving resources and creating more efficient systems. With this conception waste, excess, and the irrational are generally deemed to be counter-productive and secondary to the fundamentals of frugality and sobriety. If organization is to be successful, it is assumed that this derivative waste will be minimized and eventually eliminated. However, it is difficult to ignore the fact in the world around us today there is a proliferating multitude of apparently useless and unnecessary products and services. Think of the 'slacker' economy, generation X, the 24-hour party people, Sumo wrestling, Formula 1 motor racing, the stretch Hummer guzzling a gallon of petrol for every half-mile of transport, and the recent popularity of DVD-collections, the definitive compendium, the directors' cut with its multiple 'endings' and exhaustive scene-by-scene commentary (regardless of whether this is a collection of nonstop fornication or every episode of *The Prisoner* ever made). It is difficult to see this in terms of utility. As a proliferation of the excessive it speaks of a world that is far from the frugal and sober 'economization' of costs, marginal utility and economic rationality. Where the creation of such luxury, decadence and

---

\*E-mail: alf@abo.fi

indulgence is often seen as a fundamental flaw of economy, and one that has deleterious consequences for the discipline of utility and competition, we want to re-examine the relationship between the utile and the non-utile in terms of a 'theory and practice of excess' that is suggestive of new ways in which we might consider organization.

The terms within which organization is understood and studied are still primarily defined by what Bataille would call a 'restrictive economy', one of parsimony, calculation and utility—a conception which remains the mindset of most business practitioners. For the busyness of the everyday waste is deemed bad and 'unworthy', and excess is deemed 'other' to the value of utility—in an 'othering' that gets variously and complexly suppressed and denied. This special edition on the theory and practice of excess introduces a series of papers in organization studies that are beginning to question this conventional understanding and logic. That 'excess' is even deemed worthy of serious academic scholarship is itself a sign that the kind of organization studies acceptable to a managerialist business studies agenda is perhaps being challenged and undermined. These papers explicitly draw attention to the various manifestations of excess and help us re-think the relationship between the logic of competitive market 'rationality' and that which borders and lies outside its parsimonious economy. We explore the idea that excess might not simply be an 'other' to competitive efficiency, something which undermines its disciplinary apparatus, but rather a complex 'supplementarity' (Derrida, 1974), opening up a relationship that is paradoxically both a condition of possibility for the stringency of calculation and determination, and its condition of impossibility. In thinking excess not only do we begin to see that excess might actually serve the purposes of utility, albeit in complex and contradictory ways, but that the distinction between utility and excess might itself be specious. Moreover, in the exercise of this thinking we tarry with the excessive in ways that risk our texts themselves being carried away by excess.

It is difficult to trace a simply genealogy of thought within which we can locate the emergence of this interest in excess and organization. The temptation is always to exposit a citational and linear schema that gives the impression of foundational authorities and a logical progression of thought that works towards some end-point of conclusion and completion. Such teleologies are obstacles to the understanding of excess and anathema to its teachings. Our interest in excess will be located within the influence of so called 'postmodern' organization theory and the growing interest in and popularity of 'poststructural' texts and ideas. There can be little doubt that the writings of George Bataille (1897–1962) remain central to this emerging problematic of excess, in particular his three-volume study of *The Accursed Share* (Bataille, 1988a, 1991). However, any serious reading and study of Bataille must contend with the problem that his writings do not furnish a corpus of appropriable ideas and resources but rather form part of what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) would call a 'body-without-organs'. To read Bataille is to read an excess that can never be tamed; crossing traditional scholarly boundaries and protocols his writings often push toward a limit of reason and readability. Moreover, his texts participate in a constellation of forces, which must be positioned and read in the context of their explicit dialogue with a number of important predecessors and contemporaries. Any reading and attempted appropriation that does not respect this intertextuality is in danger of gross misunderstanding. As a first precaution Bataille must be read carefully in the context of his continual reading and engagement with Hegel, primarily through his relationship and dialogue with Alexander Kojève (Williams, 2001). In addition, Bataille writes in relation to thinkers such as Sade, Marx, Freud and Nietzsche in a conversation he shares with contemporaries such as Maurice Blanchot, Michel Leiris and Pierre Klossowski. His thinking also needs to be read in connection to his work with the *Collège de Sociologie* (Hollier, 1989), early surrealism and the *Acephale* community. This introduction is not the place to tease out the various ideas about general economy, base matter, transgression,

expenditure, sacrifice, sovereignty, and the sacred,<sup>1</sup> but they have begun to appear on the fringes of mainstream organization studies, primarily through the work of scholars such as Steve Linstead, Jo Brewis and Anthony O'Shea.

Whilst excess is distilled through the writings of Bataille, to understand its genealogy we must also pay reference here to the work of Walter Benjamin and Jean Baudrillard who both contribute important in-roads and out-roads from this reading of Bataille. Benjamin's (1999) interest in advertising and consumption and its sublimation of primitive forces offers an interesting relation to the work of Bataille and this influence can be seen in our proposal that there is an emerging excess and organization. Baudrillard is explicit in his reading and development of Bataille's thinking and indeed his concepts of 'symbolic exchange', the ecstasy of communication, the 'obscene' and 'excescence' are almost unthinkable without Bataille. Our introduction to excess draws on this complex genealogy but cannot provide a lexicon or glossary of concepts and definitions; to treat excess and organization in a preliminary and consistent way for organization demands that we defer this 'completion'. What we attempt to edit and collect here an emerging style of thinking (excess) in organization studies that seems to reflect the volatility and unpredictability of excess that is always in a constant state of flux and mutation. This means that we are compelled to exercise what we might call a 'movement-thought', a process of thought that is always returning to the beginning and working towards definition. As it migrates through the various disciplinary fields and regimes of scholarly expertise, excess changes both subject and object—at least for those who grasp (after) excess as a mode of enquiry as well as interesting object of analysis.

These dimensions of excess mean that this introduction is written in a way that reflects what is organizationally a complex before (and) after state. An introduction to organizational typically seeks to provide a *founding* and our text has clearly been written in anticipation of the work that follows; but it is also written as an 'after-effect' that follows a consideration of the work we have collected for this special edition. Taking inspiration from Bataille, it seeks to maintain a 'position' both inside and outside the main body of the text, but in so doing seems to threaten an impossibility and collapse of what Weick (1995) would call sense-making in organization. In the remainder of this paper we introduce what we take to be some of the hidden waste(lands) in contemporary organization where we might expect to find aspects of this excessive. A careful treatment of excess introduces us to an unusual and bizarre ontology. We then consider the work of Weick as an exemplary practitioner-theorist whose efforts to map organization as a practical processual accomplishment often forces him to consider organization as excess: this juxtaposition of Weick with our thinking on excess might be surprising to those used to a more conventional reading of Weick (Sutcliffe, Brown and Putnam, 2006). We find that his writing opens up organization to something that is always beyond, inviting an excess that ceaselessly calls out for innovation and analysis. Unlike the abstract and theoretical preoccupations of those interested in the texts of postmodernist or post-structural writers there is an skillful and intuitive consistency of text and phenomena in Weick that provides a useful way of approaching excess. Before introducing the essays that we have edited for this issue of *Culture and Organization*, we argue that excess demands something more radical, however, than what Weick is prepared to venture. In brief, we have to *hazard* the useless and the un-knowing in our attempts to approach excess. Here, organization in excess becomes a dissemination of shards and fragments that proves to be the cause of some disorientation in our habitual methods of classification and analysis and in the papers that follow we see evidence of a new 'collection' that seems to be gathering the contours of a new mode of mapping organization. Always on the brink of organization this constellation of bits and pieces outline the flashpoints of excess that perhaps mark a coming emergency...

## HIDDEN WASTE(LANDS) IN ORGANIZATION: THE DETRITUS, MARGINALIA, EXCLUDED AND FRIVOLOUS

Wine lakes, butter-mountains, radioactive waste, and 64 thousand million tons of human fecal matter. These are just some of the things produced each year by citizens of the European community (calculated from the *Eurostat Yearbook 2004*). And they all need organizing, perhaps nothing more so than waste itself. Indeed, the history of capitalism is, as Dominique Laporte (2002) writes, the 'history of shit'. The modern industrial city, the rise of the nation state, and even the struggle for clean and proper language, are all inextricably bound in a struggle with sewage and waste; the Victorian engineering of sewers and pipes, subterranean gutters and drains, aqueducts and the viaducts that we see around our suburbs and towns, all components of a complex infrastructure required to maintain the circulation of water so vital to the body and its city. Heidegger (1977) offers the image of a 'standing reserve', a hydro-electric power station that dams up a massive reservoir of water that sustains the pressure which allows us to turn on the tap in the morning and have water flow on call into our kitchens and homes. What he doesn't invite us to think about is the pressure that comes from a standing-reserve of waste, the effluent and discharge that attends the circulation of matter placed on call for the convenience of modern man. On the outskirts of our cities, and in regions and dimensions of Heidegger's 'Being' not frequently visited by analysts of contemporary organization, we find examples of this standing reserve of excess—landfill sites and reprocessing centres, the stench of decomposing matter in transformation and elimination attended by the screech of feral gulls and other nascent, mutant plant and animal life. In his oil-stained overalls and local authority logo, we might catch a glimpse of the landfill site manager returning to his site office and his VDU monitor, which displays the data from a management information software system that is somehow supposed to help in the management of this vast circulation of matter...

Shit is simply one but inevitable form in which excess finds expression. And it needs to find expression, for each year we generate as much waste as we produce things of beauty and utility—the paradox being that organization does not eliminate excess, it can simply change its form and expression. It finds itself compelled to push back the limits in which we contain our ever-burgeoning desire for a 'restrictive economy' (Bataille, 1988a) based on the security of a mundane pragmatism and utility. Excess always lurks on the borders of our towns and cities, in the dank cellars of burned-out factories and waste-lands, the rusting hulks of 19<sup>th</sup> century industry, the concrete vacant lots and what Deleuze (1992) might call the anonymous 'any-space whatevers' that cultivate the fear of pandemic virus and contagion and which give rise to alternative communities and roaming bands of anarcho-syndicalists, ecstasy and 'rave' culture, eco-warriors and urban terrorists (Hetherington, 1996; Edensor, 2005).

Excess can also be found in that which cannot be made to fit a system, that which is neither inside nor outside the state apparatus, but somewhere in-between, in a hiatus or hybrid zone of semi-legality and clandestine activities: military detention camps and rendition bases, Guantanamo Bay, Sealand, the immigration 'processing' centres, sidewalk economies, refugee camps, bordertowns, the grimy back-alleys of the urban condition, junkspace, needle parks.... These are turbulent states of exception (cf. Agamben, 2005), spaces of *bricolage* and improvisation that concentrate a host of powers and forces, causing them to collide and twist, fostering and festering mediations and reactions that periodically discharge in unusual and exceptional ways. Excess piles up in these bordertowns and wastelands of organization forming compounds of tense, fragile equilibrium that we might liken to what Taussig (1992) calls a 'nervous system'—the audible click of its radioactive half-life barely perceptible above the metallic clang and whirl of power generators and

military equipment. Here, excess is equally surplus and void, positive and negative, production and waste, both the presence and absence that attends the circulation of matter. In thinking excess or indeed becoming excess, we are apprenticed to see and advent organization as a vast hypertrophied system of waste-management, but also decadence and extravagance, frivolity and the mindless pleasures of trigger-happy street gangs in pursuit of 'bling', all delicately poised upon the tindersticks of an imminent and spontaneous combustion.

Such excess is in a sense *anorganized*, standing in reserve for that which is above and beyond the bare necessity and its barren land of utility and harsh puritanism. It can show itself in exuberance, in inebriation, in obesity. It can be traced through the swirling patterns created in redundancy, in emotion, in romance, in aesthetics. Everywhere that there is more of something than is *absolutely needed*, there will be excess, and excessively so. Excess compels students of organization to come to terms with what might appear to be a bizarre ontology, a vast bio-material flow of energies and forces that finds expression in the shards and fragments, the bits and pieces of matter in organization that ordinarily get passed over as the anomalous or the accidental and irrelevant (Rhodes and Pullen, forthcoming). Finding ways of mapping the patterns and associations between these elements poses a considerable challenge to current research in organization analysis, as this has been trained to identify the structures and functions, behaviors, agencies and relations of the 'restricted economy'. In its preoccupation with what is measurable, what is sensible, understandable, and subject to the dictates of 'mundane reason' (Pollner, 1987), organization analysis continues to ignore what is perhaps most essential to contemporary and emerging organization. The papers in this special edition provide fascinating insight into some elements of what might be discerned as a new 'constellation' in organization. Focusing on a series of marginal and ephemeral subjects and objects ordinarily not seen within the orthodox framework of organization analysis these papers challenge the idea that organization embodies and accomplishes a rational administration of task and functional work.

Collectively, they announce the beginnings of a form of organizational analysis that is beginning to think excess, exploring the equivalent of those unassuming nods and winks, the asides of discourse and practice in organization through which excess becomes manifest.<sup>2</sup> Here, for example, we will listen to the three simple words 'I'd Rather Not', first spoken by Bartleby the Scrivener in Melville's short story, but which continues to be spoken today, perhaps increasingly so, haunting organization and its management. We study the rarely spoken 'Linley ostrich feather duster with hand-finished walnut handle' and consider the importance of the allegorical tapestry as an artifact of contemporary organization that provides insight into the sumptuous display and ostentatious magnificence of excess. The mundane and unobtrusive quotidian routines of everyday life that sustain a frenetic borderline condition of subjectivity provides another article of interest reminding us of the suppressed excess and its relationship with the more obvious and manifest excess in modern life. The 17th-century Dutch tulip-mania provides a point of access to consider the impossible quantification of financial risk in today's banking system, an aporia which helps explain the proliferation to excess and the hyper-reality of global capital and finance whose logic helps explain Enron and its simulated, phantom organizations. Finally, we take inspiration from the visceral and gynecological thinking of Luce Irigaray to think 'beyond the boundary of organization'. In this beyond, the logic of a mimetic excess threatens to erode our customary separation of 'critical' and 'non-critical' thinking stimulating a deconstruction that calls into doubt all manner of habitual dualisms and oppositions, up to the most profound of distinctions that seeks to maintain a 'real' against an 'unreal' in organization.

## EXCESSIVE THEORIZING: FROM WEICK TO POSTMODERN ORGANIZATION THEORY

In collecting these papers from the 2005 Stockholm Standing Conference on Organization Symbolism, we see the preliminary and incipient signs of a possible new opening in organization, one that has hitherto been neglected and ignored, barely perceived by the various schools and paradigms in contemporary organization study (Clegg, Hardy and Nord, 1996; Tsoukas and Knudsen, 2003). The conventions of organizational analysis still persist with the assumption that organization is a bounded and integral object of analysis that exists in the form of an entity available for inspection and classification in which laws and regularities can be established and measured. The radical-humanist challenge to this orthodoxy introduced variants of Marxist and post-marxist theory to challenge this mainstream and to re-present organization as a contested and political phenomenon. In its more 'constructivist' strains (O'Doherty and Willmott, 2001) this helped to show that organization mediates a plurality of competing and contradictory realities in the process of an on-going construction and reproduction of social relations. However, in thinking excess we do not simply look for the unintended consequences, the contradictions and antagonisms that befall the logical and incremental planning and administration of formal-rational organizational, but rather begin to open up a new vista (in) organization that casts into relief a novel set of (part)-objects, subjects and artifacts at play in social relations.

Intellectually, there can be little doubt that the work of those who at one time might have been labeled 'postmodern' theorists in organization (Hassard and Parker, 1993) have made organization a more interesting and unusual phenomena. What is not convincing is the extent to which there has been a preparedness to question the underlying philosophical dualisms of modern social theory, perhaps because this would inevitably entail some crisis for orthodox modes of analysis and representation in social science. Organization is processual, volatile, undecidable, etc., but only by dint of an intellectual preference and its analytical fiat exercised by process theorists and postmodern analysis of organization (Chia, 1996).<sup>3</sup> Disorder and disorganization is not derived or demonstrably forced upon the organization analyst out of the practice and limits of social science but instead gets represented and reified as primordial (see Willmott, 1998). One of the most disappointing aspects of the recent turn to philosophy in organization (Jones and Munro, 2005) is perhaps this neglect of how participants in actual empirical organizations individually and collectively see, think, and speak their world. To what extent, we might wonder, do social agents share this understanding of a primordial flux, or organization as disorganization and disorder? What gets lost here is the importance of the socio-material phylum, the flux of material flow, the components and sub-components of the vast assemblage that maintains and reproduces organization. In thinking the practice of excess we are re-tu(r)ned to this empirical heterogeneity. Excess is carried and discharged through the minutia of its socio-material flow, from the humble office paper-clip<sup>4</sup> and the smell of photocopier carbon and its ink cartridge in the print room, to the emergency safety valve that whilst seemingly innocent and innocuous lies coiled and waiting to spring, booby-trapped to victimize an unpopular colleague (Gabriel, 1995).

It is perhaps only the work of Karl Weick (1979, 1995, 2000) that offers possibilities for developing a form of organization studies that is capable of responding to this interest in excess. Weick develops and exemplifies a subtle and innovative approach to organization analysis borne out of a commitment to study the minutia of empirical phenomena in organization. His studies in organization are interested in the ways in which the bewildering complexity and detail of what we would call a socio-material assemblage is perceived and understood by subjects *other than* the master theoretician who brings to bear his or her Derrida or Foucault to the worlds of organizational practitioners. His work is exemplary of

the kind of attention to the rich and teeming fertility of social and material transformations that opens up when thinking excess. Moreover, in his 'writing organization', theory does not arrive completed and fully formed as (capital-letter 'T') *Theory* (see O'Doherty, forthcoming) that waits in reserve for application and utility. Instead, Weick presents theory as both a medium and outcome of organizational analysis—like a practice or craft which becomes itself an ongoing accomplishment, one that is never fully realized or achieved and cannot be made formalizable and abstract in the form of a set of principles or techniques that can be understood outside the temporal and experiential struggle of engaging and intervening in this phenomena we call organization. The texts of Weick almost become the phenomena that they are studying—and this is perhaps inevitable when one commits to the idea that one can only understand the world of organization by participating in its on-going production and reproduction, an analytical disposition that inevitably means one changes the world in seeking its understanding so that one is always condemned to chasing something that cannot be made stable or object-like. As we follow the twists and turns of his painstaking analysis, whether this is reading interview transcripts, exploring the data of a multi-sensate ethnography, or trawling through the mass of documentation assembled to analyze and report on an air disaster, there is an endless to-and-fro between the empirical and the theoretical, a subtle hermeneutic of exposition, hypotheses, experimentation, testing, interpretation and generalization.

One reads Weick with a sense that organization is being conjured into life by a mode of representation that does not simply synthesize the different understandings and interpretation of its agents and participants, nor does it proceed by way of an application of a superior and alien intellectual abstraction in which phenomena is recruited and translated in ways unrecognizable to the subjects of organization. In the work of Cooper, Chia, and their followers (Böhm and Jones, 2001), there is very little interest in how employees of organization, for example, might understand the ontology of their world, or what subjects might think is their contribution to the constitution and reproduction of organization as an ontological reality. Organization as process, disorder, and undecidability appears to be an understanding based simply on perspective and language-game. Logically, it is possible to see that one cannot have organization without disorganization and that order and disorder are co-implicated in tense and antagonistic ways, which is constitutive of a dynamic that manifests as phenomena circulating within the socio-technical assemblage of organization. However, this logical a priori submits organization to the limits of a conventional analytical dialectic, an intellectually abstracted formalization that is easily learnt—in the form of a language game that enables its supporters to produce clever innovations on a theme. It provides a template for the recruitment, enrollment and recognition of organizational phenomena, albeit a template that is far subtler in its operation than the allocative and classificatory associations the metaphor of 'template' intuitively tends to evoke. This template resembles something more like a movie-camera that is able to capture the movement of organizational phenomena in its presence and absence securing a mode of analysis that allows us to see the mutual interference of things like 'inside' and 'outside' (Cooper, 1986) in delineating the outline of objects and components routinely discovered as parts of the organization assemblage (Law, 1994). Phenomena is conceived through the penumbra of relationality and interaction in ways that grant to the subjects and objects of organization a motility and volatility, which draws attention to the vagrancy and unpredictability of organization in action. However, this instability remains the projection of an intellectual *a priori*, an analytical deduction into which one can place one's thinking and thereby map and re-present organization as the temporary stabilization of complex interacting processes and patterns.

Intellectually and theoretically driven this re-presentation of organization means that nothing new can be said of organization as a practical accomplishment; there seems to be no way of understanding, for example, what makes an organization like the police force unique and

distinguishable from, say, a car production factory. Weick develops his analysis and representation by conversation and dialectic; his texts are meticulous in their attention to the empirical minutia. They are inclusive and dialogical, bearing the trace of difference and multiplicity and the uncertainties, hesitations and improvisations associated with the real-time *in situ* of organization as an always unfinished, deferred outcome of accumulating decision making and activity (see Van Maanen, 1995; Czarniawska, 2005). In sum, they offer a demonstration and exposition of organization in action; or, if one prefers, they expose the radically excessive nature of the process of organization as it is experienced and assembled by its practitioners—which includes its readers and writers. For Weick, we are all readers and writers of organization, from the secretary who types up the minutes of meetings to the theoretician who publishes text and presents their work to an MBA lecture theatre. Where Weick's conceptualization was distilled out of a process of un-learning that attends his submission to an unknown that only emerges out of the encounter with others in organization, organization theory and the theorist in the form of a Cooper or Chia is not placed at 'risk' in their mode of organization analysis—they do not risk *unknowing* and cannot therefore be expected to respond to the ontological challenge of excess. Undoubtedly the form of organizational analysis practiced by Weick only permits a modest challenge to the paramount reality of ontological meaning and stability and 'to invert the order of things, to unsettle accepted modes of thought, to render the taken-for-granted world a little topsy-turvy' (Van Maanen, 1995: 687) in only a gentle and somewhat conservative way. The wager staked by Weick is one he can afford to lose and one that does not risk his rationality or reason.

It is this being placed 'at risk' which is the danger and attraction of admitting excess in organization so that for us Weick is helpful because in a preliminary way he allows us to see organization as a continuously overflowing garbage can of multifarious productions. With Weick organization is still relatively ordered and orderable, meaningful and understandable, accessible and representable in ways that do not unduly lose or sacrifice what is essential to contemporary organization. There is a liberal intellectual sensitivity in Weick that is able to uncover the importance of relationality and interaction in which organization is understood as a form of gestalt that can secure and reproduce a complex whole only by recovering and remembering the inter-dependence of the parts (distributed over long and complex differences of space and time) and the parts with the whole—in which the whole remains greater than the sum of its parts. In the treatment of excess, however, this hermeneutic or dialectic of parts and whole becomes radically unhinged in ways that involve a sacrifice of the orientation provided by the typified categories and processes of academic organization analysis. Something like an open whole and an infinitesimal dissemination of dismembered parts begins to dawn on those experimenting with excess in organization—an excess that cannot be subsumed under the dialectic. In this submission to the unknown, theory (and the theorist of organization) becomes a more tortured practitioner of what appears to be a far more *desperate* organization in action.

It is easy to risk that apocalyptic tone which Derrida (1984) speaks of, but there are certain consequences of approaching excess that challenge the very foundations and procedures of our thinking in organization. Without a contextual whole within which to place 'the parts', for example, we can no longer be sure that it makes sense to speak of 'parts', for without the mediating opposition of whole/part what are we to understand as 'documentary evidence' (Garfinkel, 1967) of the components and sub-components that collectively, in space and time, contribute to the formation of an organization whole? Here, we rapidly risk the loss or perhaps sacrifice of ontological sense. It is only possible to conceive of phenomena, of course, if it can be rendered stable by some form of representation and analytical 'capture' and the kind of categories invoked by Weick would seem to be offer a bare minimum within which to orientate oneself in organization and so provide a way of grasping the subtleties of

relations and interactions of phenomena at a scale opened up by excess—a scale that complexity theorists might call the quantum or sub-molecular. However, even those relative stabilizations possible within the quantum level of organization are in danger of being lost when tackling the excess of organization because in this scale phenomenon remains in such a radically indeterminate and volatile state that it resembles elusive but fissile and explosive *energies* rather than states of nature available for analytical and linguistic capture. We approach the limits of what can be said...infinite and ‘limit-experience’ (Bataille, 1988b).

### THE MATTER OF EXCESS: NEW IMAGES OF ‘ORGANIZATION’

‘All that is solid melts into air’ has become somewhat of a cliché in recent times, but the excess of organization brings with it a force of dissolution that makes things get so out of scale that we are led to distrust any opposition between part and whole, inside/outside, high and low, text/context, now and then, here and there, etc. Here it is not possible to see ‘a world in a grain of sand...and eternity in an hour’, as Blake’s vision invites us to consider (cf. Chia, 1996: 214); instead the world could very well be a grain of sand and—if you will permit for a moment its apparent absurdity—without the stabilizing force of a contextual embrace the grain of sand becomes simultaneously larger and infinitely smaller than itself! It is not enough to simply overturn the oppositions that have structured organization thinking; they must be simultaneously *displaced* (Ulmer, 1985) if we wish to further our understanding of excess. At the level of detail opened up by engaging the excess of organization we are perhaps compelled to invent new and mobile axes of organization that permits a mapping and association of phenomena in combinations and juxtapositions that will appear fantastical or ‘surreal’ to those still ensconced within a ‘restricted economy’ and its ‘paramount reality’. Tracing the force of excess that traverses the simplest, most humble and even what might appear as the most trivial and insignificant of objects and phenomena that litter the corridors and hard-drives of contemporary organization is to begin to attend to the concealed energies that lie dormant but latent in organization. Objects shimmer in the light of excess—both there and not there, before our very eyes, in a zone of indiscernibility and undecidability. If for Bataille (1988a), in ‘the general effervescence of life, the tiger is a point of extreme incandescence’, then a simple item of luggage for sale at a duty-free shop in the airport becomes an unstable concoction of chemicals and plastics that marks what one of us has called elsewhere a ‘digital reserve’ of excess (Knox and O’Doherty, 2005). Here, the object becomes a suitcase waiting to explode (Knox *et al.*, 2006). In excess phenomena retains a capacity to connect up with the shards and fragments of other subjects and objects so that phenomena, we might say, *shudders* at the imminent brink of a domino-like cascade of explosive discharge. In excess we will be left with what Bataille (1988a) called a ‘general economy’ and its ‘superabundance of biochemical energy and growth’, one that places organization in an ‘outside’ that flays and tears the objects of its mundane reason and sensibility, scattering the integument of its relational connectivity outside to the universe of infinite potentialities.

We have suggested that organization is not the other of excess, but rather better thought as synonymous with the very production and exacerbation of excess. Organization is excess. The more we push back the limits of restrictive economy the more we amplify and stoke up the pressure of that excess ‘beyond the border’ in a movement that invites the inevitable ‘discharge’ and return of the unacceptable, the dangerous, the obscene, the disgusting. Organization at the level of the nation state always borders a similar excess. Think of Holland and its structure of dykes that helps man reclaim and maintain land from the sea. Consider the haunting and perhaps founding trauma of its nation state expressed in the image of Hans Brinker (Dodge, 2003) with his little finger plugging a hole in the Haarlem dyke holding

back the tides that threaten to sweep away hearth and home. It is of such 'hinges'—the nuts, bolts and washers that map the vinculum of organization—through which order and disorder is delicately poised. Think of New Orleans and the inundation that led to the dystopia of the Louisiana Superdome and the Convention Centre. Each year, excess builds up: we try to bury it deeper; we conceive plans to eject its waste into the stratosphere. Without restricted economy its sheer excess is likely to overwhelm social relations and undermine the possibility of community and coherence stimulating passions and emotion that provoke contagion, panic and hysteria. But organization is inevitably both restricted *and* general economy, a theatre of cruelty that folds together these two dimensions of organization to form local 'pools or order' (Law, 1994), both complex and fractal in pattern. Excess does not exert its pressure in any consistent or uniform way, marking out something like an outer circumference of organization, but instead is better thought as an uneven and transient, vagrant force that migrates and mutates in often capricious and unpredictable ways seeping into the nooks and crannies of organization where the nuts and bolts of its heterogeneous assemblage tremor and bear the strain of imminent collapse.<sup>5</sup>

You might tell from the tone in which we are compelled to write this treatise that excess is both a fascination and a disgust. In an age of slimfast diets and streamlined arguments it might seem surprising to claim that the *notion of excess* and *the excess of theory* still remains insufficiently attended to. This paradox of excess is particularly acute given the accumulation of academic articles, edited collections, special editions, and online journals that seem to produce a mindless orgy of paper and digital (reserve) ones and zeros. Excess takes many forms; unpredictable and explosive in its manifestations it always pops up just when we thought we had tamed its wild and protean force. At the same time, as we have argued, excess is not a form at all but more like a force or surplus energy. Indeed once it has been 'formed', rendered in the terms of in-form-ation for the purposes of cognition or theoretical deployment we should argue it has been lost, condemned once more to a spectral region of uncertainty. It makes it difficult therefore to introduce the question of excess, and indeed this special edition. We have seen that excess seems to fester just below the surface of what we routinely perceive and understand to be relevant organizational phenomena—indeed 'excess' may be the very dragon that the Standing Conference on Organization Symbolism takes as its logo—an image and target for its brand of organization analysis that has attracted little explicit attention (but see Sievers, 1990) perhaps because safely contained behind the frame and bars of its iron cage we are still reassured that organization can contain its monstrous implications. In other words, we have still yet to think of excess...

In this treatment of excess, we hope to outline some of the style and resources for beginning to think through the implications and consequences for contemporary organization and its theorization. Without doubt the work of Artaud, Bataille, Benjamin and Baudrillard form central components in this reappraisal of organization. It is also useful to locate our interest in excess in terms of the work of those who have identified the emergence of 'casino-capitalism' (Strange, 1986), what Beck (1999) calls a 'world-risk society', and Jean-Joseph Goux (1990) 'symbolic economies'; similarly Soros (1998) provides a useful exposition and understanding of the contours of excess as it manifest—or media and outcome of - the volatility and instability of a global financial capital system. So excessive has this 'system' become (and indeed, it is far from being 'systemic' in any sense familiar to organization theory) that it has apparently taken on a life of its own, behaving like a capricious and psychotic animal. There is an intuitive and implicit grasp of excess throughout the literature on capitalism where the concept of organization seems to be little more than an irony. Systems are presented in ways that resemble the operations of a demented psychology, a psychology out of control, randomly and indiscriminately connecting-up a disparate constellation of artifacts in a vortex of organization/ disorganization. In this situation excess wreaks havoc upon any notion or concepts that attempt to

separate the local and the global, or the macro or the micro, as it brings together and juxtaposes the barrios of Sao Paulo with the alleyways of Threadneedle Street in London, all subject to the force of an inter-national or post-national global capital (Hardt and Negri, 1999). It forces us to think of new constellations and images for organization that exceed the habitual dualisms and oppositions that have for so long oriented our thinking and practice of organization analyses. Consider the reflections of Nick Land (1993) who observes the emergence of a 'system like' conflation of global-finance with military and bio-tele-technologies and media-entertainment that all circulates wrapped up in pharmaceuticals and narcotics. Here, as he writes, the cocaine fuelled, intoxicated capital market futures trader on leaving work at night meets the anaesthetized heroin addict bundled in rags on the streets outside a corporate headquarters skyscraper. For the analyst of excess, this marks out a privileged and highly charged point/moment in what might be identify as a 'narco-capitalist' mapping of contemporary organization. These images cut across so many routine assumptions and classifications that we use to order space, time and process collapsing together the local with the global, the legal/illegal, and the state/non-state, to name just a few. Yet, there is also perverse pleasure in this excess: it is not all a William Burroughs-like dystopia of excrescent and pestilential virus.

Football crowds, sporting events, vast global media entertainment events, audience participation, interactive gameshows and reality TV, the death of a princess—all of these might be considered further expressions of the way in which an economy of excess recruits and mobilizes us all in extended relations of explosive potentiality. An estimated 20.7 million people in the UK crowded around television sets watching the England-Portugal quarterfinal of the Euro2004 soccer competition. Packed into bars and clubs, viewing figures peaked at over 24 million during the heart-stopping penalty shoot-out, a finale that saw England eventually lose. Around the world, 93 million watched this game of football live on TV. In the penalty shoot-out there was a split-second when the ball left the boot of the last English player left standing and responsible for taking a penalty kick. A global collective in-take of breath as a deathly silence fell over the streets of England. Then, an almighty roar. The multi-million pound celebrity missed—the ball flying high and wide. Following this match there was an outbreak of widespread civil disobedience, violence, drunkenness and disorder. Cars were set alight, houses were smashed, and pitched street battles ensued between police officers and football supporters. Men draped in the red and white shirts of St. George streaked with blood fought with fans wearing different colored shirts. Indeed, sporadic outbreaks of violence were reported involving different factions of England supporter (see Ballard, 2006). St George fighting with St George. Does this mark the generalized dissemination of excess, or might this mean that in the absence of St George the dragon will be left to mete out its damage elsewhere? In other words we have still yet to think of excess...

## THEORIZING AFTER THE EXCESSIVE FACT

This said, what right then do we have to publish yet another special issue, filled with even more academic paper(s)? Will this volume be simply a version of little Hans Brinker—our fingers stuck in an excess that is waiting to sweep us away? The problem appears to be that we have not yet come to terms with excess. Quite simply, as we are not good at thinking excess, we looked for a way of showcasing it. Rather than seek to efficiently isolate the core competencies of organization in order to reengineer it into a downsized, slim and slender volume for the restricted journal economy, our aim with this special issue was to invite a cornucopia of theorizing on excess and redundant layers, surplus, overabundance, passion, waste and the superfluous. A special issue that would take delight in super-sizing, spending frivolously, drinking too much and generally keeping away from calculative rationality and whatever's best for it.

Participants were invited to risk the limits of organization analysis but still we found us doubting. Although we wanted more theorizing of excess, we wanted less of the wasteful production of academic papers that only goes to restrict thinking. This peculiar double bind, where any move towards the one will automatically lead to a problematic in the other, might show us something about the very world we live in. In order to find a way back to theory (rather than piling yet another 'theorette' to the pile), we should probably write less, but in order to understand theory we might have to write more. So what is one to do? We have opted for the traditional way, namely to put together a special issue on the theory of excess, yet fully aware of the ironies contained therein. It is blatantly obvious to us that no journal covers can contain such theorization, and that one always runs the risk of turning a many-splendored thing into a runty caricature of the selfsame; but still, one must forge ahead.

We open this cornucopia of an issue with an article by the baroque thinker Ann Rippin, one of our favorite theoreticians in the field of organization studies. She has written a piece for us on expenditure, one which will satisfy even the most jaded aesthete, as she unravels a rich tapestry of excessive consuming and the skills needed to be truly lavish today. Through an intensive reading of a supplement (with all of its excessive connotations) of the *Financial Times* (with all of its excessive connotations), namely *How to Spend It* (with all of its...well, you get it), her article *The Economy of Magnificence* shows the complexity of becoming excessive, the way in which flamboyant display and cultural intermediation are used almost as a way to achieve grace and redemption. Ann makes connections to older kinds of identity projects, such as the ways in which a young up-and-comer in the late medieval French court or a person of standing in Renaissance Italy might have cast themselves through lavish symbolics, and almost finds (yet deftly loses) a connection to an underlying humanism. Her meditation on magnificence might end on a slightly pessimistic note, but the paper still shows us excess at its most intellectually challenging and in its most non-reducible form.

We then move from creating lavish new worlds and fabulous new people to another kind of handling excess with a paper entitled *Excessive Living*, written by Orvar Löfgren. In a paper that might be called an ethnology of managing excess, Orvar investigates the competencies we develop to handle and live with ever-increasing excess, painting both a dystopian picture of a harried contemporary condition and at the same time arguing for a more complex and historically sensitive perspective on abundance. We may always have lived in excess, a strand of thought alluded to in Rippin's paper and made famous by Marshall Sahlins (1972); what changes may be the discursive technologies and the techniques of the body we use to handle our sensations of 'too much'. Orvar reads these routines and stratagems in order to inquire into a moral economy of excess, outlining a theory of overflow. Such a theory, in his treatment, would also pay attention to less obvious act of expenditure, one largely ignored even by George Bataille and his thinking on the general economy. By directing our attention to things such as forgotten histories, oblivion and creative neglect, we might be able to craft new ways of thinking about the management of excess, and the roles played by limitations in an abundant world.

After this, it makes sense to explore *Excess and Mimicry in Organization Theory: Emancipation from Within*, guided by Ian Atkin, John Hassard and Julie Wolfram Cox. In their article, they encourage us to abandon the trench-wars of restricted functionalism versus restricted critical theory, and instead encourage an opening up of organization theory from within. By engaging with the concept of undecidability and with the philosophical questions put forth by Luce Irigaray, the authors beg us to think of new ways to think in order to break with the inside/outside assumptions inherent in both mainstream and separatist accounts of organizational life. In this, they raise a challenging question regarding 'mimicry'. Many of the so-called critical engagements with functionalist and managerialist organization theory have taken for granted the fact that in order to break with undesirable and stunted notions of

organizing it is necessary to find new ways of expressing the same. But what if what is needed instead is a serious engagement with the mainstream, taking its language and its logics to their logical extremes, forcing them into excessive spaces where the very boundaries normally containing them can no longer hold? We see before us a vertiginous mainstream management science, one where methodological individualism starts picking itself apart through its own ticks and aporias, one where strategy is taken so seriously that strategic management is abandoned as not strategic enough, one where business schools start collapsing from within in an excessive maelstrom of people actually taking the mainstream seriously. It is a delirious image, as we know that the surest way to destroy something is to approach it in dead earnestness, without a shred of irony.... The paper by Ian, John and Julie might not take us quite this far, but it opens up the field in ways that may lead us into the most delightfully drunken spaces of novel theorizing.

For another perspective Peter Pelzer invites us to contemplate *The Futility of Excess, or the Displaced World of Rules and Regulations*. Starting from that great grand form of excess so enticingly described by Jean Baudrillard, where the global money-markets handling mind-boggling amounts of money, Peter discusses how the world of finance manages to be both unrestrictedly excessive and excessively regulated. As the trade in currency and financial instruments can spin something like the global yearly GDP in a single day of active trading, it should come as no surprise that one has tried to introduce overarching regulations, such as the international framework of Basel II. But in a hyperreality like that of modern finance, how could the regulatory frameworks become anything but excessive? By probing into a world that is bigger than can be conceptually grasped, and into a framework of control that is paradoxical and filled with impossibilities, Peter shows the dizzying problem of analyzing the contemporary economic condition. Deftly turning to an analysis of shifting meanings and conceptual *différance*, Peter utilizes both the sociology of finance and post-structuralist philosophy to show the futility in trying to grasp excess, and turns towards a view where abundances of meaning and possibility become the very basis of meaningful (economic) being—as paradoxical as this may seem.

We end this special issue by preferring not to. These are the words spoken by Bartleby the Scrivener in Melville's classic short story, and it is these words that have moved Armin Beverungen and Stephen Dunne to present a paper on resistance and excess, a paper that enquires into the political possibilities somehow both promised and negated by the forlorn mundanity of this one original office drone. As a figure of excess Bartleby stands out as an inassimilable shard or fragment, which according to Deleuze reflects phenomena that is not determined or influenced by the milieu in which it appears to be situated. By posing a series of readings of Bartleby—politicized, ordinary and the highly evocative 'whatever'—Beverungen and Dunne take Bartleby into an other, more excessive space and from this argue that Bartleby is productive of excess. Yet, they also propose a more tantalizing dilemma. 'What if Bartleby told us *nothing* discernible about management and organisation', they write, a brave and dangerous question, so rarely asked by scholars so keen to demonstrate the perspicuity of their reading and analysis and its inevitable utility to organization studies. The reader will be left asking whether their paper has anything to say, a question to which the authors would no doubt respond with an 'I'd prefer not to'. An excessive reflection, one might think, but well in tune with our theme.

These papers approach the issue of excess from different perspectives, with different aims, but they all show the intellectual and theoretical depth prevalent in the concept of excess, and they also present us with new tracings and tellings of how organization might appear when twisted out of its framework of parsimonious thinking and frugal models. They might be understood as the faint sounds of an excessive organization theory yet to come, fractures in the fortified walls of restricted economic thinking. We welcome them, as we welcome

abundance in modes of thought, hail any move to bring in a real empiricism of the excessive world into the barren lands of organization studies...organizing with a hammer.

## NOTES

1. A number of readers and texts have with varying success attempted to provide an exposition and glossary of Bataille's major ideas (Richardson, 1994; Gill, 1995; Noys, 2000).
2. Michael Rosen's 1985 and 1988 papers are exceptional and exemplary of the kind of ethnographic sensibility able to capture and delineate those complex and overlaid 'seen but unnoticed' (Garfinkel, 1967) features of everyday life for which the slightest disturbance can set off tremors and repercussions seemingly way out of scale and proportion to the initial trigger-event. Rosen unearths a dimension of organization in which the fragility and what we might call—following the architectural innovations of Buckminster Fuller—the 'tensegrity' of social relations are made apparent.
3. Actor-Network Theory has produced a more convincing and robust challenge to organization analysis as a mode of empirical enquiry, but even here the work of Law (1994), Latour (1987), Callon (1986) seems to offer a quasi-naturalistic approach to organization and its representation that is unable to escape or justify the self-grounding tautologies of knowledge production.
4. Various used as a surreptitious weapon of 'skin battles' in low-intensity warfare amongst management executives and, as has been more popularly reported, skillfully deployed to sabotage computer hard-drives.
5. See Vaudeville (1999) on the folly of structures and the existence of architecture as borderline, critical state of imminent collapse.

## References

- Agamben, G. (2005) *State of Exception*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ballard, J.G. (2006) *Kingdom Come*, London: Fourth Estate.
- Bataille, G. (1988a) *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy. Volume I: Consumption*, New York: Zone Books.
- Bataille, G. (1988b) *Inner Experience*. Albany, New York: SUNY Press.
- Bataille, G. (1991) *The Accursed Share: Volumes II and III*, New York: Zone Books.
- Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Beck, U. (1999) *World Risk Society*, Malden, Massachusetts: Polity Press.
- Böhm, S. and C. Jones (2001) Responding: To Cooper, *Ephemera* 1(4), 314–20.
- Callon, M. (1986) Some elements for a sociology of translation: domestication of scallops and the fisherman of St Brieuc Bay, in: J. Law (Ed.) *Power, Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?*, Sociological Review Monograph: Routledge.
- Chia, R. (1996) *Organizational Analysis as Deconstructive Practice*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Clegg, S., Hardy, C. and Nord, W. (Eds.) (1996) *Handbook of organization studies*, London: Sage.
- Cooper, R. (1986) Organization/disorganization, *Social Science Information*, 25(2), 299–335.
- Czarniawska, B. (2005) Karl Weick: Concepts, style, reflection. In: C. Jones and R. Munro (Eds.) *Contemporary Organization Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Deleuze, G. (1992) Postscript on the societies of control, *October*, 59, 3–7.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Derrida, J. (1974) *Of Grammatology*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Derrida, J. (1984) Of an apocalyptic tone recently adopted in philosophy, *Oxford Literary Review*, 6(2), 3–37
- Dodge, M.M. (2003) *Hans Brinker or the Silver Skates*, New York: Harper Collins. First published in 1865.
- Edensor, T. (2005) *Industrial Ruins: Space, Aesthetics and Materiality*, Oxford: Berg.
- Eurostat Yearbook* (2004) *The Statistical Guide to Europe*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Gabriel, Y. (1995) The unmanaged organization: Workplace fantasies, stories and subjectivity, *Organization Studies*, 16(3), 481–505.
- Garfinkel, H. (1967) *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Gill, C. (1995) *Bataille: Writing the Sacred*, London: Routledge.
- Goux, J.-J. (2001) Utility: Equivocation and demoralisation, *Discourse*, 23(3), 3–23.
- Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (1999) *Empire*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Hassard, J. and Parker, M. (Eds.) (1993) *Postmodernism and Organizations*, London: Sage.
- Heidegger, M. (1977) The question concerning technology, in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Hetherington, K. (1996) *The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering*, London: Routledge.
- Hollier, D. (1989) *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Jones, C. and Munro, R. (Eds.) (2005) *Contemporary Organization Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell.

- Knox, H. and O'Doherty, D. (2005) Tamagotchi organization: Further reflections towards fuk culture...and organization. Paper presented at the International Workshop: Towards a Cultural Studies of Organizations, The Management Centre, University of Leicester, 10–11 November.
- Knox, H., O'Doherty, D., Vurdubakis, T. and Westrup, C. (2006) Something happened to ethnography: Strange tales of organization/disorganization at the airport. Paper presented to the 1st Annual International Conference on Ethnography, University of Liverpool Management School, 13–14 September.
- Land, N. (1993) Making it with death: Remarks on Thanatos and desiring-production, *The Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, **24**(1), 66–76.
- Laporte, D. (2002) *History of Shit*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Latour, B. (1987) *Science in Action*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Law, J. (1994) *Organizing Modernity*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Noys, B. (2000) *Georges Bataille: A Critical Introduction*, London: Pluto.
- O'Doherty, D. (forthcoming) The question of theoretical excess: Folly and fall in theorising organization, *Organization*.
- O'Doherty, D. and Willmott, H. (2001) Debating labour process theory: The issue of subjectivity and the relevance of poststructuralism, *Sociology*, **35**, 457–76.
- Pollner, M. (1987) *Mundane Reason: Reality in Everyday and Sociological Discourse*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rhodes, C. and Pullen, A. (forthcoming) *Bits of Organization*, Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Richardson, M. (1994) *Georges Bataille*, London: Routledge.
- Rosen, M. (1985) Breakfast at Spiro's: Dramaturgy and dominance, *Journal of Management*, **11**(2), 31–48.
- Rosen, M. (1988) You asked for it: Christmas at the bosses' expense, *Journal of Management Studies*, **25**(4), 463–81.
- Sahlins, M. (1972) *Stone Age Economics*, New York: Aldine Publishing Company.
- Sievers, B. (1990) Curing the monster: Some images of and considerations about the dragon. In: P. Gagliardi (Ed.) *Symbols and Artifacts: Views of the Corporate Landscape*, Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Soros, G. (1998) *The Crisis of Global Capitalism: Open society endangered*, New York: Public Affairs.
- Strange, S. (1986) *Casino Capitalism*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sutcliffe, K., Brown A., and Putnam, L. (2006) Introduction to the special issue, 'Making sense of organizing: In honor of Karl Weick', *Organization Studies*, **27**(11), 1573–8.
- Taussig, M. (1995) *The Nervous System*, London: Routledge.
- Tsoukas, H. and Knudsen, C. (Eds.) (2003) *The Oxford Handbook of Organization Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ulmer, G. (1985) *Applied Grammatology: Post(e) Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Van Maanen, J. (1995) Fear and loathing in organization studies, *Organization Science*, **6**(6), 687–92.
- Vaudeville, B. (1999) The folly of structures: An apology for rigidity, *Tekhnema*, **5**, Fall.
- Weick, K. (1979) *The Social Psychology of Organizing*, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Weick, K. (1995) *Sensemaking in Organizations*, London: Sage.
- Weick, K. (2000) *Making Sense of the Organization*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Williams, C. (2001) *Contemporary French Philosophy: Modernity and the Persistence of the Subject*, New York: Athlone Press.
- Willmott, H. (1998) Recognizing 'the other': Reflections on a new sensibility in social and organizational studies. In: R. Chia (Ed.) *In the Realm of Organization: Essays for Robert Cooper*, London: Routledge.