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Choice and context in studying change, creativity and innovation at work: call off the search for excellence, question combinational perspectives, and loosen the straightjacket of polarised views

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Abstract

This article draws attention to debates on studying change, creativity and innovation at work. Attention is given to 'stable' and 'process' views of organizations and how these positions influence research objectives, methodological approach and findings. The paper is critical of those who seek to hold to a superior position - a one best approach for all; as well as those who seek the best from all worlds - a combinational approach that services both quantitative and qualitative research. In drawing on over 25 years of field research on change management, the paper also seeks to explore the broken links between good scholastic theory and more practical accounts of how to best manage change. These and other controversial concerns are raised and discussed but ultimately not resolved, as in many ways, the papers poses as many questions as answers to these ongoing concerns among research academics and business practitioners.

Keywords

Choice, context, studying, change, creativity, innovation, work, call, off, search, for, excellence, question, combinational, perspectives, loosen, straightjacket, polarised, views

Disciplines

Business | Social and Behavioral Sciences

Publication Details

Dawson, P. M. (2008). Choice and context in studying change, creativity and innovation at work: call off the search for excellence, question combinational perspectives, and loosen the straightjacket of polarised views. 8th Annual Pacific Employment Relations Association Conference (pp. 1-12). Ballarat: Pacific Employment Relations Association.

This conference paper is available at Research Online: https://ro.uow.edu.au/commpapers/2447

Choice and context in studying change, creativity and innovation at work: call off the search for excellence, question combinational perspectives, and loosen the straightjacket of polarised views.

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Abstract: This article draws attention to debates on studying change, creativity and innovation at work. Attention is given to 'stable' and 'process' views of organizations and how these positions influence research objectives, methodological approach and findings. The paper is critical of those who seek to hold to a superior position – a one best approach for all; as well as those who seek the best from all worlds – a combinational approach that services both quantitative and qualitative research. In drawing on over 25 years of field research on change management, the paper also seeks to explore the broken links between good scholastic theory and more practical accounts of how to best manage change. These and other controversial concerns are raised and discussed but ultimately not resolved, as in many ways, the papers poses as many questions as answers to these ongoing concerns among research academics and business practitioners.

Keywords: change, creativity, innovation, process, variance, duality, organizing and strategic choice.

Introduction

Processes of change, creativity and innovation are central to organizations that operate in competitive business markets yet each area has developed separate and distinct bodies of knowledge (Andriopoulos and Dawson, 2009). The change management literature examines the triggers of change and the way change is managed, examining the role of individuals (change agents and leaders), groups (guiding coalitions, management, workers and unions) and various cultural, structural and political elements. The individual, the group and the organization, are all open to analysis and consideration in the movement from a current position 'a' to a preferred future position 'b'. Much of the focus rests on how to move the organization forward and to overcome obstacles that may prevent the organization achieving planned objectives. In the area of creativity, the emphasis has been on the generation of new ideas and how these originate and can be encouraged at the individual and group level. Once again, there is concern with structural characteristics that may promote creative environments and how to create cultures of creativity. In addition to these individual and group processes, there is interest in the growth in creative industries and the way in which these types of organizations are managed. In the field of innovation, the literature is concerned with identifying long wave business cycles that promote clusters of innovations that diffuse into the economy and stimulate economic growth, as well as processes of innovation at the individual and group level. Some commentators are concerned with innovative forms of organizing (Pettigrew et al, 2003), others with the organizational conditions under which innovation occurs (Burns and Stalker, 1961) and others on the nature of innovation within organizations and how new ideas are translated into commercial products and services (Bessant and Tidd, 2007). In all these, there is a concern with the

wider environment that promotes change, creativity and innovation; as well as the processes that occur within organizations. For analytical purposes, it is often easier to delimit an area of study and this is usually achieved through a clear demarcation of areas by definitional means. For example, if we define the creative process as involving the generation of new ideas, innovation as the translation of new ideas into commercial projects, and change as involving the movement of an organization from some current position to a future state, then we clearly demarcate our separate areas of concern. From the perspective taken here, this separation of bodies of thought is limited but understandable, as in practice these elements overlap and interlock.

Fixity and Flux: Organization or Organizing?

There has been a longstanding debate over whether we view organizations as generally stable entities consisting of identifiable objects, resources and structures of control and coordination or whether we view organizations as fluid entities in a constant state of flux, as consisting of processes of becoming (Tsoukas and Chia, 2002). Under the latter view, it is sometimes argued that the terms *organizing* and *strategizing* (verbs) are preferable to the terms organization and strategy (nouns) as they more usefully capture the dynamic processes of change (see, Pettigrew, Whittington, Melin, Sanchez-Runde, van den Bosch, Ruigrok and Numagami, 2003). Thus, theories of change often take as their starting point a notion of fluidity or stability and then develop a focus of interest in developing a particular theoretical explanation of change. For example, *punctuated equilibrium theory* (Anderson and Tushman, 1990; Romanelli and Tushman, 1994) views stability as the normal state of play but recognises that industries and organizations can experience major shocks within their business environments that necessitates major change. Whereas *chaos theory* assumes a continuous dynamic interplay between forces that creates a constant state of flux within which organizations achieve temporary periods of stability (Dubinskas, 1994; Stacey, 1992). Taken from the physical sciences, the basic argument is that disequilibrium is an essential condition in the development of dynamic systems as it promotes an internal resilience to self-renewal (see also, Burnes, 2000: 206-207; Hayes, 2007: 4-11). These and other theories of change, often disagree on the basis of different ontological views about the nature of organizations and consequently, the appropriate methods for studying change in organizations.

Van de Ven and Poole (2005) examine alternative approaches for studying organizational change and argue that many of these disagreements can be traced back to the differing philosophies of Heraclitus and Democritus. Process was central to Heraclitus's view of the world and was later taken up by the processual philosophers such as, Alfred North Whitehead and John Dewey. As Van de Ven and Poole (2005: 1378) note: 'They viewed reality as a process and regarded time, change, and creativity as representing the most fundamental facts for understanding the world'. In contrast, Democritus 'pictured all of nature as composed of stable material substance or things that changed only in their positioning in space and time' (Van de Ven and Poole, 2005: 1377-1378). In support of this view, Whetten (2005) argues that the study of organizations should focus on entities, such as structure and culture, rather than on social processes. This distinction between an emphasis on organizing as a process (or verb) and organization as a thing (or noun) has generated considerable debate within the academic literature (see, Van de Ven and Poole, 2005). As two alternative and competing views of the world, these debates and issues can never be fully resolved, but perhaps each may serve to address different questions. The quantitative researcher is

likely to take a more static-world view in studies on the relationships between variables; whereas, the qualitative researcher is more likely to be oriented to a process-world view in studying the processes of change in context and over time. That both approaches can contribute to knowledge on change is not in doubt, but whether the two can ever be fully combined into an holistic approach is questionable. Whilst Van de Ven and Poole (2005: 1395-1396) conclude that: 'the buzzing, blooming and confusing dynamics often observed in organizational changes probably requires the use of multiple approaches for understanding organizational change'.

One can both support and question this position, claiming that whilst there is value in both approaches, attempts to combine the best of the two competing world views into one holistic approach produces something less that what theses perspectives offer as standalone approaches. What is required is a more purist approach that enables researchers from competing perspectives with different methodological traditions to continue their studies each offering and contributing to our stock of knowledge. From the author's own background and preferences, a more processual view of change, creativity and innovation is proposed (see, Dawson, 1994; 2003a and 2003b) and in the paper, some of the other debates that have arisen within these areas of study are also considered.

Outside the straightjacket of contingent thinking: the world of dualities

Current thinking is moving away from contingency models of innovation and change to a concern with a world of dualities in which the complexity and dynamics of process is recognised. (Pettigrew, Whittington, Melin, Sanchez-Runde, van den Bosch, Ruigrok and Numagami, 2003). As Whittington and Melin (2003: 45-46) note:

> Duality is a theme throughout this book, and the structurationist duality of action and structure has special resonance here. Structure enables as well as constrains. By implication, organizational structures too are not so much passive drags on strategic action, necessary evils to be regretted and minimized; they are central resources upon which action must draw, demanding equal attention alongside strategy and initiative. Action is not simply fettered by structure, it positively relies on it. This duality has important implications for our view of business leaders, essential to action yet dependent on structure. The model of leaders as heroic individuals downplays – to their own disadvantage – the structural rules and resources on which they must draw for their empowerment. Here, structuration theory points to a delicate reciprocity between those who will lead and those who follow. Even as they play creatively on them, still leaders must subscribe to the structural limits and expectations embodied in their organizations. For leaders, action and structure are tied together.

Change, creativity and innovation are enabled and constrained not by structures per se, but by our understanding of structure and our interpretation of the limits and possibilities of action through structure that can be used to support certain preferred outcomes. As such, structures and the environment are not set as some objective force that organizations must gain fit with (as often promoted through the lens of the contingency theorist) but, following on from more post-modern constructivist accounts (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006), it is the meaning and interpretations given to structure that shapes and influences decisions and actions. In adopting Giddens' structuration theory, Orlikowski (1992) illustrates this in her attempt to combine agency and structure in analysing technology. She attempts to

embrace both the subjective and objective elements of technology (the duality of technology) through recognising that technology is physically built by humans but that interpretations and meanings are also given to the technology during this process (that is, technology is also socially constructed within a social context). When the technology is used it is often seen as part of the objective structural properties of an organisation (institutionalised and reified) and yet it is at the same time, open to modification. The concept of *interpretative flexibility* is used to capture this notion of ongoing reconfiguration. Orlikowski (1992) argues that technology that is used is likely to be reshaped over time and that this is influenced both by the characteristics of the material artefact and the social process of change and the meanings that actors attach to the technology.

The four types of relationships identified by Orlikowski (1992) in her structuration model are:

1. Technology is a product of human action, that is, technology is both designed by humans and given meaning through adoption and use.
2. Technology is a medium of human action, that is, our understanding of technology can constrain and enable human action, although it does not determine social practice.
3. Technology is shaped by humans in organisational context, or to put it another way, human action is shaped by organisational context which may influence their understanding of technology, for example, human action may reinforce a conception of technical constraints.
4. Technology may be used by human agents to reinforce institutional structures.

This concern with dualities has emerged and been developed in a number of different fields of study. As such, it is worth spending a little more time examinging the concepts of *dualities* and *structuration*, as these studies highlight the importance of choice and context whilst also demonstrating the problems with approaches that polarise options. From this perspective, the choice is not between A or B (dualism), but in understanding the dynamic relationship between A and B (dualities). A useful starting point for this discussion is the work of John Child (1972), whose landmark paper on strategic choice argued against determinist positions that downplayed the element of choice in decision-making.

A Reappraisal of John Child's concept of strategic choice

For Child (1972), whatever the constraints or pressures, there is always space for choice. As such, external environmental forces never fully determine the outcomes of change as these are ultimately shaped through a process of choice and decision-making. Rapid changes in business market conditions can often be a significant driver for company change; however, there remains 'strategic choice' in how to respond to, accommodate or make the most of these potential threats or opportunities. Child develops the concept of *strategic choice* and points out how choices made by power-holding groups or a dominant coalition (that is, key decision-makers) shape, through an essentially political process, change. He notes how more than one dominant coalition may exist and that conflict between different management groups is not unusual. The choices made by senior management can be further modified during the implementation of change, either through middle managers responsible for managing planned change, or through trade union and employee responses to change. In promoting the concept of strategic choice, Child (1972) draws attention away from the determinist arguments in which technology, the

environment or size are seen to be the key determining factors of strategy and structure, and refocuses attention on political process, social choice and negotiation in the mutual shaping of work and organisation. In a later reappraisal of the strategic choice perspective, Child notes that:

> Strategic choice articulates a political process, which brings agency and structure into tension and locates them within a significant context. It regards both the relation of agency to structure and to environment as dynamic in nature. In so doing, the strategic choice approach not only bridges a number of competing perspectives but also adopts a non-deterministic and potentially evolutionary position. Strategic choice, when considered as a process, points to the possibility of continuing adaptive learning cycles, but within a theoretical framework that locates 'organizational learning' within the context of organizations as socio-political systems. (Child, 1997: 44)

In this later paper, Child's main concern is with the way subjective constructions have objective consequences and the way these may in turn influence future actions and interpretations. In drawing on the work of Giddens (1984) and the concept of structuration (see also, DeSanctis and Poole, 1994; MacIntosh and Scapens, 1990), Child (1997) forwards what he terms as a 'double structuration' process. He explains how within organisations actors may seek to influence organisational design and in the process be informed or constrained by the existing structures and routines that they may wish to change. In addition to the cycle of 'inner structuration', Child (1997) also forwards the notion of 'outer structuration' where actors may seek to influence and interact with environmental elements, in which they are 'simultaneously informed of the opportunities for action which environmental conditions present and of the constraints which external circumstances place upon their room for action'. As will be shown in a moment, this concept of dualities has been taken up in a number of areas and is a key theme running through Pettigrew et al's (2003) research on changing organizations.

Andrew Pettigrew and colleagues: innovative forms of organizing

In their book on *Innovative Forms of Organizing*, Pettigrew et al (2003) call for a more processual understanding of the dynamic relationship between strategy and organisation. As Pettigrew states (2003: 345):

> Living with constant change (organizing/strategizing and not organization and strategy) means there are always multiple loose ends. A core driver of this experience of wrestling with order and disorder is the challenge of managing multiple dualities in the modernizing organization.

In a collaborative study on the development of innovative forms of organizing, Pettigrew and colleagues (Pettigrew et al, 2003) highlight the contextual nature of change and in so doing, question the value of prescriptive recipes and formulaic solutions (see also, Pettigrew, 1985). The authors argue that accommodation and adaptation to local conditions requires customised solutions. Their studies demonstrate how it is possible to identify common international company trajectories and how new innovations overlay and interlock rather than replace currents modes of organising. Patterns emerge from the data and are brought out in their theme of complementarities, change and performance. This concern was built into their research at the outset and follows on from contingency theory with an emphasis on finding an appropriate 'fit' between a range of variables (size,

technology, environment) and organisation structure. Through broadening this concern and taking a more holistic approach, their attention is on whole types of configurations. As such, they are interested in the complementarities of change where a stand alone change, such as, just-in-time management system, may be limited if not accompanied by other complimentary changes in management information systems, design for manufacture, quality management and so forth. They also draw attention not only to the need for a comparison of configurations, but also to disaggregating configurations to identify and analyse individual effects. In so doing, they argue that it is possible to move from the specific change to the overall full-system effects on organisational performance (Pettigrew, and Massini, 2003: 16-18).

In studying European, US and Japanese organisations their findings confirm that innovative forms of organising are in evidence across these three regions, but that radical change is far more common in Europe and the US when compared with Japan. Although change initiatives are seen to be following a common trajectory with a significant correlation between development of strategic alliances and the internationalisation of organisations; their findings do not support the convergence thesis and highlights how there is far greater boundary and process change occurring as opposed to structural change. In other words, the common direction of change and innovation is played out in different ways in different contexts and localities (Pettigrew et al, 2003: 31).

The dualities of change and continuity, innovation and convention, centralisation and decentralisation, and organizing and strategizing, question neat sequential models or simple continua that contrast and compare two dimensions. In searching for a division between dual factors, they argue that past studies have focussed on definitional and conceptual issues in drawing boundaries and clarifying the terrain (as in the example of technology where the division between the social and technical has generated heated debate and discussion). However, longitudinal qualitative and quantitative research data are increasingly calling into question these simple divisions in demonstrating the unending process of organizing. Renewal, change, closure, reconfiguration, constancy and transition all draw attention to temporality in the process of managing dualities over time. As Pettigrew concludes (2003: 347):

> Although our research findings raised the significance of the management of dualities as an issue, and have documented the rise of sets of dualities in the modernizing firm, there is a big research agenda here for other scholars to build upon. We need more research on the varieties of management strategy in use in different localities to sense, accommodate, and lead organizations through further cycles of innovation.

This of course leaves open the need for further research and debate and perhaps raises as many questions as answers. Nevertheless, it does raise interesting material for critical reflection on the separation and links between change, creativity and innovation. As with the work of Knights and McCabe (2003), the suggestion is that we are often too quick to separate and distinguish between phenomena that in practice shape and influence each other on an ongoing basis. They are critical of universal definitions, such as, the 'first commercial application of a new process or product' (Knights and McCabe, 2003: 39) that limit what we are to understand by innovation and prevent exploration of what they term 'innovation in context', an understanding of the change process within which innovation occurs (see also the study by Alvesson and

Sveningsson, 2008). Similarly with creativity, we can identify a link and overlap with notions of innovation and change in the translation of new ideas into tangible outputs, novel services or new operating arrangements (Bessant and Tidd, 2007: 40). The conceptual and theoretical challenge remains and is an area likely to stimulate further debate and research into processes of change, creativity and innovation.

In turning our attention to more practical matters the next section – controversially from a more scholastic critical academic viewpoint – outlines lessons for steering change, creativity and innovation in certain preferred directions.

Steering change, creativity and innovation: beyond the recipe approach

Despite a plethora of guidelines for managing processes of change, creativity and innovation and the various toolkits on effective change management (Cameron and Quinn, 2006; Carnall, 2007), the majority of major change transformations still fail (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2008; Kotter, 1996). Why is this? Perhaps in part, it reflects the complex dynamic and political nature of major change initiatives. Perhaps it also reflects the tendency to view change as a single linear process going through a number of identifiable and predictable stages; whereas in practice change is far from linear and often occurs within a multiple change rather than single change environment. In our view, far too little attention has been given to the multiple, dynamic and processual nature of change (Dawson, 2003a and 2003b). As Jeanie Duck (1998) highlights, managers have been too fast to view change in terms of sequential stages rather than in viewing change as an ongoing dynamic:

> The problem is simple: we are using a mechanistic model, first applied to managing physical work, and superimposing it onto the new mental model of today's knowledge organization. We keep breaking change into small pieces and then managing the pieces. This is the legacy of Frederick Winslow Taylor and scientific management. But with change, the task is to manage the dynamic, not the pieces. The challenge is to innovate mental work, not to replicate physical work. The goal is to teach thousands of people how to think strategically, recognize patterns, and anticipate problems and opportunities before they occur....The proper metaphor for managing change is balancing a mobile. Most organizations today find themselves undertaking a number of projects as part of their change effort. An organization may simultaneously be working on TQM, process reengineering, employee empowerment, and several other programs designed to improve performance. But the key to the change effort is not attending to each piece in isolation; it's connecting and balancing all the pieces. In managing change, the critical task is understanding how pieces balance off one another, how changing one element changes the rest, how sequencing and pace affect the whole structure. (Duck, 1998: 57-58)

The art of balancing multiple changes and having a strategic and operational overview of the dynamics of change is important, but are there guidelines that we can draw from these studies that can be of practical use without undermining our theoretical understanding of change processes? In other words, can we draw on a more processual holistic understanding of change, creativity and innovation in identifying some heuristics that can aid members of organizations steer processes in certain preferred directions?

In promoting a process perspective, this paper seeks to go beyond simple linear recipe approaches in identifying broader temporal and contextual lessons for steering change, creativity and innovation in certain preferred directions. In this it is recognised that authority and power relations are not equal within organizations and that political process is an important shaper of outcomes. Nevertheless, to sidestep the practical dimension would be to support the separation between theories and practice that conflict with the author's own research (see Dawson, 1994: 172-80).

There is a host of best practice guidelines on how to manage change and many of these have been criticised for being too simplistic, linear and acontextual. One of the more popular models for change management is the one developed by John Kotter (1996) who forwards an eight-stage model on how to successfully manage change. In many ways Kotter's work resembles some of the earlier work of Beer, Eisenstat and Spector (1990) who identify the following six steps to effective change:

1. Mobilise commitment to change through joint diagnosis of business problems.
2. Develop a shared vision on how to organise and manage for competitiveness.
3. Foster consensus for the new vision, competence to enact it and cohesion to move it along.
4. Spread revitalisation to all departments without pushing it from the top.
5. Institutionalise revitalisation through formal policies, systems and structures.
6. Monitor and adjust strategies in response to problems in the revitalisation process.

These simple checklist approaches can be criticized for their linearity. The complex dynamic nature of change is generally downplayed or sidestepped and these approaches pay little attention to context and political process. The focus of the approach advocated here has been on the complex nature of change, creativity and innovation that makes the distillation of simple recipes impractical. Whilst it is not appropriate to present a set of prescriptions on 'how to manage' these processes, like Alvesson and Sveningsson (2008), it is argued that a broader set of guidelines can be uncovered from processual research (see also, Dawson, 2003a: 173-77). The ten general lessons that emerge from the author's research are as follows:

1. There are no universal prescriptions on how best to manage processes of change, creativity or innovation, nor are there simple recipes to competitive success. It is recognised that this will not prevent continuing company demand for such solutions and therefore, it is important to stress the serious limitations of such n-step guides. There is a need for practicing managers and employees in general to challenge – where possible and practicable – the assumptions behind linear packages for 'company success'. This is perhaps why notwithstanding our current knowledge and experience of, for example, organizational change - 'the brutal fact is that about 70% of all change initiatives fail' (Beer and Nohria, 1998).
2. Strategies that promote change, creativity and innovation should be sensitive to the socio-cultural environment, temporal contextual conditions and the shifting character of expectations in the views and reactions of employee groups and key political players. Political sensitivity and astuteness (the ability to manoeuvre through shifting terrain) are often well-honed skills in those individuals and groups (change agents, trade unionists and the like) who are able to shape these processes in certain preferred directions.

3. As frequently stated in the literature - major change takes time. Changing the attitudes and behaviour of employees, generating commitment and support for change, creativity and innovation is a long-term goal. Moreover, any radical large-scale strategic and/or operational change requires considerable planning – including numerous revisions and modifications to planned changes – and is unlikely to be marked by a line of continual improvement.
4. Individual and group experience will vary in context and over time and there are no silver bullet guarantees for acceptance nor universal panacea to overcoming resistance to changes in the way work is organized and managed. For example, if the individual or group that questions change are viewed as an obstacle then they are unlikely to respond to or experience change in a positive way. Similarly, casting a jaundiced eye on a 'failed' project that has not enabled the translation of new ideas into commercial products may result in negative employee experience and thereby inadvertently support the assumption that the problem rests with employees and not with other elements of the organization. Such a view can create a self-fulfilling prophecy that can be hard to overcome especially if this position appeals to common-sense assumptions about why individuals and groups resist change. This clearly highlights the importance and need for continuous critical reflection in order to question take-for-granted assumptions.
5. It is important to learn from all experiences (the good, the bad and the ugly) and not simply to focus attention on so called 'success' stories or the views of those in dominant positions. Such stories are often post-hoc rationalised accounts constructed to convey a certain preferred message to an intended audience. As such, the experiences and views of different groups and individuals at various levels within an organization are all potential sources of knowledge for understanding and shaping processes of change, creativity and innovation. We can generally learn more from failure than the reconstructed (selective and partisan) stories of success.
6. Employees should be trained in new techniques and procedures when needed and as required. The misalignment of training programmes with initiatives that seeks to develop new skills and encourage new behaviours is not uncommon in organizations and can be a major influence on employee experience.
7. Communication is central to managing change, promoting creativity and supporting the innovation process, but it also needs to be understood in context. As supported by much of the literature, employee communication should be ongoing and consistent. However, within organizations that are often a number of competing narratives that co-exist at any given time, and these can undermine and misdirect attention and create environments of mistrust and uncertainty. The choice of what, when and how to communicate as well as the releasing of disconfirming information are often political issues. Communication is an important vehicle both for those seeking to steer processes in certain preferred directions and for those wishing to resist the intentions of others.
8. A simple lesson is that recipe approaches which promote well-defined programmes that support unitary notions of culture and context are ultimately misplaced. There is nothing so impracticable as a packaged

prescriptive linear initiative that purports to provide the blueprint for commercial success.

9. From the processual perspective taken here, managing processes of change, creativity and innovation is ultimately a political process that draws on sources of power in achieving stated objectives. Or to put it another way, political processes are central in gathering support, mobilising resources and shaping outcomes.
10. The final lesson is perhaps the most straightforward lesson of all, and that is that managing change, creativity and innovation requires the utilization of an array of skills and competencies in the continual adaptation to changing contextual circumstances. It is complex, demanding and difficult as it involves orchestrating, interweaving and reshaping sometimes contradictory processes towards a set of objectives, that may themselves be refined and changed over time. These processes have an ongoing history that is never static but open to change as the past is rewritten in the context of the present and in the light of future expectations. Once again, drawing attention to the value of a processual approach in understanding the theory and practice of change, creativity and innovation.

Conclusion

This paper has set out to challenge the reader through presenting some more contentious and debatable ideas behind the theory and practice of change, creativity and innovation. Focus was given to the way we view the world – whether as comprising fixed entities or fluid processes – and how these views can influence our predisposition to certain types of theory development. Those who see the world as 'things' as fixed objects, tend to look towards more variance based models and contingency type approaches that may seek to gain 'fit' between the operating structures of an organization and the business market within which it operates. Those who adopt a more processual perspective (the predisposition of the author) tend to view organizations as in a continual state of becoming, of complex flows and dynamic processes that can at times present an illusion of stability, or what Lewin (1951) refers to as 'quasi-stationary equilibrium'. Space has been given to exploring some of these notions of process, the links between agency and structure (structuration theory) and the concept of dualities. Turning to the work of Pettigrew and colleagues (2003), findings from the dual methods research into new forms of organizing were considered, and some of the more practical dimensions to managing change, creativity and innovation were examined. Although this paper has perhaps raised as many questions as it has answered, it aims to provide food for thought and further discussion on these key contemporary issues.

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