

nor is there is a reference to Noe and Rebello's (1994) interesting paper on the swings in ethics and economics, using neo-classical framework. There is no reference to E Cox's (1995) writings on social capital which describes processes that establish network norms and trust. The book has a fascinating account of how the functional and organic growth of ethics could be interwoven with the world of power and class struggles (pp 111-112). It also details how spaces can be and are provided for individual moral reasoning even as organisations learn to be "socially responsive"; social responsiveness is considered more important than "social responsibility" (p 137). The interactive networks which would enable this to happen are not however fully explored. Typically, the practical and down-to-earth systems which emerge in the recent writings of Petrick and Quinn (1997) and the inspired efforts of non-government voluntary agencies described by Pruzon and Zadeck (!997) are not touched upon.

The book is strewn all over with several insightful discussions, among which may be counted the relationship between risk and trust (p 56) loyalty to organisations (ch 9), expectancy as the source of ethics (p 73), management controls and ethics (p 61) reflective equilibrium (p 76) procedure and justice (p 97), ageism (p 101), changes in ethical motivation as careers progress (p 2) and so on.

While appreciating the spirit of fresh enquiry in the book, we

must however note that it is still very much of a work-in-process. The ideas are not crystallised to a framework into which an admittedly diverse set of thoughts could be fitted. One must be quick to add that one need not fall into the cynical mode of Couriville and describe all similar efforts as "waste paper baskets full of failed recipes"(quoted in R Saul, 1997).

The book has very little "case material". This is understandable as cases are a natural product of schools which think of ethics as problem solving exercises rather than dialogues, as held by the book (pages 38-42).

For the various reasons given earlier, it is ideally suited for reflective reading by serious students and teachers of organisational theory, ethics, sociology and economics rather than for use as a basic text-book for a young reader.

Nevertheless, the book is strongly recommended for Indian management schools so that the issues of ethics are quickly and surely rescued from religious demagogues and cultivated in the calmer and more reflective climate of academics and live practitioners.

— R C Sekhar

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Handbook of Organization Studies

Edited by : Stewart R Clegg, Cynthia Hardy and Walter R Nord, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1996, pp 730, Price: £ 65.00 (cloth)

Knowledge progresses through alternate cycles of normal science and revolutions (Kuhn, 1970). During the period of normal science, there is a well accepted paradigm that informs and guides knowledge creation. There is an apparent cumulation of knowledge during these long periods. However, gradually there is an accumulation of phenomena that cannot be adequately explained from within the paradigm. Alternate paradigms develop, but are still under the shadow of the dominant paradigm. At a certain point in time, the dominant paradigm is discarded and replaced by another that is more capable of dealing with the anomalies and is consistent with dominant evidence in the field. This stage is relatively short and is described as a revolution.

Organisational studies as an area of study is relatively new and is still trying to establish a

domain. In its initial days it had a dominant paradigm, the contingency paradigm, which still dominates the normative stream of literature, but has had to face opposition from several alternative perspectives in research oriented literature. It is almost two decades since the contingency paradigm has been challenged by several other perspectives but there has not been one that has emerged to replace it. Some prominent organisational scholars such as Jeffrey Pfeffer view the multiplicity of perspectives as detrimental to the development of organisation knowledge, and a threat to the field of organisational studies. However, several others including Gareth Morgan and Henry Mintzberg, see the existence of multiple perspectives as healthy, and an indication of a vibrant domain where knowledge can be pursued without the hurdles placed by a dominant paradigm or the politics of knowledge creation.

Handbook of Organizational Studies edited by Stewart R Clegg, Cynthia Hardy and Walter R Nord is a collection of contributions from prominent scholars that celebrates rather than discourages diversity of organisational perspectives. As the editors indicate in the preface, the intent of the handbook was to “affirm a cosmopolitan rather than a provincial coverage to encourage diversity as both principle and practice, to reflect the ways in which studies of organisations have expanded, broadened, and diversified”. The volume provides a panoramic view of the field of

organisational studies as it is in the middle of a revolution with little indication of the new paradigm that is going to replace the older dominant one.

The handbook is organised into three sections. The first section, “Frameworks for Analysis”, provides excellent reviews of the development of different competing paradigms in organisational studies. While the coverage is not exhaustive, it is comprehensive enough for anyone who wants to appreciate not only the diversity in the field, but also the sound foundations for the diversity. The second section, “Current Issues in Organization Studies”, as the name suggests, presents a brief review of some significant themes that have engaged organisation scholars in recent years. The third section, “Reflection on Research, Theory and Practice”, addresses issues that every researcher in the field of organisation studies needs to understand. It provides an opportunity for scholars to reflect on why they are engaged in research, its impact on organisational knowledge and practice.

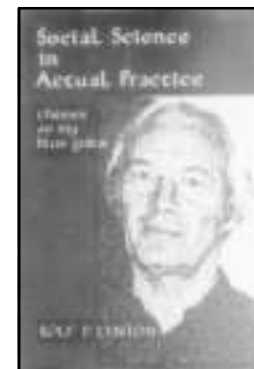
The handbook is targeted at researchers, teachers and advanced students of organisations. It is essential that everyone interested in developing organisational knowledge has a copy of this book, or at least access to it. It should be compulsory reading for students in doctoral level programs specialising in organisational studies.

However, managers and consultants (there may be exceptions) should keep away from

this handbook. It is not a recipe book of practices (or latest fads) that can be implemented to address the real (or imaginary) problems faced on a day-to-day basis. It requires clear thinking unencumbered by immediate problems, reflection on broad assumptions about organisations, and, not least, an appreciation of dense writing.

— Abhoy K. Ojha

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Social Sciences in Actual Practice

Themes on my Blue Guitar

By Rolf P Lynton, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1997, Price: Rs. 350 (cloth); Rs. 185 (paper).

Rolf Lynton is an experimenter in Organisation Development (OD). In a career spanning five decades, he spent alternate decades between the East and West and between academics and building institutions.