Franchise, margin and locale: Constructing a critical management studies locale in Aotearoa/NZ

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Abstract
Most academic disciplines have their symbolic and material “homes” in the metropolitan centres of the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK). Consequently researchers working in Aotearoa New Zealand face a choice as to the kinds of relations they develop with these metropolitan centres. We argue that researchers tend to adopt three particular modes of response: franchise, margin and locale. In this paper we illustrate each mode by reflecting on a joint research programme, Music and Organisation. We suggest researchers need to move beyond franchise and margin responses and develop methods of research that explore local issues using local empirical materials, but that also re-appropriate, in distinctive ways, imported theoretical/conceptual machineries.

Introduction
Research, like any organised social practice, is never unique to a particular location. It is something of a hybrid constituted through local conditions, histories and circumstances as well as drawing on the political, symbolic and economic relations of other locations. Researchers working in organisational studies in Aotearoa New Zealand are deeply embedded in traditions of work that express the political, symbolic and economic relations of other locales. These other locales are largely in the metropolitan centres of the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA). Researchers based here in New Zealand thus face a choice as to the kinds of responses they develop with the core of their fields.

In this paper we first establish some of the broad contours of the geography of academic disciplines as they relate to our particular location (using bibliometric studies). We then argue that researchers often respond in three particular ways which we label franchise, margin and locale. To illustrate each mode we present reflections on our joint Music in Organisations research project. The project contains elements of all three modes but also attempts to move beyond franchise and margin approaches towards a position that not only takes up local issues and empirical materials, but re-appropriates, in distinctive ways, imported theoretical/conceptual machineries. We begin this discussion by critiquing the context of our research, particularly the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) initiatives, and how the location of research centres inevitably affects how research is done.

The (extra) challenge of location: PBRF and the tyranny of distance
National and institutional research audit processes such as New Zealand’s newly developed PBRF assigns a premium to “world class” or “internationally competitive” research. In the introduction to the 2003 PBRF results, the higher education funding body, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), reported that it

... makes no apologies for establishing a high benchmark for the achievement of world-class standing and for requiring the 12 peer review panels to apply the agreed assessment framework in a rigorous and consistent manner. A relentless focus on verifiable quality is essential if the tertiary education sector is to achieve and sustain internationally competitive levels of research excellence (TEC, 2003, p. 85).

But what does “world class standing” refer to? On what basis would one’s “standing” in the world class be established? One way would be to check if the activity one performs locally is recognised by those involved

1 The audit process involved the evaluation of a research portfolio from more than 8000 New Zealand academics in 2004. Each of 12 subject panels assigned individuals a ‘quality category’ (A, B, C, R) based on a numerical formula. An ‘A’ category was identified as ‘world class’ or ‘internationally competitive’ research activity. The secrecy of the panel deliberations, the lack of any review or possible challenge, together with the numerical method, aimed to assure those involved that the ascription of a quality category is an objective measure which is unsullied by personal, political, disciplinary or institutional differences and dynamics. Just 5 percent of the 8013 submissions to the PBRF were rated ‘A’ that is world class.
in the same activity elsewhere. In other words, are we participating in the *same class* of activity? For example, dairy farmers in Ireland, Australia, China, the USA, and New Zealand would no doubt recognise that work done in each location belongs to the same class of activity they themselves perform. Is this what TEC has in mind? For them “world class standing” does assume participation in the same class of activity, but it also assumes qualitative differences in the performance of this same class of activity between those participating. It also tends to assume that there are competitive relations between those involved. The problem in attempting to categorize performance differences is what criteria to use. Depending on the criteria used, different rankings will be produced and from these, different hierarchies of performance constructed.

The Ministry of Research Science and Technology’s (MORST) recently released National Bibliometric Report notes that New Zealand leads the world in scientific publications per US$1 million investment (MORST, 2006, p. 13). In other words, if we compare New Zealand researchers with those located elsewhere, New Zealand researchers are among the most efficient producers of scientific papers (on a cost per output basis). Such an indicator may be helpful in supporting claims for funding and rebuffing charges that research money is wasted. The problem is that the “international” research *game* is not played with a scoreboard that ranks players in terms of the efficient production of research papers. The generally accepted qualitative criteria used to measure “world class standing” is the standing of the journal in which the work is published, the number of citations the publications attract, and to some degree the number of papers produced. On these criteria – status of journal, citation, and number of publications – New Zealand researchers do not score quite so well.

New Zealand-based researchers publish about 5600 (ISI-recognised)² papers per year (MORST, 2006). This places New Zealand about midway along a scale of publications per capita (10th out of 22 countries). However, in relation to citations (which are strongly dependent on particular journal of publication), the MORST study found that just three fields of work – Ecology, Pharmacology and Physics – have citation rates above world citation averages. In other words, in all other fields, including agriculture and social sciences, where researchers produce higher than world average numbers of papers³, New Zealand-based researchers are cited at less than the world average in their particular fields. How is this possible? How can a group that is among the world’s most efficient producers of scientific papers and who also publish above average number of papers in particular fields (like agriculture and social sciences where arguably New Zealand has some advantages) fall below the world average in citation recognition?

Bibliometric studies of New Zealand research sketch out some of the general features of research produced here. This analysis is important in the production of league tables and hierarchies. But such studies are largely unable to interpret or explain the features we have described. How might we explain below average citation? One superficial response might be that the papers are not good enough. This might be the case with some papers, but could it be the case for all the 5600 New Zealand-sourced papers published annually? We think not. In order to explain what is going on with the citation rates we need to know some more about the context in which these works are published.

The MORST study notes that on average, papers published in some fields (agriculture and social sciences for example, where New Zealand researchers publish above average numbers of papers) are fields that have below average citation rates as compared with other fields – particularly those in the core sciences. In other words, if we take citation as a meaningful measure of research performance, then New Zealand-sourced papers published in these fields are not cited as much as papers published in fields with higher citation rates. This is a problem because citation is often used as a proxy for research performance. So how can we explain the lower citation rates for New Zealand-sourced papers?

One reason for this is that the journals in which New Zealand-sourced papers are published tend to be in the wrong fields (fields with lower than average citation rates) relative to other fields. This measure is not only shaped by citation within the field but also of the ranking of the journals in particular fields⁴. Thus, in order to understand the dynamics of citation

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2 ISI Web of Knowledge is an internationally recognised citation index, available at http://portal.isiknowledge.com

3 Since 1992 the number of New Zealand-sourced social science publications has nearly doubled (from 0.4 to 0.8) as a proportion of total world production. This proportion is nowadays almost twice the proportion of science papers sourced from New Zealand.
at the level of the journal, we need to drop down and explore the geographies of particular academic fields. Our argument is broadly that citation, as a measure of recognition, better suits researchers located in some places than others. Of course we are not discounting the possibility that the New Zealand-sourced work is poorly done. Rather, we suggest that location-related factors help to explain lower than average citation records for researchers located here. We are not bemoaning this, however. We are using it to establish a basis for a particular kind of response to metropolitan research.

Music and organisations in New Zealand: Or“Six months in a leaky boat”

We now consider the issues discussed above by reflecting on a joint research project. The project which is made up of three separate case studies explores music in and around organizations. Our discussion shows why location is important in research.

The broad research question of our project is: how does musical consumption and/or performance help to organise work and the management of that work? Our research involved three case studies of: a refugee community that supported a music group; a factory where managers had banned the use of personal music machines after more than 20 years of supporting their use; and an investigation of music in commercial exercise regimes (in group fitness sessions). We discuss this project, using illustrative experiences from each discrete part of the research, to show the different approaches that can be used to engage with the centre of social theorising – the centre in our discipline being the USA and Europe.

To begin, we need to make three general points. First, we contend that in general our project and its dilemmas reflect the predicament of other management/social science researchers in New Zealand. Theory about music as an organising system, like other theory with which we engage, primarily originates in the USA and Europe (e.g. Adorno, 1976; 4 Each journal in each research field is ranked (Thomson ISI) on the basis of the number of citations papers published in the journal have received in the previous two years and this is divided by the number of papers published in both years. The calculation gives an impact measurement that can be used to rank journals against each other.

Barthes, 1977; Ingarden, 1986; and for more contemporary citations Albert & Bell, 2002; De Nora, 2000; Hatch, 1999; Hazen, 1993; Nissley, Taylor & Butler, 2003; and a special edition of the journal Group and Organisation Management). Second, Music and Organisation can itself be seen as a marginal research pursuit. However, to dispute this point, music has long been of interest to philosophers and social science researchers: its rather belated entry into organisational and management research belies its importance in social, economic and organisational life, rather than confirms its insignificance.

The third general point we wish to make concerns how location currently works in our particular field of research endeavour. Recent scholarship that explores the character of research practice highlights the centrality and dominance of the USA and the UK in the construction of “international research” (Paasi, 2005; Uskiken & Pasadeos, 1995; Westwood & Clegg, 2003). This is not simply due to the numerical concentration of researchers in these locations, or the sheer number of papers produced (as noted above). It is also an effect of the concentration of publishing outlets (particularly journals), the home of learned societies, and of citation technologies. Consequently the various mechanisms of academic research (publications, societies, publishers etc.) are strongly tied to and draw from the conditions, histories and circumstances of those locations, and are consequently a priori recognised as “international” work.

In our particular field of work — management and organisation studies — the dominance and centrality of North Atlantic journals, conferences and societies means that “North Atlantic Theories of Organisation” (NATO) comes to be regarded as “international studies of organisations” (Clegg, 2004; Clegg, Linstead & Sewell, 2000; March & Sullivan, 2005; Prichard, 2004; 2005a; 2005b; Westwood & Clegg, 2003; Usdiken & Pasadeos, 1995). Researchers located here therefore confront a problematic that their colleagues closer to the “NATO nexus” can largely ignore: how to engage in research whose content, method, and format is at a distance and to varying degrees distinct from that produced
by the particular location in which they find themselves. Of course other locations outside the NATO nexus also experience the effects of their locations, for instance Latin America (Ibarra-Colado, 2006).

How do we as researchers respond to this challenge? We in New Zealand use a variety of mechanisms to reduce these divergences, including directly engaging USA and European researchers here, training our researchers at NATO HQ (hoping they later return to the periphery, see Lander & Prichard, 2001; 2003), international collaboration, and conference and study leave. These tactics do not, in and of themselves, lead to what our local research community identifies as “international recognition”, although they may facilitate responses to the challenge of the *centre-periphery* issue. To address this, we discern three main responses in our research – franchise, margin and locale – and we now discuss each in turn in relation to our research project as an illustrative example of the practice and problems we face as management and social science researchers located *here* in New Zealand.

**Modes of responses to centre-periphery relations**

*Franchise*

During a trip to the UK to attend Critical Management Studies (CMS) and Standing Conference on Organisational Symbolism (SCOS) conferences in 2003, Janet Sayers visited a UK-based University, and was graciously hosted by academics who were rapidly disseminating work in an area of research interest – aesthetic labour (Nickson, Warhurst & Watt, 2000; Nickson, Warhurst, Witz & Cullen, 2001). An outcome of this visit was that Janet undertook to be part of an “international study” looking at “styles” of aesthetic labour in different countries. Her intention was to explore “Kiwi” styles of labour, using the existing UK survey and contributing to international comparative work.

The New Zealand fitness industry was chosen as an appropriate focus for the study in New Zealand (the hospitality industry was used in the original study). The survey was adapted to the New Zealand context and the fitness industry, and then administered, collated and analysed. The research has so far been disseminated in two conference papers (Bradbury & Sayers, 2004; 2005) aimed at the fitness industry. As part of this project, group fitness instructors were interviewed about their aesthetic labour, and particularly how they experienced music when they work. In explanation, music is central to the production system of group fitness: music is effectively the *technology* of the system that binds the participants together through exercise and dance routines. To date several conceptual papers on how music is used and interpreted in the highly organised system of group fitness sessions have been presented in European conferences, and submitted to NATO journals (e.g. Sayers & Bradbury, 2004; Sayers, 2005). The research area also led to a research opportunity that occurred more by chance during a later visit to the UK when a conference paper on Charlie Chaplin’s use of music and dance to critique service work, was picked up for a forthcoming collection of critical essays (Sayers & Monin, 2007, forthcoming). This eventuation was largely serendipitous. In short, sometimes getting published in the “right” places is dependent on being in the right place, at the right time (that is, where the editors are, and the decisions are made).

As this work has progressed it has moved away from the initial “franchise” arrangement. Initially the *franchisors* – the UK researchers – were keen to promulgate and extend their work world-wide. However, this attempt to promulgate a theoretical idea foundered on problems with adapting and interpreting the survey, and of distance. In terms of the theoretical dissemination of the “aesthetic labour” idea, the theoretical paradigm within which it is framed originates as an extension of Hochschild’s (1983) work on emotional labour. If one wishes to publish back into the UK or USA journals, then the material demands to be framed back into this debate, and the field moves very rapidly.

The franchise model favours technical, uniform methods of expansion. Like the business franchise system, it is all about mimesis, although, like the biggest franchise system of them all, McDonalds, some local adaptations are possible. However, global cultural domination and profit remains the central strategy, and what emanates from the centre has vast theoretical and financial resources (see Felstead et al., 2006). The intrinsically radical approaches of interpretive methods of inquiry that question the assumptions that emerge from the centre, are not ideal for the franchise system.
The key feature of franchise research is the particular relations it establishes through the transmission and reception of theoretical and conceptual approaches. The theoretical work is done at NATO HQ and the status of this work as being of global standing is established through empirical elaboration in peripheral locations such as New Zealand. The franchise, in other words, helps to establish the status of the framework as a “global enterprise” and in the process it takes its place in (neo) colonial relations of power and influence (Said, 1978).

Margin
Ralph Bathurst conducted research among musician-refugees, research that grew out of two important life experiences. He began his working life as a music teacher in a large secondary school, in an age of booming science departments. The arts, and especially music, were at best considered irrelevant and at worst a waste of time. For many of Ralph’s students, music was a marginal activity that bore little or no relevance to their future working lives, and they resented being forced to study it and take it seriously. In response, he found himself being as much a persuader as an educator – persuading students of the value of music to their becoming fully rounded human beings. Ralph’s passion for music is an essential part of his own identity and he strongly believes in its ability both for personal development, and as a way to help turn around the lives of troubled young people. Secondly, in recent years, Ralph has acted as a volunteer support person for refugee families settling in New Zealand. Families, estranged from their home lands (Middle East, Asia and Africa) are invited to settle into an unfamiliar country, where the cultural values are often at odds with their past experiences. As a result, they feel marginalised and uncomfortable with their new surroundings, and many struggle for years before finally, if ever, identifying with the label Kiwi.

For Ralph, musical refugees represented an ideal opportunity to discover how people at the margins use their cultural capital (their music) as a way of integrating into their new surroundings and enter into New Zealand economic and social life. Following Bourdieu’s notion of capital (1986), Ralph observed how these musicians used their talents to integrate into New Zealand society and exchange their skills for social...
and economic capital. He spent time with the Burundian Drummers, a group of musicians who rehearse each Saturday afternoon in the back yard of a state housing area on Auckland’s North Shore.

Important events within this community, most notably the Burundian National Day, are marked with lively drumming and dancing. During his research Ralph found that this group do not use their musical skills as a means of employment or of assisting them to become Kiwis. Rather, they use their drumming as a way of preserving their culture and inducting their New Zealand-born children into the Burundian way. Here a marginal group chooses to remain at the margin, for it is in this marginality that their unique identity is preserved.

Ralph describes one critical incident which illustrates the importance of the margins when it is to do with fundamental questions of identity and culture. The leader of the Burundian community in Auckland exclaimed to an assembled audience at their National Day Celebrations in July 2004, after a stunning performance of drumming and dance, “Don’t you wish you were Burundian?” This leader invited the audience to the margins, inferring that the margin is where uniqueness and difference is experienced and where identities are formed. The performance of his music brought the Burundian drummer, momentarily and ecstatically, into the centre of where meaning was made.

The concept of margin is infused with paradox, and this paradox provides a dilemma for researchers in New Zealand, as it does for researchers in other marginal locations. The centre and the margin depend on one another; they cannot exist without each other because the very concept of centre comes with a margin, and vice versa.

A research response from the margin may be based on a reaction to some of the features of location. Marginal research seeks traditions whose very character, motifs and sensibilities speak to one’s context and allow a level of non-compliance with the field’s core traditions. Some of the difficulties in creating this work may be that it is experienced and received with indifference, subordination, subjection and even exploitation. It may be that a margin response is inevitable in the face of such difficulties and the realization that the same levels of commitment, sharing, engagement, and participation are unlikely to be extended equally over time and space. This indifference may cause withdrawal to the margins which may also be read as an attempt to signify difference and divergence without attempting to resist, challenge, or mount a conflict with the centre.

On the other hand, and more positively, the pursuit of the margin might be presented as the construction of a niche through the celebration of the local and/or disengagement from the orthodoxy of metropolitan agendas. Even more than celebration, and as illustrated by the Burundian drummers, a marginal position can be used knowingly to transmit culture and meaning.

Margin then, is a two edged sword. The margin can be celebrated as a place where creativity and culture happens, but if the margin is defined by the centre, then we are in an uncomfortable position. We are unique and special, and so of value to the colonising centre, and at the same time, while we attempt to claim and preserve our identity, we experience powerlessness and vulnerability. Specifically, in the research field, if we take up a marginal position, our research is unlikely to be recognized as internationally competitive or of “world-class standing”.

Locale

For Craig Prichard the music in the workplace project arose out of a strong sense of disassociation that had been developing between his professional (research and teaching) and amateur (music performance) work. This was bought on in part by the gradual loosening of ties with his professional community based in the UK (he moved back to New Zealand in 1998). On the amateur side he had joined a local Ceilidh band in 2000 as a guitarist and singer and in the following five years spent many evenings chopping out Irish and Scottish dance rhythms (jigs and reels) behind a group of highly talented fiddle, accordion, pipe and whistle players.

Craig’s research investigated the removal of personal music machines (walkmans) from the shop floor of an agribusiness factory after more than twenty years of use by production workers (Prichard, 2005c). In addition he has been involved in looking at the use of charivari"
Craig’s research struggles with questions of locality and locale. Music is an embodied, emotional and aesthetic experience tied to the circumstances of place and location. Consequently we can see that alongside franchise and margin response modes, a third response to centre-periphery relations is possible. This involves turning location into a locale (Fiske, 1993; Prichard, 2000; Prichard & Willmott, 1997). A locale does not ignore the centre’s research problems or theoretical machineries, and nor does it react to these by tracing out the boundary positions. Rather it attempts to re-invent or re-imagine these as part of a response to the empirical and theoretical materials found or experienced in a particular location. This involves explicitly speaking back to the dominant theoretical and conceptual machineries of the metropolitan centres.

This third route is, in our view, the necessary next step for CMS scholars in New Zealand and other non-metropolitan locations. It does not make a virtue of marginality, nor seek to replicate the work underway in metropolitan centres, and neither does it provide empirical produce for the metropolitan theoretical chefs (Prichard, 2005b). Of course creating a locale is not easy. It involves having to respond to the assumptions and frameworks provided by NATO HQ in the midst of what are colonial and neo-colonial processes of academic knowledge production. The creation of a locale recognises that one cannot do without the centre, but neither should one attempt to emulate it or run from it. What is involved is a move that appropriates and changes the ideas, concepts and voices in such a way that the centre is destabilised.

The next part of our discussion turns to two crucial issues that emerge from our discussion so far. The first of these is the relation of locale to oneself, and is a discussion of this point through our research experiences, which provides a challenge to the predominantly ocular, rather than aural, ways that we perceive our research and its place in the world. The second issue has to do with asking the question, “So what”, or specifically in our case, “Is creating a CMS locale a contradiction in terms?”

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Wikipedia describes charivari as: originally a French folk custom, a noisy mock serenade for newlyweds. It was also sometimes used as a form of social coercion, to force an as-yet-unmarried couple to wed. Charivari is the original French word, while ‘shivaree’ is used in North America. In charivari, people of the local community gather around to celebrate a marriage, usually one they regard as questionable, gathering outside the window of the couple. They bang metal implements or use other items to create noise in order to keep the couple awake all night. Sometimes they wear disguises or masks.
To constitute a locale start with oneself

Craig writes of his Ceilidh experiences:

It struck me that there is something quite magical and largely unconscious going on via the music between band and audience ... What can occur is highly organised – orchestrated – and rather spontaneous and euphoric ... What continually struck me during our performances was just how compelling music was as a means of engaging people, organising crowds, creating cooperative activity (dancing/singing), and generally raising spirits and changing moods. If I attempted to make sense of my amateur work from a professional reference point it struck me that the band drew on a set of practices that amounted to a highly evolved and effective form of organising technology. But just how did this technology achieve these effects? This was something of a mystery and in response I began to read the social science literature.

When one reads the social science literature, what is apparent is that, when it comes to music, there are many fascinating possibilities in understanding music’s use in organisational contexts. There is an enormous array of explanatory positions within relatively discrete literatures. Each takes different objects as their point of engagement such as the unconscious and symbolic mind; the cognitive mind; the social structure; or business. Yet, despite this enormous array of possibilities, relatively little has been done in organisation studies.

Craig’s reflections on this issue – of starting with oneself – provides a key insight into why music offers such a powerful metaphor for organisational research as well as an audience of listeners. The epistemological starting point of an aural frame of reference questions the very nature of the way we perceive our research communities. In short, it becomes apparent that when we look at ourselves and others, vision dominates our practice as researchers.

At the same time organised sound presents itself as an interesting epistemological starting point. Epistemologically the study of organisations has, not surprisingly, been strongly guided by the metaphor of visibility. The mode of investigation in the field is strongly ocular-centric. The field’s dominant textbook is called *Images of organization*, and investigators attempt to see what is going on in organisations or to place organisations in a field or context. Despite the obvious difficulties that we cannot in anyway see organisation, but merely its effects, investigators continue to privilege perception, images and visibility as appropriate modes of engagement (see Prichard et al., 2007).

In a sense, understanding music from the point of view of the self undermines this ocular metaphor, which is intrinsically tied to colonialism, surveillance and visibility (see Prichard, 2007). Music and its production and consumption, requires different cognitive processes of perception. Aural modes of perception are intrinsically about place, because musical meaning is communicated and sensed physically in the body, and emotionally in a system of symbolic meaning (Langer, 1962). Music is intrinsically associated with time and place, and with melody, rhythm, tone, timbre, lyrics and genres, music signals where it originates from. To illustrate this point, Janet writes from the perspective of someone consuming (rather than producing) music, from her research journal for this project:

I stood in the light rain at the Auckland Zoo and watched Tim Finn performing on stage, to family groups, songs from ‘Split ENZ’ and his own repertoire. Tim, the local Levin boy made good, successful musician, famous global rock star, returned home to New Zealand with his family and reside permanently. At one point in his performance he bemoans the lack of attention he has been getting lately and some wag in the audience calls out, ironically, ‘We love you Neil Finn’. Tim laughs with surprise, and seems to appreciate the wit of the interjector, and the ‘take the piss’ in-joke. As his band starts to play a song from his own repertoire, *Freedom* he launches into a monologue about what he thinks about when he plays this song. ‘I imagine myself under a waterfall in Karekare’, he says. ‘That feeling you have when the water is pouring down on you. There is nothing like it in the world,’ and several people in the audience hoot out with recognition. They have clearly been under the same landmark waterfall. The next song he plays is *Six Months in a Leaky Boat*, a ‘Split ENZ’ song. This song is basically a sea shanty about New Zealand’s place in the Pacific, the journey to get from there to here, the tyranny of distance and the spirit of adventure. Everyone in the audience knows the words, and a moment of collective recognition breaks...
out as spirits surge and voices sing along. This is a Kiwi moment. I hear New Zealand themes of isolation, alienation, of adventure, of place, language, and of culture, interwoven into a centuries-old tradition of sea shanty songs and the newer form of contemporary rock music. What occurs is an impenetrable moment of confidence. This is a small family concert, for a good cause (raising money for protecting native animals), good natured, bound together by familiar music, with New Zealand themes that matter to New Zealanders, using the now universal, but UK and USA originating technologies of traditional folk music and rock and roll. But, what I notice most is the audience. This matters here and now, to these people. We have a collective moment of relationship and recognising ourselves. Not as individuals, but in relationship to each other as people who share a common history and repertoire of experiences. It was a World class moment, in New Zealand.6

Is creating a Critical Management Studies locale a contradiction in terms?
The Music and Organisation project, aside from the empirical projects themselves, can be read as an attempt by the researchers, each in sometimes different ways, to address the problem of responding to centre-periphery relations. While in some respects the overall project and each case study itself could be read as a search for the margin, or entertains the sensibilities of the margin, each project is also an attempt to produce a locale. We start in each case with our own experience and concerns – subjective experiences, embodied experiences, emotionality, our self-reflexive relation with others’ experience, and in community relations, in whatever form these take. As such the projects are all inevitably located within a critical interpretative tradition (one that begins with people and their understanding and experiences). But beyond this none is tied to or attempts to flatter particular NATO research problems or questions. Rather, each is involved in what could be called the number-eight wire activity of attempting to cobble together and move between sets of conceptual resources that in terms of the particular location seem to make sense.

6 (see http://www.tsrocks.com/s/split_enz_texts/six_months_in_a_leaky_boat.html for the lyrics to this song).

Of course at the same time we are not unconcerned about the problematics of getting some attention for such work from there (there being the place that seems to anoint us with credibility as far as the PBRF is concerned). But rather than attempt a franchise or margin response, our work points toward the attempt to constitute a locale. A locale, in research terms, is a space that begins with the local and non-local resources and attempts to fashion something distinctive from both. This might seem to some to be haphazard and to even violate the coherency and consistency of some ideas, concepts and frameworks. This is inevitable: turning a location into a locale involves altering to some degree the meaning and purpose of the resources and material used to construct that position. Improvising involves putting something to work in ways that were not intended by the original authors. Thus constructing a locale is not without its disappointments and challenges in relating to those original authors and the traditions that support them. This is not to dismiss NATO debates, theoretical frameworks and methodological traditions but rather to beg, borrow and steal from them in ways that turn location into a locale, a space from which to address both local issues and concerns and to speak back to the centre.

Of course as members of a community engaged in a competitive PBRF system we are caught between a rock and a hard place. We have little option but to participate and compete (for an example of this from the Music and Organisation group see Barry, Bathurst & Williams, 2005). If we want to continue to work in this critically inclined research community then we need to find ways that speak critically about management in ways that can be recognized in Europe and the USA. And yet this ought to be done, in our view, in ways that not only draw on strong, evocative empirical materials that are distinctive of this place, but improvise with imported frameworks and concepts and develop and use concepts that are distinctive and resonate with “this” place.

Yes, the research audit processes will continue to use terms like “internationally competitive” and “world-class standing”. The task, then, is not to see this as the inevitable necessity and slavish pursuit of franchise research, but as an invitation to appropriate and fashion our
On reflection, the Music and Organisation project contains franchise and margin modes of organising. As a research project it is a margin response built on weakening franchise relations (with one's academic centre) that began with responses to very localised embodied experiences. As a margin response it is also a product of a search for a niche empirical topic. And yet, as it has developed, the work has turned to face the centre, particularly its dominant epistemological traditions. It has also begun to question conceptual divisions that make up centre traditions.

References


Assembling Sociologies: Following Disciplinary Formations In and Across the Social Sciences

Terry Austrin and John Farnsworth

Abstract

The paper considers disciplines as hybrid assemblages and takes up the case of sociology as a key means of following how disciplines are both constituted and reworked across varying national, historical, institutional and interdisciplinary arrangements. It traces English, European, North American and New Zealand sociologies in order to show how the occupational work of sociologists is necessarily reassembled under the impact of different national arrangements and tensions.

Sociology (like history) will remain, as it is and always has been, a very disorderly and wholly provisional enterprise.” (Hawthorn, 1976, p. 137)

Introduction

How are we to make sense of the disciplinary shifts which have seen a central preoccupation of sociology, work and organisation, move to an area such as critical management studies? In this paper, we argue that one answer is to look at the processes of disciplinary formation out of which specific constellations such as sociology or critical management studies are created. Seeing such rearrangements this way allows us, we argue, to trace how particular practices and narratives, representations and identifications, crystallise into different disciplinary formations at different stages and places. Doing this enables us to make sense of how practices, formerly in one discipline such as sociology, appear to migrate to another, such as management or organisation studies.

Given the attention now paid to work and organisations within management studies, this might seem to put the cart before the horse: why not simply focus on how these areas are investigated in critical management studies? The answer, indirectly addressed by Parker (2000),