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overstated. We both want to thank Marquita and each of her colleagues at Sage for their professional assistance, encouragement, and willingness to open new pathways for the study of human cooperation and global action in the new century.

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—Jane E. Dutton
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PREFACE

Today's global forces for change are moving us into a remarkable new set of circumstances, one in which human social organizations inherited from the modern era may be unequal to the challenges posed by overpopulation, environmental damage, technology-driven revolutions, gross imbalances between rich and poor, and the onslaught of treatment-resistant diseases. Although very different in form, these various trends, from ozone depletion to 24-hours-per-day trading, are transnational by nature, crossing borders all over the globe, simultaneously affecting local-global realities, and reminding us that the earth, for all its historically reproduced divisions, is a single unit (for a powerful analysis of this point, see Kennedy, 1993). A world of thoroughgoing interdependence is upon us, and along with it is a historic opportunity to anticipate and imagine, to discover and design a new vision of the world's cooperative potential.

THE LAUNCHING OF A NEW SERIES

This pioneering volume is the first in a new series at Sage Publications that is devoted to advancing our knowledge of the Human Dimensions of Global Change. The series is designed to support a broader, worldwide movement—a

call to all of the social sciences—to create an interdisciplinary domain seeking better understanding of the earth as a total system and to define ways in which human activities are both a source and a potentially positive response to alterations in earth and human systems that are not and cannot be localized; in short, the rapidly growing global agenda for change. The series is created out of concern for the future of humanity and the earth and recognizes that how humanity responds today to the consequences of ecological and economic global change will reverberate well into the future and across generations. What sets this series apart is its special attempt to augment the largely deficit-focused science of global change with special emphasis on constructive human response to the global agenda. In particular, it will attempt to search for new forms of human cooperation and global action. Thus, the call is to: (a) help build a foundation within the human dimensions of global change community for a scholarship of transformation that seeks to interpret basic new trends in humanity's global cooperative capacity; (b) anticipate new possibilities in organizational forms and processes; and (c) study the new relational practices that can contribute to a deeper understanding of the life-giving interrelation of humanity and world ecosystems, cooperative forms, and global society.

BACKGROUND AND BRIEF OVERVIEW

This volume grows from a special national Academy of Management conference hosted at Case Western Reserve University in the spring of 1995 that was intended to "begin building a solid Foundation under the Organization Dimensions of Global Change as a coherent intellectual enterprise . . . to explore how global change research needs organizational theory and change scholarship, and vice versa." The logic is simple: There is not one item on the global agenda for change that can be understood (much less responded to) without a better understanding of organizations. More than anywhere else, the world's direction and future are being created in the context of human organizations and institutions. Today, as the walls to global cooperation have tumbled, new spaces have opened for transboundary corporations, networks, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), regimes, associations, grassroots groups, and many others to proliferate. The significance, in many respects, of the relatively small number of decisions made by our nation-state leaders pales in comparison to the billions of decisions made every day by members and leaders of such organizations. It is within this context that the editors of this volume offer

an orientation and normative focus for organizational dimensions of global change (ODGC) inquiry as follows:

> ODGC research is an enterprise dedicated to the study and development of worldwide organizations and leaders that is capable of addressing the complex and pressing global issues of our time. In the transformative mode, ODGC research is deliberately capacity or "opportunity focused" and is "radically appreciative"—where inquiry itself is constructed as an intervention for the better and where the very framing of questions is recognized as a crucial choice-point for the kind of world that the "scientific construction of social reality" helps bring to focus, and perhaps fruition. Methodologically, it proceeds from the premise that there are "no limits to cooperation" and that virtually every item on the global agenda can be addressed, given the creation organizations and other cross-boundary cooperative systems that have as their primary task a world future of (a) human and ecological well-being; (b) sustainable economic development; and (c) an articulation of a set of values (emerging global ethics) capable of inspiring human action in the service of the widest possible good.

The book is divided into three parts. The chapters in Part I by Karl Weick, Kathryn Kaczmarski and David Cooperrider, Frances Westley, and Ram Tenkasi and Sue Mohrman explore and broaden our understanding of organizational sensemaking and knowledge exchange—it is called Sensemaking and Global Change. Part II is about the structuring of global cooperation and argues that organizations working on the global agenda are almost everything but unitary organizational forms. Part II, therefore, is titled Collaboration and Partnership Arrangements: The Structures of Global Change. Included are chapters by L. David Brown and Darcy Ashman, Mayer Zald, Barbara Gray, Julie Fisher, and John Aram. Part III is titled Social Constructionism and Global Change and invites greater attention to ethical discourse and inquiry into ever-evolving visions of the good. It invites greater disciplinary self-critique and reflexivity. It seeks expansion of voices participating in the world of global change science and action. And it invites anticipatory theorizing, constructing future images, propositions, and languages of positive possibility. Again, the authors are leading thinkers in their fields: Kenneth Gergen; Raza A. Mir, Marta B. Calás, and Linda Smircich; Rene Bouwen and Chris Steyaert; Nancy J. Adler; and Stuart Hart.

Although the contributors to this volume come from the arena of organization studies, this book should be of greater interest to human dimensions of global change scholars and practitioners all over the world and from an array

of disciplines, including interdisciplinary fields of organization and management science, policy studies, international relations and development studies, and earth systems science, as well as the disciplines of sociology, economics, anthropology, political science, and psychology.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In addition to the featured authors who contributed the chapters to this volume, our friends and colleagues from Case Western Reserve University and the University of Michigan have offered continuous goodwill, inspirational input, and support.

At Case Western Reserve University, we owe a large debt to faculty and students at the Weatherhead School of Management and its SIGMA Program on Human Cooperation and Global Action. Together, they hosted the conference with great hospitality and enthusiasm. In particular, we want to thank those faculty who made an important contribution in their willingness to give of their time and energy to lead a variety of sessions: Lisa Berlinger, Diana Bilimoria, Richard Boland, Richard Boyatzis, Ron Fry, Michael Ginzberg, David Kolb, Eric Neilsen, William Pasmore, and Don Wolfe. One of our richest sources of inspiration, as always, was Suresh Srivastva. He was the person who insisted that the conference needed a clearer direction; his suggestion to add "No Limits to Cooperation" as a subtitle for the event assisted in giving it a more affirmative and normative focus. Likewise, tremendous energy and a sense of purpose were infused throughout the conference by doctoral students from the Department of Organizational Behavior. Its success owes much to Kathryn Kaczmarski, Gurudev Khalsa, and Punya Upadhyaya, who were key organizers as well as visionaries about the importance of this domain for the future of the field. They, in turn, were assisted by a number of other doctoral student colleagues serving in a variety of ways: Don Austin, Ilma Barros, Rama Bhalla, Chet Bowling, Carla Carten, Tom Conklin, Mary Finney, James Ludema, Angela Murphy, Alice Yoko Oku, Charleyse Pratt, Cheryl Scott, Param Srikantia, Jane Wheeler, and Rob Wright. We are also grateful to Retta Holdorf and Bonnie Copes for their responsible, never-ending assistance in managing the conference and making sure that all of those who attended felt at home. In addition, two of our greatest advocates throughout have been Claudia Liebler and Ada Jo Mann, mainstays of our Global Excellence in Management Program. Their consistent sustenance for our efforts is gratefully received. In addition to the above, our very deep appre-

ciation is given to the Dean of the Weatherhead School, Scott Cowen. Scott has always been an exceptional leader to all of us; and without his inspiration, encouragement, and ability to facilitate action, this conference (and, indeed, SIGMA) might not have happened. We are particularly grateful to him for his conviction that schools of management have a special, noble responsibility to society vis-a-vis the global agenda for change. He has been unfailing in his support for us personally and professionally and for the SIGMA Program.

Likewise, there were many from the University of Michigan who helped us with the conference. We appreciated the input and enthusiasm of several doctoral students: Gelaye Debebe, Bill Dethlefs, Stephanie Mackie-Lewis, Gina McLaughlin, and David Obstfeld. Dean Joseph B. White of the University of Michigan Business School lent his presence, ideas, and support for the conference. In his own leadership style, Joe has opened endless possibilities for inspiration and collaboration. Finally, Cheryl Vereen has helped with all of the details, assembling and caring for the production of this book. Without her help, the book would not have happened. This is her first book production, and, based on her enthusiasm, our guess is that it will not be her last.

In addition, we wish to thank a number of institutions and individuals who made this whole experience possible. The invitation and the seed grant funding came from a special initiative of the Academy of Management. Overall leadership and further funding came from two groups of the Academy: the Division of Organization and Management Theory and the Division of Organization Development and Change. Individual contributions were offered by a number of people; most notably, a generous gift from Jane Seiling was provided in support of SIGMA. Likewise, outside the Academy, inspiration and encouragement for the idea came from conversations with Tom Baerwhald at the National Science Foundation's Global Change Research Program and with John P. Grant and Elise Stork from the Office for Private Voluntary Cooperation (PVC) at the U.S. Agency for International Development. PVC's direct support in the field of Case Western Reserve University's Global Excellence in Management initiative provided a much-needed grounded context for the more academic theorizing about the organizational dimensions of global change.

As mentioned earlier, this volume is the first in a new Sage series. Marquita Flemming, our editor, has been a wonderful colleague, friend, and guide throughout this entire process. Instinctively, she knows that management today is a matter of world affairs and that the entire field is being called to aim higher. Her courage and commitment to work with us to connect organizational thinking to the research domain of global change cannot be

overstated. We both want to thank Marquita and each of her colleagues at Sage for their professional assistance, encouragement, and willingness to open new pathways for the study of human cooperation and global action in the new century.

—David L. Cooperrider
Case Western Reserve University

—Jane E. Dutton
University of Michigan

1

NO LIMITS TO COOPERATION

An Introduction to the Organizational Dimensions of Global Change

DAVID L. COOPERRIDER
JANE E. DUTTON

Sometimes, a short anecdote can express more than many words, especially when the anecdote is true. Ours is actually very simple. It is about a letter we received several years ago, the content of which became the focus of our very first conversation and the starting point of our first collaboration, culminating in contributions to *Advances in Strategic Management,* Volume 9, 1993.

At the outset, it must be said that the letter's query was surprising, formidable, disconcerting—and totally compelling. It signaled the lack of input from organizational scholars into the policy-relevant conversation about global change. It was written by members of the UN's International Facilitating Committee (IFC) for the "Earth Summit" (recall that the conference was the largest meeting on environment and development in history). In essence, the call said:

We are about to step into an unprecedented experiment in global cooperation. And frankly, there is cause for concern. The issues to be discussed and acted upon are tremendously complex, scientifically uncertain, interrelated, dynamic, and monumental. Consider just a sampling of the issues requiring deliberation:

- World population, in the lifetime of those born after World War II, will soar from 2 billion to 10 billion—although it took 10,000 lifetimes for the population to first reach 2 billion.
- The world's forests are being destroyed at a rate of one football field-sized area every second, and every day, a species becomes extinct; and since mid-century, it is estimated that the world has lost nearly one fifth of the topsoil from its cropland.
- A continent-sized hole is opening up in the earth's protective ozone shield as the world's emissions of chlorofluorocarbons doubles every decade, having already increased 40 times over since World War II.
- Fossil fuel use has, in the same time period, increased 10 times over, flooding the atmosphere with unprecedented levels of carbon dioxide.
- The economy, which grew five times in size, is pushing human demands on the ecosystem beyond what the planet (our soils, water supplies, fisheries, etc.) has the ability to regenerate; and with around a billion new mouths being born each decade, the pressures on the entire ecosystem will multiply.
- Every day, 37,000 children under age 5 die of starvation or preventable diseases; nearly a billion are suffering in desperate poverty (and the conflicts and wars associated with it) while a precarious global debt burden grows by $7.5 billion every month.
- Questions: Can the world survive as one fourth rich and three fourths poor, half democratic and half authoritarian, with oases of human development surrounded by deserts of human deprivation?

We are, in so many ways, infants when it comes to our cooperative capacity for building a global society congenial to the life of the planet and responsive to the human spirit. So, as you know, more than 30,000 people with diverse disciplinary backgrounds from all over the world—from the earth sciences, from economics and business, from governmental and nongovernmental organizations, from religious and cultural institutions, and from the grassroots to the ivory tower, not to mention the myriad of cultures from hundreds of nations—will be assembling in Rio de Janeiro for what we call a summit, and what your field would call strategic planning. So we have a puzzle for you.

Your answer is important. Indeed, what happens at this meeting in response to ecological and economic global change will reverberate well into the future and across generations. Critics argue, and many of us actually agree,

> that the world could be worse off as a result of this ambitious meeting (it could result in greater loss of hope, increases in cynicism in international institutions, identification of irreconcilable conflicts, waste of resources, much talk with no action, empty platitudes and promises, and others). So we are asking for answers—from organization and management theory.
>
> To help us organize and ensure a successful meeting, what knowledge can your field offer? Can you point us to the specific pieces of research, the theories, the principles and practices that could truly make the difference?

There are at least three ways to make meaning of this call. The first is to raise questions about the appropriateness of the recipients of the letter. Would not the IFC do better writing for help from schools of international relations, political science, geostrategic studies, or others? Second, maybe the anecdote's importance resides in its metaphorical contribution, that is, that organizing, in all domains of endeavor, is beginning more and more to resemble a global meeting (i.e., saturated in temporary relationships, information overload, metaproblem complexity, nonroutine tasks, structural dispersion, backlash from the crises mentality, diversities of every kind, and others). Or third, perhaps the anecdote is best understood at face value—simply as an urgent invitation to an increasingly important field of scholarship and knowledge whereby organization and management studies are now viewed on a much broader scale than ever before, indeed, as a matter of world affairs.

This volume is offered in anticipation of a new and expanding role for the students, scholars, and educators in organization and management studies. It takes as its challenge to address how organizational scholarship and thinking can inform understanding issues of global change. Its mandate is broad, its theoretical boundaries are open-ended, and it is inspired by a conviction that organizational studies has a pivotal role to play in both defining an agenda of relevant research on global change and providing theoretical lenses for understanding these research questions. Although it is risky business to herald an advance or bold new agenda without much evidence that it is already happening, we hope to at least begin making the case in this introductory chapter, considering developments like these:

- Something quite extraordinary has been occurring on the world scene over the past 7 short years across the physical and social science disciplines. Around the world, an unprecedented interdisciplinary program of research has been envisioned, mobilized financially and programmatically, and organized almost like a global social movement organization. Its purpose, its vision, and its name have combined to galvanize levels of cooperation like few other initiatives in the

history of social science—it is called "the human dimensions of global change research program."

- The more productive the global change research domain has become (the 1996 Encyclopedia of World Problems now, sadly, catalogues some 15,000 transboundary problems), the more people are recognizing, or rediscovering, the role of organizations: Growing throughout the domain of global change science is the recognition and conviction that there is not one single item on the global agenda for change that can be understood outside of the role and functioning of organizations. Any effort to understand, much less come to terms with, global change that does not include a sustained commitment to improving our knowledge of the organizational dimensions cannot succeed.
- More positively, the logic of rediscovering institutions can be taken one important step further. Although there may be limits to growth as far as the world's ecosystems are understood, there are no necessary limits to cooperation as human beings seek to constructively organize and respond. To an extent unimaginable a decade ago, the ideals of building a healthy, prosperous, and sustainable world future are taking on form and substance. Obstacles to cooperation and human enterprise that long seemed immovable have collapsed in humanity's path. In their classic volume *Our Common Future,* the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) in fact suggested that virtually every item on the global agenda for change can be addressed (at least technically and economically)—"providing that *institutional arrangements* [italics added] permit the constructive interrelations of many intellectual resources and insights involving people from many countries with a myriad of cultures, traditions, languages, aspirations, and so on" (p. 8).

The book explores the potential of cooperation as a practice, an organizing accomplishment, and as a value for understanding issues of global change. It opens up conversations, research paths, and opportunities for dialogue around global change research. It addresses basic questions such as, What do we mean by global change research? What can organizational scholarship contribute to understanding the human dimensions of global change? If we were to offer a priority agenda for research and inquiry, what questions would we be asking, and what kinds of research would have a high probability of making a large contribution to knowledge as well as timely relevance for action? Is the global change domain likely to grow in future importance? And what would such inquiry do for organization scholarship? Will an expanded focus to include the organization dimensions of global change open our field to broad vistas of learning and compel changes in our current theories of

human organization, management, and processes of change? Where are the exemplars?

In the rest of this chapter, we will begin exploring this new call, the opportunities raised, and the implications for both organization theory and society.

The chapter unfolds in three sections. The first provides a brief account of what has been internationally formulated as the domain of global change research, and it seeks to do so in ways that make these developments come alive for our own discipline. The second section, more importantly, previews the original pieces of work written for this volume. They are offered in the three parts of the book: Sensemaking and Global Change, Collaboration and Partnership Arrangements: The Structures of Global Change, and Social Constructionism and Global Change. We then conclude with a hope that we have for the future. It begins in a speculative way to envision broad reconsideration of the field's priorities focused on research, education, and innovation that is deliberately "opportunity focused" (Dutton, 1993) and "appreciative" (Cooperrider, 1990)—where inquiry itself is constructed as an intervention for the better and where the very framing of questions is recognized as a crucial choice-point for the kind of world that the scientific construction of social reality helps bring to focus, and perhaps fruition.

GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH DOMAIN: A BRIEF REVIEW

The dominant changes that affect the environment and the course of life on Earth are natural ones, induced by such inexorable forces as natural selection, the shifting of winds and rivers, changing inputs from the Sun, the turbulent dynamics of the atmosphere and oceans, the drifting of the continental plates, the building of mountains, and the expansion and contraction of ice masses. But imposed on these is now another set of changes, more recent and immediate in consequence, that is the clear result of human activities. Our uses of energy and practices of intensive farming and technology have altered the albedo of the Earth, the composition of soil and waters, the chemistry for the air, the areas of forests, the diversity of plant and animal species, and the balance of global ecosystem.

International Council of Scientific Unions (1986, p. 1)

Do you think you can take over the universe and improve it?

—Lao-tzu

As used throughout this volume, the term *global change* is meant broadly to refer to alterations (positive or negative) in human or environmental systems whose effects are not and cannot be localized and for which appropriate human response is likely to require transboundary thought, organizing, and action (e.g., depletion of ozone; the transboundary movement of HIV/AIDS; species loss; emergence of global civil society; the global eradication of smallpox). As a research domain, global change science, especially that which is focused on the human dimensions, is young, dynamic, and emerging so rapidly that there is some risk of trying to say anything definitive about it. But there can be no mistake. Something quite extraordinary is occurring, and it has escaped the view of all but a relative handful of close observers, or those who are in the midst of creating the new directions. Place this in conjunction with the domain of actual practice—where social inventions across the local-global nexus are far outpacing our theories—and the potential of something like the organization dimensions of global change begins to expand in many exciting directions. Let us start with a brief review of the domain, the call to research in the area of global change.

The United States and International Global Change Research Program (GCRP)

The USGCRP was created as a Presidential Initiative in 1989 and was formalized by the Global Change Research Act of 1990. At about the same time, the phrase "human dimensions" was added to the vocabulary of global change and in programmatic terms gave birth to the International Human Dimensions on Global Change Research Program (IHDGC), again in 1990. The major piece of writing giving direction internationally is generally taken as Turner, Clark, Kates, Richards, and Mathews's (1991) edited volume on *The Earth as Transformed by Human Action*; in the United States, there was, most notably, the framework-creating volume by Paul Stern, Oran Young, and Daniel Druckman (1992) *Global Environmental Change: Understanding the Human Dimensions*. Both had their roots in an invitation, a call, perhaps even a plea that can only be described as something of a scientific social movement, led by people such as Harold Jacobson at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, as well as many others, such as Ian Burton (Director of the International Federation of Institutes for Advanced Study), Roland Fuchs (United Nations University), and Luis Ramallo (International Social Science Council). What brought these people to work tirelessly around

the world over a period of several years was the conviction that the physical sciences (which had been defining the global change research agenda since the 1950s in the form of the international Geosphere-Biosphere Program) could go only so far without understanding the anthropogenic (a) sources of global change; (b) consequences of global change, both through other components of the geosphere-biosphere as well as directly to the human use systems; and (c) management of global change, that is, the prevention of harm, adaptation to change, and the rehabilitation and restoration of systems where changes of a deleterious nature are occurring. Speaking with conviction and passion to the entire social science community—disciplines such as economics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and organization studies—the challenge was articulated rhetorically with two simple questions:

> Why does leadership come from the natural sciences, when the problems of global change are so much a function of human action? Should not the human sciences be expected to provide the lead, to set the agenda, and determine the priorities? (Burton & Timmerman, 1989, p. 304)

Momentum to address the question was generated. It was especially visible at the Sixteenth General Assembly of the International Social Sciences Council in December of 1986, and then it was used skillfully to build a consensus at the next major gathering in Tokyo 2 years later. The world's most ambitious social science cooperative endeavor was about to be inaugurated. For the catalysts, the obstacles, of course, were immense, including the challenges to science's claims to value neutrality, detached objectivity, tendencies toward ethnocentric knowledge, and limited methodological tools for dealing with truly global data sets. Even the design of the Tokyo event itself called for an extraordinary level of technical communication and mutual cooperation by the main sponsors, the International Foundation of Institutes of Advanced Study, the United Nations University, the International Social Sciences Council, and others. The myriad of geographically dispersed parties needed to overcome disciplinary, political, cultural, and language difficulties across all time zones. The Tokyo meeting, in particular, was a roller-coaster session, but people stayed in dialogue with the clear intuition that the outcomes of the deliberations might well be historic. Although no scientific or social consensus existed (or yet exists) about the scope and significance of issues such as climate warming, ozone depletion, acid precipitation, and the linkages between economy and ecology (e.g., the consequences of extreme poverty and/or overconsuming societies), something even more basic, accord-

ing to the catalysts, was at stake: "Perhaps more importantly, there is no truly *global context* within which to *think* about these problems, let alone to begin to manage the problems themselves. This is the driving force behind HDGCP" (Burton & Timmerman, 1989, p. 298). In Kuhnian terms, fortunate observers at the meeting were witnesses to a paradigmatic revolution in the making. Lest one has any doubts, just type the words "global change" into a web search. The expedition will go on for hours (more on this later).

The Tokyo meeting resulted in an "extraordinary" and "urgent consensus" (Burton & Timmerman, 1989, p. 297). There were moments when differences of theoretical backgrounds and culture seemed unbridgeable. What emerged, however, was a unanimous conviction:

> Response to global change by one nation acting alone, or even by a few of the more powerful acting in concert will not suffice. The global community must become involved. The common welfare and moral solidarity of human-kind being at stake . . . a new relationship has to be forged between human society and environment, which will be morally, economically, and ecologically sustainable. (Burton & Timmerman, 1989, pp. 299-300)

Visions of the new domain were given voice, one after the other. However, just as quickly as convictions and commitments were made, there were voices of caution, even fear, about setting sail on a course that the human science community was scarcely prepared to undertake:

> Given the magnitude of the task proposal—to create an international program that can contribute effectively to the understanding and management of global change—it has been asked whether the international community of scholars and human scientists is fully prepared to undertake it. Our own judgment is unequivocal: we are not fully prepared, and that is part of the problem. Were we more ready in intellectual and organizational terms, the world might not face quite a daunting prospect. . . . A great opportunity lies before us, and a great responsibility. (Burton & Timmerman, 1989, p. 303)

These words were written at precisely the same time that the Berlin Wall was falling, and events in Moscow signaled the end of the cold war. Signal events such as these marked an opportunity to approach the human sciences in a more integrated and whole-system way.

It is probably safe to say also that participants had precious little idea that within a few short years, there would be a mass mobilization of human di-

mensions conferences on every continent, dozens of new and related journals, the birth of literally hundreds of centers worldwide devoted to the human dimensions of global change, and, not incidentally, dedicated funding. As just one example, the piece of the U.S. Global Change Research Program budget devoted to the human dimensions (which also includes separate research budgets on climate and hydraulic systems, human interactions, biochemical dynamics, ecological systems, earth systems history, solid earth processes, and solar influences) has surged from $20.1 million in 1990 to more than $200 million in 1997 (see Office of Science and Technology Policy, 1997). This development in the United States has parallels across all continents and is all the more striking in view of the decline that was simultaneously under way in many other, more traditional areas of support in the humanities and social science research in general. In a recent article, Daniels (1996) asks, "How will future historians of science account for this rapid progress in only five years?" (p. 18).

The upshot of this brief review, of course, is not the dollars. What is important is the fact that a stage has been set. The phrase "human dimensions of global change" has and will increasingly become a powerful integrative theme bringing people together internationally across disciplines. The invitation is the following:

- To improve understanding and increase awareness of the complex interactions of environmental systems, including the atmosphere, biosphere, geosphere, and hydrosphere, as well as human systems, including economic, political, cultural, and sociotechnical systems
- To strengthen efforts to study, explore, and anticipate social change—attitudes and beliefs, population growth, markets, sociocultural systems, organizations and institutions, and international structures of cooperation—affecting the global environment
- To identify broad strategies to prevent, or mitigate, undesirable impacts of global change, or to adapt to changes that are already unavoidable
- To expand strategic options for dealing with global change and promoting the goal of sustainable development

Few developments have conveyed the sense of globality—and the need for global, transboundary methods for understanding and acting—as strongly as the growing realization that all depend on the earth's ecological resources and are vulnerable in the face of their degradation. For years, people have been talking about how globalization will set in motion a revolution in the intellectual world and compel refiguration in disciplinary boundaries, identities,

methods, commitments, and agendas. Now it is beyond talk. Many are doing it. The domain of global change research, we believe, will burgeon in the next several years as issues of global concern will increasingly be identified through advances in theory and method and through advances in the world's communication capacity. How will organization theories respond? What can the organization and management sciences contribute to understanding the human dimensions of global change?

We now consider how the empirical forms of organizational life create additional urgency and possibility for the development of understanding of the organizational dimensions of global change.

From the Abstract to the Concrete: New Organizing Forms for Global Change

Until very recently in history, people have responded to global phenomena as if they were local; they have not effectively institutionalized their responses across sectors or societies, nor have they been able, in organizational terms, to respond by deliberately altering the course of global changes themselves. But things are different now from what they have been for millennia. One example (drawn from material in Cooperrider & Bilimoria, 1993, p. 118) can be used to quickly illustrate the point:

> Future historians of global change will surely rank May 8, 1980 among the big dates. For on May 8, when the World Health Assembly declared that smallpox had been eradicated from the planet, smallpox became the first, and as yet only, global problem in history to have been eradicated or solved by organized action on a local-global world scale. The achievement can scarcely be overstated. Involving nearly a quarter million staff from 69 countries, including a multidisciplinary, multicultural group of 700 leaders, this global change response successfully addressed, in 10 years, a dreaded world boundary-crossing disease that had deadly effects on the human population since the time of the Neolithic age. Citation of this effort has happened more than a thousand times in the medical literatures. This is scarcely surprising, given the life-saving import of such an achievement, as well as the implications for other global health concerns, such as HIV/AIDS, and many other childhood diseases. But to this day, there has yet to emerge one theoretical or empirical study of this organizational breakthrough—from the perspective of leadership, decision making, organization design, management, strategic alliances, human motivation, managing change, multicultural management, or others.

We bring attention to this illustration for several reasons. The first is to underscore the point that it really is no longer utopian or romantically idealistic to be using the language of global change. The development of global cooperative capacity, across boundaries of all kinds, is part of the evolution of human efforts to organize life in response to transboundary problems and opportunities. We believe that these processes will accelerate in coming years.

The second is to bring attention to what we feel is a vast opportunity for organization theory. Indeed, the observable fact is this: Since World War II, more than 30,000 transnational nongovernmental (NGO) and intergovernmental (IGO) organizations have emerged to manage concerns related to issues of ecology and development (Union of International Associations, 1997). Many of the organizations to which we are referring are now familiar names: World Wildlife, Nature Conservancy, The Body Shop, Merck, Save the Children, United Nations, World Business Academy, Stonybrooke Farms, Sarvodaya Shramadama, and so on.

And this may be the tip of the iceberg. A study by the Club of Rome has called it a global "barefoot revolution" (Schneider, 1988); sociologists describe the axial age we are in as "the building of the global civic culture" (Boulding, 1988; de Oliveira & Tandon, 1994); Worldwatch Institute simply refers to new worldwide "people power"—with grassroots groups fighting poverty and environmental decline now numbering in the millions (Durning, 1989). Likewise, in other related spheres, political scientists are describing the accelerating formation of "institutions for the earth" (Haas, Keohane, & Levy, 1993) and of "global regimes" (Young, 1989); and at the same time, business thinkers at The World Business Academy are now even talking about the leading-edge "corporations as agents of positive global change" (Harman & Hormann, 1990) or the new "ecocentric organization" (Shrivastava, 1996).

So what ties these organizations conceptually? In connection with the language of the human dimensions of global change research program, we would like to refer to the type simply as global change organizations. The bridge is a useful one, we believe, because the language of the human dimensions of global change will continue to enlarge the boundary-crossing dialogue across disciplines—included in this rapidly growing dialogue are fields such as earth systems science, as well as the disciplines of sociology, economics, political science, international relations, anthropology, psychology, and management studies. Likewise, it is increasingly clear that what is happening and what the world is calling for is the birth of new organizational arrangements that allow for the closing of what some have called the institutional

gap—the dichotomy between organizations born of the modern bureaucratic eras of the past several centuries and the new demands of a postmodern, supranational, globally linked world system of change (see Cooperrider & Bilimoria, 1993). As the World Commission on Environment and Development (1985) put it in clear and practical terms, "The real world of interlocked economic and ecological systems will not change; but the policies and institutions concerned must" (p. 9). In this spirit, the term *global change organization* is useful also to avoid the tired and outworn distinctions of profit, not for profit, public and private, governmental and nongovernmental, and so on. Global change organizations, as proposed below, have several minimal but important characteristics that can be used to help support interdisciplinary inquiry:

- Global change organizations assert, as their primary task, a commitment to serve as an agent of change in the creation of environmentally and socially sustainable world futures—their transformational missions are articulated around the real needs of people and the earth.
- They have discovered and mobilized innovative social-organizational architectures that make possible human cooperation across previously polarizing or arbitrarily constraining boundaries.
- They hold values of empowerment, or people-centered forms of action, in the accomplishment of their global change mission, emphasizing the central role of people as both means and ends in any development process.
- They are globally-locally linked in structure, membership, or partnership and thereby exist, at least in identity and practice (maybe not yet legally), as entities beyond the nation-state.
- They are multiorganizational and often cross-sectoral. They can be business, governmental, or not-for-profit. Indeed, many of the most significant global change organizing innovations involve multiorganization partnerships bridging sectoral boundaries in new hybrid forms of business, intergovernmental, and private voluntary sectors.

From here, many interesting questions surge to the fore. How many global change organizations are there? Can we create a mapping of this largely nonterritorial invisible continent where people are organizing to bridge barriers between nations, races, religions, sectors, professions, cultures, and distances in the service of a global imperative? What are their linkages and interactions? How do the designs and dynamics of complex organizations mediate humanity's sensemaking ability—its capacity to understand and respond to global change? How is the world's cooperative capacity enlarged

or diminished in and through the evolution of organization structures that are locally and globally linked, multisectoral, cross-cultural, and multi-institutional? What is the effect of chronic disaster on people's sense of hope that constructive response to global change is possible? On a more micro level, can we create typologies or modes of enacting global change? What about transitions from old to new organizational forms? How do companies, for example, make rapid transition from being harmful agents of global change to active and constructive agents of global conservation, restoration, or renewal? What about questions of global change leadership? Gender relations? Oppression? How can we frame human response to global change so that all voices from different and unequal positions can be heard in organizational settings with equivalent seats? Equally important, how can global change partnerships be formed and guided effectively in the absence of authority? Will the people of the world ever evolve a shared global ethic, and what role will global change organizations play in this arena? What is the relationship between international regimes and transnational social movement organizations? Do global change organizations provide a powerful counterpoint to the dominant cost-minimization, benefit-maximization paradigm in the management sciences—where, at best, organizations are seen as utilitarian inducement/contribution (contract) systems, where hierarchy and control are designed to minimize shirking and agency costs, and where self-interested opportunism is assumed to prevail? Will organization theory rise to the positive challenge of building concepts whereby the self-sacrificing quality of the people and organizations—a public goods orientation—is, in fact, noticed and thus becomes a central, as opposed to a peripheral or tangential, focus?

OVERVIEW OF THE CONTENTS

The remaining 14 chapters making up this book were originally written in response to a worldwide call from the Academy of Management to begin a new dialogue on questions exactly like these. The authors, leading thinkers in the fields of organization studies, were invited in the context of discovery

> to open new doors to understanding and action . . . to view this as opportunity to accept Toynbee's well-known challenge "to dare in scholarship" and to generate systematic propositions that will give vision and direction to an

> enterprise that will count, and count affirmatively, as it relates to the complex and growing global change agenda of our time.

The chapters, selected from more than 90 submissions, are expansive, vibrant, and thought provoking. Conceptually, they are grouped into three theoretical configurations beginning with questions of sensemaking (How do complex human organization dynamics mediate humanity's ability to understand and respond to global change?). Second, there are priority questions of new collaborative and partnership structures (How is the world's cooperative capacity enlarged or diminished in and through the evolution of organization structures that are locally and globally linked, multisectoral, cross-cultural, and multi-institutional?). Finally, Part III deals with broad questions related to promising paradigmatic approaches that take into account the socially constructed nature of reality in a pluralistic global change arena of multiple voices, diverse value systems, reflexive knowledge systems, and a world of interdependence. We now turn to an overview of each of the contributions.

Part I: Sensemaking and Global Change

Research on the human dimensions of global change strives to understand the interactions among and between human systems and environmental systems, including the atmosphere, biosphere, geosphere, and hydrosphere, as well as human systems, including economic, political, cultural, and institutional arrangements that make choices, take action, and so forth (see Stern et al., 1992). The question that concerns the authors of Part I is related to the latter emphasis: How do the workings of complex organizations mediate humanity's sensemaking ability—its capacity to understand and constructively respond to global change?

A sensemaking lens on the organizational dimensions of global change is rooted in the recognition that the global change domain is made up of issues that have unclear cause-effect structures, unintended side effects, are linked as metaproblems that are multilayered (cutting across entire societies), are essentially contested phenomena, have consequences that are often irreversible, and simultaneously, because of the reverberations into the future, create an imperative to act regardless of the endless uncertainties. In short, to organize for global change is an act of sensemaking. Sensemaking, we contend, is the birthplace for human response to global change because

sensemaking sets the frame for decision making, becomes the basis for envisioning possible futures, creates the communication context for linking with others, and is itself transformed in the designs and processes of organizing. The chapters that fit in this section all locate the possibilities for accomplishing global change in the processes by which knowledge is created, shared, and acted upon. They share with each other a belief that small actions are consequential in the generation of meaning, that organizing with consequences for global change is an ongoing accomplishment, and that making sense is a critical part of the process. All four chapters are rich with example, helping us see how a sensemaking lens identifies important new ways to both think about and organize for global change.

Karl Weick's chapter on "Sensemaking as an Organizational Dimension of Global Change" opens Part I and unpacks the core premise that different organizational forms shape how people make sense by affecting the sensemaking resources available. He elaborates seven properties of sensemaking that afford different capacities for individuals to act in different situations. As a prolific writer about the importance of sensemaking in all of organizational life, Weick is well suited to extend his analysis to implications for global social change. He does this in a surprising way, by using examples to bring alive the connection between form (design), sensemaking resources, and outcomes.

As a starting point, Weick asserts that individual sensemaking in different organizational designs has critical consequences. The consequences from inadequate and adequate sensemaking are conveyed dramatically through the contrasting stories of firefighters in the Mann Gulch and the sensemaking by members of the Worker's Defense Committee in Poland. In the former case, 13 men die in a tragic fire. In the latter case, a small group of members of an opposition movement create a nearly miraculous large-scale change toward achievement of democracy. Sensemaking fails in the first and triumphs in the second.

The stories that Weick contrasts are powerful in their own right. However, they are especially compelling as reminders of the challenge in global social organizing: that strangers come together with diverse experience, only having face-to-face contact for limited periods, with leaders unknown or by chance, in temporary systems, facing solutions that make no sense, with limited or nonexistent ways of communicating and sharing experience, in unfamiliar terrain, and with strong consequences implied. Yet despite this challenge, by thinking systematically about the sensemaking resources available in an organizational form, one acquires a way of seeing the possibilities for enhanc-

ing global organizing. The window that Weick opens helps us to see that answering several design (organizational form) questions in the affirmative enables global social change: Does the form encourage conversation and give people a distinct, stable sense of who they are and what they represent? Does the form preserve elapsed data and legitimate the use of those data? Does it enhance the visibility of cues, enable people to be resilient in the face of interruptions, encourage people to accumulate and exchange plausible accounts, and encourage action or hesitations? According to Weick, the more affirmative the answers are to these questions, the better suited the form is for global social change.

Chapter 3, by Kathryn Kaczmarski and David Cooperrider, provides a different window into the possibilities for global organizing that arise from a focus on leadership. Like Weick, these authors locate the possibility for global organizing in the social processes that different structures afford. Rather than call these social processes sensemaking resources, these authors call the organizing potential *constructionist leadership.* They breathe new life into the concept of leadership by example and by contrast.

The example is a powerful one. The chapter traces the emergence of leadership during the creation of the Mountain Forum, a global-level alliance that, over the course of 11 years, brought together mountain-centered organizations, NGOs, international agencies such as the World Bank, mountain researchers and land managers, various national governmental representatives, donors, policymakers, academics, and IGOs, all of whom had a shared interest in increasing global interest in the conservation of the world's mountains. The story of the alliance's evolution documents the enormous challenges of scale and diversity that make the alliance's creation so remarkable. It also illustrates the pushes and pulls, planned and unplanned events, and large- and small-scale meetings that jointly enabled the emergence of this alliance. Although formalized by name in 1995 as the Mountain Forum, the alliance organized itself using a form that resisted bureaucracy, hierarchy, and formalization. As the authors put it,

> A pioneering image of the Mountain Forum emerged. Visualized by the participants was a coalition of organizations strung together by geographic region but with no identifiable center and no formal secretariat. . . . Within this coalition, boundaries would fade and no hierarchy of organizations or positions would exist, consistent with the consensus that a relational network of mountain NGOs and agencies was necessary to function successfully at

> the global level . . . reflective of the basic values of the Mountain Forum: open, democratic, decentralized, accessible, transparent, accountable, and flexible. (Chapter 3, p. 72)

Kaczmarski and Cooperrider help us to see the power of constructionist leadership in helping this forum come to life. They distinguish the leadership task as one of organizing by bridging across diverse cultures of inquiry. Constructionist leadership enables "productive connections at the deepest levels . . . of belief and method" (Chapter 3, p. 76). Such a leader "works at a nonmaterial, epistemic level of promoting appreciation of the 'intelligibility nuclei' across often-conflicting communities" (Chapter 3, p. 76), and in "building knowledge systems, open and indeterminate, capable of generating intellectual breakthrough and action time and again" (Chapter 3, p. 76).

These authors distinguish this leadership form by three qualities: "(a) an appreciative approach to knowledge, (b) a generative approach to language that is rich in metaphor and narrative form, and (c) the formation of 'out of control' organizations through the web of inclusion" (Chapter 3, p. 77). The appreciative approach to knowledge means actively trying to use processes that "[seek] to discover, learn about, and bring to prominence the 'life-giving' best of every culture of inquiry" (Chapter 3, p. 78). The importance of narrative and metaphor are described in terms of their bridging power, their capacity to embrace complexity and ambiguity, and their ability to create and sustain hope in the face of such diversity. It is all about a kind of leadership that enables the kind of sensemaking so well articulated by Karl Weick in the previous chapter. The authors bring to life these sensemaking constructions by describing a series of meetings of Mountain Forum participants held in circular Mongolian-styled yurts. Here, the place for gatherings was rich in metaphoric possibility, and the social process used to encourage dialogue in the sessions relied explicitly on metaphors and images as means for opening up conversation and encouraging multiple interpretations. The use of appreciative approaches and metaphor and narration invites confusion, ambiguity, and a sense of potential chaos. Kaczmarski and Cooperrider celebrate the delicate balancing that a constructionist leader must create to open up the dialogue through these methods and ways of relating without surpassing the collective's capacity to extend and elaborate its potential.

The final element in constructionist leadership is captured by the idea of web of inclusion, which describes a leader's commitment to inclusive structures and inclusive processes that ensure an "ever-expansive domain of relat-

edness" (Chapter 3, p. 86). In the evolution of the Mountain Forum, this feature was ensured through the creation and use of an open electronic network; through the commitment of values that support inclusion (open, democratic, decentralized, etc.); open membership; and a reliance on temporary leadership groups.

By chapter's end, one has a strong sense of the value of constructionist leadership for global organizing in its capacity to generate and bridge cultures of inquiry—in short, for making collective sense of a global agenda for change. One gains an intellectual and emotional appreciation for the possibilities derived from this form of leadership, as well as an understanding of some of its defining features. Interestingly, these ideas are brought to life in the Mountain Forum case, where no one leader or leadership group is ever named or identified.

In Chapter 4, Frances Westley addresses one of the greatest threats to humanity's sensemaking capacity—the impact of chronic disaster. Building on Kai Erikson's recent book *A New Species of Trouble* (1994), this chapter begins by looking at a uniquely contemporary experience of disaster that gathers force slowly and insidiously, creeping around people's defenses rather than smashing through them. People become unable to mobilize against the threat, sometimes because they feel there is nothing that can be done to avoid it, sometimes because they have been misinformed, but mostly because they have elected consciously or unconsciously to ignore it, to avoid anxiety by constricting awareness. In short, there is a dangerous constriction in sensemaking capacity, and it happens at every level of human system, from individuals to groups to organizations to the whole of society.

The disasters today, explains Westley, are different from many that human beings have dealt with throughout history because they (a) are chronic and insidious rather than acute and dramatic; (b) are humanly generated, or human-made; and (c) often involve toxins that seem to permeate the very ground of being, rendering the environment that surrounds us and of which we are a part "defiled and unreliable." The dread, slowly and progressively, appears to grow with time. It has the capacity to make people feel demoralized, helpless, and traumatized in a "peculiarly inaccessible way." It often incapacitates the very fabric of community, organization, and joint action—it raises questions about human beings' contemporary capacity to comprehend the global agenda, much less respond in viable and vigorous ways. The case in point: One of the most critical issues confronting the globe today is the rapid extinction of species. Estimates are that some 24 species are becoming extinct

every day. Westley believes that although we may clean up our rivers and the atmosphere, learn new technologies for curing disease and for destroying toxic wastes, invent substitutes for environmentally destructive energy sources, and return to chemical-free forms of agriculture, we as a species have not learned to re-create the miracle of life.

A new species of solution, what we earlier talked about as the global change organization, may, in fact, be one antidote to the hopelessness and constricted sensemaking associated with the experience of chronic disaster. It is here where Westley makes her inspiring contribution. Her research, which traces the story of a worldwide network called the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, takes a look at their effectiveness as a organization, but more importantly, she documents the human impact that such organizing has on its members. Through in-depth interviews, surveys (87% response rate), and participant observation, Westley provides insights into ways that organizing can transform the debilitating experiences of chronic disaster into informed and sustainable action.

Do organizations restrict our human capacity to make sense of our world, or are they centers that have broad potential for helping human beings reclaim and enlarge their sensemaking capacity? The question, theoretically, is important because it may help differentiate the sensemaking perspective on organizations from classic theories of decision making that stress constricted awareness and the satisficing effects of organization. Westley's scholarship, we believe, invites consideration of the latter.

In Chapter 5, Ramkrishnan Tenkasi and Susan Mohrman craft a series of arguments for why global change requires the creation of contexts in which collaborative knowledge can be created and used. These authors locate the possibility for global change in the social process by which knowledge is created and shared between interacting units or organizations. Their chapter directly critiques traditional ideas that knowledge can be realized objectively, applied universally, and considered complete. They substitute these traditional claims with ideas: (a) knowledge is subjectively constructed and subjectively consumed; (b) knowledge requires contextual adaptation; and (c) knowledge is incomplete. Throughout their chapter, they use examples in which knowledge transfer failed or succeeded depending on the consistency of actions with the collaborative knowledge creation perspective.

For these authors, successful global change requires the intentional and careful creation of what they call interpretive spaces, where joint meaning between parties can take place and where joint learning is enabled. They

mention several techniques and perspectives used in contexts of global collaboration that enable these interpretive spaces: the dialogic method, search conferencing, appreciative inquiry, and interpretive interactionism.

Part II: Collaboration and Partnership Arrangements: The Structures of Global Change

In our view, we are already witnessing a significant transformation in the central preoccupation of organizational scholarship away from the individual or unitary organization and toward some more globally conceptualized entity. On one level, the shift signals a change in organizational forms. At another level, many are now arguing that cooperation is a higher-order adaptive strategy than, for example, competition (see The Club of Lisbon's report "Limits to Competition," 1994). One is reminded of Astley and Fombrun's (1983) notion of "collective strategy" (p. 181), which, as they ardently reason, specifically refutes the conception of organizations as autonomous, self-sufficient units and stresses the fact that all organizations are inevitably participants in a multitude of interorganizational associations that overlie and interpenetrate one another, thus constituting an intricate, functionally integrated network of vital relationships. To understand organizations as unitary and competitive (the vast majority of organization theorizing and research are indeed still founded on such assumptions) may no longer be relevant to understanding what is happening in the world of global change. In effect, by giving priority to the unitary form, organizational theory might well be underestimating the cooperative resources in the world. But more debilitating to the generative potential of the field is the problem of paradigm blindness; the field simply may not see the higher-order adaptive strategies. Only in this way does it make sense that still, almost 20 years after the classic global eradication of smallpox, not one single piece of organizational research can be found based on this unprecedented cooperative achievement. Have we painted a picture of the world's cooperative potential with a whole series of colors as missing?

As the authors in Part II demonstrate, the organizations responding to the agenda for global change are almost everything but unitary organizations—they are all hybrids. Whether termed strategic bridging institutions, social movement organizations, public-private partnerships, regimes, networks, referent organizations, or locally-globally linked NGOs, virtually all involve

organizational arrangements that use resources and/or governance structures from more than one existing organization. Such "hybrid organizational arrangements" are no longer the exception but the norm and invite more relationally informed theorizing (e.g., concepts such as social capital, the strength of weak ties, cooperative advantage, and others). They also, as any leader in the arena of global change will attest, pose a myriad of new challenges for managerial practice. Imagine the hybrid organizational dynamics involved in the dramatic response to the depletion of the earth's layer of ozone. Literally thousands of organizations—corporations such as DuPont, social movement organizations, academies of science, intergovernmental agencies, trade associations, grassroots NGOs—combined their capacities to address the global environmental problem. Some observers say that it was the most successful form of human cooperation and global action ever recorded, at least as it involved worldwide mitigation response to destructive activities affecting the world's ecosystems (Haas et al., 1993). What do we know about this kind of organizing?

In Chapter 6, L. David Brown and Darcy Ashman argue that items on the global agenda for change are systems of self-reinforcing difficulties, or "messes" (using Russell Ackoff's colorful language), and are intractable to problem-solving activities by single organizations focused on limited aspects of the problem system. Planned global change—such as dealing with chronic poverty, maldevelopment, and hunger in large parts of the world, including debt-ridden economies whose instabilities are intensified by growing gaps between rich and poor—will inevitably demand changes at several levels of analysis. Global problems are often approached through macrolevel changes that can alter the policy environment. They also begin as microlevel reforms vis-à-vis locally focused projects that alter local behavior and institutions. But long-term global change, where vast increases in interdependence and uncertainty abound, requires both the macro and micro in the form of mesolevel programs and institutional relations. The mesolevel, as described by the authors, is neither top down nor bottom up and offers an alternative to free-market or central planning approaches to societal regulation. It involves global change partnerships that are both lateral and vertical; lateral partnerships join diverse professional skills and capacities across organizations and sectors, whereas vertical partnerships join parties across the divides of power, from the policy levels to the grassroots. This kind of hybrid arrangement has the earmark of a seminal idea and, as the authors demonstrate, can have high leverage effects on large systems with seemingly intractable problems.

The strength of the chapter is its research base in combination with a theoretical elaboration of Robert Putman's concept of social capital in the global change domain. Thirteen cases of hybrid partnerships from 12 countries in Africa and Asia are examined seeking to "identify ingredients associated with successful cooperation across differences in sector and power" (Chapter 6, p. 140). Three factors are used to explain successful cooperative efforts: (a) preexisting social capital in the form of previously experienced networks, norms, and trust; (b) settings of dialogue that maximized mutual influence among organizations in spite of sector and power differences; and (c) face-to-face group learning processes that used conflict (moderate to high levels of conflict were more productive than low levels of reported conflict) to enable new choices and new behaviors by interorganizational systems. The Bangladesh Immunization Health Program, for example, involved more than 1,000 partner organizations, transforming the vertical and lateral dimensions into a hybrid for change that has had a positive impact on the health of millions of Bangladeshi children. The cases, one after the other, are compelling. But equally important are the innovations in research practice leading to the case writing. The case studies and the initial comparative analyses were conducted by an international team of researchers. The medium, in this chapter, is also the message.

Mayer Zald turns his attention to a different kind of organization, one of the great catalytic forms that often sparks efforts at regime formation—transnational social movement organizations (SMOs). Zald's starting question is fundamental: How do people around the globe sometimes come to act in concert? His analysis is conceptually rich. It is guided by modern social movement theory, especially the writings that focus on resource mobilization, political opportunity, and cultural framing. But there is a paradox, says Zald: Cooperation across national boundaries to alleviate hunger, contain and eliminate the spread of AIDS, combat environmental deterioration, and so on also creates the conditions for large-scale conflicts. Groups and cultures that were once fairly isolated from each other are now brought into contact, and, almost by definition, SMOs generate conflict precisely because they are born with social transformation and change as their reason for existence. So, although the idea of cooperation across national boundaries to achieve desirable social goals has intuitive appeal, there are always groups and organizations with opposing priorities, goals, and values. The more effective the SMO is in generating cooperative transboundary action, the more conflict there will likely be in the world. A case in point is the role that SMOs played in helping

to virtually eliminate slave trade globally across national boundaries. So, like the chapter by Brown and Ashman, cooperation and conflict go hand in hand; they are not opposites along a continuum.

Admittedly, Zald's writing is in an assertive mode, as if we knew a lot about the operation of transnational social movements. On a descriptive level, histories of particular social movements have been written. Yet on a comparative and theoretical level, much remains to be done. Concludes Zald, "The trends in globalization will inevitably lead to more transnational social movements and a more complex interweaving of conflict and cooperation" (Chapter 7, p. 183).

Most observers of the human response to global environmental change believe that the key to solving problems of collective action is in the creation of international regimes—and this is Barbara Gray's focus in Chapter 8. Regimes are interlocking sets of framework conventions and obligations that govern interactions among international actors. Although most of the study on international regimes concerns economic regimes, interest has mounted rapidly in the study of environmental regimes. To manage the myriad of environmental changes that are forecast (e.g., sea level increases from global warming) requires organizing at both the local and global levels. But such organizing presents a supreme challenge—it is about governing without government, it is about organizing a world of uncorrelated stakeholders in the absence of authority. It is about underorganized systems where interdependence is high but where most actors are approaching global-level phenomena through local, uncoordinated action and where no party has sufficient power to force unilateral decisions.

For Gray, the search for solutions to life-threatening issues at the global level involves four classifications of environmental problems: commons; shared natural resources; transboundary externalities; and linked issues, such as environmental and economic development linkages. In the absence of authority, the only real option, argues Gray, is collaboration: "'Collaboration involves a process of joint decision making among key stakeholders of a problem domain about the future of that domain'" (Chapter 8, p. 191). Like Brown and Ashman earlier, the author identifies a number of factors, such as social capital, that are critical to the successful development of regimes. Theoretically, Gray looks at how leadership, culture, structure, and technology become the mechanisms for negotiating the development of a domain and then quickly turns her attention to practical requirements or "how tos." What is most needed, she contends, is the formation of active trust. Her chapter

identifies three major challenges to the successful creation of international regimes: how to effectively frame problems, how to deal with power differences, and how to select a convener. Her chapter identifies a range of solutions to these practical and structural organizing challenges. Her discussions of solutions suggest that organizing for global change is not simply about cold structures and mechanistic power relations. Much needed in the area of global change is a scholarship of human process. Although the structures of collaboration must likewise be better understood, Gray's call is for a better understanding of the difficult human processes of negotiation, interaction, and trust development that lie at the foundation of the collaborative forms.

Julie Fisher's chapter puts some numbers to such trends. For example, she maps out the breathtaking growth of indigenous NGOs committed to addressing issues of poverty and environmental decline in the Third World. The chapter explores characteristics of regionally and globally linked grassroots organizations (GROs), horizontal networks between GROs, grassroots support organizations (GRSOs), and horizontal and vertical GRSO networks that are connecting across cyberspace in a virtual global community. Organizations such as EarthCare Africa, The Latin American Network for Child Welfare, ANGOC (Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development), and dozens of others are described in ways that give the reader a feel—the barefoot revolution is on and the organizations being born have been hybridized with traditional ways of practicing cooperation in villages and cultures throughout the developing world. In Africa, for example, thousands of GROs were organized in response to the droughts of 1973 and 1985. In Kenya, there were 1,600 women's GROs by 1987. All of them must be understood through the lens of their cultural roots and traditional relational forms.

In reading Fisher's chapter, one is reminded of Pradeep Khandwalla's (1988) pioneering work intended to make the organization and behavioral sciences more directly relevant to sustainable development, especially socioeconomic growth in developing cultures. Fortunately, as Fisher's chapter so aptly shows, the opportunities and materials for studying the organizational dimensions of global change from the perspective of the developing world context are tremendous. These organizations, as the reader will see from the descriptions, offer exceptionally rich sites for natural experiment and participatory types of research where "before," "during," and "after" data on structure, leadership, boundary spanning, human relations approaches, organization revitalization, and change methodologies can be learned from in vivo. An organizational study for social development is an exciting and overdue paradigm; it is an area where practice is truly outpacing theory.

In the final chapter of Part II, John Aram argues that the sheer numbers, the size and magnitude of the recent explosion of global change organizations, suggests the need for a wholesale rethinking and revision of management assumptions and concepts. Conceptually and practically, global change organizations provide a powerful counterpoint to the dominant cost-minimization, benefit-maximization paradigm in the management sciences—where, at best, organizations are seen as utilitarian inducement/contribution (contract) systems, hierarchy and control are designed to minimize shirking and agency costs, and self-interested opportunism is assumed to prevail. The global change organizations are public or collective goods organizations. The matters of concern—human rights, environmental protection, biodiversity, women's rights, and community development—are meant by members to be commonized, not privatized. In terms of the influential theory of collective action (Olson, 1965), these behaviors should not be evident where large numbers prevail and group membership is heterogeneous. However, the enormous magnitude of the global change movement demonstrates the widespread prevalence of a different set of principles. From the standpoint of theory development, Aram proposes, the challenge is to build concepts in which the self-sacrificing quality of "people and organizations that create public goods is the central, as opposed to the peripheral or tangential, issue" (Chapter 10, p. 238). The organizational significance, the real story of the global change movement, lies in the incontrovertible and widespread evidence of public-goods behavior.

So, where do we go for insights into the growth of global change organizations, their innovativeness, and their ability to take public goods producing collective action? Here again is the idea of hybrid forms, of global change as requiring anything but unitary organizations. And in place of rational choice theories, Aram draws on the theory of weak ties in sociological network studies to cast an important light on the phenomenon. This theory explains how a social system organized by a greater number of acquaintances (weak ties) rather than close friends (strong ties) will exhibit greater aggregate innovativeness, cohesiveness, and adaptability. The decentralized, diffuse nature of membership in most global change efforts, especially aided by modern electronic communications, builds issue-oriented, low-density organizational networks.

At the same time that Aram identifies the insights applicable to global change organizations from network theory, he offers an important critical perspective in the global change movement. He illustrates the diverse intellectual influences that compose this movement (e.g., communitarian, social

reformist), making the contradictions between influences more transparent. The existence of these differences means that effective organizing is a challenge. In addition, Aram raises three global needs—expressions of ethnonationalism, global crime organizations, and differing views of justice and fairness—as developments that further challenge the design of effective collaborative forms. Coupled with Aram's convincing case against the universality of the widely accepted utilitarian models of management, this perspective opens the door for fresh ideas for organization research and theory building.

Part III: Social Constructionism and Global Change

In the interest of establishing priorities and achieving clarity of exposition, the Committee on the Human Dimensions of Global Change made a series of focused recommendations for the national program on global change research. One, for example, zeroes in on the relational aspects of a growing global change agenda—especially the enormous intensification of worldwide conflicts over values and choices:

> Proposals deserve priority to the extent they are likely to enhance understanding of processes of decision making and conflict management in response to global change. . . . How will global environmental change intensify existing social conflicts or engender new forms of conflict? What technologies of conflict resolution or conflict management are likely to prove effective in coming to terms with these conflicts? (Stern et al., 1992, pp. 243, 247).

Interestingly, the committee also raises significant ethical questions about global change science itself, realizing that traditional science conventions—such as value freedom, detached objectivity, the picture theory of language, and the like—might well suppress the potential of a human dimensions research program. "Novel theoretical constructs and research methods are needed" (Stern et al., 1992, p. 167). For example, the stakes may be quite high: "The reflexivity of human activity makes knowledge itself a driving force of the system that is the object of that knowledge" (Stern et al., 1992, p. 167). Even further, in light of the dramatic plurality inherent in global-level inquiry, it is no longer possible or desirable to sustain patterns of insularity from the views, values, and understandings of those not quite like us.

Recently, social constructionist approaches to knowledge have begun to surface (see Gergen, 1994) that offer many exciting and promising ways of enriching the enterprise of human science, especially in a domain where questions of human relatedness (dealing with difficult issues of values, cultures, conflicts, and beliefs) and reflexivity (where knowledge itself transforms the phenomenon) are increasingly of preeminent concern. Unlike earlier versions of social constructionism that appeared as inherently critical of virtually every aspect of conventional science, current expressions not only place great value on empirical methodologies and other traditional accomplishments, but they also forge ahead with new methods demonstrating the advantages of breaking disciplinary boundaries, entering interrelated dialogues, and approaching concerns of reflexivity not as contaminating limitation but as unique opportunity (e.g., the 1987 accounts of ozone depletion reflexively turned back on human beings and prompted unprecedented reality-shaping forms of human cooperation and global action, including major alterations in corporate behaviors, changes in the agendas of international regimes, the birth of whole new connections among grassroots environmental movements, and rapid transformations in popular vocabularies and awareness).

For purposes here, constructionism is an approach to human science and practice that replaces the individual (or any single entity) with the relationship as the locus of knowledge. Philosophically, it involves a decisive shift in Western intellectual tradition from *cogito ergo sum* to *communicamus ergo sum*. The common thread in most constructionist writing is a concern with the processes by which human beings, their values, and commonsense and scientific knowledge are both produced in, and reproduce, human communities. In practice, constructionism replaces absolutist claims or the final word with the never-ending collaborative quest to understand and construct options for better living (for the major statement in this area, see Gergen, 1994).

One of the prominent strengths of the constructionist perspective, from the vantage point of developing a truly global human dimensions research program, is that it is always seeking to open the door to a fuller interweaving of the disparate communities of meaning. Although descriptions of social constructionism vary widely and are subject to an enormous and rapidly expanding body of scholarship, there are at least four exciting ways that social constructionism can expand the scope and significance of research on the organization dimensions of global change: It invites greater attention to ethical discourse and inquiry into ever-evolving visions of the good; it invites greater disciplinary self-critique and reflexivity; it seeks expansion of voices

participating in the world of science and action; and it invites anticipatory theorizing, constructing future images, propositions, and languages of positive possibility. All of these, it would appear, are important forms of scholarship to the emergent domain. And each of these invitations is illustrated, at least partially, in Part III of our volume.

For example, Ken Gergen's chapter on "Global Organization and the Potential for Ethical Inspiration" demonstrates how social constructionism does not avoid but engages with full priority the thorny questions of values, concerns of power, and how social constructionism has practical uses in the arena of "an enormous intensification of ethical conflict" (Chapter 11, p. 257). For Gergen, the sources of conflicts in the global change domain are not essentially problems of malignant intention ("we should not think in terms of the evil practices of the multinationals as against the purity of traditional culture [or vice versa]" [Chapter 11, p. 258]) or ruthless and colonizing groups seeking world domination ("[these terms] are the epithets of the outsider" [Chapter 11, p. 258]). Rather, the problem is that of multiple and competing constructions of the good.

After dismissing and showing the weaknesses inherent in many conventional approaches to conflict resolution—including the long-standing attempt to generate universal and binding ethical principles, and when those do not work, the additional strategy of reactive international sanctions—Gergen finds compelling potential in new organizational forms and postmodern organizational theory.

The pivotal metaphor for simultaneously achieving organizational viability and ethical well-being, for Gergen, is found in conceptualizing ethical construction as relational process. Proposed is a shift in the Western intellectual tradition from conceptions of ethical principles, from which proper behaviors are later derived, to forms of ethically generative practices that give rise to conjoint action and the synergistic valuing of realities. From the social constructionist stance, global values and ethics will always be interminable and unsettleable; they are also contingent and parochial, reflecting the ongoing constructions of reality of parties in concrete relationship. Postmodern organizing, therefore, is to be valued for its relational globalizing potential to the extent to which it continuously opens the opportunities for intelligibilities to commingle, to interpenetrate in cooperative practice, and where the pervasive pluralism of international life is met not with dismay but with a sense of reassurance. Concrete illustrations of the abstract argument are usefully offered, such as that from a multinational pharmaceutical company, where the

voices of ecological activists in essence became part of the management of the firm (the outside and inside of the corporation was obviously blurred)—leading the company to champion an international policy of bioethics. In the postmodern organization, writes Gergen, boundaries are loose and permeable; there are no single individuals making autonomous decisions; there are multiple centers of intelligibility and rapidly obsolete rationality; there are many nonhierarchical and overlapping networks of group configurations, lattices, matrices, temporary systems—and there is healthy appreciation for incoherent policies. A formula for chaos? Just the opposite, says Gergen. In the relationally rich circular organization, intelligibility is not as likely to ossify. Images of the good and the right do not become frozen, where my reality is the reality. Conventions of negation, so often created when intelligibilities are walled off from one another, are softened. And a subtle shift is accomplished. Relational practice gives rise to livable ethics. Embedded in the hurly-burly of everyday vocabularies and constructed understandings, these ethics are fluidly reconstructed in the course of living, in the processes of practical dialogue. Much needed, argues Gergen, is transformation of our fundamental quest. The ethically generative question for the global change community of researchers and practitioners is not "What is the good?" but instead, given the heterogeneity of the world's peoples, must become "What are the relational means by which we can help bring about dialogue and mutually satisfactory conditions?"

In Chapter 12, Raza Mir, Marta Calás, and Linda Smircich demonstrate one of the truly unique commitments of the social constructionist perspective—reflexive deliberation. Too often in scientific and scholarly pursuits, attention is focused "out there" with little open reflection inside the discipline. Hidden from view, frequently, are perhaps oppressive tendencies, values, or even innocent but detrimental consequences of the work. For the constructionist, there is recognition that, whether a primitive society or a scientific subculture, we develop working languages, and with those words (concepts, theories, professional vocabularies), accounts are furnished on what is real, rational, and right. Without reflexive deliberation—exploration into the historically and culturally situated character and consequence of the accounts, including our own—there is always risk of settling in too quickly. Univocal agreement tends to occlude critique. Outsiders not sharing the premises are rendered suspect, often dismissed or denigrated. Many disciplines obviously operate this way. But it is not a good foundation for building a program of inquiry into the human dimensions of global change. The all-too-familiar

process of disciplinary fragmentation is antithetical to truly global learning. From this perspective, it is essential to build into global change science some processes of reflexive deliberation. And by doing it in this chapter, Mir, Calás, and Smircich offer a message that is demonstrated in its medium. It is a great piece of writing; something we need more of in organization theory.

The chapter begins in complete and utter protest with the theme of the present book. That we should hold up the value of cooperation as a positive and universal good appears at first glance to be a seductive vision. But not so quick, say the authors. Could it be that the language of cooperation is mainstream smoke; that it is fraught with historical connections to traditions, views, economic requirements, social systems, and practices that are oppressive? The possibility exists, say the authors. So, as theorists striving for less constriction in the discourse, "we have no option but to be rebelliously uncooperative" (Chapter 12, p. 277).

The scholarship of dislodgment that follows challenges all of us to retrace the historical continuities involved in the language of cooperation, including Frederick Taylor's call for cooperation, Mayo's human relations approaches, and others, including recent machinelike methods to organization reengineering. The continuities are disturbing. The authors wonder if anything like authentic cooperation, or full voice, is ever possible in the global domain.

In the modern age, argue the authors, new forms of domination are increasingly embodied in the social relations of science and technology, which organize knowledge and production systems. The story becomes further disturbing as a spotlight is placed on GE's strategic business moves in India—and its implicatures in female infanticide. Hailed by mainstream organizational writers as a move of great entrepreneurial vision, the authors show how the voices of women were systematically excluded in the broadest societal discourses. (One can easily transpose the argument to many global change concerns, such as trying to understand loss of rain forests and the indigenous voices.) Trying to understand the situation is complicated. But the problem, in the end, is not one of lack of explanations but one of who can explain. Are we "bound to remain trapped in [an] inability to produce a participative epistemology"? (Chapter 12, p. 290) ask the authors, and "is the West (knowledgeable enough to be) even capable of listening?" (Chapter 12, p. 290).

René Bouwen and Chris Steyaert continue the constructionist perspective almost seamlessly with their chapter "From a Dominant Voice Toward Multivoiced Cooperation." To understand human response to issues of global

change, from inconsolable poverty to interrelated environmental pressures, we must complement the institutional, legal, and political perspectives with new understandings about how interactions among the world's peoples are framed in and through organizations. The question they add to Gergen's earlier one is this: "How can we frame human response to global change so that all voices from different and unequal positions can be heard in organizational settings with equivalent seats?" No, this is not an invitation to a Tower of Babel negatively interpreted, argue the authors. It is an invitation to recognize an original polylinguism. The care of our world and strengthening of cooperative capacity can be approached through the care of languages: "'No language to waste'—that is the polyphonic cry that can ground every global development or cultural project" (Chapter 13, p. 303).

Organizing, to be sustainable and effective, is about expansion of voice. The ideal, proposes the authors, is the development of "a polyphony of fully valid voices." Writing from their home in Belgium, the authors explain polyphony as a metaphor they are using from the oldest of musical repertoires. In the 15th and 16th centuries, the Flemish Primitives created a furor throughout Europe with their paintings. At the same time, a musical composition form was developed that eventually became an artistic production throughout all Europe. The composition technique was called polyphony—literally, multivoicedness. Two or more independent but organically related voice parts sound against one another. The authors describe how, in polyphonic partiture, we find multiple melodic lines (not just melody and chorus), and every line could, in theory, be performed separately. But performing all of the lines simultaneously creates a rich and complex musical totality. Most important, next to the independent horizontal lines, vertical lines emerge that also form a totality. In this way, a network of horizontal and vertical lines is created, in which every voice is meaningful but, at the same time, gains meaning in relation to other voices. Characteristic of Flemish polyphony is equivalence of all. There is no soloist part, nor a chorus part. The different voices are created simultaneously in and through one another in relational practice. The authors propose that this is the central priority for building new knowledge regarding global changes organization dimensions. Quoting from Bakhtin (1981), they conclude,

> We must renounce our monologic habits so that we might come to feel at home in the new artistic sphere which Dostoevsky discovered, so that we might orient ourselves in that incomparably more complex *artistic model of the world* which he created. (chap. 13, p. 318)

Nancy Adler, in Chapter 14, seeks broad expansion of voices in her search for new leadership: "Where are we going to find the kind of leaders that we need for 21st-century society. . . . What do we know about the women who hold the most senior global leadership positions?" (Chapter 14, pp. 323, 324).

For Adler, the central task of the final years of this century is the creation of a new model of coexistence among the world's various cultures, peoples, races, and religious spheres within a single, interconnected civilization. In relationship to the rapidly growing agenda for global change, we face the task of recreating virtually all of our organizations. Government organizations are encapsulated in increasingly obsolete domestic structures. Companies increasingly have the transnational structures and outlook necessary to address worldwide global issues, but they lack the mandate and vision to do so. But are there exceptions? Are there corporations, for example, that have dedicated themselves to addressing global issues? What are their characteristics, especially with regard to leadership?

After creating a mapping of the world's women leaders in both the governmental and global corporate sectors, Adler sets out on a fascinating search for the themes and patterns of women leaders. She traces the leaders' unique paths to power, how they leveraged the fact that they are women, their rising numbers, their diverse styles and backgrounds, and their promising strengths. Adler notes that "some strikingly unexpected patterns in the women leaders' paths to power differentiate them from most of their male contemporaries, and these very differences appear to fit well with the needs of 21st century society" (Chapter 14, p. 333).

Picture, for instance, Anita Roddick, founder and CEO of The Body Shop, whose U.K.-based company operating worldwide has become renowned for its global change commitments, including environmental campaigns, job creation efforts, leadership in the area of environmental auditing, and human rights advocacy. Roddick describes an image of organizing that fits our earlier definition of a global change organization: "'Leaders in the business world should aspire to be true planetary citizens. They have global responsibilities since their decisions affect not just the world of business but world problems of poverty, national security and the environment'" (Chapter 14, p. 334). Indeed, the Body Shop's mission statement states their reason for being is to "dedicate our business to the pursuit of social and environmental change."

It is important to note that Anita Roddick's vision is not the same as the important, but more familiar, call for socially responsible enterprise. It is more about organizations as leaders of needed change. With economic globalization and changing local conditions, business leaders will increasingly be involved

with a broader field of issues that affect not only their shareholders, employees, and customers, but also the quality of life in communities and cities, our ecosystems, and people in countries throughout the world. In many ways, Roddick's views on leadership are iconoclastic. The conjoining of profits and social ideals is a disquieting proposition for some people. There is business, and there are good works, and never the twain shall meet. Is it an accident that this kind of future is being envisioned by a woman?

This is not the place for detailed commentary on Adler's courageous—and perhaps for some, provocative—findings. But her chapter points to deep-level changes—whole system transformations in values, beliefs, basic assumptions, and commitments—taking place in society. Most of us grew up in organizations that were dominated by men and their theorists—Henry Ford, Frederick Taylor, and Max Weber—the fathers of the classic bureaucratic system. These are not the organizations that will likely deal effectively with the transboundary concerns involved in the human response to global change. So, from where will the new cooperative forms come? For Adler, the women in her exploration represent a dialogue with future history. And the new voices, in polyphonic fashion, are offering a prophecy: "approaches that appeared to work well in the 20th century but foretell disaster for the 21st century" (Chapter 14, p. 343).

In the final chapter in Part III, Stuart L. Hart responds to a fourth constructionist invitation—to participate in the construction of new worlds. Many business, nonprofit, and government leaders talk about global environmental sustainability, but few have been able to advance anticipatory theory that moves beyond good critique into an actionable agenda for organizations. As anticipatory theory, Hart's work suggests that the task of good organization theory is not only to hold a mirror to the world as it is, nor to merely provide critiques of debilitating assumptions and practices, but to study that which has not yet occurred, that is, create alternative conceptions of the future through theory. From a constructionist stance, theories and discourses of the profession are themselves constitutive of societal life. Some theories, as they enter the common discourse of the culture, prepare the way to the future by sustaining taken-for-granted assumptions, whereas others, in more critical terms, serve the task of dislodgment. Hart's work, which he calls "prospective" theory, points to yet another direction: It responds to a mandate for social transformation. Rather than telling it like it is, this chapter tells it as it may become.

Like it or not, argues Hart, the responsibility for ensuring a sustainable world falls largely on the shoulders of the world's enterprises. The environ-

mental revolution has been almost three decades in the making, and it has changed forever how companies do business. However, suggests Hart, the distance traveled to date will seem small when, in 30 years, we look back to the 1990s. Beyond greening, beyond competitive strategy, lies an enormous challenge. Hart's interest is in how the changing relationship between the world's ecosystems and the economy will change the whole paradigm of management where competitive strategy should give way to cooperative action. More than that, Hart's chapter is a call for systematic inquiry into corporations as agents of global change—pathfinders who have accepted the enormous challenge of developing a sustainable global economy. Although the social and technological issues exceed the mandate and the capabilities of any corporation, at the same time, corporations are the only organizations with the resources, the global reach, and, ultimately, the market motivation to achieve sustainability.

For Hart, the future of enterprise lies not just in pollution prevention (minimizing or eliminating waste before it is created) or even product stewardship (minimizing pollution from manufacturing and also all environmental impacts involved with the full life cycle of a product) but in leading the way to sustainable development (vision-led companies that are finding ways to act on three goals—environmental and social sustainability, and economic development—at the same time). Sustainability implies moving beyond incremental change to complete revision. This process might involve a creative destruction process as originally advocated by Schumpeter (1942), where creative new industries are born from the ashes of the old. By implication: Corporations can and should lead the way in helping to shape public policy, driving change in consumers' behavior, shaping new relationships to suppliers and other companies, and becoming educators rather than mere marketers of products. Obviously, there are very few examples of firms operating at the third level.

Hart's chapter illustrates these possibilities with powerful examples, including Monsanto's move from petrochemical to biological products and Amory Lovins's concept of the hypercar. Hart's prospective propositions are meant to hasten discovery of corporate leaders in the global change domain. His conclusion is that those who think that sustainability is only a matter of pollution control are missing the bigger picture. We are poised at the threshold of a historic moment in which many of the world's industries may be transformed. As a field, we are being invited into a research arena where the stakes are real. We need, as theorists, to be willing to set sail from the shores

of the familiar. Much needed, argues Hart, is research into the firms and industries that are first movers.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this discussion, we have attempted to bring thematic focus to the chapters to follow and have pointed to the central contours of a contemporary research agenda of tremendous importance and exciting implication. There is little question that globalization and global-level concerns are calling for the transformation of all social sciences in terms of their research and learning priorities, agendas, metatheoretical commitments, and methodologies. As it relates to the organization dimensions, we have proposed that:

- there is not one single item on the global agenda for change that can be understood outside of the role and functioning of organizations. Any effort to understand, much less come to terms with, global change that does not include a sustained commitment to improving our knowledge of the organizational dimensions cannot succeed.
- an increasingly important field of scholarship and knowledge is being born whereby organization and management studies will be viewed on a much broader scale than ever before, indeed, as a matter of world affairs.

In many ways, our common future will depend on the extent to which today's executives, grassroots citizens, and political leaders develop their visions of a better world, the shared will to achieve it, and the organizations capable of embodying humanity's cooperative potential. And so, finally, with important caveats as expressed, for example, in the chapters by Mir et al. and Aram, we would like to end this chapter with an opportunity-focused, affirmative direction for future research, dialogue, and experimentation in the domain of the organizational dimensions of global change (ODGC). Our suggestion and vision:

> ODGC research is an enterprise whose focus and task is to interpret basic new trends in humanity's global cooperative capacity, anticipate new possibilities in organizational forms and processes, and study the new relational practices that can contribute to a deeper understanding of the "life-promoting" interrelation of humanity and world ecosystems, cooperative forms, and global society.

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