POWER AND EMOTION IN ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

Russ Vince[1,2]
The University of Glamorgan

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the difference between learning in an organisation and organisational learning. I construct a conceptual framework for understanding organisational learning at an organisational level of analysis. This framework is based on the proposition that organisational learning is visible in the organisational dynamics created from the interaction between politics (power relations) and emotion within an organisation. Using a combination of psychodynamic theory and reflections on the politics of organising I develop the idea that organisations are learning when the 'establishment' that is being created through the very process of organising can be identified and critically reflected on. I use a case example of a change initiative within Hyder plc, a multi-national company, to identify organisational dynamics that limit organisational learning. In the final part of the paper I discuss the conclusions that emerged from the case example and the implications of these conclusions for the theory and practice of organisational learning.

[1] Professor Russ Vince, The Business School, University of Glamorgan, Pontypridd, CF37 1DL, Wales, U.K. Phone: +44(0)1443-482955 Fax: +44(0)1443-482380 or +44(0)1656-890402 E-mail: rvince@glam.ac.uk

INTRODUCTION

In this paper I develop a conceptual framework for understanding organisational learning at an organisational level of analysis. In using the phrase 'an organisational level of analysis' I am attempting to highlight the difference between individual learning in an organisation and organisational learning. Despite widespread theoretical acknowledgement that an understanding of organisational learning requires analysis of individual, group *and* organisational phenomena (Crossan, Lane and White, 1999), the thinking and practices associated with organisational learning have tended to focus on the learning of individuals. In practice, the evidence for this is the ubiquity of personal appraisal systems linked to both training and development programmes and 'self-managed' learning (Vince and Broussine, 2000). The 'in-use' idea of organisational learning therefore is that it happens as a result of the sum of individuals learning within an organisation. The view presented in this paper is different. When I refer to organisational learning I am not talking about the sum of individual learning within an organisation and its possible eventual impact on the organisation as a system. Instead, I am referring to 'organisational' dynamics, constructed from the interaction between emotion and power that create the social and political context within which both learning and organising can take place.

Using a combination of psychodynamic theory and reflections on the politics of organising I develop the idea that organisations are learning when the 'establishment' that is being created through the very process of organising can be identified and critically reflected on. I argue that this combination of psychodynamic theory and politics is an important addition to current thinking about organisational learning, and particularly for developing an understanding of the relationship between learning and organising. I use a case example of a change initiative within Hyder plc, a multi-national company.

Hyder[3] plc[4] is a multi-utility and infrastructure management company that has grown and changed considerably from its original organisation, Welsh Water. The emphasis of this change has been in two directions. It has created Hyder Utilities, a multi-utility business within Wales. It has also established Hyder Infrastructure Development, which undertakes large engineering, consulting and infrastructure projects throughout the world. One issue that these changes created for the workforce was how to move from ways of reflecting and acting that remain rooted in their public sector, locally focussed past towards clearer imperatives for commercial growth and global development.

The conceptualisation of organisational learning in Hyder is that individual staff can benefit from on the job learning and training which is highly practical and applied. Hyder has a well-developed "learning journey" (Hurlow, James and Lenz, 1998) available to staff, built on a link between various processes of appraisal and a variety of approaches to training and development. Learning is transferred into action within the company, and has an impact on working groups. The resulting changes and developments in working practices and attitudes mean that the organisation is

---

[3] Hyder (pronounced Her-der) is the Welsh word meaning 'confidence'.
[4] Hyder plc has provided permission to publish this case study.

learning. For Hyder, organisational learning is the result of the impact that individual and collective learning have on the organisation. I critique this understanding of organisational learning and show how difficult it is in Hyder to engage with the impact of entrenched organisational dynamics and established power relations on individuals and collectives. Managers believed Hyder to be a 'learning organisation', however the evidence I present shows how difficult it was for learning to have such an impact on organising. I develop an 'organisational' perspective on organisational learning, adding a critical view to the idea that it happens as a result of the learning of individuals within an organisation.

Research Approach, Data Collection and Analysis

The case example I use to illustrate my conceptual framework is drawn from a wider action-research project within Hyder designed to help the company think about the further development of the 'learning journey'. Action research is a broad term that covers various qualitative methods linking inquiry with learning and change (see Raelin, 1999). The study was interpretative and impressionistic, capturing examples of the issues, meanings, relations and politics that were characteristic of the organisation. It was an attempt to reveal what was hidden, stuck, obscured or undiscussable. The research was not undertaken in order to provide evidence to justify action, rather as the starting point of action that implies learning.

There are a variety of aspects to the method that gave it particular relevance to the study of organisational learning in Hyder. Action research recognises that language is not an individual act, assuming a complex, interpersonally negotiated processes of interpretation (Winter, 1989). An important aspect of Hyder's struggle with learning was to move beyond the notion that individuals are the primary focus for learning, to understand the relational and political dynamics (created through the interplay of behaviour and structure) that are central to both learning and organising. Action research is collaborative, it is research with people, not on them (Reason, 1988). It does not seek a consensus, but engages with dialogue and difference. Hyder created organisational dynamics that avoided and underplayed differences and therefore was unable to practice dialogical forms of communication. Dialogue is acknowledged as a key element of communication involved in generating organisational learning (Schein, 1993b; Isaacs, 1999). Action research is a method that explicitly recognises the interplay between reflection and action. In Hyder, managers place more emphasis on action than they do 'reflection-in-action'. For whatever reasons, they often ignore, avoid or abandon meaningful processes of reflection and inquiry.

Seven Directors from different parts of Hyder were interviewed up to five times over a period of two months. The interviews lasted ninety minutes each and were largely unstructured. They were guided by an emphasis on the Directors' understanding of their role in the company. Through discussion of their role, and the relatedness between person, role and organisation, the research sought to reveal and explore the "organisation-in-the-mind" (Armstrong, 1991; Bazelgette, Hutton and Reed, 1997) of these senior managers, to provide one possible map of the experiences, impressions, understandings and interpretations of Hyder as an organisation. The data collected was emotional, relational and political in nature, as well as reflecting the thinking of the Directors individually and collectively.

The analysis of the interview transcripts sought to identify two areas of understanding, the *current themes and issues* present for this group of Directors, as well as their *mental representations* of Hyder. For the themes and issues, I identified emergent categories within the transcripts, refined these categories and then grouped the data from each Director around these categories in order to highlight a set of broadly collective concerns. For the mental representations of Hyder I highlighted the various images, metaphors and expressions within the transcripts and then grouped these into different images of the organisation. The focus of the next stage of analysis was both 'checking back' and extending the number of interpretations of the data. The participating managers were sent copies of the initial categorisation and analysis. They were asked to comment and to reflect on the themes and issues that had emerged.

The "Create Our New Company" initiative (CONC), that I use as a case example in this paper, constituted one of twenty-four categories emerging from the overall data on themes and issues. Discussion of the CONC initiative arose because the senior manager responsible for it wanted to explore his role in developing and attempting to sustain it in the company. The seven Directors reflected a wide cross-section across the company, and each had views about the impact and relevance of CONC within their part of Hyder. All the interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. All the quotations that I have integrated into my descriptions about CONC are taken from these transcripts.

POWER AND EMOTION IN ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

In the past ten years organisational learning has become an important concept across a wide variety of academic disciplines (Easterby-Smith, 1997) as well as a common component of prescriptions for organisational design and change that are of commercial significance to modern organisations (Lei, Slocum and Pitts, 1999). There are now several reviews of the literature of organisational learning (Huber, 1991; Dodgson, 1993; Miller, 1996; Vince, 1996; Argyris and Schon, 1996; Crossan and Guatto, 1996; Easterby-Smith, Snell and Gherardi, 1998), and the field is currently characterised by a dual emphasis: on practical interventions to create learning organisations (Pedler et al, 1991; Senge, 1990), and on scholarly observation and analysis of the processes involved in individual and collective learning inside organisations (Easterby Smith, Araujo and Burgoyne, 1999).

The current academic and scholarly work in the field of organisational learning has moved away from an emphasis on organisational learning as a technical process (i.e. learning through the effective processing of information) towards the 'social perspective' (Easterby Smith and Araujo, 1999). One key theme in organisational learning as a social process is a shift away from the idea that politics is a problem in the way of learning (Argyris, 1990); or that political activity is a constraint on learning (Senge, 1990). Politics is seen as a natural feature of organising and learning, and it is recognised that power relations directly mediate interpretative processes within organisations (Coopey, 1995; Coopey and Burgoyne, 1999). It is important to acknowledge the political nature of information and knowledge, and how information and knowledge are expressed and mediated through power relations.

Many approaches to organisational learning have been rational and pragmatic, focusing, for example, on the measurement of outcomes (Garvin, 1993), on specific behaviour sets (Ellinger, Watkins and Bostrom, 1999), or in terms of gaining explicit capabilities (Ulrich, Von Glinow and Jick, 1993). However, both learning and organising are much more than rational processes. Learning in organisations and organisational learning also happen by accident, from the unintended consequences of action and through 'paradoxical tensions' that are integral to organising (Vince and Broussine, 1996). The challenge of learning can be expressed in attempts to engage with the paradox, uncertainty and complexity of management and organisation (Gherardi, 1999).

Such engagement requires an examination of the complex web of social relations through which learning occurs as well as the impact of the emotions that are generated by attempts to learn and to prevent learning in organisations. Although there is widespread acknowledgement that emotions are integral to organising, this is in itself "uncomfortable knowledge", that prompts organisational members to try to "de-emotionalise emotions" and "make them seem rational" (Fineman, 1993). Learning primarily occurs in the context of social relations and as a result of complex interactions, which are profoundly influenced by both individual and collective emotions.

In addition to the central place of politics and emotion to the theory and practice of organisational learning, it is important to understand how the words 'organisational' and 'learning' connect, or indeed contradict each other (Weick and Westley, 1996). Is there any way in which learning can be considered *organisational*? "Perhaps the idea of organisational learning is an anthropomorphic fallacy, that leads to an inappropriate reification of the concept of organisation" (Prange, 1999:27). However, there is also the view that "complex organisations are more than ad hoc communities or collections of individuals. Relationships become structured, and some of the individual learning and shared understanding developed by groups become institutionalised as organisation artefacts" (Crossan, Lane and White, 1999:524). In other words, organisations can be seen as more than the sum of their individual or collective parts. In order to further clarify the ways in which the words organisational and learning fit together it is important to consider what is involved in organisational learning at an organisational level of analysis.

There seems to be a continuous difficulty in trying to decide whether organisational learning is a progressive or a regressive concept. In practice, processes associated with organisational learning can lead to significant shifts of organisational design and interpretations of organising and managing. They can also provide more sophisticated organisational processes of compliance and control. It is useful therefore to think of organisational learning as both a progressive and a regressive idea. Indeed, the tension between these two possibilities constitutes a critical perspective on organisational learning and thereby helps to sustain the value of the concept (Vince and Broussine, 2000). The current perspectives and questions I have outlined suggest the value of a framework for understanding organisational learning that integrates politics, emotion and organisational level dynamics, and therefore one that contributes to an organisational level of analysis of organisational learning.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in this paper is based on the inter-relation between politics, emotion and organisational dynamics. The framework is designed to promote reflection on what the word *organisational* in organisational learning means. Such reflection is useful to scholars because it attempts to provide greater clarity as to what constitutes an organisational level of analysis. It is also useful to practitioners in considering how organisational dynamics are created and expressed through individual and collective behaviour and engagement, and therefore in assessing the possibilities and limitations of learning within a specific organisational context. There are three premises that underpin this framework:

Premise 1:   Learning processes are directly mediated by power relations.

Premise 2:   Emotion determines the possibilities and limitations of both learning and organising.

Premise 3:   There exist organisational 'dynamics', which are more than the sum of individual or collective learning.

My overall proposition, which combines these three premises, is that *organisational learning is visible in the organisational dynamics created from the interaction between politics and emotion.*

There are two particular aspects to the thinking behind the premise that learning processes are directly mediated by power relations. One of these concerns theory, the other is to do with practice. As theory, "a political perspective widens our understanding of the processes that constitute learning in organisations" (Coopey and Burgoyne, 1999: 292). It achieves this by addressing how employees relate to organisational practices and constructions of reality, to the structural features that locate them in positions of inequality or impotence. It addresses the interface between structure and action, and shows how such interactions create and establish characteristic power relations or 'regimes of truth' (Foucault, 1979). From this viewpoint, politics is neither a problem to be avoided, nor a set of conflicts of interest. Rather, it affords a 'critical' stance on the complexities of power relations through which organising takes place. When I use the word politics therefore, I am talking about the power relations that moderate how learning (and change) does or does not happen in organisations.

As practice, a political perspective invites critical reflection on what managers think they know and how they come to know it within an organisational context. Managers can find ways to doubt taken for granted assumptions, and learn through their capacity to question and to engage with the particular 'regime of truth' that both they and the organisation have jointly created. The political struggle in organisations in terms of practice is often represented in the reluctance managers have towards enacting their leadership openly and in public (Vince, 2000). The ways in which managers are able to open out processes of leadership and decision-making to others and to reveal rather than avoid power relations will be crucial for both management and organisational learning in the future. Managers defend against the impact of socially constructed power relations because of the anxieties that struggles with

issues of power, authority and responsibility provoke. However, engaging with such issues can provide considerable opportunities for learning about the emotional, relational and political processes involved in managing and organising (Vince, 1996). The revelation of how power is expressed and enacted in organisations offers opportunities to move beyond interactions that are created from managers' defensiveness and towards new forms and processes of communication and interaction.

My second premise, that emotion determines the possibilities and limitations of both learning and organising, is influenced by psychodynamic theory. The subject of emotion in organisations has an established literature, reflecting both a social-constructionist standpoint (Hochschild, 1979 and 1983; Fineman, 1993 and 1996) and the psychodynamic exploration of emotion at work (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1985; Hirschhorn, 1988; Trist and Murray, 1990; Hoggett, 1992; Obholzer and Roberts, 1994; French and Vince, 1999). Both approaches challenge the ways in which emotion in organisations have been "narrowly perceived" (Hosking and Fineman, 1990), as well as a tendency to ignore the impact that emotions have on organisational development and design.

There are two aspects to psychodynamic theory that are particularly important to the understanding of emotion and organisation that is presented in this paper. First, there is the idea that learning and change are inevitably associated with anxiety. At both a conscious and unconscious level, the management of learning is the management of anxiety and of resistance arising from the anxiety (Obholzer, 1999). In addition, this implies something about the role of a manager, that such a role involves an emotional connection to the anxiety arising from the nature of work. As several authors have pointed out, anxiety is an important ingredient in managers' understanding of learning in organisations, both in terms of how learning occurs and how it is prevented (Kofman and Senge, 1993; Schien, 1993a; Vince and Martin, 1993). Also, Bain (1998:414) has identified the "absence of attention to unconscious processes influencing individual, group and organisational functioning" in the writing on organisational learning.

The second contribution that psychodynamic theory makes to this paper is with the theory of 'relatedness' – the "conscious and unconscious emotional levels of connection that exist between and shape selves and others, people and systems" (French and Vince, 1999: 7). People in organisations are inevitably "creatures of each other" (Hinshelwood, 1998), involved in a mutual process of becoming that obscures the notion of a separate self. The Chief Executive of an organisation, for example, is the focus of many different fantasies, projections, expectations, slanders and hopes solely as a result of being in such a role. The ways in which he or she is experienced both as fact and as fantasy has considerable impact on how leadership is enacted in the organisation as a whole. Relatedness implies a range of emotional levels of connection across the boundaries of person, role and organisation, which emphasise the relational nature of organising. In using the word 'emotion', therefore, I am talking about emotions (e.g. envy, guilt, joy and fear) that are ignored or avoided and how these consciously and unconsciously impact on organising. To put this briefly, I am saying that 'emotion' is political.

My third premise is that there exists something that can be referred to as 'organisational dynamics' (see Miller and Rice, 1967). These are more than the sum of individual or collective learning in the sense that they identify the system or more precisely the *establishment* that is organisation. Systems theory is foundational within the field of organisational learning because it implies a recognition of the complex structures and patterns that are integral to processes like managing and organising (Senge, 1990). However, politics has often been relegated to a peripheral role in organisational learning (Coopey, 1995). In using the term 'establishment' in addition to 'system', I am trying to find a way of bringing the politics back to the forefront of theories of organisational learning. Establishment (as opposed to 'family', 'community' or 'all working together') is expressive of the connection between emotion (relatedness) and power.

The idea that organising gives rise to establishment is useful in two ways. First, it connects to insights about the ways in which an "internal establishment" (Hoggett, 1992) is created and perpetuated within individuals' inner worlds. In other words, how individual psychology and organisational power relations combine to create the temporary 'truths' or realities that underpin individuals' roles in organising. Second, it implies a controlling force, which is inevitably brought to bear on new ideas in order 'contain' them (Bion, 1985: Bain, 1998). An establishment seeks to contain learning so that it can be assimilated into existing organisational power relations, so that learning can be 'exploited' as much as 'explored' (March, 1996). This implies that the juxtaposition of organisation and learning is desirable, as long as it is learning that can in some way be 'managed', limited or controlled.

Organisational dynamics are created from the interplay between emotions and (existing and emerging) power relations generated within and between individuals and groups. I am using the term 'organisational dynamics' to describe the organisational characteristics that are created from individual and collective experience and action (see Neumann, 1999). The term exists as a device to focus on an organisational level of analysis. To refer to such dynamics both avoids the problem of personifying or reifying an organisation, and acknowledges that as behaviour and structure interact they produce processes that have an impact beyond the individuals and/or collectives that imagined them. In the following section of this paper I link my conceptual framework to a case example taken from my action research in Hyder.

THE "CREATE OUR NEW COMPANY" (CONC) INITIATIVE

The case example I am presenting to illustrate my conceptual framework concerns the development and implementation of a significant initiative (both in terms of staff time and financial resources) aimed at increasing staff participation and involvement in organisational change. On the surface the motives for the initiative were about the empowerment of staff, however, the politics and emotions surrounding the initiative were more a representation of competition between different parts of the business, fears about conflict, and control.

CONC was created by senior managers and human resource development (HRD) staff in Hyder Utilities. Their strategic focus was on doing something to marry the

very different management styles and organisational cultures that were represented in the previously separate organisations, Welsh Water and SWALEC (South Wales Electricity Company). The initial enthusiasm and desire that built the CONC initiative was a genuine feeling that "with time, this process will definitely improve the shape of our business", that it was a "nurturing process" of change. The design of the change programme was to take a cross section of the company staff (500 from the 5,000 in Hyder Utilities) away for a two and a half-day residential facilitated by external consultants. The company ran twenty-six of these seminars over three months. The brief for the participants was "to look at visions and values for the future and to develop a change model that will take us from where we are, to the company we want to create". The workshops were developmental in the sense that the first twelve were used to bring out ideas. The next ten reviewed, reflected on and developed the ideas from the first stage of workshops. The final four workshops asked staff to pull all the ideas and actions together into the vision and values of the new company. A small, steering group of participants was created to sustain and develop the initiative.

CONC was initiated in the Utilities business a few months after the launch of a company wide re-branding that created Hyder as one organisation. Corporate Human Resource staff in the Group Development section of the company led the re-branding. The idea of "One Hyder" was "to identify a market position and to represent a promise to customers and other stakeholders". The underlying value seen to be driving the re-branded organisation was the earning of 'confidence' (hence the name Hyder). Internally, this would happen "because managers had the self-confidence to go forward and to create a confident business, one that generates external business confidence, both from the client and the Stock Market". However, at the time when the action-research was initially undertaken Hyder was still in practice a divided company:

> "The idea of 'One Hyder' is a very strong desire, but a very bad representation of what it is actually like" (Hyder Senior Manager).

Managers in Group Development saw CONC as a waste of time and money. It seemed to them to cut across the re-branding exercise and to have very different organisational aims and purposes. The dynamics between the CONC initiative and the corporate re-branding exercise were to an extent expressive of tensions between managers who wanted the company to remain focussed on its "core" (utilities) business in South Wales and those who wanted "growth" in the company towards becoming a key global enterprise. The organisational dynamics being played out over CONC were constructed from the tensions between the desire to assert Welsh Water's public sector values in the face of an evolving and demanding commercial imperative within the 'new' company (Hyder). The CONC initiative can be understood as a process designed to promote change within the Utilities division. It can also be understood as a reaction against changes taking place within the company as a whole.

Organisational Dynamics

The key proposition in my argument is that organisational learning is visible in the organisational dynamics created from the interaction of politics (power relations) and emotion. I suggest that organising generates an identifiable *establishment*, created from the interaction between emotions and power relations, within which both behaviour and structure are contained and constrained. The following quotation offers an insight into the contextual dynamics characterising Hyder at this particular point in the history of the organisation.

> "That Create Our New Company initiative is very, very similar to a considerable other number of initiatives during recent years which have been undertaken with the best possible motives in mind, they really are, they are quite laudable, it is about empowerment, it is highly participative, with the right objectives in mind, but we do seem to struggle if we revisit only a handful of the ones that I have been on myself, as to what on earth happened afterwards".

The interviews provided the impression of an organisation where change initiatives were enthusiastically created yet could not be sustained and fully implemented. As another senior manager put it, "they sort of sink into the sand". One reason why CONC sank into the sand was because it was designed to represent a political position within Hyder Utilities, as well as an emotional and strategic response to attempts at organisational change emerging from Group Development.

The dynamics created from politics and emotions that were visible in the CONC initiative reflected the wider establishment in Hyder. Managers were working in the context of a continuous pull between two directions or dual identities. For some Hyder was a (Welsh) utilities company, for others it was a global, commercial company. Communication between the people with these two perceptions was not good: "it is almost like the old iron curtain". The tension between managers wanting to develop the utility business and the commercial business became a powerful underlying aspect of the organisational design of Hyder. As one senior manager remarked:

> "If you structure a business to be split down the middle that's what you are going to get".

The politics of this split did not only concern the difference between discreet divisions of the organisation but also different perceptions of the organisation. As these perceptions were reinforced through everyday decisions, interactions and the avoidance of interaction, they created an organisational dynamic. The emotions connected to this split were primarily fears about the conflict that might arise between the two sides, and such emotions promoted a lack of communication in the company as a whole.

> "I think the big problem with the organisation is that everybody knows what needs to be done, but everybody is dead scared of doing it because of the consequences and the fall out and the issues that come with it".

Discussions with senior managers on the CONC initiative revealed that the emotions and politics mobilised around two competing organisational change initiatives were ignored and avoided. There was little or no communication about the ways in which the CONC initiative and the re-branding exercise might conflict or complement with each other. Managers in Utilities and Group Development ignored, avoided and undermined the change initiative that least represented their view of the company, thereby sustaining the competition between them. The unresolved competition and the inability of the CONC initiative to make the desired impact created defensiveness and consequently a desire to protect and justify the initiative. The CONC initiative was set up (in part) to compete with the re-branding exercise. It was a process designed to promote change, but at the same time it was a reaction against Group Development's view of change.

Politics and Learning

I have argued, along with other commentators on organisational learning (Coopey, 1995), that inquiry into the politics of organising widens our understanding of the processes that constitute learning, and the internal and external structures that locate people in positions of inequality or impotence. My conceptual framework emphasises that the power relations that organising has generated moderate how learning happens (or not) in organisations. The way in which the CONC workshops were set up meant that promises about involvement, participation and empowerment were made to staff. They were sold the idea they were being involved in the creation of a new company. The senior manager responsible for CONC reported that the staff members involved in the workshops were pleased and excited by this idea. However, these staff were not involved in the creation of a new company, rather they were pawns in a power struggle between two versions of the organisation. The eventual impotence of staff involved in CONC was an inevitable aspect of the process. The initiative certainly gave rise to considerable enthusiasm from a group of staff who believed that they were being 'empowered' to be involved in organisational change. Despite the overt response from Group Development (broadly, 'go ahead and do it if you think it will work'), there was a lack of interest and commitment from the part of the organisation most responsible for organising corporate change.

The power relations surrounding the CONC initiative were cautious and controlling, motivated by fear of failure and reinforced by a fear of conflict. Conflicts tended to be covered over rather than dealt with. Managers feared that "things will get personal", and as a consequence interactions were motivated by the question "how do I avoid this row". The difficulty that managers had with conflict undermined the extent of their authority.

> "We don't explore the differences long enough to actually expose the differences and therefore to deal with those differences and actually understand them."

> "That sort of intelligent inquiry without fear is something that is absent from our behaviours. Of course you end up having a conversation where one thing is being said but something else is being thought".

The politics of trying to initiate change in a climate of mistrust between two competing perceptions of the organisation made the Director of Group Development's espoused view of "collegiality" in the organisation look (at best) optimistic. The power relations that were created in Hyder, visible in the CONC initiative, were not about collegiality. Managers did not enact their authority and leadership openly through dialogue, and they were unable to open leadership and decision making to others in ways that might address rather than avoid these power relations. This meant that opportunities to move beyond defensive interactions were lost, excluding the possibility of effective communication across organisational sub-systems.

Emotion and Leaning

I have argued that individual and collective emotions, generated through organising, come to define characteristic organisational politics or power relations. These power relations then have an impact on what are possible (or legitimate) emotional responses. I summarise this idea by saying that emotion is political. An understanding of organisational learning involves asking how emotions are ignored or avoided in an organisation, and how what is ignored or avoided impacts on organising. Corporate HRD managers in Group Development felt that CONC was "unnecessary" and "divisive", since it cut across their corporate re-branding exercise. In addition they did not rate the initiative highly. For them, the conclusions that emerged from the workshops "were values that we have probably been espousing since about 1986, there wasn't anything new about it". Managers within Group Development felt that "the outcome was built into the process, you got the impression that there was a certain leading going on", and that the steering group arrangement was an artificial expression of authority.

> "So it seemed to me that it reinforced the divisions… it seemed to vest in a group of people quasi decision making authority which is artificial, and I think it told of a prospectus of change which was not as vigorous as it needs to be".

In turn, the HRD managers in Hyder Utilities didn't rate the re-branding exercise. For them it was seen to come from a "corporate communism mentality". Their imperative for undertaking CONC was "an urgency to get on and do something" because Group Development "weren't attempting to shape anything". It was felt that the re-branding exercise did not represent the needs of staff in Hyder Utilities, and that the Director of Group Development (who led the re-branding exercise) was to blame:

> "Now there is someone who should actually be representing the interests of the people and this is a very positive, people based initiative, there is someone who should be on board helping to lead it and yet feels threatened by it".

Managers both in Hyder Utilities and in Group Development acted as if the competition, envy, mistrust and lack of communication between them did not exist or have an impact on the organisation. However, it did, and the avoidance of the powerful emotions surrounding the CONC initiative both represented and reinforced existing organisational power relations.

Managing learning means managing anxiety, that the role of manager involves an emotional connection to anxiety at work. Anxiety is a key element in understanding how learning both occurs and is prevented (Schien, 1993b; Vince, 1996). In Hyder there was considerable anxiety surrounding the expectations both on individual managers' commercial success as well as the commercial success of the organisation as a whole. In all organisations, expectations are handed up and down, consciously and unconsciously through relations between individuals, and between sub-systems, as well as through political processes of action and avoidance. Expectations can have a powerful impact on the ways in which organisational members feel about and do their jobs. This, in turn, shapes organisational habits and characteristics, creating 'established' ways of organising.

An emotional pressure on managers was the "high expectations of people to deliver". Such expectations were both managed from above and self-imposed. The imperative from above was for commercial success, and the internal experience of this was the pressure to be "successful", "always right" and "to stay in control". Managers lived with considerable anxiety about "not achieving what one imagines one ought to achieve". In terms of the CONC initiative, 'what one ought to achieve' was the change that staff had been promised. The managers and staff responsible for CONC became protective, defensive and ultimately controlling of the initiative as they saw it sinking. Their defensiveness meant that the CONC initiative "had to be kept alive in peoples minds" which, given the organisational politics, involved much frustration and anxiety. In an effort to keep things alive the CONC steering group members devised statistical measures and processes to monitor the behaviour of managers. Controlling the behaviour of managers would be achieved through monitoring their improvements in relation to a prescribed list of acceptable behaviours.

> "We put that pamphlet out to all of our people and it shows the …behaviours and what some of those behaviours look like in practice. We are going to build that into development reviews with people and also use the same values in appraisals for managers… We will do that in a way in which we can actually get a fix on what people's perceptions are, of how they are operationalising those values. So, if we get an overall score, which is a very crude score admittedly, that says our managers have been scored at sixty-six out of a hundred so to speak, the next time we get the fix on it is a score of seventy. I want to measure how well managers are developing against those values, not to stifle them but to say to people, look, last year we looked like this, do you think we look like this now?" There is more sort of empowerment if you like in this process, you feel more relaxed about yourself and we try and build positives to encourage people to do more and not less".

The steering group's "policing" strategy generated even more direct criticism, and this in turn produced more defensiveness and self-justification.

> "Some people have said that this thing is very manipulative and it is not consciously designed to be manipulative but we have been very definite to put a framework around it".

As it gradually but inevitably 'sank into the sand', the frustrations over the apparent failure of CONC were most powerfully felt by the managers and staff in the steering

group. They saw themselves as the guardians of all the enthusiasms and expectations that had been generated in the workshops, as well as being responsible for the impossible task of sustaining and developing the initiative. They were angry about the consequences of the failure to implement the vision that they had been responsible for creating. The manager in charge of the steering group felt that failure would be "an ongoing black mark against the organisation forever and a day" that would "live in the ongoing mythology of the organisation".

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the previous section of the paper I have described some of the organisational issues associated with the CONC initiative, highlighting various aspects of the politics and emotions that gave rise to CONC and contributed to its demise. My impression, based on experience within various organisations, is that Hyder's story is a common one. In fact, Hyder is a good example of an organisation that is doing much to support *learning within the organisation*. The problem is that managers have not done what they could to support *organisational learning*, by reflecting and acting on organisational dynamics, on the *establishment* that organising has created and that limits learning and change. In this part of the paper therefore my focus is on the conclusions that have arisen from the case example and the theoretical implications of these conclusions for organisational learning.

Establishment was created and reinforced through the underlying emotions and power relations in Hyder. Power is not something external to organisational members or relationships, it "penetrates the very essence of our being" (Knights and McCabe, 1999). Power can not be separated from the emotions and relations that reinforce it. There are three inter-linked organising processes that have helped to construct distinctive power relations in Hyder. First, all organising for change took place in the context of strong emotions and political manoeuvring between organisational members who supported the 'core' work of the company (Hyder Utilities) and members within other parts of Hyder (particularly Group Development) where the desire was to progress commercial 'growth'. Second, such different political perceptions of the business and the emotions attached to them led to an "iron curtain" between the 'core' and 'growth' parts of the organisation. Relations between Utilities and Group Development were based on attempts at control rather than dialogue. Third, as the emotions and politics surrounding this difference became more entrenched, their separateness needed to be protected and justified. Power relations shifted from being concerned with organisational change to being concerned with protecting the rights of these two parts of Hyder to create organisational change in the ways that they wanted, as well as defending their part of the organisation from the others perceptions of change.

In an organisational context it makes little sense to talk about emotions in organisations separately from organisational politics. Emotions were politically expressed and enacted in Hyder in the following ways:
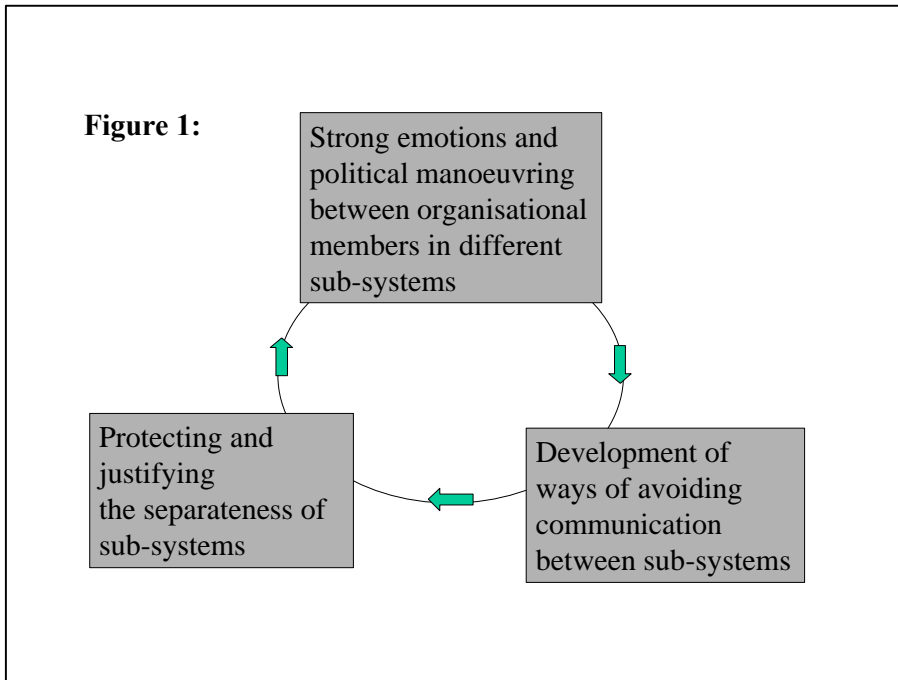
- Competition, driven by emotions like envy, mistrust, or personal dislike, was ignored or avoided.

- The CONC initiative invested in its participants an unrealistic feeling of involvement or empowerment in organisational change. The initiative did not have the wider political legitimacy it needed and therefore it could not create the necessary authority and ownership for the implementation of change.
- In whole organisational terms the initiative generated conflicting emotions. The enthusiasm of utilities staff was concurrent with a lack of enthusiasm from managers within Group Development responsible for re-branding.
- The motives driving some of the managers in Utilities were aimed at protecting their own turf. They were trying to build a groundswell of values unique to Hyder Utilities that would counteract the commercial values at the base of the re-branding exercise.
- The initial enthusiasms for CONC could not be sustained because it did not have the wider organisational legitimacy it needed. There was disappointment that it was not progressing as planned, defensiveness towards the criticism that it engendered, and anger at the failure of impact of a large and expensive initiative.
- The emotions generated around the CONC initiative both connect to and mirror company wide emotions generated from expectations about delivery. Managers in Hyder are generally anxious about failure and the potential destructiveness of conflict. The avoidance of conflict reinforced communication difficulties between the different sub-systems of the company.

Differences of thinking within sub-systems of the organisation, and the emotions and politics mobilised around them, were organised into an inability to communicate across organisational boundaries. Such differences exerted increasing influence on the behaviours behind managing and organising. The resulting sensitivity to criticism and reluctance to debate promoted further attempts to control, protect or justify what was communicated between different organisational groupings, thereby reinforcing difficulties of communication. The dynamic was circular and self-limiting, unlikely to assist in the promotion of organisational learning. Managers espoused a desire to promote dialogue within the company, to involve staff and take the organisation forward. However, in practice they felt threatened and acted defensively. They focussed on the development of their own part of the company to the extent that considerable competition, mistrust and envy was generated between sub-systems, undermining communication across organisational boundaries and reinforcing a lack of confidence in the whole. To express this another way, the company formally became one organisation and changed its name to mean 'confidence' at the time when there was very little confidence inside the company about its ability to communicate and develop as one organisation. At this time in its development the company was not concerned with organisational learning but with creating an image that contradicted the actual organisational politics.

The learning that emerges from this case example and theoretical implications

The case example in Hyder reveals how particular organisational dynamics were being constructed and maintained (see Figure 1).

Figure 1:

	Strong emotions and political manoeuvring between organisational members in different sub-systems

Protecting and justifying the separateness of sub-systems

Development of ways of avoiding communication between sub-systems

Organisational dynamics were constructed from strong emotions and political manoeuvring between organisational members in different sub systems, which led to distinctive ways of avoiding communication, which led to their separateness being protected and justified. This circular, organising process provided further opportunities for reinforcement of the emotions and politics originally involved. Differences of understanding between competing perspectives of Hyder, and the emotions and politics that sustained them, became organised into an inability to communicate across boundaries, were further limited by protection and control, and by attempts to cover up the importance of these differences. Given these organisational dynamics, an initiative constructed on the basis of empowering staff to make change happen came to represent and mirror ways of working that mean change does not happen. To put this simply, the case illustrates how a collective desire for empowerment became a collective representation of the establishment.

The organisational dynamics I have identified in Hyder are helpful in beginning to pinpoint key aspects of a theoretical approach that seeks to map the connections between learning and organising. My reason for doing this is to learn more about the components of an 'organisational' analysis of organisational learning. The case example in Hyder provides a vivid picture of the difference between the idea of learning in the minds of managers and the implementation of learning in the context of emotions and power relations that underpin organising. Organisational learning is not only represented in the ability of individuals in an organisation to have an impact on the ideas and practices that characterise the organisation. Organisational learning is demonstrated through the ability of an organisation to transform the self-limiting establishment that it has developed (deliberately, through its history, through habit, by default, through the very action of organising). Both in theory and in practice, this implies some collective effort to understand the nature and impact of the establishment that organising creates, as well as its consequences for learning.

One of the key theoretical implications of my conclusions is therefore that an analysis of organisational learning will go beyond the question of the collective impact of individual learning and identify the characteristic organisational dynamics, emotions and power relations present in organisational attempts at learning and change. Current writing on organisational learning acknowledges that all different 'levels' of analysis are important (Crossan, Lane and White, 1999) yet it is the organisational dynamics surrounding learning that have been least well theorised and thought-through in practice. Strategies for the development of learning, both individual and collective, benefit from being informed by an understanding of organisational dynamics. Learning can then be seen as organisational as well as individual, based on the interaction between the relational role that an individual occupies and the established and evolving politics of the organisation. The benefit to Hyder of an organisational level of analysis of learning is that it makes their characteristic ways of organising visible and provides opportunities for reflection and action based on these characteristics.

Politics, emotion and the ways in which politics and emotion interact, are an integral aspect of understanding organisational learning. This interplay between politics and emotion provides scope for an understanding of organisational learning that represents the complexity of social and political interaction in organisations. Learning and organising are not therefore limited by a perspective that focuses on individuals' power to achieve personal advantage or preferred outcomes (Pfeffer, 1981). Neither is the relationship between learning and organising distorted by those writers who are ambivalent about politics (Argyris and Schon, 1996; Senge, 1990). My discussion of the interplay between politics and emotion in Hyder offers an additional development to the perspective that political activity "frees people up to voice their opinions" and "generates a creative dialectic of opposites" (Coopey and Burgoyne, 1999: 286). I would say that political activity may also mute people's voices and distort their opinions, generating a defensive practice that reiterates differences and promotes scepticism about the point of dialogue. It is an understanding of the interplay between the politics and emotions involved in organising that make it possible to identify how such different 'feelings' are being enacted and expressed within an organisation, and how they contribute to defining the boundaries of inequality or impotence. Whatever the individual or collective feelings expressed by organisational members it is likely that there will be both desire and ambivalence concerning organisational learning. The case example shows Hyder as an organisation that organises, consciously and unconsciously, both for and against learning and change. Any analysis of organisational learning will therefore need to take account of this dynamic, that learning is simultaneously likely to be both desired and avoided.

Reflecting back on attempts at learning and change such as CONC offers managers opportunities for a retrospective interpretation of organisational dynamics. Such reflection means that the company's understanding of organisational learning can be underpinned by an analysis of the establishment that is being created and reinforced through the very process of organising. An 'organisational' approach to learning in Hyder will be assisted when a number of organisational dynamics are thought-through and worked through. These organisational dynamics highlighted in the case example reflect particular tensions at work in processes of managing and organising.

I will summarise what these tensions are and their theoretical implications for organisational learning.

The tension between the idea of learning and the implementation of learning
Managers in Hyder believed that learning and change were possible. Hyder had a clearly identified 'learning journey' for individuals, and many initiatives, like CONC, were designed to make change happen. However this study showed how difficult it was in the organisation to sustain and implement the initial enthusiasm generated by idea of learning. Whatever the individual and collective enthusiasms may have been for learning in the organisation, the organisational dynamics identified in this study revealed emotions and power relations that restricted learning. An analysis of the interplay between emotion and power relations in Hyder is the starting point in helping to make sense of 'organisational' barriers in relation to learning.

The tension between empowerment and establishment
Organising in Hyder was undertaken in the context of a characteristic dynamic, the confusing interplay between involvement and control, between attempting to change and trying to remain the same. The espoused desire for "collegiality" in managing and organising sat alongside power relations motivated by fear of failure and a perceived need for control. Cynicism about learning and change occurred when 'empowered' individuals were confronted with the actual organisational power relations that blocked learning and change. The discovery of the limitations of involvement after the event reinforced managers' cynicism and confusion. This study has identified the contradictions that surround learning and change in Hyder. To break free of such contradictions would involve attempts to reflect on the power relations that limit learning and change at the very beginning of any initiative designed to make change happen.

The tension between individual learning and organisational learning
Hyder's experience of learning was built on the company's commitment to individual development and the collective difference that this might make. Whatever the managers involved in the CONC initiative learned as individuals their learning actually had little impact on established organisational power relations or on organising processes. However, the analysis of the emotions and power relations involved in learning and change undertaken in this study provided scope to interpret why Hyder's strategic emphasis was on the individual 'learning journey'. An emphasis on the learning of individuals within the organisation placed the responsibility for learning with individuals. In this sense, learning was linked to individual and collective experience but not explicitly to organising.

The tension between creating a 'new' organisation and recreating the 'old' one
It was easier for a lot of the people involved in the company when Hyder was a public utility serving South Wales, rather than a global enterprise. There was considerable resistance in parts of the company towards the type of learning and change that would give rise to a shared, commercial future. As the CONC initiative showed, an initiative designed explicitly for creating something 'new' can represent the desire to recapture the past as well as a desire to design the future. In practice, the research reveals Hyder as an organisation with a complex mixture of emotions and politics that depict the capacity both to embrace and to avoid learning.

The CONC initiative was explicitly set up as a process for building organisational learning and change. An analysis of the initiative shows that it was also created to represent a political position in the organisation; it was an emotional response to others attempts to change the company; and it was an attempt to recreate the organisation as it used to be. What can be learned from this case example is that an understanding of the emotions and power relations that underpin initiatives designed to promote learning is a necessary aspect of any attempt to organise learning. The study of the impact of emotions and power relations on 'learning' initiatives particularly provides an opportunity to understand learning at an organisational level of analysis.

The organisational tensions that I have identified in the case example can be summarised in terms of their theoretical implications for the study of organisational learning at an organisational level of analysis. This particular theoretical perspective on organisational learning involves:

- A collective inquiry aimed at understanding the nature and impact of the 'establishment' that organising creates and its consequences for learning. Critical reflection on what has become established provides a way out of self-limiting organisational dynamics.

- An inquiry that identifies organisational politics or power relations and the potential impact that these might have on initiatives designed to promote or defend against learning. Such inquiry would be the starting point of learning initiatives.

- A focus on the organisational dynamics that underpin and impact on both learning and organising. Such a focus implies attempts to understand 'learning from organising' (Vince, 2001) as much as the (individualised) notion of 'learning from experience'.

- An analysis of the interplay between emotions and politics, and how this links to the paradoxical desire within organisations both to promote learning and to avoid learning. This recognises emotion *as* politics, adding something more to the analysis than the idea that emotions are 'feelings' located in individuals or collectives.

In addition to providing a theoretical approach to organisational learning at an organisational level of analysis, the discussions in this paper help to further our understanding of the recent idea that, "organisational learning would not appear to be a comfortable state" (Palmer and Hardy, 2000:223). In fact, learning implies some discomfort with the state we are currently in, some desire to change. Organisational learning requires changes in the 'State' or *establishment* that has been constructed through the very processes of organising. This involves inquiry into the power relations that characterise an organisation as well as the identification of conscious and unconscious dynamics that guide the internalisation of the organisation in the minds of its members. In practice, making power relations, emotions and organisational dynamics visible in order to create new mental and structural models for organising is not an easy task for either individuals or organisations to achieve. Organisational learning is not a comfortable state precisely because to learn is to

challenge the current 'State'. Learning provokes anxiety, defensiveness, fear and retrenchment as much as it excites, stimulates, motivates and empowers organisational members. The tensions inherent in organising reflect the continuous pull between the desire to learn and the need to avoid learning, and the ways in which desire and avoidance are played out in organisational processes.

The 'organisational' focus outlined in this paper makes a distinctive contribution to advancing understanding of theory and practice in organisational learning. It does this by emphasising the importance of organisational dynamics created from the interaction between emotion and power. Inquiry into organisational dynamics offers an opportunity to frame an organisation not only as a *system* of 'complex patterns and structures' (Senge, 1990) but as an *establishment* of emotional and political processes that restrict the relationship between learning and organising. The advantage of this perspective is that it makes a contribution to critical thinking on organisational learning (see for example: Reynolds, 1998, 1999a, 1999b and Vince, in press). A 'critical' approach to organisational learning is concerned with encouraging doubt about established habits, processes, assumptions and attachments. The focus of the approach is on the social rather than the individual, and therefore it pays particular attention to an analysis of power relations, and to the politics and emotions mobilised around learning in organisations. The framework outlined in this paper provides the theoretical foundations for going beyond an understanding of individual learning in organisations and challenges both academics and practitioners to think critically about processes of organisational learning.

REFERENCES

Argyris, C. & Schon, D. (1978) *Organizational Learning.* Reading: Addison-Wesley.

Argyris, C. & Schon, D. (1996) *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method, and Practice*. Reading: Addison-Wesley.

Argyris, C. (1990) *Overcoming Organizational Defences*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Armstrong (1991) *The "Institution in the Mind".* London: The Grubb Institute.

Bain, A. (1998) *Social defenses against organisational learning*. Human Relations, 51/3:413-429.

Bazelgette, J., Hutton, J. & Reed, B. (1997) 'Organisation-in-the-mind'. In J. E. Neumann, K. Kellner & A. Dawson-Shepherd (Eds), *Developing Organisational Consultancy*. London: Routledge.

Bion, W. R. (1985) 'Container and contained'. In A. D. Coleman and M. H. Geller (Eds.) *Group Relations Reader 2*. Washington DC: A.K. Rice Institute.

Coopey, J. (1995) *The learning organisation, power, politics and ideology.* Management Learning, 26/2:193-213.

Coopey, J. and Burgoyne, J. (1999) 'Politics and learning'. In Mark Easterby-Smith, Luis Araujo and John Burgoyne (Eds.) Organisational Learning: 3rd International Conference. Volume 1, pages 275-298. Lancaster University.

Crossan, M. M. & Guatto, T. (1996) *Organisational learning research profile*. Journal of Organisational Change Management, 9/1:107-112.

Crossan, M., Lane, H.W. and White, R.E. (1999) *An organisational learning framework: from intuition to institution*. Academy of Management Review 24/3:522-537.

Dodgson, M. (1993) *Organizational Learning: A review of some literatures*, Organization Studies. 14/3:375-394.

Easterby-Smith, M. (1997) *Disciplines of organisational learning: contributions and critiques*. Human Relations 50/9:1085-1113.

Easterby-Smith, M. and Araujo, L (1999) Organisational Learning: current debates and opportunities. In Mark Easterby-Smith, John Burgoyne and Luis Araujo (Eds.) *Organisational Learning and the Learning Organisation*. London: Sage.

Easterby-Smith, M., Araujo, L and Burgoyne, J. (1999) *Organisational Learning: 3rd International Conference*. (2 Volumes). Lancaster University.

Easterby-Smith, M., Snell, R. & Gherardi, S. (1998*) Organisational learning: diverging communities of practice*? Management Learning. 29/3:259-273.

Ellinger, A.D., Watkins, K.E. and Bostrom, R.P (1999) *Managers as facilitators of learning in learning organisations*. Human Resource Development Quarterly 10/2:105-125.

Fineman, S. (1993) *Emotion in Organisations*. London: Sage

Fineman, S. (1996) 'Emotion and organizing'. In S. Clegg, C.Hardy & W. Nord (Eds), *Handbook of Organisation Studies*. London: Sage.

Foucault, M. (1979) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

French, R. & Vince, R. (1999) *Group Relations, Management and Organisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Garvin, D.A. (1993) *Building a learning organisation*. Harvard Business Review 71/4:78-91.

Gherardi, S. (1999) *Learning as problem-driven or learning in the face of mystery?* Organization Studies 20/1:101-124.

Hinshelwood, R. D. (1998) 'Creatures of each other'. In A. Foster and V. Zagier Roberts, *Managing Mental Health in the Community: Chaos and Containment*. London: Routledge.

Hirschhorn, L. (1988) *The Workplace Within: Psychodynamics of Organisational Life*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press.

Hochschild, A. R. (1979) *Emotion work, feeling rules and social structure* American Journal of Sociology. 85/3: 551-75

Hochschild, A. R. (1983) *The Managed Heart*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hoggett, P. (1992) *Partisans in an Uncertain World: The Psychoanalysis of Engagement*. London: Free Association Books.

Hosking, D. & Fineman, S. (1990) *Organising processes*. Journal of Management Studies 27(6), 583-604.

Huber, G. P. (1991) *Organizational learning: the contributing process and the literatures*. Organization Science. 2/1:88-115.

Hurlow, S., James, C. and Lenz, P. (1998) 'Creating Learning Partnerships: A case study of a higher education institution and a commercial organisation'. Paper delivered to the *'Emergent fields in Management: Connecting Learning and Critique'* conference, University of Leeds, UK, 15th - 17th July.

Isaacs, W. (1999) *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*. New York: Currency/ Doubleday.

Kets de Vries M. F. R. & Miller, D. (1985) *The Neurotic Organisation*. London: Jossey-Bass.

Knights, D. and McCabe, D. (1999) *'Are There No Limits to Authority?': TQM and Organisational Power*. Organisation Studies 20/2:197-224.

Kofman, F. & Senge, P. M. (1993) *Communities of commitment: the heart of learning organizations*. Organizational Dynamics. 22/2:5-23.

Lei, D., Slocum, J.W. and Pitts, R.A. (1999) *Designing organisations for competitive advantage: the power of learning and unlearning*. Organisational Dynamics, (Winter).

March, J. G. (1996) 'Exploration and exploitation in organisational learning'. In M.D. Cohen and L. S. Sproull (Eds.) *Organizational Learning* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage. Pages 101-123.

Miller, D. (1996) *A preliminary typology of organizational learning: synthesizing the literature*. Journal of Management. 22/3:485-505.

Miller, E. & Rice, A.K. (1967) *Systems of Organisation*. London: Tavistock.

Neumann, J. (1999) 'Systems psychodynamics in the service of political organisational change'. In R. French & R. Vince *Group Relations, Management and Organisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Obholzer, A. (1999) 'Managing the unconscious at work'. In R. French & R. Vince *Group Relations, Management and Organisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Obholzer, A. & Roberts, V. Z. (1994) *The Unconscious at Work*. London: Routledge.

Palmer, I. and Hardy, C. (2000) *Thinking about Management* London: Sage.

Pedler, M., Burgoyne, J. G. and Boydell, T. (1991) *The Learning Company*. London: McGraw-Hill.

Pfeffer, J. (1981) *Power in Organisations*. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger.

Prange, C. (1999) 'Organisational learning: desperately seeking theory?' In Mark Easterby-Smith, John Burgoyne and Luis Araujo (Eds.) *Organisational Learning and the Learning Organisation*. London: Sage.

Raelin, J. (1999) *Preface to the Special Issue: The action dimension in management: diverse approaches to research, teaching and development*. Management Learning 30/2: 115-126.

Reason, P. (1988) *Human Inquiry in Action*. London: Sage.

Reynolds, M. (1998) *Reflection and critical reflection in management learning*. Management Learning 29/2: 183-200.

Reynolds, M. (1999a) *Grasping the Nettle: Possibilities and pitfalls of a critical management pedagogy*. British Journal of Management 9/ :171-184.

Reynolds, M. (1999b) *Critical reflection and management education: Rehabilitating less hierarchical approaches*. Journal of Management Education 23/5:537-553.

Schein, E. H. (1993a) *On dialogue, culture, and organizational learning*, Organizational Dynamics. 22/2: 40-51.

Schein, E. H. (1993b) *How can organisations learn faster? The challenge of entering the green room*. Sloan Management Review (Winter).

Senge, P. M. (1990) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. London: Century Business.

Trist, E. & Murray, H. (1990) *The Social Engagement of Social Science, Vol. 1.* London: Free Association Books.

Ulrich, D., Von Glinow, M.A. and Jick, T. (1993*) High-impact learning: building and diffusing learning capability*. Organisational Dynamics (Autumn) 52-66.

Vince, R. (1996) *Managing Change: Reflections on equality and management learning*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Vince, R. (2000) *Learning in Public Organisations in 2010*. Public Money and Management Vol. 20/1: 39-44.

Vince, R. (2001) *Organisational Learning: A Personal Viewpoint*. International Journal of Management and Decision Making 2/1:

Vince, R. (in press) *Organising Reflection* Management Learning. Vol. 32

Vince, R. & Martin, L. (1993*) Inside action learning: the politics and the psychology of the action learning model*. Management Education and Development 24(3), 205-215.

Vince, R. and Broussine, M. (1996) *Paradox, Defense and Attachment: Accessing and working with emotions and relations underlying organizational change*. Organization Studies 17/1:1-21.

Vince, R. & Broussine, M. (2000) *Rethinking organisational learning in local government*. Local Government Studies 26/1:15-30.

Weick, K.E. and Westley, F. (1996) 'Organisational Learning: affirming an oxymoron'. In Stewart Clegg, Cynthia Hardy and Walter Nord (Eds.) *The Handbook of Organisation Studies*. London: Sage.

Winter, R. (1989) *Learning from Experience: Principles and practice in action-research*. London: Falmer Press.