Preface

The overriding purpose of this *Handbook* is to give organizational researchers an indispensable reference work, a litmus for issues of current and future methodological significance, a grounding in the terrain's history which conditions contemporary thinking and practice, a well-spring of ideas and inspiration. Our specific aims are to:

- provide a comprehensive critical review of contemporary issues, debates, field practice, and trends in organizational research methods;

- locate current thinking, debates, and methods in the history of organizational research, demonstrating how current thinking and practice are influenced by earlier perspectives;

- identify trends, theories, and issues which have the potential to shape the underpinning epistemologies, theories, methodologies, and where appropriate the subject matter, of organizational research into the medium-term future;

- explore strategies for bridging the gap between researchers, and those who are in a position to act on research findings to influence organizational practice.

Our main readership includes professional academic researchers in faculty, doctoral, and post-doctoral positions. The contents and authorship are designed to appeal to a wide disciplinary and international readership, by including a range of contributors balancing Australasian, European and North American perspectives. The content also addresses the international dimensions of the subject, such as cross-cultural and comparative research, transferability issues with culture-specific findings, and the management of international research teams.

Organization studies is a broad subject area, extending far beyond the narrow confines of the traditional subject of organizational behaviour. It is important also to recognize that interest in organizational research methods extends to settings beyond conventional commercial concerns, to a range of organized settings, issues, themes, and topics that are not commonly found on introductory business and management studies programmes. This broadening of the field is reflected, for example, in *The Sage Handbook of Organization Studies* (Clegg et al., 2006). The current project thus addresses the interests, concerns, and needs of a widening range of researchers, whose objectives encompass a variety of questions and problems, covering a diversity of settings, unconstrained by conventional discipline boundaries.

We hope that this *Handbook* will also be of interest to two other groups of readers.

First, the postgraduate Masters degree student community. There are now numerous specialist Masters degree programmes in research methods, and almost all postgraduate Masters degree programmes in business, management, and related subject areas require candidates to complete a field-based research project. While these readers are already well-served with a range of generic and more specialized texts, this *Handbook* aims to provide more depth and wider contextualization in specific areas.

Second, the management consultancy community. This includes the larger management consultancies, which have specialist organization development and change units, and the internal change and organization development departments of larger concerns. The aims and methods of management consultancy overlap with those of academic research, and many faculty researchers, particularly in business schools, are involved in consultancy work.

the research methods context

One of the aims of this *Handbook* is to locate the more technical aspects of research methods in the wider context of the many other influences on research design and methods, which are often bypassed by conventional accounts, but which also influence the conduct of research in organizational settings. In addition, the distinctive properties of organized human activity as a site of interest to researchers are often overlooked, despite the observation that those properties trigger research interest in the first place, and affect approaches to data collection.

One of the central themes running through this project concerns the diverse and eclectic nature of contemporary organizational research. The field is no longer dominated or constrained by positivist epistemology and its traditional extended family of primarily quantitative hypothetico-deductive methods. Organizational research today also embraces, and reflects the influence of, critical, phenomenological, constructivist, interpretative, institutionalist, feminist, realist, and postmodern perspectives. In this regard, organizational research has come to resemble other branches of the social sciences. It is not surprising that diversity and eclecticism have involved the generation of new research topics and agendas, the creation of novel terminology, the use of innovative research methods, the development of combined or mixed methods research, the collection of non-traditional forms of evidence, the development of fresh approaches to measurement, analysis, conceptualization and theory building, and the acceptance of modes of generalizability of findings other than statistical.

One consequence of this flurry of creativity is that the language and the evidence base of published output are increasingly bewildering to non-academic consumers of research findings. This is probably one factor (among others) fuelling the popularity of evidence-based management (see Learmonth, chapter 6, and Denyer and Tranfield, chapter 38, this volume) as commentators representing both the academy and practice rush to accuse researchers of pursuing irrelevant inquiries and being unable to develop useful conclusions. Why should this be cause for concern, when academic output in many other fields attracts such criticisms ? The answer begins with the observation that the organizational research voice by definition often attempts to reach both academic and practitioner ears. Researchers are often motivated by a desire to challenge organizational practice, to trigger intervention, to effect change. Why investigate power if not to identify ways to deploy it more effectively, address its consequences, or recommend strategies to reduce power inequalities ? Why study job satisfaction and quality of working life if not to prescribe methods for their enhancement ? Why research harassment, bullying, and discrimination at work if not to expose these practices and help bring them to an end ?

Some researchers will complain, with justification, that the preceding paragraph makes unwarranted assumptions about their research aims, which lie elsewhere. An increasingly common answer to the question, 'why study ?', concerns simply the accurate description of social and organizational phenomena. To capture the richness and complexity of social and organizational experience can be a valuable goal in its own right. Some researchers take their aspirations beyond description to address explanations relating to the phenomena under investigation. However, this does not necessarily extend to the identification of hypotheses, or to the establishment of causal links. The topic of causality is complex and controversial, and discussion of the processes of causal inference is beyond the scope of this preface. However, for many organizational members unfamiliar with contemporary debates in social science philosophy, epistemology, and methodology, the concept of 'explanation' relates to more familiar notions of 'what causes what', and 'what works', sometimes reflecting a misguided but

perennially popular concern with 'best practice'. An inability, or perhaps worse, a confessed unwillingness, to identify causality in either a technical or a popular sense, can be a further source of confusion and frustration in the view of non-academic users of organizational research findings.

Novel research aims, concepts, methods, evidence, and theories are not merely unfamiliar. They may be seen as untrustworthy. Ears accustomed to the notion that 'proof' relies on the analysis of data from controlled experiments, or from large, representative samples, may listen with suspicion to reports of findings based on opportunistically chosen qualitative studies of single cases, where participants were involved as co-researchers, and the researcher sought to change organizational practices during the study. The aspirations of organizational research with respect to change, improvement, and development are unlikely to be fulfilled if the segment of the audience in a position to act on the findings cannot understand the methods or the message. Those aspirations will suffer more significant damage if that audience does not trust the message, believing it to be based on 'unscientific' or otherwise flawed methods.

This line of reasoning is complicated by the observation that the linkages between problem definition, data collection, research conclusions, prescription, and consequent changes to practice, are not as linear as this sentence construction implies. Even findings that are regarded as trustworthy do not always find immediate application. The relationships between evidence and practice, in most fields (including medicine, where the concept of 'evidence-based medicine' is a popular theme), are considerably more complex, for reasons beyond the scope of this introductory discussion. Relations between researchers, and the consumers of findings, therefore, are problematic. Recent innovations in epistemology, methodology, and terminology appear to have increased the distance between these communities, and this is a fundamental challenge for organizational researchers.

Finally, the distinction is often made between method and theory, as discrete if related stages of research practice. First, define problem or question. Second, gather data. Third, analyse and interpret data. Finally, develop theory, or explanation, based on what the data reveal. It has long been recognized that this linear path from problem definition to explanation does not reflect the conduct of research, particularly qualitative research, and that the distinction between theory and method is oversimplified and misleading, for a number of reasons.

First, it is difficult to gather 'raw' data unless one has a tacit theory concerning which kinds of information are likely to be relevant in the first place. For example, it is difficult to frame questions concerning the concept of 'professional identity' without an approximate understanding of the dimensions of this construct, and the factors that might be significant in shaping it, or even to decide whether this topic is best approached through the use of, say, qualitative interviews, same- or mixed-profession focus groups, a diary study, or by observation. Second, a research method can itself be viewed as an implicit theory. At its simplest, this implicit theory states that, if I gather my data in this manner, I will find out what I want to know. Researchers studying organizational change from a processual-contextual perspective thus begin with a theory of method which states that, if we gather longitudinal data from case study sites using multiple methods (interviews, documents, observation), at different levels of analysis (individual, team, organization, external context), we will expose the complex, iterative, politicized nature of the change process and the multiple interacting forces determining its outcomes. Third, there are numerous examples of research method influencing the dimensions of the theory derived from the data analysis. One infamous example is Fredrick Herzberg's two-factory theory of work motivation, derived from the critical incident interview method, which generated narratives which, when content analysed, suggested that the factors leading to low job satisfaction, poor motivation, and low performance were different from, and not merely opposite to, the factors leading to high satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Researchers studying the same question with different methods generated results inconsistent with Herzberg's findings, which have been attributed to

the phenomenon of projection; when we perform well, we congratulate ourselves, but when we perform badly, we project the blame onto factors beyond our control.

A clear distinction between substantive theory (e.g., leadership theory, institutional theory) and theories that are employed in relation to research practice, is therefore difficult to sustain. Choice of method is conditioned by (sometimes tacit) theory, method itself is (often implicit) theory, and the development of theory can be conditioned by the choice of method which in turn influences the nature and scope of the data gathered. As already indicated, one of the overriding purposes of this *Handbook*, therefore, is to *recontextualize* the organizational research methods field, demonstrating both the range of issues that influence choice and use of methods, and also the substantive consequences of methods choices. Our aim is to establish that this field is more complex, more challenging, and indeed more interesting than conventional treatments allow, and that the development of this field depends to a large extent on whether and how those complexities and challenges are addressed.

what's in a method ?

One of our first challenges was to define the *scope* of this handbook, an issue that generated debate with members of our editorial board, some of whom argued for a more inclusive approach than we proposed. For example, one member of the board noted that, 'I was surprised by your definition of research methods as procedures for data collection. My understanding is that methods includes analysis and interpretation also, not simply data collection. I suggest developing a more inclusive definition'. That inclusive definition of research methods is widely presumed. For example, the majority of papers published in *Organizational Research Methods*, a journal sponsored by the Research Methods Division of the Academy of Management, deal with developments in (primarily quantitative) data *analysis* techniques, and only a small number of papers consider data collection *methods*.

As this debate will also concern many readers, we should explain how we have addressed the matter, and the thinking behind our resolution. We have adopted, *in the first instance*, a narrow definition of research method simply as a tool or technique or approach for collecting and collating data. Social science has only three methods; observation, asking questions, and inspecting documents, although these can be used and combined creatively in a number of different ways. This approach appears to draw a boundary around a set of research practices distinct from epistemological concerns, and deliberately excludes data analysis techniques. Data analysis can be regarded as a closely related but separate field, with its own specialist literature, such as the *Handbook of Data Analysis* (Hardy and Bryman, 2004), and widening the scope and length of this project to incorporate data analysis would have been unrealistic. Does this imply a focus on qualitative methods at the expense of quantitative techniques ? It can be argued that perhaps all organizational (and social) research methods are qualitative, based as they are on observation, asking questions, and analysing documents. Even the conventional Likert-scaled tick-box self-report survey relies on ordinal measurements with language labels (although statistical tools are often applied to the resultant numbers).

Nevertheless, this is a definition of convenience. Research methods as data collection tools cannot be divorced from the wider set of considerations involving research objectives, epistemological choices, and the opportunities and constraints presented by the organizational setting in which research will be conducted. This wider contextualization of method is the argument of chapter 1, and is one of the central arguments of this project; data collection methods are part of a systematic web of influences - personal, interpersonal, epistemological, theoretical, historical, contextual, ethical, temporal, political - and cannot be regarded as isolated technical choices determined exclusively or even primarily by research aims.

A distinction between research methods and data analysis techniques is also an artificial one, in at least two other respects. First, the techniques of data analysis that a researcher employs are often (but not always) implicated in the methods that have been used to collect the data

in the first place. This is illustrated, for example, by the collection and collation of qualitative and quantitative longitudinal case study data to develop process theoretical explanations of phenomena such as organizational change (Pettigrew, 1990; Dawson, 1997 and 2003; Suddaby and Greenwood, chapter 11, this volume; Langley, chapter 23, this volume) and innovation (Van de Ven et al., 1999; Van de Ven and Poole, 2002). Second, some data collection methods have embedded analytical procedures, such as grounded theory (see Goulding, chapter 22, this volume), and action research and other collaborative approaches (see Denis and Lehoux, chapter 21, this volume). Consequently, a narrow definition of research method does not lead us to *exclude* issues of epistemology, data analysis, interpretation, and theory development, but instead allows us to *locate* those factors, or rather those mutual interdependencies, more clearly in the context of a distinct primary focus on data collection tools and techniques.

This debate arises from the somewhat casual manner in which the associated terminology is often used. Many commentators use the terms methodology, design, strategy, and method synonymously, inclusively as already noted, and often without precise definition. Gill and Johnson (2000) use the phrase 'research methods' to encompass the research process from inception to communication. In their introductory text, Saunders et al. (2003) similarly use *research methodology* to describe the unfolding steps across the research process as a whole, defining *research strategy* as a 'general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research question' (p.488), and *research methods* as 'tools and techniques used to obtain and analyse research data, including for example questionnaires, observation, interviews, and statistical and non-statistical techniques' (p.481). While casual, broad, and inclusive usage can lead to confusion, precise distinctions can create artificial categories which in turn blur interdependencies. In the context of organization studies, a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary field which encompasses the full spectrum of ontological, epistemological, and methodological perspectives, it has perhaps become more important to be explicit in the use of these terms, given the potential for misinterpretation. Exploring what his title describes as *research design* in organization studies, Grunow (1995) uses the terms *research methodology*, *research design*, and *research strategy* as synonyms, discusses multimethods designs (and strategies), and asks, 'how are research strategies designed ? (p.97). However, he identifies case studies, comparative case studies, surveys, combined surveys and case studies, and experiments, as *forms of study*, contrasted with interviews, observation, content analysis, document analysis, and group discussion which are *techniques of data collection*.

In their analysis of current trends in organization and management research, Scandura and Williams (2000) use the term *research methodology* in their title, observe that, 'it is important for researchers to assess the *methods* they employ' (p.1248), then advise that, 'researchers should be mindful of what *methodological procedures* are being rewarded by top journals' (p.1248), then note that their study focused on *research strategies*, including formal theory/literature reviews, sample surveys, laboratory experiments, experimental simulations, field studies, field experiments, judgement tasks, and computer simulations (emphasis added). Incidentally, Scandura and Williams (2000, p.1263) note an increase in the use of case studies, arguing that 'Management researchers need to rethink their apparent predisposition towards field studies, the most common research strategy now employed. They need to question whether studies with ambiguous conclusions can say much about the settings in which they occur. It may be that, without rigour, relevance in management research cannot be claimed' (see Tsoukas, chapter 17, and Fitzgerald and Dopson, chapter 27, this volume). For Scandura and Williams, evidently, the popularity of a research strategy, or form of study, or research method, is not to be confused with its acceptability.

Adopting a more structured approach, Bryman and Bell (2007) distinguish between research strategy, design, and method. *Research strategy* concerns 'a general orientation to the conduct of research' (p.28), distinguishing quantitative and qualitative strategies, while recognizing the

limitations of such a basic classification. *Research design* is 'a framework for the collection and analysis of data' (p.40). Designs include experiments, surveys, case studies, and longitudinal and comparative studies. *Research method*, then, is defined as 'simply a technique for collecting data' (p.40). These are the usages reflected in the title and editorial contributions to this *Handbook*, although we leave it to individual contributors, where appropriate, to adopt and explain their own terminology.

what's in this Handbook?

Our editorial introduction first identifies some of the main contemporary characteristics of organization studies research, with regard to its widening boundaries, multi-paradigmatic profile, and methodological inventiveness. Choice of research methods is then set in the context, not only of research aims, epistemological concerns, and norms of practice, but also with regard to a range of organizational, historical, political, ethical, evidential, and personal factors, which are often treated as problems to be overcome, rather than as issues to be addressed systematically, and perhaps exploited to the benefit of the research process.

Our editorial board members questioned the presence of chapters exploring the ontological and epistemological aspects of research; conventionally, one might confine 'thinking about research' to another volume, and focus on 'doing research'. But this is unrealistic. One of the implications of the pluralistic approach to epistemology and methods that has emerged is the increasing need for researchers to make their own positions explicit, particularly in cross- or inter-disciplinary work of the kind that arises in organization studies. Epistemology and methods must now be addressed simultaneously, in both the conduct and writing of research, and we feel that it is appropriate to combine these issues within the same covers.

We have then divided the main contents of the *Handbook* into four sections.

Part 1, *Dilemmas: the shifting context of organizational research*. These six chapters focus on the issues, debates, tensions, and dilemmas which define the historical, epistemological, and practical contexts in which organizational research occurs.

ch	authors, short title	contents, arguments
1	David A. Buchanan and Alan Bryman **contextualizing methods**	Organizational research is now characterized by widening boundaries, a multiparadig-matic profile, and methodological inventiveness. Choice of research method relies not only on research aims and epistemological stance, but also on organizational, historical, political, evidential, and personal factors, which are not 'problems to be solved', but factors to be woven effectively into practical research designs.
2	Stanley Deetz **research discourses**	Researchers adopt differing approaches to the construction of knowledge. The concept of incommensurable paradigms is replaced with four discourses of research, normative, interpretive, critical, and dialogic, based on the type of subject interaction researchers prefer (local/emergent, or elite/a priori), and on whether the focus is with closure or indeterminacy (seeking consensus, or seeking dissensus). This creates a 'rotation of contestabilities', as these orientations are useful for different types of research question. Ideally, researchers would move across orientations with ease. However, a multiperspectival approach leads to shallow interpretations, and good work within one orientation is valuable.
3	Dvora Yanow and Sierk Ybema **interpretivism in organizational research**	Four interpretivist perspectives can be identified in organization studies. *Pluralists* emphasize the ontological incompatibility of positivism and constructivism. *Revolutionaries* simply dismiss positivism. *Warriors* struggle for recognition in the face of 'normal science'. *Peacemakers* value the combination of stances. The interpretive turn triggered a methodological turn (or *re*turn) to qualitative methods, once popular until the 1950s. The current 'cold war' has stifled the 'playful vitality' that characterized debates during the 'hot' paradigm wars. These epistemological and methodological divisions are compounded by a geographical split; while in the US research practice and the editorial policy of leading journals reinforce traditional positivism, researchers in most other countries embrace 'paradigm plurality'.

4	Mats Alvesson and Karen Lee Ashcraft **critical management studies**	Motivated by questions of power, domination, and constraint, critical management studies (CMS) take the side of the weak, by questioning ideologies, interests, and identities. Suspicious of mainstream research, CMS has focused on theoretical analysis and meta-critique, but has now begun to use interpretative perspectives and qualitative fieldwork (interviews, observation) along with historical and visual methods. CMS has three core activities: generating insight, critique, and 'transformative redefinition'. Rarely addressed, this third activity concerns possibilities for social reform. CMS must recognize the legitimacy of values such as productivity, quality, and customer service, and be accountable to the research context by responding to requests for relevant knowledge.
5	Emma Bell and Edward Wray-Bliss **research ethics**	Organizational research is ethically problematic, especially where it functions in the service of oppression, aided by the idea of the detached researcher. Ethical principles are thus formally codified (Nuremberg principles), and practice is audited. Ethical formalism is problematic for qualitative research which appears unscientific in deviating from a medical research model. As the dilemmas faced by organizational research are distinct, it may be appropriate to replace universal codes with an ethical pluralism recognizing the issues facing researchers with different aims and methods.
6	Mark Learmonth **evidence-based management**	Currently fashionable, evidence-based management (ebm) is based on outmoded concepts of 'science' and 'evidence', which encourage narrow epistemological and methodological perspectives. A politically inspired project designed to secure research funding, the current conception of ebm should be countered with 'transgressive research', encouraging plurality in approaches and types of evidence, while recognizing the risks to academic career which such a transgressive strategy entails.

Part 2, *Agendas: the broadening focus of organizational research*. These ten chapters explore influential traditions in organizational research, that is areas that have helped to define and characterize the field, exemplifying methodological approaches, developments, and trends, taking methodology into new territory.

7	Michael D. Mumford, Tamara L. Friedrich, Jay J. Caughron, and Alison L. Antes **leadership research**	Leadership research is a field traditionally dominated by survey-based research. More recently, however, leadership research has come to include a much wider range of research designs and methods. One notable trend concerns the growing use of qualitative research and historiometric studies of leaders and their influence. Leadership research is characterized as increasingly a multi-method field in which several approaches co-exist and whre there is growing use of more than one method within an investigation.
8	Pushkala Prasad and Anshuman Prasad **organization culture research**	Views quantitative studies of organizational culture as limited in scope and impact and argues for qualitative studies. Suggests that existing studies of organizational culture are limited by virtue of the growing impact and significance of globalization. A framework for studying organizational culture is outlined, taking account of and sensitive to the forces of globalization. In particular, a multi-sited ethnographic approach is necessary in order to capture this crucial aspect of the modern world.
9	Stewart Clegg **power work**	The study of power and politics in organizational settings means focusing on the discursive moves of actors in context - meetings, conversations, language games, disputes, rules, decisions, and non-decisions - using qualitative case methodology over prolonged periods (and not survey methods, which generate meaningless data in this field). The need for a detailed contextual understanding of rule, domination, 'circuits of power', and the way in which power is constituted over time, is exemplified with incidents from the author's work and research experiences.
10	Robert David and Alexandre Bitektine **institutional theory**	The growth in popularity (i.e., institutionalization) of institutional theory has been accompanied by a shift in the agenda from a traditional focus on stability, similarity, and constraint, towards attempts also to explain change, diversity, and action. The field has also welcomed the use of qualitative research methods. But institutional theory has limited relevance to management practice, beyond institutionalizing change. The fragmentation of an approach that seeks to explain everything with little practical output may contribute to the deinstitutionalization of the perspective.

11	Roy Suddaby and Royston Grenwood **researching institutional change**	Institutional explanations of change offer an alternative to economic accounts which overlook the normative systems through which social arrangements arise and evolve. Institutional researchers have traditionally relied on *multivariate* methods to develop variance-based explanations. However, *interpretive*, *historical*, and *dialectical* approaches using a range of qualitative methods are increasingly used to understand processes of institutional change, such as movements in world views, complex path dependency, and political struggle. These approaches each offer a partial account. Exemplary research typically deploys two or more perspectives, one dominant (foreground) and one subordinate (background). This multi-theoretic stance, recognizing the tensions and benefits of competing paradigms, is likely to characterize developments in this field in future.
12	Mark Griffin and Alannah Rafferty **job satisfaction and motivation research**	Job satisfaction is one of the most studied concepts in those domains of enquiry that emphasize organizational behaviour, employing a variety of research methods and designs. The field has been dominated by a quantitative research approach and great strides have been made to improve the quality of measurement of job satisfaction. Although a 'traditional' topic, current trends and developments affecting the nature and experience of work mean that the significance of this field remains high.
13	Glenn Carroll, David McKendrick, Mi Feng and Gael Le Mens **studying organizational populations**	Outlines the rationale for a focus on populations of organizations rather than on organizations as such, as well as the analytic choices available to researchers. Discusses the kinds of archival data that are typically employed in population ecology research and the different approaches to evaluating the quality of such data. Delineates the issues involved in targeting and sampling particular populations, in particular from the perspective of the biases generated through one approach rather than another. Presents the case for examining 'vital events' in organizational populations, such as founding and mortality.
14	Antonio Strati **organizational aesthetics**	Research in organizational aesthetics (architecture, dress, product design, furnishings, equipment, 'atmosphere') is well established in Europe, but not in North America. This perspective offers a new methodological awareness giving theoretical value to notions of ugliness and the sublime, beauty and pathos. An 'aesthetic style' of research challenges the dominance of cognitive understanding with four approaches which transgress traditional methods: archaeological, empathic-logical, aesthetic, and artistic. Opposing alienating and manipulative processes, an aesthetic approach is critical of positivist perspectives, challenging the distinction between the value of research and the pleasure of doing it. Critical also of managerial standpoints, aesthetic research is concerned with emancipation and the exercise of aesthetic judgement.
15	Marta Calás and Linda Smircich **feminist perspectives**	The role of feminism concerns the social transformation of unequal gender and power relations. Feminist theory is thus philosophical, political, and plural, and research method derives from a theoretical understanding of what we want to know. Organization studies has incorporated feminist meta-theory in three main ways, researching *conditions of women* (feminist empiricism), *gendering relations* (feminist standpoint), and the *discursive processes of gendering* (feminist postmodernism). It is the researcher's orientation and purpose, not research method, that make research feminist; several examples are explored. The aims of feminist research, as with critical management studies, do not always coincide with other organization and management scholarship, where business case takes priority over social justice. However, feminist organization studies challenges the status quo, observes how the 'progressive' reconfiguration of work involves no real change for women, and questions the constitution of categories of class, race, and gender.
16	John Hassard **ethnographic documentaries**	Ethnographic documentary films promise unique, grounded, and unmediated insights into the nature of work, occupations, and institutions, but are overlooked by mainstream organizational research. Following a brief history of the genre, four styles are examined; *world-of-labour film*, the *free cinema* movement, the modern *television documentary*, and *video diaries and blogs*. The realist claims of documentary do not withstand the challenge that these are crafted products which are as 'fictional' as films made for entertainment. Their research value lies with the notion that they represent not reality, but the ideological positions of their authors.

Part 3, *Strategies: approaches to organizational research*. These nine chapters deal with approaches to achieving research aims, illustrating links between topic, aims, strategy, analytical framework, and theoretical development, also demonstrating the range of choice and degree of creativity as well as technical knowledge underpinning research strategies.

17	Hari Tsoukas **small-N studies**	Given the craving for generality, small-N studies are usually dismissed. However, there is a growing recognition of the significance of the particular, the local, and the timely, emphasizing naturalistic and analytical generalization. The epistemic significance of the particular lies with two questions: 'what is going on here ?', and 'what is this a case of ?'. The theoretical contribution of small-N studies concerns opportunities for refining previous conceptualizations of general processes, by selecting examples that share 'family resemblances' with other cases, and which have the potential to surprise and enable us to see features and connections that we could not see before. The craving for generality is replaced by the craving for a better view. Generality in small-N studies is often pursued with experimental logic, causal mechanisms, critical realism, and analytical generalization. These perspectives are limited. More appropriate terms for the ways in which small-N studies and single cases inform our understanding are heuristic generalization and *analytical refinement.*
18	Eugene Stone-Romero **laboratory and field experiments**	Considers approaches to research in terms of how far they are experimental. One key distinction is between experiments, quasi-experiments and non-experiments. Only studies based on true experimental designs can allow causal relationships to be inferred with confidence. Non-experimental studies, like those deriving from cross-sectional designs, are often used to infer causal relationships retrospectively, but these provide a weak basis for causal inference. Quasi-experiments provide a better basis for inferring cause and effect, but lack the random assignment which is a crucial aspect of true experiments.
19	Mark Peterson **cross-cultural research**	Outlines the challenges facing cross-cultural researchers, in terms of the establishment of equivalence in research instruments and their administration and in the samples employed. Shows that even issues such as the choice of which research problems should be the focus of investigation is not without equivalence issues. Discusses the different ways that the research teams, which are typically necessary for such studies, may be assembled. Explores how collaborative exercises need to be managed and co-ordinated, and also how, as with most research, outcomes are likely to be a compromise between the desirable and the practical.
20	Paul Spector and Michael Brannick **common method variance**	The problem of common method variance is widely assumed to afflict questionnaire-based studies. However, although this may be a problem for such research, which is widespread in organization studies, its significance may not be as great as the problem of measurement bias. An overview of several of the measurement biases that often trouble questionnaire researchers leads to the recommendation that the use of multiple methods can effectively control for such biases.
21	Jean-Louis Denis and Pascale Lehoux **collaborative research**	With the twin aims of developing innovative actionable knowledge and theoretical understanding, collaborative designs involving users as co-producers of research has five main variants or archetypes: action research, participatory action research, soft system methodology, action science, and utilization-focused evaluation. The success of these designs depends on the participants' commitment to each others' agendas as well as to their own.
22	Christina Goulding **grounded theory**	Grounded theory is an approach to data collection and analysis that is primarily associated with qualitative research. Notes that the origins of this approach lie in the quest in sociology for an approach to theory generation from qualitative data, but that the originators of grounded theory - Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss - later parted company over how it should be practised. As a result, there are subtle differences among practitioners in how grounded theory should be conducted. The author uses a detailed illustration from her own work, which is closer to Glaser's than to Strauss's rendition, to examine the main elements of grounded theory.

23	Michael Moss archival research	The internet has revolutionized information-seeking behaviour and distribution channels, as internet engines widen access to research resources. But do we mistake noise for music ? Digital content is not mediated by editorial controls, or appraised by custodians as in the analogue world, raising questions of integrity and provenance. This implies freedom, creativity, and sharing of ideas. But an audit and compliance culture encourages organizations to destroy potentially incriminating evidence, on which strict conditions may apply in terms of access and publication. The US Patriot Act requires archives and libraries to report readers and the materials they consult. The careful drafting and filing of written records is replaced with the haphazard storage of electronic communications. Rather than opening the view, the information landscape may in future be narrowed by technological, social, and geopolitical trends.
24	Ann Langley process theory	Process theories explore the temporal dynamics of evolving sequences of events rather than synchronic relationships among independent and dependent variables. Where variance theories reveal covariation, process theory is often required to explain how and why. Process perspectives are particularly relevant to organization studies where time is critical, where the diachronic patterns of events, behaviours, and choices shape outcomes. Using predominantly qualitative methods, process theorists often study the untidy and iterative nature of organizational changes, and links to practice are clearer than with variance theory. Process perspectives raise three challenges affecting the production of knowledge; temporal orientation (past, present, future), conceptual products (patterns, mechanisms, meanings), and researcher perspective (site relationships, academic careers). Strategies for establishing the trustworthiness of process research are explored.
25	Mike Reed critical realism	Presents critical realism an alternative to both positivism and constructivsm. This is apparent in its social ontology which, while acknowledging an external and extant social reality, argues that reality 'cannot be reduced to a discrete set of observable events or a discursively manufactured inter-subjective construct.' Depicts the main contribution of the approach as its commitment to the identification of generative mechanisms and their operation in specific socio-historical situations. Examines challenges to critical realism, such as the questionable role of agency within its purview.

Part 4, *Methods: data collection in organizational research*. These fifteen chapters focus on specific methods of data collection, demonstrating the inventiveness and innovation that now characterize this field, and the widening range of possibilities concerning the development of data collection tools.

| 26 | Timothy Hinkin survey design | Focuses on two aspects of survey administration that are seen as crucial to the reliability and validity of measurement: the factors that affect willingness to participate, and how respondents can be encouraged to participate. Applies an organizational perspective to the factors that inhibit willingness to participate, arguing that the ideal is for the organization to become a partner in data collection. This approach has significant implications for collaboration between academic researchers and practitioners. |
| 27 | Louise Fitzgerald and Sue Dopson comparative case studies | Case study designs are widely used in organization studies, having been developed in sociology, anthropology, psychology, and medicine. They are often undervalued, but many projects based on single cases have been influential. A traditional focus on single units of analysis is restrictive, and raises problems of generalizability. These concerns have led to the use of multiple or comparative case designs, often based on an interpretative epistemology. Comparative designs include replication strategies, comparison of differences, comparison of outliers, and embedded cases. These designs are flexible with regard to scope and data collection methods, and they are particularly suited to studying the dynamic aspects of organizational phenomena, addressing 'how' and 'why' questions. The building blocks of case study designs include contextual data, stakeholder perspectives, source triangulation, and multi-factorial analysis. Quality criteria for these designs include construct validity, appropriateness of methods, adequacy of sampling, rigour of analysis, reflexivity of the account, adequacy of presentation, and the value of the outcomes. |

28	David Greatbatch **conversation analysis**	Conversation analysis is concerned with 'the social organization of naturally occurring human conduct', in which language plays a central role. Conversation analysis entails a fine grained study of language in use. The growing application of conversation analysis in institutional contexts has rendered it of great interest to organizational researchers. A study of management guru oratory is used to illustrate patterns of response and participation on the part of managerial audiences.
29	Catherine Cassell **qualitative interviews**	Examines the nature of the interview in organizational research, emphasizing its use in qualitative research. Outlines the different forms of interview and explores the challenges faced by practitioners. The interview is a reflexive process, and the outcomes are the product of co-construction and 'identity work' between the parties. Several trends in the use of interviews are explored, such as technological developments and assessments of interview data quality.
30	Alan Bryman **mixed methods research**	In spite of its growing use, mixed methods research is by no means a new approach. Some of the main debates are outlined, noting in particular the 'paradigm wars' and the role of epistemological issues in the arguments that took place. Examples from organizational research show how mixed methods are used, emphasizing the rationales that are often provided. Little attention has been paid to the writing of mixed methods findings, and the considerations involved in this respect are explored.
31	Stephen Ackroyd **realist research methods**	The methods preferred by realist researchers include single and comparative case studies, generative institutional analysis, large scale datasets, action research, and policy evaluation. The logic of realist discovery concerns the identification of generative mechanisms in particular contexts. Realist research is considered unorthodox, relies on assumptions that are not widely understood, and is more difficult to publish. But this perspective promises deeper understanding of social and organizational phenomena, and is particularly valuable in the domain of policy evaluation, where traditional perspectives offer false and misleading conclusions.
32	Nelson Phillips and Marialaura Di Domenico **discourse analysis**	Depicts discourse analysis as part of the linguistic turn that views language as crucial to understanding how social reality is constituted. This entails understanding not just the texts that are formally the objects of analysis but also the social contexts in which they are generated. Explores the different forms of discourse analysis in terms of two main dimensions: the reliance on text or context, and the degree to which the approach is critical in orientation. Portrays discourse analysis as especially helpful in relation to the study of issues such as gender and identity, which can be explored in terms of their discursive production.
33	Samantha Warren **visual research methods**	Visual research methods are not yet widely used in organizational research, although well established in the related disciplines of sociology, anthropology, and ethnography. Images can be analysed as data in their own right, and can also be used to generate fresh data. Technology developments and the Internet are likely to generate fresh pressures and opportunities for the further rapid and creative use of visual methods in organization studies.
34	Carl Rhodes and Alison Pullen **narrative-based methods**	Narrative is a way of representing the connections between a series of events. One of the roles of narrative analysis in organizational research is to develop an understanding of sensemaking. Stories are the building blocks for a narrative analysis, providing insight into organizations as social constructions. Shows how narrative analysis can turn its attention to the research process itself, demonstrating that research is a realm in which stories are told and which can themselves be subjected to narrative analysis. Examines the conventions that are employed in telling research stories.
35	Gary Alan Fine, Calvin Morrill and Sharmi Surianarain **organizational ethnography**	Qualitative research has always been with us, and is frequently seen as making major contributions to the field of organizational research. Unlike many other research methods, ethnography allows for a detailed understanding of context and multiple perspectives and gives a stronger sense of process. Examines some the main contributions of ethnographic research in the field. Shows how ethnographers manage accusations of bias through techniques like member checks and triangulation. Also examines the dilemmas an ethnographer faces, such as knowing when to finish collecting data.
36	John Hassard and David A. Buchanan **feature films as data**	Feature films can be viewed not only as illustrating aspects of work, management, and organization, but as documentaries coding cultural myths, values, preoccupations, anxieties, and patterns of social change, and as process explanations linking antecedents to consequences in context through narrative. Viewing 'movie as thesis', film is source of creative theoretical insight, as well as a platform for theory testing, and has significant untapped potential as one component of a visual organization studies.

37	Charles Scherbaum and Adam Meade **measurement**	The importance of measurement lies with objectivity, quantification, communication, efficiency of observation, consistency, and link to theory. However, measurement is often treated casually by organizational researchers, who tend to rely on classical techniques, overlooking contemporary developments, such as generalizability theory, item response theory, logistic models, graded response models, and measures of social cognitions such as implicit association and conditional reasoning tests.
38	Colin C. Williams and Monder Ram **researching 'off the books' work**	While one might assume difficulties in researching the informal, shadow, underground, 'black', economy, involving 'cash-in-hand' deals, working family members, and ethnic minorities, this is not the case. Off-the-books work is readily accessible to research through a range of indirect (proxy) and direct (more conventional) methods, and such studies are empirically and theoretically rewarding, and also inform policy and practice in significant ways.
39	David Denyer and David Tranfield **systematic review**	Systematic review is a research methodology that entails searching and synthesizing the literature of to a specific area in order to arrive at definitive conclusions about what is known. Outlines the distinctive approach of systematic review, and links this to evidence-based management, noting that the impetus for systematic review in organization studies is often associated with the growing use of it in medicine. Points to some of the criticisms that are levelled at systematic review for organization studies and suggests how the method can be modified to take into consideration the distinguishing features of organizational research.
40	Ken Parry and Maree Boyle **organizational autoethnography**	Organizational autoethnography is a new approach located in the traditions of both case study and ethnography, and which seeks to link the personal and the organization in organizational research. Organizational autoethnography is a highly reflexive approach that locates the researcher firmly within the overall research process. Organizational autoethnographies must be written in an evocative manner in order to maximize the impact on readers.

Conclusion. The final chapter offers our editorial assessment of the main themes, developments, trends, and challenges facing the field of organizational research methods.

41	Alan Bryman and David A. Buchanan **present and futures of organizational research**	The methodological inventiveness that has become a hallmark of organizational research is now threatened by multiple institutional pressures. The multiparadigmatic nature of the field once stimulated debate, but we are now witnessing a 'balkanization' of organization studies, in which the previously 'warring' factions no longer even exchange views. The field is also characterized by different approaches to the use of case studies, and by contrasting perspectives on the nature of causality, the latter being potentially bewildering for potential users of research findings. The writing of organizational research and the role of reflexivity are also explored. In the light of this discussion, is the future of organizational research methods bright, or bleak ?