
TAMARA manifesto

David M Boje. *Tamara : Journal of Critical Postmodern Organization Science*. Las Cruces: 2001. Vol. 1, Iss. 1; pg. 15, 10 pgs

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[Headnote]

Tamara: Journal of Critical Postmodern Organization Science is an interdisciplinary dialog whose time has come. In their Communist Manifesto, written in late 1847, Marx and Engels wrote, "A spectre is haunting Europe - the spectre of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies" (published 1848). The purpose of this essay is to combine Critical and Postmodern perspectives in the study of Organization Science.

Well, it's a cold, cold, cold, cold,

cold, cold, cold, cold

Post, postmodern world

No time for heroes, no place for good guys

No room for Rocky The Flying Squirrel

They're not here, they're not coming

Not in a million years (Henley, 2000).

The Tamara Manifesto is a spectre that is now haunting the globe - the spectre of critical postmodern organization science. All the powers of university and state, religion and corporation, and now corporate university, have entered into a new alliance to exorcise this Tamara: state accrediting associations, media textbooks, advertisers in the classroom, and "top-tier" science journals are overtly or covertly pomophobic -- spectre indeed. Where are the critical theorists, critical pedagogists, postcolonialists, and postmodernists who have not been accused by their opponents in power of being relativistic or anarchistic for voicing ethical and economic justice questions? We each teach in conservative institutions and while modern forms of scholarship address ethical issues, we do take the lead in the critique of exploitation and hegemony.

Two things result from this situation:

I. Critical theory critical pedagogy lonial, and postmodern theory (or the Tamara of these voices) are already acknowledged by all the world's powers to be collectively a power. It is not a power-base and no essentialist unity just a loose weave of different interests addressing new forms of

global capitalism in their own way. And we sometimes contest one another. Rather than being recognized as a power, we get demonized and marginalized by the powers that be.

II. It is high time that the Tamara should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the spectre of Tamara with a manifesto itself.

To this end, a Tamara of academics and independent intellectuals have assembled in virtual community and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the first issue of Tamara Journal of Critical Postmodern Organization Science. In the first part, I define terms used in the title of the journal. This is followed by an explorations of practical themes that emerge from a conversation among disciplines that have been too separate.

By way of introduction, the nexus of conversation we seek here is addressed by Best and Kellner (1997), Steve Best and Steve Fuller (in this issue and elsewhere), and Hal Foster's (1983) book, *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*. There appear to be several forms of postmodernism and modernism (critical and otherwise). Foster (1983: xi-xii) talks about two postmoderns:

In cultural politics today, a basic opposition exists between a postmodernism which seeks to deconstruct modernism and resist the status quo and a postmodernism which repudiates the former to celebrate the latter: a postmodernism of resistance and a postmodernism of reaction." xi-xii

As Ngaire Bissett (in review of this text and in her response) has helped me understand, neo-conservatives who critique modernism in the name of postmodern work to sever the cultural from the social, that is they critique the critical culture of modernism while retaining the structural basis of modernisation. The result is that while we deconstruct and otherwise critique certain cultural and cosmetic aspects of global capitalism, its economic and political underpinnings escape our analysis, or we end up affirming it. Bissett gives more focus to this paradox in her response.

Next, I briefly introduce Tamara and define the terms in its subtitle, *Critical Postmodern Organization Science*. Tamara applies critical and postmodern theory, along with critical pedagogy and postcolonialism to the social milieu that is organization science.

Tamara defines space for dialogs among wandering audiences who chase fragmenting storylines from room to room in the mansion of science, a place increasingly constructed and furnished by corporate power (Boje, 1995). The Mansion of Science was constructed in tandem with capitalism, and we have always co-habited there.

We raise our voices to protest against the injustices affecting the majority of the worlds' citizens and indeed all sentient life.

Critical refers to both critical theory and critical pedagogy. The Frankfurt School of Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer and others (radical humanists) became a critical science, separating from structuralists. The critical pedagogy of Freire, McLaren, Giroux, Shor, Garcia, Pryne, and others are developing a science to counter the technocratic pedagogical factories that essentialize gender and objectify race. And this new science has its pomophobic detractors, taunting with spectre-accusations of superficial, liberal, multicultural radicals. To me, the task of Tamara, as a journal, is to look at critical, even radical versions of postmodernism. As with critical theory and postmodern theory, critical pedagogy comes in multiple versions, with certainly no monolithic discourse to be found. One voice certainly is at call for revolution in cultural politics that fashion the "official" pedagogy and design the mechanistic delivery system and defines the central form

marginal topics of discourse while setting up truth and objective knowledge claims for efficient and meaningless examination. Critical theory and critical pedagogy set up spaces for ethical, and interdisciplinary dialog, and a call for answerability from corporate and university power. By answerability I mean corporate and university citizenship recognizing rights and responsibilities.

Postmodern refers to a wide spectrum of positions, but here the focus is on "critical postmodern" and "postcolonial" discourses, a meeting place for critical theory, critical pedagogy, postcolonial, and postmodern theory. Certainly Best (1995), Best and Kellner (1993, 1997), Bauman (1989, 1993, 1995), Jameson (1984, 1991), and Said (1978) frequent this room as do the ghosts of Nietzsche, Marx, Foucault and Lyotard, each seeking to mingle critical theory with postmodern theory (See Alvesson & Deetz, 1996 for more on this topic and Kilduff & Mehra, 1997 and Mumby, 1997 for work on the interface of modern and postmodern; Best, 1995 for the critical voices of Foucault, Marx and Habermas). It is "critically postmodern" to discuss the ethics of the fashionable technologies: biotechnology, genetic reengineering of food and people, virtual reality workspaces, and the growing popularity of sweatshop production in the world economy. Critical postmodern theory also examines the nexus of postmodern consumerism and postindustrial subcontracting networks of production and distribution (Carty, 1999). A key project for Tamara is to explore ethics. Ethics need not be caged in the language of modernism. There can be critical postmodern ethics and Tamara as a journal can provide space to articulate ethics in conjunction with political, social and economic theorizing and envision modes of practice that have not occurred or been marginalized in modernism. Instead of universalizing ethics, it can be articulated in context. Cilliers (1998), for example, believes that in Derrida (1976) and Lyotard (1979), there is the possibility of an ethical position that informs complexity theory. Bauman (1989, 1993) looks at the ethics of the modern project and outlines a postmodern ethics that works without universalizing assumptions (See Boje, 2000a).

Finally, postmodern ethics refers to the intellectual neglect of the injustice to the "peasantariat," the majority of global citizens who subcontract to the postmodern virtual corporation (Burrell, 1998). The dark side of postmodern organization is the way the modern violence machine is shrouded in postmodern architecture, virtual reality machines, and theatric spectacles (which Guy Debord anticipated). Postcolonial theory is rich in critique of postmodern and poststructuralist theory. A definition of "postcolonial" is provided by Angana Chatterji:

"Postcolonialism -- The diverse field of thinking, resistance, and action, within the Academy and sites of activism in the North and the South, defined through a critical relationship to colonised/ neocolonised history, imagination, society, politics, economics, culture, aesthetics, the relations of race, class, gender, through a critique of the impact of European and other Northern cultures on the Global South and other areas of internal colonisation. Its subjects are the historically 'colonised'. It does not refer to the 'end' of colonisation/neocolonisation, but rather critiques of power, subjectivity and relations defined within the context of the North and the South, South and the South, the East and the West, since colonialism began. It is important to acknowledge that there is not a postcolonialism, rather postcolonialisms that are framed and operate within specific histories and contexts. Postcoloniality then conspires, is complicitous, in generating sociopolitical frames while refusing to present itself as a cure. It resides within practises that (dis)locate oppressions, resistances, truths that historically configures its subjects and subjectivities in the present. Postcolonial ethics discourses the role of postcolonial critique in its hybridity, contradiction and complexity. The project of deconstruction delineated by such ethics is premised on a historicised relation to imperialism and coloniality, to labour and oppression, to critical intellectual activity and to activism. It narrates the spaces and sites of located and disturbing subjectivities, of representations of the self that challenge the roles and identities, the histories and presents the self confronts in postcoloniality. Through an exhaustive and critical accounting of difference and multiplicity, postcolonial critique relanguages the present where the subaltern might speak and be heard." (From Chatterji, Angana. 2000. *The Politics of Sustainable Ecology*. p 42.)

I think that a dialog between critical postmodern, critical pedagogy, and postcolonialism needs to take place. And it is a dialog whose hybridity will inform organization science.

Organization - McDonaldization (Ritzer, 2000), Disneyfication, Las Vegasization, and Virtualization are the surface features of the hybrid modern/postmodern organization. Post-Fordist and post-industrial approaches (late modernism) is wearing the garments of pre-modern festival and postmodern architecture and rhetoric in order to sell products and attract players. Parker (1993) and Thompson (1993) argue that there are no postmodern organizations. I would, however, list the darker examples, hybrids of late modern and postmodern organizations such as McDonalds, Monsanto, Disney, every sneaker agency, and Fashionable Casino Hotels on the strip, each able to transform postmodern consumer desire with ironic ads while subcontracting to sweatshop factories (including the Netslaves of the electronic age), high biotech design, and corporations that devour natural resources for profit. They are each part modern, part postindustrial, and certainly the dark side of the interspectacle of postmodern consumerism and production. We survive in a global economy that is addicted to over-consumption and over-work, and the top-tier journals of organization science continue to discuss transaction costs, population ecology, expectancy and reinforcement motivation, and the manipulations of path-goal leadership, when the manifest influence of materialism, consumerism, utilitarianism, and so-called "open market" economics do not get space on the page. After 3,000 years of Protestant and Puritan work ethics, we measure our self-worth by our work and consumption, industriousness, sacrifice of family, and lack of time for play. Instead of more articles on how to increase addictions to stuff and to work with increased performativity, Tamara invites articles on how to resist addiction, net slavery, and where to find convivia (e.g. the Italian slow food movement to counter fast food, Isthmus, 2000), simplicity (to counter over consumption), and Ahimsa (to counter the factories of terror and the animal slaughterhouses). Key to Tamara is the critical postmodern organization critique of the many global corporations masquerading as ethical ambassadors of democracy, spiritual enlightenment, and "free market economic development liberators to the third world. Tamara removes the mask of corporate PR and annual shareholder masquerade balls in order to look at the charade of an overworked, stressed out, work force fed on the corporate need for speed while half the world's population can not cannot earn a living wage.

Science - Why science? Critical theory and critical pedagogy can become a science, but what academic discipline would ever admit to postmodern theory being a science? (ironic question). I say, why surrender "science" to the front stage biotech, robotic, virtual reality industries and the backstage sweatshop industries? Why limit postmodern theory to just literary criticism? This is a bum wrap, since critical and postmodern scholarship is happening in every discipline imaginable, including science. Can a physicist or a biologist or a sociologist exhibit a postmodern orientation? I seek an interdisciplinary dialog that would be different from Kuhnian paradigm science. The challenge is not to define science as a universalist domain or enshrine a new god of techno-virtuality. An engagement of science with its political, economic, and social context is required.

Many if not most, postmodernists eschew science, preferring to view their theory as art. And those enrolled in the Science Wars are happy to enforce and demonstrate the boundary between the arts and the sciences (Sokal, 1996; Best & Kellner, 1997; Fuller, 2001 in this issue). Yet, I think there is room in the science mansion for studies of the ethics of biotechnology, consumerism, materialism, and utilitarianism. A critical postmodern science is a dialog between philosophy and science in the hopes of creating new theories and practices of organization science, consumer science, and a way to find a more convivial science. This convivia science would measure the violence and terror of production technologies, consumerism, and the racism of globalization. Instead of what Foucault terms the "specific intellectual", whose model is the expert, disinterested scientist, a critical postmodern scientist does not surrender every grand and universal narrative (as Lyotard, 1979) has demanded, but participates (as Best & Keller, 1993 argue) in the ones that affirm life. Instead of a postmodern age of disengaged intellectuals playing language games with hypertexts, the call is for answerability, to be a voice countering corporate power, ethnic cleansing, anti-Semitism, and the continuing genocide of human and animal life.

Some grand narratives need to fall. Science without ethics and answerability is a universal narrative worthy of deconstruction. The question is how to do this without becoming the grand narrative we struggle against. How do we work outside the boxes of modernist narrative and classification? The political and economic context of science as narrative shapes its achievements and tempers its emancipatory potential.

The history of organization science is the history of structural functionalism, a science of systems without much attention to hegemony. *Administrative Science Quarterly* began as a dialog among scholars and practitioners, but by the second year, the scholars drove the practitioners from the stage, and Talcott Parsons' structural functionalism reigned until the advent of population ecology. Now the interplay of social construction, transaction costs, strategies of colonization, and organizations seem to be evolving without an ethical compass (Boje, Fitzgibbons, & Steingard, 1996). The journal, *Organization Science*, to take another example, has had but a few articles (e.g. Martin, 1990), here and there that take on critical postmodern issue. There appears to be a glimmer of critical theory or postmodern theory in the shadows, and no critical pedagogy at all. And the new *Organization Science* issue that will soon come to press is a re-declaration of the science wars, a pomophobia feast (Boje, 2000a). The Academy's flagship journals, the *Academy of Management Journal* and the *Academy of Management Review* seem to be publishing more critical and postmodern material of late, certainly more than *Organization Science* and *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Several new journals, *Organization*, the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Organization, Theory and Society*, *EJ-ROT* (*Electronic Journal of Radical Organization Theory*), *Ephemeral*, *Postmodern Culture*, *Journal of Management Inquiry*, and now *Tamara* have provided more space for critical and postmodern challenges than what is provided for in just a select few in of the so-called "top tier" journals. *Tamara* is a space for critical reflective analysis of postmodern organization and its relationship to society.

Tamara seeks to expose the previously hidden, now open fight between the powerful journals and those of the lesser tiers (the ones that count less in tenure review). This fight has become a veritable science war in which each battle has ended, either in a minor revolutionary reconstitution of theory, practice and pedagogy, or in the ruin of the contenders.

What else will we write about? We need to do more than write for tenure, to open more page space to critical postmodern science. But, who really cares about tiers, the tenure committee, the dean, and other deans sitting on accreditation committees? Why do we allow them to run the university? (This is a rhetorical question, since Foucault argues we all participate in this panopticon of power and knowledge.) Yet what is our answer to the corporate makeover of the university, to science itself, and to the colonization of the proletariat by the successor to the nation state, the last dinosaur, corporate erectus (Mitchell, 1998, p. 41)?

It is time to critique the charade of uncritical organization science. Corporate PR writes the texts that get signed by organization science authors, because if the story be told, wherever the global corporate dinosaur has trod, death seems to pursue both peasant and nature (A parody of Darwin's comment in *Voyage of the Beagle*, 1839). Editors and reviewers gate-keep to contain critical postmodern writing to a bare minimum, a token article here and there, but only by the few who are officially author-ized to write to the top tier. Why are we being told that there is no room for critical and postmodern philosophy in the classroom, in the top-tier journals of organization science, in the choices students make for dissertations ("will you get a job with that?"), and in the tenure packages? The finger has been pulled from this dike. And now, is it an accident or coincidence that as top tier journals open their pages to us, the corporations and publishers have begun their own universities? Beyond our own mire in journalistic gate keeping and censorship of corporate critique, there is the issue of what do we write about once the gates are open?

Taking our stem from Marx (1848) "the modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society" is a complicated arrangement of nouveau technologies that gets

celebratory attention in the top tier. Tamara presents critiques of Monsanto, DuPont, and other corporations in their global race to patent every human and plant gene, and thereby radically transform indigenous and metropolitan patterns of production and consumption forever. And beneath these factories and patents for consumption, and the gaudy shelves of Wal-Mart lies the sweatshop. We want to see a Tamara of conversations across disciplines that will take up this challenge to 'end the sweatshops!' It is time to remove the insular shackles of the academic division of labor and construct new meeting rooms in the house of science. And out of the meeting rooms to take the actions of academic activism.

It is time for Tamara. Critical theory took root before the new biotech, virtual tech, and trendy postmodern consumerism took effect. Critical pedagogy has focused on multiculturalism, but has been less attuned to the role new technologies play in the workaholic lives of students. Look at the eyes of the students and see the over-work. Look at the families that increasingly shatter the lives of parents and children to keep up with the media images of what constitutes a happy consumer, a life of stuff and more stuff. I gave students in my MBA program a simple test of questions that define a workaholic, and every single one had a workaholic score, some working 70 to 92 hours each week and going to school. Further, we need to write about wealth and poverty: The "500 richest people on the planet now control more wealth than the poorest 3 billion" (half the human population) [UTNE Reader, July-August, 1999: p. 46]. And someone dies of hunger, every 3.6 seconds (See <http://www.thehungersite.com> for a country by country simulacra).

Tamara will provide a space to critique sweatshop philosophy and practice as it appears in a variety of domains. There is a revolution on university campuses today, confined to administration office sit-ins, but it needs to protest the halls and classrooms of the mansion of science as well. Too many TAs are noticing their sweatshop wages. There is a growing post-WTO revolution (forms of resistance movement) that is demanding a radical reformation of global capitalism, demanding that executives and shareholders include more voices in the boardroom, demanding that the move from evolution to co-evolution (the interplay of simulated forests, biotech species launch, and human redesign) be slowed and that more voices beyond those of corporate power speak. Why are top-tier organization science journals and so many classrooms quite silent about the co-evolution of technology, nature, and cyber-culture? What good is a population ecology that is without ecology?

Why do management and organization theory textbooks refuse to give any serious space to sweatshops? Sweatshops (in the third world, in every metropolitan city, and in Netslaves) constitute the dominant form of work life of this millennium. Netslaves work 100-hour weeks for 40K (<http://www.disobey.com/netslaves>). While textbooks and top-tier journals celebrate the virtual corporation, the global enterprise, and the great entrepreneurs for their leadership and motivation and economic strategies, these giants are the hubs of sweatshop supply webs that are ignored (there are exceptions such as Mills & Simmons, 1995; Fulop & Linstead, 1999; Boje & Dennehy, 2000). The spirituality movement in business writing (some of it postmodern), for example, focused on the enlightened executive and the corporations with ISO14000 practices, but ignores what goes on backstage. Beneath the Disney Theme Parks and the Las Vegas casino resorts are the sweatshop factories of the world.

What is needed is an organization pedagogy that attempts to complete the modernist project of Adam Smith, to combine economics with ethics, to counter monopoly power with local citizen control of corporations. There are fragments among several grand narratives that can help make the case, but their overall negative effect on labor and feminism also needs deconstructing. Adam Smith (1759, 1776), Karl Marx (1867) and even Frederick Taylor (1911) agreed that there are organizational alternatives to sweatshops that yield more productivity, profit, and net workers, even higher "living wages." Smith (1976), for example, in the *Wealth of Nations*, saw the choice about having each worker a "living wage as clear economic and moral: A man must always live

by his work, and his wages must at least be sufficient to maintain him. They must even upon most occasions be somewhat more; otherwise it would be impossible for him to bring up a family, and the race of such workmen could not last beyond the first generation (Smith, 1776, CHAPTER VIII Of the Wages of Labour).

And both Taylor and Marx wrote about paying living wages instead of paying the least wage the law allows and held out viable solutions to sweatshops' "slow sacrifice of humanity" (Marx, 1867, p. 244). Organization science is quick to write histories that suggest that more enlightened management approaches to work life have replaced Taylorism. They seem to ignore that what was revolutionary about Taylor's (1911) scientific management was the observation that rest and refreshment are necessary to quality and sustained work. Any profit gained by overwork--and snatching time for mealtimes and rest breaks and from paying the least possible bare subsistence wage and over-work in unhealthy and unpleasant situations--was meager compared to the output of the high productivity enterprise.

For Marx, piece-wage was a special form of time-wage. "In time-wages the labor is measured by its immediate duration, in piece-wages by the quantity of products in which the labor has embodied itself during a given time" (1867: 553). And piece-wages, from his point of view, afforded the "source of reductions of wages and capitalistic cheating" of workers (p. 553). That is, with piece-wages, the incentive is for the capitalist to parasitically "sub-let" labor by using the services of middlemen (subcontractors).

How is it that Smith, Taylor, and Marx concur that there are more productive and ethical alternatives to sweatshops, while management and organization theory proliferates texts and journal articles that would deny that sweatshops are in intimate relation to the productive live of global corporations and to our own consumptive lives? Who can put on clothes anymore that are not made in sweatshops? Can we buy anything in Wal-Mart that was not made in a sweatshop?

Why is it that sweatshops are proliferating faster now than in the time of Smith, Marx, and Taylor? What is an MBA program if not training for the cadres of auditors, consultants, and speechwriters who will attest with much scientific data that sweatshops do not exist? It is no accident that global corporations contract with factories in nations with the highest of suicide rates. According to the World Health Organization (October 2000), 500 women each day commit suicide, a rate of 17.9 females per 100,000.

The focus of Tamara therefore is to reenter these houses of terror, to stare the vampire of predatory capitalism in the face and make the mass of sweatshop workers and addicted sweatshop-consumers visible on these pages. Certainly no MBA student should be graduated who has not read chapter 10 of Marx's *Das Kapital*. The sweatshop is a "Theater of Terror," a "House of Pain." As Marx observed the sweatshops in Europe and the U.S. he saw modern management as the "vampire" sucking every last drop of blood and life from living labor (1867: p. 233). And after we bash Taylorism for not seeing the relations of scientific management to capitalism, should we not also say the following? Taylor (1911: p. 14-- 18) argued that it is possible to have prosperity for both owners and workers and the diminution of poverty and the alleviation of human suffering. For Taylor, the solution to feudalistic sweatshop factories was to convince/influence employee and employer, to demonstrate that through scientific experimentation, healthy work conditions and expertly-designed work processes -- workers would toil fewer hours, with more rest breaks, and at higher pay, and thereby gain efficiency, while the firm enjoyed the fruits of sharp increases in production.

Is it possible to theorize radical change within capitalism without looking at the question of living wages? Recently, 45 academics submitted a research proposal to scientifically test Smith's, Marx's, and Taylor's options in the apparel industry (Boje et al, 2000b). That is to move from what is called "extreme Taylorism" managing work processes with central control and high division of

labor, to what Taylor had originally described, a system of work that is productive for employers and prosperous for employees. And to what Smith described as a living wage and what Marx saw as a way to empower workers through active participation in worker democracy. Dare we think of moving beyond Taylorism to more post-Taylor work processes and condition where the individual (and the collective) is more important than the work system? We believe this is an attainable objective for global enterprise, its subcontractors, global workforce, customers, investors and other stakeholders. To better understand influence it is necessary to spend a bit of time to show the Tamara of narratives and theatrics that are played out on the global stage. Will the athletic footwear industry let us enter the factory?

Finally, a Critical Postmodern Organization Science is about new forms of ethics and science. It is a critique of consumerism, materialism, and sweatshop ethics. Tamara moves the discussion of ethics between classic philosophy interests in the virtues and universals, the modern ethics of "free market" economics, and the postmodern ethics in the work of Bauman (1989, 1993, 1995). Moving from consumptive and materialist ethics that legitimate sweatshop production and consumption to convivia ethics will take a good deal of dialog and work. Entering into dialog with the Biotech industries to look at the narrative ethics (Newton, 1995) of these new patterns of production and consumption will take even more discursive skill.

Life and work in late capitalism requires the dialogic sciences of Tamara.

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