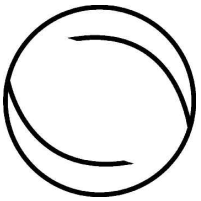

Carnival and Spectacle in *Krewe de Vieux* and the *Mystic Krewe of Spermes*: The Mingling of Organization and Celebration

Gazi Islam, Michael J. Zyphur and David Boje

Abstract

This is an ethnographic study of the *Mystic Krewe of Spermes*, which does float construction and a parade for Mardis Gras in New Orleans. We compare spectacular and carnivalesque elements of the organization in its preparation for and enactment of the annual parade. We show that both system-maintaining spectacular theatrics and system-challenging carnivalesque protest govern the event, which at once leads to opposition and tension, as well as acceptance and renewal within the krewe and its local audience. We discuss implications for critical organization studies, and the importance of the krewe as an indigenous organizational form.

Keywords: spectacle, carnival, organizational resistance, organizational change, organizational irony

Gazi Islam
Ibmec São Paulo, Brazil

Michael J. Zyphur
University of Washington Bothell, USA

David Boje
New Mexico State University, USA

Introduction

'The common people's carnival — with its subversion of the dominant order, wild dancing, and festive transgressions, iconoclastic celebration of freedom through cross dressing, 'obscenity', and other behavior offensive to genteel Americans — was relegated to the back streets and ignored by the press.' (Smith 1994)

'It is hereby decreed that melancholy be put to route, and joy unconfined seize our subjects, young and old of all genders and degrees ... that the spirit of make-believe descend upon the realm and banish from the land the dull and the humdrum and the commonplace of daily existence.' (Public proclamation by King of Mardi Gras [Rex] 1967)

Krewe de Vieux (KdV) is a Mardis Gras krewe created when a parade through the French Quarter of New Orleans by the Krewe of Clones (KoC) was denied permission to march by the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD); the reason given: the 1986 'Super Bowl' traffic concerns. As the KoC and its sub-krewes represented a carnivalesque tradition of local culture parodying the demands of corporatized spectacle events, two sub-krewes of KoC decided to march in opposition. Upon reports of the transgression, 12 NOPD patrol cars sped to the scene of the mini-parade, forcing marchers off the street and onto the sidewalk, where they continued to march for the length of the parade route

Organization Studies
29(12): 1565–1589
ISSN 0170–8406

DOI: 10.1177/0170840608098772

— escorted by the NOPD. Building on this event of rebellion, KdV was formed shortly thereafter to keep alive the ancient tradition which is Mardis Gras carnival. Since its inception, KdV has secured a position marching through the French Quarter each year — the only krewe allowed to march through the historic area — two Saturdays before the official Mardi Gras (i.e. 'Fat Tuesday').

This article is an exploration of carnivalesque organization. Specifically, our study focuses upon one sub-krewe of the KdV: the Mystic Krewe of Spermes (MKS). This sub-krewe was begun by a melange of graduate students and professors — although its current membership is not limited to the university community. We explore how its members revitalize the ancient carnivalesque tradition of the Middle Ages, when carnival was about social commentary through parody and satire, and was meant to facilitate the disinhibition of free self-expression. Our thesis is that Mardis Gras and local culture have been largely reified into spectacle, and that the rebellious sub-krewe we studied boldly reinscribed the kinds of carnivalesque tradition that folklorist Francois Rabelais (1532/1873) and Mikhail Bakhtin (1968) expressed in their writings. The remainder of this paper takes the following route. First, we provide an overview of the theoretical foundations of our work, drawing on diverse literatures in sociology and anthropology in addition to organization studies. Next, we offer a contextual background of the site studied, with a brief introduction to Mardi Gras in general and an outline of the historical progression of the KdV. This outline focuses on the KdV as organizing out of resistance to commercial interests in New Orleans and developing into a unique Mardi Gras entity. We then describe our methods, elaborating on sources of data and giving a description of the organizational makeup of MKS. In our findings, we lay out the study as it relates to the grotesque in political satire, then to the travesty of sacred texts, and finally at ambivalence of the actors and spectators to the carnival. This is followed by a discussion of the carnival in terms of its implications for critical and postmodern organization studies.

Theoretical Tensions in the Study of Social Action

Mystic Krewe of Spermes (MKS) is an example of the critical management study of carnival, an area in which there have only been a few examinations (e.g. Boje 2001; Oswick et al. 2000; Rhodes 2001). Following these previous works, and by localizing the study of carnival within the larger context of the study of social action in general, we may clarify the social-theoretic roots of the current work. We broadly frame these roots within the grand debate between system-reinforcing and system-transformational views of symbolic action (e.g. Durkheim 1961; Turner 1969), reflected in organizational treatments of stability and change of status quo structures and norms (e.g. Leanna and Barry 2000).

To explain the creation of consensus within pre-modern societies, Durkheim (1961) discussed the importance of ceremonial displays. Similarly, many key figures in the study of ritual saw periodic, organized social displays (of which Mardi Gras is an obvious example) as maintaining social roles and norms. For example, Van Gennep (1909/1960) notes patterned, recurring social behavior as structuring role transitions throughout the lives of individuals. Turner (1969), in

addition, saw the importance of communal symbolic behavior in maintaining order, stressing the communal bond or *communitas* as a functional objective of social events.

At the same time, these key thinkers recognized a basic tension within patterned, ritualistic social enactments. For example, Van Gennep (1909/1960) saw rituals as attempts to restore equilibrium, with the premise that social orders tend to naturally disintegrate due to individual, group, and environmental changes. Similarly, Turner viewed social displays as ways of negotiating between stability and revolutionary change, while Durkheim doubted the ordering function of carnivals, asserting that 'an ordered tumult remains a tumult' (Durkheim 1961, cited in Piette 1992: 37). Finally, Moore and Myerhoff (1977), similar to Turner, saw repeated social enactments, such as carnivals, as not only reinforcing and maintaining social structures and relations, but also as able to shift these structures and relations by reframing how issues are seen by participants:

> 'It is our contention that certain formal properties of that category of events ordinarily called collective ritual (or ceremony) all lend themselves singularly well to making ritual a "traditionalizing instrument" ... collective ceremony can traditionalize new material as well as perpetuate old traditions.' (Moore and Myerhoff 1977: 7)

This tension between order and disorder appears in later organizational theory, where both system-maintenance functions (e.g. Van Maanen 1975; Vaught and Smith 1980) and system-transformational functions (e.g. Gephart 1978) appear as central aspects of symbolic enactments in organizations. A possible explanation for the apparently contrary effects of social action is that such actions can sometimes backfire, opening up possibilities through their enactment that were not part of the original function of the enactment (Moore and Myerhoff 1977). Cases of backfiring socialization processes are well documented in the organizational literature, where, for example, socialization techniques may produce rebellion or disdain (Hallier and James 1999; Pratt 2000); or committee membership for opposing groups, intended to placate oppositional voices, may unintentionally provide those groups with discursive power (Conrad 1983). Such risk of true system change is particularly relevant in the study of carnival, where the 'tumult' that Durkheim described may spill over the boundaries of social control, and the passion, violence, and proliferation of illicit activities may result in a dilution or diversion, rather than reinforcement, of social categories.

Carnival and Spectacle

While the literature on carnival in organizations is small, it is ubiquitous in its debt to the foundational work of Mikhail Bakhtin. The work of Rhodes (2001, 2002), for example, used Bakhtin's (1981) notion of carnival to explain the transgressive humor of television shows such as *The Simpsons* (Rhodes 2001) and *South Park* (Rhodes 2002). Rhodes's work draws additionally upon Eco's (1984) treatment of limited carnival, suggesting that limited spaces of transgression meet popular demand while limiting transgressive effects to within a television screen. Boje, also drawing on Bahktin, concords with this diagnosis, asserting that 'Contemporary carnival is more controlled, a safer theater than ones in the Middle Ages' (Boje 2001: 438). However, Boje's analysis allows for

non-televised, open manifestations such as sit-ins and parody shows as carnival, contrasting these acts with the mass-numbing performance of collective spectacle. We continue this comparison, using the ideas of carnival and spectacle to analyze a Mardi Gras krewe. Thus, we begin with a brief discussion of the theoretical aspects of carnival (Bakhtin 1968) and spectacle (Debord 1967).

During the Middle Ages and into early Renaissance, spectacle, festival, and carnival were distinguishable spheres of discourse. For Bakhtin (1968: 8–9), festival was 'agrarian in nature', including the comic elements of the 'pagan feast' and a celebration of 'cyclical time', and was utopian in its appeal to 'community, freedom, equality, and abundance'. Spectacle, on the other hand, was progress time, and 'betrayed and distorted' what was 'the true nature of human festivity' into the official storyline (1968: 9). 'The men [and women] of the Middle Ages participated in two lives: the official and the carnival life' (Bakhtin 1968: 96). Bakhtin (1968: 9) viewed carnival as 'moments of death and revisal, of change and renewal' that stood in-between spectacle and festival, accomplishing societal renewal using the billingsgate of marketplace humor. With the advent of modernity, the power-elite stopped attending carnival. Yet, for Bakhtin, long ago the spheres of spectacle, festival, and carnival were separate parts of an overall social system of metamorphosis and renewal (Boje and Cai 2004). We would like to suggest that although festival and carnival have been appropriated by the spectacle of marketplace capitalism, here and there, and quite rarely, there is still some interplay between spectacle, carnival, and festival.

> 'Because of their obvious sensuous character and their strong element of play, carnival images closely resemble certain artistic forms, namely the spectacle. In turn, medieval spectacles often tended toward carnival folk culture, the culture of the marketplace, and to a certain extent became one of its components. But the basic carnival nucleus of this culture is by no means a purely artistic form nor a spectacle and does not, generally speaking, belong to the sphere of art. It belongs to the borderline between art and life. In reality, it is life itself, but shaped accordingly to a certain pattern of play.' (Bakhtin 1968: 7)

It is this carnival nucleus of the social system of marketplace play that we seek to explore. Mystic Krewe of Spermes, we argue, uses 'numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanation, comic crownings, and uncrownings' (Bakhtin 1968: 11); it uses an ambivalent carnivalesque laughter that is 'also directed at those who laugh' (1968: 12). In short, MKS does not place itself as a bystander, but belongs to the spectacle marketplace.

Further, Bakhtin's ideas about spectacle predate and anticipate Guy Debord's (1967) *Society of the Spectacle*, a treatise to move Marxism from the accumulation of production to contemporary issues of spectacle. Debord argues that modern society has traded authenticity for commodified, pastiche forms of authenticity. In this perspective, the reality of the subject is objectified as images, traded among people to create, extend, and reify social relations. Thus, what appears as social transgression may be, following Debord, a force which itself serves to reinforce existing hierarchies. Stated differently, hierarchies may clothe themselves as participatory and empancipatory, making it difficult to tell the true empancipatory value of a movement. In such a view, MKS may serve not to subvert hegemony, but may simply recodify it in a libertine guise.

What Bakhtin (1968: 20) adds to Debord's critique is the role of grotesque realism, the way 'not only parody in its narrower sense but all the other forms of grotesque realism degrade, bring down to earth, turn their subject into flesh'. Grotesque realism means 'to hurl an object down to the reproductive lower stratum, the zone in which conception and a new birth take place' in the 'bodily grave (belly, bowels, earth)' (1968: 21–22); '[T]he grotesque image reflects a phenomenon in transformation, an as yet unfinished metamorphosis, of death and birth, growth and becoming' (1968: 24). It is in this conception of renewal that the 'gay popular spectacle of the marketplace' undergoes transformation in the 'regenerating flames of carnival' (1968: 393–394).

We argue that grotesque realism is important for several reasons. First, using the grotesque has often been linked with de-emphasizing cultural expression as a vehicle for elite values, and asserting the local, vulgar, and commonplace (e.g. Rhodes 2001). Dominant cultural systems have often been studied as taming or channeling bodily functions (Aho 2002; Elias 2000), transforming into cultural processes basic mechanisms of food ingestion, digestion, and excretion (e.g. Mosko 1991), and channeling sexuality into normative categories (e.g. Bordo 1989). The enculturation of bodily process here reflects a basic form of cultural control, the basis for cultural resource procurement and sharing (food metabolism) as well as kinship systems (sexuality). In light of these anthropological treatments of bodily processes, the social display of bodily fluids and orifices put to non-traditional uses is not simply 'shock value', or rather, the shock value itself is not atheoretical, but is shocking only in light of the very norms that such displays flout.

In addition, the use of grotesque realism during carnival is constitutive of what Bakhtin (1968) referred to as 'cyclical time', a temporal orientation focused on the metabolistic properties of feast and harvest rather than the linear progression of unfettered growth. According to Bakhtin, 'degradation digs a bodily grave for a new birth; it has not only a destructive, negative aspect, but also a regenerating one ... Grotesque realism knows no other level; it is the fruitful earth and the womb. It is always conceiving' (1968: 21). The notion of cyclical regeneration has been used in the study of ritual in opposition to modern linear conceptions of time (e.g. Eliade 1954). The theoretical importance of cyclical time provides a counterpoint to Schumpeter's (1975) classic formulation of 'creative destruction'; carnival represents a 're-creative' destruction, the breaking of traditional institutions not to give way to the radically new, but to recycle and replenish the eternally old. As we will see below, the KdV and Spermes sub-krewe were rife with symbolism pertaining to cyclicality, birth, and fertility.

Often through its explicit content, our study of MKS addresses questions relevant to organization studies. Particularly, our approach raises the central question: in what ways does the MKS parade reintroduce the ancient idea of carnival that satirizes and parodies the mainstream? Alternatively, in what ways do the krewe celebrations perform a system-reinforcing 'safety valve' function? In other words, are exhortations to 'come on down, let's have some fun!', 'sperm gone wild!', and such, just part of the Bourbon Street commercial spectacle, or is there deep transformative potential in these acts? This difference between safety-valve and social moment functions has been noted elsewhere in the literature (e.g. Humphrey 2001; Kinser 1990); because of the unique positioning of

MKS within the Mardi Gras event, we argue that this krewe manifests tension between these two functions in interesting ways. In short, we seek to tease out where MKS is satiric carnival versus spectacle illusion.

Method: Background of Site and Data Collection

While there is debate regarding its origin, modern-day carnival was a time for cyclic, ritualized indulgence in Greece, Rome, and medieval Europe (Schindler 1997). Following the Latin *carnelevare* (to lift or to remove meat), Mardis Gras was originally called *boeuf gras* ('fat cow') and marked a day of feasting before Lent — although the ritualized feasting often began long before Mardis Gras itself (Schindler 1997).

Mardis Gras, and the carnival preceding it, burgeoned into a series of parades and masquerade balls that allowed for revelry and social protest in the south-eastern United States (Tallant 1989). For example, following the US civil war, krewes of masked 'Indians' and paraders in black-face protested racial discrimination in New Orleans (Smith and Govenar 1994). More recently, Mardi Gras has been a site for protest for the rights of homosexuals (Gill 1997). Despite such protest, by the middle of the 1970s, Mardis Gras had become largely a tourist attraction, with large floats and celebrities meant to generate revenue for New Orleans (Kinser 1990). It is with this background that we introduce KdV and MKS.

Following the dissolution of the KoC in 1986 with the 'Super Bowl' incident described above, the KoC sub-krewes and various other individuals banded together to form KdV. Many of these individuals were not simply discontented with events like the Super Bowl, but viewed the traditional Mardis Gras skeptically as a way to pacify the populous and generate profit. Indeed, the very name of 'Krewe de Vieux' (crew of old) attempts to revive an age before consumerist spectacle, and, paradoxically, furthers political protest through the invocation of a Mardi Gras tradition prior to commercialization. Krewe de Vieux, as the 'mother' krewe, is funded by dues and organized around meetings at local bars. New members are recruited through informal and highly decoupled networks. The organization also does fundraising to finance its activities, such as a beer-brewing contest. Sub-krewes have manuals of etiquette, practices, norms, and rules that they disperse among their new members.

We should emphasize that, as a carnivalesque flaunting of anti-institutional norms, KdV focuses on themes which may be offensive in most contexts. Floats extravagantly portray political and religious figures in sexual acts, reflecting alternative sexual preferences including, for example, fornication with animals. Floats with exaggerated penises and banners say things like 'drips and discharges' and 'year of the cock' (see Figure 1).

There is cross-dressing and a general challenge to traditional sexual mores that includes outlandish allusions and *jeux de mots*. Particular to the Krewe of Spermes — itself a parody on the more traditional Mardis Gras 'Krewe of Hermes' — past themes include 'Stuffing the Bush Ballot Box' and 'Carnal-val Cruises' (with inebriated sailors wearing outfits labeled 'wasted seamen'). The

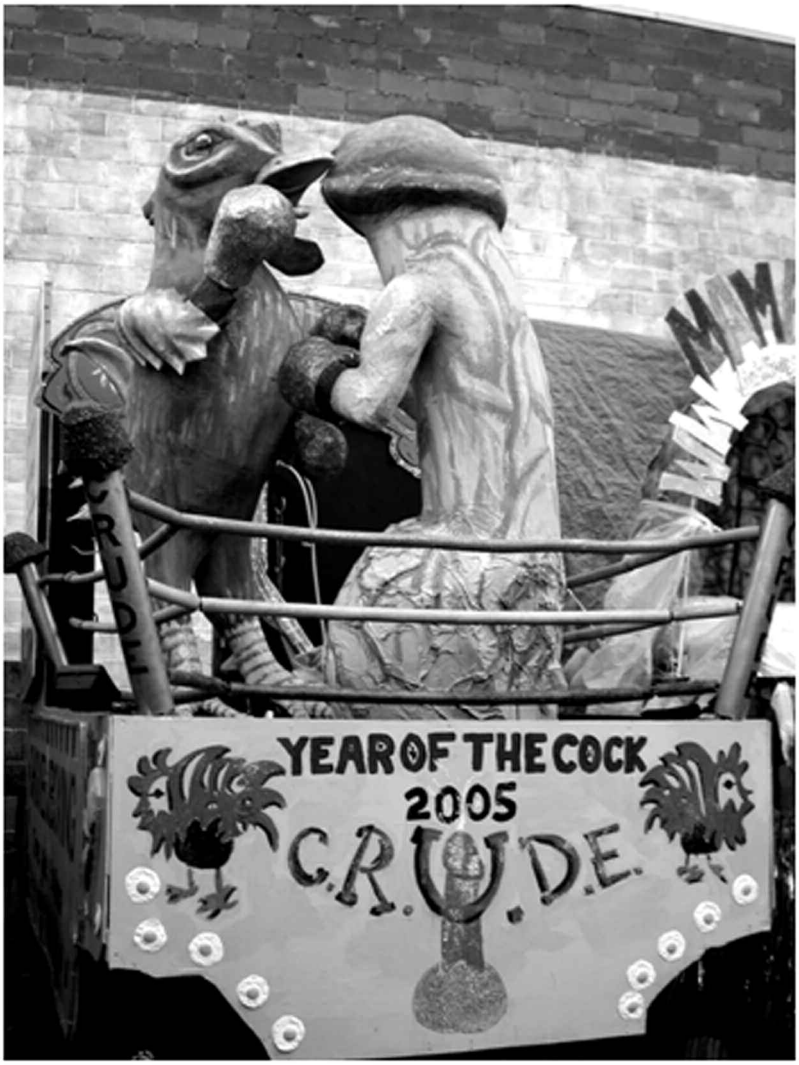

Figure 1.
A float from a Krewe de Vieux sub-krewe (the Krewe of C.R.U.D.E.)

current year's theme was 'Turning Wad into Wine', with an enormous Christ figure ejaculating a white-glowing stream which turned to red as it was caught by a bejeweled golden chalice.

In short, what we view as organization, societal parody, and satire, others may readily view as pornographic. Not only sexual, KdV and MKS parody political and religious symbols, with signs saying 'Lost Commandments: Burning Bushes' or 'What would Jesus Bomb?' (see Figure 2). Some people are dressed in President Bush and Vice-President Cheney masks, wearing a papal crown or bishop's cap (see Figure 3). Some parades feature tank replicas with signs reading 'sponsored by Hali-bear-ton' (see Figure 4). In addition, some break racial/sexual taboos against mixed-group marriage. In sum, these costumes and floats are meant to be provocative.

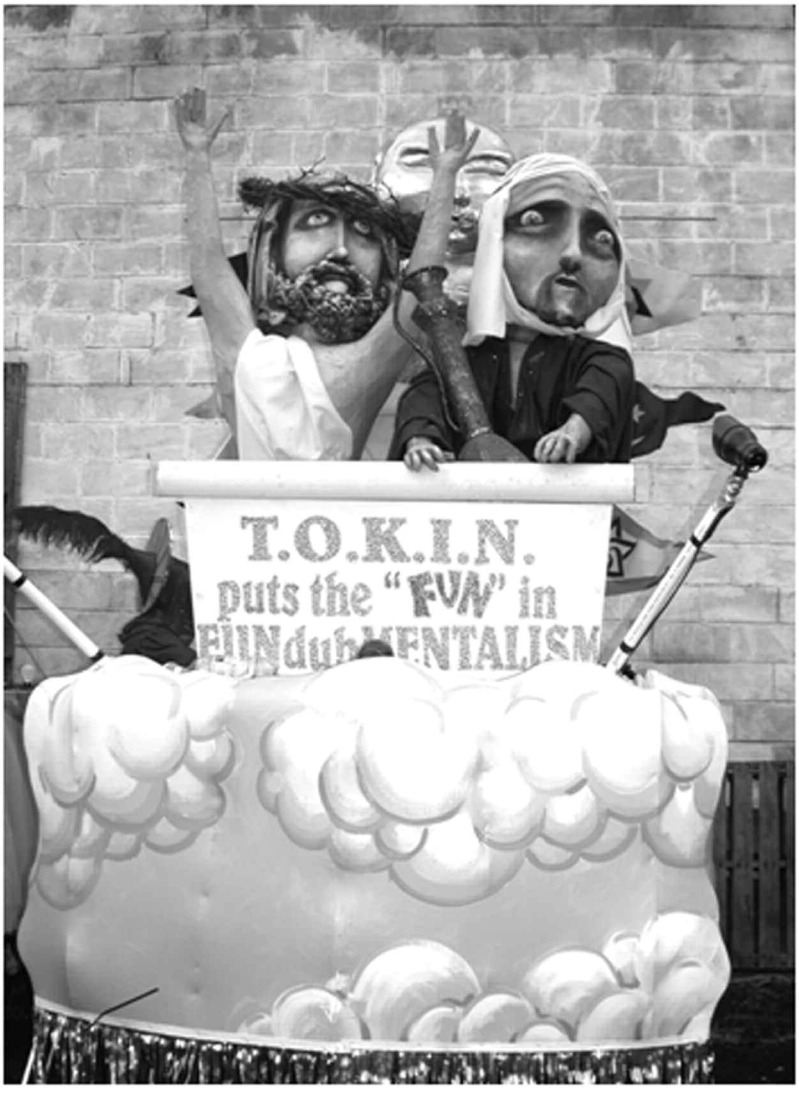

Figure 2.
A float of the Krewe of T.O.K.I.N. showing a Christ figure and disciples smoking cannabis; inscription reads 'T.O.K.I.N. puts the 'FUN' in FUNduhMENTALISM'

Given the nature of the organizational data described above, one may ask if our own article is too controversial, dealing with body parts and fluids and grotesque humor. In defense of our presentation of taboo, we note that several key works in the academic cannon have emphasized taking on the very frames of reference implicit in the subjects involved, thus using narrative to participate in the traditions under study. This is apparent in such classic works as Geertz's (1973) 'penetrating' exploration of the Balinese Cockfight as 'deep play', and De Andrade's (1970) 'Anthropophagy Manifesto'. Thus, some degree of grotesqueness is called for so as not to betray one's subject matter under the guise of academic style.

Figure 3.
A portrayal of US President and Vice-president, Bush and Cheney, dressed as despots

Figure 4.
Hali-Bear-Ton,' a play on the corporate giant Halliburton. Below the float reads 'Bear the consequences'.

Data were collected during formal and informal events leading up to, and including, the MKS parade on Mardi Gras day (as mentioned above, the second, informal parade after the official KdV event two weeks earlier). The first two authors had participated in MKS for four years prior to the beginning of data collection, and began participant observations with note-taking in September of

2004, concluding data collection in March of 2005. During this time, all KdV and MKS functions, including monthly meetings, were attended and notes were taken at these meetings by the second author. All KdV meetings were held at the 'Rock n' Bowl', a local jazz-bar bowling-alley. At these meetings, two representatives were present from each sub-krewe. Because the second author was not an official krewe representative, he did not participate but only took notes.

The MKS meetings were held at a local bar called 'Cooter Brown's', traditionally the meeting place for MKS. There were a total of two meetings, meant to allow idea generation and consensus formation for the year's float theme. For these meetings, the first two authors participated vigorously and took notes concurrently. Finally, the main KdV social event, the 'Krewe de Vieux Brew Doo' — the official KdV fund-raising beer brew — which occurred approximately midway through the planning process, was attended, and KdV members from a variety of sub-krewes were asked about the significance of KdV for them, and to describe briefly KdV's fundamental mission. For most photographic data presented here, a freelance photographer was employed to document pre-parade festivities and the pre-march itself. However, photographic material dealing with the Mardis Gras day march was collected from MKS members after the festivities.

Results

Grotesque Realism in Political Satire

There are many examples to suggest that MKS is, in part, a revival of the Rabelaisian heritage of grotesque humor. According to Bakhtin (1968), medieval cultures used 'grotesque realism' to link the cosmic, the cultural, and the physical, bringing the pretension of grandiose culture to the level of the community. The Rabelaisian grotesque was thus a fundamentally populist reply to aristocratic appropriation of cultural forms, a protest against regulation and taboo through the celebration of filth and the praise of folly (see also Masters 1969; Schwartz 1990).

For example, when asked at the 'Brew Doo' what KdV meant to them, participants gave responses such as 'I like the donkeys', 'Vomit, a lot of vomit', 'Unadulterated sperm in the street', and 'The big penis that skates' (the last response being an allusion to an actual character present at the Brew Doo). These responses employed corporeal images inappropriate for 'civilized' discussion. Alternative sexual practices (the donkey), oft-unacknowledged corporeal functions (the vomit, the sperm), and hidden body parts (the penis) all fit together in a kind of synthetic unity of the taboo. In this way, even in the explicit materiality of the themes present in the Krewe, each may be substituted for each without loss of meaning, because they all derived their meaning from the grotesque realist principle of exposure of the hidden.

During the KdV meeting, the use of the grotesque as an explicit technique of political criticism became very evident. The following excerpts, for example, from a poll (double entendre acknowledged during the meeting) taken to

determine the parade's overall theme, demonstrate how the use of sexual metaphors are used to parody political events, including the US presidential election and the war in Iraq:

'How about "shriveled liberties!"'
'Uncivil liberties!'
'Electile dysfunction!'
'Weapons of mass distraction!'
'How about "The Iraqtion?" Something with penises and Iraq?'
'No, I've got it, let's go after the Bush daughters!'
'How about "Bush Polls his Daughters?"'
'Polling the Bush Women!'
'Spermes Promises to Pull-Out?'
'Ah! "Iraqtile Dysfunction!"'

The determining of a theme for the Krewe thus followed a logic of the grotesque that was overtly political, directing sexual innuendo towards topics usually discussed seriously. From the ubiquitous way in which such themes were tossed out by all members of the meeting, there seemed to be assent that sexualizing things such as war and political oppression was an appropriate way to post a public critique of policy. We may turn to Bakhtin once again to understand why this may be the case.

Following Bakhtin's (1968) conceptualization, the explicit flaunting of sexual and corporeal aspects forms part of both festival and carnivalesque projects of reinserting the material into cultural processes. Notions of food and feast (festival, carnival) were manifest in the open sharing of food and alcohol among subkrewes and the open drinking of the participants during the march. This tradition echoes Rabelais' *Gargantua*, where the birth of a new society is marked by feast and drink (Masters 1969). Similarly, notions of sexuality and fertility (Spermes) echo the medieval functions of fertility ritual during carnival described by Bakhtin: the attempt to celebrate the material fecundity of a culture through the lavish openness of consumption and libertine exposure. For example, the MKS march on Mardis Gras day is a procession of sperms-on-sticks, following a glowing orb which is 'The Egg' from Uptown New Orleans toward the French Quarter (see Figure 5).

In this sense, perhaps it is no coincidence that the frontline band for the parade each year is the local brass band 'Rebirth', sometimes mingling members with its offshoot, 'New Birth'. In a similar vein, we might extend our analysis to the name 'Spermes', which not only parodies 'Hermes', but does so in such a way as to emphasize the corporeal and material over the formal and representational.

Bakhtin's description of the vulgar, in this respect, can be informative. The standpoint displayed in carnivalesque vulgarity is not one of distancing but of rapprochement. Following Bakhtin's analysis, this vulgarity is akin to the linguistic familiarity of informal language between friends, who use vulgar language that is often sexual or corporeal in nature, but this very vulgarity is a sign of the closeness of the parties involved, and marks their closeness by the unmasking of formally inappropriate forms of communion.

Figure 5. Spermes chase 'The Egg' toward the French Quarter on Mardis Gras day.

Such ritual degradation should not be seen as aiming to destroy political forms, but rather to bring these forms down to earth, captivating them at the level of local material culture. In this sense, sexuality in carnivalesque forms is semiotically opposed to formalized sexuality in spectacular events. For example, Barthes (1970) described the sexuality of striptease as antisexual and distancing, and the notion of the 'objectifying' nature of sexual exposure has an elaborate history in the academic literature (e.g. De Beauvoir 1952; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). This use of the body in an objectifying way seems well embodied in mainstream Mardi Gras parades, where the 'King and Queen' of the krewes stand on tall platforms, intricately adorned and masked (Kinser 1990). The opposite is the case with KdV, whose 'subjectification' of the body emphasizes the exposure and celebration of bodies of all shapes and sizes, adding caricatured bodily enhancements, and turning on its head the traditional norms of physical beauty (see Figure 6).

Travesty of the Official and the Privileging of the Informal

As Bakhtin describes, the marketplace was at one time 'the marketplace [that] was the center of all that was unofficial' (Bakhtin 1968: 153–154). This attempt to emphasize the unofficial was clear in the krewe's organizing activities. The krewe had leaders (captains) and, like all Mardi Gras krewes, had the tradition of a 'king'; however, unlike mainstream krewes, these positions were stripped of absolute authority and essentially functioned as coordination mechanisms rather than figures of reverence. In addition, 'kings' were chosen democratically. The

Figure 6.
Exaggerated female genitalia

following discourse from the selection process of the king of the parade demonstrates the unofficial and highly sacrilegious aspect of this process:

'OK, let's vote on royalty: They must not have an entourage, they must not feel like royalty! They must be able to make fun of themselves!'
'How about a New Orleans historian?'
'[let's choose] Rick ... he really celebrates the Mardis Gras tradition, the culture, the history, etc.'
'How about a public official?'
'How about Dick Cheney!' (*laughter!*)
'Only if he has chains and bells on!' (*everyone laughs!)*
'How about Condoleeza Rice?! She can bring her oil tanker!'

The deliberate flaunting of the idea of using public officials as krewe leaders reinforces the emphasis on keeping local, traditional (but not institutionalized) actors central to the values of the krewe.

Similarly, one thing observed was that unofficial critiques of marketplace ideology are no longer at the center of the marketplace; their consumption is peripheral and for locals. That these critiques remain unofficial is key to the mission of the MKS and KdV in general — in essence, that which is official is the object of KdV parody, and thus the critique must be couched in a performative, rather than declarative, manner. Damatta (1991), in his comparison between Brazilian and New Orleanian carnivals, noted the highly structured, hierarchy-enhancing aspects of the latter, due to the divorce of large krewes from local neighborhoods and their alliance with socioeconomic groups — further, it is well known in New Orleans that joining a large, 'official' Mardis Gras krewe is relatively expensive. Thus, it makes sense that an interruption of spectacle would be held peripherally to major krewes, centered around local culture, and temporally distant from Mardi Gras day.

It is no surprise, then, that KdV (and only this krewe) runs past the historic French Market — one of the oldest markets in the United States. What is resurrected in the KdV is not anticapitalist sentiment per se, but a kind of celebratory atmosphere that at once challenges contemporary capitalism and harkens back to an imagined past where the market was a place for liberty and expression. Hence the tension within the movement of the Krewe: it both embodies and critiques the drive to organization and institution. Conducting the carnival in the festive marketplace with a carnival crowd, while parodying corporate spectacle, can be a force of transformation and social renewal. However, the 'Krewe of Old' is by no means progressive; it remains tied to cyclical tradition of social revel, and while its spectacular elements note what a 'fun break' the parade is, its carnivalesque elements make a very serious statement with their march (see Figures 7 and 8).

For a carnivalesque procession is not a 'break' from the social world at all, but rather its creative principle, the yet undefined act of cohesion and movement out of which formalities and structures can later draw their momentum. The mesh of colors, costumes, and contradictions within the parade — at first glance seeming to give no inroad into a coherent social system — by their very arbitrariness frame their social protest: anything goes, including the mainstream. Thus, in a past year, even MTV (i.e. the Music Television Network) sent young women to march with KdV in an attempt to capture the 'real' Mardis Gras. This addition generated heated dialogue, but the KdV captains ultimately agreed. The MTV contingent began the parade with high spirits, but complained of the cold rain during the parade, dancing warily astray of projectiles and around the vomit of the Spermes captain, and finishing the parade on a more subdued note. They did not repeat the march the following year.

The clearest example of the travesty of the sacred, however, is the *second* MKS march, the unsanctioned and illegal annual appearance of the Spermes on Mardi Gras day. In this event, MKS leaves behind even the KdV, and marches alongside large 18-wheeler semi-trucks that are decorated as floats. At a strategic point between uptown and downtown, the Spermes break through the parade

Figure 7.
An exaggerated, inflatable male genital and a cross-dressing woman

Figure 8.
The Mystic Krewe of Spermes marching during the Krewe de Vieux parade

barrier and march between the official floats, until they are, inevitably, escorted off the route by municipal police (we note here that the MKS as a whole, or individual members themselves, may attempt multiple other break-ins). They then (re)organize and head into the French Quarter, continuing the march until

Figure 9.
The Mystic Krewe of Spermes float during the Krewe de Vieux parade

they eventually dissipate into smaller clusters over the course of the next several hours. The on-parade trespass typically lasts between 30 seconds and 20 minutes — during the current study, MKS marched for approximately 5 minutes before being expelled.

Ambivalence of Spectators and Actors

More so than the later, more grandiose parades, KdV muddles the distinction between spectator and actor. First, it is ground level. While the larger parades' participants stand on tractor-pulled floats, the Spermes march on foot, their vulgar float pulled by donkey (see Figure 9).

As pedestrians, the only thing that distinguished them from the crowd were their costumes (although the spectators are often also in costumes) and their wooden, papier-mâché sperm-topped batons, which they often let stray into the crowd and sometimes lost to avid spectators. Often, outsiders joined the parade; although they had not paid, no one complained, and many were given baton 'spermes' to carry. At the ground level, actors shared kisses and embraces with the crowd, often exchanging personal items such as jackets, hats, shoes, or flasks, when paraders ran out of beads. Often the parade stopped momentarily, and MKS members ran into local bars to use the toilets. In general, this highly interactive nature of the parade may work to blur the boundaries of the organization, in contrast to traditional parades, where breaking the parade line would be unthinkable. However, this does not prevent the establishment of tight identity bonds between MKS members, many of whom chanted 'Spermes' loudly throughout the entire parade. Similarly, during the Mardi Gras day march, many spectators were surprised to see a new krewe suddenly emerge onto the parade route on foot. While MKS threw beads to the crowd, many threw beads to the krewe (notably, during the current study, krewe members were also given barbecued chicken by a friendly spectator), a practice that would be unheard of in mainstream krewes and which highlights the ambiguity of role distinctions between audience and krewe members.

The interchange between organizational members and spectators had political implications in KdV vis a vis the larger, more mainstream krewes. While typical Mardi Gras floats are manned with masked, indistinguishable figures of nobility — an elite *other* that distinguishes itself from the populous — KdV and its sub-krewes sent a fundamentally democratic message: the institution does not hover over the people but dances among them, relying on them to provide beverages along the way and giving *and* receiving alms. For there is no doubt that Mardi Gras is an institution, and its progression seems at once like a drunken chaos and like the progression of a society through time. If there is a cultural signifier embedded in the flow of the parade through the crowd, KdV added content to the abstraction of the institution, filling it with faces, in a move that is subversive because it shows that there is nothing special or other-worldly about being in the parade. This emergence of democratic culture from the 'bottom up' coheres with classic treatments of carnival culture, such as Damatta's (1991) exploration of Afro-Brazilian carnival tradition, and fits into his conception of carnival as a radically equalizing social ritual.

While, above, we have been discussing the ambivalence between actors and spectators across MKS boundaries, it is also important to point out the ambivalence between actor and spectator roles within the krewe itself. That is, when questioned at the Brew Doo, some organizational members saw the KdV as 'quintessential New Orleans', typifying and coding the event as in a spectacle. In another example, a member described the event as, 'sperm gone wild', an intertextual reference to the spectacle-laden 'Girls Gone Wild'. Others refused such typification, describing KdV only by making non-referential but highly agentic remarks, such as 'We are the Kazoozie Floozies', a statement that refuses to place the author outside of the event, but presents her as defined within it. Similarly, it became apparent that both carnivalesque and spectacular elements coexist in the krewe, and that, because of the subtle difference between representation/reification and parody, it is sometimes difficult to tell the difference. For example, the statement, 'I go for the *one* moment, it's pure joy and ecstasy … I do it all for that one moment', as stated by one krewe member, seems to embody the carnivalesque essence of MKS. However, the somewhat similar statement, 'Work hard, play hard', by another member, seems not only to miss the existential moment in the first, but to deliberately set up the debauchery as a system-reinforcing element, a 'venting' that modern capitalism provides its workers so that they can go back to work after the party is over. In this way, a self-satirical play was set into motion within the krewe, with carnival actors refusing to comment on, and thus typify, their own political action; ironically, spectacular actors rave about the marvels of carnival, freezing into discourse the carnival that unfolds around them.

In sum, carnivalesque irony was the basic organizing force. This irony was one that used a critical ideology and a good deal of ambivalence about one's own role in the spectacle. At the very least, the MKS carnival humor purifies the 'false seriousness' (Damatta 1991: 141) of the Mardis Gras commercial spectacle.

Implications for Critical Organization Studies

While much of organizational studies is about the corporation, we think that MKS is an important organization to study because of the ironic yet serious nature of its activism and the 'deep play' (Geertz 1973) behind its ad hoc organizing. Under 'the camouflage of laughter and fun', MKS engages in societal and corporate critique (Bakhtin 1968: 90). Perhaps we may add to Bakhtin's observation by noting that, in essence, *the laughter and fun are the very forms which embody and enact social transformation.*

Critical and postmodern organization studies has long attempted to find, under the 'crystallized forms' of structural organization (Haraway 1991), the ongoing process of organization that maintains social bonds and leads to new and innovative social forms and interpretive schemes (e.g. Daft and Weick 1984; Kellogg et al. 2002). In recent literature, for example, collective action through grassroots and other forms of social organizing has been acknowledged as key to the organizational innovation process (e.g. Hargrave and Van de Ven 2006). The MKS provides an illuminating case of such organizing and its effects in refreshing the wellsprings of social tradition. In MKS, we see both traditional repetition and creativity; the organization maintains its integrity year after year, even through high turnover, infrequent meetings, and loose organizational boundaries. In an organizational world that increasingly emphasizes loose boundaries, diverse constituencies, and creative innovation, MKS holds lessons that can be applied to organizing. For example, Hargrave and Van de Ven argue convincingly that collective action works dialectically to shape cognitive frames and thus to influence existing institutions. Our study complements this point of view by showing how collective action can *disrupt* larger institutional frames and thus make space for alternative practices within those frames, without necessarily providing alternative frames.

Similarly, a key theme in critical and postmodern organizational studies, and social theory more generally, has been the relationship between traditional social structures and progressive movements. Framing KdV as social renewal and falling back upon the idea of the ancient carnival addresses this persistent theme. Critics of modernist thinking have long pointed out the grand narrative of progress underlying much of modern thought (e.g. Lyotard 1984). In one of the clearest statements of the presupposition of progress, Gadamer describes the 'prejudice against prejudice itself, which *deprives tradition of its power*' (Gadamer 1982: 241). On the other hand, postmodern thinkers, perhaps most notably Foucault (1972), have warned against the unthinking reproduction of entrenched ways of thinking, the reappropriation of tradition in the very act of progress. In this way, we believe that much of postmodern thought has struggled with its own progressiveness, wary of the grand narrative of liberation and yet unwilling to turn to the unquestioned authority of tradition.

The carnivalesque approach of KdV addresses this concern in an interesting way. As described above, KdV hinges its values on the old, the historic quarter, the old market, and the preservation of the 'spirit' of Mardi Gras. The krewe uses the grotesque to affirm the metabolistic, fleshy, fertile, cyclical process of renewal. However, the free-for-all, uncontrolled progression of the parade suggests that this

movement is not a reactionary, conservative one, and does not seek to reinstitutionalize old ways. Rather, the parade suggests both transgression and tradition, and suggests a way to challenge norms without reproducing the idea of a better new world. We believe that the idea of anti-structure as renewal, rather than as progress, is a key contribution to contemporary social-theoretic debates.

For example, the organizational literature on resistance tends to emphasize active opposition to the organizational hierarchy (e.g. Jermier et al. 1994), indirect resistance through cynicism and dis-identification (e.g. Kunda 1992), or, closest to the current study, the 'micro-resistance' of identity creation and symbolic behavior (e.g. Fleming and Spicer 2007). Our study adds the key observation to this literature that resistance can occur *in the very enactment of traditional structures*, a counterintuitive idea that becomes understandable only through the cyclical understanding of ritual ceremonies of renewal. We attempt to show, thus, that not all tradition is status quo-reinforcing; to invert Marshall Sahlins' (1993) assertion that change itself follows a cultural logic, we attempt to show that a tradition can carry the principle of its own transformation.

Third, our analysis revealed paradoxical social ideologies present in the interpretation of MKS activities, a feature of organizational life important in organizational studies (Cooper and Burrell 1988; Eisenhardt 2000; Hatch and Erlich 1993). On the one hand, elements of culture-as-spectacle (Debord 1967) permeated the organization from within as well as externally, pressuring conformity with mainstream Mardi Gras and its corporate sponsors. On the other hand, the grotesque, parodying, carnivalesque ideology (Bakhtin 1968) behind KdV remained alive in the krewe. We found that, through irony, the spectacular was itself absorbed and dissolved in this carnivalesque approach, such that, if the business of spectacle is to colonize the lifeworlds of local actors (cf. Habermas 1981), the carnivalesque in turn acts as a catalyst to erode these colonizing forces. MKS thus points critical scholars toward an important lesson in political activism: rather than fighting colonizing structures with liberating structures, a carnivalesque 'anti-structure' can effectively produce an enclave for the free play of community without degrading into anarchy.

This dialectic between structure and anti-structure provides a useful contrast to, for example, work on organizational rites (e.g. Trice and Beyer 1984; Rosen 1985, 1988). Specifically, the dramaturgical aspects of carnival and spectacle need to be addressed (Rosen 1985, 1988). Rosen's studies are particularly interesting in presenting the converse of our argument, showing how socialization produces commitment, whereas we see it as producing resistant, even rebelliously outrageous behavior. Rosen's point is that anti-structure rebelliousness can lead to counter-structuring, and entrenchment of the status quo. Not disagreeing with this idea, our study informs how carnival allows rebellion without entrenchment.

This point is important to organizational studies because the nascent literature on organizational ceremonies and rituals (e.g. Trice and Beyer 1984; Islam and Zyphur, forthcoming) tends toward functionalist accounts of these phenomena, as organizational strategies that work to promote consensus and harmony. Following Rosen, rituals in these accounts tend to be seen as consolidating organizational values and identities. We show that rituals can also challenge dominant values, originate from below, and produce a plurality of effects.

As implied above, the current study also addresses the long-held preoccupation of critical organization studies with issues of local and grassroots governance (e.g. Woywode 2002; Zald and McCarthy 1987). The emergent and local nature of the KdV provides a striking example of such possibilities. The potential for organizing local social movements that involve diverse constituencies has been a key theme in studies of race and gender (e.g. McAdam 1982; Calas and Smircich 1996), postcolonialism (e.g. Chiu and Levin 1999; Prasad 2003), and globalization (e.g. Frenkel 2001). Much of this literature has acknowledged the challenges faced by local actors in the face of government and corporations who often have recourse to resources inaccessible to local actors. We add to the existent but small literature (cf. Hallier and James 1999; Vaught and Smith 1980) on ceremonial behavior that emphasizes the potential to invert spectacle from the bottom-up.

We have described above several ways in which the KdV privileges the local and participatory over the hierarchical and directive. The local composition of the krewe and inexpensive membership fees, the physical proximity of paraders and spectators and lack of elevated platforms, the inclusion of spectators in the parade, the lack of anonymity of the paraders, the pre-parade meetings in local pubs and the opening of pubs as bathrooms for paraders *during* the parade, the use of local bands versus national stars, and the scheduling of the parade long before the tourist rush of Mardi Gras day, all suggest that the KdV is a sounding board for local culture rather than supra-local entities. Thus, in the wake of the academic discourse described above, we hope to add to the discussion of possibilities for grassroots organizing by pointing to a unique form of organization that privileges the local and includes as its beneficiaries all who may happen to stumble by.

Finally, the current study contributes to theoretical developments on embodiment and sexuality in organizations. Our work adds, for example, to that of Martin (1990) on objectification and subjectification of the body in ritual. As Smirchich and Calas (1987) argue, researchers should look for expressions of grotesque realism as a way to understand organizing, which our study attempts to analyze. Grotesque realism, we argue, provides a bridge between individual embodiment and political expression, which may be both status quo-reinforcing and transformative.

Conclusion

Carnival has long been studied as a form of social organization that is fundamentally paradoxical: central to the symbolic life of a society yet refusing to submit to society's structures, carnival points us to a principle of creative becoming that organizational researchers have long struggled to understand. MKS follows this tradition well, born in dissent, tolerated and yet marginalized by the Mardi Gras spectacle, perpetuating tradition through its petulance. The 'Krewe of Old' thus harkens us to an age when kings and queens, popes and bishops attended carnival not just as spectators, but as participants. Now, the power elite rarely

attend, and the media films the main Mardis Gras floats that have little or no social commentary. MKS is, therefore, a reattempt at traditional carnival; it is a reawakening and infusion of the socially profane at its best.

This study began as an attempt to understand this unique form of organization; it ended as an attempt to preserve an indigenous knowledge threatened by disaster. The devastation of New Orleans in August of 2005 by Hurricane Katrina raises the question of how the city's rebuilding will affect is most famous tradition, that of Mardi Gras. Will the parade change over time, or will it survive the radical rebirth it values so much? Will only the spectacle be reproduced, being tied to corporate sponsorship and top-down planning, while the flooded neighborhoods behind the French Quarter and Marigny, the local, spontaneous drivers of the city's ad hoc charm, be left behind in the attempt to create a new, more 'developed' New Orleans?

The ability of KdV to retain its carnivalesque character will be a test for the resilience of an organizational form, a form that was built out of hardship, based on the principle of deconstructive levity and spontaneous rebirth. If it is true that 'there is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn' (Camus 1955: 90), then we suggest that this form of local revelry will survive, a feat of organization hard to explain through our prevailing views of market rationality. If we are wrong, then the current study will serve as a celebration of a time that celebrated an older time still, and a story about the struggle of the commons against the 'spirit of make believe' (Mardi Gras King 1967), who 'banished from the land' the local existence of the people.

Note

The authors would like to thank Dena A. Schwartz for her contribution in creating and organizing the photographs for this study.

References

Aho, James
2002 *The orifice as sacrificial site: Culture, organization, and the body.* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Bakhtin, Mikhail
1968 *Rabelais and his world* (trans. Hélène Iswolsky). Cambridge/London: The MIT. Press.

Bakhtin, Mikhail
1981 *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barthes, Roland
1970 *Mythologies*. Paris: Seuil.

Boje, David M.
2001 'Carnivalesque resistance to global spectacle: A critical postmodern theory of public administration'. *Administrative Theory and Praxis* 23: 431–458.

Boje, David M., and Yue Cai
2004 'McDonald's: Grotesque method and the metamorphosis of the three spheres: McDonald's, McDonaldland, and McDonaldization'. *The Metamorphosis Journal* 3: 15–33.

Bordo, Susan
1989 'The body and the reproduction of femininity: A feminist appropriation of Foucault' in *Gender/body/knowledge: Feminist reconstructions of being and knowing*. A. M. Jaggar and S. R. Bordo (eds), 13–33. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Calas, Marta B., and Linda Smircich
1996 'From "The woman's point of view": Feminist approaches to organization studies' in *Handbook of organization studies*. S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, and W. R. Nord (eds), 218–257. London: Sage.

Camus, Albert
1955 *The myth of sisyphus and other essays* (trans. Justin O'Brien). New York: Random House.

Chiu, Stephen W. K., and David A. Levin
1999 'The organization of industrial relations in Hong Kong: Economic, political and sociological perspectives'. *Organization Studies* 20: 293–321.

Conrad, Charles
1983 'Organizational power: Faces and symbolic forms' in *Communications and organizations: An interpretive approach.* L. L. Putnam and M. Pananowsky (eds), 173–195. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Cooper, Robert, and Gibson Burrell
1988 'Modernism, postmodernism and organizational analysis: An introduction'. *Organization Studies* 9: 91–112.

Daft, Richard L., and Karl E. Weick
1984 'Toward a model of organizations as interpretation systems'. *Academy of Management Review* 9: 284–296.

Damatta, Roberto
1991 *Carnivals, rogues and heroes: An interpretation of the Brazilian dilemma* (trans. John Drury). Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

De Andrade, Oswald
1970 'Do Pau-Brasil à antrofagía e às utopias: Manifestos, teses de consursos e ensaisos'. *Obras completas,* Vol. 6. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

De Beauvoir, Simone
1952 *The second sex* (trans. H. M. Parshley). New York: A. Knopf.

Debord, Guy
1967 *The society of the spectacle.* London: Red and Black.

Durkheim, Emile
1961 *The elementary forms of religious life* (trans. J. W. Swain). New York: Collier Books. Original work published in 1915.

Eco, Umberto
1984 'The frames of comic "Freedom"' in *Carnival*. T. A. Sebeok (ed.), 1–10. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Eisenhardt, Kathleen M.
2000 'Paradox, spirals, ambivalence: The new language of change and pluralism'. *Academy of Management Review* 25: 703–706.

Eliade, Mircea
1954 *The myth of the eternal return or, cosmos and history.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Elias, Norbert
2000 *The civilizing process: Sociogenetic and psychogenetic investigations*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Fleming, Peter, and André Spicer
2007 *Contesting the corporation: Struggle, power and resistance in organizations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Foucault, Michel
1972 *The archaeology of knowledge.* New York*:* Routledge.

Fredrickson, B. L., and Tomi-Ann Roberts
1997 'Objectification theory: Toward understanding women's lived experiences and mental health risks'. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 21: 173–206.

Frenkel, Stephen J.
2001 Globalization, athletic footwear commodity chains and employment relations in China'. *Organization Studies* 22: 531–568.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg
1982 *Truth and method*. New York: Guilford Press.

Geertz, Clifford
1973 'Deep play: Notes on the Balinese cockfight' in *The interpretation of cultures*. C. Geertz (ed.), 412–453. New York: Basic Books.

Gephart, Robert J.
1978 'Status degradation and organizational succession: An ethnomethodological approach'. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 2: 553–581.

Gill, James
1997 *Lords of misrule: Mardi Gras and the politics of race in New Orleans*. Oxford: University of Mississippi Press.

Habermas, Jürgen
1981 *The theory of communicative action,* Vols 1 and 2. (trans. Thomas McCarthy). Boston: Beacon Press.

Hallier, Jerry, and Paul James
1999 'Group rites and trainer wrongs in employee experiences of job change'.

The Journal of Management Studies 36: 45–65.

Haraway, Donna
1991 'A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century' in *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature*, 149–181. New York: Routledge.

Hargrave, Timothy J., and Andrew H. van de Ven
2006 'A collective action model of institutional innovation'. *Academy of Management Review* 31: 964–988.

Hatch, Mary J., and Sanford B. Erlich
1993 'Spontaneous humour as an jndicator of paradox and ambiguity in organizations'. *Organization Studies* 14: 505–526.

Humphrey, Chris
2001 *The politics of carnival: Festive misrule in medieval England*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Islam, Gazi and Michael J. Zyphur
(Forthcoming) 'Rituals in organizations: A review and expansion of current theory'. *Group and Organization Management*.

Jermier, John M., David Knights, and Walter R. Nord
1994 *Resistance and power in organizations*. London: Routledge.

Kellogg, Katherine C., Wanda J. Orlikowski, and Joanne Yates
2002 'Enacting new ways of organizing: Exploring the activities and consequences of post-industrial work'. *Academy of Management Proceedings*: C1–C7.

Kinser, Samuel.
1990 *Carnival, American style: Mardi Gras at New Orleans and Mobile*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kunda, Gideon
1992 *Engineering culture*. Temple University Press: Philadelphia.

Leanna, Carrie. R., and Bruce Barry
2000 'Stability and change as simultaneous experiences in organizational life'. *Academy of Management Review* 25: 753–759.

Lyotard, Jean François
1984 *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge* (trans. G. Bennington and B. Massumi). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

McAdam, Doug
1982 *Political process and the development of black insurgency: 1930–1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Martin, Joanne
1990 'Deconstructing organizational taboos: The suppression of gender conflict in organizations'. *Organizational Science* 1: 339–359.

Masters, G. Mallary
1969 *Rabelaisian dialectic and the Platonic–Hermetic tradition*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Moore, Sally F., and Barbara G. Myerhoff
1977 'Secular ritual: Forms and meaning' in *Symbols and politics in communal ideology*. S. F. Moore and B. G. Myerhoff (eds), 3–25. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Mosko, Mark S.
1991 'The canonic formula of myth and nonmyth'. *American Ethnologist* 18: 126–151.

Oswick, Cliff, Peter Anthony, Tom Keenoy, Lain Mangham, and David Grant
2000 'A dialogic analysis of organizational learning'. *Journal of Management Studies* 37: 887–901.

Piette, Albert
1992 'Play, reality and fiction: Toward a theoretical and methodological apparoch to the festival framework'. *Qualitative Sociology* 15/1: 37–52.

Prasad, Anshman (ed.)
2003 *Postcolonial theory and organizational analysis: A critical engagement.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pratt, Michael G.
2000 'The good, the bad, and the ambivalent: Managing identification among Amway distributors'. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 45: 456–493.

Rabelais, François.
1532/1873 *The works of Rabelais*. (trans. Gustave Dore 1832–1883).

Rhodes, Carl
2001 'D'O: The Simpsons, popular culture, and the organizational carnival'. *Journal of Management Inquiry* 10: 374–383.

Rhodes, Carl
2002 'Coffee and the business of pleasure: The case of Harbucks vs Mr Tweek'. *Culture and Organization* 8: 293–306.

Rosen, Michael
1985 'Breakfast at Spiro's: Dramaturgy and dominance'. *Journal of Management* 11: 31–48.

Rosen, Michael
1988 'You asked for it: Christmas at the bosses' expense'. *Journal of Management Studies* 25: 463–480

Sahlins, Marshall
1993 'Goodbye to tristes tropiques: Ethnography in the context of modern world history' in *Culture in practice: Selected essays,* 471–500. New York: Zone.

Schindler, Henri
1997 *Mardis Gras New Orleans*. New York: Flammarion Press.

Schumpeter, Joseph A.
1975 *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. New York: Harper. Original work published 1942.

Schwartz, Jerome
1990 *Irony and ideology in Rabelais: Structures of subversion*. NY/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smirchich, Linda, and Marta Calas
1987 'Organizational culture. A critical assessment' n *Handbook of organizational culture*. F. Jablin, L. Putnam, K. Roberts, and L. Porter (eds), 228–263. Sage: Newbury Park, CA.

Smith, Micheal P.
1994 *Mardi Gras Indians*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co.

Smith, Michael P., and Alan B. Govenar
1994 *Mardis Gras Indians*. New York: Pelican Publishing Company.

Tallant, Robert
1989 *Mardis* Gras ... *as it was*. New York: Pelican Publishing Company.

Trice, Harrison M., and Janice Beyer
1984 'Studying organizational cultures through rites and ceremonials'. *Academy of Management Review* 9: 653–669.

Turner, Victor W.
1969 *The ritual process.* Chicago: Aldine.

Van Gennep, Arnold
1909/1960 *Rites of passage* (trans. M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Van Maanen, J.
1975 'Police socialization: A longitudinal examination of job attitudes in an urban police department'. *Administrate Science Quarterly* 20: 207–228.

Vaught, Charles, and David L. Smith,
1980 'Incorporation and mechanical solidarity in an underground coal mine'. *Sociology of Work and Occupation* 7: 159–167.

Woywode, Michael
2002 'Global management concepts and local adaptations: Working groups in the French and German car manufacturing industry'. *Organization Studies* 23: 497–524.

Zald, Mayer N., and John D. McCarthy
1987 *Social movements in an organizational society*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

Gazi Islam

Gazi Islam is an Associate Professor of Business Administration at Ibmec São Paulo. He completed his PhD in Organizational Behavior at Tulane University, where his research focused on organizational identity, voice, and power relations. His current research interests include the organizational antecedents and consequences of identity, and the relations between identity, group dynamics, and the production of group and organizational cultures.
Address: Ibmec São Paulo, Rua Quatá 300, São Paulo SP 04546-042, Brazil.
Email: GaziI@isp.edu.br

David Boje David M. Boje is Bank of America Professor, and former Arthur Owens Anderson Professor in Business Administration in the Management Department at New Mexico State University. His main research is the interplay of story, strategy, and complexity. He is President of Standing Conference for Management and Organization Inquiry, editor of *Tamara Journal* and associated editor for *Qualitative Research in Organization and Management*.
Address: Department of Management, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-8001, USA.
Email: dboje@nmsu.edu

Michael J. Zyphur Michael J. Zyphur received his PhD in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from Tulane University, New Orleans. Besides the study of carnival and the recovery efforts in New Orleans, his current interests lie in the biological underpinnings of organizational behavior, the influence of cognitive fluency in human resource decisions, and the role of methodology in theory construction.
Address: University of Washington Bothell, Business Administration, 18115 Campus Way NE, Bothell, WA 98011–8246, USA.
Email: bizmjz@nus.edu.sg