

## Editor's Note (2.2)

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With this issue, *Emergence* takes a step toward combining the insights of philosophy with the hard-learned lessons of participant observation. In doing so, we are trying to build on the experience of several complexity conferences held in the first half of 2000. A major theme echoing through these conferences is to ask, "What can complexity do for me, today?" The authors assembled herein have some answers.

Birute Regine and Roger Lewin open by writing of the role that leaders and values can play in a company. Leaders demonstrate values by the way they act, by the stories they tell, by the constraints they set, and by the environments they allow to be created around them. Regine and Lewin thus set the stage for Alicia Juarrero, whose 1999 book, *Dynamics in Action*, appears here in truncated form. Juarrero provides us with the philosophical foundations for the very tools that Regine and Lewin cite: telling a narrative, forming constraints, and establishing values. Complexity theory as a mode of action comes alive in Juarrero's work, and I cannot urge readers strongly enough to go out and read the full book.

Hugo Letiche shares with us his reactions on reading Juarrero. Letiche reminds us that Juarrero and complexity challenge conventional notions of cause and effect. He cites the overlooked notion of entrainment as an explanatory variable, and emphasizes that when causality is examined through the lens of complexity, multiple perspectives often emerge—perspectives that create the possibility for actions through narrative. Chris Goldspink follows Letiche with an examination of contrasting perspectives between the linear and the nonlinear, between the simple and the complex. Finally, Ray Cooksey writes of mapping textures and the dynamics of decision making, whereby we are returned to the world of participant observation and the daily refrain of "What can this do for me?"

As the number of complexity-related books and articles grows, so too does public awareness. This very morning I saw a London cab with advertising labeled "Chaos" on one door and "Order" on the other. The flipside to the increased awareness is the growth in overly simplistic oneliners supposedly about complexity and the growth in fad-like consulting practices. Works such as Juarrero's are an effective means of placing firmer foundations under the more hype-like trends. When Juarrero suggests that the all too present emphasis on linear cause and effect relations needs to be replaced in the light of complexity, she is pointing to a new direction for complexity studies.

Most complexity studies have taken the work of mathematics, physics, and biology as a given and built analogies around the "models" of "hard science." The analogies have been limited, however, by a continued need to assert causality as a linear process. If one takes Juarrero as a beginning (and there are more works like hers coming), linear causality is replaced by narratives and feedback-oriented causal concepts. Notions of identity, boundary, constraints, narratives, and perceptions take on increased importance. The perceptual control theory of William Powers and others (see for example a new book, *The Things We Do: Using the Lessons of Bernard and Darwin to Understand the What, How, and Why of Our Behavior*, by Gary Cziko from MIT Press) begins to be more strongly tied into both complexity and management.

The themes of narrative, constraints, and boundaries will continue to echo throughout the year. Several conferences have been called to deal explicitly with these phenomena and their role in the entwined world of complexity and management. The prominence of these themes reflects the very premise on which *Emergence* is published: that the key to understanding complexity in management and management in complexity lies not in quantitative models of old data, but in the very processes by which both complexity and management unfold.