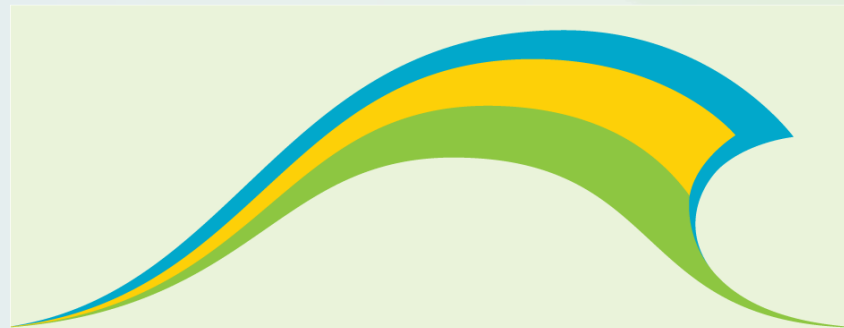


Rethinking Co-operatives

Réseau de recherche pour mesurer la
DIFFÉRENCE COOPÉRATIVE



Measuring the Co-operative Difference
RESEARCH NETWORK



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Introduction and Overview

- Synopsis of Case Studies of Ethnic Minority Cooperatives
- Rethinking Cooperative Scholarship
- Towards Alternative Critical Coop Studies
- Some Implications
- Conclusion
- Questions

Update and Synopsis of Case Studies

- Japanese Canadian Fishing Cooperatives on the West Coast of Canada, 1900-1948
- Japanese Canadian farming cooperatives in the Fraser Valley, British Columbia, 1942-1948
- Housing cooperatives and neighbourhood renewal in Strathcona, Vancouver BC, 1960-1985

Rethinking Cooperative Studies **

- Master narratives and counter narratives
- Omission, silences, erasures and misinterpretations
- The masters' tools will not dismantle the master's house
- Call for critical analytical tools and frameworks
- Acknowledge contingency

Call for Critical Coop Studies**

Positioning Cooperatives: as a model for enterprises & alternative to global capitalism

- **What are we missing?**
 - Macro and micro contextualization of research
 - E.g. Conditions of failure as alternative & even exacerbation social exclusion
 - E.g. How do unequal relations of power operate in and through cooperative enterprises?

Questioning and problematizing: power, race, gender, class hegemony of discourses.

Alternatives Frameworks*

- Opportunity to apply critical theories from different intellectual traditions and disciplines (organizational, race, feminist, political economy, & development studies among others)
 - Critical Theory in Organizational Studies could convey particular ways to understand organization and mgt.
 - deepens conceptions of power, control & authority
 - demonstrates the value of including representation of diverse interest &
 - brings “into the surface suppressed conflict”.
- “CMS show managerial values embedded in language systems, social practices and decision routines have lessened the quality of organizational decisions and reduce the capacity to meet important human needs” (Alvesson and Deetz , 2006)
- Overlaps with significant contributions of other bodies of literature

Some Alternative Analytical Frameworks

Taking Difference Seriously: Subject identities matter

Critical Race Theories

- state racial projects
- racial formation of the nation state - making and remaking a white settler nation
- institutionalized and systemic racisms
- Acknowledge contingency
- Macro- and micro-contextualization of research
- Acknowledge failures as an alternative & even possible exacerbation social exclusion

Some Alternative Analytical Frameworks

Feminist Intersectional Frameworks

Categories of race, gender, class, sexuality, citizenship among other categories of identity are socially constructed, co-constituted and interconnected.

Some Alternative Analytical Frameworks

Post Colonial Discourse Analysis

- Self/Other
- Power, Knowledge, Truth and Colonialism
- Colonization/Decolonization

What using these theoretical * approaches help us understand?

- **Enrich knowledge about the full range and complexity of cooperative activities and actors.**
- **- Re-theorizing dominant discourse:**
 - E.g Examining real cases
 - Break Politics of Knowledge production:**
 - Eg. economic explanatory models and indicators must be augmented with analysis of power, racism, class, gender, nationalism, and citizenship, amongst others.
- **Disrupting Hegemonic discourses: Cultural Captivity**
Accepting different co-operative tradition.

Implications

For Future Research

For Theory

For Practice

For Policy

Implications

For Future Research

- Investigate ethnic minority cooperatives cross-sectorally to reveal contingency of cooperatives within context of racial state formation. (e.g. all cases)
- What factors are needed for cooperatives to be a tool of empowerment? (e.g. JC fishing coop case)
- What difference does difference make in cooperative governance? (e.g. Strathcona case)
- Food justice/environmental justice examples
- How do seemingly distinct spheres of cooperative activities linked in their effects on the marginalization/empowerment of marginalized communities and individuals?

Implications for Theory

- Stimulates new questions and sites of inquiry
- Opens space to understand ways of resistance & exclusion & marginalization
- Could contribute to outline an humane alternatives to global neoliberalism

Implications For Practice

- Uncover alternative strategies of survival and resistance.
- Better engagement with diverse challenges within co-operatives.
- Diversity: build stronger co-operative movement.
- Nurture alternative forms of social change.

Implications For Policy

- Policy formation: look at how racial, sexual, gender and class inequalities have shaped cooperative policies with differential effects.
- Policy impacts: Government policies regulate entitlements and access to resources.
- Co-operative policies at the organizational level: who benefits? Whose voices are heard or not heard under what conditions?
- How are different policies used to contest racism, sexism, violence, etc? How are co-operatives used to promote social justice and not just economic advantage?

Conclusions: Master Narrative

- The master narrative is impoverishing and 'capturing' co-operative studies, and
- Decreasing its possibility of replacing global mainstream paradigms.

Conclusion: Key Takeaways

- To achieve its democratic promise, cooperative scholarship must be more critical;
- Conventional narratives of cooperatives leave out many stories, consequently, our understanding of the scope of cooperatives is diminished;
- ‘Social differences’ are socially produced, cooperatives are a site of struggle and constitutive of identities as well as being constituted by struggles over power;
- There are no neutral actors; unequal power relations must be considered at the outset;
- Need to move beyond making the “business case” for cooperatives; many social and economic justice implications for research, theory, policy and practice;
- This task is urgent if we are to meet challenges of global 21st century without reproducing problems of the past.

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