Boeke

KREPS, G L 1990: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION. (SECOND EDITION). MASKEW, MILLER LONGMAN: NEW YORK. ISBN 0-8013-0155-6. P332.

Die toename in die belangrikheid van organisasiekommunikasie as teoretiese en toegepaste studieveld binne die kommunikasiewetenskappe blyk uit die groot hoeveelheid handboeke en artikels wat in die afgelope aantal jare hieroor verskyn het. 'n Leemte sover dit meeste van hierdie publikasies aanbetref, is dat die bruikbaarheid van hierdie publikasies op 'n akademiese vlak dikwels beperk word omdat hulle onvolledige of gefragmenteerde beskouings van organisasiekommuni-kasie bied. Met sy boek "Organizational Communication" poog kreps om 'n breër voorstelling van organisasiekommunikasie se kennisveld te maak, deurdat 'n groter spektrum van teore-tiese perspektiewe oor interne sowel as eksterne kommunikasiefunksies en toepassings gebied word.

Hierdeur spreek Kreps 'n belangrike behoefte aan omdat meeste ander handboeke op interne funksies van organisasiekommunikasie fokus ten koste van die eksterne skakelingsfunksies. Daar bestaan ook feitlik nie handboeke wat interne sowel as eksterne organisasiekommunikasie in verhouding tot mekaar beskou nie. Deur ook op eksterne funksies van organisasiekommunikasie te fokus, slaag Kreps daarin om weg te breek uit die tematiese patroon wat ander soortgelyke publikasies se omvattend-heid aan bande lê. Wat hy egter wen aan omvattendheid, boet hy ongelukkig in sover dit volledigheid aanbetref. Hoewel dit 'n sterk punt van teks is dat aspekte soos inter-organisasieveld, openbare skakeling, bemarking en reklame,

openbare mening, stemmings-makery asook korporatiewe betoog behandel word, word die leser onbevredig gelaat sover dit dieper kennisvlakke oor hierdie onderwerpe aanbetref.

Die hantering en aanbieding van ander onderwerpe wat bespreek word, is logies en bied aan die leser 'n geïntegreerde oorsig oor die veld van organisasiekommunikasie sover dit interne sowel as eksterne aspekte aanbetref.

Die boek is in vier dele verdeel. Die eerste gedeelte van die boek bied 'n inleiding tot organisasie en kommunikasie, terwyl Deel Twee 'n omvattende oorsig oor die vyf belangrikste teoretiese perspektiewe van organisasiegedrag en -kommunikasie bied. Die bespreking van sowel die sosiale sisteembenadering as Weick se model van organisering ondervang huidige navorsings en teoretiese benaderings goed en bied die nodige uitbreiding op die drie tradisionele primêre historiese perspektiewe wat gewoonlik in handboeke van hierdie aard bespreek word.

Deel Drie ondersoek die gebruik van kommunikasiekanale in organisering. Interpersoonlike, groeps- en omgewingskommunikasie, asook die administratiewe funksies van interne kommunikasie word vanuit 'n oopsisteemperspektief bespreek. Hierdeur poog die outeur om huidige kennis oor organisasiekommunikasie op 'n duidelike en teoreties geldig wyse te integreer. Die probleem is egter dat omvattendheid in die hantering van onderwerpe noodwendig tot onvolledige hantering van inhoud aanleiding gee. Hoewel mens dus bly is oor die insluiting van konsepte soos kommunikasie-klimaat en organisasiekultuur,

bevredig die bespreking wat daaroor handel, nie sover dit omvang of peil aanbetref nie. Dit is veral dan ook die nuwe byvoeging oor groepskommuni-kasie wat opvallend oppervlakkig hanteer word deur hierdie outeur.

In die laaste gedeelte van die boek word die etiese beperkings op interne en eksterne kommunikasie in die organi-sasie bespreek. Spesifieke etiese vraag-stukke en probleemgebiede soos politiek, vooroordele, eerlikheid, inlig-tingsbeheer, afwykings, stres en eks-terne verantwoordbaarheid word onder-soek. Die boek sluit af met 'n bespre-king oor organisasie-effektiwiteit en hoe dit gevestig en onderhou kan word deur die toepaslike gebruik van inligting.

Om lesers te help om die konsepte wat in hierdie boek bespreek word toe te pas en te ontleed, bevat elke hoofstuk verskeie gevallestudies. Dit is 'n bruik-bare insluiting omdat dit studente, veral op voorgraadse vlak, kan help om die inhoud van elke hoofstuk toe te pas en so hulle begrip van teoretiese beginsels te toets.

Die tweede uitgawe van Organizational Communication is dus hersien en gewysig om die nuutste navorsing en teorieë in te sluit. Twee nuwe hoof-stukke, een oor groepskommuni-kasie en een oor die etiese aspekte van orga-nisasiekommunikasie, is bygevoeg. Die gedeelte oor organisasieteorieë is uitge-brei om die nuutste teoretiese bena-derings in te sluit.

As 'n oorsigteks is hierdie boek 'n wel-kome toevoeging tot die veld van orga-nisasiekommunikasie. Wat veral verbly-dend is, is dat die outeur poog om vanuit 'n geïntegreerde perspektief 'n omvat-tende teoretiese, dog pragmatiese, benadering tot organisasiekommuni-kasie daar te stel. Dit maak hierdie boek ook 'n bruikbare teks vir voorgraad-se organisasiekom-munikasiekursusse. Vir die kenner het hierdie teks egter be-perkte nut en kan dit nie in dieselfde lig

as ander gesaghebbende organisasie-kommunikasiehandboeke beskou word nie.

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COMMUNICATION THEORY 1(1), FEBRUARY 1991. A JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNI-CATION ASSOCIATION. EDITOR: ROBERT T CRAIG (UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER). PUB-LISHED QUARTERLY BY GUILFORD PUBLICATIONS, INC., 72 SPRING STREET, NEW YORK, N Y 10012.

The birth in February 1991 of this journal indicates something larger than the ex-pansion of academic discourse in the communications field. As Craig points out, its appearance marks the coming of age of the discipline. Here at last is a publication which is devoted to the de-velopment of the theory of communica-tion as an original body of know-ledge, acknowledging that the field hs grown beyond its origins as a poorly defined meeting-place of a variety of disciplines.

However, this development should be greeted with cautious optimism. While a significant amount of original work has spurred the theoretical growth of the communications field, the scope of communication theory as well as its proper forms and functions have be-come increasingly uncertain and con-troversial. "The fragmentation of com-munication theory across disciplines and subsidiariness challenges those who would proclaim communication and emergent discipline" (Craig 1991:1).

But even though questions are still raised concerning the field's mission and scientific status, COMMUNICA-TION THEORY has at least provided us with a forum in which these essential questions can be examined.

The journal contains three sections: Articles, Book Reviews and Forum. While the first two fulfil conventional

functions, the Forum section promises some excitement. According to Craig in his introduction to the first issue, this section will provide opportunity for theoretical dialogue, as well as for presentation of theory in experimental forms and styles. "Interviews and conversations, debates, narratives, self-reflexive texts, parodies, epistolaries, lyrics, visual displays, or other forms may prove especially well suited to the presentation of certain concepts and arguments (1991:2).

It is fitting that a young field should explore new avenues, and considering the current debate concerning the nature of rationality and the increasing incredulity toward scientific and theoretical metanarratives discussed by such philosophers as MacIntyre, Rorty and Lyotard, this section of the journal should keep the communication field in the forefront of interdisciplinary theoretical debate.

Indeed, the initial Forum establishes a precedent in this regard, with essays by Majid Tehranian and Brenda Dervin exploring the nature of comparative communication theory. Tehranian argues that it is possible, albeit difficult, to develop comparative theory as an alternative to either universalist or contextualist theories of communication. The problems facing comparative theory are the dilemmas that bedevil both the liberal-pluralist and the Marxist-critical traditions in this regard: the conflict between value-free and value-bound social science, between micro and macro perspectives, and between consensus and conflict social science models. Tehranian suggests three ground rules that might aid efforts to solve these dilemmas. Firstly, that all human communication is culture bound, or local. Secondly, despite this, that some common features are shared by all local communication systems, and thirdly, that as a result, universal aspects of communication might be found across time, space, structure and function.

To be successful, a comparative theory would need to, among other things, integrate theories on different levels (structural, micropersonal, macrohistorical and macroeconomic) as well as "identify those perennial social processes in which communication plays a central part" (Tehranian, 1992:51). Tehranian lists these as: signification, socialisation, legitimation and accumulation. These would then be examined on the dimensions of time, space, structures and functions. Tehranian argues for a communitarian perspective that will resolve the binary oppositions that have been characteristic of past of past comparative theories. This perspective "would argue for an inter-dependency of the material and ideational aspects of social life. All reality is thus viewed as socially negotiated and constructed through the media of cultural expression to communicate and control society's dominant values" (1991:52).

Finally, Tehranian argues, a comparative theory will have to develop operational methods for research into these abstrct concepts.

Dervin's article focuses more specifically on comparison of entities such as cultures and subcultures. She names the central problem in the search for comparative strength as the use of inappropriate conceptualisations of communication phenomena - at base the emphasis on states or entities rather than dynamic or processd.

Dervin points out a schizophrenia in communication theorising, where process ideas are talked about but seldom implemented. In the comparison between cultures, a dynamic or process approach would attend "more to verbs (e.g., how culture is created, maintained, contested, destroyed, allowed to decay) than nouns (e.g., what traits or situations distinguish cultures). This would mean, for example, focusing on meaning making as well as meanings

made, on the struggling to achieve order or destroy it as well as on order achieved or destroyed" (Dervin, 1991:61-62).

In the interests of developing a process view, Dervin proposes a "gap perspective" in which discontinuities rather than continuities are examined. Communication is conceived of as 'gap bridging' - something all entities are involved in: "There are gaps between reality and human sensors, between human sensors and mind, between mind and tongue, between tongue and message created, between message created and channel, between human at time one and human at time two, between human one at time one and human two at time one, between human and culture/society/nation, between human and institution, between institution and institution, between nation andnation, and so on" (1991:62).

Five areas are examined in which the communication field still retains inappropriate metaphors, which the gap idea can work to alter: The transmission metaphor which often confuses the process of communication with the product: the assumption that communication structures "have lives of their own"; the division of the discipline into levels of analysis, from interpersonal to societal, which ignores connections between levels and obscures the fact that all are part of a whole; the division of the field into contexts where the fundamental nature of political communication is seen to differ from that of health communication, for example, "simply because these contexts are assumed by observers to be organizing tools for categorizing situations relevant to actors" (1991:64) and finally the explanation of communicative behaviour through use of static time-space concepts rather than dynamic time-space bound concepts. "Looking for such state regularities, we end up missing everything that is changeable or cre-

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ative about the behavior of human entities, collective or individual" (1991:61).

Moving out of these limiting assumptions, the gap idea seeks ultimately to provide a more powerful tool for comparison, by allowing dynamic patterns to emerge. "This contrasts with our current analytics - implicit and explicit - which look at the entity and the entity's inputs and outputs and not how the entity got from here to there" (1991:68).

These two articles seem to be important contributions to the theoretical debate over communication, currently marked by many divisions and a belief that universal theory is both unachievable and undesirable. Dervin's theory of 'gappiness' might also be useful ind eveloping a productive approach to intercultural communication in the South African context (something that seemed to elude most delegates at the recent SACOMM congress).

Fortunately, the debate on comparative theory begun here, is set to continue in subsequent issues of the journal, along with symposia on such topics as theory and history and visual argument. Judging from these initial articles in particular, and the first issue in general, COMMUNICATION THEORY promises to be a journal indispensable to those who wish to participate in the philosophical and theoretical development of our field, and indeed marks the beginning of an exfiting new phase in the growth of the discipline.

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BELCH, G E & BELCH, M A 1990: Introduction to advertising and promotions management. Homewood, Illinois: Irwin, ISBN 0-256-09869-7 (International student's ed.)

Here, at last, is a useful and very practical undergraduate textbook on adver-

tising that moves beyond the agency perspectives and places advertising and promotions clearly within the wider context of the marketing planning and management process.

The brothers Belch, both from San Diego State University, clearly state that this text takes a broad view in examining the field of advertising and promotion and the world of marketing communications. They adhere to the assumption that to fully understand advertising and its role in contemporary marketing, attention must be given to other promotional areas such as sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling. While it is stated clearly that an understanding of the overall marketing process, consumer behaviour and communications theory is needed to effectively plan, implement and evaluate advertising and promotions, the focus is essentially on advertising.

From the student's viewpoint, the authors have mercifully remembered that professors were also, of course, once students themselves. At the other end, so to speak, instructors are provided with a comprehensive array of support material, such a complete teaching resource that includes learning objectives, chapter and lecture outlines, answers to discussion questions, teaching notes for transparency acetates, an additional references. A computerised test bank included more than 1 200 questions, including multiple choice, true-false and essay questions for each chapter. Users also receive a set of 70 full-colour high quality acetate transparencies, and although this material is exclusively American stuff, it does provide a more than useful core of practical illustrations which are so absolutely essential for the effective teaching of advertising.

Each chapter contains a number of unique features that enhance the learning experience and greatly contributes to making things easier for the instructor:

- Chapter objectives are provided at the beginning of each chapter to identify the main goals and indicate what should be learned from each chapter.

- Opening vignettes provde a practical example or application or discuss an interesting issue that is relevant to the chapter.

- Several boxed promotional perspectives featuring in-depth discussions of interesting issues related to the chapter coverage are included in each chapter.

- Chapter summaries are written in detail to provide a synopsis and serve as a quick review of important topics covered.

- Discussion questions are provided at the end of each chapter to give students an opportunity to test their understanding of the material and to apply it. These can also be used for class discussions.

- Full-colour visuals of print advertisements, storyboards and other material appear in many sections of the text.

The particular strength of this book is the integration of the various concepts, ideas and theories with practical application. After having used this text book during the past year, I can fully recommend it for any undergraduate course in advertising and promotions management.

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