

Environmental Turbulence and its
Impact on Strategic Change and
Organisational Culture
The Case of the Queensland Rugby
Union

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ENVIRONMENTAL TURBULENCE AND ITS IMPACT ON STRATEGIC CHANGE AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

THE CASE OF THE QUEENSLAND RUGBY UNION

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*A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy*



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May 2001

CANDIDATE’S STATEMENT

I certify that the research thesis entitled “Environmental Turbulence and its Impact on Strategic Change and Organisational Culture: The Case of the Queensland Rugby Union” is the result of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged. This work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other tertiary or educational institution.

Signed

Date

ABSTRACT

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The general purpose of this research was to examine the influence of environmental turbulence on the change process occurring throughout the Queensland Rugby Union (QRU) during the 1990s, and to analyse its impact on that organisation's strategic direction and organisational culture. Within these broad parameters, the specific aims were: first, to understand the ways in which external and/or internal jolts and disturbances have impacted upon the change processes occurring at the QRU; second, to establish the levels of resistance to change within the organisation, and how the QRU managed this resistance between 1995-1999; third, to explain how the QRU went about managing and legitimising organisational and cultural change between 1995-1999; and finally, to develop a model of organisational change that reveals the complexity of the change process that occurred within the QRU between 1995-1999.

Three theoretical constructs comprise the conceptual framework of this research project. The first construct is grounded in Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change. This change model provides a framework for explaining the QRU's responses to the numerous forms of environmental disturbances it has confronted. The second construct draws on Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality. These theories are used to provide insight into understanding how the QRU has attempted to use policy documents to maintain the desired strategic direction and control over the outcomes of the change process, and to develop a new organisational culture. The third construct is based on Derrida's (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) interrelated theories of deconstruction and 'différance'. This provides the framework for understanding the

differing interpretations that rugby officials placed on the policy documents produced by the QRU.

In order to obtain a detailed understanding of the change process occurring at the QRU, a postmodern ethnographic case study was conducted from November 1996 to November 1999. This research design was supported by the three principal data collection methods of observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

The results of this research demonstrated that organisational change is not a neat and simple process. In the case of the QRU two conflicting sets of opinions existed about how environmental turbulence should be accommodated, and how organisational change should be managed. First, the majority of senior management personnel believed the QRU must change in order to deal effectively with the external jolts and disturbances that were occurring in the sport and entertainment marketplace. Second, those involved in the management of rugby at club level believed their current management practices were adequate, even when they acknowledged environmental turbulence has impacted on the code. These conflicting views on how rugby in Queensland should be managed are centred on two clashing belief systems. Club level management were not prepared to embrace the new values associated with professionalism, and instead preferred to cling to the values and beliefs of amateurism. The cultural divisions that exist within the QRU have been instrumental in producing a number of fragmented outcomes associated with the organisational change process.

It is recommended that future research into area of organisational change should consider an application of a hybrid model that allows the fragmentation arising from the change process to be captured. It is believed that this approach will provide deeper insight into understanding the complexities of the change process in sport organisations.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

1.

...INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Research Problem*

The concomitant changes resulting from the growth of commercialised sport (e.g., increased sponsorship, media exposure and corporate involvement) in Australia have created a turbulent and highly competitive sporting environment. These changes have had an especially significant impact on players and administrators in many sporting organisations. Professional sport in Australia is now constrained by the same economic and fiscal laws that govern competitive commercial organisations (Aris, 1990). Sporting organisations must aggressively compete against each other for new spectators, members, and sponsorship dollars (Berrett, 1993; Shilbury, Quick & Westerbeek, 1998). This changing environment has caused sporting organisations to review their organisational goals and objectives in order to become commercially viable entities. Thus, as Smith (1998) pointed out, “the process of administering sport will differ little, on an economic level at least, from the administration of commercial businesses”(p. 3).

These changed circumstances have forced many sporting organisations to confront the necessity of internal change, and to consider the principles of change management. The literature on change management indicates that strategic change is fundamental to the progress of organisations adapting to new competitive environments. Strategic change requires a basic rethinking of the values and beliefs by which an organisation defines and

carries out its business. According to Lorsch (1986), traditional beliefs can inhibit strategic change in two ways. First, they can produce strategic inertia and second, managers often respond to such inertia through changes that maintain their traditional culture. For example, a response may involve changing the organisation on the surface to give the perception of change rather than implementing processes to change the embedded values and beliefs of the organisation. The inevitable danger for sporting organisations steeped in history and tradition, such as the Queensland Rugby Union (QRU), is that they may only be able to respond in this superficial way. Moreover, methods to overcome the onset of organisational inertia can be difficult to implement and cannot always be achieved in the short-term.

In the more specific field of sport management only a few attempts have been made to analyse the responses of sporting organisations to environmental disturbances. Kikulis, Slack, and Hinings (1992) undertook one of the most revealing studies when they identified specific environmental disturbances in their analysis of institutionally specific organisations. It was found that institutionally specific organisations shape the construction of an organisation which in turn may enable or constrain certain sets of values, rules, myths, and symbols, which strongly influence the way they respond to the demands of new environmental conditions. Kikulis et al. also found that organisational responses were linked to government control over the distribution of funds. While their analysis demonstrated a relationship between environmental disturbance and organisational change, it did not examine organisations outside the realm of government control, and who were responsible for their own financial viability.

More recently, O'Brien and Slack (1999) provided a case study analysis of an English rugby union Premiership club. The club attempted to align itself with its new environment through a process of deinstitutionalisation. In this analysis they suggested that values and ideals such as amateurism had become accepted within the club through habitual, historical and traditional forces, and were therefore institutionalised. However, just as values and ideals can be institutionalised they can also be deinstitutionalised. O'Brien and Slack used Oliver's (1992) theoretical lead to show how political, functional, and social pressures contributed to the process of deinstitutionalisation in a rugby union club. Moreover, O'Brien and Slack showed how both inertial forces (i.e., forces that tend to resist change) and entropic organisational forces (i.e., forces that facilitate change) mediated these pressures. It is the interplay between these forces and pressures that determines the rate of deinstitutionalisation in organisations. O'Brien and Slack suggested that the development of new values and ideals was necessary if the club was to develop an appropriate fit with its new environment. However, their research is limited to an analysis of a relatively small English rugby union Premiership club.

This thesis aims to add to the literature in this field in two ways. First, unlike Kikulis et al (1992), it will examine the impact of environmental disturbances on an independently resourced non-government sporting organisation that is attempting a shift from amateur to professional status. Second, it will move beyond O'Brien and Slack's (1999) work by focusing on a governing body rather than a single club. That is, it will examine the impact of environmental disturbances on the QRU, an organisation responsible for overseeing the development of rugby from club level to elite level throughout the state of Queensland.

Additionally, although O'Brien and Slack provided valuable insight into the elusive processes associated with organisational change, they did not address the deeper complexities that can be revealed through a postmodern interpretation of the change process, such as the possible fragmented and contradictory outcomes that may surface, as this research will aim to do. It is anticipated that this approach will provide a broader and deeper insight into the unique and complex dynamics of the organisational change process in sporting organisations.

The conceptual framework to achieve this outcome comprises three theoretical constructs. First, Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change will be used to analyse the changes that have occurred throughout the QRU's recent history. Laughlin emphasised organisational values as key features of organisational design coherence and change. If organisational values are not aligned with the new purpose of the organisation, successful change will be difficult. Laughlin refined and developed the complexity of organisational change and in doing so constructed a typology of the processual dynamics of organisational change. Therefore, Laughlin's model will initially be used to provide a systematic understanding of the QRU's commercial development and how it responded to a significant 'jolt and disturbance'. Laughlin's model will also be extended to provide a postmodern interpretation of the change process.

Second, Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality will be used to provide insight into understanding how the QRU has attempted to use its policy documents to maintain the

desired direction and control over the outcomes of change and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture.

Finally, Derrida's (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) interrelated theories of deconstruction and 'differance' will be used as a framework to interpret the text that exists within internal documents produced by the QRU. This construct will provide the theoretical basis to explain the potential for documents to produce either uniform or fragmented outcomes.

In summary, this thesis will examine the 'management of change' throughout the QRU, and assess its impact on the culture, operations, and strategic direction of rugby union in Queensland. The 1995-1999 period was chosen because the QRU had to respond to a number of traumatic external forces that directly impacted on its management structures and culture.

1.2 *Justification for the Research*

A new era of rugby union has emerged. No longer can rugby union be thought of as a sport that is administered and developed by the spare time activities of many enthusiastic volunteers. Today rugby union is big business competing for the corporate dollar against not only other sports, but also an array of entertainment pastimes. Rugby union is part of the entertainment industry striving for financial gains and encompassing new marketing techniques to attract new spectators (Phillips, 1994). Players are also demanding greater salaries, better conditions, and a guarantee of a career after sport. If these guarantees are not met there is the possibility that potential elite players may transfer to similar football codes such as rugby league. All of these factors place significant pressures on senior rugby management.

Rugby union was one of the last bastions of amateurism, and rugby's conservative administrators were slow to respond to the surrounding commercial pressures. Although a superficial appraisal may indicate that they have warmly embraced the notion of professionalism since the mid 1990s, a deeper analysis shows a level of ambivalence and resistance on the part of many local club administrators. Notwithstanding this ambivalence, the QRU underwent a process of not only changing structures and procedures within the organisation, but also changing the values, beliefs, and traditions that once embodied the code. In short, the QRU management decided that strategic organisational change could not be achieved successfully without changing the culture.

The chances of successfully implementing organisational change are dependent on both internal support and the amount of resistance that accompanies it. Resistance means that the process of strategic and cultural change will be inhibited by complex organisational dynamics and power relations. This research aims to provide a clearer understanding of how these complexities impacted on the change process during the later part of the 1990s. This thesis aims to construct a broad based model that can reveal both the complex nature of the change process, and the different outcomes that may result from the organisational change process occurring in Australian sporting organisations.

1.3 Aims

The general purpose of this study was to examine the influence of environmental turbulence on the change process occurring throughout the QRU during the 1990s, and to analyse its impact on that organisation's strategic direction and organisational culture.

The specific aims of this study are:

1. To understand the ways in which external and/or internal jolts and disturbances have impacted upon the change processes occurring at the QRU.
2. To establish the levels of resistance to change within the organisation, and how the QRU managed this resistance between 1995-1999.
3. To explain how the QRU went about managing and legitimising organisational and cultural change between 1995-1999.
4. To develop a model of organisational change that reveals the complexity of the change process that occurred within the QRU between 1995-1999.

1.4 Methodology

In order to gain a detailed understanding of the differing impacts of environmental turbulence on the strategic organisational change process occurring at QRU an ethnographic case study was conducted from November 1996 to November 1999. This was supported by three principal data collection methods. They were: observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

As a first step to understanding the impact and ramifications of the various forms of environmental turbulence on the QRU, it was necessary to establish the context in which the QRU functions. It was therefore important for the researcher to act as a participant observer within the QRU. The researcher engaged in the interactional dynamics of the context as a necessary and committed agent for long and continuous periods. For an in-depth analysis to be appropriately conducted, the research needed to account for temporal questions of validity. This meant that the research needed to be of an adequate duration to account for the inferences drawn from it, and that valid inferences required generalisation. To account for this, the research comprised 35 weeks of interaction within the QRU over a period of three years.

Finally, the research used major incidents and instances to develop generalisations about the changes that took place within the QRU. These generalisations are, however, treated cautiously since Chalmers (1982) and Woolgar (1988) noted the importance of sufficiency when making generalisations, which they defined as the problem of induction. They

suggested that generalisation requires that sufficient major occurrences of specific instances are experienced, such that generalisation is valid for the purpose of inference. The conclusions drawn from this research are therefore generalisations of specific instances of environmental disturbances that confronted the QRU, and their subsequent impact on organisational change.

Data was collected through a combination of observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The observation component of the fieldwork had two areas of interest, one of which was the very general sense of 'being in the situation' (Kirk, 1986). This involved the total time spent at the research site in informed conversation with the QRU and the rugby community generally. Intrusion into the world of the QRU, was a vital means of obtaining contextual information about the organisation, the employees, and the supporting network committed to rugby union. This aspect of observation acted as a means to becoming sensitised to the research setting.

The second area of observation involved systematic observation and field note taking during meetings that occurred within and outside the organisation. Throughout this study a structured and predefined method of systematic observation was used to itemise and categorise responses (Weick, 1985). Meetings were observed between senior management and a variety of groups including the entire management team, between senior management and employees, and between senior management and those involved in rugby union who are outside the organisation (rugby club representatives, regional representatives and volunteers). Systematic observation provided a foothold in the world of senior management

and provided the basis for further conversation in interviews when discussing the types of environmental turbulence the QRU had been exposed to, and the type of change that occurred as a result of this.

A cross section of senior and middle management was selected for semi-structured interviews. In each case they had responsibility for determining, implementing, and monitoring the organisational response to the environmental disturbance. The managers interviewed were the: Chief Executive Officer; Rugby Manager; State Director of Coaching and Development; Marketing Manager; Financial Controller; Rugby Administrator; Reds Rugby College Manager (the manager of the college is responsible for the development of elite players who will go on to represent at the highest level with the Queensland Reds in the Super 12 competition); Operations Manager; and the Media and Public Relations Manager. A total of five club managers were also interviewed. The interviews were used to establish the nature of the strategic responses, to determine when and why the environmental turbulence occurred, and to provide an understanding of the reason behind adopting a specific response.

All interviews were audiotaped and lasted from 30-90 minutes in duration. Audiotaping the interviews meant the researcher did not have to attempt to write down the responses of each individual. The researcher was therefore able to concentrate fully on the interviewees' responses and use these as a basis for further questioning. Adding interview data to recorded observations further improved the trustworthiness of the data.

A number of planning and policy documents produced by the QRU were used as an important tool of analysis. Content analysis, as outlined by Sarantakos (1998), was utilised to explore the strategic issues addressed by the QRU, to examine the subjectivity that exists in documents, and to highlight how organisational motives, attitudes, and values play a role in the interpretation of documents. The documents included in this analysis were the *Strategic Plan for 1997-2000*, and the *Business Plans for 1997-1999*.

Documents of this type have never previously been produced by the QRU, as such they evolved throughout the duration of the study. This allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of how the strategic management process worked, the changes that were being attempted, and the actions being used to achieve them.

Additional documents were used to sensitise the researcher to the internal workings of the QRU. The documents included the *Memorandum and Articles of Association*.

These provided an understanding of the governance procedures and potential power plays that could result as a consequence of these procedures. The researcher also examined the Annual Reports for 1996-1999. This provided insight into the financial implications associated with implementing the change process. The other document examined was titled *Australian Rugby: Creating a Future*. This report was presented to the Board of the Australian Rugby Union (ARU) and was prepared in 1996 by Michael Crawford, a private consultant. The report outlined the future strategic direction and policies senior managers of rugby union in Australia should employ. This allowed the researcher to further understand the 'management' of rugby union in Queensland.

1.5 Abbreviated Terms

The terms listed below will be abbreviated throughout the thesis in the following way:

1.	A consortium of the South African Football Union; New Zealand Rugby Football Union; and Australian Rugby Football Union national governing bodies	SANZAR
2.	Australian Capital Territory Rugby Union	ACTRU
3.	Australian Cricket Board	ACB
4.	Australian Rugby Union	ARU
5.	Australian Rugby Football Union	ARFU
6.	Australian Rugby League	ARL
7.	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
8.	International Management Group	IMG
9.	International Rugby Football Board	IRFB
10.	New South Wales Rugby Union	NSWRU
11.	Queensland Rugby Union	QRU
12.	Rugby Football Union	RFU
13.	Volunteer Improvement Program	VIP
14.	World Rugby Corporation	WRC

Note: The ARU and the ARFU are the same organisation. The latter is the full legal title of the organisation and is used in all official documentation and legal contracts. The discussion within the thesis reflects this.

1.6 *Structure of Thesis*

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction to the research topic. Chapter two presents a literature review. It examines the research that explains the nature of organisational change, and links changes in the environment to changes in organisational strategy and culture. Chapter three outlines the research design for the thesis and puts forward a justification for undertaking a postmodern ethnographic case study. Chapter four addresses the area of data-collection and analysis, and details the procedural issues that are related to the research. Chapter five outlines the conceptual framework used in the thesis and provides a detailed discussion of the three theoretical constructs that form this framework. Chapter six provides an historical overview of the diffusion of rugby union into Queensland, and insight into the traditions and management practices that accompanied it. Chapter seven presents a discussion and analysis of the interview data. Chapter eight examines the documents produced by the QRU and details the impact they have had on the change process. Finally, chapter nine provides a summary of the research findings, and discusses the extent to which the aims of this thesis were achieved. The implications for future research are also considered.

1.7 *Limitations of the Research*

This research does not provide any firm conclusions about the impact of environmental turbulence on strategic change and organisational culture beyond the investigation of the QRU. While the research occupied a substantial period (3 years) and utilised observation, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and experiences within the organisation, it does not examine the likely long-term success of the initiatives that were implemented. The timeframe for an examination of this nature was not sufficient, and in any case, an evaluation of the QRU's performance was outside the aims of this thesis.

In addition, although this thesis discusses how traditional cultural values had become ingrained and subsequently challenged within the QRU, an examination of all cultural manifestations is not possible. Therefore, although the researcher recognises that sporting organisations inherently display 'masculine cultures', the existence of, and implications associated with such a culture are not explored here. An examination of this nature would be deserving of a separate investigative undertaking and would also extend beyond the aims of this particular thesis.

1.8 Summary

This chapter commenced with a discussion of the research problem and how this research aims to reveal the unique dynamics of the organisational change process in the QRU. It is anticipated that the thesis will deepen our understanding of the changes occurring in Australian sport in general, and rugby union in particular.

In addition, it provided an overview of the methodology to be used in this research.

Primarily, an ethnographic case study of the QRU was conducted from November 1996 to November 1999. Data was collected through the use of observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The chapter included a reference source for the abbreviated terms used in this thesis, an outline of the structural format of the thesis, and the limitations of the research project.

Chapter two will discuss the relevant literature related to this research.

CHAPTER TWO

2.

...LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

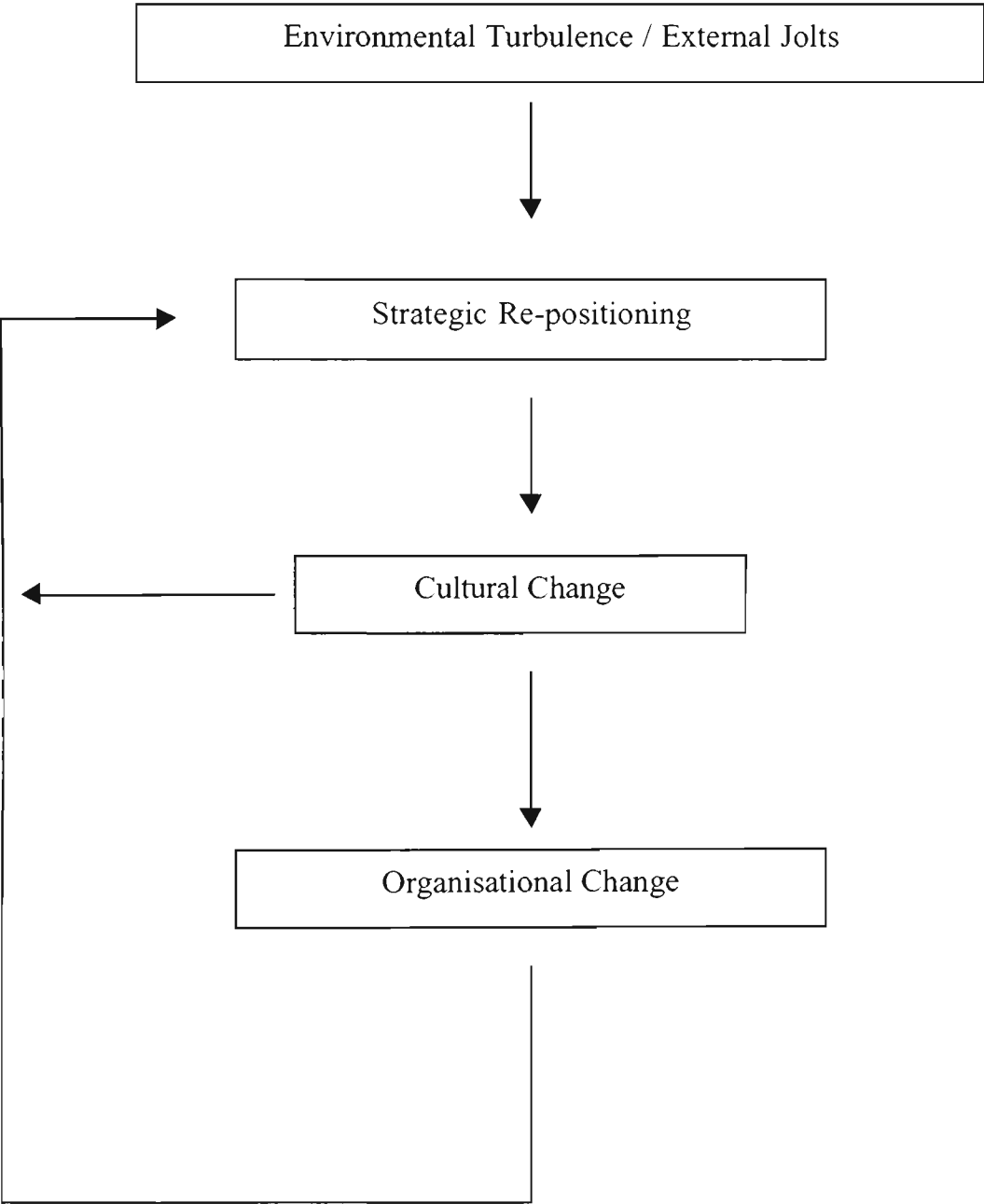
2.1 *Introduction*

This chapter examines the research that links changes in the environment to changes in organisational strategy and culture. In doing so it establishes a theoretical and empirical foundation that allows the researcher not only to address the general purpose of the thesis, which is to examine the influence of environmental turbulence on the change process occurring at the QRU during the 1990s, but also to analyse its impact on that organisation's strategic direction and organisational culture. This chapter is written in three sections. Section one highlights the need for an organisation to attain a sustainable 'fit' with its environment in order to produce a viable level of activity. It also shows how the environment can frequently create the impetus for organisational change. The organisational change occurring within the QRU can subsequently be perceived not as a sudden management whim, but rather, as the result of having to respond to a turbulent external environment. Section two explores how differing models of organisational change attempt to explain how organisations survive in conditions of environmental turbulence and uncertainty. Specifically, it discusses three theoretical models: (1) population ecology; (2) resource dependence; and (3) strategic choice. The shortcomings of these models and their ability to fully explain the process of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU are examined. Section three addresses the concept of organisational culture and its relationship with strategy. It draws on a number of theoretical insights to explain how environmental change is connected to strategy and culture. It then explains how

organisational culture can either support or impede the organisational change process.

These connections are diagrammatically represented below in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: The Connections Between Environmental Turbulence and Organisational Change



2.2 *The Environment and Organisations: The Need for 'Fit'*

2.2.1 Introduction

This section addresses the importance of organisations obtaining an appropriate fit with their environment. The change occurring in the Australia's sporting environment is momentous, much of the environment surrounding sporting organisations is turbulent and difficult to anticipate or predict. The literature suggests that if sporting organisations fail to achieve the necessary fit with their environment the consequences could threaten their survival. It is therefore necessary to initially establish why such a fit between a sporting organisation and its environment is necessary for the organisation's long-term viability.

2.2.2 Understanding the Importance of the Environment

According to Perrow (1973) organisational theorists paid little attention to the external environment until the advent of the systems approach in the 1960s. Before this time traditional theories of management, administration and bureaucracy neglected the influence of the environment and viewed organisations as closed systems (Fayol, 1949; Taylor, 1916; Weber, 1948). Melville (1994) suggested that one of the main reasons for this neglect of the external environment within the scientific management and human relations schools was the lack of analytic tools with which to conceptualise the external organisational environment. She further suggested that the proponents of these two schools focused almost exclusively on the internal functions of the organisation, and so to a large extent the environment was

unconnected to internal variables such as efficiency, size, technology, structure, psycho-social dynamics and decision-making processes.

The inadequacies of closed system thinking became apparent after World War II as society became more turbulent and its problems more complex and interconnected. Through the insights of Weiner's (1950) work on cybernetics and Von Bertalanffy's (1968) conceptualisation of 'general systems theory', it became increasingly clear that no living entity could survive without exchange with its environment. Consequently, organisations were viewed as open systems that were not fixed and isolated entities, insulated from their surroundings. Rather, organisations expanded and evolved by adapting to changes in their environment and in turn, impacting on the external environment. Scott (1987) noted the distinction between the two theories.

The previous definitions tended to view the organisation as a closed system, separate from its environment and comprising a set of stable and easily identified participants. However, organisations are not closed systems, sealed off from their environments but are open to and dependent on flows of personnel and resources from outside. (p. 23)

The systems approach therefore became a useful method for understanding and dealing with problems or situations that confront organisations (Immegart & Pilecki, 1973). Systems theorists recognised the importance of studying the organisation as a whole and giving consideration to the interrelationship of its parts including its relationship with an external environment (Livingston, 1997). The open-systems perspective had several distinctive characteristics that emphasised the organisation's

environment. Morgan (1986) indicated that an understanding of this relationship between an organisation and its environment is managed by:

...stressing the importance of being able to scan and sense changes in task and contextual environments, of being able to bridge and manage critical boundaries and areas of interdependence, and of being able to develop appropriate strategic responses. (p. 45)

However, over the years, organisational theorists coming from a range of different theoretical traditions have experienced difficulty in articulating coherent theoretical notions about the organisational environment. According to Melville (1994) these ranged from the initial abstract theoretical typologies of the major characteristics of the environment (Aldrich, 1979; Emery & Trist, 1965) to the much more recent concrete attempts to define the specific elements, which make up the wider organisational environment. Hall (1999) suggested that these include factors that influence the organisation's ability to function effectively, such as cultural, political, economic, technological, legal, social and demographic characteristics of any given society. Regardless of the current lack of theoretical specificity about the elements of the external environment that can impact on an organisation, Melville indicated there is a common agreement amongst organisational theorists that it is a vital ingredient in the analysis of both short-term maintenance and long-term survival.

2.2.3 *Environmental Turbulence*

Environmental turbulence refers to an unanticipated and discontinuous change in the environment that creates a sense of uncertainty within an organisation. Emery and Trist (1965) introduced the concept of turbulent fields. They developed a typology of four different organisational domains, each with its own unique characteristics: the placid randomised, the placid clustered, the disturbed reactive, and the turbulent environment. The first two domains differ according to the source and degree of interdependence between the organisations and their environments. The third domain is characterised by the actions of organisations, such as the amount of competition between them for resources. The fourth domain is characterised as highly unpredictable because of the undependable behaviour of different groups of organisations with other groups.

The most important insight of Emery and Trist (1965), however, was the recognition of the causal texture of turbulent environments. They noted that while open systems theory was useful in characterising the exchanges between an organisation and its environment, it had not dealt with those processes in the environment itself which are among the determining conditions of the exchanges. In other words, the forces connecting parts of the environment to each other (the causal texture), are often incommensurate with those connecting either parts of the organisation (the internal interdependencies) or those that govern the organisation's exchanges with the environment (the transactional dependencies). Thus, the turbulent environment is characterised by the dynamic processes arising from the environment itself.

Sui (1978) provided a useful analogy to such an environment by describing the game of Chinese baseball. He implied the game is similar to American baseball except that when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, anyone can move any base anywhere they like. In short, actions in other parts of the interconnected system, while largely invisible, can have an impact on the organisation's functioning (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Terrerberry (1968) expanded on the arguments of Emery and Trist (1965) and suggested that organisational environments were becoming more turbulent. She cited evidence that supported the increasingly and rapidly changing interconnections among elements in the environment and concluded that organisations were becoming increasingly dependent upon their environment and each other. In a similar vein, Ansoff (1975) defined the level of turbulence as the state of knowledge at which an organisation must initiate action in order to respond effectively to environmental changes. Additionally, he observed that turbulence appeared to be escalating since organisations were increasingly having to design management systems capable of making decisions on weak signals - the necessarily incomplete and impressionistic analysis of emerging issues and trends (Ansoff, 1979, 1980).

More recently Livingston's (1997) work on the organisational responses taken by school principals to the environmental turbulence they confronted highlighted the broad cross section of definitions used to explain the term. Theus and Billingsley (1992) suggested that turbulence could be seen as fluctuations in environmental conditions, however, Haleblan and Finkelstein (1993) suggested it may also be recognised by reference to its volatility or difficult to predict discontinuities. Finally,

according to Ansoff and Sullivan (1993), it may be referred to as a measure of changeability (or discontinuity) and predicability of an organisation's environment.

However, it is the work of Cameron, Kim, and Whetten (1987) who suggested that turbulence exists when changes facing an organisation are non-trivial, rapid and discontinuous that provides an understanding of the turbulence that has recently confronted the QRU. The four factors proposed by Ansoff and McDonnell (1990) also indicates the magnitude of turbulence that has confronted the QRU. These factors are: (1) the complexity of events the organisation confronts; (2) a familiarity with successive environmental challenges that the organisation encounters; (3) the rapidity of change with which events evolve after they are first perceived; (4) a visibility of the consequences of these events. Each of these four factors featured in the QRU's environment, and forced the organisation to recognise that its ability to adapt to the turbulence present its external environment was limited.

Indeed, turbulence is a major component of most post-amateur sporting environments. It generates high levels of change, competitiveness and uncertainty. In such conditions, organisations find it difficult to monitor their environments and plan accurately. Sporting administrators are often unable to bring about uniformed and successful change. As a result environmental turbulence is a major challenge facing managers and modern sporting organisations in their attempts for future survival. Therefore, a central question is: "in what ways do environmental factors affect the strategic direction of the organisation?" Attempts to answer this question have given rise to a number of theoretical models. They include the population ecology model

(sometimes known as the natural selection model), the resource dependence model, and the strategic choice model. These models will be discussed in the next section.

2.3 Models of Organisational Change

2.3.1 Introduction

A key problem with much of the study of change management in organisations is that many influential writers in the field do not explicitly discuss the models and frameworks that guide their analyses. This is a crucial oversight, since theoretical models are essential to our understanding of complex issues. Any type of thinking about our world requires some kind of theoretical model, implicit or otherwise, which structures and guides our thinking and renders it meaningful (Collins, 1998). The following section discusses three models that provide an understanding of how organisations respond in conditions of environmental turbulence and uncertainty.

2.3.2 The Population Ecology Model

This model relies primarily on concepts embedded in the biological theory of natural selection. This approach “posits that environmental factors select those organisational characteristics that best fit the environment” (Aldrich & Pfeffer, 1976, quoted in Hall, 1999, p. 275). It has been explained in the following terms:

...the pattern of organisational change is such that ‘selection pressures’ may favour or eliminate entire groups of organisations, such as industries, and that changing structure and distribution of organisations in a society reflects the operation of such selection. (Aldrich, 1979, p. 28)

These selection pressures are currently occurring in the Australian sporting environment. Rugby union is now competing in the entertainment market where the amount of competition and limited resources available in the environment is selecting which sporting organisations survive. As Morgan (1989) suggested:

This selection orientation tends to emphasise the importance of environmental competition, on the one hand, and of resource scarcity (as a factor influencing the number of organisations that an environment can sustain), on the other, as two forces that 'select' or 'eliminate' specific types of organisations. As a consequence, populations of organisations can survive or fail as a result of natural evolutionary processes, regardless of actions taken by individual organisations. (p. 89)

Aldrich and Pfeffer (1976) further suggested that the population ecology model does not deal with single organisational units but is concerned with forms or populations of organisations. Organisational forms that have an appropriate fit with the environment are selected and survive over those that do not fit or fit less appropriately. The implication is that organisations and individual organisational actors are viewed as possessing very little power to influence the outcome of this selection process.

Aldrich (1979) however, suggested that certain environmental forms could fill niches in the environment. Niches are "distinct combinations of resources and other constraints that are sufficient to support an organisational form" (p.28). Research on niches (Carroll, 1985; Freeman & Hannan, 1983) has shown that narrow niches tend to support organisations that are specialised, whereas wider niches are more

supportive of generalist organisations. According to Hall (1999) the notion of niches raises the possibility that there are unfilled niches within the environment waiting for the right organisational form. There are a number of instances where sporting organisations attempted to develop their own niche within the mass entertainment market. The QRU is one example of such an organisation attempting to secure a position within this niche.

There have been, however, a number of theoretical flaws exposed in the population ecology model. Van de Ven (1979) criticised the model because of its down-playing of strategic choices made on behalf of organisations. The variations in forms that occur have some source and, according to Van de Ven, it is the strategic choices made within organisations. As such, managerial processes within organisations are ignored inasmuch as only successful organisational forms will survive in the long run. In short, the managerial decisions that allow an organisation to 're-position' itself, and consequently create a fit between the organisation and the environment are disregarded.

Clegg and Dunkerley (1980) suggested population ecologists pay very little attention to theorising about the influence of macro structures and social and political processes (especially those to do with the distribution of power, and the way conflict and competition is dealt with) which occur within and between organisations. These factors are of critical concern to an analysis of a sporting organisation that has differing opinions about the strategic direction it should be moving in. The political manoeuvring that plays a vital role in determining this strategic direction will be fraught with conflict.

Finally, Melville (1994) suggested that, given the centrality of resources to this model, it is problematic that none of the major theorists provide an adequate explanation of the problems associated with this. There is no attempt to explain the distribution of resources in terms of power, or that power itself can be conceived of as a critical resource. Power and its influence on resource allocation are fundamental to an analysis of an organisation that is responsible for the development and management of rugby union throughout the state of Queensland.

2.3.3 *The Resource Dependence Model*

Whereas the population ecology approach stresses selection – organisational change and survival are explained in terms of a selection process that occurs in the environment - the resource dependence model emphasises adaptation. In other words, individual organisations can act to improve their chances of survival.

This perspective is strongly rooted in an open system framework as discussed earlier in this chapter. It is argued that one cannot understand the structure or behaviour of an organisation without understanding the influence organisational members have in determining the strategic direction of the organisation. This is emphasised by Hall (1999) when he suggested that the population ecology model down-plays the role of organisational actors in determining the fate of organisations. The resource dependence model allows for organisational decisions and actions to be brought back into consideration (Aldrich & Pfeffer, 1976; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This is a point having direct relevance to this research, as decisions made and actions taken are pivotal in determining the QRU's strategic direction.

The resource dependence model also has strong ties to what has been labelled the political economy model of organisations (Benson, 1975, Wamsley & Zald, 1973) and the dependence exchange approach (Hasenfeld, 1972; Jacobs, 1974). The basic premise of the resource dependence model is that decisions are made within organisations. The decisions deal with environmental conditions faced by the organisation (Schreyogg, 1980), however, these decisions are made within the internal political context of the organisation. It is the political environment that is one of the

central planks to understanding not only how decisions are manufactured within the QRU but also the various forms of support these decisions receive.

Additionally, the model recognises that organisations attempt to deal actively with the changing environment. Organisations will attempt to manipulate the environment to their own advantage rather than being passive recipients of environmental forces as implied in the population ecology model. Within this model organisations will make decisions about adapting to their environment. These decisions are currently occurring at the QRU albeit within the context of its internal political environment.

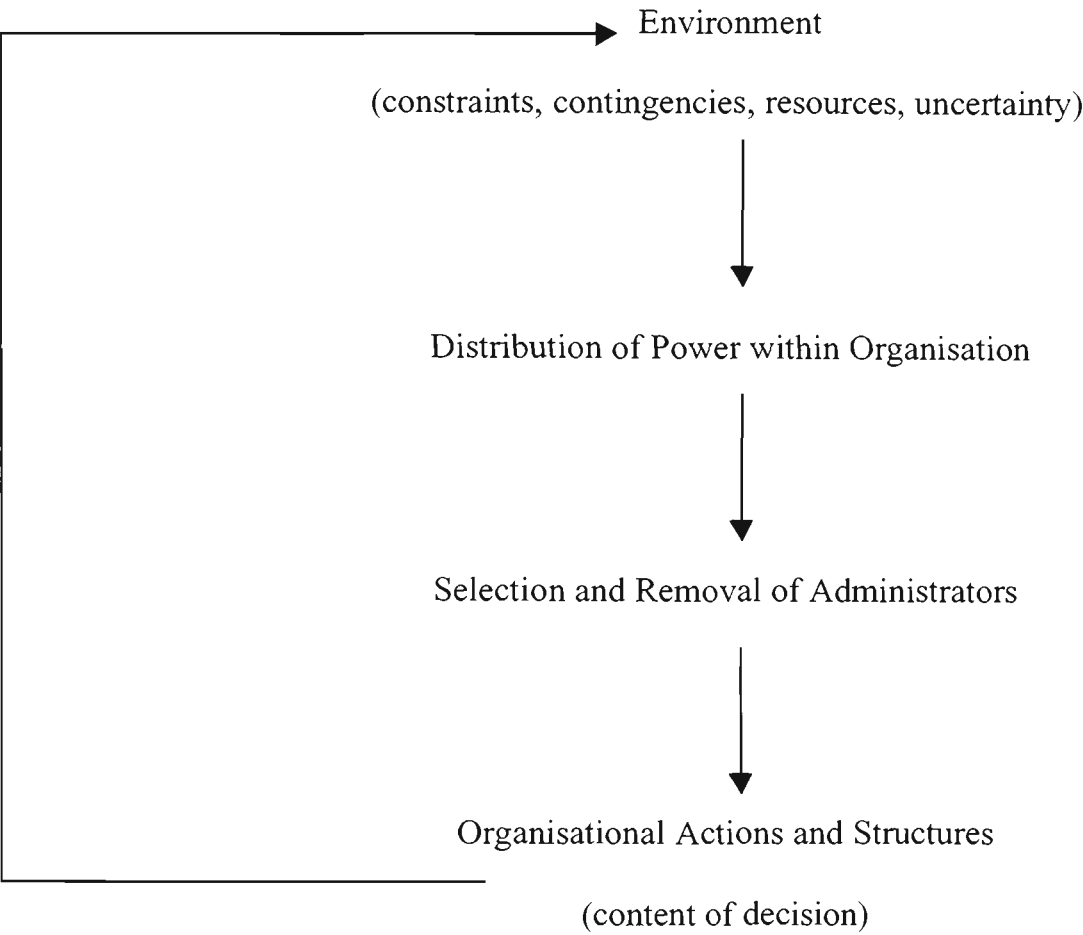
It is clear then that a key element of the resource dependence model is choice (Chandler, 1962; Child, 1972). This implies that a decision is made from a set of alternatives, and the decision made by the organisation is capable of dealing with the current environmental conditions. The assumption is that the environment does not force the organisation into a situation in which no choice is possible. This is a point supported by Aldrich and Pfeffer (1976) who noted that the criteria by which choices are made and determined are both important and problematic. There is not just one choice or course of action available to organisations.

The resource dependence model stresses the importance of internal power arrangements and the influence of external groups in determining the choices made by organisations (Aldrich & Pfeffer, 1976). These issues are critical when analysing the choices made by the QRU. Some individuals within the organisation utilise their power to influence the decision-making process. Former players and administrators who have a long attachment and association with the QRU represent external groups

who can influence the decision-making process. Despite this Aldrich and Pfeffer stress that the environment is still a key factor in the decision-making process as it provides numerous constraints, uncertainties, and contingencies. However, it is those individuals or groups with political skills who have a greater ability to deal with the constraints, uncertainties and contingencies they confront who therefore hold the most power and influence within organisations (Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck, & Pennings, 1971).

Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) supported and furthered the arguments put forward by Hickson et al. (1971). In doing so, they developed a model that highlighted how an organisation adapts to environmental constraints, uncertainties, and contingencies (see Figure 2.2 below). They concluded that power distribution is determined by who succeeded in key decision making positions, and subsequently, what point of view came to characterise the organisation's decision-making. These factors, in turn, can affect the actions of organisational members and the structures that exist in an organisation. The problem for the QRU is that those who have occupied and succeeded in key decision-making positions at the club level adopted the view that rugby should remain an amateur game supported by traditional management practices. As a result, the decisions made were not always appropriate for the changing environment the organisation was confronting.

Figure 2.2: Organisational Adaptation to Environmental Constraints



Source: Pfeffer (1982, p. 203)

As the resource dependence model links the outcomes of the decision-making process with the internal political environment of organisations the emphasis placed only on environmental factors is not as great. This is primarily because politics is seen as a process operating somewhat independently of environmental factors. Therefore the resource dependence view implies a looser coupling between organisations and their environments than implied by population ecology (Pfeffer, 1982). Given this, although resource dependence theory highlights that organisations are linked and constrained to and by the environment, it also recognises that the internal political environment has a major influence in determining organisational direction and therefore cannot be ignored. The power internal political groups have is crucial in determining the nature of the choices made, and thus an emphasis on power is necessary since choices are made in a political context (Hall, 1999).

The resource dependency model however, displays two distinct shortcomings. First, it tends to emphasise inter-unit (e.g., marketing versus finance) power differentials and tends to ignore hierarchical power differences. Hierarchical power differences according to Hall (1999) must be considered in any choice process since such differences can override inter-unit power struggles. Second, although the resource dependence perspective with its focus on power distribution makes an important contribution to the analysis of the role played by the external environment in shaping the long-term fate of organisations, it does not focus sufficiently on cultural processes (Beyer, 1981). These processes help shape organisations and can contribute to the possible long-term survival of the organisation. The cultural processes that have existed within the QRU for the majority of its existence are seen as significant barriers

to its possible long-term survival. Therefore, the influence cultural forces have had on the outcomes of the change process must be discussed in this research.

2.3.4 The Strategic Choice Model

According to Aldrich (1979), the concept of strategic choice stands squarely in the tradition of the rational selection model, positing that variation and selection are simultaneous processes dependent upon decisions made by organisational participants. Variation involves a rational search for alternative goals and methods of attaining goals, while selectivity is inherent in participants' choosing between the various alternatives. It is this emphasis on goal setting that distinguishes, and is central to, strategic choice theory. In other words, an organisation can choose its futures rather than have them made for it.

The concept of strategy within this model is taken from Chandler's (1962) historical study of the evolution of General Motors, DuPont, Standard Oil of New Jersey, and Sears, as each attempted to take advantage of perceived markets in their environment to ensure the long-term health of the organisation. Chandler's conception of strategy focused explicitly on the active role participants play in modifying structure:

Strategy can be defined as the determination of the basic long-run goals and objectives of the enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals. Decisions to expand on the volume of activities, to set up distant plants and offices, to move into new economic functions, or become diversified along many lines of

business involve the defining of new basic goals. New courses of action must be devised and resources allocated and reallocated in order to achieve these goals and to maintain and expand the firm's activities in the new areas in response to shifting demands, changing sources of supply, fluctuating economic conditions, new technological developments, and the actions of competitors. As the adoption of new strategy may add new types of personnel and facilities, and alter business horizons of the men responsible for the enterprise, it can have a profound effect on the form of the organisation.

(p. 16)

This implies that rather than environments directly impinging on organisational structures and activities, they are mediated by the agency of participants' choices in strategy formulation. Child (1972) argued that the direct sources of variation in formal structural arrangements are the strategic decisions made by those persons having the power to initiate actions. He added that theories proposing an environmental, technological, or economies of scale imperative:

...draw attention to possible constraints upon the choice of effective structures, but fail to consider the process of choice itself in which economic and administrative exigencies are weighed by the actors concerned against the opportunities to operate a structure of their own and/or other organisational members' preferences. (p. 16)

Child (1972) did not assert that participants create environments or that the availability of resources is not a constraint on organisational change. Rather, he was

attempting to correct what he perceived as an imbalance in the field, whereby theorists were neglecting the wide range of discretion open to decision-makers. According to Aldrich (1979), Child's position implied that the debate over choice versus constraint is best phrased as the conditions under which member discretion can have significant impact on change, and how often such conditions arise. Miles, Snow, and Pfeffer (1974) extended on Child's (1972) work and argued that to some extent organisations could choose the environments in which they were to operate.

Aldrich (1979), however, highlighted three general constraints to this process. First, constraints exist on the capacity of decision-makers to make optimal choices of new environmental niches. Under these conditions new organisations may be selected by organisational decision-makers but there are significant constraints on the operation of this process. Potential environments may be excluded by law, because of funding restrictions, or by legal barriers to entry. Second, there are limits on the power of organisations to influence their environments. Aldrich suggested that although some organisations have the power to strategically influence their environment most strategic decisions are centred at the top of the organisation, since that is where the power lies. Furthermore, ideologies and cultural values commonly enter the decision-making process (Beyer, 1981) and decisions are made by coalitions of individuals and groups (Bacharach & Lawler; 1980, Gargiulo, 1993). Additionally, the desired outcomes of interest groups may or may not coincide with the best interests of the organisation. In the majority of instances they will not coincide with the interests of those groups in power. As a consequence those in power have an incentive to manipulate information to influence decisions in their favour (Milgrom & Roberts, 1988). Finally, there are risks associated with any strategic choice as individuals

attempt to distinguish between the environment and their perceptions of the environment. Here Aldrich (1979) suggested that all theories stressing the importance of the environment have frequently blurred the distinction between the characteristics of the environment and the perception and evaluation of these characteristics by organisational members.

As a consequence of these constraints the environment sets the limits within which rational selection among alternatives can take place. Prior limits and constraints on the availability options leaves little room for manoeuvring by most organisations, and strategic choice may be a luxury only open to the largest and most powerful organisations.

Although the QRU attempted to influence its strategic direction by following the strategic choice template, that is, developing organisational goals and strategies, its strategy formulation was also affected by other forces. Specifically, the QRU's strategic choices were influenced by two factors: (1) the unequal distribution of power, and (2) the entrenched cultural values and beliefs of amateurism that exist within the organisation. Consequently, the strategic choice model has only limited applicability to this research. As with the population ecology and resource dependence model it does not satisfactorily address the problems of power differentials and entrenched values. As a result, these models provide only a superficial insight into the forces impacting on the organisational change process occurring at the QRU. Therefore, to effectively discuss how the QRU has responded and adapted to the environmental turbulence it is necessary to move beyond these approaches.

The next section will discuss the area of culture and its relationship to strategy.

2.4. Organisational Culture and its Relationship to Organisational Change and Strategy

2.4.1 Introduction

This section discusses the basic tenets of organisational culture and a number of models that provide an understanding of cultural change. It then examines the links between organisational culture and strategy. Particular attention is given to the development of subcultures and their impact on organisational change.

2.4.2 Organisational Culture

It is in the field of anthropology that the concept of culture has been developed most fully. In this context, culture can be collectively defined as the prevailing values and beliefs common to a group of people. Anthropologists set themselves the task of investigating, interpreting and translating the behavioural and social patterns of groups of individuals by aiming to understand the manner in which individuals and groups relate to the environment.

Modern organisational theorists, however, have been relatively slow in picking up the anthropological concept of culture and applying it to organisations. Subsequently, the concept of culture has been the subject of considerable academic debate, and there have been numerous approaches to defining it, (e.g., Barley, Meyer & Gash, 1988; Martin 1991; Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). From these definitions common threads defining organisational culture can be explained in two basic components. First,

culture is the substance, or the networks of meanings contained in the ideologies, norms and values of the organisation. Second, culture is expressed through practices whereby the meanings of the ideologies, norms, and values are used, expressed, affirmed, and communicated to members of the organisation.

Organisational culture can, therefore, be viewed as a pattern of beliefs and expectations that are common to members of a social unit, and which subsequently set the behavioural standards or norms for all new employees (Barley, 1985; Schwatz & Davis, 1981). In all organisations individuals are exposed to what researchers term 'cultural revealing' situations, which includes observable behaviour of members, their work methods (that is photos, honour boards and other memorabilia on show) and interactive communication, or the way in which individuals relate to each other. Shared values and beliefs and common understandings constitute the foundation of organisational culture (Ott, 1989).

As far as the culture that exists in sporting organisations is concerned only a small amount of study has been conducted. Pawlak (1984) undertook an examination of organisational culture of three sporting organisations: the Polish Judo Association; the Polish Weightlifting Association; and the Polish Kayaking Association. In order to determine the culture of these Associations data was collected from their publications and press reports and was supplemented by interviews with officials. Pawlak identified the predominant values imposed on the associations by senior management. The values were encapsulated into three fundamental goals. These goals were sport success, the development of discipline, and increasing participation. In regards to management processes substantial value was attributed to the centralisation of

decisions, efficient information dissemination and decision making processes, in addition to an unambiguous organisational structure.

Lee (1989) undertook an analysis of leadership style, strategy and organisational culture in order to establish their relationship with success. Sport coaches from American football, basketball and baseball were questioned via survey. The results showed that an appropriate organisational culture is important for a successful sports team. For example, a culture of integrated values of competitiveness and teamwork was deemed advantageous. In addition, strategies implemented will be more fruitful within an environment conducive to their undertaking - a point to be taken up later in this section. In short, however, the research indicated that an appropriate culture is a necessary prerequisite for success.

Smith and Stewart (1995) have undertaken the most recent work in their analysis of the organisational culture of an elite level Australian football club. Their study concluded that the club's success could be attributed in part to a culture which is characteristically masculine, achievement orientated, and disciplined, all within a club environment which rewards collective identity over individual self-interest. However, the club possessed a culture which placed little value on long-term planning and a preference for the familiar over the new and uncertain. These particular traits were at odds with the requirements needed in a rapidly changing sporting environment. To date, however, there have been no studies that have attempted to model the cultural change process within a sporting organisation. Therefore to gain an understanding of how this process operates it is necessary to draw on models that

focus on the process of change. Lundberg (1985) and Dyer (1985) developed two important models.

2.4.3 Lundberg's Organisational Learning Cycle of Culture Change

Lundberg's (1985) model for understanding cultural change in organisations is likened to an elaborate learning cycle. The basic premise is that in order for cultural change to occur requisite external and internal circumstances must exist. He suggested that there are two external enabling conditions that may facilitate culture change. The first relates to domain forgiveness; that is the degree of threat to an organisation by such forces as competition, the relative scarcity or abundance of resources, and the relative stability or instability of the environment. Lundberg suggested that the more forgiving the environment the more likely change will occur as it is perceived to be less risky. The second external enabling condition is organisation-domain congruence. If the degree of congruence between an organisation and its domains is too little or too great then change may seem overly threatening or unnecessary. Change is more likely when the degree of congruence is perceived to be relatively modest.

Additionally, Lundberg (1985) suggested that favourable internal conditions must exist within the organisation to further provide an impetus for change. First, there must be a surplus of change resources, such as money and managerial time and energy. Second, there must be a collective sense that people are willing to change, referred to as system readiness. Third, there must be the existence of coordinative and integrative mechanisms that facilitate communication and control. Finally, there must be a relatively strong leadership team with a high level of strategic awareness,

sufficient power, and possession of the ability to envision alternative organisation futures.

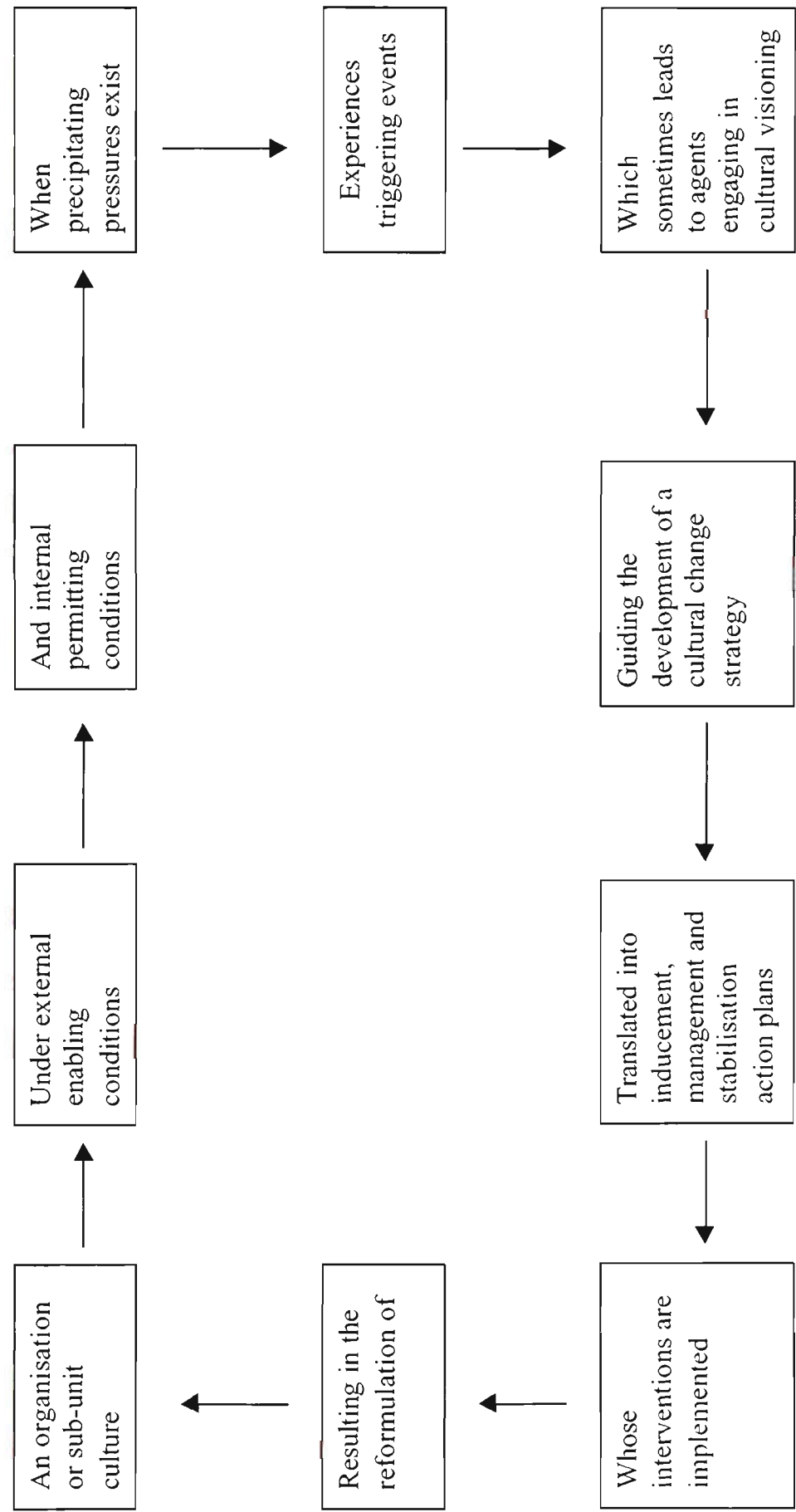
According to Lundberg (1985), if these external and internal conditions exist and the organisation is faced with certain precipitating pressures, then organisational members are more likely to change. Such precipitating pressures may normally include (1) atypical performance demands (such as to be more productive), (2) stakeholder pressures (which might come from the public or government), (3) organisational growth or decrement and, (4) the perception of a crisis associated with environmental uncertainty. However, one further condition is required before change can be initiated: the occurrence of a triggering event.

Lundberg (1985) discusses five forms of triggering events. These include: (1) environmental calamities (i.e., a changing financial position), (2) environmental opportunities (i.e., the development of new markets), (3) internal revolutions (installation of a new management team), (4) external revolutions (being taken over by another corporation) and, (5) a managerial crisis (a major shake-up of top management due to an inappropriate strategic decision). Furthermore, in those instances where the trigger comes as a surprise to the leadership of an organisation and puts it in a predicament, management may respond by engaging in a process of inquiry. This process involves rendering the dominant culture explicit and sketching out a new and preferable alternative. Lundberg referred to this descriptive shaping of a new organisational culture as cultural visioning.

Lundberg (1985) suggested that the creation of a new and preferred organisational culture is necessary but not a sufficient enough step towards that culture's establishment. Once the new cultural vision exists a general strategy is needed to achieve it. Cultural change strategies require the agents of change (management) to define their plans in relation to three questions. First, will the pace of change be swift or slow? Second, will the scope of change impact through the entire organisation? Third, will the time span for change occur over a short or long time period? Once this has occurred the organisation must undergo the sequential implementation of three action plans. These action plans are created for the purpose of the inducement, management, and stabilisation of change. Inducement action plans are developed to prepare and stimulate organisational support for change as well as countering or weakening of natural resistance forces to change. Management action plans allow for the manipulation of information and mobilisation of powerful change agents. Stabilisation action plans institutionalise cultural change through the development of new values at the expense of the old ones.

Lundberg (1985) indicated that these three phases of action planning need to be mapped against four levels of cultural meaning to provide a matrix of cultural change interventions. These include: (1) artifacts; (2) perspectives; (3) values; and (4) assumptions. This implies that successful cultural intervention requires that all levels of a culture from artifacts to assumptions need to be addressed. To achieve this however, continuous, repeated and multiple interventions will be needed to increase the chances of a successful reformulation of organisational culture. This process of cultural change is depicted in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: The Organisational Learning Cycle of Cultural Change



Brown (1995) however, suggested that there are shortcomings in Lundberg's (1985) model. He indicated that there is a lack of explanation in regards to how: (1) cultural change is to be managed; (2) how the different factors impact on each other or operate to induce or prevent cultural change. For example, one of the keys to successful long-term cultural change is its effective management. Without a mechanism to achieve this the process cultural change can become futile. Additionally, Lundberg suggested organisation-domain congruence is required to facilitate cultural change. However, the amount required is relative and difficult to recognise in any given instance. Furthermore, he argued that triggering events can negate this need. As such the need for the effective management of cultural change is overlooked and the notion that it can be explained sequentially becomes a point of debate.

It is, however, the issue of leadership that distinguishes Lundberg's model from other models of cultural change such as Dyer's (1985) model of cultural evolution.

Lundberg (1985) indicated that a relatively stable leadership team is required if cultural change is to be achieved, whereas Dyer's model suggests that cultural change is only possible when a change of leadership occurs. To highlight the difference in the two approaches to implementing cultural change, Dyer's model will now be discussed.

2.4.4 *Dyer's Cycle of Cultural Evolution in Organisations*

Dyer's (1985) model is derived from the case histories of five large American companies; General Motors, Levi Strauss, National Cash Register, the Balfour Company, and the Brown Corporation. He outlined a six phase sequential model of evolutionary cultural change, however, he further suggested it is possible for these stages to overlap or to occur simultaneously. In the first phase of the model it is suggested that change is precipitated by an unanticipated crisis that stimulates leadership transitions and major shifts within organisations. He suggested that an environmental shock in the form of a depression, recession, or financial crisis is the typical cause of this period of questioning. This triggering event creates the perception of a crisis that members of the organisation cannot solve using traditional methods. As a consequence organisational participants engage in a search for alternative solutions to the crisis.

The second phase of the cycle occurs concurrently with phase one. While there is a questioning of the current leadership's abilities to manage the crisis there is a breakdown in what Dyer (1985) refers to as pattern-maintenance symbols, beliefs and structures. These factors form the basis of the current cultural values and beliefs that can be entrenched in organisations, and is particularly so in sporting organisations. He believed it is essential that these pattern-maintenance symbols, beliefs and structures be changed first if organisational cultural change is to succeed. Dyer again links these concepts with leadership. He suggested that the leadership of the organisation is no longer able to reinforce and support the cultural values and beliefs that exist in an organisation as the perceived crisis threatens the very existence of an organisation

with such values and beliefs. The fraying of these values and beliefs will therefore threaten the existing leadership. This was particularly the case at the QRU. As environmental turbulence escalated it became clear that the current leadership, and the cultural values and beliefs of the organisation were at odds with the new direction the QRU needed to take. It was only when the turbulence forced a leadership change that it became possible to implement strategies to change these beliefs.

In phase three Dyer (1985) indicated that although a questioning of the leadership's abilities coupled with a breakdown of the pattern-maintenance symbols, beliefs and structures is necessary they are not enough to trigger cultural change. Dyer suggested that for this to occur an alternative set of values and beliefs must emerge for the organisation to evaluate. In the majority of cases these are put forward by a new leader, however, initially the organisation is likely to continue to respond to the crisis as it has done in the past (as did the QRU).

Conflict and struggle highlight phase four of Dyer's (1985) model. With the arrival of a new leader there is an understanding that past organisational responses must cease. This results in a period of conflict and struggle between the supporters of the old and proponents of the new culture. However, these conflicts may only be short-lived. This is primarily because those individuals who are unable to accept the change are fired, may leave voluntarily, or are moved to positions of little influence on the process. This however, may lead to individuals attempting to undermine the process of change and therefore prolong it. The QRU was characterised by this conflict, as old cultural values could not be isolated to one sub-unit of the organisation. They were evident,

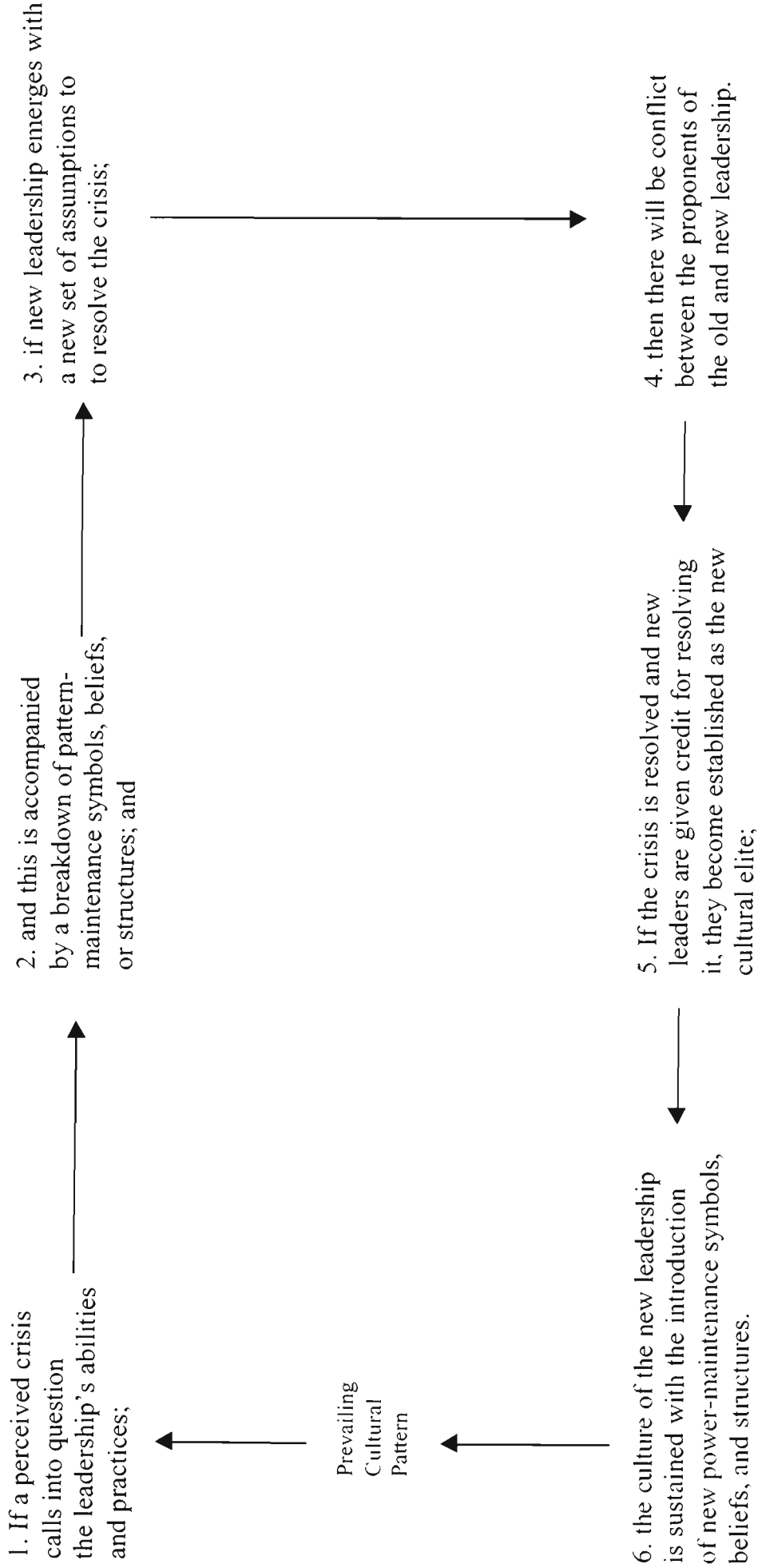
albeit in different concentrations, throughout the organisation. This heightens the possibility of the cultural change process being undermined and extended.

In phase five Dyer (1985) suggested that it is necessary for the new leadership to overcome the conflict and resentment caused by the process of establishing a new organisational culture. To achieve this Dyer indicated that two conditions are necessary. First, the crisis that precipitated this change must appear to be resolved. This will pacify the anxiety and tensions that are associated with organisational uncertainty. Second, the resolution of this crisis must be accredited to the new leader. This will establish the foundation for the acceptance and implementation of future changes by establishing the new leader's power base.

The final and sixth phase of Dyer's (1985) model is linked to stabilisation. The authority and dominance that has been gained through the success of the previous phase must now be used to create new pattern-maintenance symbols, beliefs and structures. These will act to stabilise and institutionalise the new culture. This authority and dominance is normally symbolised by the establishment of a new team that has been selected and recruited by the new leader. At the same time there is a gradual process of elimination of the non-conformists who still exist. Ensuring that all present and new organisational members credit the success to the new leadership team at the expense of the old regime must also support this process. This will invariably lead to new leaders reinterpreting the past and making comments that undermine the credibility of the previous regime. This process was one followed by the QRU leadership team. As senior management of the QRU attempted to develop a professional approach to the management of rugby, that was supported by a base of

skill and competence, it constantly reinforced that the problems confronting the QRU were the result of the previous regime's failure to formalise a strategic planning process. Furthermore, the current leadership team promoted that the only reason the organisation had survived the environmental turbulence it confronted was because of the strategic planning process it had implemented. Dyer's model of cultural evolution is depicted in Figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4: The Cycle of Cultural Evolution in Organisations



Source: Dyer (1985, p. 211)

Dyer's (1985) model can be used to explain how change was initiated at the QRU; specifically, an environmental crisis in concert with a leadership change was necessary for major cultural change to begin. However, the model is limited in its ability to fully explain the competing forces involved in achieving cultural change. In particular, it simplifies the process of cultural change by not placing enough emphasis on the impact of internal and external political forces. The conflict resulting from such forces can inevitably lead to a leadership casualty. The core of Dyer's model is based on the establishment of new leadership. If the turnover of leaders is high this must restrict the potential success of implementing cultural change. Sporting organisations have a history of using political forces to undermine leadership challenges. This may create chronic leadership instability, and the opportunity for cultural change is severely reduced. This proposition will be applied to the change process at the QRU.

The above models demonstrate that cultural change is essential for successful organisational change. The key to a successful change outcome, however, is the leader's ability to create a successful fit between the culture and strategy of the organisation and the demands created by the environment turbulence it confronted. This next sub-section will outline the importance of attaining such a fit.

2.4.5 *Environment, Strategy, and Culture: The Link*

The notion that in order to achieve success, culture must be appropriate to the environment or context in which the organisation functions, is a recurring theme in the cultural study of organisations. The importance of an alignment between strategy and culture has also been investigated; effective strategy implementation and success being determined by the degree to which the culture supports the organisation (Chapman, 1988). That is, each organisation should foster the development of a culture which is consistent with the challenges and expectations of its internal and external environments (Dunn, 1991). It is this balance that the QRU tried to achieve between 1995-1999.

The ability to link effective strategy with an appropriate supporting culture is vital to organisational success. According to Bate (1994), strategy formulation of any kind is cultural activity. The problems and mechanisms of managing strategic change in organisations need to be explained and considered in terms of their cultural context. Thus, Bate suggested that structure and strategy are all implicit in the cultural concept. A change in structure and strategy must be accompanied by a change in culture. Whiteley (1995) supported this notion by highlighting that organisational change constitutes a renewal of parts or even the whole organisational culture, structures, processes and relationships with the outside environment.

Schein (1992) believed if the environmental context is changing, such conflict can be a potential source of adaptation and learning. At the same time, an organisation's strategic direction can be impeded by a dysfunctional culture, and enhanced by a

culture which fits the strategy. In the case of sporting organisations a strategy of merchandising, sponsorship, and general commercial development may be threatened by a culture that supports an amateur ethos. This process of strategic repositioning, which involves an organisation realigning itself with its new environment, has historically been a complex and long-term process and one that is heavily influenced by an organisation's culture (Lorsch, 1986). In short, an organisation's culture exerts a powerful influence over the strategies it pursues (Beach 1993).

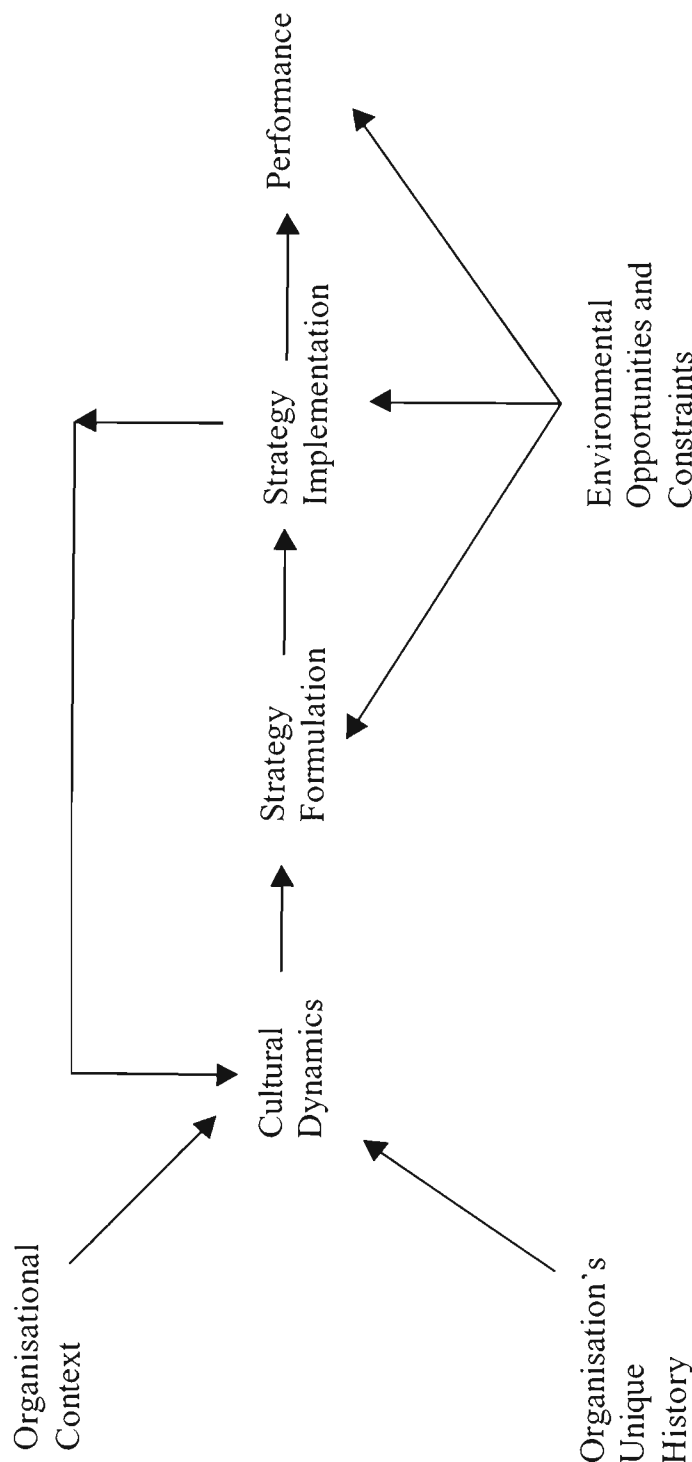
Brown (1995) expanded on the view that an organisation's culture drives its strategies. He suggested that organisations typically exist in highly complex and dynamic environments in which industry trends are difficult to discern. Under these conditions selective perception can mean that organisations in the same market but with different cultural assumptions can interpret their environment differently, giving rise to radically opposed strategies. He further suggested that these cultural assumptions are developed by the influence of the organisation's wider environmental context (business environment) and in response to the unique history, personalities, events, decisions and processes that have characterised its evolution. The result is an intricate web of rites, rituals, symbols and cognitions that influence decisions as they create a complexity of cultural dynamics. These dynamics had a profound impact on the development of the organisational culture of the QRU, and were instrumental in fixing its long-term direction.

Brown (1995) further suggested that culture directly impacts on strategy formulation in five different ways. That is, culture; (1) acts as a perception filter; (2) affects the interpretation of information; (3) sets moral and ethical standards; (4) provides rules,

norms and heuristics for action; and (5) influences how power and authority are wielded in reaching decisions regarding what course of action to pursue. An organisation's culture therefore influences how its strategy is implemented.

Additionally, Brown (1995) suggested the more compatible a strategy is with its prevailing culture the greater the opportunity for that strategy to be put into practice effectively. Furthermore, the stronger and richer the culture (i.e., there is agreement on values and beliefs) the more likely the strategy will be implemented successfully. However, Brown indicated the significance of environmental opportunities and constraints in influencing strategy formulation and implementation. Subsequently, the resulting level of performance is dependent as much on environmental factors as it is on culture. How these forces are interconnected is depicted in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2. 5: Understanding Culture, Strategy, and Performance



Source: Brown (1995, p. 198)

Regardless of these environmental factors, Brown (1995) hypothesised that certain cultural features are more likely to be associated with high levels of organisational performance than others. Thus, in order to create effective organisational cultures which are not only strong (in the sense of being consistent), but rich (there is agreement on values and beliefs) there is a need to actively involve large numbers of organisational members in consultative and decision-making bodies. In addition, those cultures that allow an organisation to exploit a given environment more effectively than others are more strategically appropriate. If a culture is able to adapt to changing circumstances in order to maintain its strategic appropriateness over time this will further compound the amount of competitive advantage that an organisation may develop over its rivals. On the other hand, the likelihood of fragmentation indicates that potential problems exist for organisations attempting to develop an appropriate cultural fit.

2.4.6 The Fragmentation Perspective

Studies conducted from a fragmentation viewpoint focus on ambiguity as the essence of culture. No stable organisation-wide or subcultural consensus is seen, as a precise fit between the environment, strategy, and culture cannot be attained throughout the organisation. Instead, issues temporarily generate concern, but that concern does not coalesce into shared opinions, either in the form of agreement or disagreement. Thus, as an outcome, an organisation's culture can be riddled with ambiguities.

According to Martin (1992), something is judged to be ambiguous because it seems unclear, highly complex, or paradoxical. External sources of ambiguity stem from

conditions external to the person perceiving the ambiguity. For example, uncertainties in an organisation's environment, such as an unexpected environmental jolt, can cause perceptions of ambiguity, as in the case of the QRU. Structural variables can also be an external source of perceived ambiguity, as when an organisation's technical core is loosely coupled with the image it presents to the outside world. However, external sources of ambiguity can have numerous forms of internal reactions on organisational members. These internal reactions range from disgust to antipathy (because individuals do not tolerate ambiguity well) to joy and elation. Internal reactions to ambiguity then can be negative (e.g., a reaction of debilitating confusion or paralysis) or positive (e.g., a reaction of feeling free of unhelpful constraints or able to innovate).

Martin (1992) defined culture from a fragmentation perspective as a "loosely structured and incompletely shared system that emerges dynamically as cultural members experience each other, events and organisation's contextual features" (p. 152). She suggested that rather than seeing consensus within the boundaries of a culture or subculture, the fragmentation viewpoint presented a multiplicity of interpretations that seldom, if ever, coalesce into stable consensus. The boundaries of subcultures are seen as permeable and fluctuating, in response to environmental changes of feeder cultures. In this context the manifestations of a culture (rituals, symbols, beliefs and values) must be multifaceted – their meanings hard to decipher and necessarily open to multiple interpretations.

Organisational researchers such as March (1978) and Starbuck (1987) have long stressed the importance of ambiguity, although usually without a particular focus on

culture. Weick (1985) listed various sources of organisational ambiguity that researchers have explored:

They include things like high mobility of people among positions, faulty memories, attempts to cope with overload by lowering the standards of acceptable performance, public compliance undercut by private deviation, sudden changes in authority or job descriptions, merging of old product lines, and the like. (p. 117)

Fragmentation studies follow in this tradition, bringing ambiguity to the foreground of cultural description. The fragmentation perspective reconceptualises consensus in a manner that acknowledges that cultural members sometimes change their views from moment to moment as new issues come into focus. Different tasks become salient, and new information becomes available. Organisational subcultural group identities do not form stable subcultures as multiple interpretations or reactions are always possible to the change that is occurring around them. Instead, a fragmentation view of organisational subcultures portrays boundaries as permeable, subcultural membership as fluctuating, and relations among subcultures as multivalent. As a result, group alliances look like affinities or coalitions rather than identities, and are characterised by their fluidity, and ability to mobilise and disperse. Some theorists call them microresistances (Gagnier, 1990).

Additionally, from a fragmentation perspective, power is not localised solely at the top of the hierarchy or at the subcultural level of analysis. Instead power is usually seen as being diffused more broadly into the environment and among individual

organisational members. As a consequence change is in a constant flux, rather than an intermittent interruption in an otherwise stable state.

From the fragmentation perspective cultural change is therefore difficult to translate into an action plan for either the powerful or the powerless. This is because the fragmented outcomes that can arise from cultural change create a barrier to any shared sense of progress, and as a result uniformed cultural change becomes difficult to attain. Therefore environmental sources of change and individual attempts to promote cultural change will be differently perceived and will cause a plethora of transient reactions. Furthermore, since cultural change is perceived and enacted by individuals, any attempt to implement change by one individual in one direction may well be counteracted by another individual moving in a different direction. This will result in organisational instability and very little uniform cultural change occurring.

Given these difficulties, Martin (1992) indicated that it is not surprising that the fragmentation perspective offers few specific guidelines for individuals attempting to control the cultural change process. However, advocates of the fragmentation perspective who are concerned about cultural change express the dangers of underestimating the impact of material realities such as the unequal distribution of power.

Approaches to cultural change from a fragmentation perspective are yet to be explored by cultural researchers. Martin (1992) suggested, however, that a failure to embrace such a perspective would not allow researchers to search for a deeper understanding of the cultural change process. For example, how can researchers find

traces of the views of volunteer administrators in studies that report only senior managerial points of view? In more general terms how is it possible to study the impacts of organisational change on culture in ways that retain sensitivity to differences within oppositionally defined organisational groups? According to Martin, one resolution to this problem is to adopt a postmodern perspective when dealing with change. A postmodern approach concurs with the fragmentation perspective's emphasis on ambiguity and multiple cultural interpretations. This thesis will use the fragmentation model when discussing the cultural change process occurring at the QRU.

2.5 Conclusion

The literature presented in this chapter demonstrates that the relationship between environmental change, organisational strategy, and culture is complex. While environmental change can be a trigger for organisational change it is heavily mediated by organisational culture. The culture of an organisation is a vital component in the organisational change process since it can hinder or assist the process. However, it should be noted that culture is not the only influence on organisational strategy and that it is often the case that an organisation's strategy is at variance with its culture. As a general rule the more an organisation's strategy is at variance with its culture the greater the likelihood strategy will not be effectively implemented.

In addition, the literature has indicated that the richer and more consistent a culture is, the more reliable will be the implementation of that organisation's strategy. However, it is important to realise that culture and strategy are mutually interdependent and that the formation and implementation of a strategy is likely to have an ongoing influence on the evolution of an organisation's culture in terms of its dominant beliefs, values and assumptions. Therefore the considerable influence that culture exerts over how organisations function means that it is imperative that cultural issues are taken into account when planning the long-term direction of an organisation. These issues will be addressed in the results chapter of this thesis.

Chapter three will discuss the research design of this thesis, and in particular explores the benefits from using a postmodern ethnographic research approach.

CHAPTER THREE

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 *Introduction*

Chapter 1 provided a general introduction to this thesis including a rationale for the use of qualitative analysis as the primary research tool. Chapter 1 also identified the research questions to be addressed and the complexity involved in addressing these questions. This chapter extends this discussion by reviewing the nature of ethnographic research and its capacity to illuminate the ways in which the QRU responded to major external change. To achieve this, it will first critique the theoretical and ideological assumptions that underlie conventional research traditions, and, second, argue that a postmodern ethnographic case study is the appropriate research design for this thesis.

3.2 *Traditional Ethnographic Research*

3.2.1 *The Positivist Tradition*

The positivist research tradition in sport management grew out of the view that social scientists should use research methods that were similar to those which had seemed to lead to the discovery of objective laws and regularities in the natural sciences. There is in this tradition therefore a concern with measurement, reliability, prediction and replicability. The appropriate way of going about knowledge production is thought to be by means of the hypothetico-deductive method in which the researcher begins with a clearly articulated theory, deduces hypotheses which are logically consistent with

the theory, and then tests the hypotheses under experimental conditions. But since social science hypotheses do not often lend themselves to laboratory experimentation, statistical analysis of large samples usually counts as objective testing. Such methodology assumes that through observation and precise measurement, social reality, which is external to and independent of the mind of the observer, may be rendered comprehensible to the social scientist.

It is in approaches to theorisation, as much as in the methodology itself, according to Sharp and Green (1975), that the 'inherent weakness' of such deductive research is revealed. Critical social theorists have attacked the positivist, logical empiricist tradition. They argued that while 'fact finding' and 'head counting' produces voluminous statistical data, it does not address the social circumstances out of which such data arise. Quantitative, positivist sport management studies assume the existence of a natural social order with an underlying value consensus. According to Sharp and Green, this limits both the formulation of problems to be studied and the conceptualisation of possible solutions:

Methodologically, this tradition tends to engage in positivistic 'fact finding' procedures with arbitrarily imposed categories for differentiating the data. It fails to do justice to the complexity of social reality, which cannot be 'grasped' by merely reducing sociologically significant characteristics of men to their external and objective indicators. (pp. 2-3)

In the positivist tradition, or paradigm of social science research (Kuhn, 1962), emphasis is placed upon the search for generalisations or laws which will enable not

only explanation but also the prediction of social behaviour, and therefore social intervention and control (Berstein, 1978; Fay, 1975). Fay further indicated that by treating conventional activities and social circumstances as if they are naturally occurring entities, the positivist approach reifies the social institutions and customs of the society it is studying. By reification, Lukacs (1971) explained that social arrangements are treated as if they were immutable things that must necessarily be the way they are. Social structures and the structural relationships are regarded as inevitably functioning the way they currently do regardless of the wishes of the social actors. Research which reifies social arrangements in this way by treating them as neutral cannot be ideologically neutral itself, as such research must necessarily implicitly endorse such arrangements and lend support to the status quo. Positivism, therefore, can be viewed as excessively narrow and inflexible. Consequently, this approach has not been utilised in this thesis, as it is unlikely to successfully capture either the complexities of the organisational change of the QRU, or the commercial and cultural context within which the change took place.

3.2.2 The Interpretive Alternative

Criticism of the separation of the individual from social structures, which is a characteristic of the positivist tradition, coupled with a philosophical attack upon the tenets of positivism, and the realisation that social advances do not necessarily follow any correct scientific manner (Kuhn, 1962), led to the emergence of more interpretive research (Woods & Hammersley, 1977). This approach shares a common concern with the investigation of ways in which human actors themselves construct the social

world through the interpretation of the interaction with other human actors. This approach is especially apparent in the development of other versions of ethnography.

3.2.3 *Anthropological Ethnography and Functionalism*

Although, as Smith (1987) reported, the evolving field of ethnography is in a state of 'zesty disarray', the essential feature of most ethnographic research is that it attempts above all to describe "the nature of social discourse amongst a group of people" (Wilcox, 1980, p.2).

This viewpoint is most apparent in the American tradition of ethnography with its particularly strong roots in anthropology (Delamont & Atkinson, 1980; Spindler & Spindler, 1971). Ethnography is regarded by such researchers as the "science of cultural description" (Wolcott, 1975, p.112), a means by which to understand what it is like to "walk in someone else's shoes" (p. 113).

Geertz (1973) whose influence upon such cultural ethnography has been important, regarded ethnography as 'thick description' which locates the multi-layered significance of events within their social contexts. Since the most significant data amount to "our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to", analysis involves "sorting out the structures of signification" (p. 9). The researcher must therefore be in a position to observe behaviour within the context of its setting, and to elicit from those observed the "structures of meaning which inform and texture behaviour" (Wilcox, 1980, p.2).

The latter point raises the important question of the extent to which conventional ethnography has actually allowed a shift from the view of human nature which is an integral part of the positivist, structural-functionalist paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Indeed, especially in the American tradition of largely anthropological ethnography, an essentially limited, structural-functionalist approach to human nature and society is still apparent despite the use of methodologies that are thought to afford understanding through description and interpretation.

Although offering some insight into the day to day reality of human life, such ethnography only provides the perspective of an interested observer. This thesis will move beyond the scope of an interested observer, as the researcher has been an active participant within the QRU. This will provide a new dimension to understanding organisational change as the research aims to grasp the complexity and uncertainty of social life and its subsequent implications for organisational change.

3.2.4 Sociological Ethnography, Symbolic Interactionism, Ethnomethodology, and Grounded Theory.

While the American tradition of ethnography derives largely from anthropology with emphasis upon the understanding of events, the use of ethnography in Britain has been associated more with sociology. In this tradition this emphasis has been more upon an understanding of relationships rather than activities, and research has been based more explicitly upon sociological theory.

Sociological ethnography derives particularly from symbolic interactionism, which attempts to explain how the definition of the situation is negotiated amongst a group, and from ethnomethodology, which seeks to understand the social construction of reality. In both cases, concern is with social interaction as a means of negotiating meanings in context.

In contrast to positivism, the emphasis in the interpretivist tradition, with its roots in symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology, is upon the elucidation of “the way in which the social world is constituted by the actors’ meanings” (Freeman & Jones, 1981, p.1). Both symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology place human actors and their interpretive and negotiating capacities at the centre of analysis. Their common phenomenological perspective reflects an attempt to understand the world through the subjective perceptions and meaning of its human actors. Researchers working within a symbolic interactionist framework actively enter the world of the research subjects. They continually move between social theory and the world of people who are the subjects of the research, between their conceptual framework and the immediate social experience being studied (Denzin, 1988).

Grounded theory method, with its aim to develop explanatory theory concerning common life patterns, has emerged from the symbolic interaction tradition. The specific techniques within grounded theory method were originally developed and refined by Glaser and Strauss. Their book, *‘The Discovery of Grounded Theory’* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), presented these strategies for qualitative research to the work of human science research. In doing so, Glaser and Strauss shared their notion that this was a “beginning venture in the development of improved methods for

discovering grounded theory” (p. 1). Also, their basic position, in contrast to logical deduction theory building from a priori assumptions, was “that generating grounded theory is a way of arriving at theory suited to its supposed uses” (p.3). Thus, theory building is based on the accumulation of data that reflect the experiences of the researcher.

In ethnomethodology, attention is also upon human actors and the way in which members of various social groups make sense of the social situations in which they find themselves. The influence of ethnomethodology in the sixties and seventies emphasised the rule-governed negotiation of intersubjectivity, the mutually defining emergence of structure in process and process in structure. Ethnomethodology facilitates a process in which its primary focus is “the meaning and understandings that people use to make sense of their everyday lives” (McNeil 1990, p. 94). This methodology is substantively continuous with the phenomenology of ethnography.

What has defined the character and trajectory of ethnography in the past quarter century has been its theoretical eclecticism. In other words, ethnographic practice has been driven by a diverse and competing range of methodologies borrowed from phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, Marxism and feminism. Most recently, critical theory and postmodernism have attracted the attention of researchers. They have been particularly useful in providing greater theoretical weight to ethnographic research.

3.3 *Emerging Ethnographic Research*

In this section, it will be argued that critical ethnography and postmodern ethnography can address the weaknesses that exist within the positivist and traditional approaches to ethnography. These forms of ethnography, while taking advantage of the advances of traditional ethnography over positivism, depart from the traditional approach to ethnography in a number of significant ways.

3.3.1 Power and the Researcher as Subject

Critics of traditional ethnography are concerned about the exclusion of power from the field of study. Recent interpretive analyses has drawn attention to the role individuals play in the construction and maintenance of meaning systems, and hence constitute 'a vast improvement' upon work by positivists and structural functionalists, however, it fails to address the power relations between these individuals.

Habermas (1978) suggested that traditional ethnography lacked a theoretical relationship to the political practices that might bring about emancipation of the people being investigated. Conventional or traditional ethnographic description uncritically represents versions of perceived realities without locating its stories within a framework of political and social explanation. Far from intentionally enlightening the subjects of an ethnography or giving them the means to understand and alter their circumstances, traditional ethnographic practice has historically involved subjective, anthropological description in which the subject of ethnography

is observed by an authoritative, yet sympathetic, observer (Hammersley, 1992: Weedon, 1987).

Fay (1975) argued the traditional approach of ethnography is inherently conservative because, in assuming that actual social practice is inherently rational and that conflict is due to irrational understandings, it endorses change that leaves the system in tact. Hence, traditional approaches that seek to be interpretative by nature, would only “lead people to seek to change the way they think about what they or others are doing, rather than provide them with a theory by means of which they could change what they or others are doing” (p. 91). Such a theory would draw attention to the interrelationship between knowledge as beliefs and attitudes, actions and power relations, and by doing so offer a social, rather than individualistic, approach to the question of change.

Another area of concern is the apparent negation in traditional ethnography of the role of the researcher in the construction of the data they present. Gitlin, Siegal, and Boru (1989) and Tyler (1983) drew attention to the textual practices of interpretive ethnographers that, they argued, deny the voice of the researcher-as-author. While the researcher may describe their initiation into the field, the subsequent identified social or cultural patterns are present as objective descriptions, untainted by either the ethnographers’ presence or the rhetorical decisions made. Tyler maintains that such:

... ethnography is a textual practice intended to obscure its textual practices in order to present a factual description of the way things are, as if they had not been written and as if an ethnography really were a picture of another way of life. (p. 84)

As Marshall (1989) noted in his critique of objectivism in educational research, “such a presentation of the world as an external reality implies that it can be observed objectively and impartially by any person” (p. 104). The ethnographic picture and the researcher are positioned as independent entities. This style of narrative realism presents fieldwork as an essentially rational activity rather than a social and political undertaking.

In positioning the researcher as a neutral gatherer and hence the presenter of truth, traditional ethnographies are seen to deny the notion that knowledge is constituted within social relations. The researcher is not understood to be implicated in the production of the knowledge that purportedly belongs to the informants. Indeed, while the context of the research may be understood as socially constituted, the researcher is not; they are presented as a neutral tool. This thesis recognises this shortcoming and acknowledges that the researcher's interactions within the organisation may influence the amount of knowledge organisational members have about the change process and its potential ramifications. At the same time, this presence may also contribute to organisational members developing a broader understanding of the change process occurring at the QRU.

3.3.2 *Critical Ethnography*

Critical ethnography constitutes an alternative to traditional ethnographic research. As well as emphasising the inherently ideological nature of the social sciences and their part in governing contemporary capitalism, critical ethnography has attempted to reconstruct the conceptual practices that comprise ethnography. Consequently, accepted canons of ethnographic practice, such as grounded theory, the use of (borrowed) analytical concepts such as validity, generalisability and so on, have either been rejected or reformulated. Although this approach is still in its nascent stages, the implied critique of grounded theory within the approach of 'extended case method' (Burawoy, Burton, Ferguson, Fox, Gamson, Gartell, Hurst, Kurzman, Salzenger, & Schiffman, 1991), Anderson's (1989) concept of a 'critical reflexivity', or Smith's (1987) notion of 'entry points' within the everyday, have suggested the emergence of a coherent, viable, alternative research program(s) to that of traditional ethnography.

In contrast to traditional ethnography critical ethnography acknowledges the existence of power relations in the construction of meaning systems. By acknowledging this existence it seeks to emancipate its subjects through enlightening them to the political and social circumstances of their existence. As critical ethnography seeks to be emancipatory, its subjects by definition are constrained by oppressive social or political relations of some kind. Critical ethnography becomes the public voice for groups within society who might otherwise remain voiceless.

Although exponents of critical ethnography agree that research conducted in the traditional ethnographic mode is concerned with social change, and recognises the political nature of knowledge production and its process of legitimation, differences exist in their understanding of the actual research agenda as well as their theoretical orientation. For some, the research process itself constitutes, in part, the intent of the study. Such work is concerned to directly empower research participants, including the researcher, through joint critical reflection on the constitution of their interpretive frameworks. This process involves exploration of the discursive positions from which participants are speaking and the creation of spaces from which the marginalised are heard. This thesis aims to produce this outcome by presenting multiple interpretations of the organisational change process in the QRU.

Therefore, in the context of this thesis, empowerment of the marginalised is not a product of the work of the researcher who, as the 'transformative intellectual', assists participants to realise the falsity of their views and to adopt the use of the researcher's critical discourse or that of a new shared reality. Rather, empowerment involves the research participants in an exploration of the politics of production of their knowledge. By examining the political nature of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU the possibility for enhanced insights into the process may be achieved. However, critical ethnography stops short of allowing or enabling the researcher to assist the empowerment process. Although critical ethnography talks about the empowerment of individuals involved in the research process and alerts us to particular types of issues of injustice, it does not actively involve the researcher in empowering the research participants' understanding of the research issue under investigation.

3.3.3 *Postmodern Ethnography*

The contribution of postmodern ethnography to empirical work on organisational behaviour to date has been minimal. According to Kilduff and Mehra (1997), this is because organisational researchers have tended to neglect or reject the critiques of academic enquiry offered by those who write from a postmodern perspective. They suggested that this might be because the import of postmodernist approaches for organisational studies is unclear. Indeed the term postmodern is itself vaguely understood: it is often equated with deconstruction (Linstead, 1993), and is generally viewed as a nihilistic enterprise that offers nothing beyond a cynical scepticism (Codrescu, 1986). Nor are the works of such authors as Derrida, Foucault, and Baudrillard, who are often associated with the postmodern turn, accessible to the majority of those practising organisational research. Postmodern writings are therefore derided for their unintelligibility (Thompson, 1993), and dismissed for reducing research to textual analysis (Giddens, 1987).

Within social sciences in general the spectre of postmodernism has aroused widespread anxiety. Kilduff and Mehra (1997) suggested that:

Postmodernism has been viewed as an enterprise that calls for the death of all scientific enquiry; the end of all new knowledge; the dissolution of any standards that may be used to judge one theory against another; a banishment into utter relativism wherein a clamour of fragmented and contentious voices reign. (p. 454)

In practice however, postmodern ethnography, as in critical ethnography, challenges the content and form of dominant models of knowledge, and also produces forms of knowledge through breaking down disciplinary boundaries and giving voice to those not represented in dominant discourses (Giroux, 1992). However, postmodern ethnography moves beyond critical ethnography in that the presence of the researcher is encapsulated in the research. The researcher is actively involved not only in the research process, but also in the empowerment of the research participants' understanding of the research issue under investigation.

To achieve this, Kilduff and Mehra (1997) argued that postmodern researchers, in pursuit of conventional wisdom, can mix and match various perspectives of research styles for aesthetic effect in order to contrast with tradition (p. 458). This freedom to combine styles of discourse follows from the belief that no method grants privileged access to truth and that all research approaches are embodied in the cultural practice that postmodernists seek to make explicit (Smircich & Calas, 1987).

Paramount in the postmodern shift is a re-examination of the values, beliefs, and practices perpetuated by elites that serve to suppress the expression of minority viewpoints. The importance of finding a single totalitarian truth or commonality is replaced by the realisation that multiple truths exist simultaneously and that the real issue is not what the truth is but which one is being allowed to be heard. By focusing attention on social processes like power and conflict, which operate below the surface of an individual's awareness, postmodernism challenges the monopoly of currently dominant orthodoxies.

Hargreaves (1994) in his conclusions drawn about postmodernism suggested that “adapting a postmodern theoretical position involves denying the existence of foundational knowledge on the grounds that no knowable social reality exists beyond the signs of language, image and discourse” (p. 39). The implication of this, according to Hargreaves, is that “all that is available to the postmodern theorist is the practice of deconstructing existing versions of social reality, and giving voice to other versions which are normally neglected or suppressed” (p. 39). Thus, deconstruction constitutes a postmodern method of analysis that examines the basis of how an author comes to privilege a theory or version of reality that is considered superior to others.

As a result the context, content, and methods of entire research disciplines have become more open than ever before to continuous rethinking, reanalysis and reinterpretation. The works of ‘experts’ who were heretofore considered major contributors are being examined for biases attributable to their membership in dominant groups. The views of critics deconstructing the grand narrative (which attempts to account for a range of phenomena in terms of a single determining factor) and providing a voice to the marginalised are being given increasing hearing and weight. In short, research is witnessing an explosion of reflexivity, wherein ‘accepted’ interpretations of the past are being increasingly challenged for their relevance.

Hargreaves (1994), however, implied that deconstructing grand narratives and giving voice to the marginalised, in themselves are not sufficient for the research process.

According to Packwood and Sikes (1996), there is a danger that research methods and approaches that solely reflect personal experiences and emotions of the researcher can

lead to self-indulgence and narcissism rather than to enhanced understanding and useful ways of viewing the world. They suggested that in order to eliminate this trap, it is essential to situate deconstructions within their social, political, economic and moral contexts. In these instances it is possible to apply postmodern approaches when they are appropriate and when they offer the opportunity to take a more critical stance towards aspects of the research process and the area being studied.

According to Packwood and Sikes (1996), what postmodernism has to offer is a focus on the narrative of the individual and the acknowledgment of the situated, partial nature of knowledge claims within the context of the shifting and often contradictory nature of reality. In other words, the meta-narratives that comprise single explanations for the occurrence of a phenomenon are to be deconstructed into micro-narratives of the individuals. This approach serves a dual purpose in this research. First, it allows the voices of those dispossessed by meta-narratives to be heard. In this study space is given to the voices of volunteer rugby administrators, not just senior management. Second, it allows the taken-for-granted truths and realities of those meta-narratives, in relation to the causes and outcomes of the change process, to be made problematic and therefore verified. Consequently, this research is cautious of broad universal claims about the nature and scale of change in the QRU and remains open to diverse interpretations of the causes and outcomes of the change process through the inclusion of alternative representations.

Such an approach however, may be construed as moving towards an abstract representation of reality. Tyler (1987) refuted this and suggested postmodern ethnography does not move toward abstraction away from life, but back to experience.

It aims to restructure individual experiences and restructure the conduct of everyday life. Postmodernists, therefore, prefer the interesting to the obvious and place a high value on paradox, contrast, counterintuition, and humour (Fine & Martin, 1995). From a postmodernist research perspective there is no point establishing the obvious through laborious research. Such research not only brings social science into disrepute with its publics (thus violating the postmodernist emphasis on relevance), but also wastes resources on research questions that simply confirm what everyone knows (Kilduff & Mehra, 1997). Postmodernism, then, involves a search for the non-obvious, the counterintuitive, the surprising, the ambiguous, the contradictory, and the chaotic.

In scientific research there is a search for wholeness and interconnectedness rather than the fragmentation of phenomena. In this research study, modern methods of scientific examination and expert-driven discourse are supplanted by postmodern methods of conversation that allow the emergence of multiple realities and the realisation of the limitations of currently dominant paradigms. The postmodern approach embodied in this thesis therefore views the narrative as a dialogical production of a cooperatively evolved polyphonic text. In other words, it is representative of the differing views that exist in the QRU. Utilising this approach will allow the researcher to capture the fractured and chaotic reality of the change process experienced by the QRU, and its varying impact throughout the organisation.

In conclusion, as the swell of critical/postmodern thinking disrupts cherished practices of research, the foundations of ethnographics tradition have come under critical scrutiny. Traditional ethnography's imperative of revealing the insider's reality has been plagued with problems. Discourses of the natural, of science, of objectives and

subjectivity that variously intersect to produce ethnographic method are being contested in the light of more recent discourses such as postmodernism.

Postmodernism broadens the field of ethnography by accentuating awareness of research practices, drawing attention to the role of power relations in the construction of reality, problematising the role of the researcher as subject, and empowering the research participants understanding of the research issue under investigation. A postmodern ethnographic research design will now be presented.

3.4 *The Research Design for the QRU Study*

3.4.1 A Postmodern Perspective

In the context of this research, a postmodern perspective of the change process will allow for a critical examination of the values, beliefs, and practices promoted by QRU senior management as being reflective of the entire organisation. The importance of finding a single totalitarian truth or commonality will be replaced by the realisation that multiple truths about the ramifications of the change process exist simultaneously.

As a postmodern perspective allows attention to be focused on social processes like power, control, and conflict; this thesis will be able to search for the fragmentation, which according to Martin (1992), can accompany the change process. Hence, a postmodern analysis of the organisational change process provides a framework to challenge the power relations that exist within the QRU, as the causes and outcomes of the change process promoted by senior management are questioned by organisational sub-units and members. As a result, the perceived wholeness and interconnectedness that is meant to accompany the change process can be re-examined, as individuals will be able to tell their own stories, to identify their own concerns about the change process, and present their own opinions about the outcomes of the change process.

3.4.2 *A Participant Observer Perspective*

To understand the impact and ramifications of environmental disturbances on the QRU, it was necessary to understand the context in which the QRU functioned. A greater understanding of this context was effectively achieved by acting in it. This not only involved observing, making notes, interviewing, recording and writing up, but also involved engaging over a continuous and long period in the interactional dynamics of the context as a necessary and committed agent. This analysis of the QRU therefore acknowledges the influence of the 'researcher as a subject'.

In addition, for an in-depth analysis of organisational change in a professional sport organisation to be appropriately conducted, the research needed to account for temporal questions of validity. This meant that the research needed to be of an adequate duration to account for the inferences drawn from it, and that valid inferences required generalisation. That being the case the research was conducted over a three year period from November 1996 to November 1999.

The research also used specific major incidents and instances to develop generalisations about the changes that took place within the QRU. These generalisations are, however, treated cautiously since Chalmers (1982) and Woolgar (1988) noted the importance of sufficiency when making generalisations, which they defined as the problem of induction. They suggested that generalisation requires that sufficient major occurrences of specific instances are experienced, such that generalisation is valid for the purpose of inference. The conclusions drawn from this research are, therefore, generalisations of specific major instances of environmental

disturbances that have confronted the QRU and their subsequent impact on organisational change and culture.

In the context of this research, 'direct experience' of the organisational change processes is likely to produce a more 'revealing' result than conventional ethnographic methods on their own. This 'direct experience' method also had a number of practical benefits. In a practical sense, completing lengthy and extensive fieldwork in a professional sporting organisation, (such as the QRU), as a conventional ethnographic researcher, is difficult to organise due to the commitment of management within the organisation. Management is frequently attending to business away from the office and in some instances is required to reschedule and prioritise their commitments due to unforeseen circumstances. These factors can severely impact on the ability of the conventional ethnographers to observe the interaction of management personnel as their own timeframe for analysis is limited. Also, a conventional ethnographic approach would likely entail frequent and lengthy absences of the researcher from the context, as the requirement of commitment to continuous action in the context (the experimental requirement) would be difficult to sustain, due to personal and professional commitments the conventional ethnographer may also have.

3.4.3 Ethnographic Reconstruction

As this study has been based on the researcher's experiences as a participant observer with the QRU, the issue of ethnographic reconstruction had to be addressed.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) pointed out that participant observation allows the

researcher to develop a rapport with individuals within the organisation. This is vitally important for gaining data. The researcher was also involved in the strategic planning process that occurred within the QRU and the development of new initiatives being undertaken by the organisation. The data has therefore evolved from experience, with the benefit of hindsight, rather than from data derived with a given problem as its focus for collection.

According to Rosen (1991), organisational ethnographers as neutral observers try to position themselves among those who are the data, and record observations. They try to learn the subjects' rules for organisational life, to interact with them for a frequency and duration of time sufficient to understand how and why they construct their social world as it is, and explain it to others. However, this type of reconstruction only provides a 'neutral interpretation of what is going on', as they are not involved in the event occurring before them. This thesis has the benefit of the researcher's experiences in the world of the QRU to negate a 'neutral interpretation' of the change process and ensure that the chaotic realities of organisational behaviour are captured.

3.4.4 Reflexivity

For Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) reflexivity requires explicit recognition that the social researcher and the research act itself are part and parcel of the social world under investigation. Therefore, aside from being based on the direct experiences of the researcher within the organisation this thesis differs from traditional ethnography in another significant way. While traditional ethnography tends to underplay conflict (Gallagher, 1992), in this case the researcher was not always able to avoid or ignore

the conflict given his involvement in the organisation. In many ways conflict is endemic to work in a sporting organisation where power relations are always in the forefront of social interaction. Hence, the researcher has reconstructed the outcomes of the change process to embody the organisational conflict that impacted on the change process at the QRU. This assists in providing valid and appropriate insights into the outcomes of the process.

Given this, the researcher's reconstruction of the change process has two temporal aspects. First, the researcher's organisational experiences constitute an interpretive reconstruction at the time. That is, the researcher's interactions were constantly changing with the researcher's understanding of the organisational context. Therefore as the length of time within the organisation increased the researcher's interpretation of the change process reflects a greater understanding of the organisation. Second, it is a reconstruction that is a reflexive post-hoc representation. That is, analysis also occurred after the researcher had removed himself from the research environment and reflected on the data gathered from the QRU.

3.4.5 On Representation

With regard to the issue of representation, much of the contemporary theory of ethnography centres on the construction of the authority in the text (Clifford, 1986; Denzin, 1991a; Denzin, 1991b; Denzin, 1997; Tyler, 1987; Woolgar, 1988). The concept of authority has two meanings. First, authority refers to the way in which a text is reconstructed (Pratt, 1986). Second, authority relates to the validity of representation. Here, the concern is about the extent to which the text is an accurate

representation of the social world under investigation, rather than being merely representative of the author's interpretation (Dawson & Prus, 1993; Crapanzano, 1986; Rosaldo, 1989).

In this study the researcher's representation of the change process is reconstructed to embrace the conflicting and passionate views from within the QRU. A failure to embrace these characteristics of organisational behaviour would not be an accurate representation of the social world under investigation, and therefore allow a misrepresentation of the change process to surface. Further, the researcher's representation is an interpretative reconstruction of the change process occurring within the QRU, and its subsequent impacts rather than representation and explanation of the entirety of social, cultural, political, and economic practices of the organisation. The author of this thesis has therefore selectively reconstructed the text to highlight this context.

3.5 Conclusion

Positivistic and quantitative approaches to sport management research (Auld, 1997; Cuskelly, 1995; Shilbury, 1994) have historically dominated the discipline in Australia. Qualitative methods, and more recently the support for emergent ethnographic approaches to management research (e.g., Hardy & Clegg, 1997) provide an alternative to the positivistic testing of formal theories developed by empirical researchers. While qualitative research has not been universally embraced in the general discipline of management, it is gradually evolving into a more accepted practice in the specific discipline of sport management. The recent works of Edwards (1999), Kellett, (1999), O'Brien and Slack (1999) Skinner, Stewart & Edwards (1999) and commentary by Chalip (1997) provide a clear indication of this.

This chapter has discussed the strengths of emergent ethnographic research and its applicability to a sport setting. It proposes that a postmodern ethnographic case study can provide a voice for those organisational members whose opinions can be suppressed by powerful individuals within the QRU. In this case senior management are the powerful individuals, while the marginalised are the volunteer rugby administrators. This approach allows the researcher to capture the full impact of the organisational change process and is therefore an applicable research design for this thesis. In utilising this form of qualitative inquiry the researcher was involved in participant observation that embraced ongoing inductive reflection about the researcher's participation in the QRU. This reflexive practice tempered the subjectivity of the researcher's interpretation to provide an 'insider's' understanding of the causes and ramifications of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU. In doing so, this thesis aims to break new ground by moving away from the

historical domination of the positivist tradition in sport management research in which data comes mainly out of surveys and questionnaires. In contrast this research study will incorporate a participant observation approach, supported by semi-structured interviews, document analysis, all within a postmodern analytical umbrella.

Chapter four will discuss the methods used to collect and analyse the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.

**...DATA COLLECTION &
ANALYSIS**

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

4.1 *Introduction*

This chapter outlines the methods utilised to acquire and analyse the research data. Data collection focused on the QRU and involved senior and middle management members associated with the QRU. The categories of managers were the: Chief Executive Officer; Rugby Manager; State Director of Coaching and Development; Marketing Manager; Financial Controller; Rugby Administrator; Reds Rugby College Manager; Operations Manager; Media and Public Relations Manager; and finally five Club Managers. In total fourteen managers were observed and interviewed. Data analysis involved the open coding of interview data, and content analysis of policy documents produced by the QRU.

4.2 *Data Collection Instruments*

4.2.1 *Observation*

The data collection was based primarily on observation supported by interviews and document analysis. The observation component of the fieldwork had two dimensions of interest. The first was the very general sense of 'being in the situation' (Kirk, 1986). This involved the total time spent at the research site in informed conversation with the QRU and the rugby community generally (e.g., volunteers, supporters, players, etc.). Intrusion into the

world of the QRU was a vital means of obtaining contextual information about the organisation, the employees, and the supporting network committed to rugby union. This aspect of observation acted as a means to becoming sensitised to the research setting.

Furthermore, as a result of the time spent at the research site, this form of observation provided insight into the daily operational issues that confronted the QRU. Such issues included: preparation for high profile matches that involved the Queensland Reds - the elite representative team; administrative issues that were related to all sections of the rugby community; the monitoring and evaluation of rugby coaching programs and courses; liaising with the media to ensure pre and post match publicity; servicing and communicating with sponsors to keep them informed of leveraging opportunities; dealing with the concerns of Brisbane and Regional rugby clubs; dealing with the concerns of affiliated bodies such as the Queensland Country Rugby Union, the Queensland Junior Rugby Union, and the Queensland Rugby Football Schools Union; liaising with the ARU; and the general social interaction that occurred between all organisational members and stakeholders. By observing these operational issues and being present in the organisational setting, the researcher was able to develop a good rapport with a broad cross section of the rugby community. This allowed the researcher to engage in informal conversation about the issues confronting the QRU and provided a greater understanding of the causes and impacts of the organisational change process.

The second dimension of observation involved systematic observation and field note taking during meetings that occurred within and outside the organisation. Throughout this research

a structured and defined method of systematic observation was used to itemise and categorise responses (Weick, 1985). In total, 41 meetings were observed that addressed a variety of concerns. Meetings that involved the executive committee, the strategic planning committee, the marketing committee, and the finance committee were observed, as were meetings that addressed other specific issues and concerns were observed between senior management and a variety of groups. These included meetings between senior management and employees, and between senior management and those involved in rugby union who are outside the organisation (rugby club representatives, regional representatives, etc.).

These field notes focused on a number of details. For example, it detailed the time and location, descriptions of the building where the meeting(s) took place, the furnishings, the decor, the level of formality, the amount of distraction from other factors (mobile phone, interruptions, etc), the numbers of people present, the facial expressions of the people being observed (this was linked to the management strategy being explained), their appearance and dress styles, their language, their body language and level and type of informal interaction. Systematic observation provided a foothold into the broader world of rugby management, and provided the basis for interviews that discussed the types of environmental disturbances to which the QRU had been exposed, and the type of change and outcomes that occurred as a result of this.

4.2.2 Interviews

A cross section of senior and middle management was selected as the primary source for semi-structured interviews. This was essential for providing information on the change process since they ultimately had responsibility for determining, implementing, and monitoring the organisational response to any environmental disturbance. The categories of managers that were interviewed were the: Chief Executive Officer; Rugby Manager; State Director of Coaching and Development; Marketing Manager; Financial Controller; Rugby Administrator; Reds Rugby College Manager; Operations Manager; Media and Public Relations Manager; and five Club Managers. Club managers were selected from city and regional areas in order to provide a greater insight into how the change process impacted throughout the state. The overall selection process allowed the researcher to determine when and why the environmental disturbances occurred and to develop an understanding of the reason behind adopting a specific response. Conclusions on the impact of the disturbance and response throughout the entire organisation could then be drawn.

According to Burns (1997), an interview is a verbal exchange wherein the interviewer attempts to access the opinions or beliefs of the informant. In structured or standardised interviews, every informant receives the same questions in the same sequence. This forces the informants to respond only to the fixed question, and subsequently the information elicited reflects the depth and insight of the questions previously established by the designer of the questionnaire. Burns suggested there are several disadvantages to this method of interviewing. First, the researcher has no flexibility to determine beliefs, feelings, attitudes,

and perceptions of the respondent beyond that answered according to the pre-determined response categories. Second, in using a structured interview, the interviewer must become a neutral standardised medium wherein questions are presented without bias or subjectivity. As a result, the method fails to acknowledge the inherent humanness of the interviewer. Finally, the detachment and impersonal approach required can prevent trust and rapport from developing between the interviewer and the respondent.

Due to these factors, it was decided that the sequence of the interviews would follow a combination of the Stewart and Cash (1994) topical sequence method and the Judd, Smith and Kidder (1991) funnel principle. Stewart and Cash defined a topical sequence as a technique that uses the natural discussion of interviews to develop themes. This sequence gives the interviewer the freedom to probe answers and adapt to any response the participant may give. The funnel principle, according to Judd et al. (1991), advocates that the interview should start with general questions and issues. For instance: “What are the major problems confronting the QRU?” The initial questions should be easy and unchallenging for the participant. As the interview progresses the questions focus on more specific issues. To assist the interviewer, each question contains a series of probes to aid the researcher in focusing on specific themes within the question; as such the funnel principle was also applied when probing for a deeper understanding of the causes and outcomes of the organisational change process.

The benefits from this ‘funnel’ approach were highlighted in an interview with an organisational member on 15th July 1998. The interview began with the interviewer initiating

conversation about the participant's background and interest in rugby union in order to address a particular theme. This led to the interviewer asking a general question such as: "How long the participant had been employed by the QRU?" From here the interviewer would ask a more specific question such as: "During that time what changes have you seen occur at the QRU?" This would then lead to a question requiring more specific information that would elicit more detail on a particular theme: e.g., "What factors contributed to that change occurring?" By utilising this approach the participant felt at ease and provided the interviewer with a detailed individual perspective of the type of environmental turbulence that has confronted the QRU in its recent history.

Judd et al. (1991), however, suggested the major disadvantage of open-ended semi-structured interviews is that the researcher is vulnerable to the interpretations and subjective insights of the informant. As a result, the researcher may be drawn into the informant's world view. According to Burns (1997), this problem of validity is acknowledged as inconsequential if the informant's behaviour is congruent with their perception of reality – as was the case in this research.

Interviews were conducted with 14 managers over a three year period. During this time 34 interviews were completed, 22 of which were audiotaped, with each interview in total ranging from 30-90 minutes in duration. All interviews were carried out in person and interviewees demonstrated a willingness and openness in their responses to the questions posed. All participants agreed to this process once it was established that confidentiality would be maintained, and tapes would be erased after transcription. Note taking was

permitted in interviews that were not audiotaped. Audiotaping of certain interviews was not permitted because of the discussion of highly sensitive material. Each interviewee was identified by a number from 1-14 and labelled as a respondent. This approach was taken to preserve confidentiality – an issue discussed later in the chapter.

Thomas and Nelson (1990) referred to the obvious advantages associated with the audiotaping of interviews for future analysis. They suggested it allows the researcher to concentrate more fully on the interview procedure and communication process. Attention can then be directed solely to the content of the interview providing increased time to dedicate towards developing and maintaining genuine rapport with the respondents.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) also suggested audiotaping of interviews as advantageous to both the interviewer and interviewee. Reasons for this included the potential for the gathering of a more complete and detailed record of the content of the conversation, and the interviewer being more able to devote concerted attention to the interviewee without hasty note taking which may detract from the atmosphere and leave the respondent feeling distanced. Additionally, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) indicated that note taking leads to the loss of much detailed verbal information that contributes to the content of the conversation and total content of responses.

Once the interviews were completed, they were immediately transcribed verbatim to a computer disk. Ellen (1984) highlighted the immense importance of immediate documentation and transcription of interviews to warrant them a serious analytical tool. Judd et al. (1991) outlined the use of detailed verbatim responses of individuals as useful in the

final evaluation of results. The researcher consequently ensured exact replication of the interview content.

Marcus and Fischer (1986), however, expressed concerns about the ways in which a generic researcher can influence the research, in both the methods of data collection and the techniques of reporting findings. This influence cannot be eliminated but it can be neutralised if its assumptions and premises are made as clear as possible (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

Fontana and Frey (1994) indicated that one way to reduce researcher influence is through polyphonic interviewing. Here the voices of participants are audiotaped with minimal influence from a generic researcher, and are not collapsed together and reported as one through the interpretation of the researcher. Instead the multiple perspectives of the various participants are reported and the differences discussed rather than glossed over (Krieger, 1983). This thesis will provide multiple perspectives of the organisational change process in its discussion of the interview data.

4.2.3 Document Review

Researchers often supplement interviewing and observation with the analysis of documents produced in the course of everyday events. The history and context surrounding a specific organisational setting comes, in part, from reviewing documents (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Furthermore Marshall and Rossman suggested that “the review of documents is an

unobtrusive method, rich in portraying values and beliefs of participants in a setting” (p. 116). As such, documents are essentially culturally standardised discourses associated with the value system an organisation wishes to promote (Miller, 1997).

In this thesis primary documents were examined to gain further insight into the values, beliefs and cultural discourses associated with the QRU. The primary documents reviewed were the *1997-2000 Strategic Plan* and the *1997-1999 Business Plans*. Documents of this nature were new to the QRU, and indeed, were being developed and implemented throughout the duration of this study. This allowed the researcher not only to gain an understanding of the changes that were being attempted and the processes being used to achieve them, but also gain insight into the new values, beliefs, and cultural discourses being promoted within the documents.

Secondary documents were used in a similar fashion to the observation component of this research. They helped to sensitise the researcher to the governance procedures of the QRU; provide insight into the QRU’s past and current financial position; and provide an understanding of the future direction in which rugby should move. For example, the *Memorandum and Articles of Association* were used to provide an understanding of the governance procedures and power relations that could result as a consequence of these procedures. The 1996–1999 *Annual Reports* provided insight into the financial implications associated with implementing the change process. Finally, a report titled *Australian Rugby: Creating a Future*, which was prepared by Dr Michael Crawford in his capacity as an

outside consultant, provided recommendations on policy development and the changes rugby union administrators in Australia should employ.

4.3 Data Analysis

4.3.1 Open Coding of Interview Data

In order to analyse interview data the technique of open coding was applied (Polgar & Thomas, 1991). While there is an abundance of literature published on qualitative research (e.g., Burns, 1997; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Sarantakos, 1998; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), and researchers advocate different approaches to coding, they employ a number of common steps. Initially, the researcher should study his or her transcripts in order to have a close familiarity with the material. It is during this process that all the concepts, themes, and ideas are noted to form major categories. For example, as the interviews in this research were concerned with establishing the causes and outcomes of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU the initial coding of the categories included factors related to this. These included: (A) environmental disturbances; (B) internal adaptation; (C) organisational dynamics; and (D) culture. The coding of qualitative research in this fashion is important as it operates as a labelling, retrieval and organisational device. In this context the coding system becomes a “conceptual model” (Burns, 1997, p. 341).

Strauss and Corbin (1990) then recommended that axial coding be undertaken. This involves employing a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making a connection between categories. This results in a cumulative knowledge about relationships between that category and can subsequently lead to the development of sub-categories being created from the initial categories. The researcher therefore established files for each of the new sub-categories. From the first four open-codes, eight sub-codes were created: (1) external forces; (2) external competition; (3) internal change; (4); structural change; (5) political environment; (6) power relations; (7) organisational values; and (8) cultural conflict. This process further added to the conceptual model as proposed by Burns (1997).

The researcher then made multiple copies of each segment of data, and a copy was filed under all categories and sub-categories to which it was relevant. With this system, when it was time for detailed analysis of a particular category or sub-category, all relevant data was readily available and there was no need to sift through the running record to find the relevant data segments. An additional advantage is that all items relevant to the same category or sub-category can be put side by side and compared. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) indicated that data organisation techniques play an important role in facilitating reflexivity - a core proponent of this research:

They provide a crucial resource in assessing typicality of examples, checking construct-indicator linkages, searching for negative cases, triangulating across

different data sources and stages of the fieldwork, and assessing the role of the researcher in shaping the nature of the idea and findings. (p. 173)

Memos were used initially to categorise the data and then provide a framework for the comparison of data (Strauss, 1987). Thus, a memo was written on a file card that contained a number of references to the data and a conceptual category that this evidence suggested. The writing of memos acted as a catalyst to spark ideas and allowed the researcher to see connections and implications that at first were not obvious. The following section from an interview transcript with Respondent Two highlights how memos were used to link the data to categories. He was asked, “Do you believe the QRU would have gradually evolved into a professional organisation responsible for the management of a professional sport?”

..we wouldn't have changed if it had not been for what was happening outside rugby union. We just couldn't ignore it if we were to survive. Previously we could ignore it as the environment was not that threatening to the game and indeed to those involved in the game, but with all that money being pumped into rugby league and entrepreneurs trying to take over rugby union if we didn't change we had no chance...our hand was forced.

The memo on the file card attached to this transcript indicated that page four was relevant to the category of environmental disturbances and the sub-category of external forces. In respect to the comparison of data, details from transcripts were in the first instance allocated to a category. For example, the following question was put to a number of respondents

involved in the interview process: “Do you believe the culture of the QRU is changing?”

Respondent Eleven stated:

The culture of the organisation will never change... that's because most people are involved in rugby union for the same reasons I am involved and that's because we love the game. Its not about money for us, it's about doing something you enjoy doing and valuing why we do it. If we didn't we wouldn't be involved in the game there would be no such thing as an amateur rugby player -we would all want to be professionals...why would you want to change the culture?

When the same question was put to Respondent Five, he stated:

Yes, the culture of the organisation is changing. People are starting to recognise that we need to change and that if we don't rugby union will suffer as other sports take over the marketplace. So I think although some people might not like the idea of changing the culture they have accepted that it is inevitable and that we must.

When analysing this information a memo was attached indicating that the responses could be allocated to the initial category of culture. However, when revisiting the data further clarification was possible. It was decided that the response given by both respondents provided examples that could be allocated to the sub-category of cultural conflict. A memo indicating this was therefore attached to the file card of each transcript. Thus, by comparing the data within the initial category, and sub-dividing it further, a deeper understanding of the issues confronting the QRU started to emerge.

Finally, selective coding was then undertaken (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This is the process of selecting a core category and systematically relating it to the initial categories and sub-categories in order to validate the relationships that exist between them. This refinement process of linking the existing categories and sub-categories can therefore be geared towards generating precise themes that can form the structure for discussing the interview data – as is done in chapter seven of this thesis.

4.3.2 Analysis of QRU Policy and Planning Documents

Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality and Derrida's (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) interrelated theories of deconstruction and 'différance' were used to construct an appropriate framework for the analysis. A more detailed explanation of these theories and how they were used to analyse certain texts produced by the QRU is presented in chapter five.

The analysis of documents often entails a specialised analytic approach called content analysis. The raw material of content analysis may be any form of communication, usually written materials (e.g., formal policy statements; planning documents; minutes of meetings; transcripts of interviews; etc). As a method of social research, content analysis can aim at quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of texts. Traditional classic content analysis is marked by Berelson's (1952) work titled '*Content Analysis in Communication Research*'. In it he offered a quantitative approach to the content analysis of media messages. Kracauer (1953) immediately challenged this work and put forward the case for qualitative content analysis techniques drawing on hermeneutical textual procedures. Kracauer advocated an approach

that examined the content of a text as a totality. The task of the analyst, he argued, was to bring out the hidden meaning of the text.

More recently, Sarantakos (1998) suggested that as a qualitative technique content analysis can be directed toward more subjective information such as motives, attitudes and values.

However, the outcomes of such an approach are largely dependent on whether the researcher is searching for manifest or latent content within the document. Sarantakos described manifest content as the “visible surface text, the actual parts of the text as manifested in the document, that is the words, sentences, paragraphs and so on; here analysis relates to the straight and obvious, the visible content of the document” (p. 280).

Latent content, however, is the underlying meaning conveyed through the document. Here the “reader reads between the lines, and registers the messages and meanings and symbols that are inferred or hidden and which are significant for the object of study” (p. 280). It is in this type of content analysis that subjectivity of interpretation can be employed.

It is when latent content analysis as suggested by Sarantakos (1998) is combined with Foucault’s (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality and Derrida’s (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) theories on deconstruction and ‘differance’, that an appropriate framework for document analysis is established. This approach allows the researcher to look deeply for the hidden meaning that exists in text. Although latent content analysis informs us to look beyond the surface of the text, it is when this technique is employed in tandem with Derrida’s theories of deconstruction and ‘differance’ that a deeper interpretation of the text is possible. For example, an analysis of the goals in the QRU’s 1997-2000 strategic plan may

on the surface seem clear. However, by applying Derridian logic the researcher is able to recognise that each goal embodies a multiplicity of meanings that are dependent on the reader's interpretation the text, and the context in which they read it.

The concept of 'differance' suggests that the text of a document can have multiple meanings (polysemic), and that the context the text is read in can influence the interpreted meaning.

That is, according to Derridian logic, the meaning of a particular word is only appropriate in a given context. The meaning can therefore be deferred to another time (temporal deferral) and/or another place (spatial deference), if the context is not relevant for justifying the proposed meaning. For example, the phrase 'sound financial practices', may have a totally different meaning when interpreted by a different reader in a different context. A volunteer involved in club management may interpret this phrase differently to a paid administrator, by choosing to defer its meaning to an appropriate context. This is highlighted by Respondent Eleven when asked if he believed the financial management practices employed at club level were adequate. He responded:

...what you have got to understand is that managing a club doesn't require the same attention to detail as overseeing the management of rugby union throughout Queensland... our management practices have stood the test of time because we are surviving financially and we will continue to survive financially for a lot longer yet. Just because we aren't full time managers and don't get paid for doing it doesn't mean our approach to ensuring the club is financially secure isn't adequate.

This technique for interpreting documents provides a deeper and broader insight into the ramifications and outcomes of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU.

4.4 Validation Procedures

To ensure the data collected were valid two triangulation techniques were utilised. First, data-source triangulation involved the comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but derived from different phases of field work, and the accounts of participants located at different levels of the QRU. Insofar as participants' accounts of organisational responses to environmental disturbances were concerned, the researcher continuously reformulated and reiterated various questions and comments to consolidate or disconfirm their degree of validity or worth. This strategy was employed across individual accounts, within the same account, and between accounts from individuals of differing managerial positions. For example, when discussing changing management practices Respondent One was asked: "How has the need for a more professional approach to management impacted on the organisation?" He responded:

Well, in a general sense it has impacted generally in a positive sense as the organisation as a whole is functioning more effectively and efficiently. We now have responsibility for specific tasks allocated to either a business unit such as marketing or an individual person who may oversee the organisation of a function that we are putting on. In this sense we have developed accountability as well as responsibility.

At a later date he was asked: “How do you establish a system that encourages a professional approach to management?” He responded:

What we do is make people responsible for their function. What I mean is we tell them they have a certain amount of money to achieve certain objectives and that they are responsible for meeting those objectives. By doing this we make them accountable and make them recognise that their performance will be measured against this.

The same question was also put to another management member in a slightly varied way.

For example, Respondent Four was asked: “Do you think you have a professional approach to management?” He responded:

I have to, because the buck stops with me. I am given a certain amount of money and told what I have to achieve with it. I then delegate to other units within my area and tell them what they have to achieve with it. They answer to me if they don't achieve it but ultimately if we can't meet our business unit objectives I have to explain why.

This type of approach enabled the researcher to recognise and consolidate key themes and concepts. In this case the data indicated that professional management practices were being employed. This was highlighted by multiple responses that centred on delegation of responsibility and accountability.

Second, triangulation between those involved in the research process was used to determine if inferences drawn were consistent. That is, the researcher discussed the inferences drawn from the data collected with his supervisors. This provided greater validity to the findings as all parties supported the conclusions drawn. These forms of triangulation provided a means of checking consistency and congruence of the findings.

4.5 Access and Procedural Issues

4.5.1 Gaining Entry

Hamersley and Atkinson (1983) suggested appropriate tactics for gaining entry to a setting include knowing whom to approach and how. Such knowledge is based upon some prior information about the temporal work rhythms that exist and the power alignments within the organisation. The researcher needs to garner information in order to present himself or herself to the right person at the right time to gain authorisation to carry out an inquiry in a setting. When multiple entries are required (as in this situation) to meet the purpose of the research, the researcher should establish credibility and enter into positive relationships.

Initial entry into the QRU was gained through a contact located in the QRU, and with whom the researcher had established credibility through a previous positive working relationship at a professional sporting organisation. According to Loftland (1984), the use of a contact or acquaintance to gain entry is not unusual amongst field workers.

It seems quite typical for outside researchers to gain access to settings or persons through contacts they have already established. They case about among their friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and the like for someone who is already favourably regarded by the person with access control. (p. 25)

Consequently, the researcher's contact became and acted as a 'sponsor' in the QRU, providing the researcher with the opportunity to develop relationships which otherwise might have been more difficult and time consuming to achieve.

4.5.2 *Gatekeepers*

Approaching the researcher's personal contact initially started the process of getting permission to conduct the research. After a brief oral presentation concerning the purpose of the research, the researcher's 'sponsor' agreed to introduce the researcher to the appropriate individuals within the organisation. Attention then shifted to the official gatekeeper of the QRU - the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). After the CEO granted approval, the researcher applied for and received University Ethics Committee approval for the research.

Hamersley and Atkinson (1983) have indicated that gatekeepers will generally be concerned as to the 'light' in which the organisation will be portrayed, and will have a desire to see themselves and their colleagues presented in a favourable manner. This view was one that was not one taken by the CEO. The CEO assured the researcher that he believed that

drawing out different opinions was conducive to gaining a broader understanding of the issues confronting the QRU. He believed that the research process would assist in making individual management personnel think of potential ramifications that they had not previously considered.

Given the nature of the research, it was recommended by the CEO that the researcher safeguard the confidentiality of the research participants. This would require establishing a research agreement and building trust with individuals throughout the QRU.

4.5.3 Research Agreement

The research agreement was primarily developed as a mechanism to provide guidelines in relation to the dissemination of information. In the researcher's initial visit in November 1996 it was decided that a confidentiality agreement be established between the researcher, the researcher's supervisors, and the CEO of the QRU. A confidentiality agreement was presented to the CEO of the QRU on May 16, 1997, and signed by the appropriate parties. A copy of this agreement is attached as Appendix One.

The organisation was concerned that any information that was provided to the researcher was only viewed by those directly associated with the research and was to be used for academic purposes only. The information given was sensitive and had been developed in order to provide the QRU with a competitive advantage over its rivals. Additionally, the agreement outlined that the QRU, through the discretion of the CEO, could terminate the

study if any information was published or distributed in the broader private or public domain without prior agreement.

Finally, there was a verbal research agreement in relation to confidentiality. This was due to the fact that information given by individuals may vary and as such have potential to cause conflict between management members. To overcome this before each interview, management personnel were reminded that the interview was being conducted in complete confidentiality. Each individual, as previously indicated, was arbitrarily assigned a label so that participants were listed as 'Respondent One', 'Respondent Two', and so on. However, in some cases due to the specific nature of the interviewees' leadership or management role(s) their responses may make it difficult in reality to disguise their identities. This point was explained to those individuals to which it would have greatest meaning and they expressed that they were cognisant of the dilemma.

Thus, the rationale for confidentiality and negotiation of accounts is based on an ethical consideration of respect for persons who have guaranteed an intrusion into their world, and access to their opinions in regards to the research issues.

4.5.4 Preserving Anonymity of Participants

Maintaining anonymity was a consideration throughout the entire research project rather than only in the write-up. This required the researcher to use various procedures to help preserve anonymity. First, as previously mentioned in this chapter, each interviewee was identified by

a number from 1-14 and labelled as a respondent. However, each respondent gave their permission to be identified as either a managerial representative of the state governing body, or alternatively, a volunteer administrator at the local club level. Given this, those respondents identified by a single digit are managerial representatives of the state governing body. Those identified by double digits are volunteer administrators at the local club level. Second, the researcher was the only person who had access to the bulk of the data during the fieldwork stage. Fieldwork notes were not presented to anyone, but treated as highly confidential. Finally, time itself helped to protect anonymity or at least to make identification more difficult. Over time, people tend to forget what others have said, even what they themselves said.

In spite of these procedures individuals who are familiar with the QRU will speculate about statements made by individuals where positive identification is not possible. However, to present the information in such a way that even the people central to it are fooled by it is to risk removing the very aspects that make it relevant, insightful, and believable. The participants were informed of this and accepted that it would occur. Having been assured of confidentiality, management personnel generally felt freer to talk about the organisation and the change process occurring. This, in turn, leads to the notion of trust.

4.5.5 Trust

Wax (1971) emphasised the importance of reciprocal relationships while gaining entry.

Mutual trust, respect and co-operation are dependent on the emergence of an exchange

relationship in which the researcher obtains information, and participants in a setting can identify something in that setting which will make their co-operation worthwhile.

Nelson (1969), however, established that restrictions can exist in achieving the desired amount of trust from participants. These potential barriers were highlighted through Nelson's direct participation in ethnographic fieldwork. His work focused on the notion of foreign and domestic participation. He believed participation in one's own formal organisation is accompanied by a set of research constraints apparently not encountered if one participates in the activities of a foreign social group. The difference lies in the participants' perceptions of the ethnographer. While an ethnographer in a foreign culture might perceive him or herself as a participant, those in the group, are likely to perceive the ethnographer more as a guest participant rather than a full member.

Rosen (1991) related the problems raised by Nelson (1969) to the issue of secrecy. Rosen indicated that when a researcher occupies an official place in an organisation, an office located in physical and temporal space, he or she becomes part of the first order politics of the organisation, and therefore not someone to be fully trusted by others located in the same political arena. This is opposed to how one might trust an outsider, the ethnographer as an observer. In this situation the researcher is an outsider knowledgeable of the organisation, yet at the same time probably marginal to its political processes.

This issue of secrecy, according to Rosen (1991), is related to the notion of trust. Rosen believed when the researcher occupies a place in the first order politics of an organisation

they are tied to the instrumental relations of organisation, the means-ends processes of social intercourse. However, the ethnographer who occupies a role solely as an observer is tied to the moral relations among individuals, friendship-like relationships are develop and pursued. Rosen suggested that the instrumental and moral dimensions of a relationship are clearly embedded within the same discourse between actors. From a means-ends perspective, the ethnographer as an occupier of a role in instrumental relations will be informed according to other organisational members' perceived utility or disutility of doing so. On the other hand, the ethnographer as part of a friendship relationship (as an observer) will be informed of the discourse of the organisation insofar as it is germane to the discourse of friendship.

Throughout this study the researcher was perceived in a dual capacity depending on the role being fulfilled. Due to this, the researcher was aware of developing an impression of a person who would be discrete in handling information within the research setting, and who would honour promises of anonymity when collecting and discussing data. Therefore, the researcher found it was not advisable to request at the outset full access to relevant and sensitive data that was required. The researcher decided to leave this request, of what seemed more delicate forms of access, until field relationships had been established. For example, although the researcher was privy to the discussion of the detail of player contracts and their implications for management, the researcher did not request to see a copy of these contracts until a relationship of trust had been established between those concerned. This approach resulted in the researcher being given copies of the contracts under the provision that they be treated in the strictest confidence.

This gradualised approach to obtaining data at an appropriate time was instrumental in allowing relationships to develop. As a consequence, this process assisted in participants being more open and candid in discussions. The outcome was the development of relationships based on mutual trust, respect, and co-operation over a three year period.

Conclusion 4.6

This chapter has explained the data collection methods and analysis techniques that were utilised to acquire data, and to address the research aims. Observation was initially utilised to provide the researcher with a foothold in the world of senior management and provide the basis for further conversation in interviews. A broad cross section of senior and middle management was selected as the primary source for semi-structured interviews. Fourteen managers were interviewed and in each case had responsibility for determining, implementing, and monitoring the organisational response to any environmental disturbance. In total, 34 interviews were completed, 22 of which were audiotaped, with each interview ranging from 30-90 minutes in duration. Content analysis was used to unravel a number of planning and policy documents produced by the QRU. Finally, access and procedural issues were reviewed. They included gaining entry; gatekeepers; research agreement; preserving anonymity; and trust. Each of these issues was a vital part of the research process, and were appropriately resolved.

Chapter five will outline the conceptual framework used in this thesis and discuss the three theoretical constructs that form this framework.

CHAPTER FIVE

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...CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 *Change Models and Constructs*

This chapter outlines the three theoretical constructs used to underpin the analysis of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU and its impact on organisational strategy and culture. The three constructs comprise the conceptual framework for this study. The first construct is grounded in Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change and the related concepts of design archetypes and interpretive schemes. This change model provides a framework for explaining the QRU's responses to the numerous forms of environmental disturbances it has confronted. Through the incorporation of postmodern theory this model will be used to reveal the complexities of organisational change by examining the contextual issues confronting the QRU and how they impacted on the management of the QRU and its decision-making process.

The second construct draws on Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality. Foucault's work provides insight into understanding how the QRU has attempted to use policy documents to maintain the desired direction and control over the outcomes of change and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture.

The third construct is based on Derrida's (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) interrelated theories of deconstruction and 'différance'. This provides the framework to interpret the text that exists

within internal documents produced by the QRU and to explain their potential to produce either uniformed or fragmented outcomes. If the policy documents produced by the QRU can produce fragmented outcomes that may inhibit, restrict, or complicate the process of organisational change it will be to the detriment of the QRU.

5.2 *Archetypes and Interpretive Schemes*

For many years the dominant models of organisational change were what Chin and Benne (1985) described as 'normative re-educative'. Essentially change was seen as a linear process consisting of a series of steps that involved diagnosing problems in organisations and developing solutions to these problems (Slack, 1997).

Lewin (1947) and Griener (1967) also used linear models of organisational change.

Particular emphasis was placed on the role of change agents and individuals that used a variety of organisational development techniques to guide the change process. Models of a linear nature laid the foundation for further analysis of organisational change, however, they failed to take into account that change can be confronted by ongoing resistance. In addition, they do not address the area of the dynamics and interdependent aspects of organisational change. For example, organisations undergoing change frequently have to deal with issues of power redistribution and hidden political agendas of organisational members.

Greenwood and Hinings' (1988) model of organisational change was based around the concept of archetypes and addressed some of the dynamics of organisational change. Thus, this work provided insight beyond the linear process models. According to Greenwood and Hinings, an understanding of the types of change that an organisation can experience is best understood by reference to design archetypes or holistic patterns. These patterns are a function of the ideas, beliefs, and values - the components of interpretive schemes (Ranson, Hinings, and Greenwood, 1980a) - that are embodied in organisational structures and

systems. A design archetype is therefore a set of structures and systems that reflects a single interpretative scheme (Greenwood & Hinings, 1993).

To understand the interplay and sequences of events through which organisations adapt to changes in their environment, Greenwood and Hinings (1988, 1993) created the concept of change tracks. Greenwood and Hinings argued that because organisations are conceptualised as archetypes, a key aspect of tracks is the rate at which design arrangements become de-coupled from the prevailing interpretative scheme and become attached, or re-coupled to, suffusing ideas and values. Thus, tracks are configurations of interpretative decoupling and recoupling arising from the loss and retention of structural coherence and the displacement or stability of underpinning interpretative schemes over time.

Greenwood and Hinings (1988, 1993) maintained that all organisations generate tracks as they move through time, and these tracks reveal whether and how organisations change. Tracks reveal the degree to which organisations either move through from the constraining assumptions of a given archetype, for example their strategic orientation, and assume characteristics of an alternative one, or remain within the assumptions and parameters of a given archetype over time. Thus according to Fox-Wolfgramm, Boal, and Hunt (1998), tracks can be seen as “combinations or cognations of behaviour” (p. 88).

Hinings and Greenwood (1988) suggested four potential tracks through which organisations decouple and recouple their interpretative schemes from the structures and processes of

organisational design. First, by using the work of Miller and Friesen (1984), as a starting point they suggested that organisations tend to demonstrate a consistent and sustained attachment to one interpretative scheme. In the majority of circumstances there is a resistance to the decoupling of the structural or processual elements from the confines of the basic interpretative assumptions. Subsequently the organisation remains in a state of inertia. A view similar to that of Starbuck, Greve, and Hedberg (1978) who suggested organisations are most likely to respond to environmental changes, even ones that create a crisis, in a manner that retains their current values and structural modes. Thus, proposed change that is inconsistent with the prevailing interpretative scheme will be non-existent or suppressed. It is clear a response such as this privileges culture over other elements in its influence in the change process. However, by privileging culture it fails to embrace two previous issues discussed in chapter two. Namely, the notion that organisations will attempt to adapt to environmental change as indicated by the resource dependence model, and that the decisions made about change are made by those persons who have the power to initiate action and therefore influence the direction of change as indicated by the strategic choice model.

Second, organisations may engage in an aborted excursion involving a limited and temporary ‘fraying’ of an initial structural coherence. This ‘fraying’ away from the underlying archetype, however, is eventually followed by a return to the initial archetype. Reasons associated with aborted excursions are normally linked to a failure to align existing values with changes to structures and processes, or the underlying political motivations of individuals within the

organisation causing pockets of resistance to the change process, and as a result change is aborted.

Third, an organisation can take a reorientation track by which it leaves one type of archetype and ultimately moves to another. As a result, structures become decoupled from the old legitimating interpretative scheme, and connected - recoupled - to a new one. The organisation has emerged in a different design archetype. While some reorientations may be linear progression it is only one of several possible reorientation tracks. Oscillating or delayed patterns may also become noticeable. Consequently, reorientations need not follow a pattern described in cusp-catastrophe terms as punctuated equilibrium, in which sudden, discontinuous shifts occur, followed by convergence around a framework (Gresov, Haveman, & Oliva, 1993; Tushman & Romanelli, 1985). Rather, reorientation can be achieved through incremental steps, although these movements may require varying amounts of time in the push towards reorientation.

The fourth track was an 'unresolved excursion'. Hinings and Greenwood (1988) expanded on the work of Ranson, Hinings, and Greenwood (1980a) and noted that organisations often get locked into competing battles between different interpretative schemes. Unresolved excursions involve movement from a coherent archetype without attaining a reorientation. As a result incomplete decoupling occurs without completed recoupling.

Although Hinings and Greenwood (1988) provided a solid explanation of how organisations can react to environmental change, the model tends to be somewhat conservative in

discussing the possible outcomes and ramifications associated with the change process.

While the outcomes indicate change is a difficult process and organisations tend to react against it, these authors do not explore the consequences of change.

5.3 *First and Second Order Change*

There has been a multitude of attempts to detail and categorise organisational change. One approach has been to distinguish between first and second order change and how first and second order change should be defined. Levy (1986), Robb (1988), and Smith (1982) provided a useful starting point for distinguishing between these two forms of change that are relevant to the theme of this thesis. In their collective understanding of organisational change, they referred to change as being of a morphostasis (first order) and morphogenesis (second order) nature as understood in biology and cybernetics. Smith defined first-order change as follows:

Morphostasis encompasses two types of changes. First there are those things that enable things to look differently while remaining basically as they have always been... The second kind of morphostatic change occurs as a natural expression of the developmental sequence...the natural maturation process.

(p. 318)

According to this definition, first order change consists of those minor improvements and adjustments that do not change the system's 'core', and occur as the system naturally grows

and develops. The outcome would lead to the organisation returning to its original archetype of structural coherence and underpinning interpretative schemes. Thus, an aborted excursion, as suggested by Hinings and Greenwood (1988) would be a first order change.

Second order change however, according to Smith (1982, p. 318), penetrates so deeply into the “genetic code” that all future generations acquire and reflect these changes or, as Robb (1988) suggested, morphogenetic changes:

...occur when the model of the organisation held in view is questioned, when, as a result of learning and developmental processes, a new model emerges and when new processes are instituted to achieve the new objectives entailed by the new model. (p. 4)

Given this, any change that causes the organisation to adopt a new design archetype and in doing so establishes structural coherence and stability in underpinning interpretative schemes, would be deemed second order change. Therefore, second order change or morphogenesis can be associated with the differing forms of reorientation suggested by Hinings and Greenwood (1988).

According to Levy (1986), it is these changes to interpretative schemes, encapsulated in the biological terms of morphostasis and morphogenesis, that distinguish first and second order change and ultimately determine which pathway change will follow. Therefore, change of a first order nature initiated by an environmental disturbance will track its way through the

organisation without affecting the interpretative schemes. Second order change, on the other hand, stemming from an environmental disturbance will result in changes in the interpretative schemes. That is, the core cultural values of the organisation will be transformed.

Although Levy's (1986) definitions of first and second order change allow change to be neatly categorised, it does not always fully reveal the complexities of the change process. This is particularly the case if the outcome of change leads to the unresolved excursion track discussed previously in this chapter. Change of this nature, according to Hinings and Greenwood (1988), results in 'schizoid' structural coherence and underpinning interpretative schemes. These tracks therefore provide examples of failed or resisted attempts at reorientation and thus highlight some of the difficulties associated with attempting organisational change. However, they do not provide insight into the ramifications that may accompany it. Thus, the model is somewhat deficient in its explanation of the broader outcomes of the change process. These issues need to be addressed if a deeper understanding of these outcomes is to be achieved.

Laughlin (1991) addressed these limitations by refining and developing the complexity of organisational change, and in particular providing a typology of the processual dynamics of organisational change. The typology builds on the work of Miller and Friesen (1984) who believed that an organisation will change only when disturbed, kicked, or forced into doing something. Organisational change emanates from some form of initial environmental turbulence. In the context of the QRU, the organisational change emanated in part from the entry of a new competitor into the marketplace, thus creating turbulence in the environment

in which the QRU was competing. This turbulence can lead to transitions and/or transformations of differing intensity and longevity, and which take different tracks through the organisation.

Laughlin (1991), however, suggested that although the environmental turbulence may impact on organisations in a similar fashion, it may invoke different reactions. Thus, the type of 'track' that is followed may vary. This point is highly pertinent to an analysis of the phenomena of organisational change in the QRU. As indicated in chapter one, sporting organisations such as the QRU have placed great historical emphasis on maintaining an amateur ethos. Therefore any organisational responses of the QRU to environmental turbulence would take this ethos into account.

Laughlin's (1991) model will be used to provide a theoretical construct for analysing the complex nature of implementing change in a sporting organisation, and thus provide insight into understanding the QRU's responses to the numerous forms of environmental turbulence it has confronted in its recent history. The model will also be used to refine the complexities of organisational change by taking into account the contextual issues confronting the QRU.

In conclusion, Levy (1986) suggested that understanding first and second order change can be assisted by addressing three questions. First, what makes an organisation transform itself, and what are the driving forces for change? Second, how do organisations transform? Finally, what is it that distinguishes first from second order change? This thesis will provide insight into these issues through the application of Laughlin's (1991) model, and in doing so,

will provide a greater understanding of the organisational change process occurring within the QRU.

5.4 *Modelling Organisational Change within the QRU*

The view that organisational change results from an environmental disturbance is not new (e.g., Emery & Trist, 1965; Ginsberg 1988; Lenz & Engledow, 1986; McCann & Selsky; 1984; Meyer, Brooks, & Goes, 1990). According to these authors the response to an environmental disturbance is usually determined by the value system that exists within the organisation. Laughlin (1991), however, suggested that organisational change is more complicated than this. It can be more appropriately explained by reference to organisational sub-systems, design archetypes, and an amalgam of interpretive schemes.

Laughlin (1991) suggested that the sub-systems of an organisation are the tangible elements, such as buildings, people, machines, and the behaviours and natures of these elements. The design archetypes and internal values and beliefs are the less tangible dimensions that are responsible for giving direction and meaning, and providing the interconnection to these more tangible elements. Laughlin further suggested that the values and beliefs of the organisational members support particular structural designs, and produce a common purpose. He categorised these values and beliefs as interpretive schemes in a manner similar to Greenwood and Hinings.

Laughlin (1991) pointed out that an ideal organisation is one that is in equilibrium. That is, the interpretive schemes, design archetype and sub-systems are, at any point of time, in some dynamic balance. It is the impact of an environmental disturbance that can consequently cause an organisation to temporarily move out of equilibrium. Furthermore, he suggested that the organisation will either absorb the disturbance and maintain its previous equilibrium or, as a result of a shift in design archetype, sub-system elements and interpretive schemes, develop a new equilibrium. This forms the basis of his typology that refines and develops the complexity of organisational change.

5.4.1 Laughlin's Change Typology

Laughlin's (1991) typology builds on a number of previous works (Greenwood & Hinings, 1988; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Miller & Friesen, 1980a, 1980b, 1984; Ranson, Hinings, Greenwood, & Walsh 1980b; Walsh, Hinings, Greenwood, & Ranson, 1981).

Laughlin suggested that an organisation will change only when disturbed, kicked, or forced into doing something. Once the organisation undergoes an environmental disturbance the type of change can either be first or second order change (see Table 5.1). Here he draws on the work of Smith (1982) and Robb (1988) to put forward the notion that change can be typified as morphostasis (first order), or morphogenesis (second order) change.

Table 5.1: Laughlin’s (1991) Typology of Organisational Change

No Change		‘Inertia’
First Order Change	(1)	‘Rebuttal’
(Morphostatic)	(2)	‘Reorientation’
Second Order Change	(1)	‘Colonisation’
(Morphogenetic)	(2)	‘Evolution’

Sourced from Gray, Walters, Bebbington and Thompson (1995)

According to Laughlin, an organisation is assumed to be in a state of inertia, and is operating in equilibrium, before a disturbance of interest arrives. However, it is clear from the literature (e.g., Johnson & Scholes, 1993; Mintzberg & Quinn, 1991; Slack, 1997) it is possible that this particular state may never really exist in any organisation as organisations are continually adapting to minor changes in their internal and external environments.

With first order change, an environmental disturbance is met by rebuttal or reorientation. In this case the fundamental values or beliefs of the organisation do not change. Gray et al. (1995) suggested rebuttal is characterised by the organisation attempting to deflect or externalise the disturbance in order to return to the previous state of inertia. Reorientation is the result of a disturbance that cannot be rebutted but has to be accepted or internalised into the workings of the organisation. Gray et al. indicated that in each case while some slight change may occur, the “real heart” of the organisation is basically unaffected (p. 216). In other words change is effectively resisted by the organisation, preferring the previous state of inertia.

In his analysis of second order change, Laughlin (1991) draws heavily on some aspects of Habermas’ (1981a / 1984; 1981b / 1987) critical theory about the various ways organisations change, and can be changed. Specifically Laughlin adopts Habermas’ model of societal development at a micro-organisational level. The model is abstract and complex, and makes reference to three key interrelated variables. These are what Habermas calls a ‘life-world’, ‘systems’ and ‘language decentration’ (Giddens, 1979; Habermas, 1981a / 1984). The life-world is, to Habermas, a type of cultural space which gives meaning and

nature to societal life. Whilst separate and distinct from the more tangible (technical) visible system, it is the social reality which gives these systems meaning and attempts to guide their behaviour through steering mechanisms. Systems are “self regulating action contexts which co-ordinate actions around specific mechanisms or media, such as money or power” (Thompson, 1983, p. 285). They are, in this sense, distinct elements whilst at the same time intended to be the tangible expression of the cultural life-world. Language decentration traces the way individuals develop their language skills which, to Habermas, enables the differentiation of the life-world and systems, and the development of both. Habermas argued for the systematic improvement of the life-world through an expanded conception of rationality focusing on the creation and re-creation of patterns of meaning. The life-worlds can be regarded as fully rational, rather than instrumentalised or strategised, to the extent that they permit interactions that are guided by communicatively achieved understanding rather than by imperatives from the system world.

Through the application of Habermas’s model of societal development Laughlin (1991) distinguished between two types of second order change. Colonisation is differentiated from evolutionary change by the degree of undistorted communication that exists in determining the organisational change process. Colonisation is forced on the organisation by an initial environmental disturbance. As a consequence, the direction this type of change takes through the organisation is not freely chosen, but is imposed by an external body or an internal directive. The disturbance invokes change to the design archetype and then impacts on the sub-system elements as well as to the interpretive schemes. This results in the coercive infiltration of new guiding values and beliefs into the organisation. However, in

some instances these new values and beliefs may not be agreed upon by organisational members. This type of change is consequently seen as potentially regressive. Laughlin highlighted how an environmental disturbance results in this type of change:

For instance, there could be a financial crisis (an initial disturbance) which feeds into the design archetype calling for major changes to manage such threats which, in turn, through complex processes, colonises the guiding interpretive schemes of the organisation. (p. 218)

On the other hand, evolutionary change embodies an open and free discourse about where the organisation is going (Laughlin, 1991). According to Laughlin, it is seen to be the least traumatic form of change as environmental disturbances lead to new interpretive schemes being chosen and accepted by all organisational participants freely and without coercion. This leads to a common organisational vision based upon shared values. As Laughlin pointed out:

The initial environmental disturbance causes some reverberation in the interpretive schemes, which generates rational discussion about its design. This leads to a chosen new underlying ethos which, in turn, reshapes the design archetype and the sub-systems to be in line with the newly chosen interpretive schemes. (p. 221)

Through this explanation of the evolutionary change process, Laughlin (1991) established two important points. First, change of this nature may take years to complete. Second, it is

only through undistorted rational discussion that consensus can be reached regarding both present and desirable states of organisational change.

5.4.2 Refinements of Laughlin's Model

Gray et al. (1995), in their application of Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change, noted that the major shortcoming of the model is its rigidity and limited ability to fully explain the processes of organisational change. To overcome this they applied Llewellyn's (1994) explanations of boundary management. Llewellyn's work highlighted three conceptualisations of organisational boundaries. The first conceptualisation addressed the boundaries of closed systems and suggested that the boundaries of these systems are relatively impermeable to the forces of their surrounding environments. Cooper (1990) described this type of system as a container that holds the system parts together and thus prevents dispersal. This is consistent with most theories of change that assume implicitly that organisational boundaries are distinct and remain intact throughout the change processes.

In contrast to this closed system approach, Llewellyn's (1994) second and third conceptualisations of organisational boundaries have distinct parallels with open systems theory. These forms recognise the interdependencies between the organisation and its environment. Llewellyn noted the importance of interactions between the organisation and the environment, and established that organisational boundaries are permeable in both

conceptualisations. However, a distinction is made by establishing how the organisation reacts after an environmental disturbance creates the need for change.

Llewellyn's (1994) second conceptualisation of an organisational boundary suggested that, in the aftermath of change, the boundary will congeal, reducing exchange and increasing organisational insularity. In this situation change is seen essentially as divergent in nature, and ceasing once equilibrium is regained. Llewellyn's third conceptualisation is far more dynamic, and recognises the importance of active boundary maintenance. Within this framework, defining what is inside the organisation and what is outside the organisation becomes an important role of organisational management, and the survival of the organisation is dependent on an ongoing appropriate relationship with its environment. This implies that successful organisations are likely to be more fully responsive to such things as changing technologies, shifting customer needs, and new sources of revenues.

According to Gray et al. (1995), Llewellyn's third conceptualisation offered in fact, a postmodern interpretation of an organisation. This implies that organisations are essentially fluid, increasingly transparent and with shifting boundaries. They suggested that this view of an organisation, when laid across Laughlin's (1991) model, provided a rich and multi-layered conception of the process of organisational change. However, this thesis will argue that this interpretation of boundary management only fine tunes Laughlin's model and does not address the messiness and contradictions of organisational change. For example, it does not explain how change is accepted or rejected at different levels within the organisation. This point supports the arguments put forward by Martin (1992) in chapter two, when she

addressed the possibility of fragmented outcomes occurring as a result of the change process. Consequently, a more detailed analysis of these outcomes is necessary in a critical postmodern interpretation of the change process.

To summarise, the first theoretical construct for this analysis combines Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change with postmodern theory to provide an understanding of the change process in QRU. This hybrid model will be used to provide a solid foundation for understanding the differing impacts of environmental disturbances on the QRU.

The next section discusses the second theoretical construct that draws on Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality. Foucault's work provides insight into understanding how the QRU is attempting, through the production of policy and planning documents, to maintain control over its strategic direction and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture.

5.5 *Controlling Organisational Change*

From the late 1980's onwards, a second generation of Foucault-inspired work has appeared which draws on the essays of governmentality (e.g., Foucault, 1991; Miller, 1990; Miller, 1991; Miller & O'Leary, 1989; Miller & O'Leary, 1990; Miller & Rose, 1990; Preston, 1992; Robson, 1991; Rose, 1991). The common threads drawn from these authors indicated that Foucault's theories of governmentality centred on: (1) a conception of power operating at multiple points throughout the social network; (2) a conception of the management of populations as central to the task of government; and (3) a conception of continuous surveillance as a means of control. This thesis will examine the extent to which the practices employed in the organisational change process by the QRU demonstrate these principles of governmentality.

Issues of power are pivotal in understanding Foucault's theories of governmentality. For Foucault (1979, p. 93) "power is everywhere", but can be hidden in the discursive practices of organisations. Power in this context, however, is always shifting and inherently unstable, as discursive expression is subject to the changing networks and alliances forged through a desire for similar organisational outcomes (Clegg, 1989). Therefore, discursive communications between organisational stakeholders leads to the positioning and repositioning of stakeholders and demonstrates how the relative and changing nature of power comes to manifest itself in certain components of the organisation.

One of the key features of this modern expression of power is the notion of management.

The process of management to achieve desired ends is central to the notion of governmentality, one of whose chief instruments is policy. The management and administration of a population via policies has become a key feature of modern life. If the main task of governments is the management of the people through policies, it follows that an analysis of the policies should reveal the ways in which governments operate to manage the population. Such an analysis should also reveal the manner in which governments aim to channel the activities of the population towards the goals that have been planned by the government. Foucault (1979) has termed this process of managing the population, governmentality.

Miller and Rose (1990) stated that an examination of the notion of governmentality can therefore give insights into the ways in which organisational policies work to render “aspects of existence thinkable and calculable, and amenable to deliberated and planful initiatives” (p.

3). Policy, in this context, can be seen as a mechanism for consolidating the strategic direction of organisational change.

5.5.1 Governmentality and the Panopticon

The development of policies provides clear examples of the technologies of government through which “authorities of various sorts have sought to shape, normalise and instrumentalise the conduct, thought, decisions and aspirations of others in order to achieve

the objectives they consider desirable” (Miller & Rose 1990, p. 8). From this perspective, it is possible to view the policies as part of the technology of governmentality; that is, the way policies are designed to determine the type, direction, and desired outcomes of organisational change. To ensure the desired outcome of the organisational change process within the QRU, is clearly one of the ends of senior management. Moreover, it is done in a way that aims to effectively manage and influence all organisational members.

The notion of governmentality can therefore be usefully supplemented with the notion of panopticon, particularly as the notion of governmentality entails the notion of continuous surveillance. Foucault used the metaphor of the panopticon to characterise the technology of control in modern society. The panopticon was Jeremy Bentham’s design for a prison. It comprises an annular building surrounding a central tower. The panopticon is an apparatus for continual, non mutual observation for those in custody, with the intention that the incarcerated should eventually come to internalise the watching eye and thus regulate their own conduct without need for further coercion.

Its design was simple. Prisoners would inhabit small cells built on the perimeter of a circular building and in the centre would be an observation tower. The cells would have windows on both the inner and outer walls of the ring, so that, from the point of view of the watchers, they would be backlit. The tower would be in darkness, so that the observers themselves would be never observed. The regime was based around reform, so that the prisoner’s sentence depended not on a fixed retributive scale but on the degree of penitence and personal change perceived by the prison governor (or his representatives, for the prisoners

would never know the difference). The inmates, unable to tell when they were being watched, would have to continuously behave as reformed characters, in order to have the best chance of early release. It was believed that being forced to behave in this way would lead the prisoner to repent and thus become fit to be released back into society. Its main effect was:

...to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent viability that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that its architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of a person who exercises it; in short, the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they themselves are the bearers. (Foucault, 1977, p. 201)

By causing those in power to develop in themselves the means by which such power operates, the panopticon is thus a superbly efficient mechanism for social control:

There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze, an inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against himself. (Foucault, 1980, p.155)

Although Bentham's design for a prison was intended to be taken literally, the panoptican can be interpreted as a powerful metaphor for control by scrutiny, and for the internalisation and normalisation of control mechanisms. More important than surveillance by the supervisor, however, is the development of self-surveillance by the prisoners themselves, and the acceptance of the naturalness of the self-surveillance. As Foucault (1979) stated, the panoptican "[induces] ... a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (p. 201). Ultimately, the external application of surveillance becomes unnecessary as the individual "inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles, he becomes the principal of his own subjection" (p. 202). Surveillance thus becomes a technique for self-control or self-discipline. When this aspect of Foucault's work is applied to organisational change through policies, the panoptic quality becomes clear. It is possible for the organisational members of the QRU to be effectively managed, and thus management can influence the direction of organisational change through policies that require self-surveillance for their operation.

As a technology of power, management operates like the panoptican both providing techniques for surveillance and requiring the internalisation and naturalisation of truths. Furthermore, according to Ball (1990), it offered "a system of normalisation, whereby a resister is normalised through coercive or therapeutic means" (p. 158). This form of regulatory control is therefore not just imposed from the outside but is threaded through the organisation in the everyday work that organisational members do. This is what Foucault (1980) described as a capillary form of power, "which reaches into the very grain of individuals' synaptic regime of power, a regime of its exercise within the social body, rather

than from above it” (p. 39). Foucault also emphasises that this process of normalisation which, combined with the exercise of surveillance, assists in reducing inconsistent organisational performance through the creation of a one dimensional indicator for the desired outcomes of the change process - the strategic plan.

Like Yeatman (1990), Considine (1988) argued that corporate management represents a shift in the technologies of power within organisations, rather than major paradigm shifts. He suggested that one of the effects of corporate management is to:

...tighten the control function in the hands of ministers and senior managers. Even where other government policies give forms of increased autonomy to departments, authorities and statutory corporations, the creation of these new techniques of management makes local organisations conform more closely to a central agency determined outlook. (p. 9)

It is precisely this shift in the technology of power that is central to this analysis of the QRU. Despite the move to autonomy and self-management there was a centralising tendency that kept these components firmly under the control of the QRU. That is, it was possible for all component parts of the QRU to be effectively managed or governed through centrally developed policies. The crucial point is that ostensibly devolutionary practices can conceal the extent to which an organisation seeks to manage its organisational members.

While current policy formulation and implementation can be seen as expressions of governmentality, this does not mean to say that policy directions and intentions are unable to be challenged, or unable to be reinterpreted in every arena. Although the written texts of policy may not change over time, their interpretation and re-creation and hence their outcomes will be constantly shifting (as discussed further in the next section of this chapter).

The next section outlines the theoretical construct that will be applied to determine if the policy documents produced by the QRU can result in fragmented outcomes due to the possibility for varied interpretations of the policy documents occurring.

5.6 *Contradictions within the Change Process*

This section draws predominantly on the work of Jacques Derrida (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) in discussing and applying the philosophical praxis termed deconstruction and the interrelated concept of ‘differance’. This approach to the interpretation of texts is a valuable tool for exploring the paradoxes, biases, and contradictions in social and organisational behaviour, and the interests being served by this behaviour.

5.6.1 Text and Deconstruction

The challenge of deconstructionism is that it locates its understanding within a ‘language game’ of textual analysis, and discovers multiple interpretations within texts (signifiers) which challenge meaning and identity. As no one interpretation is considered dominant or superior to another, deconstruction is more a form of critique, than conclusive analysis.

Deconstructionism seeks to extrapolate signs and significations from a text which operate within written texts but conform to language as their regulated function (Derrida, 1976). In this language game, the text acts as a signifier in which language becomes a chain of significations and the author is seen as inscribed within the text. Basically, this implies that multiple interpretations of the text are valid, and in Derrida’s terms, “il n’y a pas hors-texte” (p.158) - there is nothing outside the text.

Derridian deconstructionism challenges notions of meaning and identity but does not advocate arbitrary interpretation. It is not anarchy in which any text can mean anything, nor the reproduction of emptiness, where all texts are deconstructed into nothing.

That person would have understood nothing of the game who, at this (*de coup*), would feel himself authorised merely to add on, that is, to add on any old thing. He would add nothing, the seam wouldn't hold... The reading or writing supplement must be rigorously prescribed, but by the necessities of a game, by the logic of play, signs to which the system of all textual powers must be accorded or attuned.

(Derrida, 1981, p. 64)

Derridian deconstructionism aims to draw out of a text the undismissible prescribed signs or significations. Such significations function within written texts and conform to language, or more specifically, to its regulated function. The sign is not pursued in order to find the author's intention, neither is it sought as meanings imposed by language and history. In essence, the signifier, or the text, is the field of play in which language is uncovered as a chain of significations amidst a textual system that permits multiple interpretations and denies the dominance of any particular one.

By questioning the organising principles of canonical texts, Derrida aimed to place these principles in new relation to each other, suggesting the possibility that interpretations can be debated rather than suppressed. Thus, deconstruction is used not to abolish truth, but to question how these interpretations evolve from texts and how they are employed to

systematically support categories of thought and communication. The implications of a deconstructive reading are, therefore, not limited to the language of the text itself but can be extended to the political and social context in which the text is placed. This allows the reader to understand the extent to which the objectivity and persuasiveness of the text is dependent on a series of strategic interpretations.

Therefore, when organisational members begin to decipher a policy document(s) it is the interpretation of the text that is instrumental in justifying their understanding of it. These differing interpretations of policy document(s) can be used to provide insight into the reasons why the outcomes of the organisational change process may contradict those suggested in the policy document(s) or text. Moreover, it provides an understanding of why the actions of certain sub-units may not be consistent with the desired strategic direction of the organisation's senior management.

Through Derrida's theory of deconstruction it is possible to examine if the existence of different interpretations can inhibit and ultimately lead to a failure of these sub-units to fully support the change process. Deconstruction theory in this thesis will therefore seek to reveal that, although organisational documents may outwardly represent the organisation's intent, it is the interpretation of the text within documents that can produce unanticipated outcomes due to the perceived intersubjectivity that may reside in any text. This perceived intersubjectivity that exists in texts can be further highlighted through Derrida's notion of 'differance' (Hassard, 1993).

5.6.2 *Derrida's 'Differance'*

The previous sub-section has indicated that deconstruction may reveal the perceived intersubjectivity that may exist within organisational documents, and provide an understanding of the contradictions that may evolve from the organisational change process. Moreover, it suggested that writing is never neutral, as it always requires interpretation that can lead to varying conclusions.

In an attempt to further deal with the fact that writing was not a neutral form of expression, Derrida developed a strategy of thought that reflected but did not capture this process. He achieved this through the notion of 'differance' (Hassard, 1993). Hassard further indicated that the term 'differance' has its roots in the two senses of the French verb *differer* - defer (in time) and to differ (in space). Dixon (1998) expanded on this and suggested:

... 'differance' is more than difference. The term 'differance' as employed by Derrida not only means to differ; it also means to defer. 'Differance' is a way by which we can understand difference, how meanings are deferred, how one meaning defers another; still the other remains, not destroyed, but set aside for now. (p. 85)

In his essay, 'Differance', published in *Margins of Philosophy* (1982) Derrida takes the understanding of the term to another level. In the first instance he explained that the term 'differance', like most words is polysemic – the word can have many meanings. In the

second instance, however, he indicates that the context can be vital in determining which meaning is appropriate.

The implications of this understanding are twofold. First, although policy document(s) attempt to express what Dixon (1998) labels purportive intentions (i.e., what the authors understand as significant) it is according to Dixon the importive intentions (i.e., what a reader of the document(s) considers important) that is vital in isolating the multiplicity of meaning that exists within the document(s). This process is, in part, the result of the readers of policy document(s) bringing their own biases to the table that influence their interpretation of the document(s), changing its nature and interpreting within the context of these biases as they read it (Hassard, 1993). This allows the reader to recognise features within the policy document(s), albeit from a certain type of perspective, and produce a different interpretation of the text within the document(s).

Second, organisational members or sub-units, in their interpretation of the policy documents, may find certain meanings that exist within the policy document(s) are more appropriate if they are deferred to another time, another place, when the text of the policy document is read in an appropriate context that justifies the interpreted meaning. For example, in the context of this thesis, organisational sub-units may choose to 'defer' the interpretation of a strategic goal to an appropriate time (temporal deferral) and place (spatial deference) that provides a justification for that meaning.

As a consequence, although policy documents are meant to provide a framework of compliance, the outcomes may not indicate this. Lower level management may choose to follow a certain organisational direction that supports their interpretation of the text with the policy document(s). Although the strategies within the policy document(s) have been developed to achieve a desired strategic direction, organisational sub-units are provided with a mechanism for justifying a differing direction. This creates outcomes that are reflective of Martin's (1992) fragmentation model. In the case of the QRU, resistance to change may result in fragmented outcomes, as uniformed change is denied by the enforcement of the status quo at certain functional levels of the organisation. Thus, the outcomes of the change process may become contradictory and therefore inhibit, restrict, or complicate the possibility of achieving the long-term uniform change desired by senior management of the QRU.

Conclusion 5.7

This chapter has outlined the three theoretical constructs used to underpin the analysis of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU, and its impact on organisational strategy and culture. The three constructs comprise the conceptual framework for this thesis. By utilising these theoretical constructs, the basis for a deeper and more complete analysis of the organisational change process in the QRU can be undertaken.

Laughlin's (1991) model provides the first part of a two dimensional analysis of organisational change. The first dimension provides a general understanding of the change process in QRU and its impact upon the QRU's interpretive schemes. The second dimension involves the incorporation of postmodern theory to explain the specific outcomes of these changes in the context of the QRU. An application of Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality will provide insight into understanding how the QRU attempted, through the development of specific planning documents, to maintain the desired strategic direction and control over the outcomes of change and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture. Derrida's (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) theories of deconstruction and 'différance' are used to establish the extent to which policy documents produced by the QRU to guide change produced fragmented outcomes and therefore inhibited, restricted, or complicated the process of organisational change.

Chapter six will set the scene for the discussion of results by providing an historical overview of the diffusion of rugby union into Queensland, and examining the traditions and management practices that accompanied its development.

CHAPTER SIX

6.

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6.1 *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an historical overview of the evolution of rugby union. It will highlight how the traditions and management practices that underpinned rugby union for the vast majority of its existence became entrenched within the code. This will provide an understanding of the cultural issues that senior managers of the code in Queensland confronted in their attempts to implement organisational change during the 1990s.

6.2 *The Evolution of Rugby Union*

The widely accepted myth is that rugby acquired its distinctive form as a result of a single deviant act by an individual, William Webb Ellis. According to the stone set in the wall at Rugby School, in 1823:

...William Webb Ellis who, with a fine disregard for the rules of football as played in this time, first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the rugby game A.D. 1823. (Hickie, 1993, p. 1)

Although the William Webb Ellis myth is a historically inaccurate depiction of how the game of rugby union started (Dunning, Maguire & Pearton, 1993) it is commonly accepted that the emergence of the game resulted from its infiltration into the English Public School System (Dunning & Sheard, 1979). According to Dunning and Sheard, by the 1850s rugby had spread into society at large and independent clubs were formed throughout England. The growth of the code ultimately created the need for the formation of a governing national authority to develop and enforce the rules of the game. Thus in 1871 the Rugby Football Union (RFU) of England was formed.

During the 1870s rugby in England was played and administered by a homogeneous upper middle-class clientele and was confined to the south (Dunning & Sheard, 1979). Throughout this period, rugby union enforced the notion of amateurism. Definitions of this notion vary slightly (Adair & Vamplew, 1997; Paddick, 1994; Stoddart, 1986; Vamplew, Moore, O'Hara, Cashman, & Jobling, 1994) however, the common thread that emerges is the belief that money and sport are incompatible.

This ethos would come under threat as the popularity of the code expanded and began to cascade in the class hierarchy, particularly in the north of England. As the game spread throughout the north of England it was taken up by those who had either not attended public school or, if they had, not the higher status schools such as Rugby, Eton or Westminster. Those who played the game considered themselves gentlemen, but to the disbelief of those in the south, were prepared to recruit working men as team members. Consequently, rugby in the northern regions held a lower degree of status exclusiveness than in the south. This combination of socially exclusive clubs

with more open clubs was a configuration full of potential for tension and conflict (Dyer-Bennet, Townes, & Trevithick, 1996).

Dyer-Bennet, Townes, & Trevithick, (1996) suggested that these tensions emerged first in Yorkshire, and were given shape by the Yorkshire Challenge Cup established in 1876. This cup competition rapidly became a success. Many new clubs were formed and as a result the numerical strength of Yorkshire rugby union increased. Moreover, since cup matches attracted large crowds, the cup played a crucial part in the emergence of northern rugby as a spectator sport. This provided the economic foundation for the transformation of open clubs into gate taking clubs with the capacity to pay players and administrators.

This development was to fuel the controversy over the amateur values and beliefs that should underpin the game. In the south of England the values of amateurism were preferred. Rugby according to this ethos had its ideal aim in the production of fun, pleasure and character building. The competitive element was crucial to the code, but striving to win was supposed, at all times, to remain subordinate to the production of pleasure and sportsmanship. This ethos expressed the wealth and independence of the public school elite and the fact that, as a class, they could afford leisure and use it principally to please themselves. They believed that if the code was to professionalise and begin to pay its players and administrators – as it was doing in pockets in the north of England – it would transform the code from play into work and destroy its amateur ethos and intrinsic value (Dyer-Bennet, Townes, & Trevithick, 1996).

White (1994) indicated that this conflict resulted in the public school elite combining at the RFU general meeting in 1893 to oppose any form of professionalism becoming enshrined in its constitution – a regulation that would effectively deter or restrict working class involvement (Collins, 1998). Two years later in 1895, comprehensive sets of antiprofessionalism regulations were drawn up. Subsequently, the game of rugby took different directions in the south as opposed to some areas in the north of England. The south embraced the amateur game of rugby union and was played for pleasure and administered in the spare time of those involved. However, as a result of the antiprofessionalism regulations, areas in the north such as Yorkshire and Lancashire were left with no alternative but to embrace the increasingly professional game of northern union football, or what was to become known in 1922 as rugby league (White, 1994).

Despite this conflict, by the end of the nineteenth century rugby union had spread throughout Britain and to the British Empire's colonies (Perkin, 1989). This expansion necessitated the development of a world governing authority that could oversee and enforce the amateur ethos that the public school elites wanted entrenched within the code. The International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) was formed in part to serve this purpose in 1890. Its initial membership was limited to the four home unions within Britain: the RFU; the Welsh Rugby Union; the Irish Rugby Union; the Scottish Rugby Union (Ryan, 1994). The amateur values that the IRFB adopted subsequently impacted on the diffusion of rugby union into Australia and ultimately Queensland.

6.3 *The Diffusion of Rugby Union into Queensland*

According to Hickie (1993), the development of rugby union in Australia has undergone a similar process to that of England. Rugby union in Australia can be traced back to as early as 1829. It developed initially through cricket clubs in Sydney that comprised mainly merchant and middle class gentlemen. Because open space was limited, rugby clubs had to locate in grammar schools and universities. The values of these institutions were predominantly influenced by English educationalists with public school backgrounds who were heavily influenced by the amateur guidelines established by the RFU of England and enforced globally by the IRFB. As such, according to Hickie, these values gradually attached themselves to the game of rugby union and the ethos of amateurism became entrenched within the code.

These values, however, did not stop players from hotly debating the rules of the game. It became clear to those involved that there was a need for uniformity in this area. This need led to the formation of the Southern Rugby Union in 1874 which, in 1892, became the New South Wales Rugby Union (NSWRU). This organisation was administered by volunteer officials whose 'love for the game' acted as the prime motivation for their involvement (Hickie, 1993).

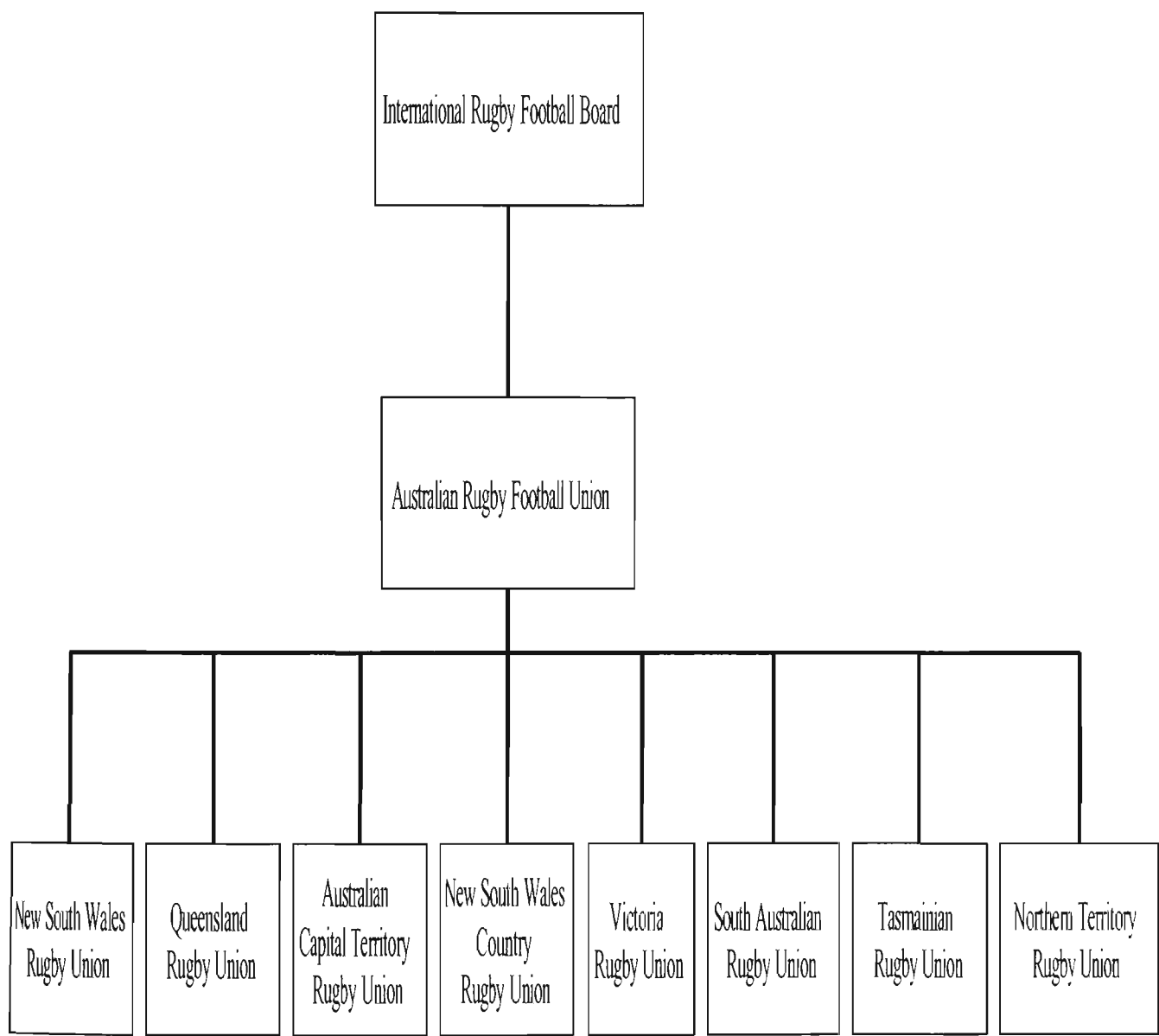
As the popularity of the code increased it began to spread north to Queensland, culminating in the first inter-colonial game of rugby football in Australia in 1882 between New South Wales and Queensland. This contest created the impetus for the formation of the Queensland Rugby Union, or as it was originally called, the Northern Rugby Union, which was officially incorporated on November 2, 1883 (Diehm, 1997). However, despite the same enthusiasm of the volunteer administrators who

strived to establish the code in Queensland, for a long time it languished behind New South Wales in its influence on the Australian rugby scene. Consequently, the game faded into recession for 12 years at the end of World War 1; however, it was to re-emerge in 1929.

By 1949 rugby union in Australia had grown enough to warrant recognition and representation on the IRFB. In order to secure IRFB membership Australia needed to form a national body that could voice the opinions of those who administered the code in Australia. It was recommended that all States' governing authorities be represented by the Australian Rugby Football Union (ARFU) (Vamplew, Moore, O'Hara, Cashman, & Jobling, 1994). In order to fulfil this criterion however, the ARFU agreed that the NSWRU and the QRU would retain their independence as separate entities. Subsequently, it was agreed that the decisions made by the ARFU required the support of the member unions of the time, New South Wales and Queensland. In addition, the ARFU would require the support of all future governing authorities, as they would also remain independent entities. The relationship between the IRFB, the ARFU, and its state member unions and affiliated unions is depicted in Chart 6.1.

Chart 6.1: The Relationship Between the IRFB, the ARFU, and its State

Member Unions and Affiliated Unions



These guidelines confirmed that the QRU was the principal governing authority responsible for the development, expansion, and management of rugby union at all levels throughout Queensland. According to Diehm (1997), these responsibilities continued to be undertaken by volunteer administrators whose initiatives in the 1960s led to the consolidation of the code in Brisbane. These included the formation of the Queensland Junior Rugby Union, the development of a Queensland sub-districts competition, the re-constitution of the Queensland Country Rugby Union, and Queensland rugby authorities acquiring land at Ballymore. Bob Templeton the former Queensland coach acknowledged the importance of these initiatives when discussing the frameworks that have contributed to the long-term survival of the code in Queensland. He stated:

There was a time during and after the First World War when the code virtually ceased to exist north of the Tweed and it was only in the late 1920s that it was revived. While it survived World War Two, the post war years saw rugby struggling for recognition as a major attraction. Its current status can be contributed to some spectacular initiatives taken in the 1960s, among them the formation of a junior rugby union, a country rugby union, the acquisition of Ballymore, and the decision to send Queensland teams abroad. (quoted in Diehm, 1997, p. 9)

6.4 *Environmental Disturbance and Pressures for Change*

These initiatives of the 1960s were the catalyst for the growth of rugby union in the 1970s (Diehm, 1997). It was in this decade that the first signs of the commercialisation of the game began to surface. Corporate involvement with the game began in the middle of the 1970s when the Australian Rugby Union accepted sponsorship from Adidas to cover the costs of outfitting the national representative team, the Wallabies (Pollard, 1984). Commercialised rugby union subsequently expanded to member unions in New South Wales and Queensland. For example “in the 1980s corporate assistance to the Queensland Rugby Union was only \$20,000 and in the following decade it had swelled to \$2.1 million” (Phillips, 1994, p. 209).

Television also had a significant role to play in transforming sport from the 1970s. By the 1980s it had not only become the dominant cultural icon, and transmitter of cultural values, but also the medium by which most people experienced big time sport in Australia. Its hyper-real emphasis on excitement, speed, the intimate close ups, a variety of slow motion replays, quick grab and the short attention span, conditioned viewers to demand constant entertainment, sensory stimulation, compressed dramatic tension and its quick resolution (McKay & Miller, 1991). Improvements in satellite technology during the early 1970s also enabled global markets to emerge, and expanded the sport audience beyond the wildest dreams of administrators who managed the game a decade earlier.

The advent of corporate sponsorship and heightened media interest failed to have a significant impact on how the game was administered and did not extend to players openly receiving remuneration (Diehm, 1997). Rugby union continued to pride itself on being a game that was administered by volunteers and played for pleasure not financial reward. This provided a justification for the governing authorities of the game to expel players from participating in the code if they openly received payment for playing. These practices ensured the amateur values of the game were preserved.

However, the gradual professionalisation of rugby league throughout the 1980s presented increased financial opportunities for elite union players to defect to rugby league. For example, players such as Michael O'Connor, Brett Papworth, Ken Wright, and Russell Fairfax made the shift from union to league. It was becoming evident that the potential for greater financial rewards offset the consequences of being expelled from union for breaching amateur guidelines. By the mid-1990s a new generation of rugby union players demanded equivalent monetary rewards that their colleagues in rugby league were receiving. This line of thinking can be attributed, in part, to the Super League / Australian Rugby League conflict that resulted in inflated player salaries due to the potential presence of two elite competitions. Rupert Murdoch's global Foxtel TV network attempted a take-over of the Optus sponsored Australian Rugby League. The purpose of this attempted take-over was to establish a competition as a vehicle to recruit Pay television customers throughout Australia. To maintain the high standard of play in both competitions, rugby league scouts from both competitions looked to rugby union to bolster their player stocks, and they had the backing of large corporate organisations such as News Limited and Optus to offer large financial rewards for changing codes (Phillips & Hutchins, 1999).

At the same time it was becoming clear that the volunteer administrative structures that underpinned rugby union could no longer deal with the commercial pressures being placed on it as it struggled to survive against the expanding national competitions in Australian football and rugby league. These pressures, although specific to Australian rugby, contributed to the IRFB decision to reassess its views about the amateur principles that regulated the union. The late 1980s and mid-1990s therefore saw a gradual recognition that rugby union's amateur ethos was under threat. The global rugby world was forced to admit that the amateur values and traditions that were so strongly enforced for so long by administrators and players were becoming obsolete.

These pressures on rugby's traditions culminated in August 1995. The IRFB, under pressure from the rival World Rugby Corporation (WRC), which had committed 501 of the world's top players to WRC agreements for a proposed global competition, was forced to make changes to its amateur regulations. The IRFB held an interim meeting in Paris where it made the announcement that the amateur principles, upon which the game had been founded since its existence, were to be repealed. This announcement now known as the Paris Declaration, stated that participants in the game of rugby union football could openly receive financial remuneration for their playing services. The Paris Declaration was subsequently ratified by the IRFB at its meeting in September 1995 (Rugby Football Union Commission Report, 1995).

6.5 Rugby Union's Strategic Adjustment

As a consequence of this decision the ARU resolved to adopt the IRFB principles of professionalism at all levels within its organisation. The ARU and its major member unions, the QRU, the NSWRU, and the Australian Capital Territory Rugby Union (ACTRU) similarly adopted the IRFB proposals. Although this agreement essentially formalised the 'under the table' payments (Tasker, 1996), that many elite-level players had been receiving since the 1990s, the consequence of the decision had a profound effect on the QRU. The Chairman of the QRU noted in the 1996

Queensland Rugby Union Limited *Annual Report*:

The process of change was not restricted to the elite players but also impacted on the QRU's role and method of operation. It was clear that there had been pressure for rugby in Queensland, and for that matter the rest of the world, to professionalise its management and administration. The dilemma for the QRU was to strike a balance between its commercial and sporting objectives. (p. 4)

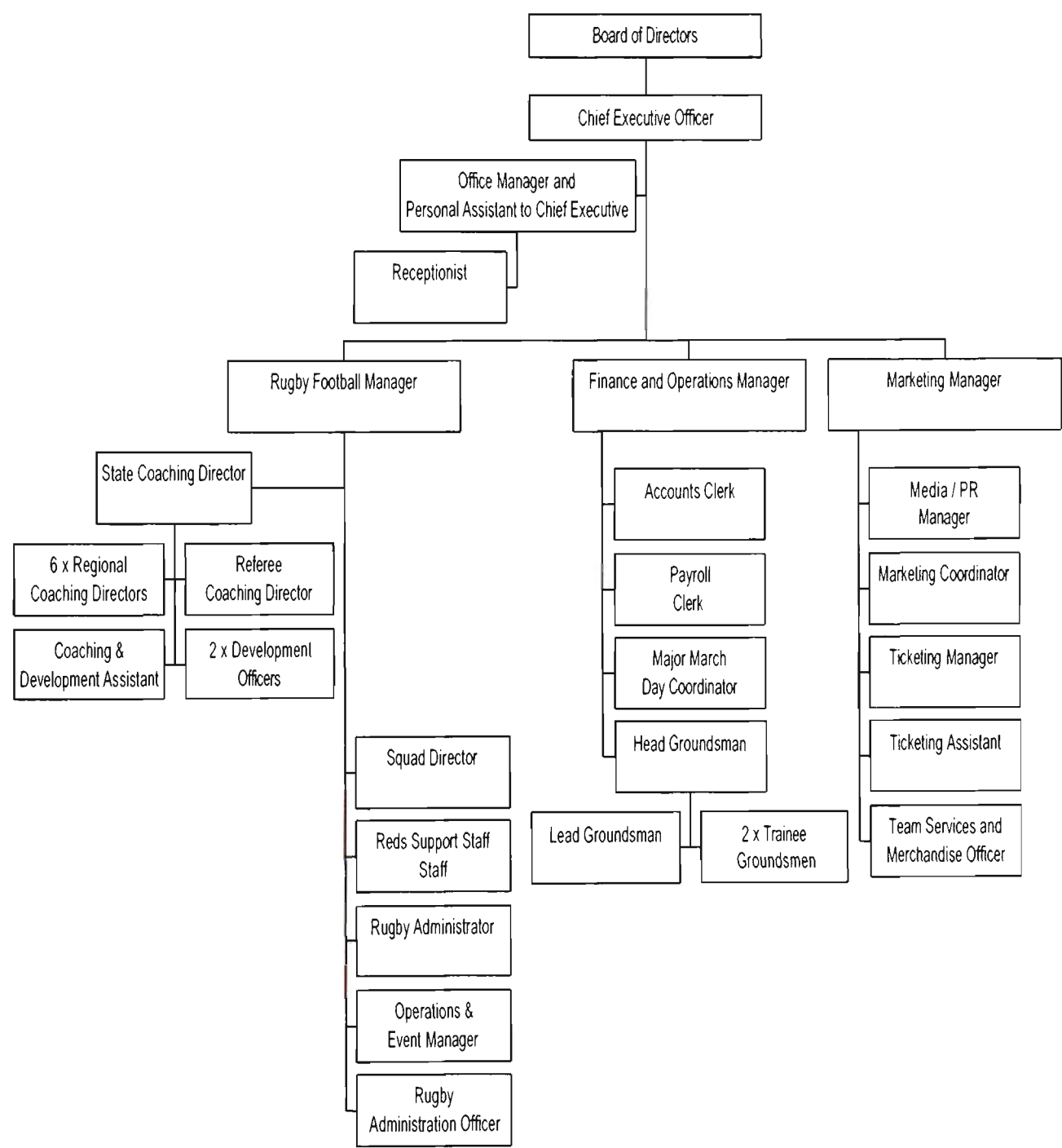
As a result, the QRU no longer considered rugby as just an amateur sport to be played for its own sake. It recognised that union at the elite level at least, was becoming a mass entertainment business. Historically, rugby was primarily considered a community sport for the middle classes. However, union administrators increasingly understood that it was competing in the mass entertainment industry. This recognition required rugby's most senior managers and officials to strategically reposition the code and realign it with the new environment. The challenge confronting the QRU was to establish an organisation capable of monitoring and adapting to the numerous

environmental disturbances occurring in its 'sportscape'. However, in doing so it created major tensions throughout the rugby community (Crawford, 1996).

6.6 *Structural and Cultural Adjustments*

To make this adaptation to the rapidly changing Australian sportscape and enter into the mass entertainment business, the QRU changed its administrative practices. One of the first adaptive steps involved the development of a new organisational structure in 1992/3. The current 2000 structure is based on this initiative, and is illustrated in Chart 6.2. The QRU was confident that the new structure could deal effectively with the demands of its new competitive environment.

Chart 6.2: The Organisational Chart of the Queensland Rugby Union



However, the literature indicates successful organisational change must extend beyond structural change (Ansoff, 1979; Beyer, 1981; Brown, 1995; Hall, 1999; Whiteley; 1995). In the case of the QRU successful organisational change required it to relinquish a set of values and beliefs that had defined its identity for most of its sporting life. However, this traumatic transformation of values and beliefs was vigorously resisted by many of its constituents, in spite of strong senior management support. This resistance created a great challenge for the management of the QRU, and is a focal point of this thesis.

6.6 *Summary*

This chapter provided an overview of the growth of rugby union in Queensland and the forces that have impinged on the code throughout its history. It reveals the importance of amateur values throughout its evolution. It also showed that recent forces have pressured the governing authorities such as the QRU to establish structures and processes capable of adapting to the changing environment.

Chapter seven will provide a detailed examination of these changing structures and processes through an analysis of the interview data.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.

**...RESULTS & DISCUSSION
INTERVIEW DATA**

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

INTERVIEW DATA

7.1 *Introduction*

As stated earlier, the general purpose of this research is to examine the influence of environmental turbulence on the change process occurring throughout the QRU during the 1990s, and to analyse its impact on that organisation's strategic direction and organisational culture. To achieve this, an ethnographic case study supported by observation, interviews, and document analysis was undertaken. This chapter uses the interview data to analyse the change process that occurred in the QRU.

The interview data will be analysed through the 'prism' of open coding. As discussed in chapter four, the interview data have been divided into four refined categories. The data categories developed were: (1) environmental disturbances and their impact on organisational change; (2) internal adaptation to changing circumstances; (3) the impact of organisational dynamics on change; and (4) the impact of change on organisational culture. In addressing this research question, respondents provided a variety of opinions on the causes and consequences of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU.

The first data category is titled environmental disturbances and their impact on organisational change. It reveals the type of environmental turbulence that has impacted on the QRU in its

recent history and provides insight into how QRU officials responded to this turbulence.

Category two explores the internal adaptation that occurred within the QRU due to changing environmental and organisational circumstances. Category three examines the dynamics of the change process through an analysis of the powerful interest groups that utilise the political environment to exert influence over the strategic direction of the QRU. Finally, category four details how the change process led to fragmented cultural outcomes. For each category the respondents' comments will be linked to the relevant literature in order to provide a deeper understanding of the role of the change process. Particular attention will be given to Lundberg's (1985) organisational learning cycle of cultural change, Martin's (1992) fragmentation model of cultural change, and Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change.

7.2 Interview Data: Results

Introduction 7.2.1

The QRU is currently in the process of implementing organisational change. Using Lundberg's (1985) model this section will discuss the environmental disturbances that have forced the QRU to make a number of major adjustments to its organisation. The internal restructuring that has occurred at the QRU is outlined to highlight how the organisation evolved throughout the 1990s. The internal dynamics of the organisation will be discussed in together with the resultant conflict within and outside the QRU. The ways in which these political forces impacted on organisational culture is also examined. Finally, Laughlin's (1991) model and a postmodern 'overlay' will be used to 'frame' and explain the change process that resulted from the disturbances.

7.2.2 Environmental Disturbances and their Impact on Organisational Change

Environmental disturbance has been a significant force for change in Australian sport. According to Shilbury and Deane (1997), the catalyst for change can be linked back to the 1977 cricket revolution instigated by Kerry Packer. The establishment of the privately run World Series Cricket circuit in competition against the traditional game promoted by the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) forced cricket administrators to review the way in which the game of cricket was managed.

The realisation that sport was becoming a business was revealed through the changes that Packer's World Series Cricket delivered to the game. Instant television replays on giant video screens were introduced to accommodate the cricket customer, games were played under floodlights to maximise television exposure, marketing plans were designed to improve cricket's public profile, and corporate involvement in the game was more actively pursued (Quick, 1990). This changed the face of first class cricket as the seriously modified one day limited over international matches played with altered rules, and in coloured uniforms, took fans away from the slow moving traditional five-day test matches. However, rugby union administrators in Queensland at this time were not concerned about the changes going on in cricket, or indeed in other sports. This point was highlighted by Respondent Two:

...in the seventies rugby union in Queensland was thriving. We were winning everything and enjoying it. We weren't concerned with what was going on in cricket, league, whatever – rugby union was doing just fine – we didn't need to change anything because there was no need.

This response was common amongst all rugby administrators during this period despite the emerging sport-business nexus, and the changes being implemented by other football codes (Stewart, 1983). Shilbury and Deane (1997) noted that rugby league and Australian football were developing national competitions and restructuring to capitalise on corporate opportunities. Furthermore, they suggested rugby union was characterised by cumbersome, time-consuming administrations that emphasised traditional values, and did not willingly want to adapt to environmental change. This point was highlighted by Respondent Two:

We were still supporting an amateur approach to the game – both at the playing level and administration level. We could see that rugby league was starting to expand but we thought they would never threaten us because the game is based on traditional values and those values would see us through.

However, by the 1990s rugby union started to slowly respond to the continued environmental turbulence that was occurring throughout the Australian sporting landscape. Diehm (1997), Fitzsimons (1996) and Tasker (1996) identified two distinct periods of environmental disturbance that provide an understanding of the commercialisation and professionalisation of rugby, and ultimately the strategic and cultural change that accompanied this transformation. The first period of turbulence began in 1991, when ‘trust’ arrangements for elite players evolved. According to Respondent Two, the QRU was the first rugby organisation to set up a trust. He explained that it involved:

...pooling funds raised from interstate luncheons, all those things we used to run, golf days, things like that. We then set up a Board for the trust, and on that Board were representatives of the QRU, independents, past players, and a couple of players who were currently involved. They devolved the money that was raised in a fashion that they deemed to be reasonable. Nobody challenged it – everybody accepted it...

This scheme was developed to ensure that representative players, who sacrificed and devoted the greatest amount of time to the code, received some remuneration from the game without infringing on their amateur status. Player trusts allowed administrators to reward players for their commitment to the code within the guidelines of amateur regulations. The

arrangement had little effect on the administration of the game and the players that played it; however, it created a perception that the traditions of the game were surviving. Respondent Eight highlighted this point when discussing the purpose of trusts. He indicated:

... trusts had an upside and a downside. The upside from our perspective of being an amateur sport was it allowed us to keep that perception. Deep down we knew that we were paying the players albeit in a way that protected our amateur status, but the bottom line was we were paying them. This meant that we were justified in continuing to manage rugby the way we were because we were still amateurs.

Respondent Eight also indicated that the trust system was a mechanism that created a false sense of security. He stated:

...the downside was that we were just worried about surviving as an amateur sport. We weren't looking at the big picture of what was going on around us. As far as we were concerned if we provided a framework by which we could offer our players some rewards for playing we would keep them and as a result we would have nothing to worry about.

These structures perpetuated the amateur mythology and the related value system that existed within the ranks of rugby union in Queensland. Although it seemed that the administrators involved in the game recognised that the environment around them was changing, their primary concern was to create structures that would enable rugby to continue to survive in a form that reflected the ideals of the past.

The second period of turbulence, which began in 1995, not only highlighted just how much of a false sense of security existed in the QRU but also how much external change was occurring. Rugby union's amateur stance was beginning to make it vulnerable to the loss of high profile players to professional rugby league clubs. This vulnerability was put to the test as a result of the developments that occurred in rugby league in 1995. Rupert Murdoch's News Limited Corporation introduced 'Super League' in an attempt to take over the running and administration of rugby league worldwide, in providing a product for cable and pay television. In Australia, this resulted in a bitter struggle between 'Super League' and the Australian Rugby League (ARL) – the traditional governing authority of the code - for both clubs and players (Masters, 1997). The conflict resulted in inflated player salaries due to the restricted market of player talent, the potential presence of two elite competitions, and the financial support provided to Super League by News Limited, and to the ARL by Optus.

In many ways these 'external enabling' conditions mirrored Lundberg's (1985) requisite condition of domain forgiveness as discussed in chapter two. The above developments indicated that the three forces discussed by Lundberg existed. First, it is clear that competition from rival rugby league organisations presented a threat to the code and, as such, rugby union needed to alleviate this threat. Second, there was a relative scarcity of resources in relation to the number of elite rugby league players. This forced the rival competitions to look to rugby union to bolster their playing stocks. Finally, these forces were creating environmental instability as the multinational organisations of News Limited and Optus attempted to control rugby league.

This battle for control was highlighted by Respondent Four who used the following example to demonstrate the intense competition confronted by rugby union:

The reality was we were seeing a guy like [x] straight out of school 19 years old Canterbury offering Canterbury Rugby League – with the support of News Limited - offering him ½ million dollars a year Queensland Rugby Union offering history or tradition whatever emotional plea in the book - how could you possibly expect this guy to play rugby union for Queensland and remain an amateur just because of tradition.

As these scenarios increased in frequency, rugby union officials in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa became concerned that they were going to lose many of their leading players to rugby league. This led to the formation of a ‘southern hemisphere consortium’ - collectively known as SANZAR. The consortium announced on 23rd June 1995, prior to the commencement of the Rugby World Cup, that it had signed a ten year joint venture agreement with Rupert Murdoch’s News Limited worth \$US550 million over 10 years, with a five year option. Of this, 24% was to be distributed to the ARU (this has since been renegotiated to 27% on the basis of television viewing audiences), and the remainder distributed equally between the New Zealand and South African rugby unions (Tasker, 1996). This was due to the greater amount of rugby product (provincial competitions that exist in these countries) which they had to offer.

In return for the investment that News Limited would put into the code the ‘southern hemisphere consortium’ was required to provide two products. The first was a ‘Super 12’

competition of five regional teams from New Zealand, four from South Africa and three from Australia. The second was a Tri-Nations series between the three countries. However, although the newly formed consortium may have negotiated a deal with News Limited, it had not bothered to advise its players, or more significantly, sign them to contracts. In addition, a newly formed body called the WRC - headed by Ross Turnbull a former ARU vice-chairman and once a member of the IRFB - entered the market for players in order to establish a worldwide rebel rugby union competition. The pivotal issue was that the WRC had secured the signatures of leading rugby union players with the offer of generous 'Super League' like contracts but had yet to secure a pay television contract to televise its proposed competition.

Rugby union now not only had to deal with the rugby league onslaught, but was also faced with the possibility that the code could be hijacked by a former rugby union administrator who had initially gained the backing of Kerry Packer's Publishing and Broadcasting Limited. Rugby union officials were not prepared for this development. This point was highlighted by Respondent Three when he suggested the major problem resulting from the environmental turbulence of 1995 for the QRU was that it happened so quickly. He stated:

I think we were, I suppose, after dealing with the threat from rugby league through the use of trust payments ...we were hoping maybe we were being fairly naive that it would just roll along in a nice orderly fashion. We had as a consequence obviously put steps in place to look into talking about contracts for players well and truly before the WRC you know Super League scenario but all of a sudden it was on us.

As a consequence decisions about the future of rugby union had to be made quickly.

Respondent Four commented:

It was virtually an overnight decision. People were sure they were headed down the path of professionalism but I don't think anything really would have prepared us for what took place overnight. In other words, I don't think we had copies of other people's contracts like AFL contracts and league contracts and things like that. But there wasn't the urgency to deal with those until such time as a decision was made, and because it was forced around about the time of the 1995 World Cup because of the WRC threat, it made us virtually react overnight.

The 'southern hemisphere consortium' responded to the WRC threat with their respective unions placing pressures on players to desert the WRC. Both the New Zealand and South African Unions experienced success with relatively little consequence. However, negotiations between the players and the ARU had a momentous impact on how rugby union in Australia was to be managed in the future. The ARU accepted that the code could not survive in its traditional form. This view was supported by Respondent Three who commented:

I think initially the game continued to survive in its original form because of a bit of both. I mean it was the trust system and the traditions of the game that helped us at the time. There has always been rugby league who paid their players and we had always dealt with it. No matter what people say they are two very different games and there are only a few players that really make the transition across, but we always have cut our losses and let those who wanted to go to do so. Initially we got away with it, but

all of a sudden when you had Super League as well and WRC and pay television came in, that has been a huge influence on the way things evolved and provided the leverage for the players to enter discussions on how rugby union should be managed in the future.

The negotiations between the ARU, and the elected six person player committee comprising of Mark Harthill (Chair), George Gregan, Mathew O'Connor, John Eales, Tony Dempsey and Tomo Boston, were not only constrained by the parameters of the News Limited deal but also created the conditions for future change. In order to secure the services of the elite players within Australia, Ian Ferrier, the then NSWRU Chairman, was authorised by the ARU, the NSWRU, the ACTRU, and the QRU – as these member unions were to participate in the proposed Super 12 competition - to make an offer to the Australian players who had signed with the rebel WRC organisation. The agreement, which came to be known as the 'Ferrier Agreement' (attached as Appendix Two), promised players (collectively known as the Players' Association) access to 95% of the proceeds of the News Limited television deal, with the remaining 5% to be distributed to youth and junior rugby development. The Ferrier agreement also gave players the assurance that two of their number would sit on the ARU Board. Proceeds from sponsorship, merchandising and gate receipts were retained by the ARU.

The outcomes of these negotiations provide an example of some of the requisite internal conditions that Lunberg (1985) also suggested need to exist in order for change to be facilitated. As discussed in chapter two, a surplus of change resources such as money and managerial time and energy must be present. This is highlighted by

the massive investment that News Limited made in rugby union. Furthermore, management accepted that the funds would be controlled by the players and as such a great deal of managerial expertise and time would be required if the code were to survive. This created a collective sense that the organisation was willing to change and a 'system readiness' for change.

The power of these external and internal conditions for change forced administrators to acknowledge that the code was now faced with what Lundberg (1985) labelled a 'precipitating pressure'. That is, there was now a perception of a crisis within rugby union that could be associated with the environmental uncertainty that led to the signing of the Ferrier agreement. The agreement had far reaching ramifications for the NSWRU, ACTRU and the QRU. These organisations altered their constitutions to allow two members of the Players' Association, who were current players, to be appointed as Directors of their respective Boards. This has since been reduced to one member on the QRU Board by agreement. In addition, the Ferrier agreement severely reduced the redistribution of television revenues from the ARU to the above member unions, and as a consequence, the QRU needed to look beyond its members and volunteers to maintain a viable business, as indicted by Respondent Nine:

I suppose the fact that the game of rugby union became professional overnight created some problems. They were in essence operating ten years behind the eight ball in the way they attracted their supporter base, the general public. After the 1995 conflict it was clear we needed

to change our approach to the management of rugby as well as develop the corporate support rugby league had achieved in order to survive.

According to Respondent Four, the QRU moved quickly to secure corporate support. In addition, he indicated that although the impetus for change came from outside the QRU, at the Board level, recognition of the need to adapt to the change happened quite quickly. This recognition facilitated Lundberg's (1985) final condition for change - a 'triggering event' within the organisation. A major shake-up of top management led to the appointment of a new CEO to develop an appropriate strategic direction through the implementation of organisational change. This allowed the QRU to initially reduce the ramifications that accompany environmental change. This development is highlighted by Respondent Four who stated:

The catalyst for change came from outside the Queensland Rugby Union yes, if you look at the Queensland Rugby Union as a body yes. The decisions were made outside that, but the QRU also acknowledged to be part of the change otherwise we are going to lose all our players and the code would really suffer. One of the biggest influences on that was the formation of WRC and with WRC being a threat to the game that threat had to be dealt with. The only way to deal with it was to pay our players and agree to the Ferrier Agreement otherwise we were going to lose them to a separate organisation who were going to pay them. The new CEO of the QRU accepted the outcomes of this agreement and got on with the job of doing what he had to do.

Every respondent agreed that external commercial forces had created a radically new environment, and that the QRU had to adapt to secure its future. Respondents also indicated that the QRU was gradually changing its operations to meet its new environment. The following sub-section discusses the internal changes that respondents believed were occurring and the extent to which these changes were caused by commercial forces, on one hand, or an independent shift in management strategy on the other.

7.2.3 *Internal Adaptation to Changing Circumstances*

When discussing the internal changes with senior management of the QRU, two issues emerged. The first issue concerned the nature of the changes, and the second concerned the impetus for change. The following data show that a conflict of opinion began to surface at two levels. The first level of conflict centred on whether internal strategic adjustments or external commercial forces actually caused the shift from amateurism to professionalism. The second level of conflict centred on just how much the traditional values had been undermined by the new professional ethos.

The first major structural change occurred in June 1992. Up until this time the QRU was an unincorporated organisation. The overseeing body was a management committee that met every Monday night. The management committee saw its role as one of having to deal with operational issues at a hands on level. In June 1992 the organisation became incorporated as a legal entity separate from its members, and a Board structure replaced the management committee. This resulted from a realisation that the structure of the organisation needed to change in order to function effectively within this framework. The Board now met on a monthly basis and its role became one of driving policy with a supporting management structure underneath to implement these initiatives, rather than the Board dealing with operational issues.

The subsequent impact of this decision resulted in the second change initiative. In 1992/3 the QRU underwent an organisational review by an independent consultant. This led

Respondent One to comment:

After the incorporation of 1992 they employed this lady to have a look at the whole structure of the organisation because of the incorporation, because of the changing pressures of the game. I guess a sort of commercialisation of the game.

Respondent One also believed that the organisational review “was not a strategic planning exercise but one aimed at the refinement of the human resource function... strategic planning wasn’t addressed at the QRU until 1996”. The review resulted in the formation of four new positions within the organisation. These were: (1) Financial Controller, who would also fulfil a Company Secretary role; (2) Rugby Administrator; (3) Marketing Officer; and (4) a supporting Marketing Officer who would also act as a Personal Assistant to the CEO.

When asked if this process was the result of the QRU’s realisation that the structure of the organisation needed to change because of the growth of the sport, Respondent One stated:

Exactly, and when that got put in place part of the process, a by product of it, was to formalise a Board procedure, that was a normal monthly Board meeting, formal Board reports produced before the meeting, and they became a Board, policy drivers as opposed to operational drivers and they would have a management and a staffing structure underneath who were responsible, who were hopefully trained and would have the expertise in their own areas to run the management of the organisation.

This structural adjustment allowed us to better manage rugby union because it was growing in popularity and interest.

Respondent One indicated that the next major change issue took place in 1994. The ARU signed a marketing agreement with International Management Group (IMG) for five years. This required IMG to provide a minimum return in order to earn a profit from the agreement. According to Respondent One this:

...resulted in the ARU signing an agreement with IMG for five years to act as their marketing agents. They underwrote to the level of \$50 million over five years in that they would produce income for the ARU on that basis by the way of sponsorship, licensing, corporate functions and all those things they were totally in charge of. They were then entitled to a commission of income that was generated above that level.

According to Respondent One, the IMG deal created further complications for the QRU. This is because, when the formal joint venture agreement that was reached between News Limited and the 'southern hemisphere consortium', a commission was paid to Carnegie Sports International which factored the deal out of London. This reduced the amount of income that was to be distributed to the ARU from the joint venture agreement. As the ARU distributes money to its member unions - such as the QRU - this amount was cut back to account for this loss of income. In addition, IMG was still collecting a percentage of the marketing agreement it had previously reached with the ARU. This further reduced the QRU's income as the ARU had to pay for this deal out of the income it generated - not

what it received from News Limited. This was highlighted by Respondent One who commented:

See the IMG deal was done only with Australian Rugby whereas the News Limited deal was done with a joint venture. So that money we give IMG only really comes out of the pool that is generated by Australian Rugby not the money received in the joint venture agreement with News Limited. This reduces the pool of money that we can receive from the ARU.

A number of senior QRU management staff believed that the structural changes that occurred in 1992/3 were the first signs that the QRU was adapting to a changing environment. In other words, this was an indication that the QRU was moving down an orchestrated path of change to professionalism well before the severe disturbances of 1995. It had begun with the structural review of the organisation in the early 1990s and continued with the development of trust arrangements prior to going professional. The 1995 disturbances simply increased the speed of the process. The comments of Respondent Three highlighted this when asked if he believed the forces of 1995 caused a realisation within the organisation that change had to occur. He stated:

I think it probably started before then, we just became aware that we couldn't stay as we were in this sheltered little world of amateur rugby. I think, unfortunately for us, the WRC and Super League conflict probably put us back about 5 years because we were moving down a reasonably slow and hopefully a reasonably well planned sort of progression into professional rugby, but all of a sudden the WRC and

Super League situations were thrown upon us and some of the deals that were done in haste in order to supposedly retain our top players, in hindsight were not the best decisions to be made.

When further asked to respond on the issue of whether rugby was moving towards professionalism before the advent of WRC and Super League, he stated:

Yes, very much so, I mean it was just a matter of time and we had put steps in place and people like [x] and [x] would be able to explain them far more than I could. We had put things in place, we knew what we were doing and where we were going, but the clock got wound up very very quickly, now we had to move quicker, and as I said a lot of the deals that were done we are still paying for. One would question the Murdoch deal for example, then the players' contracts and the amount of money there. There are a number of things in hindsight we probably did not address well and did not do properly, simply because our hand was forced. I am sure if it had happened slowly – as it was - rugby in general would have been better off for it.

Respondent Seven supported this view. He stated:

Change was happening internally in a number of areas and we were slowly heading towards professionalism anyway. It didn't happen overnight just because of a large injection of cash that was bought into the game via News Corporation. I think in essence rugby was evolving into a professional game and would have survived anyway – in the end we might have had a better outcome for all the rugby community not just the players.

These statements clearly indicate that some organisational members believed that, although the News Limited deal accelerated the advent of professionalism, the management of rugby union was changing well before the external commercial disturbances of 1995. The problem, however, was that the accelerated change that occurred failed to take into account the ramifications for the rugby community in general. This perhaps in many ways created a vehicle for future internal conflict about the organisational change process, as the general rugby community felt threatened by the environmental forces of 1995. Respondent Three touched on this issue of the general rugby community feeling threatened when asked if he believed if the broader rugby community would have adapted to change better if the internal structural adjustments to the organisation were allowed to continue gradually. He stated:

I'm not sure if the whole of the rugby community would have adapted to change better but I think they would have accepted the changes without as much resentment. If you have a gradual process to change I think people don't feel as threatened by it and are more willing to accept it. The problem was that all of a sudden people are told that you need to do this – you need to change that – you should do that this way. This irritated a lot of the rugby community because they had been doing it their way for years. If we had just kept things slowly changing I think eventually rugby would have developed the values necessary for its new environment.

Respondent One believed that the environmental turbulence of 1995 was overrated, and it impacted on rugby more at a national level rather than a state level. He believed the structure at the QRU has not really changed since the organisational review of 1992/3. He suggested

that the environmental factors of 1995 did not have a dramatic impact internally on the QRU. The organisation has the same number of staff basically doing the same thing. What did happen, according to Respondent One, was that the income - the major income item being television rights that came in as a result of professionalism - flowed directly to the ARU at the expense of the general rugby community. When pressed for a response as to whether the income filtered through to the QRU and the general rugby community throughout Queensland, he stated:

What happened was there was an agreement reached, because of the WRC situation at that time, the Australian Rugby Union established an arrangement or agreement with the players. A Players' Association that actually hadn't established at that point but part of the agreement was to establish one. The agreement was that 95% of the funds that came in from News would go to the players. The other 5% was for junior and youth development. So essentially the States and grassroots levels did not see much at all of the money. That is one of the reasons why nothing much has changed at State and levels below us such as club rugby within the state. I guess for some reason there has been some bitterness expressed by some of the people at the grassroots level that the change that took place in 95 with professionalism, was at their expense. This was because there was a perception a lot more money was flowing into the game and they weren't receiving any of it.

This perception that money was not being fairly distributed created tension within the QRU.

Whereas a number of the management team believed that change was both necessary and beneficial, others argued that it was creating damage to the organisation that would take

years to rectify. The magnitude of this tension was highlighted by Respondent Eight who stated:

...it is a huge tension, it is a bit like a marriage you know, like we have got a mistress who has brought money into the game but none of it is actually getting back to the grass roots area. I mean one of the classics of the collective bargaining agreement was that the Players' Association came out and said we will, to buy back a little bit of public support they said they would give \$10,000 to each of the Brisbane clubs and \$10,000 to Queensland country. I had the President of Darling Downs ring me up and he said I just picked up the paper this morning, Saturday morning it was in The Australian newspaper, he said isn't that great the Players' Association are actually going to give us some money, he said \$10,000 for Queensland country he said there is 11 sub-unions so that is \$950 per sub-union, he said I have got 180 players up here he said that is \$6.50 each isn't that [xxxx] wonderful, and hung up on me.

When asked how the QRU attempted to deal internally with the tension that was escalating between club and professional rugby, Respondent Four commented:

...through strategic planning. This has allowed us to ensure the future of club rugby is being taken into account. We have been able to say yes there are professional players but let's not get excited there is only 30 of them but we are also about the other 28,000 people involved with rugby throughout the state. We are developing strategies to cater for these groups.

Pressed on whether or not the clubs were implementing the desired internal changes that have stemmed from the strategic planning process, Respondent Four stated:

...no, even though we have tried to implement some form of internal change by appointing General Managers that are paid for by this office I think the clubs still resist the concept of change. Plus it would be foolish to think that they could change overnight as well so I think it is a slow transition for them. Whilst they are professional people - the General Managers - they have still got to deal with the committee that still is not. They are dealing with a committee that probably is much the same and has much the same views as it had two years ago when we weren't professional, so therefore I think the change there is going to take some time.

Respondent Four also added that many club committees did not believe change was necessary. They believed the values associated with the professionalism of elite rugby were not appropriate for club rugby, which further exacerbated the tension. This point was taken up by Respondent Nine who indicated that clubs must understand that rugby needs to change to accommodate the changes occurring not only in its environment, but also in the wider society. He stated:

...I mean we are finding at the moment with the amateur game which is struggling substantially, I mean no longer. I am generalising here but I mean the days of you know getting 5th and 6th grade down at all these clubs are just being eroded. This is because there are other things to do and you know people's time is becoming less and less their own everyone seems to be running around. You used to go down to your local club and

spend three days a week at the bar and you know training once a week, it's just not happening anymore. It is unfortunate but that is just the way that it is going, people just do not have the time to go and relax and turn off and have a beer with their mates and train once or twice a week and then Saturday is another story. If you have got a family, you know got a girlfriend or whatever, it is you are not seeing them as much during the week so the pressure is on to spend a bit of time with them on the weekend. The desire might be still there to go and have a game of rugby but the pressure from other angles for a lot of people these days just doesn't allow it to happen. Clubs have got to understand that and adapt to these circumstances in order to survive. The problem is they won't accept it.

Respondent Five was also concerned that club rugby was not embracing the changes permeating the higher levels of the QRU. Although the restructuring of the internal frameworks at club level was occurring gradually, it was only a cosmetic change. Clubs continued to espouse traditional amateur values despite the need for significant change. This need for significant change was a direct result of the environmental turbulence of 1995, and the resulting pay television deal orchestrated to retain the player base. According to Respondent Five:

This turbulence had a huge commercial impact on the organisation. In the past this was not the guiding principle, it was about politics, pride etc, prior to that. Commerciality is now the guiding principle with which we run this organisation because we have no choice in the matter if we are to compete successfully in the entertainment sector. It is establishing recognition of this at club level that will require time.

Respondent Five argued that the structure of the organisation needed to be supported by an analysis of its fundamental focus. Furthermore, he argued that while the QRU had an appropriate structural framework in place the key to its successful adjustment to change was its increasing commercial focus. He believed this principle of commerciality added a new dimension to the organisation as it places greater emphasis on the commodification and entertainment component of sport. This, he believed, changed in 1995, it was not happening gradually because of internal factors as expressed by others within the organisation.

Respondent Five went on to say:

The professionalisation of sport is more than just simple paying players it is about professionalising the organisation at a managerial and administrative level, change is about culture, direction and the underlying purpose of the organisation. Internal structural change on its own does not achieve this. In the past this was about amateur players with volunteer officials running the game – this can't be the case if you are involved in professional sport.

This view is supported by Respondent Six who stated:

Some believed that you could pay the players and not have to change anything else. The structure did not evolve after 1995, apart from the development of a Reds Academy as a separate arm of the QRU, the vast majority of changes that did occur were only superficial. It was the focus of the organisation that had to change, the whole organisation had to become commercially focused – that includes the clubs. We all need to align our values with the new environment that we are now a part of.

Respondent Five added another dimension to the analysis by noting that, in order for the QRU to govern effectively, it must not only address issues associated with structure and values but it must also overcome the volatile political environment that exists within the QRU. This had occurred because for the majority of its existence the QRU was an amateur organisation promoting an amateur game. As a result, long serving officials do not want to be pushed out or lose their influence. In short, they utilised their influence to serve their own interests at the expense of the long-term survival of rugby in Queensland.

In summary, there was agreement amongst respondents that the QRU had changed its strategic direction and structure during the 1990s. However, there was serious disagreement on the causes of this change direction and structure. Some respondents believed it was the result of the games evolutionary progress culminating in a number of structural changes in the early 1990s. Others thought it was directly attributable to the external commercial forces acting through News Limited in particular in 1995.

7.2.4 *The Internal Dynamics of the Change Process*

As indicated in the previous section, the QRU underwent a strategic change process during the 1990s in an attempt to professionalise the management of the organisation. According to Respondent Five, this strategic change occurred through a consultative process. That is, the Board through consultation with management and stakeholders determined the direction that the QRU should take. This is consistent with the principle that accountability for the implementation of strategies rests with management. However, Respondent Five also conceded that in practice this process was thwarted by the political environment that exists within the QRU. According to Respondent Five, political factors impacted on the strategic direction of the QRU due to the agendas that different interest groups within the organisation attempted to promote.

He further indicated that the political environment that existed within the QRU was a product of the number of power relationships that had been present for some time. He stated:

...power is exercised at a number of levels. It is exercised at an electoral level by the Brisbane clubs and Queensland country, which have the majority of the power between them. A small group on the Board and a small group of very influential club Presidents also exercise power at a functional level within the organisation. Some members of the executive staff in their relationships with other parts of the rugby body also exercise power at the tertiary level. There is no one seat of power, it's not a unitary centre. It is diversified through three or four strata of

different levels of power and different levels of influence and there is some inter-relationships between those various levels.

When further pressed on what specific type of power exists within the organisation, he indicated that there is electoral power, financial power, and status. He further asserted that power associated with status has had the most influence within the organisation. He stated:

The power associated with status that has the most influence. The status attaches to three specific groups. It attaches to elected officials of both the club and State level. It attaches to those who have been involved with the code for a long time, and since 1995 the status of players has increased dramatically. They can now exercise their power in terms of their influence over operational issues relating to football.

Respondent Five argued that those individuals who have legitimate power should wield most influence in the decision-making processes. When asked to explain how power is legitimised throughout the QRU, he stated:

...it is legitimised in two ways. They are either an employee in a specific function or they are an official elected to a specific position. Either at the first strata, which is the Board of the QRU, or at the second strata as an elected official within the Queensland Rugby Union - whether they are a selector, whether they are a member of a coaching panel. The next level of legitimate power is the elected official at club and the sub union - the President, or the Secretary, or the Treasurer.

The problem however, according to Respondent Eight, is that some individuals who have status within the organisation have achieved it through a long association with rugby union in Queensland, but might not necessarily occupy a position as an elected official. Due to their long association, however, they have an indirect influence on the decisions made. The other major problem is that certain elected positions have greater status and therefore have far more influence in relation to major decisions. This creates conflict between the component parts of the organisation. When asked why certain elected groups carry greater influence, Respondent Five stated:

...there is a simple explanation...the President of the Western Queensland Rugby Union has nothing like the power of one of the major clubs in Brisbane, because he will not have direct influence over the Board of the QRU – it's all about access. The relationship is similar to interest groups within a pluralist system, where it depends on what their perceived power base is and what their access is to decision-makers. So if someone from Longreach rings me up it's not, it doesn't have the same potential consequences for me as opposed to someone who is the President of the Queensland Junior Rugby Union or President of one of the major Brisbane clubs.

The related problem however, according to Respondent Nine, is that the elected officials have their own agenda and use the political process to promote this agenda. This point was supported by Respondent Three who stated:

*There are always people who are going to have their own agendas.
We have been an amateur sport run primarily by volunteer*

administrators for the last 100 odd years. So the change to professionalism, and more importantly a change in the way rugby is managed to run as a business at all levels is going to take time. People are going to get upset about that and perhaps resist it - which is where the politics comes in. People use it to get the results they want.

Respondent Five indicated that these individuals actively recruited support for their cause or the outcome they desired, and that senior management ended up having to deal with an interest group. This is then compounded by the fact that it creates a 'domino effect' and numerous interest groups emerge. According to Respondent Five, the problem therefore is not only one of dealing with the different agendas of individuals but dealing with the conflict of opinion that exists between the different interest groups. He further suggested that it was essential the QRU recognised that the outcomes that result from dealing with these groups may have a lasting impact on the future strategic direction of the organisation.

Respondent Five suggested that conflicting opinions can be dealt with in a number of ways. They can be dealt via political means by pitting interest groups against each other. However, this approach was not advocated by Respondent Three. He acknowledged that a political environment exists within the QRU but also believed it should be dealt with transparently rather than tactically. He stated:

I understand the logic behind approaching a problem in a political sense but I don't necessarily agree with it. I think we have to recognise that we need to be honest about things. If we are constantly dealing with

different interest groups by playing them off against each other how can we expect to get the full support of everybody. I mean these people are going to recognise that we are using this approach because it is to our benefit and in the end nobody will trust anybody. The best way to deal with problems is for all parties to be honest on where you are going and what you are doing. We should forget the political stuff.

When these points were put to Respondent Five, he indicated that in the ideal world such an approach would be possible but in reality such an approach would not work. He did, however, indicate that his preferred approach to dealing with conflict of opinion is through the managerial process. This allows the organisation to be transparent in its approach to change and therefore more open with all interest groups.

Respondent Five also indicated that the managerial approach should be used to deal with conflict of opinion. This approach should be based on development of managerial frameworks, which includes the development of long and short-term goals, objectives, policies, budgets, etc. This creates an air of rationality or a rational process through which conflict of opinion can be managed, not through political lobbying based on self-interest as was always attempted in the past.

Although a rational managerial approach to addressing the conflict of opinion was slowly accepted by some groups within the QRU, others continued to use the political process to achieve their goals. According to Respondent Four, this may deviate change from its strategic path, and hurt the long-term viability of rugby union in Queensland.

Given the potential influence the political process may have on the change agenda it was necessary for the QRU to monitor the political environment at all levels of the organisation. When pressed on how the QRU attempted to do this, Respondent Five indicated that the process of monitoring the political environment again related to the rational managerial approach but the same problem arises. That is, certain individuals throughout the organisation were not willing to embrace this approach. He provided the following example:

...I'm trying to put it within a rational or managerial framework, and I mentioned specifically the election of Queensland selectors. At present this is not a rational approach to it. Amateur officials who have got no qualifications and don't satisfy any criteria to get the job other than they may be good blokes and they make a lot of noise at the bar can get this job. That is not how we should choose the selectors for the team because that is our core business - how well that team does - but some people won't accept this.

It is clear that the political influence of the 'old boys' network was an issue that needed attention. Respondent Nine commented that he believed one way to deal with it was by appointing management personnel who were outside of rugby union. He suggested that the days of "Joe's a good guy let's give him the job" must be addressed. He stated:

This mentality of employing individuals on the basis of they will fit in needs to be changed. I mean unless the person is up to the job, accountability is crucial these days. In the past the accountability in these management positions could be questioned. These days we are trying to install the mentality that unless you are performing in whatever

you are doing, whether it be playing rugby for Australia or running the [x]department at Queensland rugby, I mean if you are not performing you are not going to be there next week, next month, next year.

Therefore at the end of the day the jobs for the boys scenario, and it will probably still happen, has to be eroded. If we do this the organisation will not only be managed better but it will also reduce the political influences that evolve from it. We must come to grips with the fact that rugby union is now a business so it has to be run that way.

According to Respondent Five, changing the political environment within the QRU required challenging the power relations within various sub-units and groups. However, this also required changing the *Memorandum and Articles of Association*, and specifically the clause that relates to voting rights. He noted that many decisions that arose from the voting process were manufactured through political manoeuvring, and provided the following example:

It is very difficult to say we have 28,000 players in this organisation, within Queensland Rugby. Within those we have got 12-14,000 from Regional sub-unions that have representation from three delegates. They have got three votes as opposed to another five thousand players from the Brisbane clubs and sub unions who have got 22 votes. These groups simply make deals with each other about what is best for them. In return they offer their support at a later date. These deals are sometimes done at the expense of the three delegates representing half the playing population. These are issues that we have got to address. The challenge is how do we make them give up something that they have already got. The changing of these power relationships is the QRU's job.

Respondent Five conceded that attempts to dilute the power of certain groups may in fact intensify political lobbying on a broader scale. This is because certain groups will realise that their influence in the decision-making process is under threat. Furthermore, he believed that if political lobbying was to intensify it could lead to a decision-making system that becomes fractured by regional and city boundaries. Regional representatives would be pushed further out of the decision-making process due to their lack of power, decisions would be made for individual interest rather than the collective good.

Respondent Fourteen agreed with the possibility that regional areas could get pushed further out of the decision-making process and therefore emphasised the need for the dilution of power through the redistribution of voting rights. He believed it was essential if rugby union in Queensland was to move forward. He stated:

...for years regional areas have been putting a case forward about certain issues and what needs to be done. The problem is that regional factions have very little influence on the decisions that are made because they get out voted. We know that behind the scenes there is a lot of political manoeuvring going on to stop regional factions getting what they want. Although in some cases they may get the initial support of certain city representatives when it comes to voting this changes. This is because deals have been done – politics comes into it.

Senior management clearly acknowledged that the internal power dynamics of the QRU threatened the achievement of desired strategic outcomes. In response to this perceived ‘problem’ they implemented a rational managerial approach to change. They believed that if

this approach is accepted by all component parts of the organisation then the ‘management of rugby’ could be based on sound short and long-term goals, objectives, policies and budgets. However, some officials were sceptical about the uniform acceptance of a managerial approach that embraced these principles. Senior management recognised that it was necessary to change the power relations within the QRU in order to foster the development of a more equitable decision-making system. Under these conditions powerful city representative groups would be less likely to complicate senior management’s attempt to change the culture of the organisation.

7.2.5 *The Impact of Change on Organisational Culture*

Although the data indicated that the QRU was aware of the organisational changes needed to align itself with its new environment, the cultural change needed to ensure a successful outcome had not fully penetrated the organisation. According to Respondent Five, a change in the culture of the QRU:

...will be a generational change. To be more specific, for the players it will take 5-10 years, for the QRU and rugby community 15-20 years. To achieve this however, we need to install policies that don't allow us to slip back to the past. It's about implementing a rational managerial approach to everything we do.

Although the majority of management respondents believed that the culture of the QRU had become more commercially focused with greater emphasis on long-term planning and business development, there are certain reservations about treating rugby union primarily as a business. There was a concern that the 'new' cultural model could devalue the fundamental amateur ideals and values that were attached to the code for so long. This concern was raised by Respondent Eleven who stated:

The old culture of the QRU was one that fitted well with the amateur game. We had some paid administrators who were responsible for everything from financial management to marketing – and they were ex-players. The majority of those involved however, were volunteer administrators who basically dealt with management issues as they occurred – they employed the old kitchen table approach to

administration. They were involved with rugby because they loved it, they had a passion for it, and believed it was a sport not a business. We are worried that these values will be forgotten...in the end what rugby is all about won't mean a thing.

He suggested that a high percentage of the rugby community are attracted to those traditional values that supported a culture devoid of the need for planning and goal setting. This attraction, however, inhibited and complicated the QRU's attempts to adapt to its new environment and develop a new culture that treats sport as a commercial enterprise. As Respondent Three noted:

It is hard to run a sport solely as a business as it means you may have to shut up shop in other areas. In many ways we need to retain the beliefs and values of the past so rugby does not lose its true meaning and purpose for the majority of stakeholders who have been involved and contributed to the game for a long period of time. I'm not sure we want to change those things just because our environment says we should.

These comments demonstrate that the traditional values that underpin rugby union are central to understanding the scale of resistance toward cultural change within the QRU. The majority of those involved in rugby union at the lower club levels cling to the amateur traditions where pride, passion, and playing the game for its own sake are the fundamental driving forces and reasons for being involved in the game. As Respondent Eight indicated:

Although we have got 30 players in the game that get paid the other 28,000 people running around Queensland still have the same values and

the same philosophies that they have always had. This is a fact of life and although one of my favourite sayings is tradition won't protect you from commercial reality – the current situation is as simple as that. So whilst we are trying to promote the commercial component of the game and 99.9% of the people still involved in the game are still involved for the traditional reasons. There is the perception that because we have got elite players earning enormous amounts of money that the culture of the game will change. I mean there is still amateur AFL, there is still amateur rugby league, there is still amateur soccer, there is still all these things.

When asked whether there had been a change to the management culture at the elite level as opposed to the lower level of club rugby, Respondent Eight stated:

Oh yes definitely, purely and simply because the Board have to run it on a commercial basis – we have to make money. See we have now entered into commercial agreements with the ARU and you know everything now has to be handled on a professional basis. Years ago they used to sit around a table down there with the tours committee and say well we have got British Lions here. In Queensland you can have one of the tests, NSW Country they deserve a game, Queensland Country, yes we will stick one up in Mt Isa against Ireland but now the commercial reality of it is you just have to generate this revenue.

This management drive to create a commercial focus has been met with 'fragmented' acceptance. It has been embraced at the elite level, but at the lower levels there were few attempts to embrace the commercialisation of rugby. Club officials did not see any direct link

between revenue generation and development, or recognise that rugby was competing in the entertainment sector. As Respondent Eight stated:

Well, I mean, whilst people at the grass roots traditionally struggle with the fact that matches have been taken away from Ballymore - I mean that is a bottom line scenario. We struggle with the fact that the Bledisloe Cup is no longer here but the fact is we simply don't have a stadium that will hold a capacity that will generate substantial revenue return. The grass roots level of the game still resent this but if we don't think of the commercial aspect of generating revenue rugby won't exist.

Respondent Eight's statement acknowledges that the commercial approach adopted by the QRU was directly linked to revenue generation, and has been complicated by the signing of the Ferrier agreement. He went on to state:

...what these groups have to understand in this context is that the decision is based on commercial reality. It is not a rugby thing, it is a commercial thing. You have to remember we no longer have access to television revenue. Because of the Ferrier agreement rugby has to generate revenues from other sources. I mean the facts of life are a lot of events cannot be held in Queensland purely and simply because we don't have a venue with a capacity to hold a large crowd. I mean if the Lions for five years in a row won the AFL and then demanded the right for the next Grand Final in Brisbane the commercial reality would say no, hang on a minute you got a capacity of the GABBA at 37,000, we have the capacity at the MCG of 100,000. So whilst you think that you have a right to it, there is that commercial reality that does not allow you to do it.

Respondent Nine concluded that a shift towards a commercial culture required a greater emphasis on sponsorship and corporate support. He further suggested that since the QRU's competitors have developed such a culture it heightened the need for the QRU to move in this direction. He stated:

...basically the QRU needs to attract and place greater emphasis on the need for sponsors and corporate support. These demands require a new culture to filter through the organisation - a culture based on commercialism, profit... The demands that have been put on the QRU are very similar to the expectations of the Broncos. They have evolved I suppose over the last couple of years. A commercial arrangement exists between the QRU and our sponsors and they want a return for their money otherwise they won't be there. So in that regard the expectations our sponsors have are very similar to the sponsors of the Broncos. I think the major difference between the two organisations is that the Broncos primarily look after one A Grade team whereas Queensland Rugby Union is a lot more diverse than that. That in itself creates cultural problems. There has to be room in our organisation for the amateur game but trying to run an amateur game that embraces a commercial culture at the lower levels is never an easy thing to do and if it is going to be done we need their support.

Respondent Four was acutely aware of the 'fragmented' opinions about the need for a commercial focus throughout the QRU. He believed that the QRU culture would only change when the values and beliefs at the club level changed. He added there was a need to change volunteer management practices. The focus needed to shift towards a more professional management approach and away from a management system based on tradition

and the belief that rugby will survive because of the passion and involvement of 'ordinary' people. When asked if the change that is occurring at elite level is impacting on club level rugby, he responded:

It has but I wouldn't say that it is dramatically. I would say that there was initial reaction to it from a large amount of the volunteers and the rugby community in regards to the players. This is because they use to get practically nothing and are now probably getting unbelievable amounts. As a result they probably don't have the same amount of empathy towards the players, when they know they are getting very well reimbursed for it. So there was that little bit of changeover, there where people who said, well bugger it, if money is getting poured into the game at the elite level why can't club level rugby have some too. In this regard professionalism has been a long hard lesson. The reality is clubs or the grassroots level are not going to receive the News Limited money and it has taken them a while to understand that. It is not going to flow through and the reality is that the money goes to that top 30. Everything else virtually stays the same. Murdoch only wanted to pay for the elite, he didn't want to pay for Queensland Country or Queensland suburban. This is what annoys those at the lower levels.

When asked if he thought a business orientated culture was filtering through to the clubs, he responded:

...no, even though we have taken the steps to install a culture based on effective management practices I don't think cultural change will occur just like that. I think it is a slow process of recognition for them... I think the rugby community has accepted that there has been tremendous

change in the game. The problem is that we have a lot of people at this level who sit around and start bitching about the way the game is going and where it should be, it's hard to get everybody positive about it and to work towards changing the culture... these traditionalists in clubs just sit back and bag the game and have nothing good to say about where the game is heading – as a result the culture stays the same - just as they want it.

Respondent Five disagreed and suggested there are signs that cultural change is occurring at club level. The problem as far as he is concerned, is how to sustain long-term cultural change. If the QRU does not respond to environmental change it will not survive. He added that the QRU has to establish a culture that allows change to occur just as quickly as its environment can change. The strategic planning documents were developed to provide frameworks that would allow this to occur. These documents not only dealt with the ongoing threats that existed in the environment, but also provided tangible evidence to the clubs that senior management had developed and supported a culture of managerialism and long-term planning.

Respondent Five's belief that cultural change is occurring at club level, was supported by Respondent Three, who stated:

Clubs in the past have adopted a bushfire approach to solving problems in that you put out the fire and then simple carried on as usual. Now clubs are starting to recognise that planning is necessary for not only dealing with unforeseen problems but also for their daily

running. The long-term viability of the organisation is being considered at all levels.

This lack of consensus about the nature of the QRU's culture supports Martin's (1992) requisite conditions for fragmented cultural outcomes to surface. According to Martin, cultural change needs to be supported by all organisational members at all organisational levels if it is to be effective. Any attempt to facilitate cultural change can be inhibited by an organisational sub-unit refusing to accept the values associated with that new culture. The outcome of this process, according to Martin, is that very little uniform change may occur across the differing organisational levels.

According to Respondent One, the failure of the QRU to implement uniform cultural change could inhibit the growth, development, and the commercial competitiveness of rugby. This will ultimately impact on the long-term viability of rugby at all levels. He suggested that in the past clubs could rely on the depth of player talent to attract people to club rugby. This factor contributed to the financial viability of the club competition, but since the advent of professionalism in 1995 this has changed. Clubs no longer have access to these talented players who could attract crowds and generate revenue for the clubs. Clubs now need to find other ways of raising revenues to remain viable because the players have significant commitments at the elite level. He stated:

...three years ago a club like Souths could say come along and you will stand next to [x] and he will teach you how to play well. A club can't promise that anymore, therefore they have to dig out other resources

and other reasons as to why they should be playing or watching Souths' or any other club. I think they are struggling with that and they struggle with it because their income, being primarily bar takings, are down because people aren't turning up to see those players anymore because those players aren't there. The problem is they are looking towards us for an answer but we are trying to explain to them the answer is not here, the club players won't be back, you need to generate revenue through other sources. This means you have to manage the club more efficiently – you have to change the way you do things – this means changing the culture.

According to Respondent One, the belief that it is the QRU's responsibility to solve the revenue problems confronting clubs is a consequence of a failure by the QRU to implement professional management practices. The majority of respondents also suggested that clubs have historically been inflexible to any form of change as it upsets the status quo. On the other hand, it was agreed that in order for clubs to survive they need to become more self-sufficient, and not to look to the QRU for financial support, and generate their own revenues. Respondent Four suggested that, in order for clubs to become more self-sufficient, it was necessary to educate the clubs.

Respondent Eight indicated that not only should a culture based on the principle of self-sufficiency be developed, but also that the QRU was attempting to make it happen. He gave the following example:

This is why we put the General Managers in, to stop relying on the old ways. It is like clubs that relied in the 1970s on the bar income

knowing that people, before the drink driving laws were enforced as heavily, had to come to the realisation that drink driving is not an option and therefore this income will be reduced. Therefore you have to come up with an alternative and a lot of multi sports complexes have done that and we have gone down that path with a number of our clubs. We are trying to educate them into saying you're not just a rugby club anymore. Get yourselves together, not in all circumstances, but get yourselves together with some other professional people and all you are is part of a large sporting group. You need to get some professional expertise in there and learn that you are not just going to generate an income from selling beers over the bar anymore. That in itself took a long time and then we've got the added problem of saying, guess what, you have no longer got your players' as they have got to come to that realisation, and I think some of them struggle and still hang on to that as if they are going to get them back, whereas others have grabbed the concept of saying well we just have to make the best we can out of this whole situation.

He indicated that, while most clubs would benefit from generating revenues through other sources the cultural change to sustain this was not always evident. When asked if this implied that cultural change was occurring at different rates at club level he responded:

Yes, there have certainly been no real leaders out there that have been able to grab hold of the type of cultural change needed. Probably if you say anything [x] has put themselves into a viable situation by adopting a professional management approach. I think in years to come they will be able to handle the cultural change that would be necessary with professional rugby at club level – that is if certain factions within the club don't get their way.

Respondent Three believed one way to reduce fragmented outcomes and eliminate the influence of ‘resistance factions’ was to establish a common purpose throughout the organisation. He indicated that if agreement could be reached that the long-term viability of rugby in Queensland was dependent on elite level success then strategies should be developed around this. He suggested the QRU should develop reward systems that encouraged clubs to support elite level rugby. He gave the following example:

...if we don't have a structure whereby a Talent Identification Program exists and is ongoing we wouldn't have players like [x]. He would not be playing rugby because he was from Innisvale in the Far North.

Essentially, he was part of a structure up in which volunteers or coaches bought players down to Rockhampton. He was identified through this process back in '93 and now people would say oh yes he was an overnight success or something like that, but he was identified back then. I clearly remember people saying he is going to be on a certain pathway. However, it takes volunteer administrators to do that, people behind the scenes who can run clubs effectively in order to foster this talent, so from my point of view we should reward those administrators because they are working towards our common purpose. I'm not sure how we can do it but we need to put in place systems whereby we are giving them incentives to support elite rugby and as a result changing the culture of club rugby to support this.

Respondent Four suggested management education was critical in facilitating uniform cultural change. He indicated that the QRU has started a Volunteer Improvement Program (VIP) in an attempt to install a culture that supports the professional management of rugby at all levels of the organisation. This is a state-wide plan sponsored by the Australian Sports

Commission whereby QRU representatives travel to regional areas like Rockhampton, Townsville, and Cairns to deliver sports administration modules. These are broken up into six different modules covering management practices related to human resource management, financial management, strategic management, marketing, communication, and sponsorship.

Respondent Four understood that the VIP program was in its embryo stages but believed the program would develop a culture that supports a professional managerial approach to club rugby. When asked if he believed this process would make clubs more self-sufficient in terms of their management practices and create a more uniformed cultural outcome to the management of rugby in Queensland, he responded:

Yes, because the plan is to have a continuation of people coming into the course so you are educating everyone. So when your Treasurer decides he wants, say for instance in a country town where it's generally the local bank guy or whatever - he gets transferred- no one's panicking looking around for someone else. Hopefully we have already got someone else who has done that module and they have been assisting them for the last 12 months so that person is just naturally going to come into that place. We don't slip back to the old cultural management practices of the past. The old kitchen table approach to management.

Respondent Nine also noted the difficulty in moving away from the traditional 'kitchen table' model of club management. At the same time, he believed that educating volunteers to understand the link between the culture of the organisation and its management practices

could ease some of the cultural problems confronting the QRU. However, he suggested volunteers often do not have the time to fully understand the issues confronting the QRU.

The perceived inability of volunteers to apply themselves to the management of club rugby frustrated senior management. Respondent Nine suggested senior management should spend more time thinking through the issues and resolving how they to deal with them. Volunteers at the lower levels of the organisation address these issues after a 'heavy' day at work, and also after having been told they need to do things differently. This is a demanding requirement. He suggested that:

...the outcome of this is that it creates a very different culture within the organisation. In many ways though it is not their fault. They are just doing the best they can with the time they have got ...they have become comfortable with the way things are and change seems a difficult and complicated process requiring a lot of effort and time.

When pressed on the issue of whether the cultural differences that surfaced throughout the organisation would subside, he suggested that the tradition of playing for the 'love of the game' would gradually be eroded. He stated:

I think effectively what is going to happen is that underlying culture that has been the backbone of the game will change, and like it or not over a period of time it is going to be eroded. We are going to have guys coming out of school deciding whether they are going to play rugby league or rugby union depending on whoever holds the biggest cheque

book. I think rugby union needs to try and hold on to every bit of tradition it has got, and I firmly believe that - but over a period of time I honestly believe that that tradition will be eroded as the players will follow the money and playing rugby for 'the love of it' will mean nothing and unless the clubs adapt they will suffer.

He indicated that the problem of money influencing a player's decision was compounded because what occurred in Queensland was also occurring globally. He stated:

...we are seeing at the moment. These northern hemisphere teams coming out from England, Scotland, they really at the moment couldn't care less about International rugby. It is all about club rugby now because clubs in the Northern hemisphere pay their wages. These players no longer see playing for your country as a priority. You can almost throw that tradition in relation to representing your country straight out the window as far as these overseas countries are concerned. The reverse applies here in that representative honours are linked to high earnings and club rugby suffers as a consequence, and those involved in club rugby can see the changes coming but don't won't accept them. They continue to support an amateur culture and refuse to change.

The interview data on cultural change demonstrate that all respondents understand that cultural change is a necessary part of the organisational change process. However, it also shows that the unwillingness of some organisational members to embrace cultural change and its practical outcomes. The dilemma confronting the QRU is that a culture based on managerialism and commercialism, which is supported by long-term planning and goals, is not consistent across the different functional levels of the organisation. In Martin's (1992)

terms its culture is fragmented. At the 'elite' level there is a clear acceptance of managerial and commercial principles. However, at the club level there is resistance to the changes proposed by senior management. Club officials prefer the management practices that are consistent with an amateur game, where volunteer administrators deal with problems as they arise, and have no strong desire to change. This fragmentation of values illustrates that organisational change is a difficult process to implement, and in Martin's terms, is fraught with 'ambiguities'. As a consequence these ambiguities have thwarted the organisational change process.

7.2.6 *Summary of Interview Data*

The interview data was addressed within four categories. The first category detailed the extent to which environmental disturbances have impacted on the organisational change process. From this data it was evident that every respondent agreed that external commercial forces had created a radically new environment, and that the QRU had to adapt to secure its future. Respondents also indicated that the QRU was gradually changing its operations to meet its new environment.

Category two examined the internal adaptation that has occurred at the QRU throughout the 1990s. The data indicated there was agreement amongst respondents that the QRU had changed its strategic direction and structure during the 1990s. However, there was serious disagreement on the causes of this change direction and structure. Some respondents believed it was the result of the evolutionary progress of the game, while others thought it was directly attributable to the external commercial forces acting through News Limited in particular.

Category three presented a discussion of the internal dynamics that are associated with the change process. The interview data showed that numerous interest groups exist within the QRU. These groups can invariably influence the change agenda by manufacturing decisions via the political process. These decisions invariably impact on the strategic change process and create outcomes that may impact on the long-term survival of the game. Senior management recognised that it was necessary to change the procedures that allowed the

decision- making process to be manipulated by powerful city representative groups at the expense of their regional counterparts.

Finally, category four analysed the impact the change process has had on the organisational culture of the QRU. The interview data revealed that the majority of management staff believed the QRU needed to change the culture of the organisation in order to deal with the environmental jolts and disturbances that have confronted the organisation. This, however, is not an opinion that is shared at the lower levels of the QRU – in particular club level.

Consequently, it could be argued that parts of the organisation 'are in love with their past but at war with their future'.

7.3 Interview Data: Discussion

7.3.1 Laughlin and Organisational Change

The purpose of this section is to use Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change to explain the differing impacts of environmental disturbances on the QRU, and the responses of both professional and volunteer management. First, Laughlin's model will be used to analyse the general thrust of the changes that have taken place in the QRU. Second, his model will be complemented by a critical postmodern framework to provide a more detailed understanding of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU. This should provide additional insight into the multi-faceted impact of change on organisational behaviour.

7.3.2 Overview of the Change Process in the QRU

The interview results suggested that until 1990 the QRU operated in a situation where it chose to ignore the external changes and disturbances occurring in its environment. As a consequence, it remained in a state of inertia. Rugby union was a sport administered and developed during the spare time of volunteer officials. It operated in an environment with limited competition for the corporate dollar. It disregarded competition from other entertainment pastimes. Amateur values filtered throughout the organisation and the general rugby community and formed the cornerstone of the QRU's culture. Llewellyn (1994) suggested that organisations displaying these characteristics operate as closed systems and

are relatively impermeable to their surrounding environment. Goals are achieved through principles of internal design and assist in reducing the uncertainties that arise from the interdependence of organisational components.

Two periods provide an understanding of the first order change faced by the QRU. First, the results indicated rebuttal occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s in response to a general increase in the commercialisation of sport. Kerry Packer's World Series Cricket in the late 1970s was the catalyst for tremendous change in Australia's sporting environment. The major football codes of rugby league and Australian football in the 1980s moved towards national competitions and more professional structures. Some elite rugby union players transferred to rugby league, to which they were attracted by potentially large salaries, better conditions, and a career after sport. The QRU's response to the professionalisation of other football codes was to externalise these forces. Although the QRU had lost players to rugby league during this period, administrators believed that the dominant the values of rugby union would withstand these changes. As a result, the changing environment of sport initially had no discernible impact on the stability and fundamental amateur principles by which the QRU managed rugby union. As a consequence, the QRU was able to return to the previous state of inertia that existed prior to this disturbance. Thus, as is consistent with Laughlin's (1991) definition of first order change, the fundamental values or beliefs of the organisation did not change.

Second, a reorientation response arose as a consequence of the emergence of trust payments for players in 1991. The scheme was developed as a mechanism for ensuring that

representative players, who sacrificed and devoted the greatest amount of time to the code, received some remuneration from the game without infringing on their amateur status. Player trusts allowed administrators to reward players for their commitment to the code and the revenue they generated within the guidelines of amateur regulations. The development of a structure to accumulate, monitor, and devolve financial rewards to representative players was a clear indication of the QRU adapting internally to a changing environment. However, the arrangement again had little effect on the values and beliefs of the majority of players and administrators and therefore the cultural heart of the QRU remained unchanged.

It is clear from the above description that the QRU, in the early 1990s at least, understood the importance of adaptation between the organisation and its environment. It recognised that organisational boundaries needed to be permeable and, as suggested by Llewellyn (1994), operate as an 'open system'. Under this type of model the organisation adapts to the threats and opportunities which arise in the environment. This type of response reflects the views of contingency theorists like Burns and Stalker (1961) and Lawrence and Lorsch (1967). As Slack (1997) suggested: "In the most effective sport organisations there is a fit between the demands of the environment and the type of structure and managerial practice followed" (p. 137). This period highlighted the growing response of the QRU to environmental disturbances, but these disturbances did not yet lead to second order change.

However, as the 1990s unfolded, the QRU also experienced second order change. As discussed in chapter five, Laughlin (1991) distinguished between two types of second order change. Colonisation is differentiated from evolutionary change by the degree of undistorted

communication that exists in determining the nature and direction the organisational change process should take. Colonisation is forced on the organisation by an initial environmental disturbance. As a consequence, the direction this type of change takes through the organisation is not freely chosen, but is imposed by an external body or an internal directive. Colonisation was forced upon the QRU in 1995 as a consequence of two simultaneous environmental disturbances.

First, the Super League / ARL conflict resulted in rugby league scouts looking to rugby union, due to the restricted market in player talent, to bolster their player stocks. These potential rival rugby league organisations had the backing of large multinationals such as News Limited and Optus to offer large financial rewards for changing codes. Second, after a prolonged battle between the rebel WRC organisation and the ARFU, New Zealand Rugby Football Union, and the South African Rugby Football Union over control of the game, a pay-TV deal with News Limited was agreed. This resulted in substantial sums of money being injected into the game, the majority of which was to be controlled by the players. As a consequence, the QRU had to look to other revenue sources to maintain itself. This created a financial crisis for the QRU and resulted in a shift from a semi-structured designed archetype with limited formalisation of roles and accountability, to a structured design archetype with a more distinct formalisation of roles and accountability. This allowed a greater ability to manage such threats, which in turn resulted in the development of new interpretive schemes within the QRU.

As the foregoing analysis of the results has indicated, over the last 30 years the QRU has undergone a series of first and second order changes of differing intensity. Laughlin's (1991) model is able to succinctly reveal these different levels of change. These changes, however, have culminated in the implementation of an evolutionary change process that is presently occurring at the QRU. The environmental disturbances of 1995 were, in the first instance opposed, but the strength of the disturbance forced the QRU to change. However, the process didn't end there, as the impetus created an environment within the QRU that resulted in rational discussion about the QRU's new purpose. The change process, in Laughlin's terms, became more evolutionary in that there was a general consensus about the direction change should take. Although there were pockets of resistance throughout the organisation, a new underlying ethos emerged. However, by reshaping the design archetype and sub-systems, and realigning them with the QRU's newly chosen purpose, this ethos has led to a state of flux at lower functional levels, in particular the club level. Consequently, these new values of managerialism based around efficiency, utility, practicability, and profitability have not been equally realised at the different functional levels of the QRU organisational hierarchy.

7.3.3 Limitations of Laughlin's Model

Laughlin (1991) alluded to a limitation that exists in relation to the concept of balance and coherence during environmental disturbances. Laughlin suggested that the interpretative schemes, design archetype, and sub-systems are potentially at any point in time, in dynamic balance. He also acknowledged that this dynamic balance or equilibrium does not always

reduce the conflict and disagreements in organisational life. However, he also swept these ambiguities away by suggesting that at some organisational level there will be characteristics that bind the organisation together. Disagreements and conflicts will be subsumed or at least accommodated.

However, this conclusion limits the ability of Laughlin's (1991) model to explain diversity and difference. Gray et al. (1995) for example argued that Laughlin's model is too rigid and does not allow for ongoing conflict, ambiguity, and contradiction to be highlighted.

Specifically, Gray et al. criticised the model's inability to recognise disturbances a priori (i.e., in advance of the event occurring), to access what constitutes real morphogenetic change, and, finally, to establish the legitimate right (or even the need) to colonise.

Consequently, the model is limited in the way that it deals with the ramifications of conflict and therefore does not on its own provide an appropriate frame for exploring and explaining the divisions that occurred in the QRU. In the case of the QRU, these divisions are centred on its newly chosen guiding values of managerialism and commercialism.

One of the central principles of critical theory in organisational studies is that organisations should be free of domination - all members have an equal opportunity to contribute to organisational change, and stakeholders should be equally represented. However, given the previously discussed internal dynamics that accompany the change process the likelihood that organisations will change in this manner is low. The failure to fully recognise this point limits the explanatory power of Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change. Laughlin's model does not provide a fully adequate account of the strength and impact of opposing

forces to organisational change. Nor does it account for the differing needs and interests that exist in organisations. These issues are clearly revealed in the earlier reporting of the results where it was shown that decisions have been manufactured through the political process to serve the short-term interests of a few at the expense of the long-term viability of the code. The interests and meanings that one organisational sub-unit identifies with may be incompatible with those held by others. Moreover, there may be no simple resolution to such disagreements, divisions and conflicts. Amateur sport organisations that seek to adopt a professional managerial approach (as did the QRU) will always confront this issue.

7.3.4 Ambiguity of change

Laughlin's (1991) model is valuable in the way that it puts particular changes into conceptual categories or compartments. Although this highlights the change process and gives an historically grounded representation of change, it nonetheless fails to deal with the fussiness and untidiness around the perimeters of these compartments and the subsequent ambiguity in distinguishing between them. It does not allow for a blurring of the distinction between compartments. The pitfall in Laughlin's model is that it permits a naive description of organisational change because it fails to address the internal political conflict and contradictions resulting from the change process. These political conflicts and contradictions were endemic in the QRU during its period of change as the earlier discussion illustrates.

Bergquist (1993) suggested that the problems associated with idealised models such as Laughlin's can be overcome by adopting a postmodern perspective. That is, postmodern

organisations blend dimensions of the past and present to create new organisational forms, and the need for new skills and attitudes. These organisations are characterised by their plural, fragmented and ambiguous nature. As a consequence, Bergquist suggested that postmodern organisational models need to be flexible and highlight the potential conflict that can arise from the unclear boundaries that exist during the change process. Gray et al. (1995) addressed this shortcoming within Laughlin's model by incorporating Llewellyn's (1994) third form of boundary management to explain how boundaries shift within organisations. Llewellyn drew upon the work of Graham (1989), pointing out that postmodern organisations have more surface exposed to the external environment and that their fragmented nature creates the potential for conflict. Therefore, postmodern organisations need to actively address the issue of boundary management and the threat of ongoing political activity. As a consequence, the organisation becomes fluid, transparent, and aware that its boundaries and potential political threats are consistently shifting. These organisational boundaries and political threats are clarified and changed over time through the managerial process.

7.3.5 *'Re-Casting' Llewellyn's Model*

While Llewellyn's (1994) conceptualisation of organisations needing to be fluid and transient is useful, it does not provide a theoretical framework that allows for a deeper analysis of organisational change. The understanding of shifting boundaries is an acknowledgment of a need for organisations to develop structures that are responsive to a changing environment. A consideration of shifting boundaries enhances the credibility of Laughlin's model of

organisational change, but fails to fully embrace postmodern theory and its ramifications for organisational change. A postmodern interpretation of organisational change rejects all claims of certainty and the universal foundation of truth. As such, explaining organisational change in a compartmentalised way only provides a nebulous understanding of the process. A postmodern explanation on the other hand encompasses incredulity towards meta-narratives, that is, a refusal to accept that there is one explanation and one consequence of organisational change.

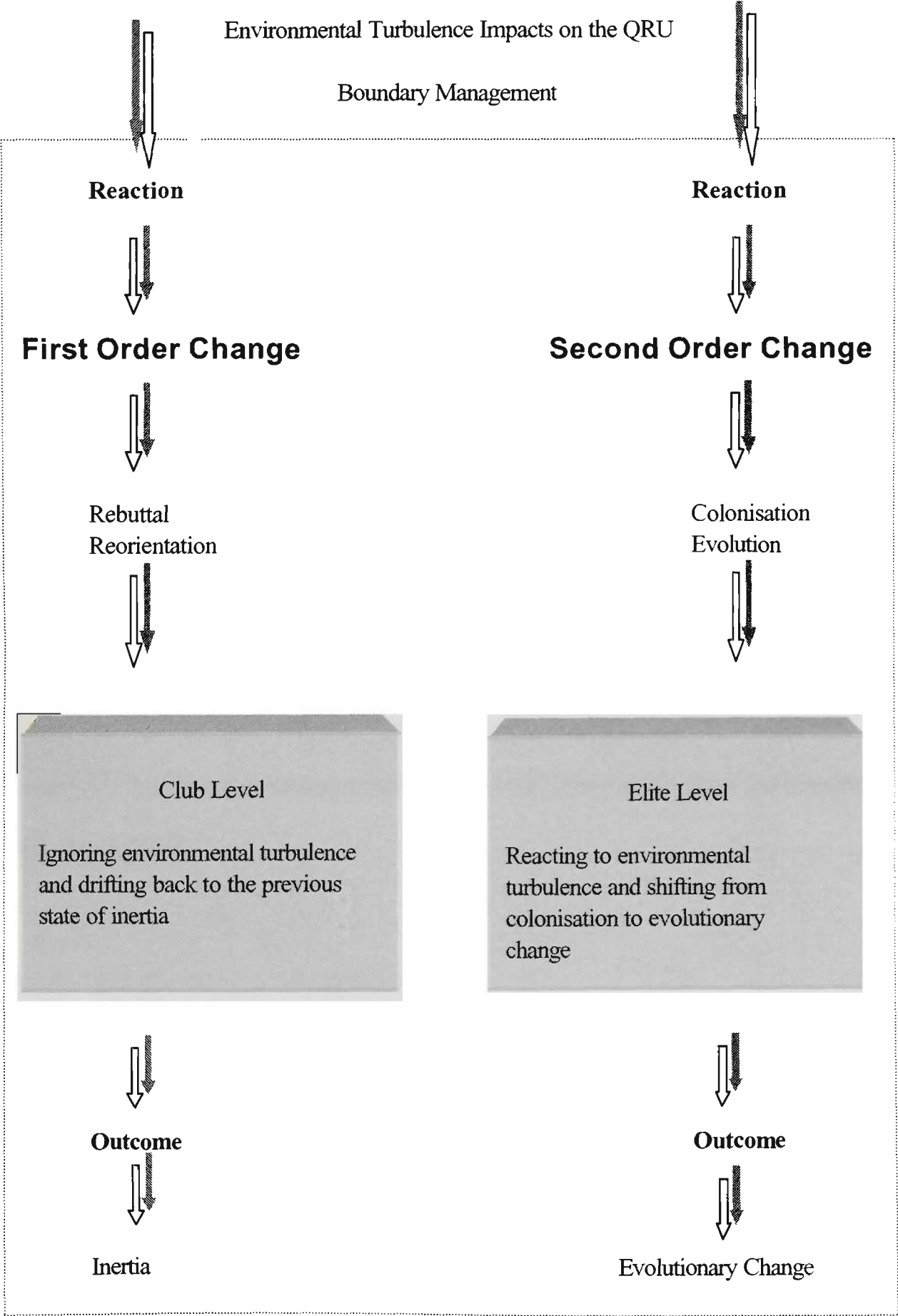
7.3.6 A Postmodern Synthesis

A postmodern approach argues that organisational change is difficult to neatly categorise since, as suggested by Martin (1992), organisations are usually fragmented, often in conflict, and sometimes even projecting different visions and values. The emergence of postmodern management structures, which according to Bergquist (1993), exhibit more flexible structures and modes of inter-institutional cooperation to meet turbulent organisational and environmental conditions, is the result of this fragmentation and shifting alliances. Bergquist further suggested that these types of organisations live on the “edge” (p. 10). Therefore, because they straddle a boundary between two or more different systems or cultures they can provide multiple realities, and highlight the contradictory nature of change in organisations.

This implies that a number of quite different changes could be occurring at any one time in an organisation, each influencing the other and leading to turbulent backwashes. These

backwashes can frequently result in some parts of the organisation returning to the previous state of inertia. The interview results have shown that this is clearly the case within the QRU. There are different groups at different levels of change and, therefore, the type of change occurring becomes difficult to identify. For example, at a club level the organisation is going through a rebuttal process of first order change and returning to the original form of inertia. However, although at the elite level the environmental turbulence of 1995 led to the colonisation of values and beliefs, evolutionary change of a second order nature has since occurred. In essence, there is a dual nature to the change process in the QRU. The modified model in Figure 7.1 depicts these phenomena.

Figure 7.1: The Duality of Organisational Change in the QRU



7.3.7 *Modelling Change in the QRU*

The duality of change indicates that organisational values can change and develop a new organisational purpose. At the same time, some components of the organisation can slip back to the old value system. The interview results indicated that while Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change succinctly revealed the types of changes that occurred in the QRU, it did not adequately explain the fragmentation that exists in component parts of the QRU. It reduced these complex phenomena to a simple explanation encapsulated in an idealised typology. Laughlin's implied hypothesis that new values and beliefs, or interpretive schemes, will guide evolutionary change throughout the whole of the QRU, is not supported by the results of this study. In reality, there are two layers of change in the QRU. The dual nature of change that occurred within this sporting organisation is a consequence of a changing environment, the embedded values and beliefs that guide the traditional views of what rugby is all about, and the emergence of new beliefs, values and visions that drive the managerial model.

7.3.8 *The Messy Realities of the QRU*

The QRU's traditional values and beliefs, which centred on the fundamental principles of amateurism, have been an important part of the QRU's cultural fabric for most of its 116 year history. This has resulted in an organisation that has reacted to environmental disturbances in a manner that reflects values of amateurism (i.e., with extreme and reactionary caution). The disturbances of 1995, however, resulted in a colonisation of values

and beliefs that led to a change in orientation and purpose, and as a consequence evolutionary change commenced. These changes can be represented historically in Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change and in particular the importance of jolts and disturbances in producing organisational change can be highlighted. However, although Laughlin provides a valuable generalised description of the change process, the interview results have shown that his model of change has a tendency to become a simplistic and compartmentalised representation of a complex phenomenon. In short, it failed to recognise the differing impacts of change in the QRU.

The model fails to 'capture' the varying degrees of resistance at different functional levels throughout the organisation. For example, due to entrenched values and beliefs that exist at the club level the colonisation of these values and beliefs has not been possible, therefore the possibility for evolutionary change is severely limited. On the other hand, at the elite level, there is wide acceptance that change is necessary. Although senior management of the QRU has addressed this issue through the implementation of a detailed strategic planning process, the uniformity of desired outcomes has been impeded by the fragmented beliefs about the purpose of the QRU and what its core values are or should be. This has resulted in different types of change occurring throughout the organisation. As a result, the neat rationality of Laughlin's analysis takes a back seat to the conflict, irrationality, and messy contradictions that comprises the realities of the organisational change process in the QRU.

The postmodern model put forward can be used in two significant ways. First, it possesses the capacity to detail the types of change that have resulted at the differing functional levels

of the QRU. Second, the explanatory power of the model is extended to allow us to understand that despite establishing a managerial process of strategic planning that facilitates boundary maintenance component parts of the organisation can respond adapt differently to environmental turbulence. How the change process filters throughout the organisation can therefore vary.

7.4 *Summary of Results*

This chapter presented a discussion of the interview data. Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change was applied to the interview data. This model was initially used to provide a systematic understanding of the QRU's commercial development and how it responded to a significant 'jolt and disturbance'. The model was then extended to provide a postmodern interpretation of the change process. This process provided broad insight into the organisational change process occurring at the QRU by discovering a multiplicity of views. In doing so, the results demonstrated two conflicting opinions. First, the majority of senior management personnel believed the QRU needed to change in order to deal with the external jolts and disturbances that were occurring in the sport and entertainment marketplace. Second, those involved in the management of rugby at club level believed their current management practices were adequate for managing rugby at the level they are associated with. The results further indicated that these conflicting views on how rugby in Queensland should be managed is associated with the resistance by club level management to embrace the new cultural values associated with professionalism, and a desire to cling to the cultural values and beliefs of amateurism. These cultural divisions not only contributed to the fragmented outcomes resulting from the organisational change process but also created pockets of resistance.

Chapter eight will present an analysis of documents produced by the QRU to manage its strategic reorientation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION
DOCUMENT DATA...

CHAPTER EIGHT

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

DOCUMENT DATA

8.1 *Introduction*

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section focuses on an application of Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality. Content analysis of the *1997-2000 Strategic Plan* and the annual *Business Plans* developed between 1997-1999 will be undertaken to provide an understanding of how the notion of governmentality is being applied to the QRU. Foucault's work will be used to understand how the QRU produced planning documents to maintain the desired strategic direction and control over the outcomes of change, and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture.

Section two involves a content analysis of specific policy documents produced by the QRU. Derrida's (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) theories of deconstruction and 'différance' will be used to interpret the text embedded within these policy documents. It will also be used to reveal the extent to which the QRU policy documents produced fragmented outcomes, and thus inhibited, restricted or complicated the process of organisational change.

Section One

8.2 Document Data: Results & Discussion (1)

8.2.1 Foucault and the Process of Change

This section uses Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality to further explore the change process in the QRU. This theory will be used to reveal how the QRU went about directing and controlling the change process and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture. A content analysis of the *1997-2000 Strategic Plan* and the annual *Business Plans* developed between 1997-1999 was used to determine the extent to which governmentality theory explains the strategic decisions taken by the QRU.

8.2.2 Managing the Population

The strategic planning process undertaken by the QRU was designed "to ensure that the QRU achieves balanced growth and development throughout the state for the Queensland Reds, senior clubs, schools and juniors" (Queensland Rugby Union Limited *Annual Report*, 1997, p. 7). The strategic planning documents of the QRU also demonstrated the principles of governmentality, panopticism, and self-surveillance. For example, the Statement of Purpose that was placed strategically in offices at Rugby House – the QRU's central office – to mark the beginning of the strategic planning process in 1997 states:

The Queensland Rugby Union is a leading provincial rugby union organisation with the responsibility and a charter to develop, administer and manage the game at all levels of participation on behalf of the players of the game and all affiliated bodies.

The Queensland Rugby Union endeavours to maximise all commercial opportunities to market and achieve successful sporting and business results. We promote a vocational and recreational ethos pursuing an ongoing quest to be recognised as the world's leading rugby province.

Within an international framework, we will adapt, develop and maintain Best Practice standards and controls for the game of Rugby and for its business administration to maximise the benefits for the code in Queensland. (p. 1)

This Statement of Purpose operated like a gaze. The "gaze is one of the central features of the notion of governmentality as it is of the panopticon" (Foucault, 1979, p. 195). The gaze is everywhere and on everyone, and in this case, the stated purpose of the organisation renders each person and each organisational sub-unit permanently visible, and under scrutiny in regards to achieving this purpose. The gaze, then, provides an "automatic functioning of power" (p. 201), rendering external mechanisms for inducing the desired organisational direction unnecessary. This link between the gaze and self-surveillance is clear as these two facets are drawn together at the beginning of the strategic plan.

The entire process of the management of the QRU's business was open to scrutiny. By stating the purpose of the organisation, by subjecting it to a gaze, the QRU in principle sought to regulate and manage the whole organisation to achieve the outcomes it desired. The Statement of Purpose as a technology of control over

individuals and organisational sub-units involved in completing daily and intermittent organisational business. It is therefore implied that policy developed by individuals and organisational sub-units must be consistent with the direction the QRU has set.

If this aspect of the gaze is not enough to control the practices of those involved in the business of the QRU, the delegated powers of self-management can be used to reinforce adherence to the desired direction of the organisation. The strategic plan was also used to establish the practice of self-management through the development of goals and strategies for local associations and clubs.

According to senior management, the strategic goals were developed to facilitate self-management practices throughout the organisation. This can be highlighted through an examination of the fifth goal, which stipulated:

- *To ensure rugby at all levels is viable and functional for administrators, volunteers and key officials.*

The strategy that directly flows from the above goal together with the four linked action statements demonstrates how the QRU went about promoting self-management at the lower levels of the organisation. The precise ways in which this strategic goal was achieved is stated below.

The strategy is to provide a high level of financial and administrative support to Queensland affiliated bodies. The four action statements linked to this strategy are: first, to expand the club General Managers program; second, to provide continued

administrative support from the QRU to affiliated bodies such as Queensland Junior Rugby Union, Queensland Schools Rugby Union and Queensland Reds Rugby Academy; third, to conduct club administration and management programs; and finally, to promote volunteerism by profiling key supporters of the game.

These action statements provided a clear indication of the QRU's desire for these organisational sub-units to become self-managing and better managed, within strict planning parameters. The desire to recruit General Managers with professional expertise to oversee the daily running of clubs, and ensure their long-term viability is an example of this desire. This, together with the focus on the development of management skills for other volunteers, created a shift towards the new cultural values of managerialism.

This desire for organisational sub-units to become self-managing is also reflected in the strategy to provide a grant funding arrangement to Brisbane clubs and Queensland Country. The action statements linked to this strategy are first, to establish funding guidelines for a three year program; second, to provide financial planning assistance to major affiliates; and finally, to assist in facility grant funding submissions to State and Local governments.

The first action statement indicates that the funding of grants is subject to regular review and its continuing relevance to the attainment of the QRU's desired strategic direction as reflected in the Statement of Purpose. Each organisational sub-unit is required to stipulate how the funding that they receive will achieve the desired outcomes of the QRU, both of which act to install a philosophy of strategic planning

at the lower levels of the QRU. This ultimately facilitates a shift to a culture of managerialism based on commercial viability. Installing this philosophy therefore provides a context in which the organisational sub-units at the lower levels systematically address issues such as where they are going and what is required to achieve this in a defined period ahead - the gaze is turned inwards.

Strategic planning in this context provided a means for senior management to establish internal self-surveillance of the QRU, as it did for surveillance of those organisational sub-units that are external to the QRU, such as clubs. Consequently, self-management is not simply about management; it is about monitoring and performance evaluation. To be effectively self-managing, an organisation and organisational sub-units must also be self-monitoring. The panoptic quality of policy requiring self-surveillance as part of the operation of power is again clear.

All organisational sub-units that are affiliated with the QRU are therefore affected by the principles of self-management that constitute a technology of control. For example, each club is required by the QRU to record its own plans, efforts, successes and failures via visible organisational operational plans. By committing their intentions to paper in plans that they devise themselves, clubs are involved in the process of incorporating senior management intent into their daily operation.

At the operational level, documents that evolved from the *Strategic Plan*, such as the *1997-1999 Business Plans*, are written documents that aim in part to reinforce and make explicit the intentions of the QRU. For example, the *1997-1999 Business Plans* consistently address the key issue of professionalism. All *Business Plans* produced within this timeframe state:

The QRU is seeking to address the key issues of professionalism and a highly competitive sports and entertainment environment. This plan is a response to these issues and an indication that the QRU will work closely with all our affiliates to preserve the good things about our sport while adjusting to the imperatives of change and commerciality. (p. 1)

To achieve this at all levels of the organisation, the use of financial planning based on established profit targets is encouraged. The aim is to make explicit the intentions of all organisational sub-units and therefore direct these groups towards achieving certain strategic goals developed by the QRU, and ultimately installing a culture of managerialism. For example, one of the goals contained in the *Strategic Plan 1997-2000* aims to provide a sustainable approach to financial growth by first, developing additional revenue sources; and second, ensuring sound financial practices.

The intention of this goal is to clearly set out the requirements and to create awareness at all levels of the organisation of the need for a comprehensive and appropriate approach to addressing revenue generation and the need for sound financial management skills. By cross-referencing this specific goal to the *1997-1999 Business Plans*, the surveillance mechanisms established to achieve this become clear. In particular, the *Business Plan* for 1999 outlined performance indicators that are used to determine if this goal is being achieved. For example, performance indicator one was based on increasing the growth and income of the major QRU clubs and affiliates.

This performance indicator acted in part, as a benchmark for determining the success of the strategy and ultimately provided a mechanism for determining if the

employment of General Managers at club level was successful in increasing the growth and income of the major clubs. Managers at this level needed to demonstrate how they were achieving this performance indicator by incorporating their intentions into their operations. At the same time, the fact that these intentions are captured in written form means that the QRU, and the lower functional levels of the organisation, were involved in a continuous loop of self-surveillance.

While the CEO of the QRU is accountable to the Board for his managerial actions, at the club level General Managers are accountable to their members and the rugby community they serve. In addition, they are also accountable to certain senior management personnel within the QRU, and therefore indirectly to the Board. Consequently, the General Managers of clubs must be able to account for all their financial activities. They must ensure that their financial activities accord with the strategic direction outlined in the planning documents they produce and hence with the documents and strategic direction determined by the senior management of the QRU.

8.2.3 *Concluding Comments*

Policy generation and implementation form part of the technology of governmentality by defining and constructing the problems that have to be managed, and by regulating behaviour. Analysis of the QRU's planning documents reveals that the technology of governmentality has been used to deal with the environmental turbulence confronted by the QRU. As a result, senior management of the QRU has attempted to determine, monitor and control the desired strategic direction the organisation should move in. Furthermore, senior management hope that this process will ultimately assist in creating a culture of managerialism at all levels of the organisation. Consequently, through an iterative process of planning to achieve designated strategic goals, of measuring the degree of attainment of these strategic goals, and a return to planning of further strategic goals, the QRU aims to manage all levels of the organisation. Such a process is consistent with a policy of self-management.

The QRU's planning process has demonstrated the ways in which governmentality operates, and how it can be used as a technology of control. The clubs operate as an arm of the QRU and aim to ensure that strategic and financial imperatives set by the QRU become part of the daily functioning of clubs. In this way, their everyday lives are shaped and managed by the QRU, even though they are in principle, self-managed.

In an ideal management world, policy as an instrument of governmentality, and policy as an instrument of the panopticon should lead to a tightly controlled organisational system, where there is no room for individuals or organisational sub-units to

manoeuvre. Planning documents are therefore important management tools since they not only show the ways in which policy operates to affirm, reshape or reject the directions set by senior management of the QRU, but, they can also highlight the ways in which organisational sub-units can be guided by centrally developed policies.

In reality though, neither governmentality nor the Panopticon operates as a system of total control within the QRU. There is always scope for subversion, conflict, and contestation, which was comprehensively revealed in the interview results in chapter seven.

Section Two

8.3 Document Data: Results & Discussion (2)

8.3.1 Derrida and the Interpretation of Change

This section applies the deconstruction theories of Jacques Derrida to reveal the different ‘meanings’ contained within many of the QRU’s documents and policies, and how such ‘meanings’ were used to reinforce traditional values and management practices on one hand, and a new strategic direction on another. To this end, additional content analysis of the *QRU Strategic Plan 1997-2000* and the annual *Business Plans* for 1997-1999 was undertaken. In this case, the content analysis used the philosophical praxis termed ‘deconstruction’ and the interrelated concept of ‘differance’, to design a framework for categorising policy documents according to the different meanings attached to them. It was anticipated the analysis would provide a broader understanding of the fragmented outcomes arising from the QRU’s policies, and the possibility of subversion, conflict and contestation.

8.3.2 Interpreting Change through Document Analysis

Derrida (1976) argued that the meaning of words derives from a process known as deconstruction. He put forward two arguments to justify the multiple meanings that exist within texts. First, he suggested that the meaning intended of texts is dependent on the author’s and reader’s interpretation. This argument can be used to tease out the various ways in which QRU planning documents can be viewed. Second, he suggested that the context in which the text is read provides a further mechanism for

individual interpretation of meaning to vary. This argument can be used to show how individual officials in the QRU may choose to 'defer' the meaning of a word or phrase to an appropriate context that justifies that meaning.

According to Derrida (1976), this process of deconstructing texts enables us to see through texts for the fundamentally ambiguous documents that they really are.

Deconstruction shows us that texts are constantly open to multiple interpretations, contrary to the appearance of fixity that they assume in our minds. Furthermore, Derrida's argument that texts gain their meaning through their relationship with other texts was supported by an analysis of the QRU's *1997-2000 Strategic Plan*, and the *1997-1999 Business Plans*. In this case, the specific issues listed in one document were extended in the other. Consequently, it not only allowed the texts to communicate with each other but also guided organisational sub-units and members along a specific and clearly defined pathway. This process was noted by Respondent One who commented:

The business plans have evolved from the strategic plan. This is a standard process in most organisations but a new one to the QRU. This has allowed us to develop some continuity in planning and at the same time it has allowed us to reinforce what we believe is necessary for the organisation to do to adapt to its new environment. Without the continued development of business plans I think the strategic plan would have been hidden away in the bottom draw.

Linking the *Business Plans* to the *Strategic Plan* allowed senior management to establish and reinforce what they believed were the necessary strategies for the long-

term viability of the organisation. This point was further highlighted by Respondent One who stated:

... although we went through a pretty lengthy process involving all the stakeholders and coming up with a strategic plan - the business plans are the key to ensuring we continue to move in the direction we want the organisation to move in. These plans are specifically tied to those elements of the strategic plan that we feel are vitally important. How we develop the business plans gives us a certain degree of flexibility in our planning as it lets us push certain strategies over other strategies. This is because the strategic planning process was a consultative process with our stakeholders and therefore we had to appease to some degree those involved, but the business plans are developed by us and therefore what we believe is important gets preference and emphasis placed on it.

This process enabled the senior management of the QRU to manipulate the strategies it believed should be pursued with greater zest. However, the extent of this control was undermined by differing reader responses. While senior management controlled the strategies arising out of the planning documents, the readers of the documents could make a number of different interpretations. Dixon (1998) suggested this is because of the importive intentions of the reader. In other words, what a reader considers important within the text has the potential to render the strategic intent ineffective, as Respondent Eleven stated:

...what you have got to remember is although the clubs in some areas may have had input into the planning process to a certain degree, but those of us not in Brisbane have had very little. We know what we want is not going to get the support it needs. I mean management in Brisbane are pushing those parts of the strategic plan they believe are important but we feel are not necessary because of our circumstances ...I guess its

tit for tat –you know – we are not going to put our energies into doing something we don't believe is necessary. So, although our funding may be dependent on implementing certain strategies or following certain guidelines, we interpret them differently. For example, the business plan tells us we are meant to submit regular financial reports that show we are becoming more self-sufficient and therefore are changing our management practices, but nobody has told us what regular is. We believe regular is once every two years year not four times a year – this means we don't have to change our management practices.

Hassard (1993) suggested that the cultural meaning attached to the organisation will influence how organisational members interpret the text. According to Hassard, this is the key to understanding how text is interpreted because it is the culture associated with the text, rather than its essence, which dictates the range of possible meanings for it. For example, QRU members who support traditional beliefs and management practices will apply those beliefs when interpreting a text. This point was highlighted by Respondent Thirteen when he stated:

...the introduction to this business plan I have here tells me that we need to manage the game appropriately given the environment we operate in. To me we are managing rugby appropriately because our environment hasn't changed. We are not going broke, our membership numbers are stable, and although our participation numbers may be down our numbers are still good. This tells me that our management approach is appropriate and our beliefs about how the game should be managed at this level are correct, and always have been.

This statement indicates that in some cases, beliefs about how rugby union should be managed at the lower levels had not changed. Senior management was aware of the pockets of resistance and was concerned that such beliefs were inhibiting change. At

the same time, senior rugby union management believed it was necessary to embody the past in the present, and to acknowledge the importance of tradition within planning documents. For example, the vision statement states:

Rugby in Queensland encompasses the recognition of tradition, spirit, loyalty and determination. Rugby is a game of speed, skill and tactics, instincts and deliberate action. Rugby is about triumphs and disasters, exhilaration and despair, ambition and lost opportunities.

Rugby is a way of life and a sport of which we are proud.

Our players enjoy the camaraderie and determination to win. They experience the extremes from the pain of persistence to the warm glow of success.

Our affiliate bodies are the rugby community who develop and support the game.

Our supporters encourage those we put to the test and enjoy the sense of challenge and the endless post mortems that follow the game.

A well organised broadly based sport, we will retain our traditions and lifestyle. We will be at the leading edge of player development and representative team performance. Queensland will be a force in world rugby. (Strategic Plan, 1997-2000, p. 3)

The vision statement is an indication of senior management's desire to appease those stakeholders who see tradition as a necessary ingredient of the QRU's future. On the other hand, it also provided the basis for traditional management practices to be justified. This was a problem for senior management since they had anticipated a more favourable response. For senior management, reference to 'tradition' provided a mechanism for acknowledging the past, but managing in a way that is necessary for the present. It was not intended to be a signal to cling to the past. This is a point supported by Respondent Five, who stated:

We understand the importance of tradition. We don't want to disenfranchise all those people who have been involved in the game for years by saying 'hey let's forget about tradition' - but at the same time we want people to realise that tradition is only a part of what we are about. We have to survive in the present...in some ways we have to put tradition behind us - particularly traditional management practices. We can't continue to pour money into clubs without them taking some responsibility for their own viability.

A closer examination of the first sentence of the vision statement further illustrated senior management's desire to appease lower level management. It states:

Rugby in Queensland encompasses the recognition of tradition, spirit, loyalty and determination. (Strategic Plan, 1997-2000, p. 3)

These different meanings are to be expected, since as Dixon (1998) noted, it is the intersection of the different interpretations by organisational members who authored the text and organisational members who read the text that is vital in defining meanings. For example, in the case of the QRU, organisational members interpreted

the meaning of the phrase ‘the recognition of tradition’ differently. It can be easily used as a justify the continuation of traditional management practices, a point noted by Respondent Fourteen:

...when I read the phrase ‘recognition of tradition’ I take this to mean we recognise the importance of traditional management practices as well as values. This means we should continue to manage rugby at club level the way we always have because we are the ones that are devoted to the game and will continue to support it regardless. If we start letting other people manage the game they are going to come in and try and change everything and if it doesn’t work – which it probably won’t – they will walk away from it. In the meantime the club rugby could have gone backwards and lost a lot of its support.

These contrary interpretations reduced the effectiveness of the QRU’s planning documents. Although senior management of the QRU understood the need for recognition of the past they also wanted to replace traditional management practices with more contemporary business methods. At the same time, it is clear that the planning documents provided a mechanism for other members and officials in the QRU, particularly at the local club level, to justify the continuation of traditional management practices. This line was taken by Respondent Ten, who stated:

I think one of the best things to come out of the strategic planning that has occurred is that we have all agreed that we can’t afford to forget the past and in many ways rugby has survived because of its past. If we forget this rugby we lose a lot of its true support. The problem is that recognising the past is more than just writing about it –actions speak louder than words. That’s why to some of us the planning documents we read justify us continuing to do some things the way we always have. I

mean that is part of tradition. It is important that those involved in running rugby are not be forced out and then asked to continue to support it because our management practices are outdated. We will keep managing rugby the way we always have because it is part of the tradition of rugby, and also because it has worked. It is not outdated at our level. Rugby can't survive without people like us managing it and preserving its traditions.

Similar contrary interpretations were made of the final section of the vision statement, which states:

A well organised broadly based sport, we will retain our traditions and lifestyle. We will be at the leading edge of player development and representative team performance. Queensland will be a force in world rugby. (Strategic Plan, 1997-2000, p. 3)

Although senior management only wanted this statement to provide a positive symbolic gesture to acknowledge the past, lower level management used it to reinforce existing views and values, a point raised by Respondent Twelve, who stated:

...when I am asked why I continue to persist in managing rugby the way I always have I tell them because part of our future is our past. I tell them to read the vision statement – this is what we are meant to abide to. It tells us we must continue to recognise and promote our traditions. To me part of our traditions is how we manage rugby. We don't want it taken over by the Murdoch's of this world whose bottom line is how much money are we making. It must be managed by those people who are dedicated to the game and therefore it will be done the way that it has always be managed –by us volunteers– if it isn't this part of our tradition will be lost forever.

These differing interpretations of the vision statement were a catalyst for conflict and division between senior and club management. This was primarily because senior management's interpretation of 'tradition' implied only the recognition of it. They were not supporting a justification of traditional management practices remaining entrenched within the clubs. As Respondent Five indicated:

...we accept that tradition is valued and I value it, but it has no place in the management of rugby – at any level. The argument that we will continue to do what have done because it has always worked doesn't hold any ground – because in the end those management practices will be their downfall – regardless how dedicated they are to the game.

Derrida's (1976) argument that the meaning intended within texts is dependent on the reader's interpretation is clearly revealed in the QRU case. The conflicting responses to the QRU's planning documents produced fragmented outcomes that occurred from the change process.

Derrida also argued that the context in which the text is read provides a further mechanism for individual interpretations to vary. This also contributes to conflicting views and fragmented outcomes. This contextual argument is based on Derrida's (1982) concept of 'differance'. Dixon (1998) reinforced Derrida's argument, and expanded on the concept of 'differance' when she stated:

...when we think of a word as a sign standing for something, pointing beyond its presence to something else, not present, we cannot be clear what it stands for, what the word is pointing to unless we know the context, the discourse and environment within which the word finds itself. (p. 96)

Derrida's (1982) argument that the meaning of a particular word is only appropriate in a given context is succinctly revealed in the way QRU officials responded to policy/planning documents. On one hand, senior management wanted to establish professional managerial frameworks that supported the managerial principles of efficiency and effectiveness. On the other hand, the management of rugby at club level has a desire for traditional management practices to prevail. Consequently, documents produced by senior management were interpreted differently by club management when the context allowed it. This point was noted by Respondent Ten who stated:

When I read a document for the first time at central office I am reading it in an environment that reflects this. They are all there in their suits and ties, in their own offices, with their own secretaries, their all telling me that if we apply what is in the document it will allow us to establish a more professional approach to the management of rugby. When you listen to them in that environment it makes sense but, then I get back here and [x] turns up in his shorts and T-shirt, there are four of us trying to manage our club out of one office, and the pitch still needs to be mowed by tomorrow. What is in the document then seems unrealistic and to me whether or not we implement precisely depends - what's in the document depends on how relevant it is to our environment.

An analysis of the fifth goal of the 1997-2000 strategic plan also highlights the concept of 'differance'. The fifth goal states:

To ensure rugby at all levels is viable and functional for administrators, volunteers and key officials.

According to Derridian logic, the meaning of a particular word can be deferred to another time (temporal deferral) and/or another place (spatial deference), if the context is not relevant for justifying the proposed meaning. For example, 'viable' has a totally different meaning when interpreted in a different context. Respondent Ten, a volunteer, chose to 'defer' an interpretation of its meaning to an appropriate time and place that provided a context that justified its interpreted meaning. When asked to express his views about the long-term viability of rugby at club level, he indicated that the management of rugby does not need to change. As a consequence, his management practices reflected this. Similar views were expressed by Respondent Eleven, who stated:

...these days we talk about rugby being viable and told that all our long-term planning should be based around this. What you have to remember though is that the type of rugby that we are involved in is totally different to what is promoted in the media. We manage the game at our level to a level that is appropriate. The management approach we take - although not textbook - will ensure the survival of rugby at the community level. So when I am asked if how we are managing rugby will ensure its viability you have to remember I am addressing the management of rugby in a different context. My response about managing rugby to ensure it's viable will be influenced by the level of rugby we are talking about.

When Respondent Twelve was pressed on whether the future viability of club rugby is related to appropriate management practices he responded:

The effective management of rugby is essential if it is to continue to survive but you can't compare the management of elite rugby with club rugby. Elite rugby has to have commercial support in order for it to compete against league and other sports but we don't need that level of

support. The management practices we use are appropriate for the type of rugby we manage. As far as we are concerned rugby at our level is going well and its long-term viability is not an issue that needs to be addressed by changing the management of it.

On the other hand, QRU senior management believed these traditional views were threatening the viability of rugby at all levels. These views also undermined the organisational change process, as strategies considered essential for the long-term viability of rugby union were not being implemented appropriately across the organisation. Consequently, this further contributed to the fragmented outcomes of the organisational change process occurring at the QRU. According to Respondent One, this placed rugby union in Queensland in a potentially vulnerable position should the environmental turbulence continue. He believed clubs had not established the necessary management practices to deal with chronic environmental disturbance.

8.3.3 *Concluding Comments*

In this section the philosophical praxis of 'deconstruction' and the interrelated concept of 'differance' were used to highlight the ways in which the planning documents produced by the QRU produced multiple meanings. It was established that what is significant within any text, and why it is significant, depended upon who was reading the text and in what context it was being read. In this case, the differing interpretation of the QRU's planning documents contributed to fragmented outcomes associated with the organisational change process. Although policy documents were developed by senior management to guide change, the differing interpretations of these documents at the local/club level reduced their effectiveness in setting the change agenda.

8.4 *Summary of Results*

This chapter was presented in two sections. The first section applied Foucault's (1977, 1979) theories of governmentality to planning documents of the QRU. This provided insight into understanding how the QRU is attempting, through the development of policy documents, to direct and control the outcomes of change and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture. In doing this, it showed how centrally developed policies can be used by senior management to guide and control organisational sub-units throughout the change process, but it also showed that this guidance and control in practical terms cannot be totally achieved due to the conflict and tension that are caused by the change process.

The second section focused on the interpretation of QRU planning documents. The framework for this analysis was provided by Derrida's (1976, 1978, 1981, 1982) theories of deconstruction and 'différance'. The results from this analysis showed that the planning documents developed by the QRU to guide change were interpreted differently. These different interpretations resulted from the different values held by senior and club management and the contexts in which each group operated.

As a result, these planning documents had the unintended consequence of further contributing to the fragmented outcomes of the organisational change process.

The final chapter of this thesis will review the aims of this research and the extent to which the results supported the expectations implicitly contained in the aims. It will also provide recommendations for future research that will assist in gaining a greater

understanding of the organisational change process, and help to manage change more effectively.

CHAPTER NINE

9.

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CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

In reviewing this research project it is useful to return to its original aims. The general purpose of this research was to examine the influence of environmental turbulence on the change process occurring throughout the QRU during the 1990s, and to analyse its impact on that organisation's strategic direction and organisational culture. Within these broad parameters, the specific aims were: first, to understand the ways in which external and/or internal jolts and disturbances have impacted upon the change processes occurring at the QRU; second, to establish the levels of resistance to change within the organisation, and how the QRU managed this resistance between 1995-1999; third, to explain how the QRU went about managing and legitimising organisational and cultural change between 1995-1999; and finally, to develop a model of organisational change that reveals the complexity of the change process that occurred within the QRU between 1995-1999. This chapter addresses how this thesis has fulfilled these aims, and provides some direction for future research into the organisational change process.

9.2 Review of the Research Aims

9.2.1 Aim One: To understand the ways in which external and/or internal jolts and disturbances have impacted upon the change processes occurring at the QRU.

This research has provided a broad analysis of the forces that have been instrumental in triggering the organisational change process that is occurring at the QRU. While there was general agreement that significant external forces had impacted on the QRU during the 1990s, the results indicated disagreement within the organisation in regards to what actually caused the shift from amateurism to professionalism.

The research showed that some respondents believed the internal structural changes that occurred between 1992 and 1993 were the first signs that the QRU was moving down a orchestrated path towards professionalism. In June 1992 the QRU became incorporated and a Board structure was established to replace the management committee that had existed. The Board took on the responsibility of driving policy with a supporting management structure to implement these initiatives. This management structure, however, was reviewed in late 1992 and early 1993. The review resulted in the formation of four new positions within the organisation that formed the framework on which further structural adaptations were based.

The results also showed that some respondents believed the environmental turbulence of 1995 was pivotal in the commercialisation and professionalisation of rugby union in Queensland, and ultimately created the impetus for strategic and cultural change in the QRU. These commercial forces created a situation in which the ARU, NSWRU, ACTRU, and the QRU found themselves confronting a major crisis. It was feared that

many of rugby union's leading players would be induced to switch codes, in response to the substantial sums of money on offer to players as a result of the Super League war. In addition, the WRC was attempting to establish a rebel rugby union competition without the support of the international or national governing bodies of the code. In response to these forces the governing authorities of rugby union in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa formed a 'southern hemisphere consortium' and negotiated a lucrative pay television contract with Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation. In doing this, however, the ARU failed to counter the strategy of the WRC who were signing the majority of Australia's elite players to highly lucrative contracts. The failure of the ARU to obtain the signatures of these players led to the prospect of the Murdoch deal collapsing.

In order to prevent this happening and to secure the services of the elite players negotiations took place that led to the formation of the Ferrier letter. The Ferrier letter ensured the demise of the WRC as it included a clause that promised players access to 95% of the proceeds of the News Limited television deal, with the remaining 5% to be distributed to youth and junior rugby development. Subsequently, these developments forced the IRFB to embrace professionalism. A meeting of the IRFB held in Paris declared amateurism was no more. The world governing body for rugby union stressed that the central plank on which the game had been built was considered to be no longer viable in the modern era. The former World Cup winning Wallaby captain – Nick Farr-Jones – who was there when the IRFB delegates came out of the conference room to announce their decision - stated that "it looked like they had just come out of their own funeral" (Fitzsimons, 1996, p. 319). This decision ensured that rugby union in Queensland was ushered into the modern sporting era – a professional era.

As the Ferrier letter severely reduced the redistribution of television revenues from the ARU to the above Unions, the QRU needed to look to alternative avenues to maintain a viable business. The senior managers of the QRU conceded that rugby union could no longer be administered and developed during the 'spare time' of part time volunteer administrators. It was agreed at senior management level that changes required to secure a viable future needed to be more than superficial changes to structure. A commercial focus needed to be developed throughout the organisation and this focus needed to be supported by a system of planning, and a culture of managerialism and professionalism at all levels of the QRU. This view was encapsulated by the comments of Responded Five, who stated:

...the future survival of the QRU is dependent on all levels of the organisation embracing commercialism. For this to occur the culture of the organisation must align itself with management principles that support the professionalisation of rugby.

In summary, the results showed that a number of significant environmental forces 'triggered' the need for change in the QRU.

9.2.2 Aim Two: To establish the levels of resistance to change within the organisation, and how the QRU managed this resistance between 1995-1999.

Although the QRU successfully formulated strategies designed to initiate change in the culture of rugby union, these strategies were not successfully implemented at all levels of the organisation. Senior QRU management wanted to establish a culture of managerialism with a planning focus, but it was not embraced at every level of the

organisation. The results indicated that resistance to change was particularly strong at club level. The results conclusively showed that this was the result of members within the sub-units refusing to relinquish the traditional culture of amateurism.

Club level resistance was not eradicated because senior management was unable to effectively deal with the myriad of political influences and entrenched beliefs that exist within the QRU. Management understood the political issues that produced the resistance, and attempted to manage this resistance by implementing a systematic approach to organisational change. The systematic approach was based on a managerial framework that centred on the development of long and short-term goals, objectives, policies, and budgets. It was envisaged that this managerial framework would develop a rational decision-making process. Senior management thought, 'naively' as it turned out, that conflict and diversity of opinion could be managed within these parameters, rather than through political lobbying based on self-interest.

To reduce political influence in the decision-making process senior management attempted to change the *Memorandum and Articles of Association* to reduce the voting rights of certain interest groups. Senior management was aware that these groups persistently manufactured decisions that served their own interests. These groups were not willing to relinquish their voting rights, and continued to contrive decisions that senior management believed were detrimental to the long-term viability of the rugby union in Queensland.

In summary, the results showed that political forces have been instrumental in influencing the decision-making process within the QRU. Senior management of the

QRU attempted to deal with this through the implementation of a rational managerial framework.

9.2.3 Aim Three: To explain how the QRU went about managing and legitimising organisational and cultural change between 1995-1999.

This thesis has shown how policy generation and implementation form part of the technology of governmentality, and how in turn, it provided senior management of the QRU with a mechanism to manage and regulate behaviour. It has also been shown how the QRU attempted through the development of policy documents, to direct and control the outcomes of change, and the subsequent development of a new organisational culture. In doing this, it has shown how centrally developed policies can be used to guide and control organisational sub-units during the change process. The technology of governmentality was also used by QRU senior management to deal with environmental turbulence. As a result, the QRU attempted to determine, monitor and control the desired strategic direction in which the organisation should move. This process was used to create a culture of managerialism at all levels of the organisation. Consequently, through an iterative process of planning, goal setting, and performance measurement the QRU aimed to establish a mechanism to manage all levels of the organisation.

Thus, QRU documents demonstrate the ways in which the process of governmentality operates, and the ways in which it can function as a technology of control. For example, this research has shown how it is possible in theory to manage club level rugby through policy. Management through policy is aimed to ensure that the

strategic and financial imperatives set by the QRU become part of the daily management that occurs at club level. In this way, it is possible for the everyday management of clubs to be shaped and managed by the QRU. However, in reality the process of governmentality did not operate as a system of total control within the QRU. The guidance and control that was required for this process to work was sometimes undermined by local officials and managers, and therefore the organisation displayed significant pockets of resistance to change.

In addition, the results showed that policy documents were interpreted differently at the different functional levels of the QRU. Derrida's (1976, 1978 1981, 1982) theories of deconstruction and 'differance' were used to demonstrate that the meaning that exists within texts is more than the words simply say. The meaning was not just the message the author intended, as the author cannot totally control the receiver's perception of the message. How a reader appropriates the author's words is a critical aspect of interpreted meaning, and this was reflected in quite different responses to the role of tradition in rugby union, and how it should be managed.

Consequently the results in this thesis indicated that the policy/planning documents produced by the QRU to guide change sometimes had unintended consequences. As a result, a significant amount of fragmented outcomes occurred. The ambiguity of these documents therefore complicated the process of organisational change. The results showed that whenever organisational sub-units embraced the content of a text, new meanings were always possible. At the same time, the results have shown that those QRU officials who offered a different interpretation of the text, were frequently doing it out of self-interest.

In summary, the results showed that although the development of policy documents were essential to assist in facilitating the change process, the desired outcomes of these policy documents were not always achieved.

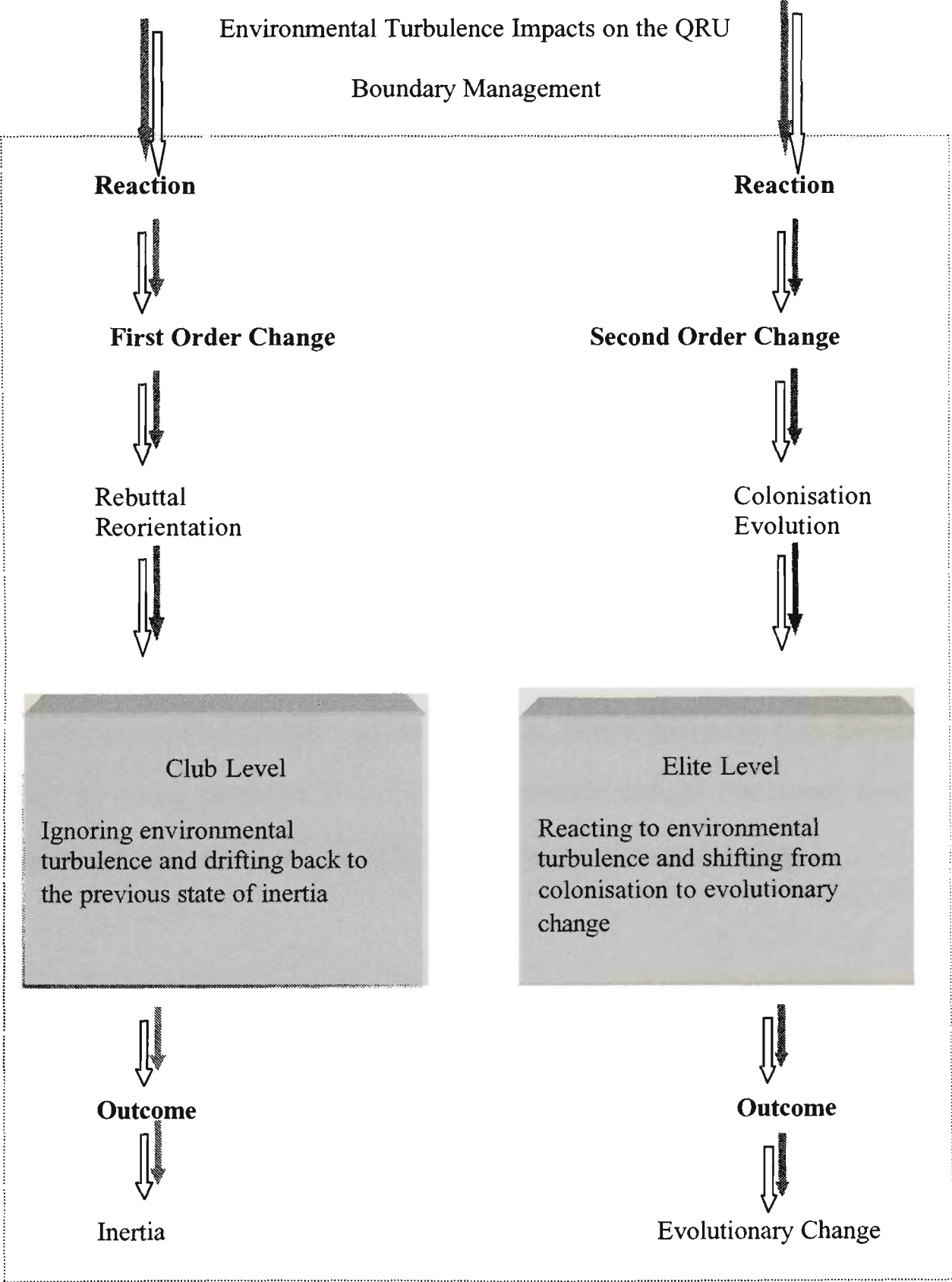
9.2.4. Aim Four: To develop a model of organisational change that reveals the complexity of the change process that occurred within the QRU between 1995-1999.

This thesis has established that Laughlin's (1991) model of organisational change succinctly reveals the way in which the changes that took place in the QRU can be historically represented. Laughlin's model is also able to systematically categorise the change. However, the model is unable to fully explain the nuances and subtleties of the change process that occurred between 1995-1999. To further illuminate our understanding of the differing impacts of environmental disturbance on the QRU during this period, Laughlin's model was complemented with a critical postmodern framework.

This thesis has established that a postmodern framework provides a sharper insight and a deeper understanding of the change process in the QRU. Through this framework the duality of change was highlighted. The results indicated that the direction and processes of change occurring at the 'governance' and structural level had not filtered through to the grassroots club level of the organisation. The model developed in this thesis established that while organisational culture can be aligned with the new purpose of the organisation, lower functional levels of the organisation can slip back to the old value system. It is these fragmented outcomes that accompany

change that add to the ambiguous and contradictory nature of the process, and which inhibited the attempts of senior management to achieve uniform outcomes throughout the organisation. This change model is re-produced below in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: The Duality of Organisational Change in the QRU



As a consequence of these outcomes, it is recommended that sport managers adopt two fundamental approaches to understanding change in sporting organisations. First, any analysis needs to consider multiple organisational levels with an emphasis on the relationship between the central body and local associations and clubs. Second, any analysis requires attention to the troubling ambiguities associated with the phenomena of change and in particular the ways in which policy statements can be resisted, and interpreted to fit particular values and beliefs.

9.3 Implications for Future Research

It is clear that organisational change within sporting organisations must not be confined to the elite level if new values and beliefs are to guide an evolutionary change process for the sport as a whole. As Laughlin (1991), through Habermas's (1981a /1984; 1981b / 1987) interpretation of organisational change, has suggested, evolutionary change can only happen dialogically. That is, there needs to be dialogue that exposes the nature and purpose of the organisation, dialogue that exposes new possibilities for change, and dialogue that exposes the process of change.

This thesis has argued that a full understanding of the change process requires a postmodern interpretation. A workable model of organisational behaviour should be able to describe the complex and often elusive processes of organisational change that typify contemporary organisations. Although O'Brien and Slack (1999) added to the body of knowledge about some of these elusive processes, they don't address the deeper and often contradictory complexities that can be illuminated through a postmodern interpretation of the change process, as this thesis does.

In addition, although critical approaches, such as Laughlin's (1991), constantly challenge the existing understandings and assumptions about organisational change, the test of their success lies in the extent to which they fully and accurately describe sporting organisations undergoing change, and whether they can reveal and predict the nature of this change. It is clear from the forgoing analysis that a hybrid model which links Laughlin's (1991) typology to a postmodern interpretation of organisation change was able to provide valuable insights into the changes taking place in the QRU. Future research into the area of organisational change should consider an application of this hybrid model to other similar Australian sporting organisations. This approach would further enhance our understanding of the complex phenomena of organisational change by providing a deeper insight into the dynamics of organisational behaviour, and adding to our understanding of the competing forces and differing outcomes that can accompany the change process.

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APPENDIX ONE

1.

University of Tasmania
at Launceston



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16 May 1997

Chief Executive Officer
Queensland Rugby Union
PO Box 205
Kelvin Grove DC
Queensland 4059

Re: PhD Studies / Confidentiality Agreement

To Whom It May Concern

As a result of conversations your organisation has had with Dr Alan Edwards I have been informed that access to the Queensland Rugby Union (QRU) for the purpose of my PhD studies has been granted. I would firstly like to thank the QRU management for allowing this.

The second point I wish to discuss is in regards to the information gathered throughout the study. This information will be treated as highly confidential and access to the information will only be granted to the following people. Dr Bob Stewart, Victorian University of Technology, and Dr Alan Edwards, Griffith University. In addition Dr Bob Stewart and Dr Alan Edwards have assured me that any information given to them will only be used for the purpose of assessment of the PhD thesis. The QRU management may at any time access this information and/or discuss the progress of the study with me.

I am fully aware of the importance of this issue and do not take it lightly. If at anytime a breach of this agreement occurs I understand the QRU has the right to terminate the study and take appropriate action. Once again I would like to thank the QRU for this opportunity and I look forward to working with the organisation.

PhD Investigator

James Skinner

PhD Supervisor

Dr Bob Stewart

PhD Supervisor

Dr Alan Edwards

APPENDIX TWO

2.



AUSTRALIAN RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION LTD

A.C.N. 002 898 344

"Rugby House", Level 7, 32-34 Mount Street, North Sydney

P.O. Box 188, North Sydney NSW 2060 Australia

Telephone: (61 2) 955 3456 Fax: (61 2) 955 3299

16 August 1995

I, Ian Ferrier, am authorised by the Australian Rugby Football Union Limited ("ARFU"), the New South Wales Rugby Union Limited ("NSWRU"), the Queensland Rugby Union Limited ("QRU") and the ACT Rugby Union Limited ("ACTRU") (collectively known as "the Organisation") to make the following offer to the Australian Rugby Players who have signed contracts with the World Rugby Corporation Pty Limited ("WRC").

In consideration of all The Players agreeing to relinquish their rights and obligations under their WRC Contracts the Organisations shall:-

1. Alter their respective constitutions so that two members of the yet to be formed Players Association ("Players Association") who are current players are required to be appointed directors to each of the Organisations respective executive/boards. Each Organisation will further alter its constitution so that it may not increase the maximum number of directors on its board/executive by more than two to take into consideration the additional two player representatives.
2. Ensure that each Organisation's Tour Committee consists of two members of the Players Association. Such members are to be selected by the Players Association.
3. Support the concept of the Players Association being formed to represent the interests of contracted national and provincial players both senior and of under 21 age groups.
4. Loan \$10,000 to the Players Association for its establishment costs including registration and legal fees. Such loan to be repaid by the Players Association within 12 months.
5. Distribute 95% of the television proceeds (Net of Commission) receivable from News Corporation Limited (pursuant to the recently signed Heads of Agreement between ARFU, News Corporation Limited, the NZRFU and the SARFU) in accordance with the Players Association Direction. The remaining 5% to be distributed for youth and junior rugby development.
6. Undertake to ensure that the present committee system is streamlined and made more efficient in each organisation.
7. Not discriminate or in any way bring retribution against any of The Players who have signed a Contract with the WRC.

This offer shall not be revoked by the Organisation unless the over-whelming majority of The Players refuse to relinquish their rights and obligations under their WRC contracts.

Yours faithfully

Ian Ferrier
Member of the Executive



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Schweppes

