



## Substitutes for Strategy Research: Notes on the source of Karl Weick's anecdote of the young lieutenant and the map of the Pyrenees

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### abstract

Six instances of Karl Weick's anecdote about the young lieutenant in the Alps are presented along with its source: Miroslav Holub's poem 'Brief Thoughts on Maps'. It is determined that all six instances constitute cases of plagiarism. The fact that the anecdote was written by a poet, not a management scholar, is invoked to explain the tenacity with which it has lodged itself in the imagination of organization theory for better or for worse.

A true philosopher says only one thing in his lifetime because he enjoys but one contact with the real. (Henri Bergson)

Spot the one contact, describe it, and then tell a tale of variations on a theme. (Karl Weick)

### Introduction

It is the purpose of these remarks to take a close look at Weick's famous appropriation of Miroslav Holub's poem about the young lieutenant and the reconnaissance unit in the Alps. Our investigations leads us reluctantly to the conclusion that the anecdote, as it appears in the six instances of Weick's published writing that we have looked at, from 1982 to 2001, constitutes an act of plagiarism. Our errand is not to provoke a scandal, however, but rather to try to display some characteristic features of the seemingly permanent problem of the 'academic' relationship between managerial practice and management writing, the experience of managing and the experience of researching. We provide an analysis of the main issues as we see them, and provide an appendix of exhibits to give the reader an opportunity to decide their importance in their own research contexts. We emphasize that whatever judgments we, or our readers, arrive at pertain first and foremost to a collection of *texts*, not to the people who wrote them.

One of the central questions of research methodology is how a piece of scholarship (a research text) can be said to make "contact with the real", as Bergson famously put it

(Weick, 2001: ix; Mezias, 2003), or how the research establishes the ‘conjunction’ of signifier and signified in writing “the prose of the world” (Foucault, 1970: 42). Before being organized into orderly prose sentences, research practice often seems little more than the collection of “tangles, fankles, *impasses*, disjunctions, whirligogs, [or] binds” that R. D. Laing called ‘knots’, and which, owing to a modicum of “formal elegance”, could easily be considered *poems* that “refer back to the very specific experiences from which they derive” (Laing, 1970: i). It is no different in organization studies, where researchers must work on the basis of an infinitude of disjointed impressions in order to discern that ‘order of things’ which is the very theme of their research: the formal principle of the organization of experience. In a very important sense, the successful discernment of ‘organization’ as such is an act or instance of stylistic mastery; it is a formal achievement. Research methodology is to a great extent a question of style – the style of one’s scholarship.

In a feature interview in the October 2003 newsletter of the Managerial and Organizational Cognition Division of the Academy of Management, Karl Weick made this point very succinctly by way of distinguishing his approach to management theory from more ‘mainstream’ scholarship or ‘thick paradigms’, which he described as too ‘heavy handed’ in their discipline of research practices. (We imagine that he means the work of people such as Michael Porter.) He expressed his preference for “the lighter hand of a question, a modest frame (e.g. variation, selection, retention), an anecdote, a single connection, or an intriguing assertion in a piece of literature,” an approach for which he has become rightly famous over the past three decades. “I read. I imagine. I write. I edit. Whatever I read becomes a frame, a ‘discipline’, a gestalt, within which I start associating and connecting. Those are moves of the imagination working within soft constraints” (Mezias, 2003). This aptly describes what might be called the *ethos* of Weick’s organization research or the *style* of his management thinking. For this, Weick was awarded the Academy of Management’s Irwin Award in 1990.

If one was to locate a single immortal contribution made by Weick to the academic study of organizations it is above all the concept of ‘enactment’. Still more specifically, he provided us with the little ‘knot’ or anecdote of the map of the *Pyrenees* that was sufficient to lead a group of soldiers out of the *Alps*. (See exhibit B for the canonical formulation.) The standard moral to be drawn from this story is that “when you are lost, any map will do!” (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 1998: 160; Weick, 1995: 54) Weick’s concepts of enactment and sensemaking are, in a sense, nothing more than detailed elaborations of this central idea, as he himself notes (Weick, 2001; Mezias, 2003)

Today, the story is not just Weick’s own personal favourite (Weick, 1990: 4; 1995: 54): it is an established anecdote in the literature (cf. exhibit I). Michael Rowlinson dwells on this fact in his review of the organization theory literature, where he both laments the lack of historical sources and notes the “deceptive appeal of Weick’s style” (2004: 617). The specific facts of the anecdote, which are de-emphasized as properly *empirical* facts both in the literary way the story is told and the lack of documentation it offers, are not altogether unimportant, as Weick’s own interpretation shows. “Now, that story would have been really neat,” Weick quotes Bob Engel as saying, “if the leader out with the lost troops had known it was the wrong map and still been able to lead them back”

(Weick, 1987: 222; 1995: 55; 2001: 346). That is, something interesting follows from details that are not quite clear in the way Weick tells the story. But even as Weick raises these questions he passes lightly by them as interesting things to think about but not something to be settled by further historical study. Rowlinson, in fact, has come to doubt the anecdote's accuracy (2004: 617) and even supporters like Mintzberg note that "this particular analogy may be unfortunate" since navigation in mountain regions is much more difficult than the story suggests. With the wrong map in hand, the unit must have been very lucky indeed to survive. While Mintzberg *et al.* do not "dispute Weick's basic point", they do draw the factual likelihood of the specific anecdote into question (Mintzberg *et al.*, 1998: n160).

Rowlinson sees the reference to Holub as a rhetorical move intended to impress a particular kind of reader with the intellectual credentials of a poet. He goes on to cite Van Maanen's declaration of Weick's "triumph of style over theory" (2004: 617). As we will see, Weick also scores a victory of style over empirical inquiry (a victory Weick celebrates as one of the lessons of the story itself).

The historical accuracy of this anecdote has, to our knowledge, never been verified and is certainly not among the outstanding empirical questions of organization and management studies. It is so rarely questioned that making it an 'empirical question' would seem odd today; it has the status of a myth. As Weick would eventually note (1990, 1995), its source is an anecdote that was told by Albert Szent-Gyorgyi (1893-1986), probably to Miroslav Holub or to people he knew, sometime before 1977. The incident from which it stems seems to have occurred during the Second World War. Holub recorded it as a poem, which was published in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1977. But because Holub's version is poetry only by virtue of being a carefully selected and lineated prose narrative (see exhibit A), there is some reason to believe that Holub's poem (originally written in Czech) was based on a written or spoken statement made by Szent-Gyorgyi or a member of his audience, i.e., that Holub's poem is already a transcription of someone else's (perhaps exact) words. Holub's main contribution may have been to translate it into Czech and sharpen its imagery. It is the bulk of this contribution, along with that made by Jarmila and Ian Milner, Holub's translators, which Weick appropriates verbatim in and as his own work (see exhibits B through G). In any case, through his 'softly constrained' style of referencing his sources, Weick generates a false sense that the story is available in two or three forms: Holub's version, Szent-Gyorgyi's and perhaps even a historical document (see also exhibit H). Like the map's role in the survival of the Hungarian reconnaissance unit, everything depends both on *believing* the story to be true and *not looking at it too closely*. Failing either of these, as might happen if the poem had been cited *as a poem*, the effect is lost.

The unacknowledged connection between Holub's poem and Weick's prose has led to a number of peculiar errors in its subsequent citation, indicating the difficulties inherent in finding one's bearings when faced with a plagiarized text (we note these in exhibits H and I). It also accounts for a variety of instances in which scholars in other fields are able to make Weick's point in contexts that are wholly unaware of Weick's work but nonetheless employ the exact same words, namely, Holub's (e.g. Barry, 2003; Connolly, 1995). These are unfortunate consequences of what may well be Weick's act of "unintentional plagiarism", as the Modern Language Association describes it, which

“sometimes happens because researchers do not keep precise records of their reading” and so are unable to determine “whether their summaries and paraphrases contain quoted material that is poorly marked or unmarked” (Gibaldi, 2003: 70). The American Historical Association acknowledges the existence of this common defence in specific cases of plagiarism, tersely remarking that it “is plausible only in the context of a wider tolerance of shoddy work.”

Whatever the cause of the original error may have been, we have dated its first appearance to 1982, in a paper co-authored with Robert J. Swieringa, who is currently dean at the Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University (see exhibit G). This case, along with Weick (1983, 1987, 2001) are instances of ordinary plagiarism, where words are used exactly as they appear in a source that is not referenced. One could cite any number of policies to establish this as a transgression of academic standards; the Academy of Management’s Code of Ethical Conduct makes the common stipulation that “whether published or not, ideas or concepts derived from others should be acknowledged.”

But the 1990 and 1995 versions of the story are different in the important sense that Weick now provides Holub 1977 as his source. This, however, is not sufficient to ensure good scholarship. We have already noted that it may even exaggerate the empirical validity of the story to cite a source without indicating the nature of the relation between the text being cited and the text that is doing the citing, the conjunction of signifier and signified, our ‘contact with the real’. In any case, “presenting an author’s exact wording without marking it as a quotation is plagiarism *even if you cite the source*” (Gibaldi, 2003: 70, emphasis added). The guidelines of Weick’s home institution, the University of Michigan, also mentions this form of citation. Even when “the writer use[s] a footnote to indicate the source,” plagiarism occurs when “she does not use quotation marks to indicate that the sentence was lifted in its entirety.” The guidelines add an interesting comment given Rowlinson’s irritation with precisely the *style* of Weick’s writing. “Chances are,” they note, “that an abrupt change in writing style will be noticeable to a critical reader” (University of Michigan Libraries, 1998).

Weick’s work will be remembered in part because of the tenacious insistence with which the anecdote of the map has lodged itself in the imagination of organization theorists. He will continue to be praised for the elegance of the way he makes his “moves of the imagination working within soft constraints” (Mezias, 2003). It may even be his “one contact with the real” (Weick, 2001: 1). Its dominance is something that other theorists (like Rowlinson) worry about and attribute to Weick’s masterful prose style. It is easily explained once we realize that the anecdote was crafted by an accomplished poet, not a management theorist, and so was not Weick’s way of conjoining the signifier with the signified, not Weick’s way of framing or making sense of his associations, but Holub’s. We believe this little detail in the history of scholarship on strategic thinking is a clear indication that, for better or for worse, the strength of organization theory lies not in the rigour of its prose but in the tenacity of its poetry.

## Exhibit A

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, who knew a lot about maps  
according to which life is on its way somewhere or other,  
told us this story from the war  
due to which history is on its way somewhere or other:

The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps  
sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wasteland.  
It began to snow  
immediately, snowed for two days and the unit  
did not return. The lieutenant suffered: he had dispatched  
his own people to death.

But the third day the unit came back.  
Where had they been? How had they made their way?  
Yes, they said, we considered ourselves  
lost and waited for the end. And then one of us  
found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down.  
We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm and then with the map  
we discovered our bearings.  
And here we are.

The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map  
and had a good look at it. It was not a map of the Alps  
but of the Pyrenees.

Goodbye now.

This is Miroslav Holub's (1977) poem 'Brief Thoughts on Maps' as it appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement*, Feb. 4, 1977, translated by Jarmila and Ian Milner. It can be found also in the 1977 collection, *Notes of a Clay Pigeon* (cf. Connolly, 1995). Holub (1923-1998) was a Czech poet and scientist. He was "noted for his detached, lyrical reflections on humanist and scientific subjects" and "was at least as well known [in English speaking countries] as in his homeland" (Encyclopaedia Britannica). He published several books of poetry, including *Selected Poems* (1967), *On the Contrary and Other Poems* (1984), *Poems Before & After* (1990), *Intensive Care: Selected and New Poems* (1996), and *The Rampage* (1997) (*ibid.*).

## Exhibit B

Definitions notwithstanding, I can best show what I think strategy is by describing an incident that happened during military maneuvers in Switzerland. The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wilderness. It began to snow immediately, snowed for two days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant suffered, fearing that he had dispatched his own people to death. But the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map and had a good look at it. He discovered to his astonishment that it was not a map of the Alps but of the Pyrenees. (Weick, 2001: 344-5)

This is a full quotation of the fifth paragraph of Weick's 'Substitutes for Strategy' as it appears in his 2001 collection, *Making Sense of the Organization*, which reprints Weick 1987 (exhibit E). It will be easily seen that it is a verbatim reproduction of Holub's poem (exhibit A), a few minor differences notwithstanding. The enjambments (lineation effects) are removed, the first stanza is left out, 'wasteland' is replaced by 'wilderness', "The lieutenant suffered: he had dispatched" is replaced with "The lieutenant suffered, fearing that he had dispatched" and, finally, Weick adds the words "He discovered to his astonishment." There are half a dozen differences in a text of 144 words. Yet Holub's poem is not referenced anywhere in the paper or in the book's acknowledgements. This is a standard case of academic plagiarism, i.e., using another's words as one's own.

## Exhibit C

This incident, related by the Hungarian Nobel Laureate Albert Szent-Gyorgyi and preserved in a poem by Holub (1977), happened during military maneuvers in Switzerland. The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wilderness. It began to snow immediately, snowed for two days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant suffered, fearing that he had dispatched his own people to death. But the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map and had a good look at it. He discovered to his astonishment that it was not a map of the Alps but of the Pyrenees. (Weick, 1995: 54)

The anecdote here appears exactly as above (exhibit B). The most notable difference here is that Weick does credit Holub, and includes the information from the first stanza about Albert Szent-Gyorgyi. It is important to emphasize, however, that this is not ordinarily considered sufficient citation. Weick's home institution, the University of Michigan, for example, deals with this sort of case explicitly in its academic guidelines. Even when "the writer use[s] a footnote to indicate the source," plagiarism occurs when "she does not use quotation marks to indicate that the sentence was lifted in its entirety." Weick should have quoted the poem (by presenting it as in Exhibit A) as he does, e.g., in the case of Pablo Neruda's 'We Are Many' (Weick, 1995: 18-20). Indeed, the first sentence here actually constitutes an unreferenced paraphrase, since he makes it look as though the reference to the Nobel laureate is a result of Weick's own scholarship.

## Exhibit D

A small Hungarian detachment was on military manoeuvres in the Alps. Their young lieutenant sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wilderness just as it began to snow. It snowed for two days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant feared that he had dispatched his people to their deaths, but the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant took a good look at this

map and discovered, to his astonishment, that it was a map of the of the Pyrenees. (This story was related by the Hungarian Nobel Laureate Albert Szent-Gyorgyi and was turned into a poem by Holub, 1977.) (Weick, 1990: 4)

This is an unsuccessful attempt at both paraphrase and citation. Much of the prose is here still lifted directly from Holub's poem. The paraphrased portions at the beginning are arguably only superficially changed and, as in Exhibit C, he gives the impression of having consulted two versions of the story – Szent-Gyorgyi's and Holub's – and does not properly indicate that the poem he refers to is in fact largely here being quoted.

## Exhibit E

Definitions notwithstanding, I can best show what I think strategy is by describing an incident that happened during military maneuvers in Switzerland. The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps sent a reconnaissance unit into the icy wilderness. It began to snow immediately, snowed for two days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant suffered, fearing that he had dispatched his own people to death. But the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map and had a good look at it. He discovered to his astonishment that it was not a map of the Alps, but a map of the Pyrenees. (Weick, 1987: 222)

This is the anecdote as it appears in the original publication of 'Substitutes for Strategy' in *The Competitive Challenge* (ed. D. J. Teece); see Exhibit B for our analysis.

## Exhibit F

Planning isn't nearly as crucial for productive action as people think it is. I can illustrate this point most clearly by recounting an incident that happened to a small Hungarian detachment on military maneuvers in the Alps. Their young lieutenant sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wilderness just as it began to snow. It snowed for two days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant feared that he had dispatched his people to their deaths, but the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end, but then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we found our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant took a good look at this map and discovered to his astonishment that it was *not* a map of the Alps, but of the Pyrenees. (Weick, 1983: 48-49)

This is the first time Weick uses the anecdote alone. There are some small differences from Holub's poem at the beginning, but it otherwise follows the form already seen in Exhibit B, adding the lieutenant's 'fear' and 'astonishment' (see also Exhibit G below).

## Exhibit G

We can illustrate the basic argument by an incident which happened during military maneuvers in Switzerland. The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wilderness. It began to snow immediately, snowed for two

days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant suffered, fearing that he had dispatched his own people to death. But the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map and had a good look at it. He discovered to his astonishment that it was *not* a map of the Alps, but a map of the Pyrenees. (Swieringa and Weick, 1982: 71)

This is the first instance of the anecdote we have been able to find in the organization theory literature, appearing in a paper that Weick co-authored with Robert J. Swieringa, who is currently dean at the Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University. Here it already has the form it will take in the most recent appearance, namely, Weick 2001 (see Exhibit B).

## Exhibit H

The young lieutenant of a Hungarian detachment in the Alps sent a reconnaissance unit into the icy wilderness. It began to snow immediately, and unexpectedly continued to snow for two days. The unit did not return. The lieutenant feared that he had dispatched his own people to death. However, on the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? 'Yes,' they said: 'We considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. We did not have any maps, compasses or other equipment with which to ascertain our position or a probable route out. But then one of us found an old tattered map in a seldom used pocket. That calmed us down. The map did not seem to quite fit the terrain but eventually we discovered our bearings. We followed the map down the mountain and after a few wrong turns eventually found our way.' The young lieutenant borrowed the map and had a good look at it. 'This isn't a map of the Alps,' he said. 'It's a map of the Pyrenees.' (Weick, 1987). (Cummings and Wilson, 2003: 1)

This is how the anecdote is quoted as an epigraph in Cummings and Wilson's *Images of Strategy*. They cite Weick (1987), but slightly embellish the text. They add that it 'unexpectedly continued' to snow and omit the lieutenant's suffering. The connective 'however' is added and the unit's response is equipped with quotation marks and expanded with additional information: the unit explicitly makes clear that it had no maps or compasses and no idea how to get out. The map is suddenly 'old and tattered' and the pocket is now 'seldom used'. All this may make the point of the story clearer, but it is now far from a quotation of Weick and no indication is given as to where this part of the story came from. Indeed, with the quotation marks added around the utterance it now appears as though their actual words have been documented verbatim, not just paraphrased in their essence. The parts of Holub's poem, however, that remain, are still identical with the source and constitute plagiarism. We do not know how or why these differences have come about.

## Exhibit I

The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps  
sent a reconnaissance unit out onto the icy wasteland.  
It began to snow  
immediately,  
snowed for two days and the unit

did not return.  
The lieutenant suffered:  
he had dispatched  
his own people to death.

But the third day the unit came back.  
Where had they been? How had they made their way?  
Yes, they said, we considered ourselves  
lost and waited for the end. And then one of us  
found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down.  
We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm and then with the map  
we discovered our bearings.  
And here we are.

The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map  
and had a good look at it. It was not a map of the Alps  
but of the Pyrenees

This is the form the poem often takes when it appears on the Internet, where it is normally correctly credited to Holub. This text can be found by searching the Internet for the exact words “onto the icy wasteland” (which contains a typographical error), suggesting that this transcription has a single source wherefrom it has been cut and pasted. (Google returns five versions with the same error, two of which cite Weick as a source. A search for the correct ‘into the icy wasteland’ returns two instances.) The formatting is slightly different than that used in the *Times Literary Supplement* version (Holub, 1977, exhibit A), no doubt because the precise lineation is difficult to consistently reproduce in an electronic format. It is here presented as quoted in Schwartz (1998), which is the likely source of the subsequent electronic appearances (that include the ‘onto’ error). Oddly, Schwartz (1998) says that Holub’s poem is ‘reprinted’ in Weick (1995) and that he has quoted it from there. Consult our exhibit C to see that this is unlikely. The same peculiarity can be found in Brown and Laurier 2004, who somehow manage to quote Holub (1977) correctly (enjambments and all) from Weick (1995). This can be attributed to Schwartz’s slightly misleading citation, which have allowed Brown and Laurier to cite Weick directly. It also explains how Holub’s ‘wasteland’ is correctly rendered (Weick has ‘wilderness’).

## Exhibit J

Karl Weick likes to recount a story about a Hungarian military unit on maneuvers in the Alps that did not return after two days in a snowstorm. On the third day, the soldiers appeared, and explained:

Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and through the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant [who had dispatched the unit] borrowed this remarkable map and had a good look at it. He discovered to his astonishment that it was not a map of the Alps, but a map of the Pyrenees. (1995: 54)  
(Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 1998: 159-160)

Cognitive maps apply metaphor to the notion of mental models. Weick (1990) recounted a favourite story about a Hungarian military unit on maneuvers in the Swiss Alps:

Their young lieutenant sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wilderness just as it began to snow. It snowed for two days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant feared that he had dispatched his people to their deaths, but the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant took a good look at this map and discovered, to his astonishment, that it was a map of the of the Pyrenees. (Weick, 1990, p. 4)

(Chermack 2003: 412)

Weick tells the story of a reconnaissance group of soldiers lost in the Alps on a training mission. It was winter, they had no maps, and they seemed hopelessly lost. They were preparing to die, when one soldier found a map crushed down at the bottom of his pack. With the map in hand, they regained their courage, bivouacked for the night, and proceeded out of the mountains the next day to rescue. Only when they were recuperating in the main camp did someone notice that the map they had been using wasn't a map of the Alps at all; it was a map of the Pyrenees. (Berwick, 2002: 18)

It is also evident in the example recounted by Weick (1987) of the Hungarian soldiers lost in a snowstorm in the Alps who eventually found their way back to camp by discovering a map of the Pyrenees. Before they found the map, the soldiers could not be said to 'know how' to get out of the Alps. As they themselves reported: "we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end" (Weick 1987, p. 222). Yet, once they had found the map, the soldiers were able to enact a collective competence that got them out of the Alps. As an officer described: "And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are" (1987, p. 222). The "knowing how" to find their way back to camp which the soldiers displayed after their discovery of the map was a situationally enacted capability – constituted through reading the map, using it to calm themselves and make sense of their surroundings, and then beginning to take purposive action towards finding a way out of the mountains. (Orlikowski, 2002: 253)

This is a collection of instances where the anecdote is quoted or paraphrased or both. It is interesting in all cases that Holub is not mentioned. Here the canonical status of the story as a formulation of Weick's writing *not Holub's* is made quite clear. One might compare Peter Barry's use of the poem in a field outside of organization studies where the obligatory reference to Weick is, of course, not obligatory. He correctly quotes the poem and its moral as Holub's (Barry, 2003: 6).

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