



New Innovations in Neo-institutional Theory

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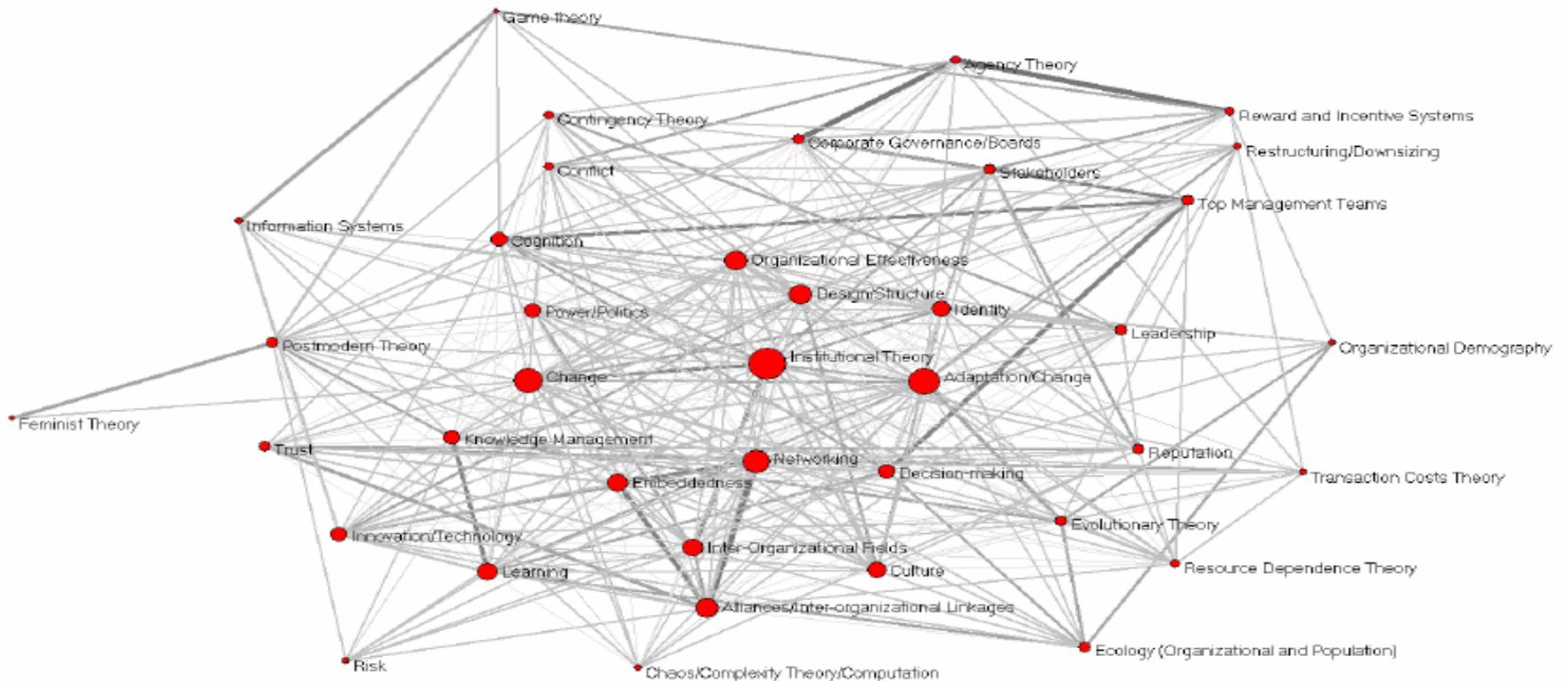
**Why does neo-institutional theory
need new innovations?**

Because it has “jumped the shark”



We are all institutional theorists now

AOM Conference Submission Topic Linkages – OMT 2004



NOTES:

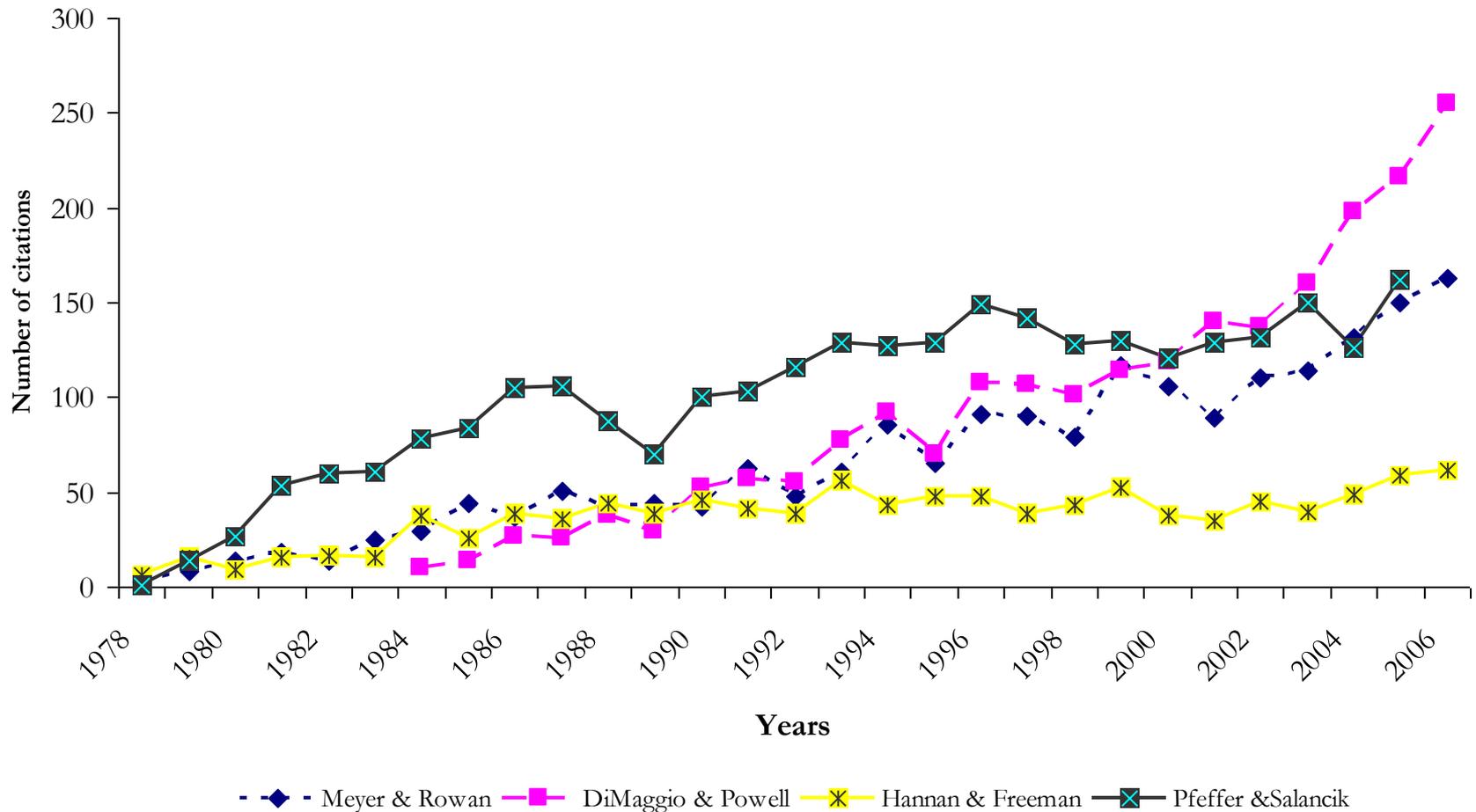
Node size = # of submissions (max, Institutional Theory = 92; min, Feminist Theory = 1)

Line width = # of ties between topics (max, Inst. Theory to Change = 23)

Line shade = Tie concentration (darker lines reflect a

But it's a *structural* kind of institutionalism

Figure 1: Citations to Meyer & Rowan (1977), DiMaggio & Powell (1983), Hannan & Freeman (1977) and Pfeffer & Salancik (1978)



What's wrong with structural institutionalism?

- Emphasize outcomes without understanding the processes behind them
- We lose focus on important questions and begin to study trivial things
- The “institutional story” loses coherence

AN example: Mimetic isomorphism & diffusion

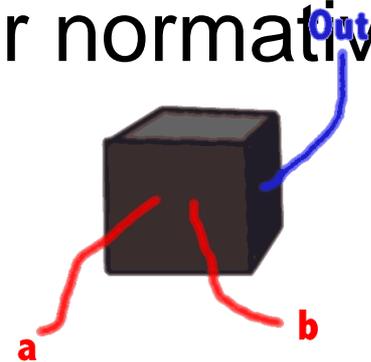
- Original story:
 - (a) firms increase their survivability chances by adopting characteristics that conform to broader socio-cultural ideals
 - (b) Firms adopt practices that mimic their institutional environment, even though such practices do not confer an economic or competitive advantage
 - (c) Firms in a common field begin to resemble each other

Mimetic diffusion: A 'black box'

1. What are the motives of adoptees
 - i.e. do they adopt for technical or mimetic reasons
 - Donaldson (1995)

2. Does isomorphism occur because of mimicry or due to coercive or normative pressures?

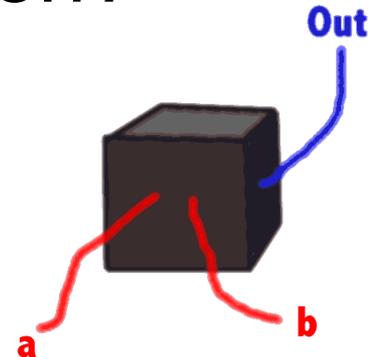
- Mizruchi & Fein (1999)



Mimetic diffusion: A 'black box'

3. Mimetic Adoption is never complete
 - Czarniawski & Joerges (1995); Boxenbaum & Jonnson (2008)

4. Post adoption, how are mimetic practices elaborated inside an organization?
 - Meyer & Rowan (1977)



Another example: institutional Entrepreneurship and change

TABLE 2
Strategic Responses to Institutional Pressures

Strategies	Tactics	Examples
Acquiesce	Habit	Following invisible, taken-for-granted rules
	Imitate	Mimicking institutional models
	Comply	Obedying rules and accepting constraints
Compromise	Balance	Balancing the expectations of different stakeholders
	Pacify	Placating and accommodating
	Bargain	Negotiating with institutions
Avoid	Conceal	Disguising nonconformity
	Buffer	Loosening institutional attachments
	Escape	Changing goals, activities, or locations
Defy	Dismiss	Ignoring explicit norms and constraints
	Challenge	Contesting rules and requirements
	Attack	Assaulting the sources of institutional constraints
Manipulate	Co-opt	Importing influential constraints
	Influence	Shaping values and criteria
	Control	Dominating institutional constraints



FIGURE 1
Stages of Institutional Change

