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This book is about the growing and increasingly significant role of ‘hybrid organizations’ in the ‘third sector’. Both these terms will be explored in detail later in the book, but they demand some immediate working definitions in order to clarify the main focus and themes of the book.

First, hybrid organizations. What has often been called the ‘blurring’ of the boundaries of the public, private and third sector has long been recognized in the literature. This chapter argues that we need to move beyond that vague description and that practice, policy and theory now have an urgent need for a tougher conceptual approach to the phenomenon. In response to that need a tentative theory of hybrid organizations is offered in Chapter 3 which discusses in detail the nature of their accountability and ownership. However, without pre-empting that discussion, a few preliminary words may help set the scene.

A first step might be to consider them as organizations that possess ‘significant’ characteristics of more than one sector (public, private and third). We might think of ‘partially nation-aliased banks’, ‘social enterprises’ and Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac as examples of the genre. Taking one step beyond this and again for purposes of early clarification, I shall argue that organizations have ‘roots’ and have primary adherence to the distinctive principles – the ‘rules of the game’ – of just one sector. Hybrity is not therefore just any mixture of features from different sectors, but according to this view, is about fundamental and distinctly different governance and operational principles in each sector.
Next, the third sector. Again, by way of an initial entry point into an area, we shall adopt a relaxed attitude to the boundary of a sector tellingly described as a ‘loose and baggy monster’ (Kendall and Knapp, 1995). The task of understanding the voluntary, nonprofit, NGO sector, and possibly taming the monster, will be an important underlying theme of the book. However, in order to manage what is clearly a vast territory, we have focused on third sector organizations (TSOs), mainly in the UK, which are primarily concerned with ‘welfare’ as generally understood in the social policy literature.

Even in the comparatively short period between the original idea for the book and its submission, its subject matter has become uncomfortably topical. ‘Welfare’ was always important but in the Western democracies it has for several decades been at a comfortable distance from the main concerns of the majority. The global recession has changed all that.

In the UK, the same economic disaster has led the government to emphasise even more the potential role of TSOs in the economy (Cabinet Office, 2009). A significant number of these TSOs will be ‘hybrids’. And, for the same economic reasons, hybrid organizations in the other sectors have also risen to prominence but for very different, and negative, reasons.

Hybrids have moved from being a minority scholarly interest to centre stage in mainstream political discourse. They are complex organizations and one of the underlying themes of the book is the challenge to increase our understanding in the belief that this will diminish the widespread phenomenon of stumbling into change.

The task of this opening chapter is to provide an introductory background, to set out the main themes of the book, to raise some initial issues and challenges and to provide a brief guide to the other chapters. It consists of four sections.

The chapter opens with a brief and selective gaze over a period of about 40 years, from the dominance in UK public policy of the traditional welfare bureaucracy to the rise of what we might call the ‘welfare hybrid’. Our focus is on the third sector and the message is that ‘blurring’ is an inadequate way to describe the current complex institutional environment. The second section notes the way in which what are regarded as the distinctive features of the third sector are held in high regard by
government and highlights the debate within the sector about its future. This is followed by a discussion which suggests that hybrids are ubiquitous and makes a link between them and current events. The chapter concludes with a more detailed explanation of the territory and issues to be explored in the book and a brief introduction to the chapters that follow.

Beyond blurring in social policy

Forty years ago the study of UK social policy was more straightforward. It was an era when social services were mainly both funded and delivered by large public sector organizations. These governmental welfare bureaucracies (Billis, 1984) were the dominant organizational form and the Seebohm Report reflected the pinnacle of the policy zeitgeist. It proposed new social services departments whose aim was no less than ‘to meet all the social needs of the family or individuals together and as a whole’ (Seebohm, 1968, p. 160). Today, it is difficult to comprehend such optimism.

What was generally called the ‘voluntary sector’ had a modest place in welfare provision, public policy and academic study. Whilst innumerable numbers of people benefited from its presence, it played a minor role in the formal political and academic arenas. The private sector was scarcely visible in the UK social policy debates. In the US, with its different welfare structure and its large educational system, what is generally referred to there as the nonprofit sector, had begun to develop a more prominent academic role. The Association of Voluntary Action Scholars (AVAS) was founded in 1971, and David Horton Smith founded the Journal of Voluntary Action Research (JVAR) in 1972. The following year Etzioni (1973) advocated the identification of a ‘third sector’ as an alternative to the public and private sectors ‘to serve our needs’ and which ‘may well be the most important alternative for the next few decades’ (p. 315).

Reel forward some 10 years and the old straightforward world had begun to disappear. Resources became increasingly scarce. Public bureaucracies were heavily criticised. In the UK the Seebohm approach was in decline and was being replaced
by the ‘mixed economy’ (Webb and Wistow, 1982) of statutory, voluntary, private and informal provision. One of the key writers of the time, Adrian Webb, had already begun to analyse what he called the collapse of ‘the pure doctrine of state welfare’ (Webb, 1979).

1978 turned out to be a busy year for the voluntary and nonprofit sectors. The Wolfenden Report on ‘the future of voluntary organisations’ appeared and the voluntary sector moved closer to centre stage (Wolfenden, 1978). The Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector (ARVAC) was established and the world’s first postgraduate research and teaching initiative the Programme of Research and Training in Voluntary Action (PRTVAC) was launched at Brunel University. Shortly after, the popular Open University voluntary sector management programme was established and it slowly became respectable for the voluntary sector to be discussed in academic circles. The year 1978 also saw the establishment in the US of the Program on NonProfit Organizations (PONPO) at Yale University to foster interdisciplinary research aimed at developing an understanding of nonprofit organizations and their role in economic and political life.

Since then we have grown familiar with the increasing adoption of the norm and methods of the market by both the public and third sectors. A bundle of approaches collectively known as ‘The New Public Management’ (NPM) became influential in the 1980s and 1990s in the provision of public services (see the following chapter by Margaret Harris). Contracting and payment for services has long been a familiar part of the welfare scene in the US (Kramer and Terrell, 1984; Demone and Gibelman, 1989; Smith and Lipsky, 1993) and in Europe (Kramer, 1993; Lewis, 1999; Alcock et al., 2004). There were also changes in the study of the third sector. PRTVAC moved to the London School of Economics (LSE) in 1988, changed its name to the Centre for Voluntary Organization (CVO) and yet again to the Centre for Civil Society. A series of seminars held at the CVO between 1993 and 1995 led to the establishment of the Voluntary Sector Studies Network (VSSN) which was to play an increasingly important research role. At the time of writing, a new journal (*The Voluntary Sector Review*) is due to be published.
Around the world, other universities had established their own centres. The Mandel Center for nonprofit organizations in Case Western Reserve University was founded in 1983. It provided a home and also the founding editor (Dennis Young) for *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, which started publication in 1990 and was co-sponsored with the CVO. In 1991, there were sufficient academic research and education centres to establish the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council and by 2009, it listed 45 member centres.

In 1992, the International Society for Third-Sector Research and its associated journal *Voluntas* further strengthened the field of study. By now a stream of books was leaving the printing presses and a new generation of third sector scholars emerged. The private sector spotted the developments and an army of consultants and trainers offered their services to the sector. For better or worse, third sector staff – in common with their colleagues in the public sector – became increasingly subjected to the virtues of concepts originally developed for the private sector.

With the advent of New Labour, the pace of policy initiatives and institutional experimentation dramatically increased (see Chapter 2). In part this might, as Alcock (2003) argues, have resulted from a combination of the Labour embrace of a third way located between the state and the market (Blair, 1998; Giddens, 1998), and a more pragmatic approach to policy-making and service delivery.

But whatever the precise nature of the Third Way and its linkage with New Labour policies and whether policies such as partnership actually work (Glendinning et al., 2002), we now appear to have reached a new pinnacle of complexity with a bewildering array of policy initiatives and apparently new organizational forms. The list is lengthy and includes compacts, partnerships, social enterprises, quasi-markets, networks, transfer associations, community interest companies, foundation trusts, city academies and others. Many of these can be found, in somewhat different shapes, both in Europe and in the US. Thus, as Defourney and Nyssens point out, the ‘concept’ of social enterprise (an important group of organizations for this study) made its breakthrough both in the US and in Italy in the early 1990s. In 2002, the debate accelerated in the UK when...
‘the Blair government launched the Social Enterprise Coalition and created a “Social Enterprise Unit”’ (Nyssens et al., 2006, pp. 3–4).

This dramatic growth of increasingly complex organizations with opaque accountability structures which apparently straddled several sectors has reinforced a long-standing concern about sector identity in the UK and US. For example, as Lan and Rainey (1992) point out in a helpful review of some of the early literature, social scientists have been exploring blurring and the boundaries between public and private organizations ‘for decades’ (p. 7). Academics, particularly those working in and with the third sector, have been particularly prone to worry about sector boundaries. It is probably no accident since, in the past, they have often been made acutely aware of its modest place in the economy compared with the public and private sectors. Indeed, one well-known American third sector writer (O’Neill, 1989) was compelled to complain that: ‘We often talk of government and business, the “public” and “private” sectors, as if there were no other’ (p. 1). This agonising over the boundary of the third sector has often led to it being described as ‘messy’ and ‘blurred’ (Powell, 1987; Van Til, 1988; James, 1990; Simon, 1990; Billis, 1991; Lohmann, 1992; Powell and Clemens, 1998; Weisbrod, 1998; Ott, 2001).

However, organizations in all three sectors (public, private and third) are now so influenced by adjacent sectors that ‘blurring’ scarcely does justice to what is happening. Yet we are faced with a paradox. Despite blurring and the apparent diminution of boundaries, sector identity remains powerful and important. It still provides a deep-rooted and fundamentally different way of responding to problems. The sector title is readily understood by citizens, since it appears to have reasonable clarity of ownership and accountability, and can consequently form the basis of public debate and policy. Sector characteristics and alleged advantages, although they may deviate from the ideal model, still provide a benchmark for what things ought to be like and for how they should work. And, if there were indeed any doubt about the continued power of the sector concept, it is only necessary to open a daily paper and engage with the discussion as to why taxpayers should bail out the banks.
If we return to the area of our own concern, the entire landscape has changed. Even the sector walls of the bastion of governmental provision have been breached. The National Health Service (NHS), the institution above all others which epitomised the very fundamentals of the UK welfare state, is undergoing what a *Times* leader describes as a ‘quiet revolution’. In reality, the influences from the private and third sector have been nibbling away at the walls for some time. Those who seek evidence of the astonishing growth of complexity need do no more than spend a few minutes looking at the organizational structure and accountabilities of a Hospital NHS Trust. Some began as charity hospitals and then moved into the NHS. They can in addition receive support from their own charitable foundations; earn income from overseas patients; have a complicated structure of governance of Trust Boards (with heavy staff membership) and Special Trustees; involve hundreds of volunteers; and in at least one case (Great Ormond Street) have 4500 ‘members’. But the action that led *The Times* to realise that a ‘revolution’ is taking place throughout the NHS was the government’s decision to introduce patient contributions to care (‘co-payments’). It has taken this sort of controversial decision to bring the ‘quiet revolution’ into the public arena.

**The Debate: A Faustian Pact?**

At the centre of the current maelstrom of institutional change is the sector which is most ill-defined, which has no generally agreed name, but it is most frequently known as the ‘non-profit’, ‘voluntary’, ‘community’, ‘non-governmental’ or – what we shall prefer here – the ‘third’ sector. Notwithstanding its fragmented and contested boundaries, it is this sector that has risen to prominence as a central player in the policy arena. Although it is a process that has been evident for some time, the sector’s appeal for New Labour should hardly be surprising. After all, Anthony Giddens, one of the architects of the ‘third way’, argued that ‘there are no permanent boundaries between government and civil society’ (Giddens, 1998, pp. 79–80).

In spite of the absence of a generally agreed name or boundary for the sector as a whole, TSOs are seen to possess
attributes that have become increasingly attractive to public policy makers. These have been identified in various policy statements as, among other features, providing services and care, mobilising communities, helping to identify and solve new needs as well as old ones, campaigning for social change, focusing on the needs of service users, tackling complex needs and difficult social issues, being flexible and offering joined up services, capable of earning users’ trust, promoting volunteering and mentoring, building stronger and connected communities and helping to transform public services (Home Office, 1998; Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, 2002; HM Treasury, 2002, 2006).

For obvious reasons, the role of the sector is seen to be even more critical:

As a vital part of the economy, a key deliverer of public and community services, and the glue which hold our communities together, the third sector is playing a vital role in delivering real help and support to people from all walks of life who are affected by the recession. (Cabinet Office, 2009, p. 6)

This positive image is widely held, and future generations of third sector commentators might look back and reflect on this period as a golden age of widespread political consensus and public support.

Nonetheless, there are those working in and with the sector who question whether these traditional distinctive attributes are being eroded in the new welfare landscape. Certainly, the extensive academic and practitioner literature continually points to the dangers of the increasing influence of adjacent sectors, and the potential loss of independence and possible mission creep. (For a recent critique, see Haugh and Kitson, 2007.) The tenor of the critique is that these pressures will lead, or have already led, to voluntary/nonprofit organizations losing their soul. They have entered into a Faustian pact in which the sector gains resources, possible influence and the opportunity to deliver more services at the cost of those fundamental attributes which made it an attractive proposition in the first place: its mission, values and voluntary contribution.
The alternative approach is more optimistic. The core values and ethos of the sector will survive. Substantial increases in government contracts and market-driven sources of income will enable the sector to meet the needs of even more people. Campaigning for unpopular and unfashionable causes will continue. The growth of large paid-staff hierarchies will not affect the ability to innovate and to respond rapidly and sensitively to the needs of users. Enthusiastic advocates of this approach make a strong case. Stephen Bubb, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the professional association of the most senior paid staff in the sector, is sensitive to the traditional argument. He responds that becoming ‘large and professional’ does not mean that the sector loses its soul. Large organizations can ‘remain closely in touch with clients and communities’ (Bubb, 2007). Furthermore, ‘to compromise on certain issues in order to deliver on other objectives is not evidence of a loss of independence. It is evidence of pragmatism and, often achievement of gain for beneficiaries’. (p. 16)

Stuart Etherington, the Chief Executive of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), steers a more cautious course. After noting that voluntary organizations ‘can and do bite the hand that feeds us on a regular basis’, he introduces several critical preconditions if they are to deliver services and also campaign. This he suggests can be done ‘with good governance, with good management and with good contracts’ (Etherington, 2004).

Both optimistic and pessimistic approaches deserve serious attention. The debate is about the allocation of resources and who is best positioned to respond to what sort of social problems. In this new era, systems of governance and accountability have become increasingly obscure. The public, staff and users have probably given up attempting to understand these new initiatives. All too often, polemic fills the vacuum.

**The ubiquitous hybrid**

One thing is sure. We are not going to return – at least in the near future – to an (apparently) benign era of more straightforward organizational boundaries. Even the notion of ‘the mixed
economy of welfare’, itself a concept that ‘remains problematic’ (Powell, 2007, p. 2), does not entirely capture what is happening. What we are now facing are fundamental changes in the nature of the organizations that are financing, planning and delivering welfare. It is not just the economy, but also the organizations themselves that have become ‘mixed’! This has been a slow process which has taken place during several decades but has accelerated dramatically during the period of New Labour with the growing influence of the hybrid organization.

A comprehensive report to the US Congress makes a similar case: ‘in recent years both Congress and the President have increasingly used hybrid organizations for the implementation of public policy functions’ (Kosar, 2008, p. 1). As is often the situation, both the US and the UK seem to be marching to the same drumbeat.

The pace and noise of the hybrid drumbeat have intensified on both sides of the Atlantic. Kosar’s report was concerned with hybrids as part of ‘quasi government’. It contained mini-case studies of two organizations that would then have been largely unknown to UK readers. Today, those organizations, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, have achieved international notoriety. Indeed, in a telling phrase, (at least) one UK commentator blames them for the global financial collapse and refers to them as ‘the abominable hybrid’ (Baker, 2008, p. 23). This is but the latest and most dramatic example of the disquiet that is often generated by institutions that do not have explicit clarity of accountability either to the state or the market. Take for example the unloved quango. As Hirst notes, they ‘have been an issue of public concern in Britain since roughly the mid 1970s’. He suggests that this is because of the clash between the ‘principles of democratic and transparent accountability and the placing of public money and government functions in the hands of unelected persons’ (Hirst, 1995, p. 341).

Yet, whilst they may have been sometimes vilified, they are widespread and growing. They have been around for a long while and can be uncovered in most areas of social activity. In the more limited field of enquiry of this book it is evident that hybrid TSOs are not just an Anglo-Saxon phenomenon. They
are widespread in Europe (Evers and Laville, 2004; Osborne, 2008) and well beyond (Lewis, 1998).

They might perhaps also be seen as a constructive and creative organizational solution. This therefore presents an intriguing agenda of challenges for practice, theory and policy. The third sector provides a ready-made laboratory to study a creative variety of hybrid since it is here that many volunteer-driven associations have slowly adopted entrepreneurial and market-driven initiatives. A prominent example of welfare hybridity is the rise to prominence of social enterprises – organizations that illustrate in their title the fusion of third/public and private sector values.

Although hybrids are playing an increasingly important role in social policy, we appear almost to have stumbled into a new era of welfare hybridity. Bearing all this in mind, the authors believe that the study of hybrid TSOs is critical for an understanding of social policy and that they also provide a rich territory for the development of ideas about hybrid organizations in general. There are indications that this is, at the very least, a prudent moment to begin the process of seeking some answers. The publication of the cross-party Public Administration Select Committee Report with its vigorous, almost withering, critique of the sector’s claim to distinctiveness represents a warning shot over the bow (Public Administration Select Committee, 2008). There are increasing demands in UK public policy statements for more evidence of distinctiveness and value-added contribution.

From across the Atlantic – often a good barometer for what might happen here – come warnings from the editor of The Nonprofit Quarterly that the UK should not look to the US for good practice (Jump, 2008, p. 1). ‘The government-funded third sector in the US’, she claimed, ‘had stagnated, with many service-delivering charities losing touch with their beneficiaries’. Perhaps more worrying is evidence from within the UK sector. Practically every issue of its main trade journal (Third Sector) reports problems that echo our own agenda of questions. Even a superficial reading demonstrates that most of the examples surround the role and activities of third sector hybrids substantially dependent on resources originating from the public and private sectors.
Even in a period of economic stability there would therefore be a compelling case for the study of hybrid organizations. But it seems we are no longer in such a desirable state. It would be naive to imagine that it will be business as usual for the third sector whose functioning is now so intimately linked to numerous resource streams, few of which are likely to escape unscathed.

**Territory, issues and structure of the book**

The territory of the book can now be laid out in more detail. Clearly, by definition, organizational hybridity is not restricted to one particular sector or one country. It is a huge area and in various chapters of the book we have attempted to acknowledge this broader institutional arena. Many of our authors have substantial overseas experience in several sectors and where relevant this has been drawn upon. Nevertheless, the study of hybridity is in its infancy and inevitably our aims must be more limited. Consequently, our focus is hybrid TSOs. But even here a word of warning is in order.

The very nature of hybridity demands a flexible approach to organizational boundaries. In this area of study, all is not necessarily what it seems to be on the surface. Organizational titles and policy categories, such as social enterprises, community interest companies (CIC), partnerships and so on, can obscure the real nature of organizations and accountability. So, in order not to constrain the analysis, most of the usual culprits have been included in our broad third sector boundary. They comprise voluntary and community organizations, nonprofits, charities, non-governmental organizations, social movements, grassroots associations, self-help groups, social enterprises and numerous other organizations that do not fall obviously into the public and private sectors (Kendall, 2003). For those who are perhaps not yet battle-scarred in the intricacies of the definitional debate about these types of organizations, some helpful texts in this area are referenced in Chapter 3 and elsewhere in the book. Since Chapter 3 and other chapters will be discussing sectors and their boundaries, we might feel more relaxed than usual in adopting this standard approach of third sector researchers.
In order to understand better the nature of hybridity in TSOs, the majority of the case studies in Part II of the book have been chosen not only in order to provide a reasonable cross-section of the UK third sector, but also because they appear to provide particularly challenging boundary issues for the study of hybridity.

This book is focused on TSOs primarily operating in the field of what is generally regarded as welfare in social policy programmes. However, despite the unquantifiable substantial place of the third sector in all its myriad varieties to the well-being of the vast majority of citizens, commentators, particularly in the Western democracies, have emphasised other fundamental aspects of its role.

There is a long and distinguished history of writers who have emphasised these other (non-welfare) aspects. In practice the third sector’s role in welfare and its broader societal contribution are often difficult to disentangle. For example, the important Wolfenden committee had two central concerns. These were ‘the strengthening of collective action in meeting important social needs and the maintenance of a pluralistic pattern of institutions’ (Wolfenden, 1978, p. 21). In the United States, Warren (2001) points to the ‘remarkable consensus [that] is emerging around Tocqueville’s view that the virtues and viability of a democracy depend on the robustness of its associational life’ (p. 3). Although focused on the contribution to democracy, Warren makes an elegant argument for the wider role of associations.

The Wolfenden Committee, reflecting on the ‘voluntary movement’, declared that they have ‘all the time... been conscious of one over-riding fact... There is nothing static about the scene’ (p. 13). Indeed there is not: a fact that needs to be remembered when exploring the nature of change in the sector.

Finally, I hope that all this succeeds in delineating the territory and main focus of the book, and in the following section I move on to consider some of the challenges to be considered. But before then I would like to conclude this section with a few words about our potential readership. Clearly, we hope that these studies will interest and prove useful for academics and students, practitioners and policy makers concerned with
the third sector within the UK and internationally, which is the main research focus of the contributors. The study of the third sector has now become genuinely international, with academics, practitioners and policy makers in different countries increasingly interacting in the main sector journals and conferences and we hope to make a contribution to that international endeavour. Increasingly, also, the growing degree of hybridity on the public/third sector boundaries has led to greater theoretical interchange in the public administration journals. The private sector literature is also paying greater attention to the third sector.

Beyond that, I hope that those in the business and management field will find the concept of hybrid organizations of relevance. The extent and scale of these hybrids deserves attention from the widest possible disciplinary approaches.

Challenges for practice, theory and policy

In keeping with an investigatory approach we are primarily concerned to open up ‘hybrid organizations’ as an important new area of study. In order to do that, a number of questions need to be addressed. They can be grouped together in four main areas:

1. What is the nature of change in the third sector?

Because of the sector’s perceived role not only in the provision of welfare services, but also in advocacy and the development of what is generally regarded as a healthy and flourishing democratic society, change with respect to its core attributes requires serious consideration. For example, is the choice only between the optimistic or pessimistic scenarios; or can a somewhat more sophisticated model be developed?

2. What are hybrid TSOs and how can the issues of accountability and transparency be addressed?

Why has hybridity grown so rapidly in the past decade? Is it possible at least to begin the process of theory building in this area? How can we approach the vexed problem of clarity of
accountability amidst a sea of hybridity? What are some of the unresolved issues?

3. Stumbling into hybridity: can theory help?
The organizations described in this book represent different types of hybrid TSOs, coping with a variety of different pressures and responding in different ways. What light can an emerging theory throw on the problems faced by the case study hybrid TSOs, in particular the dangers of stumbling into hybridity? Might different sorts of hybrids present distinctive challengers?

4. What are the wider questions and implications for practice and policy?
Do the concepts and approaches raise helpful questions for those responsible for the governance and operations of TSOs? Can a better understanding of the third sector and its hybrid organizational forms improve consistency of public policy towards the sector and improve the coherence and effectiveness of support from sector? And, looking beyond the third sector, does the theory at least raise useful questions particularly with respect to hybridity in the public sector?

Many of these questions, and others raised by the contributing authors, will serve as a possible research agenda.

Organization of the book
The remaining chapters of Part I of the book comprise three further contextual studies covering the following: social policy influences; a theory of hybrid organizations; and reflections on the nature of governance in hybrid sector organizations.
The public and social policy context, which is briefly touched upon in this chapter, is dealt with more extensively in the following chapter by Margaret Harris who looks at the policy environment within which TSOs have been operating, especially during the period of New Labour governments since 1997. Many elements in the environment in this period are
considered to have been particularly conducive to the trends outlined in this chapter – towards greater TSO hybridity and to the formation of new complex hybrid structures. The chapter argues that there are other, often contradictory, influences in the TSO policy environment that may be not only simultaneously pushing TSOs in different directions – towards greater TSO hybridity, but also exerting pressures on them to preserve their organizational autonomy.

In Chapter 3, I lay out an emerging theory of hybrid organizations. I begin by developing ideal models of the public and private sectors, provide a definition of ‘principal ownership’ and lay out their distinctive ‘rules of the game’. A comparable archetype is then built for the third sector. Having built the foundations, a model of the three sectors and their hybrid zones is presented. The analysis is completed by offering the concepts of (a) ‘shallow’ compared with ‘entrenched’ hybrids (those with deeply embedded characteristics of neighbouring sectors) and (b) ‘organic’ compared with ‘enacted’ (those instigated by other organizations) hybrids. The ideas in this chapter are picked up where appropriate in later chapters.

The final contextual chapter by Chris Cornforth and Roger Spear (Chapter 4) focuses on the governance of hybrid organizations and in particular the challenges posed by the growth of the more complex structures. It identifies the main governance arrangements adopted by unitary TSOs with single boards and highlights the current failure of governance research to keep pace with the growth of multi-level structures with main and subsidiary boards. The authors suggest that many important challenges that face hybrid TSOs are shaped by their different origins (legal structures, regulatory requirements and development paths).

Part II of the book contains seven studies of important areas of hybridity, relates these to the main themes of the book and provides a foundation for the concluding chapter. The general rationale and direction of the studies is to move from the ‘shallow’ types of hybridity to the more ‘entrenched’ examples.

The opening chapter by Angela Ellis Paine, Nick Ockenden and Joanna Stuart discusses the involvement of volunteers, both at board and at service level. Underlying themes are the impact of changes on the experience of the volunteers, the
diversity of their involvement and practical implications for the sector. The authors discuss the impact of the relatively rapid professionalisation of the sector and the displacement of volunteers by paid staff. The conclusion of their analysis is that the nature of volunteering is changing significantly in hybrid TSOs and particularly so in entrenched hybrids.

In Chapter 6, Colin Rochester and Malcolm Torry present the first of the studies that focus on a particular set of organizations, those that are faith-based and are, at most, at the ‘shallow’ end of hybridity. They suggest that while the commitment of religious congregations to serving their local communities and the government’s interest in seeing them delivering public policy may overlap to some extent, they are not rooted in the same values and operating principles. The apparent slowness of faith-based organizations to embrace the public service delivery agenda, they argue, is not the product of lack of capacity (as is generally believed to be the case) but a kind of passive resistance rooted in non-negotiable theological values which are different from those which underpin government policy.

The book enters more firmly into the territory of ‘shallow’ hybridity with the study by Romayne Hutchison and Ben Cairns (Chapter 7) of ‘community anchor organizations’ many of which the authors analyse as shallow hybrids. They identify a chronic tension within these organizations between their traditional commitment to the potential of community development and organizational change arising from policy and funding pressures. Hybridity, they conclude, is not necessarily to be avoided; but community anchor organizations need to be aware of its implications, particularly for their distinctive history and potential problems of managing accountability.

In Chapter 8, Mike Aiken presents three organizational case studies of social enterprises in the work integration field. The particular challenges and tensions faced by each organization are discussed by utilising ideas about hybridity. Using the idea of ‘principal ownership’ as a dominating logic, Aiken reaches the preliminary possibility that each of the organizations had a primary affiliation to different sectors. He concludes that understanding how social enterprises manage their internal tensions is important for policy and practice, and will require
analysis of their depth of hybridity, the nature of their moves across sectors and the possibility of reconciling competing sector logics within one agency.

We move even further into hybrid territory in the following chapter by Joanna Howard and Marilyn Taylor who examine the opportunities and challenges that arise in two ‘partnership hybrids’. Both began life as state-sponsored partnerships, but reconstituted themselves as non-statutory entities. They suggest that hybridity can offer space for innovation but that this depends on commitment to a clear vision for the organization and a clear overall structure. They conclude that while it is too early to make a judgement on success or failure of these forms of hybridity, conflicting expectations and commitments led to the collapse in one organization, whereas the other is an organization in transition.

In Chapter 10, David Mullins and Hal Pawson examine the rise of housing associations, analyse their changing position on the public–private spectrum and discuss the extent to which it remains accurate to portray associations as part of the voluntary sector. This is followed by an exploration of the changing forms of hybridity and the shifting public/private boundary, growing pains associated with the emergence of very large organizations and the impact of the post-2007 economic downturn on the hybrid model. In conclusion they consider the relevance of the two faces of hybridity: ‘for-profits in disguise’ and ‘agents of policy’ in understanding English and Dutch housing associations.

In the last of these seven chapters, David Lewis introduces an essential counterbalance to the emphasis so far by appropriately bringing us back to the individual in organizations and their experience of working across the sector boundaries. Drawing on ethnographic research on the life-work histories of individuals who have crossed between the third and the public sector, he argues that they embody at the individual level elements of the bigger picture of sector hybridity discussed in the book. The author examines the tensions that exist between the ideal model of the sector and real life in organizations. He concludes that despite increased hybridization, the model continues to play an important role for individuals in managing sector realities.
In the final chapter, I return to key questions posed in this opening chapter. A typology of hybrid organizations is constructed utilising concepts presented in Chapter 3 and tested in the light of the material presented by my colleagues in earlier chapters. The typology first examines the nature of hybridity, mission and identity and a second section speculates about the possible implications for ownership and accountability. Both these sections discuss challenges presented by change in hybrid TSOs, but the earlier case studies lead to the conclusion that a broader analysis of change is required, and a number of different processes are discussed in relation to the sector as a whole.

The chapter and the book conclude with reflections on the implications of this study of third sector hybrid organizations for those who lead and work in the sector, those who develop and implement public and social policy and those who research and study in this and neighbouring areas. I believe that policy expectations – both at the public and the individual organizational level – cannot be divorced from an understanding of organizations that are expected to deliver those policies. Failure to close that gap is at the expense of those who receive the end products of our organizations.

Note

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FROM WELFARE BUREAUCRACIES TO WELFARE HYBRIDS

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