Foreword

It is our pleasure to introduce you to this volume of fascinating work (quite literally) on new horizons of managerial and organizational cognition. What you see represented in this volume are some of the most critical areas of interest in the field of cognition research today, including strategic decision-making, managerial biases, intuition, sensemaking, and strategic change. As organizational cognition scholars, our interest lies in understanding how individuals, dyads, *and* collectives think, conceive, represent, and act based on information. We strive to fully comprehend the meaning-making process — how we make sense of the world in which we live and how such knowledge informs our understanding of how organizations form, change, and ultimately thrive. We are pleased that such a diverse and talented group of scholars from all over the world is contributing work toward these lofty goals.

It is also our pleasure to reflect briefly on the state of cognition research given our positions as the last two chairs of the Managerial and Organizational Cognition Division of the Academy of Management. In this role, we have been able to observe first hand not only the exciting research on cognition but also trends and new areas of interest.

What is both beneficial and challenging to organizational cognition research is that it is, by nature, *multi-level* and *multi-method*, as noted in the domain statement for the Managerial and Organizational Cognition Division. Cognition scholars span all divisions of the Academy and multiple disciplines. Indeed, how we think and conceive of situations impacts individual behavior at the most micro-level as well as firm behavior at the most macro-level. Consequently, we see researchers studying individuals, relationships, teams, organizations, and industries while using a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods with both deductive and inductive approaches. We, as a division within the

Academy, try to provide a home for this disparate group of researchers. Nevertheless it is quite a difficult task given our overall scholarly tendency to homophily – wherein we gravitate toward those studying at the same levels and using similar methods. Bridging this crevasse is both our greatest challenge as well as the *raison d'etre* for the Managerial and Organizational Cognition division. Our success is based on how well we tackle critical, relevant organizational phenomena centered on cognition in multiple ways.

As an illustrative example, scholars have astutely increased attention on intuition and its role in the decision-making process. Research on intuition is centered on understanding the conditions under which nonconscious, affect-laden thought can lead to better decision-making processes (e.g., Dane & Pratt, 2007). In this book, the chapter by Constantiou, Shollo, and Vendelø adopts this frame while discussing the role of intuition in the strategic decision-making process. This research on intuition represents a shift from the rational, structured decision-making approach long seen as central to furthering decision-making effectiveness. No longer is the task of decision-making one of overcoming biases via information – it's about knowing when the nonconscious mind might outperform more conscious, rational processes.

What is fascinating to us, though, as we reflect on the field is that so much of what we read about in management books, popular press, and even scholarly literature is how *analytics* and *"big" data* are changing how we make decisions in organizations. Analytics is spreading into the Academy of Management as well, with an All-Academy symposium on big data in 2015 as well as a professional development workshop on HR analytics at the last two annual meetings. The prevalence and ease of using data given current technology is providing organizational leaders tools they never had previously, helping them to make decisions ranging from product and market to human resources. Thus, our organizational cognition query becomes – *how do we think about decision-making and uncertainty within organizations when we have scholars taking both a top-down analytical approach as well as a bottom-up approach centered on intuition?* This is where we as cognition scholars have a chance to break the aforementioned force of homophily. We must bridge the divide between fields, methods, and literatures to come together and solve this organizational problem. As a field our task is to integrate *both* intuition and advanced analytics into our models

of decision-making. We are grateful that this volume tackles this challenge head on.

We are reminded of Dr. Kathleen's Sutcliffe Distinguished Scholar Address delivered at the Academy of Management in 2015. One of Dr. Sutcliffe's calls to action in that address was to look back and not take for granted "mundane" cognition topics such as selective perception, mindsets, and beliefs. As what it means to *know* something is changing in our world with the advances in technology, let us not forget how these concepts play a role in helping us study and understand this tension between person-centered decision-making such as intuition and data-centered decision-making. Analytical tools are great, but after the analyses there is still a person or people there to make sense of that analysis and that data, and to judge how to incorporate such analyses into their decision-making processes. In short, managerial and organizational cognition will continue to be the lifeblood for *how* organizations (and all their respective constituents) "think it through."

Kevin W. Rockmann
David M. Sluss

Reference

Dane, E., & Pratt, M. G. (2007). Exploring intuition and its role in managerial decision making. *Academy of Management Review*, *32*(1), 33−54.