
Systems theories, because of the emphasis they place on the maintenance of order, have generally given an impoverished account of change. Complexity theory gives an explanation of non-linear systems which makes change fundamental and strikes a better balance between order and disorder. A theory of change management is outlined which unites a generalized notion of emergence in complex systems with a notion of accomplishment in human action. The analysis is applied to a case study of the introduction of a new information system for fingerprint identification into police forces in England and Wales. The analysis shows change management and strategic activity to be widely distributed in the organization. Explores how new practices and understandings are emerging as the new system is introduced.