Keeping Organizational Theory Alive and Vital

One highlight of Bath School of Management’s involvement in AoM 2012 will be a Panel Symposium (12248) Chaired by Dr. Ian Colville, called ‘Simplexity, Prescience and Pragmatism: Keeping organizational theory (a)live and vital’.

The panellists for this event are:

Professor Jean Bartunek
Professor Andrew Brown
Professor Kevin Corley
Professor Denny Gioia
Professor Annie Pye
Professor Karl Weick

Abstract

We live in interesting times in which unprecedented events occur on a regular basis and challenge assumptions and theories on which ‘yesterday’, and in particular yesterday’s organizations and theorizing, appears to have rested and by which people make sense and orient future action. This symposium is about sensemaking and seeks to widen the dialogue to develop organizational theorizing that is (a)live and vital and of future relevance. Interesting accounts of interesting times open interesting possibilities for theorizing, yet even when people speak the same language they often use different accents. So what features or accents would a conversation composed of such accounts display? Panellists answer this through accentuating four themes: ‘simplexity’, prescience, pragmatism and practice. Reflecting the ‘ongoing conversation’ quality of sensemaking, this panel symposium aims to build on these different conceptualizations and stimulate constructive conversation, which will help widen the focus to reflect on informal organizing ‘on the streets’ and in so doing, further develop lively and vital organizational theorizing.
Multiple Perspectives on Career Scripts

Members of the School of Management have co-organized a Presenter Symposium at AoM 2012 exploring ‘Multiple Perspectives on Career Scripts: Theoretical and Empirical Advances’ (# 12445). Dr. Svenja Tams will Chair and introduce this symposium, and empirical research conducted by her, Bath PhD student Stefanie Gustafsson and Katharina Chudzikowski from WU Vienna will be presented.

Chair’s Introduction (Dr Svenja Tams): This symposium presents recent developments in research on ‘career scripts’ (Barley, 1989) to inform our theoretical understanding of questions about the interdependence between the individual and organizations. While the notion of career scripts has attracted a renewed interest, recent debates also suggest a multiplicity and fragmentation of perspectives. The Introduction will frame this symposium by reminding us of Barley’s original intentions and highlighting some of the gaps in earlier literature: (a) the reification of career scripts and with it a lack of attention to the ongoing evolution of the larger debate in organization studies about the relationship between structure and individual agency; (b) assumptions about the relative coherence and pervasiveness of organizational career scripts; and (c) a limited understanding of how career scripts are collectively enacted and culturally transmitted.

Presenters:
Dr Katharina Chudzikowski, WU Vienna
Professor Laurie Cohen, Loughborough University
Professor Francoise Dany, EM-LYON Business School
Professor Joanne Duberley, University of Birmingham
Professor Hugh Gunz, Rotman School of Management
Stefanie Gustafsson, University of Bath
Dr Svenja Tams, University of Bath

Examining Organizational Career Scripts from a Culture-as-Practice Perspective (Katharina Chudzikowski, Svenja Tams and Stefanie Gustafsson)

This empirical paper problematises the notion of organizational career scripts from a culture-as-practice perspective (Swidler, 1986; Schatzki, 2001). Based on findings from research on careers in management consulting, the authors argue that the deviations from Barley’s (1989; Barley & Tolbert, 1997) original conception of scripts have led us to loose sight of the central sociological argument addressed by career scripts. According to the authors, career scripts are not just a cognitive representation, not just a discourse, or an abstract logic, but enacted in everyday patterns of culturally learned actions and interactions. In addition they challenge the portrayal of institutions and their career scripts as all coherent and pervasive. Instead they emphasize the benefits of conceptualizing organizational career scripts from an interactional perspective by drawing on more recent developments in cultural sociology, proposing collective meaning as a repertoire of practices (Swidler, 1986; Tilly, 1993).

Abstract

Socially responsible supply chains are one of the most current issues in supply chain management, yet has been subjected to limited systematic empirical research. In this paper we systematically analyse the constructs of trust and power and the interaction between trust and power/dependence structures to evaluate their respective role in influencing socially responsible supply-chain management (SR-SCM). Drawing on primary data from 340 buyer-supplier relationships we test a set of hypotheses and find that the nature and extent of power/dependency between buyer and supplier significantly influence socially responsible supply-chain management, that there is no evidence that trust on its own influence SR-SCM and finally that there is compelling evidence to indicate that the role of trust and power/dependence shapes SR-SCM, depending on whether the buyer-supplier relationships is a domestic or overseas relationship.

2. Crowding-out the ‘community’ in community based Credit Unions?: A test of self-regulation (with Professor John Forker)

Abstract

Credit Unions are community based, co-operative financial services organisations that are run by volunteer members for the benefit of the members and have a commitment to community development. Credit Unions (CUs) have risen in prominence globally, and today have more than $146 trillion under management. Legislation, designed to subject CUs to regulation similar to that which other financial services organisations adhere to is increasingly advocated. However, opponents argue that this ‘new model’ regulation threatens to undermine the community based ethos and values that Credit Unions espouse. In this paper we evaluate the research question: does regulation designed to promote ‘new model’ (‘for-profit’) development crowd out the community impact Credit Unions have? Using a unique dataset comprising 2,275 yearly observations from Northern Ireland Credit Unions, spanning 1996-2008 we test the emergent impact of new legislation on financial and community performance.
Dr Mehdi Boussebaa

1. Constructing Global Firms? National, Transnational and Neocolonial Effects in International Management Consultancies

Abstract

Drawing on an empirical study of four major international management consultancies, this article examines managerial efforts to construct ‘global’ organizations. We show how these efforts are undermined by inter-office conflicts over the staffing of client projects. We argue that such constraints cannot be adequately understood as an outcome of inappropriate organizational structures and incentives since this explanation ignores the important role of institutional contexts. In this vein, we outline and develop four different institutionalist lenses and apply them to the empirical findings. In so doing, we reveal the need to adopt a multi-dimensional institutionalist approach to the study of ‘global’ firms, one that can account for not only national effects but also transnational and neocolonial influences on these organizations.

Dr Iain Davies

1. Where now for Fair Trade?

Abstract

This paper critically examines the discourse surrounding fair trade mainstreaming, and discusses the potential avenues for the future of the social movement. The authors have a unique insight into the fair trade market having a combined experience of over 30 years in practice and 15 as fair trade scholars. The paper highlights a number of benefits of mainstreaming, not least the continued growth of the global fair trade market (tipped to top $6 billion in 2011). However the paper also highlights the negative consequences of mainstreaming on the long term viability of fair trade as a credible ethical standard.
Dr Jens Roehrich

1. Co-operation and conflicts in long-term supply relationships: The roles of contracts and trust

Abstract

The paper investigates the existence and consequences of inter-organizational conflicts when actors seek to facilitate cooperation in long-term supply relationships. Interdependence between partnering organizations increases both the likelihood for conflict and the need for coordination through formal and informal governance mechanisms. More specifically, the work explores the interaction between different inter-organizational conflict types and both governance mechanisms. A multiple, longitudinal case study method is used to examine the manifold interactions between formal and informal governance mechanisms and inter-organizational conflicts over a 15-year period. The paper extends previous results by offering a more fine-grained understanding of the interplay between conflict types and governance mechanisms. First, inter-organizational conflict appears in at least four distinct but inter-related forms - relationship, task, process and governance. Second, it is various interactions between conflict types which have an impact on overall relationship performance. The implication of this study is that, to the extent that task and process conflict may be encouraged while relationship and governance conflict should be restrained to realize overall relationship performance. Finally, the need for coordination through formal and informal governance mechanisms in these long-term supply relationships adds another layer of complexity when considering the impact of conflicts on relationship performance.

2. The evolution of project-based cooperation to deliver integrated solutions

Abstract

This paper examines the evolving organizational forms between suppliers and buyers involved in integrated solution provision. While extant literature focuses on a supplier- or buyer-centric perspective on integrated solutions provision, limited studies have investigated how companies move towards ‘integrated project teams’ in close partnerships over time. The study demonstrates how organizational innovation in providing integrated solutions is driven by the need for increasingly closer cooperation. Providing a detailed examination of ongoing interactions over a 20-year time period at the buyer-supplier interface, the research shows that solution provision is significantly influenced by changes in organizational forms. The research is based on an in-depth, longitudinal case study investigating two organizations working in the UK water industry. Over time, the relationship moved from being centered on market transactions into fully developed forms of cooperation as exhibited in co-located integrated project teams, joint-innovation and strategic consultancy leading to innovative integrated solution provision.
Dr Jon Raelin (with Christina Cataldo & Uta Morgenstern)

1. Workshop: Reflections & Projections: An interactive panel-workshop developing the future of strategy-as-practice

Abstract

The purpose of this interactive PDW is to both raise and address concerns and recommendations by noted scholars in the field of strategy as practice (SAP). In particular, it focuses on both opportunities and threats for SAP arising from: its use as a bridging/umbrella concept, its practice based perspective, its heavy qualitative focus, its micro orientation, its cognitive rooting, and its relevance to critical/post-structural research. This PDW aims to help foster advancement for SAP in these domains through an interactive workshop format in which noted speakers tackle one of the aforementioned emergent issues that they see as crucial to the field’s future. From there, the session will divide into roundtables where each noted speaker will lead an interactive discussion designed to derive ideas that both address concerns and move the SAP field forward.

2. When feelings eclipse reason: The impact of explicit and emotional knowledge-transfer on firm performance.

Abstract

Knowledge transfer has been an area of research commanding significant scholarly attention in the field of strategy; yet, a preoccupation with rationality has potentially obscured the impact of emotion on the process. Accordingly, this paper contributes to extant theory by integrating emotional displays into the relationship between knowledge transfer and firm performance. We ask if and how knowledge transfer, in the form of verbal transmission as well as emotional displays, effects firm performance. The concept of emotional knowledge transfer is introduced, capturing the impact that individuals’ emotional displays have on the marketplace. Testable hypotheses are derived that explore the relationship between emotional and explicit knowledge transfer and the effects they have on firm performance. We use a short-term event study analyzed using a combinatory methodology to explore the impact of emotional knowledge transfer by analyzing a sample of recorded CEO interviews. Findings indicate that emotional knowledge transfer effects firm performance even in the presence of contradictory explicit knowledge transfer; thus, emotionally transferred knowledge is shown to take precedence over explicit knowledge. These findings indicate that emotion is a seminal individual-level foundation of firm performance. We conclude by raising the strategic implications of these results.
3. Free floating salience: Governments as salience investors

Abstract

The growing popularization of stakeholder theory among management scholars has offered a broad and useful framework for understanding the multiple and interdependent roles of government and business in an increasingly challenging political and regulatory environment. Despite this trend, attention to the role and responsibility of government to protect citizens from firms willing to jeopardize societal wellbeing for maximized value has been left relatively underdeveloped. While many theorists advocate private enterprise to protect these rights, recent social and economic trends raise doubts about the effectiveness of such mechanisms. As an intermediate and balanced position between calls to safeguard citizens’ rights and to limit governmental size, we argue that governments should play a role as free-floating salience investors, supplying low salience stakeholders with power and legitimacy to stand-up to firms that may profit at society’s expense. By creating such liaisons, governments protect citizens’ guaranteed rights without expanding beyond current social preferences and fiscal realities.

Professor John Forker (with Johanne Grosvold)

1. New Model Regulation: Crowding-out the ‘community’ in community based Credit Unions?

Abstract

Credit unions are community based, co-operative financial services organisations that are run by volunteer members for the benefit of the members and have a commitment to community development. Credit unions have risen in prominence globally, and today have more than $146 trillion under management. Legislation designed to subject credit unions to regulation similar to that which other financial services organisations adhere to is increasingly advocated. However, opponents argue that this ‘new model’ regulation threatens to undermine the community based ethos and values that credit unions espouse. In this paper we evaluate the research question: does regulation designed to promote ‘new model’ (‘for-profit’) development crowd out the community impact credit unions have? Using a unique dataset comprising 2,275 yearly observations from Northern Ireland credit unions, spanning 1996-2008 we test the emergent impact of new legislation on financial and community performance.
Dr Uta Morgenstern (with Jon Raelin & Cristina Cataldo)


Abstract

The purpose of this interactive PDW is to both raise and address concerns and recommendations by noted scholars in the field of strategy as practice (SAP). In particular, it focuses on both opportunities and threats for SAP arising from: its use as a bridging/umbrella concept, its practice based perspective, its heavy qualitative focus, its micro orientation, its cognitive rooting, and its relevance to critical/post-structural research. This PDW aims to help foster advancement for SAP in these domains through an interactive workshop format in which noted speakers tackle one of the aforementioned emergent issues that they see as crucial to the field’s future. From there, the session will divide into roundtables where each noted speaker will lead an interactive discussion designed to derive ideas that both address concerns and move the SAP field forward.

Dr Rekha Nicholson

1. The motives and performance of cross-border acquirers from emerging economies

Abstract

During the recent decade, the world has witnessed the rapid growth of MNEs from emerging economies. Their increasing participation in cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&As) has raised great attention in the extant literature. This study evaluates the value creation from these cross-border transactions from two representative emerging countries, namely China and India, and determines factors that result in the different performance of these international acquisition activities. Cross-border M&As conducted by these countries’ companies indeed lead to significant shareholder wealth creation. Furthermore, Indian shareholders are more likely to benefit from deals in English-speaking countries, while Chinese investors gain favorable returns from the cross-border expansion of manufacturing companies. Location also affects the performance of cross-border M&As, with acquisitions into developed countries generating higher returns to shareholders. These results are based on a sample of 203 Indian and 63 Chinese cross-border M&A deals over the period 2000-2010 and hold after controlling for various deal-level and firm-level characteristics.
Dr Bruce Rayton

1. Corporate Social Performance and the Psychological Contract

Abstract
This study investigates the role of CSP within the psychological contract. It extends the study of psychological contract breach beyond the dyadic relationship between the organization and the employee through an analysis of the impact of employee perceptions of internal and external CSP on psychological contract breach. Our results provide three clear findings. First, there is a direct relationship between the perceived level of CSP and affective commitment. Second, the results suggest that CSP forms part of the psychological contract and that breach of this aspect of the psychological contract results in a decline in affective commitment. Third, the level of external CSP is significantly related to affective commitment while it is the breach of internal CSP which is significantly related to affective commitment.

2. Employee Work Engagement, Affect and Outcomes

Abstract
This paper assesses the role of work engagement in the relationship between employee affect, as measured by affective commitment and job satisfaction, and employee outcomes using a cross-lagged survey design. Our structural model places affective commitment as an antecedent rather than an outcome of engagement, and the employee outcomes are subsequent values of supervisor-rated job performance and self-reported intention to quit. Our evidence supports the discriminant validity of work engagement (vigor), job satisfaction and affective commitment. Secondly, we demonstrate that affective commitment is an antecedent of work engagement rather than an outcome. We also establish that work engagement mediates the relationship between employee affect and job performance while playing no role in the determination of employee intention to quit.
Professor Rob Briner

Abstract

1. Feeling the squeeze: The experience of on-going change and innovation in UK public sector organizations in times of austerity

Fiscal austerity in North America and Europe is having major impacts on public service organizations, yet, we know very little yet about the effects of these changes on employee attitudes, behaviours, and well-being. The change management literature highlights the importance of understanding employee experiences for the successful management of change. This paper addresses two specific questions: First, how does a policy announcement about budget reduction affect employees’ attitudes, behaviors and wellbeing at work? Second, as change increases after the policy announcement, how do perceptions of both change and innovation affect employees’ attitudes, behaviors and their emotional well-being at work over time? We use a field study with a quasi-experimental design and longitudinal data to examine these questions, following a UK national government announcement of budget cuts. Our results suggest that the policy announcement about budget cuts itself affects individual experiences at work negatively. Further, the actual increase in organizational changes over time not only affected employees’ attitudes and well-being, but also behaviors such as engagement in the job and public service delivery. However, while the change management literature mainly reports dysfunctional effects of organizational change on employee experience, we find that not all change is necessarily perceived and experienced negatively, and that innovation has positive effects on attitudes, behaviors and well-being at work over time. We discuss the implications of our findings for public service reform and change management in times of austerity.

2. Larger, longer, and more pervasive: The distinct experiences of broken and fulfilled promises

Abstract

Researchers typically treat psychological contract breach and fulfillment as opposite ends of the same continuum, where the breach-fulfillment continuum has a linear relationship with outcomes. This treatment is, however, at odds with Rousseau’s major reconceptualization of the psychological contract, where she characterized breach as qualitatively distinct to fulfillment. 350 employees working in a local council in the United Kingdom completed a daily diary for 10 working days. We tested hypotheses about the distinctiveness of the effects of breach and fulfillment across outcomes including positive and negative daily mood, organizational citizenship behavior, and counterproductive work behavior. Confirming hypotheses, our findings show that breach had larger, longer-lasting and more pervasive effects than fulfillment. Our paper challenges the typical approach to researching psychological contract breach/fulfillment and establishes the importance of considering breach and fulfillment as distinct phenomena. More generally, we offer one of the first empirical studies to examine the experience of psychological contract breach and fulfillment.
1. Professional Development Workshop - Lost in Translation: Responding to ‘Review and Resubmit’

Abstract

The transformation of scholarly interest and research practice into a published article requires a process of translation which is inherently complex for the novice researcher. Further translation is required when the researcher receives feedback on articles submitted for publication. While the ‘pressure to publish’ dominates many academic careers - particularly among junior and mid-career researchers seeking to establish careers in an increasingly competitive academic marketplace, opinions about what constitutes ‘publishable research’ is increasingly divided. More than ever researchers are placed under pressure to submit to top ranking journals early in their careers and predictably they receive reviews critical of their work. When they are invited to review and resubmit (R&R), the passion with which they have approached their areas of research and the writing process itself makes this reviewer feedback inherently difficult to assimilate. Negotiating the difficulties inherent in review to prepare an appropriate response requires careful balancing of the feedback received and a certain understanding of the nature of the review process. This PDW is designed to support early- and mid-career researchers in the translation of review feedback into final, published articles in a broad range of peer reviewed journals; the highest ranked management journals and those closely aligned with the MED areas of interest.

2. Cross-Divisional Paper Session - Violent Innocence and Leadership' (with Magid Mazen - Suffolk University)

Abstract

In this paper, the notion of violent innocence is used to explore the covert violence present in leadership relations. The paper makes a contribution to knowledge that has two inter-connected parts. First, an introduction and discussion of the concept of violent innocence adds to the existing literature on violence in organizations. In particular, it enables an exploration of the masking of violence. Second, violent innocence provides a focal point around which to discuss the intersection of destructive individual behaviour and organizational dynamics (both emotional and political) that are embedded in leadership roles. Three research ‘vignettes’ illustrate violent innocence within leader-follower relations. The study of violent innocence offers opportunities to highlight inter-personal and organizational processes of denial and control connected to leadership.
Abstract

This study focuses on complex circumstances and defining characteristics of leading change as a middle manager. People in such roles are increasingly expected to lead organizational change as a normal part of their job. The paper draws on institutional theory and systems psychodynamic theory. The authors intend the resulting conceptual framework to increase understanding about the emotional and institutional challenges for middle managers as internal agents for change. Data gathered from 25 UK managers (representing 15 organizations) contribute substantially to this exploratory study. Three overarching issues emerged from an analysis of the data: (1) middle managers feel uncertain while having to show certainty about change; (2) leading change from the middle is prone to ambivalent authorization; and, (3) middle managers are expected to implement change without knowing how to intervene in the complex practical, emotional and political dynamics interwoven with attempts to lead change. The authors summarize two contributions to knowledge. Firstly, an understanding of collective emotions at work is shown to be important to middle managers’ potential effectiveness as internal change agents. Secondly, this pilot research begins a process of generating insights about some specific emotional and political dynamics that constrain and enable middle managers’ purposive action on leading change. From this apparent complexity, the authors derive questions about how both external and internal consultants prepare themselves and their clients to support managers in leading from the middle.