

# Museletter of the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism



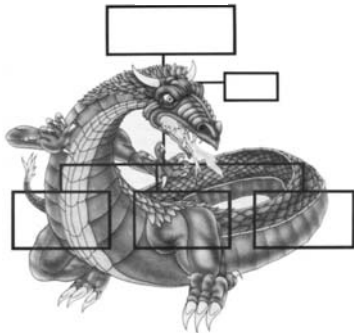
## *Notework*

May 2008

*SCOS is an international and interdisciplinary network of academics and practitioners interested in organizational symbolism, culture and change. The SCOS philosophy of 'serious fun' is articulated throughout the network's activities, particularly in the encouraging of unusual and groundbreaking ideas in the analysis of organizing and organization. We are committed to providing a forum for research that crosses traditional disciplinary and functional boundaries, and a reflective space for the development of new forms and new voices for this work.*

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# SCOS is Set to Reign in the Rainy City



Heaven Knows We're Miserable Now. But we won't be soon when SCOS comes to Manchester! The relatively New Order (though Some Might Say not so new) of *Notework* production have been pondering the numerous musical analogies and puns we can squeeze into one editorial. Just wanting to be adored! Just waiting for a guide to come and take us by the hand. F.E.A.R. of failure reigns supreme. This edition, wrote for luck, might have to get by on a certain charlatanism. So could it be magic? Or just another Bitter Sweet Symphony? Let's carry on regardless. That's what they call stayin' alive. Manchester awaits: SCOS is stepping out!

The Beautiful South's single *Manchester says: 'If rain makes Britain great, then Manchester is greater'*. For those who have not yet been there let us offer our vouch-safes. Paul Heaton is no liar. Manchester is great. It is therefore best to bring protection, lest you get drenched by all the greatness falling from the skies. This is also why, for this edition only, *Notework*, in addition to offering countless valuable insights into the world of SCOS,

also doubles as an umbrella replacement. Read it, then wear it! The edition commences, as always, with some **Notes from the Chair**. Jo Brewis reflects upon the side-effects of Antipodean writer's block before proceeding to outline her vision (and therefore our vision) for the future. Sit up and take notice!

After these words from our leader, we're then all treated to a glimpse of the underbelly of the SCOS decision making machine. Thanks to our **board secretary** Sam Warren, we present the Ljubljana board minutes. Brace yourselves! As organisation theorists know, decision making is rarely beautiful but we try to do our best here at SCOS so grit your teeth and see our cogs turn (slowly)!

Soup and starters\* out of the way, we then proceed to the main course of *Notework*, **The Musery**. What a main course it is, with no less than 5 dishes on offer to all. Robert Grafton Small offers us **two separate poems**, the first of which speaks of fish and chips. Beatriz's now **regular art review slot** this time nourishes us with her assessment of the recent Georg Baselitz exhibition held in London during December 2007. Rowland Curtis serves up a review of the recent **Conference on Practical Criticism** held at Leicester during January of this month and then Armin Beverungen gives us a taste of what it was like for him, being a **PhD student Down-Under**. Bent Meier Sørensen's interview with Miss Black Rose (see previous *Notework*) will now appear in the next edition unfortunately. Marketers call this the 'you can't shop here' effect.

From there, it is on to the reports of our **regional reps**. Have a look there in order to see how things are around the world, through SCOS tinted glasses. In doing so, reader, please think about how we can continue to spread the SCOS word. And when the reps stop talking, the elusive Zoë starts. This time, she's revisiting the James Connolly question: anti-imperialism or anti-capitalism. She does so in her own special way **crawling through the wreckage of the LPC** (labour process conference for those not in the know). Then come a series of **calls and announcements** that will be of interest to the SCOS community before closing with our **caption competition: 'a picture paints a thousand words?'** Please email us with your suggestions!

As always, if you'd like to contribute to *Notework*, or like to make suggestions for new features, please don't hesitate to contact either of us (details can be found at the end of the edition). All the best for now and see you in Manchester!

For now we take a bow,

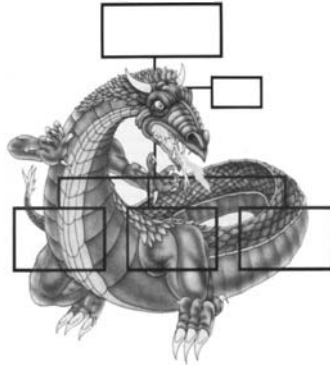
Stephen and Sheena

\* We should be clear that neither of us have ever considered either Jo or Sam to be souplike.

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# SCOS: the Standing Conference on Organization and Symbolism (oo-r-ya?)



## **We are...**

...an international and interdisciplinary network of academics and practitioners interested in organizational symbolism, culture and change. Formed in 1981 as an autonomous working group of the European Group for Organisation Studies, SCOS has grown to become a global research network comprising of hundreds of members.

## ***Philosophy: scosophilia***

The SCOS philosophy of 'serious fun' is articulated throughout the network's activities, particularly in the encouraging of unusual and groundbreaking ideas in the analysis of organizing and organization. Since its formation, SCOS has run annual international conferences and regular workshops, producing both critical debate and a considerable output of original scholarship. SCOS has always been committed to a critical approach to qualitative research that crosses traditional disciplinary and functional boundaries as well as to reflection on the forms and voices that this work takes.

## ***Research***

*Moving into its fourth decade, the SCOS network continues to develop innovative views of organization and management, taking inspiration from a variety of different fields and disciplines. SCOS has always been committed to providing a forum for research that crosses traditional disciplinary and functional boundaries, and a reflective space for the development of new forms and new voices for this work. The SCOS Network also aims to produce and develop theoretically and practically innovative views of organization and management and seeks to:*

- encourage and foster new approaches in the study of culture and symbolism of everyday life in organizations
- provoke discussion of marginalised perspectives on the understanding of organized life
- provide an arena where the boundaries of conventional thinking about organized life can be challenged and blurred
- sustain continuity and development in this fast-growing field of study
- enable the continued exchange of information and the development of community amongst a highly dispersed group of researchers, scholars and practitioners

## *Notes from the Chair*

Allow me, Constant Reader, to set the scene. I am sitting in a semi-darkened office at the University of Canterbury, high atop leafy Christchurch, NZ, where I have thoroughly enjoyed spending part of my sabbatical. I'm gazing out at the rain, grasping desperately for something wise, witty, constructive, intellectual or otherwise worthwhile to type. Having spent the day embroiled in finalizing various technicalities relating to a forthcoming ESRC seminar, I have unwisely turned to writing these Notes at half past four or so and it seems that my always elusive muse is having a little lie down with tea and biscuits. Reading Peter's last few Notes really hasn't helped either, what with him being properly erudite and all. Am also fighting the temptation just to pack in and dash through the murky late afternoon to the New World supermarket near campus. Or have yet another coffee. Or yet another fag.

Happily the board meeting in Manchester last November provides me with some much-needed inspiration. The City conference is set to be another classic SCOS event, especially if the splendid gala dinner venue is anything to go by. I should of course issue fair warning that I will be spending most of this conference waxing nostalgic about my student salad days there back when God was a boy, and annoying everyone with tips for pubs and restaurants which probably closed down years ago. Another Very Good Thing is to be able to announce that our dual location Copenhagen-Malmö 2009 conference is likewise looking very exciting indeed. The theme is *Bridging Journeying*, which to me seems quintessentially SCOSsy, and arrangements are already well in hand. The call for papers will, as ever, be formally launched in Manchester. It also looks as though we may be hieing our collective SCOSself to France in 2010 to explore Visuality, courtesy of Sam Warren and Bea Acevedo-Robbins, but more news on this when we have visited our provisional mystery location (Lille) at the next board meeting.

Something else we have now put firmly on the Board's agenda is how best to disburse SCOS financial resources. Put simply, we have some money and we need to decide how best to spend it in SCOSsy ways that maintain our security as an organization and allow as much development and participation in future as we can. I think we should probably give the Chair a generous monthly clothing allowance as SCOS ambadress, but may be that's just me. Anyway we will be discussing this issue anew at forthcoming board meetings and of course will report back via *Notework*. We also have a new co-editor of *C&O* joining Peter at the helm – my corridor mate from Leicester, the very lovely and talented Simon Lilley – and a new North American rep, Brenton Faber, who I can't be cheeky about as I don't know him yet. And one other thing to note is the upcoming third ACSCOS at the University of Technology, Sydney, in November. Carl Rhodes, David Bubna-Litic, Stewart Clegg, Martin Kornberger, Tyrone Pitsis, Alison Pullen and Anne Ross-Smith invite us all to consider and reflect the theme of neophilia (the fetishization of the new) and organization, and the deadline for either papers or abstracts is the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008. The call is in this issue as well as on the SCOS website, so go and check it out forthwith.

In the next issue of *Notework* I will enumerate my flipflop collection and discourse at length on why Sam from *ER* looks better with dark hair. Until then, here's to a fantastic conference in Manchester

May the road rise with you

Jo

PS: The board had a wonderful time in Lille and managed to get some business done in between several enormous and delicious French meals. We are delighted therefore to confirm that this is our venue for 2010, with the very good offices of our hosts, the charming team from l'Institut d'Administration des Entreprises. More details to follow.

# Musings of a Board Secretary....

## Sam Warren gives us the minutes of the SCOS Executive Board Meeting, Ljubljana, July 2007

Hi again! Sam here, SCOS secretary, with another instalment of 'Life on the SCOS Board'. While you were all getting glammed up in your glad rags for the Ljubljana Conference Dinner, your board were still at the Faculty of Economics, in a rather impressive boardroom, ensuring the SCOS machine runs smoothly...

Being the conference board meeting, only a few of us were absent which always makes for the liveliest meetings when we have the least time! But nonetheless, we managed to agree the minutes of the previous meeting in Madrid (see last issue of *Notework*).

Next up was a discussion with the new *Notework* editors' report where Sheena announced her and Stephen's plans for the future and we were all reminded to print and distribute *Notework* wherever we can (please feel free to do so yourself too and help spread the SCOS word...)

## Your board are currently:

**Chair:** Jo Brewis (UK) **Meetings Secretary:** Annette Risberg (Denmark) **Secretary & Elections Officer:** Sam Warren (UK), **2008 Conference:** Damian O' Doherty (UK) **2009 Conference:** Peter Elsmore (UK), David Crowther (UK) and Annette Risberg (Denmark) **Membership Secretary:** Ann Rippin (UK) **Treasurer:** Saara Taalas (Finland) **Notework Editors:** Sheena Vachhani and Stephen Dunne (UK) **Web Officer:** Alf Rehn (Finland) **Journal Editors (C&O):** Heather Höpfl (UK), Peter Case (UK) and Simon Lilley (UK) **Regional representatives:** Peter Pelzer (Germany) Nina Kivinen (Nordic countries) Rowland Curtis (UK) Janet Sayers (New Zealand), David Bubna-Litic & Carl Rhodes (Australasia), Brenton Faber (North America) and Beatriz Acevedo (Latin America).

We were delighted to have Katie Barratt our publishers rep for C&O which meant a full and frank discussion of the official SCOS journal and how it might continue to be developed into a major player in our field. We also heard from Ruud and Rene about the plans for the Nijmegen '06 conference special issue, and Katie reported that subscriptions are rising across the globe which is very good news indeed.

Campbell Jones then reported that we were some of 109 conference delegates that had come to Ljubljana and that everything was running smoothly. Despite being right in the dizzying whirl of said Ljubljana conference, the board then turned their attention to future conference venues.

Damian presented a tantalizing glimpse of the well advanced plans for Manchester 2008 and ideas for the 2009 conference to be held in Copenhagen & Malmo (our first twin centre conference!) were discussed.

Sam Warren reported that sadly 2010 in Italy was looking unlikely but she would scout around for another venue. A provisional proposal for 2011 was tabled (!! ) and discussed.

Saara Taalas then presented the accounts and reported that everything was in order, followed by

Ann Rippin's 'state of the nation' regarding our membership of just over 900!

Sam Warren reported on upcoming Board vacancies (that's me with my elections hat on) at the time of the meeting we needed a new Chair but both Ann Rippin and Annette Risberg had been welcomed back to the board unopposed. The regional reps then took the floor and reported on SCOSsy goings on in their regions and the Board were delighted to appoint a new rep – Beatriz Acevedo will now be representing SCOS through her Latin American connections.

Alf Rehn then wrapped up the reports by giving us the low-down on the SCOS and 2008 conference websites and continuing our discussions about putting a SCOS back catalogue of conference papers and *Noteworks* (including *Dragons* for those with a long memory!) online.

Finally, all the board thanked each other for their efforts and hard work in keeping SCOS running but especially Campbell Jones and the Leicester Management School for organising the 2007 conference at such short notice, before we went off to get ready for the Dinner too.

# The Musery

## Tales of a Single Fish (...can be two; no chips) Robert Grafton Small

Sketches of pain

Miles bitter

City of sandstone, scheme and slump, the down-at-heel flâneur - a grubby MacKintosh. In places,  
Small faces....

Just being. Outside the Oriental Buffet, all in T-shirts and check trousers, three of the kitchen staff share a cigarette break. Two are slight and below average height, the third no taller but powerful. Each has an international-size filter tip in his mouth. The body language, too, is universal. I offer them a light and the muscly brush cut smiles: "Ah, you speak Chinese."

Said unsaid or simple disorientation, the shift goes on: body politic to physical body, takeaway as supplement.

From a charity shop clearance sale, a signed first edition. Dennis Cooper, in hardback. Child abuse, pornography, drugs...the usual. There are tender notes in the margins, and climaxes marked in pink or inky blue, yet the pages seem curiously unstained.

Bargain.

The white streaks, newer and more fluid, are Tipp-Ex. Really. Texture as text, intertext....What it wants to tell us is this: when narrative is subjected to a barter economy, the terms are not fixed. You never know quite what you are selling or what you are buying. You might end up with more than you bargained for, or you might simply have been had.'

She stirs her coffee, then butters a scone with the warm spoon. A knife can't cut it in these terms; a spoon doesn't stir the blood.

So....

Take eating as written, pig meant to be read, say, and think.

Of other things....

A basement in Sauchiehall Street: 'spend small' - on carriers from T.K. Maxx, the discount store. Saving myself, does spending nothing discount the store, the slogan or shopping in general? You choose....

We're sitting on a bench waiting the train, me and the half-eaten sandwich already there. Good crust, poor teeth, ham on white. Rye would be Chuck, dining out. Eating in - not etching - an artist, eminent source of the strangely familiar:

'Throw four fish fingers under the grill. While I'm waiting for them to go golden brown, with little black singed bits, I like to knock back a pint of Nesquik, preferably strawberry flavour.

Excellent for lining the stomach.

Butter the bread, then give it a thin layer of tomato sauce. Remove the fish fingers from the grill and mash them into the bread. There you have it: the classic fish-finger sandwich. It should be washed down with vodka and a can of Red Bull.'

Performance art? Installation? Does she trace her lovers' names in the sauce?

'The Night of Santiago

And I was passing through

So I took her to the river

As any man would do'

Small fish rather than Fry, that's me in the corner, head slightly too close to the bowl when I eat soup.

My glasses mist up....

Local man in the photograph.

Looking, not Lowry. Grey-haired in a greyer suit, animated original of a black-and-white in *Blueprint*, pictured with his partner, the architects of St. Peter's Seminary, Cardross. Purpose-built for training priests but never full, it's a listed monument now, burned out, abandoned, symbol of a faith that no longer believes.

The Rock crumbled....

'at top of street, on steps of small butcher's shop painted red, children, wrapped tight in sackcloth, drowning brood of short-eared owls in pool of mixed blood: female, perched on corner terrace of brothel, screeching - piercing: children seizing chicks, plaintive: chicks drowning, waking masturbated soldiers covered by girl-whores, protected against chill of advancing darkness;'

*Eden, Eden, Eden*: what a reading of Barthes can lead to....

Late one afternoon in a local café, two women at the table next to me are having hot rolls: bacon and brown sauce, square sausage with red - code for ketchup. The sachet has corners too....Gulp.

"Breakfast?"

"What we want, when we want it."

A sign, then, of economics, an economy of sighs: the culture of contentment.

'The Hours, the undeniable,

Open the gates of Paradise.

Beyond

The wastes of space.

Before

The blue.

Now near

The sea, the snow.'

## Shouts

Dennis Cooper, *Try*  
1994, Grove Press, New York

Tom McCarthy, *Tintin and the Secret of Literature*  
2006, Granta Books, London (p. 17)

Leonard Cohen, *Book of Longing*  
2006, Viking/Penguin, London (p. 147)

Tracey Emin, *Strangeland*  
2005, Sceptre/Hodder and Stoughton, London (pp. 173-174)

Blueprint, November 2007, No. 260 (p. 90 - a sepia tint, coloured by my reading)

Pierre Guyotat, *Eden, Eden, Eden* (Translated from the French by Graham Fox), Preface by Roland Barthes  
1995, Creation Books, London (p. 23)

Christopher Logue, *Cold Calls, War Music continued*  
2005, Faber and Faber (p. 9)

## Whispers

To be amplified....



## In Persons: Entre Moi Robert Grafton Small

'...I rushed to the mirror. At the sight that met my eyes, my blood was changed into something exquisitely thin and icy. Yes, I had gone to bed Henry Jekyll, I had awakened Edward Hyde. How was this to be explained?'

(Stevenson 1986: 127)

'.../is another'

(Rimbaud 1979: 8)

We are all other, each of us alterities for the rest, those we'll never know as we are known, those who'll know us as we never know ourselves. A self, a body, a self embodied, but not entirely: the difference is telling, an absence within presence. With every expectation that each will more or less endorse the other's definition of self (Laing 1979: 35), there is 'quite a wide margin for conflict, error, misconception...a disjunction of one kind or another.'

This margin means some element in, of, ourselves we can never grasp, a known unknown we must nevertheless accept as a necessary aspect of being. A mirror man reflection, more Baudrillard (1997: 103) than Beefheart (1999), yet transgendered, time-bound and always incomplete. For all our compensating fictions, our cultural prostheses (Debord 1998: 32), the glance at Lacan's inner glass will not show us ourselves, or our flaws (Capote 2006: 49): 'It was as if the world where they joined were a ship, one becalmed between the two islands that were themselves: with any effort he could see the shore of her, but his was lost in the unlifting mist.'

### References

Jean Baudrillard, *Fragments: Cool Memories III, 1990-1995*  
(Translated from the French by Emily Agar)  
1997, Verso, London and New York

Captain Beefheart & his Magic Band, *the Mirror Man sessions*  
1999, Buddha Records

Truman Capote, *Summer Crossing*  
2006, Penguin Classics, London

Guy Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*  
(Translated from the French by Malcolm Imrie) 1998, Verso,  
London and New York

R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self*  
1979, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex

Arthur Rimbaud, *A Season in Hell/The Illuminations*  
(Translated from the French by Enid Rhodes Peschel)  
1979, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York and  
London

Robert Louis Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*  
1986, Canongate, Edinburgh

**STIGMA, GUILT AND THE WALL:  
THE GREAT RETROSPECTIVE OF GEORG BASELITZ  
AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS (LONDON, DECEMBER 2007)**  
By Beatriz Acevedo

*To my friend Diana Uribe*

After 40 years of continuous development, the work of the German artist Georg Baselitz has become a relevant way of understanding European history from the post-war years until the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. The collection of these gruesome, cruel, shocking or inverted paintings and sculptures can teach us more about this period of European history than many books and speeches. Baselitz' uncompromised view of events, feelings and scars are majestically presented in this retrospective at the Royal Academy. Also, this is the first time that a living German artist is invited to exhibit his complete work here, thus, the expectations for this event have grown with the minute.

The collection of paintings, sculptures, drawings, etchings and prints, includes works from the earliest 1960s, when the artist shocked the art world with a series of macabre and sexually explicit images. In a period when the future promised a new start for the post-war nightmares, Baselitz' paintings rejected the mainstream approach to abstraction and optimism, by revealing the burning flesh and the scars in the collective consciousness. As many other artists of his generation (amongst them, filmmakers such as Fassbinder), Baselitz assumed the burden of the pariah, becoming the constant reminder of the war wounds. Not surprising, the feelings of war, despair and shame have accompanied the artist from his childhood.

Baselitz was born in 1938 in the Saxon village of Deutschbaselitz, located in the former GDR, and close to Dresden. His father was a village schoolmaster who, as many other of his fellows, was sympathetic with Nazism. Although Baselitz was still a child when the war ended, the memories of soldiers, corpses and pain, print a mark in his work. Due to the purge of 'degenerate' literature and art, the young Baselitz did not come to learn about German expressionism, nor about important artists such as Paul Klee, until he migrated to West Germany. In 1957, Baselitz moved to Berlin to study art. There, he got in contact with the prolific work of American artists and by the end of the 1950s, he was stamping his own presence in the German art scene. The first series of works during this

period are known as 'Heroes'; there, realistic figures recall those earliest memories of wounded soldiers, abandoned in fields of destruction and death.

#### PANDEMONIUM

His work would evolve rapidly, and the young artist absorbed the atmosphere around him. However, his message is not comfortable and his earlier paintings stamped a mark on the collective consciousness. Amongst them, *The Big Night Down the Drain* (1962/63), depicting a deformed dwarf flashing an enormous penis, provoked the anger of the public, and the confiscation by the authorities of the painting. This ugliness, this fleshy deformity, was not really linked to the promises of a new future for the German or European society, nor it proposed a reconciliation, nor the overcoming of the nightmare of the war.



*The Big Night Down the Drain (1962/63)*

Along with Eugen Schonebeck, Baselitz wrote the Two Pandemonium Manifestos, and the images emerging from it show not only masturbation, or gigantic penises, but also, the fragments of flesh, dismembered bodies, or mutilated feet –(P.D, for Pandemonium)–. All these paintings talk about the deviant, the anti-social or the demented, these topics recur throughout his work.

According to the manifestos, the intention of art was not to entertain, or to please. Instead, these paintings are shocking, and in a certain way, they mirror what Artaud had been developing as the Theatre of Cruelty. In response to this approach, many of these paintings were banned or confiscated on the grounds of 'infringement of public morality'. This approach paved the way for future developments and created the public persona of the artist.

Around the mid-1960s Baselitz work becomes more exploratory and daring. He focused on drawing restlessly. The influence of Artaud is evident in the chaotic, and sometimes, destructive images. Once again, the themes of the deviant, the mentally ill, the problem of religion and death are explored across the drawings. From this period, the painting *Oberon* symbolises this search: there, the figures of four ghosts emerge in a red blood background. The surreal, the ghostly figures and the feeling of despair and hopelessness, are a reminder of our historical nightmares.



*Oberon, 1963/64*

### FRACTURE

As a result of this exercise, Baselitz refigured his work by adding certain fracture; a kind of 'German cubism' but this time it is fleshy, amorphous, distorted. Paintings began to explore the cracks, the pieces, like a gigantic puzzle, of scars, death, animals, and the human being. Between 1966 and 1969 the paintings become a bizarre collage of images and fractures, disrupting the corporeality and the identity of the motifs. In the painting *B for Larry* (1967) the tensions between

abstraction and representation are evident. The human figure emerges in a blue sky, mixing wolfs, pigs and dogs, across the forest. It is almost impossible to discern what the initial figure was like.



*B for Larry, 1967*

The symbolic meaning of these elements is crucial in the German tradition: the forest, the tree, the eagle, the soldier, is all part of the national identity. Here, Baselitz, deforms them, reinterprets them and questions them. Indeed, some other fragmented works in this room, may evidence the influence of the surrealists' 'exquisite corpse'. Nevertheless, Baselitz uses this device as a way of exploring the ambiguities of representation, by inverting, fracturing or dividing the figure. This imagery precedes what would become Baselitz signature: the inversion of the figure.

### INVERSION

By 1969 and the decade of 1970s, Baselitz followed his own style by furthering the use of the inverted figure. In fact, not any other artist in history had worked with the inverted figure, and Baselitz explores this novelty with audacity. In the painting 'The Eagle' (Adler, 1972) Baselitz combined both the satiric social comment with the audacity of the inverted figure. Here again, the Eagle, symbol of Nazism comes into question: the eagle is defeated, tired, hanging from a single thread, the sky shattered in blues and greys. The effect is mesmerising. Baselitz himself remarks that this inversion was a real discovery: *'It was so irritating and shocking that it did the trick'* he says.<sup>1</sup> In the different paintings of this period, Baselitz shows his best of this original contribution.

<sup>1</sup> As quoted in Lloyd, 2007.



*Adler, 1972*

In a time when Minimalism and Conceptual Art were in the ascendant, Baselitz remained committed to a personally expressive art (Behr, 2007). Critics call him a Neo-expressionist. However, this label falls short of accounting for the versatility of this work during the next decades. In fact, during the 1980s his work turned out to be more primitive and colourful. A series of sculptures, etchings and drawings give an account of his prolific genius. Baselitz continued with the inverted figure, adding humorous elements to the titles and involving colour.

Paintings such as the *Glass Drinker* and the *Orange Eater* keep the inverted figure, adding certain playfulness and more colours: Yellow, orange and turquoise... In a similar way, the painting *Supper in Dresden* (1983), brings together Baselitz heroes: Munch and members of the artists' group Die Brücke (The Bridge), also quite influential in his work and way of thinking. The changes in his paintings echoes the contemporary world of art, the influence of groups such as the Young British Artists and in general, a sort of self-confidence in his own geniality (Lloyd, 2007).



*Supper in Dresden, 1983*

## THE WALL

The end of the 1980s decade brings one of the most unexpected changes in global politics. By 1989 the Wall that divided Berlin for 45 years would be demolished. For that event, Baselitz prepared a series of 20 paintings of wood etchings called *Women of Dresden*. During four months the artist worked feverishly to get the work completed.

The importance of this work in this particular moment of history, can be related to the role of German women in the reconstruction of the German country. It is well known that after the war, there were not many men around, neither were they fit or able to the task of building up the country from the war's ruins.



*Women Head, from Women in Dresden 1989*

Women in Germany played a crucial position in transforming the society. In the Museum of Memory in Berlin it is possible to see how women built, stone by stone, brick by brick, the destroyed cities in Germany.

Women turned old helmets into pans and children toys, and rebuilt from the ashes a society broken not only physically but also morally and spiritually. Indeed, the bombardment of Dresden, the beautiful baroque city, symbolises the brutality of the war.

The result of the 20 etchings and two big size sculptures is impressive, the symmetric boards, the abstract forms of female heads, and the background of dark wood carved into irregular etchings, really pays an homage to the courage of the women, carving their way through rough materials and hard conditions.

## ART AT THE HEART...

In general, the exhibition creates this mixed feeling of guiltiness and despair. And although as Baselitz has assumed this burden, this exhibition reminds all of us of our responsibility within the daily weave of history. Baselitz commitment and uncompromised view of human history is remarkable.

Art is not just a consumption commodity, a spectacle that we attend as part of our lifestyle. Paintings are not made here for interior designs, or comfortable environments; instead they point the finger directly to our own hearts...

Here Baselitz strikes us with uncomfortable truths, which are not just a problem for German people, but for all of European nations and their historical responsibilities. Baselitz reminds us that still there are many walls in need of being demolished...

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Lloyd, Jill (2007) *Eternal Outsider*. Royal Academy of Arts Magazine, No. 96, Autumn 2007. Pp. 54-60

## A Review of *The Conference of Practical Criticism in the Managerial Social Sciences* A 3-day event organised by the University of Leicester, January 15th-17<sup>th</sup> 2008

By Rowland Curtis

In January of this year the first *Conference of Practical Criticism* was hosted by the University of Leicester School of Management at Leicester's Belmont Hotel – the notorious *Best Western*, as described by Bent Meier Sorensen in his 'controversial' plenary speech at last year's SCOS conference (see the last edition of *Notework* for more details surrounding this 'controversy': *Eds*). Consisting of around twenty delegates, this was a small enough group to provide an intimate forum for the sort of discussion appropriate to the event's ethos of close and open readings of texts. Nearly all delegates presented papers, arguably contributing to the supportive atmosphere that was recognised in the closing plenary as having been a distinctive feature of the event. To quote the conference Call for Papers, the basic idea of the event was that:

Texts which are influential in their particular fields of academic enquiry or managerial practice...be subject to a detailed examination in respect of the arguments they make, the evidence, or the representation of previous scholarship on which they are based and the validity of their claims to have made important and original contributions. What is to be scrutinised, in other words, are the *standards of scholarship* which are being implicitly promulgated through the current influence-networks of managerial social science (CoPC 2008, italics added).

While the papers presented can be seen to have responded to the call for papers in closely-related ways, there was also an impressive diversity of emphasis. Some papers took the authors of influential texts to task for their arguments' general lack of rigour and coherence, while others suggested cases of the *non*reading or *mis*reading of particular texts. There were also papers detailing practices of appropriation and non-citation, questions relating to journal quality and gamesmanship in publishing practices, studies of the mutations of sub-disciplinary alignments, and problems of definition and origin (see conference webpage for details of papers). We were also treated to a dramatised character assassination of sorts, providing the conference with an effective lightening rod for a discussion of certain *darker* academic practices and careerist excesses.

The inspiration behind such an event, we are told, came from the legacy of literary critic and linguist I. A. Richards and his pupil F. R. Leavis, in terms of their furthering of a model of practical textual criticism referred to as 'Cambridge English' (ibid.). Practical Criticism is seen as having been vital in the overturning of the *belles lettres* tradition whereby 'the appreciation of literature was held to be the province of the superior sensibility', moving towards an alternative model of criticism based upon 'the application of critical intelligence to the text itself'.

This is seen to have had a *democratising* influence, in the sense that it did away with previous exclusivity in critical practice, and, in the process, destroyed 'a number of reputations which could not survive a close reading of the texts on which they were based; reputations which, in Leavis' words 'belonged more to the history of publicity than the history of literature' (ibid.).

The Call for Papers diagnoses the contemporary state of affairs in the field of management and organisation studies to be a political environment whereby the 'young researcher' finds him or herself under certain institutional pressures to submit to the interests of 'professorial power', leading to the suppression of critique, the sedimentation of entrenched lines of debate and affiliation, and the reproduction of a fundamentally authoritarian system of academic practice. The reproduction and/or intensification of this state of affairs meanwhile is understood to have been to the detriment of scholarly academic standards, leading to a chronic cycle of decline. It is in this context that the promotion of practices of 'Practical Criticism' is proposed as the remedy. Restoring the rigours of academic practice is understood to be the means whereby the necessary *democratising* influence might be brought to bear, 'loosening' up such lines of influence and affiliation, and restoring the rigour and standards of academic work that presumably were in stronger evidence in an earlier period of academic history.

Whether or not we agree with this specific articulation, we might see the important move being made here as the connection made between issues of academic intellectual practice, and the institutional politics of academia. However, with this connection made, we might begin to question the particular conception of *critique* articulated here, and what is perhaps the implicit idea of an institutional politics, *external* to academic practice. To quote the Call for Papers again: '*The aim is not censorship, but the subversion of censorship and self-censorship which already exists*' (CoPC ibid., italics added).

The Call appears to suggest here that a clear distinction might be made between, on the one hand, a repressive censorship, and on the other, the subversion of such censorship through liberating critique. However as is recognised in the Call - perhaps anticipating such criticism - to carry out critical readings of academic texts in the interest of subverting perceived forms of academic censorship and influence, can be seen to simultaneously require censorship of a different moment (cf. Wortham 1999: 94-5). In 'holding court' on those texts, are taken as demonstrations of the author's falling short of particular *standards of conduct* - standards that should have been internalised and put into practice by authors as an implicit condition for participation in the academic community (cf. Hunter 1995). In this light, the 'democratising influence', intended as a consequence of the work of Practical Criticism, could instead be seen to be in more complicated or problematic relation to notions of 'freedom' and 'democracy' (cf. Hindess 1995). This work of criticism can hence be seen to have an *authoritarian* role, in its function in policing the 'free' academic community of 'self-regulating' individuals; individuals who are supposed already to have internalised such values or ethics.

We might then begin to see the conference as operating according to *juridical* principles, such that the texts subject to close reading are offered as transgressive cases and subject to a hearing, with particular verdicts being passed, and subsequently entered into the records of particular academic delinquents. In light of this, and in light of Foucault's associated notion of the author function as a medium of *punishment* (Foucault 2000: 211-2), the conference's critical activities can be seen, not as concerned with the lifting of repressive features of academic from the real business of academic scholarship, but as an integral and authoritarian feature of the formation, maintenance and surveillance of academic identities and conduct. The increasing importance of authorship to (legal) systems of property rights is also acknowledged by Foucault (2000: 212), which, with respect to academic writing we can see manifested in the intensified policing and regulation of academic practices of publication and citation in the age of the RAE.

This particular reading of the conference would not intend to devalue it (i.e. as having rather haphazardly extended the repression of otherwise free academic practice, deepening the 'plight' of the contemporary management scholar), but, instead, would intend to understand such authoritarian moments as being *internal* to academic scholarly or critical activity, and, as such, to be recognised as an integral part of the political formation and dynamics of (the) academic field(s) (cf. Blum 1991; Weber 2001). This altered perspective might then lead to changes in our conception of the 'task' with which we are faced in engaging with the politics of academia, and the specific nature of the 'practical criticism' that such an engagement might require.

Thanks to Simon Lilley and Peter Armstrong for organising the conference. All correspondence concerning this piece to be sent to: [rowlandcurtis@yahoo.com](mailto:rowlandcurtis@yahoo.com). Visit [http://www.le.ac.uk/ulsm/research/conf\\_jan08/index.html](http://www.le.ac.uk/ulsm/research/conf_jan08/index.html) for more details about the event. A special issue of *Ephemera*, guest-edited by the conference organisers, will be published towards the end of the current academic year. A 2<sup>nd</sup> CoPC has been arranged for January 2009, more details below.

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## PhD Down Under

### By Armin Beverungen

Emmenez-moi au bout de la terre,  
Emmenez-moi au pays des merveilles

How was New Zealand?

That's the question I get asked a lot these days. After living in the East Midlands (it's a bit like limbo...) for more than three years working towards my PhD at the School of Management at the University of Leicester, I thought it was about time to get out of England for a while, and to tank some sun for the last leg of writing the PhD. Avoiding the English winter also didn't seem to be such a loss. I managed to get an invitation to spend some time as a Visiting PhD Student at Massey University in Auckland (also home to your very own Janet Sayers), and so set off in the middle of January for three months of sun, beach, swimming, and – most importantly – quaint reading, reflection and writing.

So... how was it then?

Once the horrible 30 plus hours' flight were over (make sure you either take lots of aspirin for blood dilution, or, alternatively, make use of the voluminous and generous provision of alcoholic beverages onboard – often one strategy leads into the other of course!), New Zealand is very welcoming. The descent towards Auckland is simply breathtaking: the northern tip of the North Island is so thin you can see from coast to coast, 90-mile beach looms on the left, and the clouds (if there are any) hang low above the thinly-stretched country. No wonder this was named Aotearoa ('long white cloud').

After changing into a pair of shorts and getting out my sunglasses (I hadn't used these in months, if not years!), I was dragged straight to fashionable Ponsonby Road, which seduces with a variety of delicate eateries, stylish cafes and fashionable stores. Rather bourgeois really. To my delight and relief Aotearoa-brewed beer was a pure delight (with most breweries priding themselves on organic brewing), although at this point any variety of cold, preferably alcoholic liquid would have sent me straight to heaven. So after a bit of indulgence in the urban cultural landscape of Ponsonby, I just about managed the trip up to Massey University, which is on the North Shore of Auckland, and into bed.



Moi qui n'ai connu, toute ma vie,  
Que le ciel du nord

Auckland is not a particularly pretty city. Although some of its architecture is imposing, especially its Sky Tower (the tallest tower in the Southern Hemisphere), it's a fairly average city: a thoroughly boring, bland central business district, some hip areas such as Ponsonby, K-Road or Parnell, and otherwise a lot of urban sprawl. Not much different from our northern cities, then.

Yet there aren't that many cities in the world that can boast two harbours (Waitemata and Manukau), fifty volcanoes and numerous beaches. While the University of Auckland and Auckland University of Technology are based right in the city (their respective business schools both in new buildings of high architectural distinction), Massey University (MU) is based in Albany, nearly 20km away.

Albany, an old farming village, strikes one as being rather run over by the urban sprawl that has reached it since Auckland Harbour Bridge was built in the 1960s and brought vast numbers of commuters with it. The opening of MU's second campus here, as well as the opening of the North Harbour Stadium and Albany Central – a humungous shopping mall – certainly haven't encouraged quaintness either, despite the architecture of the main parts of the MU campus appearing in a faux-Spanish style, terracotta and all.

Yet Albany is still far away from the hustle and bustle of Queen St downtown: close to the East Coast Bays, and with much of the student accommodation next to a creek, once could still expect to be woken up by a rooster in the morning. Or at 3am – shooting not permitted.

Working and living in Albany proved to be a very pleasant experience. The Department of Management and International Business at MU had been so generous as to provide me with a large office, and an open door ensured a pleasantly calm but steady flow of heads popping in to extend a warm welcome.

Fortnightly discussion groups on anything from 'Exhausted signifiers in Organization Studies' (we are still looking forward to the paper, Roy!) to Walter Benjamin's 'The Life of Students' ('scholarship, far from leading inexorably to a profession, may in fact preclude it', Benjamin writes – not something you want to hear as you are about to submit a PhD, or applying for academic jobs!) kept my head working and entertained, while respite from the sun that blasted into the office in the late afternoon was to be found at nearby Long Bay, fantastic scenery for running, swimming, late-afternoon sunbathing, and for staring at the Southern skies.



### **Ils viennent du bout du monde, Apportant avec eux des idées vagabondes**

Aotearoa is also a pretty interesting place to spend some time discovering academic activities in the country's business schools (of which I counted 8). February brought the 'Organization, Identity, Locality' (OIL) workshop at Otago University in Dunedin, which gave me a chance to meet most of the critical scholars working in business schools in Aotearoa. The workshop's focus on locality proved very insightful, mostly because it engaged directly with the question of how to counteract the ways in which Integrated World Capitalism (to borrow Negri and Guattari's term) was messing up the country in all sorts of ways, beginning with the American business school model.

Early imperialist capital had led to the deforestation of most of the country, post-Fordist capital had killed off half the sheep, and in business schools there was still talk of the benefits of integrating into a world economy.

While at Massey I was working on a piece on the contemporary business school, the kinds of images it models itself on, its relation to the university, and how it could be rethought along critical lines. I ended up giving talks on this theme at 5 different campuses across the country, and was surprised at how responsive the audience was to an analysis that was largely based on the UK context.

It also reminded me of how dominant Western, and particularly US and UK, business and academics are (something we don't see so much at this end, being more or less part of that dominance, even in the critical community), while also showing how much the predicament of our colleagues down under overlaps with ours (for example in the way we all struggle with research assessment and funding). It was exciting to think that with only 8 business schools in the country, it was possible that some positively dangerous and radical ideas could spread and have effects rather quickly.

I did feel a little uneasy treating a country as a sort of ('let me go to New Zealand to do some *real* work in peace and quiet'), mostly because the flipside of this is that of our colleagues having to fight for travel budgets to attend the odd conference in the Northern hemisphere in order to take part in our academic life. Something was quite unfair here. Yet I found that most colleagues were on the one hand constructively managing their involvement with Northern academic circuits, while on the other hand being very welcoming to Northern academics seeking some local engagement. There was no sense in which the isolation and consequent tranquillity to be found at some universities down under appeared deleterious to inspired academic work – on the contrary.

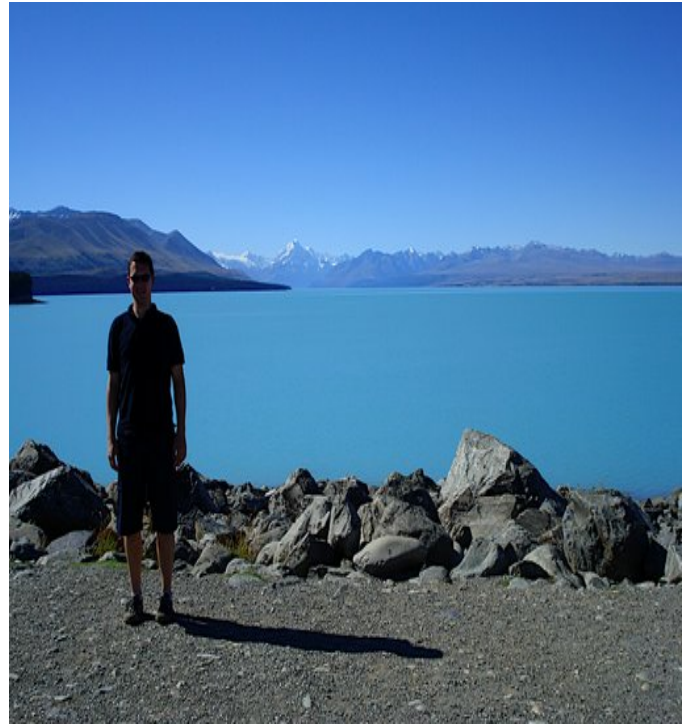
### **Et soudain ma pensée m'enlève et me depose, Un merveilleux été, sur la grève**

So, to conclude, I can recommend to anyone, especially current PhD students, to spend some time down under. You will be welcomed and well taken care of. It is surprisingly easy to arrange a stint at another university abroad – often you are welcomed with open arms, and the invitation is only a few emails away.

The change of scenery afforded by a bit of travel, and the movements of thought it produces, I found to be very enjoyable and productive. The coffee is also fantastic!

You will be invited to all sorts of places for work and get to see some great parts of the world at the same time. But most of importantly, make sure to get down there during the Northern winter, for there is nothing better to balance out the pains of birthing a PhD thesis than a marvellous summer, spent at the beach.

Armin Beverungen



# SCOS Regional rep. reports: news from around the globe.

Thoughts, views and news from the SCOS regional representatives, take it away reps!

## Nina Kivinen (Nordic Rep)

### *On texting, drinking and public leadership*

It was all over the news. Even BBC News reported on April 1 that the:

*Finnish FM loses job over texts. Finland has appointed a new foreign minister to replace Ilkka Kanerva, who was involved in a scandal over text messages sent to an erotic dancer.*

*Mr Kanerva sent 200 allegedly explicit messages to the dancer, and later made misleading statements about them."*

For weeks media had been following the story. Did the Finnish FM send text messages to an erotic dance, in that case what did he write, when did he have the time to write them, what did his life partner think about it and does it really matter?

Denying the whole thing was probably not a good idea as his was quickly removed from office once some of the messages were printed in newspapers.

In Finland the private lives of our politicians and other people in power have traditionally been off limits. For years presidents, generals, CEOs and MPs were protected by the media, and their sex life in particular, or the lack thereof, was never discussed.

Suddenly the situation has changed. Recently our prime minister tried to stop the release of an exposé written by a former girlfriend and being less amused, he asked the media how they think that a PM who is single should date...

At the same time sexual harassment claims have been made by staff at the parliament, and a prominent director of a research institute has allegedly been seen drunk at work. And these are serious concerns. You might find some of the media coverage concerning our politicians amusing and naïve in international

comparison, but it only goes to show that we have no tradition of talking about sex, harassment and improper behaviour in the workplace. And these are serious concerns indeed. The silence of media reflects the silence in the workplace and that which cannot be named...



Helsingin Sanomat: March 28, 2008

[http://www.hs.fi/kuvat/iso\\_webkuva/1135235109794.gif](http://www.hs.fi/kuvat/iso_webkuva/1135235109794.gif)

(Kanerva said that we were to join the Nato-forces "hand-in-hand" with Sweden. What does that mean? No idea, perhaps he means coming "mobile-in-hand"?)

Despite all our talk about gender equality much remains to be done. The arrogant and ignorant debates on mailing lists and discussion boards that I have seen these past few weeks would make even the optimist despair. But on the other hand, there is plenty of work to be done for a critical management researcher!

Take care, Nina

## Rowland Curtis (UK Rep)

### *'Another University is Possible': A Report from the Campus*

As we move into the warmer evenings of May, we also mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the student protests that took place in Paris and elsewhere in the summer of 1968. To coincide with this anniversary there has been

a series of events taking place as part of the Manchester University Student Union's *Another Education is Possible* week. The popular support for these 'happenings' by both staff and students has arisen in the context of the increasingly unpopular term of governance of the university by Vice Chancellor Alan Gilbert (or "President", as he likes to be known). Gilbert is seen by many to be chiefly responsible for establishing Manchester as a high profile example of the 'modernisation' of a higher education institution according to business principles and priorities associated with a range of problems relating institutional priorities.

In the spirit of '68, the week of events began with a student-led *Reclaim the Uni* demonstration march, culminating in the occupation by students of the new Arthur Lewis humanities building, seen by many as a symbol of the channelling of university money into 'prestige' investments such as the construction of new buildings and the hiring of high profile staff such as Prof. Martin Amis. Such investments are directly linked by many to a lack of funds for staff salaries in the context of recent job cuts for both academic and non-academic staff. One of the main aims of the *Reclaim the Uni* campaign has been to try to create links between dissatisfied students and staff around issues such as reductions in 'face-to-face' contact time between students and lecturers, and increases in lecture and seminar sizes.

These have been understood as leading to what some have called the 'depersonalisation' of the academic teaching relationship, and which have long been associated by others with the proliferation of online learning aids at the university ('WebCT'). The campaign has also taken issue with the increasing prevalence of the notion of students as 'customers' – as *consumers* of education – seen by some as having legitimated a 'top-down' managerialist approach to the governance of the 'university-as-corporation', and as having isolated many important decision making processes from those who make up the university's educational community.

Later this week at a meeting of student activists, the student demonstration and building occupation were interpreted as having been significant initial successes for the campaign, with a set of nine demands agreed by consensus during the occupation. The result has been what has become known as the Arthur Lewis Declarations - to be presented to the university Vice

Chancellor this coming week. The events on campus also received high-profile coverage in two editions of the Manchester Evening News newspaper this week, including a response by the Vice Chancellor himself, promising that 'radical changes' will be introduced in the interest of 're-personalising' the educational experience for students - a message that has been cautiously received by student activists in their orientation to a longer term campaign of resistance (see MEN 2008).

The following day a conference took place at the university entitled *Education in a Neoliberal World*, following up a similar event that took place in the city two years earlier. This featured presentations from Profs. Terry Eagleton and Sheila Rowbotham - both high profile, politically active academics whose employment contracts at the University will soon be terminated. There were also presentations from Alex Callinicos of Kings College London, Tom Skinner, the Manchester Student Union General Secretary, and representatives of both the Unite and UCU unions.

In his presentation to the conference, Terry Eagleton - as well as making wry comments about what he called Martin Amis' difficulty in 'scaling curbs' in and around the university - also took time in his contribution to draw attention to the ongoing UCU union dispute at (fellow North West UK institution) Keele University, relating to the proposed redundancy of 38 out of 67 academic staff at the School of Economic and Management Studies.

Keele has become understood by many as being a vital site for contestation of an increasing managerialist agenda in business schools, and critics cite the fact that 11 out of 12 academics in the department associated with industrial relations-oriented research are among those in line for redundancy. Perhaps an important connection is being made here between the values guiding what we might (provisionally) call the 'institutional' conditions of academia, and the 'substantive' content of the contemporary business school syllabus. We might also suggest that it may in fact be no coincidence that such intense contestation has arisen around the future of a *business* school, rather than any other particular academic department, based upon what we might recognise as the specific tensions and contradictions embodied at the heart of such enterprise(s) and their relation to business interests / interests in business.

To then consider Manchester Business School itself in this light, and its inclusion as part in the broader University of Manchester, we might note that the contested formation of a Critical Management research group within the business school will roughly coincide this summer with the same department's hosting of this year's SCOS conference on "The City". A vague sense of the significance of such constellations of events might be felt by those who seek engagement with the contemporary politics and institutional conditions of academia, and by those who concern themselves with the role of higher education for what we might call wider societal futures.

Indeed, such contestation can be understood as having importance beyond the spatial boundaries of the campus, and as having consequences not only for those with direct involvement in its activities. On this point, in addition to the universities' traditional role as (having been) a privileged site for liberal social critique (re. the Critical Management Studies 'project'), we might also consider the example of the recent "Manchester: Knowledge Capital" initiative, where - with reference to this summer's SCOS conference theme of "The City" - the leadership of Manchester's higher education institutions are involved as important players for UK government city-regional development policy, with all the ambivalent tones of social 'welfare' that such an agenda might be seen to imply (see May & Perry 2006). We might hear such ambivalence echoed in the slogan '*another education is possible*', in terms of the multiple and conflicting potentials contemporary higher education institutions could be seen to imply.

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See the following website for up-to-date news on union action at the University of Keele: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/socs/ucu/>

For reflections by the same author on the institutional politics of academic scholarship, please see his review of the recent *Conference of Practical Criticism* (in this issue of *Notework*: eds.)

## Beatriz Acevedo (Latin American Rep)

### *The City, The Story Tellers and Some Other Tales from Latin America*

Looking around in my local library I found this little book of short stories from Latin America: The Picador Books of Latin American Stories, edited by Carlos Fuentes and Julio Ortega, London: Picador, 1998. It is a new experience for me to read these stories in English, since their tone and rhythm is originally in Spanish, yet, I think this is a great discovery I would like to share with all SCOSers in this regional news section.

Edited by Carlos Fuentes and Julio Ortega, this book contains a diverse selection of contemporary authors of Latin America, many of them belonging to the Latin American Boom of the 1960s and some others new writers reflecting modern concerns about our societies. The beauty of this collection is that it provides a taste (like one of those nice tapas dishes) from different authors and different ideas, in the format of the short story. As Carlos Fuentes argues in the introduction of this book whereas the novel is an ocean, the short story, is a "sailboat hugging the coast". Its mastery consists in its urgency and brevity; yet, it requires being engaging and suggestive to reach its aim.

As he added, the short story writer is a lonely navigator, knowing that "if they do not tell the tale this very night, near the shore, with no time to cross the ocean, there might be no tomorrow." And in this mission, the short story enchants and charms, while picking a motive, a small clue, or just a catching glimpse, of the ocean.

In anticipation for our meeting on July/2008, there is a common topic for writers in Latin America: the city. Due to the social and economic changes during the mid-twentieth century, the most of our populations are now located in big cities. Places like Bogota, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico, Caracas, Lima or Buenos Aires, grow annually to an amazing rate. For example, a thousand people arrive daily to Bogota, in search of new opportunities, or simply running away from the violence in the fields. This fact creates a number of social problems and the city is not able to provide basic

infrastructure, housing or employment for these migrants. They end up in inhuman conditions, living in garbage towns, the gigantic shanty towns known *favelas* in Brazil, *cayampas* in Chile, the lost cities '*ciudades pedidas*' in Mexico, or '*comunas*' in Colombia.



In response to this complexity, authors in Latin America have assumed a very active political role. Many of our writers in Latin America are politically committed citizens, some of them participating directly in politics (such as Vargas Llosa in Peru), others by supporting this or other political group. However, as Carlos Fuentes has rightly stated, their contribution to their societies consists mainly in fulfilling two important social needs: imagination and language: "Deprive a society of its words or its memory, or its speech or its desires, and you are easy prey to false illusions, providential leaderships and other traditional ills of the Latin American polity." (Fuentes, 1998: x)

The discussion about the city is relevant and important for social researchers in Latin American societies. The conditions of security, development, housing, health, employment or education continues to be a challenge for policy makers and leaders. As researchers and academics we are not oblivious of these challenges, and clearly most of our work and investigations are related to understand these problems. Although we are not novelists, yet we try to provide analysis and some times propose solutions. But perhaps more importantly is that we are in a situation in which we can imagine creative ways to deal with problems, new scenarios and innovative ways to tackle our urgent concerns.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite other colleagues from Latin America to join this discussion and maybe to enhance their participation in

international forums such as SCOS and other groups, eager to know about what is happening at the other side of the ocean, in our mystical and troubled continent. The participations of my two colleagues from Colombia and Argentina, and myself in the SCOS 2008 represent a fantastic opportunity of dialogue and exchange and I am so looking forward to that!

## Peter Pelzer (German Rep)

### *Marxist Conservatism...*

There were elections again with an unclear outcome. In Germany we have to get used to five-party-parliaments with unclear possibilities of coalition. The last election in Hessen did not lead to a new government during the past two months. One topic affects universities directly: the past conservative government introduced fees, the Social Democrats, the Greens and the Left want to stop this project. This is an interesting development as the opinion in other Länder (local governments) is not clear either. One of the more interesting arguments in this debate derives from the fact that higher education in Germany still is very much linked to social status. It is much more probable that kids of rich and/or well educated parents will study than those of the lower parts of the income pyramid. Without fees for studying, so one argument, the higher classes finance their cost of education from the general taxes. Who said this? Well, it was Karl Marx. This is a surprising theoretical contribution for a conservative politics...

## David Bubna-Litic and Carl Rhodes (Australia)

Please take a look at the ASCOS Call for Papers in lieu of a rep report

Janet Sayers (New Zealand) and Brenton Faber (North America) appear to be hard at work promoting SCOS in other worlds. A double edition from them next time !

# Tales from the Field

Dr. Zoë Bertgan – over to you Zoe!

## **Crawling from the Wreckage: A Visit to the 2008 Labour Process Conference**

Reader, prepare. Rare is this extraordinary tale I am about to unfold. Let me start with an innocent enough question: when was the last time you went to Dublin for St. Patrick's Day, only to find yourself at the annual international labour process conference? Be Jaysus! I swear this happened to me in March this year, a little over 6 weeks ago. Is it only 6 weeks? My therapist is convinced that we can reduce our sessions to 3 a week, citing a more relaxed disposition since my trip to Ireland. Well, ye feckin' eejit say's I, do not confuse a relaxed disposition with stupor. For this is what I have only recently begun to emerge from: stupor ... befuddlement, bewilderedness, bewilderment, discombobulation, fog, muddle, mystification, perplexity, puzzlement, stupefaction, trance, stupor. Methodologically, I can now see the reasoning and an explanation. Let me try and explain.

Under the mistaken impression that I was taking a holiday to my ancestral home of the blarney stone and the emerald dark sea, I was in fact the subject, nay the mere play-thing of methodological forces conspiring to subjugate my labour. I will admit to a certain fascination with the labour process and indeed many a methodological lesson I've learned from its tales of suffering and woe. There he is, look! (Open the pages of a Beynon or a Terry Wallace). A real working class worker all decked out in his oily overalls and smelling of woodbine, a couple of finger-ends missing, shuffling around and doffing his cap on some shopfloor of a car production factory. I can now see the lamp light from his helmet casting a penumbral golden glow around his tattooed biceps, swelling and contracting to the rhythm of a 4/4 clunkety-clunk as he pulls down on some stiff mechanical lever, the pistons and pumps of his engine periodically releasing steam, pausing momentarily to wipe sweat from his brow, perhaps to smile at his young boy apprentice (to the tune of a brass band slow march) 'ay laddie, at the End of the day, factory whistle cries, Men walk through these gates with death in their eyes. And you just better believe, boy, somebody's gonna get hurt tonight, It's the working, the working, just the working life'.

Ah! Cars, remember them? Now, it seems another lifetime since I was a regular at the labour process. Back in the good old days of Aston and the 'Sack of Potatoes', sitting up all night in our halls of residence debating the details of the 1858 factory inspectorate reports, doodling calculations of surplus value and annotating personal favourite solutions to the problem of converting values into prices. Oh! those were the days and nights my friend, sleeping on each others floor, bleary eyed at breakfast, eight o'clock sharp, a laugh and a few jokes, a quick rollie perhaps before the serious business of paper sessions began. I confess, I thought this had all disappeared. But from where I was sitting during the after-dinner plenary speech at Dublin delivered by Mr Labour Process himself, Professor Paul Thomson, I could swear that I heard of a revival taking place. Nothing less than a triumph! A buzz in the air, Professor Thomson rose to the microphone to address a packed audience: the theme of his talk 'Work Matters!' Dressed in a fine classic tweed club patch pocket blazer framed at the shoulder with elegant golden epaulettes that flourished with a cascade of generous bullion fringe and with his ribbons and medallions occasionally catching the overhead light Thomson literally sparkled with verve and wit.

The tricyclical motif of his monographed tie that interweaved the letters L, P, and T – his own initials seamlessly integrated with the title Labour Process Theory – offered a striking touch of panache, if not a little gestural reprimand directed towards a certain frivolous and louche affectation currently being flaunted by some members on the fringe of the debate. Pulling on his red-braces (which must have been left on from a previous costume change), Thomson drew his speech to a rousing conclusion with the words, 'No more cheap venues, no more run down hotels, WE DESERVE THE BEST, I tell you, WE DESERVE THE BEST!' Immediate and riotous applause, delegates getting to their feet, clapping, uproarious cheering, the stamping of feet, 'more, more' – the cries could be heard, a few people even hugging, some with tears in their eyes. And there we were all with our pints of plain, enjoying the craic, buckled and banjaxed singing "we'll be no more go-ing around like a con-stipated greyhound". A green haze had descended when I awoke the following morning on O'Connell Street; St Patrick's Day? From hereon in it shall be forever associated in my mind with a braver man than St. Patrick.



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## Calls and announcements

Some upcoming events, dates for your diaries and announcements for members of the SCOS community.....think of us as your direct marketeers.

### ACSCOS 2008

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Australasian Caucus of the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism

### Call for Papers

#### *Neophilia and Organization*

University of Technology, Sydney

26-28 November 2008

<http://www.business.uts.edu.au/management/acscos/index.html>

#### Introduction

We are pleased to announce that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australasian Caucus of the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism (ACSCOS) will be held at the University of Technology, Sydney from 26 to 28 November 2008. Similarly to the two that preceded it in Brisbane in 2004 and in Auckland in 2006, this year's ACSCOS is being held as a meeting ground for those broadly interested in what, for want of better words, is referred to as critical and postmodern management and organization studies. The colloquium is positioned under the ambit of SCOS both in recognition of that body's long and innovative contribution to critical and *avant garde* organization studies as well as to continue SCOS's excursions against its own Eurocentricism. We sincerely hope that Australian and New Zealand colleagues will respond to this call and help to generate a vibrant and productive mechanism for exchange. We also hope that colleagues from elsewhere in the world will join us in our corner of the southern hemisphere just as we so often trek to the north. More generally we look forward to a stimulating, collegial, productive and supportive gathering.

#### Theme

The theme of this year's colloquium is *neophilia and organization*. Neophilia is a fetishistic love of all that is new. Those afflicted with neophilia become excited about novelty; they crave newness. Newness to neophiliacs is a virtue to be upheld and a goal to always strive for. The development of the modern world saw the excitement for the new become a mainstay of western culture. In a temporal reversal, it seems that today we have inherited neophilia from the modern past – a condition that permeates management practice and management theory. The colloquium invites papers that consider neophilia as it relates to management and organizations. Indeed, management practice has long been afflicted with the love of the new, whether it is for the creation of new forms of organizations, a pathological desire for change and its management, the scrambling after the latest management fashion, or the strategic demand for re-invention. Management theory is not immune to novelty: indeed, it is often in the vanguard of both its promotion and demise. Those of us engaged in this practice are under constant pressure to define our work in terms of 'new knowledge' in the assumption of an ever incremental path of progress and accumulation, lest we be considered old-hat luddites who fail to move with the times. Mainstream management articulates this in terms of creativity, change management, innovation, development and growth. Those who theorize with a more critical bent are not immune either – such 'progressive' theories venture into becoming, emergence, utopia, and in days gone by even revolution.

In our region of the world we are the direct bearers of the conflicting legacy of neophilia. We are part of the new world, whether residing in the newly discovered unknown land of the south (terra australis incognita) or the new land once named after the Dutch province of Zeeland. With this newness came a disavowal of the old, a wiping clean of the slate that created a terra nullis ripe for the creation of the new as if from nowhere. Here in the new world, neophilia went practical in its attempt to sweep clear the old in the name of colonial expansion. The colloquium seeks to trouble organization and management in relation to both its neophilic roots and its location in tradition. We call for an appraisal of the value and values of newness in our dynamic fields of practice and theory, and an exploration of the intertwined relation between newness, change and novelty on the one hand, and tradition, permanence and inheritance on the other. Papers are particularly welcomed that consider neophilia as it relates specifically to our spatial location, cultural tradition, and political position in Australasia. Papers addressing the theme might consider the following issues, although this list is far from exhaustive

- The manager as neophilic
- Management theory in the space between difference and repetition
- Avant-gardism in management theory and practice
- Management as a new academic discipline and its relationship with older scholarly traditions
- Recycling, organizing and the simulacra of the new
- Neophilia and the process of both creating the new and destroying the old
- The new managerial classes and social control
- New organizational forms and their relationship to bureaucracy
- New technology and organization
- Old vs. new scholarly value in management research
- The business school and the new university
- 'Brand New': neophilia and consumption
- The new men and women of organizations
- Resistance to the new and resistance to the old
- Newness, identity and self-(re)creation in organizations
- Organizational life and the desire to for self-reinvention
- Organizational change and the pleasures of the new
- Postcolonialism, organization and neophilia
- Management fads and fashions
- Neophilia and neophobia and organizational conflict
- Technology and the neo-luddites
- Nostalgia and the striving for a new future in an imagined past
- The temporal character of organizations
- Neophilia and organizational becoming
- Progress, the myth of progress and neophilia
- The relation between tradition, inheritance and neophilia
- The history of neophilia in organizations
- Postmodernism and the modern fetish for newness
- Intolerance to neophilia
- Neophilia as old-fashioned

### Guidelines for Submission

Papers and abstracts are invited that directly address the colloquium theme, or address other open issues. Two alternative forms of submission are invited for the colloquium: abstracts of up to 800 words or full papers of up to 7,000 words. **Full papers** will be independently peer reviewed. Accepted papers will be published in conference proceedings. **Abstracts** will be peer reviewed, and made available to delegates prior to the colloquium. Papers or abstracts should be submitted to [ACSCOS2008@uts.edu.au](mailto:ACSCOS2008@uts.edu.au) by 1 August 2008. Notification of acceptance will be given prior to 5 September 2008.

## **Venue**

The colloquium is being hosted by the School of Management, University of Technology, Sydney and will be held at the University's Haymarket Campus located at Cnr Quay Street & Ultimo Road, Haymarket Sydney.

## **Registration and Fees**

Fees for the colloquium will be A\$200. Details of how to register will be posted closer to the event.

## **Accommodation**

The University of Technology's School of Management is located in close proximity to Sydney's China Town and Darling Harbour. While participants will book their own accommodation, details of nearby hotels are available at <http://www.housing.uts.edu.au/hotels/index.html>

## **Inquiries**

Please direct inquiries to Professor Carl Rhodes at [carl.rhodes@uts.edu.au](mailto:carl.rhodes@uts.edu.au).

## **Local Organizing Committee**

Carl Rhodes (Chair), University of Technology Sydney  
David Bubna-Litic, University of Technology Sydney  
Stewart Clegg, University of Technology Sydney  
Martin Kornberger, University of Technology Sydney  
Tyrone Pitsis, University of Technology Sydney  
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Anne Ross-Smith, University of Technology Sydney

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Julie Wolfram-Cox, Deakin University, Melbourne  
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**Special Issue *management revue*:**

**Power in Organizations – Power of Organizations**

[www.management-revue.org](http://www.management-revue.org)

[Rainer\\_Hampp\\_Verlag@t-online.de](mailto:Rainer_Hampp_Verlag@t-online.de) /

**Editors**

**Axel Haunschild (University of Trier)**

**Werner Nienhüser (University of Duisburg-Essen)**

**Richard Weiskopf (Innsbruck University)**

**Call for papers**

**Power in Organizations – Power of Organizations**

**Evidence, Concepts and New Perspectives**

Whereas talking about power might still be a taboo within organizations, concepts of power have been used widely in organization and management studies over the past decades. Approaches in organization studies that explicitly refer to power as a relevant concept of analysis comprise, for example, contingency theory, resource-dependence theory, strategic analysis and micropolitics, new institutionalism, labour process theory, post-structuralist critical management theories, post-colonialism, gender studies, organizational discourse, and corporate governance studies. However, the use of power as a theoretical construct or conceptual tool varies significantly regarding the level of analysis, the research aims (descriptive, explanatory, critical or normative) as well as the implicit or explicit social theoretical assumptions (on actors, societal structures and the relationships between them). Analyses comparing and discussing these assumptions and the usefulness of theories and concepts of power can be found in the social theory literature but are rather rare in the context of organization studies. The special issue seeks to fill this gap by particularly inviting interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary papers from a wide range of social science disciplines that either critically reflect upon theories of power in organization studies or that apply and critically evaluate selected concepts or theories of power to problems of organizing and organizations.

Possible research questions and topics for submissions are (this list is not exhaustive):

- Exploring the roots of power concepts in social theories and discussing (or challenging) their relevance for organization studies.
- Changing relations of power between employers and employees as a consequence of more market-based and/or flexible work arrangements and forms of organizing.
- Co-determination and power – co-determination between counter-vailing power and powerless co-management.
- Discipline and control in post-fordist and post-bureaucratic organizations.
- How organizing and creative forms of organizing (social relations, work-relations) imply or create power.
- Strategies, relations of power (power structures) and structures of dominance within organizations. Specific areas of investigation could, for example, be MNCs, network organizations etc.
- Language and power, for instance, the role of managerial language in organizational restructuring, in leadership etc.
- Organizational diversity from a power perspective (for example evidence for and sources of inequality, power sources of organizational sub-groups; organizing as creating a 'multitude').
- How organizations influence societies and their members, for example by regulating, branding, shaping work identities and consumer behaviours, and by providing life, work and career opportunities.
- Power struggles between for-profit organizations, NGOs and/or social movements.
- How societal power structures shape power relationships within organizations, for example, the influence of globalization processes on the relative power of trade unions, employers and employees.

**Deadline:** We are looking forward to receiving your contribution! The deadline for submissions is **26 September 2008**. Please send your paper via email to all three editors. Guidelines for submissions can be found on the journal's webpage ([http://www.management-revue.org/authors\\_guidelines.php](http://www.management-revue.org/authors_guidelines.php)). All contributions will be subject to a double-blind review procedure.

For **further details** please contact:

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## **CSAA 2008 NATIONAL CONFERENCE 'FUTURES'**

**Kalgoorlie, Western Australia  
Sat 6th- Tuesday 9th December**

Cultural studies has historically concerned itself with the cultural practices of the everyday and the now. However, as a politically motivated discipline, cultural studies has an ongoing preoccupation with cultural, economic, and political change, and thus with futures. The 2008 Cultural Studies Association of Australasia National Conference will interrogate possible and impossible local, national, regional, and global futures.

Confirmed speakers:

- Judith Halberstam, Professor of English and Gender Studies, Director for the Center of Feminist Research University of Southern California
- Fred Chaney, Order of Australia, Co-chairman of Reconciliation Australia, former Deputy Chairman of the Australian Native Title Tribunal
- Kim Scott, Australian novelist, winner of the Miles Franklin Award, WA Premier's Literary Award, and RAKA Kate Challis Award.

Our imaginings of the future shape the lived experience of the present and our cultural memory of the past. These imaginings are usually polarised towards the deeply nihilistic or the jubilantly utopian. This conference will address the spaces between real and fictional futures, and the hopes and anxieties that emerge from those spaces.

Conference themes and topics might include the future of:

- Landscapes: popular cultural responses to global warming; discourses of evolution; the aesthetics of entropy, erosion, ruins, and wastelands; ghost towns;
- Urbanscapes: retro and futuristic 'burbscapes and cityscapes; future advertising and graffiti; new soundscapes; liquid architectures (modular, programmable, and nanotech);

Conference themes and topics might include the future of (cont'd):

- Movement: the culture of mobile lifestyles (backpackers, tourists, and caravan parks); animal and human migrations;
- Community: the fate(s) of indigenous and regional communities; future ethnicities and subcultures; ageing and overpopulation;
- Politics: future social movements; neo-imperialism; post-civil society; the collective commons; utopian and preventative policies;
- History: (personal and national) collections, museums and archives; the atrophy of language; life stories; the media as a future archive of the present;
- Bodies: sexualities; genders; virtual; post-human; cyborg;
- The Child: children's utopias; future parenting and pedagogy; changing cultural constructions of childhood; future infantilism;
- Technology - new trends in media and entertainment; emerging trends in, and discourses of, game culture; regional engagements with online communities; fringe cyberculture; future ethnographics;
- Economy - blue sky futures; future food systems; popular representations of gold and instant wealth; trends and discourses of exploration, discovery, and exploitation;
- Aesthetics - popular imaginings of messianic, apocalyptic and utopian futures; new forms of art and art funding.

The conference will be held in the unique regional environment of Kalgoorlie at Western Australia's School of Mines. Kalgoorlie is the historic centre of mining in Western Australia. The Perth-Kalgoorlie pipeline, completed in 1903, was a contentious development that opened up the goldfields and signified a commitment to the future of WA. The town's growth gave rise to satellite industries such as tourism, beer brewing, and sex work, and today Kalgoorlie is a thriving regional city. However, like any industry centred around natural resources, the mining industry there has a finite future. The choice of Kalgoorlie as a venue therefore not only puts into practice the Association's policy of addressing the needs of regional communities, it emphasises that the future is a dynamic driven by tensions between development and sustainability.

The call for panels and refereed papers is now open

**Panel Proposals due: June 30**

**Refereed Paper Proposals due: August 15**

A selection of papers from the conference will be published in a special issue of Continuum: **Journal of Media and Cultural Studies**.

Proposals should be emailed to:  
l.brennan@curtin.edu.au

For all other conference enquiries please contact either Amanda Third (a.third@murdoch.edu.au) or Ron Blaber (r.blaber@curtin.edu.au).

# Journal of Organizational Change Management

## Special Issue on "Movements of Transition 20 years on: Identities, Ideologies, Imaginary Institutions"

To be edited by Marianna Fotaki, Steffen Böhm and John Hassard

[http://info.emeraldinsight.com/products/journals/call\\_for\\_papers.htm?PHPSESSID=19orqdbgrdmpketcq2te5geo47&id=256](http://info.emeraldinsight.com/products/journals/call_for_papers.htm?PHPSESSID=19orqdbgrdmpketcq2te5geo47&id=256)

### Rationale

The demise of the bureaucratic Soviet type state socialism and the transition to (or rather reinstatement of) the free market in Central and Eastern Europe has been one of the most pivotal and challenging societal events of the past two decades. Drastic social transformations, set in motion by the disintegrating Soviet model (and its variants) have succeeded in firmly establishing a 'liberalist fantasy' (De Cock and Böhm, 2007) as the dominant narrative in contemporary public discourse. Reflecting the Zeitgeist, market rhetoric of 'freedom' and 'choice' has been unanimously embraced as an antidote to the alleged inefficiency and irresponsiveness of state bureaucracies in East and West. Presented as a superior form of social organization, the 'free market' has captured the minds of its allies and foes alike, becoming elevated to the status of the new master signifier (Fotaki, 2008).

In the popular imagination this transition has frequently been portrayed as the archetypal journey from serfdom to freedom (Hayek, 1944), with this process being joined with teleological references to the 'end of history' (Fukuyama, 1992/2006). In this new 'post-historical' world, the free market and capitalist management have become a hegemonic articulation, promising democracy, wealth, responsibility, security, and even equality. Meanwhile, any (alternative) collective models of organizing have been effortlessly dismissed as illiberal, coercive or irrelevant. In this special issue we would like to explore the ideologies embedded in prevailing discourses of transition - or what Buck-Morss (2002) calls (qua Walter Benjamin) 'dreamworlds'. That is, we wish to question the individual and social processes of ideology and imagination extant within the institutional arrangements of both East and West. For us, the transition to a free market society is bound up with a host of dream-like imaginations of social and economic progress (which were also found on the imaginary horizon of the Soviet system). In this sense, what we see is not a transition toward real freedom or democracy, but simply a transition from one socio-economic dreamworld to another.

We particularly wish to question the notion of transition as a blanket imposition of historical, a-historical or pseudo-historical truths onto our reality and identity. Whilst recognising the importance of common and/or conflicting power interests, we move beyond traditional political economy premises of social actors being endowed with consistent and stable preferences that are exogenous to their multiple identities. On the contrary, our starting point is the notion of social life as organized by a set of shared meanings and practices which are taken for granted over long periods (Douglas, 1986) and which affect political processes in fundamental ways (Wildavsky, 1987). We therefore argue that epochal changes, political revolutions and major reforms are frequently influenced by identity-driven strivings and demands/desires for recognition by various social groups. In other words, social processes, institutions, ideologies and identities occur and exist at the interface of political-agonistic (Mouffe, 2005) and symbolic-imaginary (Žižek, 1989) dimensions, which have been at the forefront of psychoanalytic and post-structural writing over the past two decades.

We would therefore like to consider transition - as a transformation, reconfiguration, and repositioning process - as movement which is simultaneously personal and collective. As such, there are questions of identity and imagination bound up with any process of institutional and societal change. These are not simply the effect of history, but the very stuff of which history and progress are made. Moving beyond nostalgia and critique, we look for openings and ruptures in past and present symbolic orders - or in what can be called 'imaginary institutions' (Castoriadis, 1987/2005; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985/2001).

By interrogating 'past bureaucratic' and 'present consumerist' societies, we hope to understand the dreamworlds and collective imaginations embedded in processes of social organization. We acknowledge that this interrogation can never be pure and value-free; that is, it cannot be achieved from an 'outside', 'post-historical' or 'non-imaginary' position. Our aim is to identify possibilities for theoretical and empirical 'openings and alternatives'; i.e. to explore the nature of resistance to the hegemonic discourses of market fundamentalism and neo-liberalism that currently populate the 'imaginary world of our own' (Spicer and Böhm, 2007). We see this interrogation of movements of transition not as a nostalgic look to the past, but rather as a quest for different ways of being, organizing and constituting public space.

### The Call

With such an ambitious scope our Call is open to a variety of theoretical and empirical contributions. However we wish the contributions to this special issue to extend beyond either micro-political analyses or the presentation of case studies confined to national or sectoral contexts. This aim is for this Call are to reflect critically on the different histories and identities of transition, problematize the direction of change and its seeming inevitability, and establish possibilities for alternative articulations. We particularly invite conceptual work that questions the utilitarian premises running through the grand narratives and dreamworlds of state socialism and market liberalism. Empirically, we welcome studies that interrogate identities of transition on a variety of levels - personal, institutional and societal - and discuss networks of power and resistance running through identities and subjectivities in a variety of contexts. We emphasize the need to go beyond the variations of Foucauldian 'micro-political' studies of organization and identity that have been so popular in our field in recent times. For us, identities in a transition context can never just involve micro-political settings within limited boundaries of organizations, firms and institutions. Rather, we wish to make sense of wider change processes, involving identities that are bound up with individual as well as social and collective imaginations and desires.

Hence, we would like to invite contributions that problematize, re-think and re-define movements of transition, particularly addressing:

\* The historical epoch of social transformation from what was known as 'real existing socialism' to today's (post-) transition market economies - examining and evaluating the identities and 'dreamworlds' bound up with this change process;

\* Theoretical papers presenting counterintuitive and provocative analyses and ideas of transition using a range of frameworks (e.g. feminist, post-colonial, neo-Gramscian, post-Marxist, post/Foucauldian, post-structuralist, psychoanalytic and other novel approaches);

\* Empirical analyses examining and evaluating the human, social, cultural and economic costs involved in transition, focussing particularly on the processes of identity formation and reformation.

\* Significance of social and organizational transformations in light of foreclosed and recreated opportunities for radical movements of transition;

\* The roles of, and the relationships between, the state, economy and civil society in organizing societal transitions and change processes, focusing particularly on the role of organizations (e.g. NGOs, charities, affinity groups, direct action groups, media organizations) and counter cultural discourses by various groups (women, minorities, ethnic groups and immigrants) in facilitating hegemonic as well as counter-hegemonic transitions;

\* The modes of organization in what can be regarded as transitions toward alternative 'dreamworlds'.

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## Submissions

Extended abstracts of up to 1,500 words (excluding references) outlining approaches, methods and contributions to the theme should be submitted to [Marianna.Fotaki@mbs.ac.uk](mailto:Marianna.Fotaki@mbs.ac.uk) before September 1, 2008. If accepted, you will be notified within a month.

## About the editors:

Marianna Fotaki is Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) of health policy and organization studies in Manchester Business School and holds degrees in medicine and health economics, and a PhD in public policy from London School of Economics and Political Science. Before joining the academia Marianna has worked as a medical doctor for humanitarian organizations and as the EU resident senior adviser on health & social policy and economic restructuring to the governments of the Russian Federation, Armenia, Georgia, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Tunisia. Her publications have appeared in *Human Relations*, *Public Administration*, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *Policy & Politics* and *Social Science and Medicine*. Marianna uses her diverse work experience and her experience in psychoanalysis and psychodynamic group relations, to theorize on issues on public policy formation, gender and the 'otherness' in organizations and society. She has co-organized a psychoanalytic symposium supported by Organization and Management Theory Division and Critical Management Studies Interest Group (CMS IG) at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management in Philadelphia 2007 and the stream on psychoanalysis at the International Critical Management Conference, July 2007. Marianna is convening a two-day pre-conference research workshop on 'Psychoanalysis and organisational theory' supported by CMS IG in AoM annual meeting in Anaheim in 2008.

Steffen Böhm is Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in Management at the University of Essex. He holds a PhD from the University of Warwick. His research focuses on the politics of organizing. He is co-founder and member of the editorial collective of the open-access journal 'ephemera: theory & politics in organization' ([www.ephemeraweb.org](http://www.ephemeraweb.org)), and co-founder and co-editor of the new open publishing press 'mayflybooks' ([www.mayflybooks.org](http://www.mayflybooks.org)). He has authored *Repositioning Organization Theory* (Palgrave) and co-edited *Against Automobility* (Blackwell). He has published widely in journals such as *Organization*, *Organization Studies*, *Critical Perspectives of International Business*, *Mute: Culture & Politics after the Net*, *ephemera: theory & politics in organization*, *Tamara: Journal for Critical Postmodern Organization*, *Framework: The Finnish Art Review*, *The Anomalist*, *Signs of the Times*, and others.

John Hassard is Professor of Organizational Analysis at Manchester Business School (University of Manchester) and Senior Professorial Research Associate at the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge. Previously he taught and researched at the London Business School and universities of Cardiff and Keele. His main research interests lie in theories of organization, critical management studies, and the empirical analysis of industrial change, especially in relation to transitional economies. On these subjects he has published twelve books and more than a hundred research articles. Professor Hassard is currently a board member of the Society for the Advancement of Management Studies.

## *Organization*

The critical journal of organization, theory and society

### Call for Papers—Special Issue

#### **Towards a Relational Understanding of Organization and Value: For Whom? For What? To What Effect?**

Guest Editors:

Craig Prichard, Massey University, New Zealand

Sarah Stookey, Central Connecticut State University, USA

Stefano Harney, Queen Mary, University of London, UK

#### **Deadline for submissions: 2 March 2009**

This special issue is posed as a challenge to critical organizational scholars to (re)engage with the problem of how value relations constitute organizational processes and make organizations possible.

Recently, concern with 'value' has been on the rise in various organization and management publications. For scholars, 'value' is a core conceptual and empirical puzzle but, when associated with 'management', value tends to be either taken for granted or understood narrowly as a problem of how economic value is created, appropriated and distributed in organizations. Outside academic circles, however, questions of 'value' have received more contested attention. On the one hand, a broad neo-liberal movement has swept the western economies, bringing an increased financialization of social and political life. This new liberalism includes shareholder activism, the development of the personal finance industry, new financial tools and modes of assessment for organizations, and State-sponsored marketization and consumerization of most social and political issues. All this has extended the centrality of the consumer and the individual as the primary locus of responsibility over health, happiness, and wellbeing. How to 'add value' to one's life, to one's relationships, to one's enterprise, and to one's nation, has become standardized vernacular.

On the other hand, the new liberalism has not gone unopposed. Counter movements have sprung up under the banners of 'fair trade', 'anti-globalization' and more recently 'global warming' or 'climate change'. Under such banners, multiple groups and constituencies including farmers, small business people, and consumers have confronted world leaders, corporations, and supra-national bureaucrats. Alongside direct action, such movements are also contributing to a debate on 'value', raising popular consciousness about the social, political, economic, and environmental genealogies of food, clothing, shelter, technologies, and energy use. In some cases, they have forced states, firms, and individuals to reconsider narrow definitions that simply identify value in terms of prices, things, and monetary units. For instance, they propose redefining value to incorporate political, social, and ecological relationships between people and between people and their environments. Some of this work challenges institutionalized 'governance' structures that organize the distribution of economic surplus in the family, the firm, and the economy.

While these contested concerns over 'value' seem to be pointing at a need to move away from absolute or even relativist theories of value and towards more relational understandings, management scholars' response to relational definitions has been at best mixed. For many the liberal definition of value goes unquestioned. The global sourcing of profits, the intensive factory regimes in cheap labor locations, and disparities of wealth between those at various points in the global value chains are understood, for example, as global strategic choices based on competitive resources and capabilities, or as workplace cultural dynamics, or (when things don't go as planned) as issues of organizational trust and commitment.

Meanwhile, despite obvious connections between notions of value and concerns of critical organizational scholars with issues such as exploitation and justice, theoretical and empirical analyses around 'value' have been largely left to mainstream scholars.

This special issue is a response to such imbalance. It aims to advance discussion, thinking and particularly conceptualizations and writing that both revisits existing critical approaches to value in organization studies, and extends these in new and engaging directions. In this vein submitted papers might revitalize a political economy of organizations, offer creative new approaches to the analysis of organizational value relations or offer critiques of mainstream forms of value analysis. Expected contributions include, among many other possibilities:

- New and existing approaches to understanding labor as this relates to the production, appropriation, and distribution of value in organizational processes. For example, papers might critically address the problematics of immaterial, affective, or emotional labor.
- New and existing forms of 'value', 'rent' and 'class' analysis as this relates to management and organizational processes. For example, papers might critically address from a value or class perspective the tensions and struggles between family and work relations (the so-called 'work-life balance' issue).
- Works that explore the transfer and distribution of value as part of the cultural, political, and symbolic dynamics of organizations. For example, papers might focus on the articulation and organization of gender, race, ethnic, disable-bodied relations and identities.
- Works that critically analyze mainstream organizational knowledge and practice concerned with 'value management', 'value creation', and other conventional notions in this literature. For example, papers might critically refocus the problematics of value chains or commodity chains encompassing multiple locations and multiple forms of organizing.
- Works that develop new categories or forms of value analysis promoting equitable and stable forms of wealth distribution in organizations, industries, and economies.

**Submission:** Papers must be submitted electronically by 2 March 2009 (but not before 2 February 2009) to Sagentrack at <http://org.sagepub.com/>. Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines published in *Organization* and on the journal's website: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsProdDesc.nav?level1=600&currTree=Subjects&catLevel1=&prodId=Journal20098>  
1 Papers should be no more than 8,000 words, excluding references, and will be blind reviewed following the journal's standard review process. For further information, please contact one of the following guest editors: Craig Prichard ([c.prichard@massey.ac.nz](mailto:c.prichard@massey.ac.nz)), Sarah Stookey ([stookeysab@ccsu.edu](mailto:stookeysab@ccsu.edu)) or Stefano Harney ([s.harney@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:s.harney@qmul.ac.uk)).

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## **Launching Interface:**

### **A journal for and about social movements ([www.interfacejournal.net](http://www.interfacejournal.net))**

We are proud to announce the launch of Interface, a new global online journal dedicated to research carried out from and for social movements by movement practitioners and engaged academics alike. We are looking for articles of all kinds as well as people interested in helping create the journal at many different levels. This email has some basic information, and more is available on our website at [www.interfacejournal.net](http://www.interfacejournal.net).

Call for Papers: Issue 1, "Movement knowledge"

Interface is a new journal launched by activists and academics around the world in response to the development and increased visibility of social movements in the last few years - and the immense amount of knowledge generated in this process. This knowledge is created across the globe, and in many contexts and a variety of ways, and it constitutes an incredibly valuable resource for the further development of social movements. Interface responds to this need, as a tool to help our movements learn from each other's struggles.

Interface is a forum bringing together activists from different movements and different countries, researchers working with movements, and progressive academics from various countries to contribute to the production of knowledge that can help us gain insights across movements and issues, across continents and cultures, and across theoretical and disciplinary traditions. To this end, Interface seeks to develop analysis and knowledge that allow lessons to be learned from specific movement processes and experiences and translated into a form useful for other movements. In doing so, our goal is to include material that can be used in a range of ways by movements in terms of its content, its language, its purpose and its form.

We are currently seeking contributions to the first issue of Interface and welcome contributions by movement participants and academics who are developing movement-relevant theory and research. The theme of this first issue, which will be published on January 1st 2009, is "movement knowledge": what we know, how we create knowledge, what we do with it and how it can make a difference either in movement struggles or in creating a different and better world. We invite both formal research (qualitative and quantitative) and practically-grounded work on all aspects of social movements. We are seeking work in a range of different formats, such as conventional articles, review essays, facilitated discussions and interviews, action notes, teaching notes, key documents and analysis, book reviews and beyond.

In order to achieve this, research contributions will be reviewed by both activist and academic peers, other material will be sympathetically edited, and the editorial process generally will be geared towards assisting authors to find ways of expressing their understanding, so that we all can be heard across geographical, social and political distances. The deadline for contributions for the first issue is September 1st 2008. Guidelines for contributors and contact details are available on our webpage at [www.interfacejournal.net](http://www.interfacejournal.net).

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## **The Political Economy of Academic Journal Publishing**

**Call for Papers & Proposal for a Special Issue of *ephemera: theory & politics in organization* ([www.ephemeraweb.org](http://www.ephemeraweb.org)) to be edited by**

**Craig Prichard & Steffen Böhm**

'Publish or perish', that famous diktat, is without doubt the central, pervasive and unassailable logic governing most academic work in the current period. The central figure, the one around which this decree currently revolves, is, of course, the academic journal article. While the book and perhaps the lecture remain important in some locations, the journal article has become the core currency and the very measure by which academic jobs, careers, reputations and identities are made and traded. Yet despite all the hours congealed into 'the article', and the years spent perfecting the craft of writing for journal publications, many of us know very little about the industry that surrounds our work and to which we contribute so much. Of course, we may recall certain events: Some will have noted the sale, for nearly US\$1 billion, of Blackwell's 875-strong journal collection to US company Wiley in late 2006. Others will be aware that they can now, if they so wish, purchase their already published papers as individual downloads on Amazon.com. There will be some for whom internet-based open access journals (such as *ephemera*) or online repositories are now the natural home of their written academic work.

There may be others whom have confronted the crisis that surrounds journal subscription pricing and are seeing the demise of library journal collections in their university libraries. And there may be a few among us who recognize those journals and publishers that feature in Ted Bergstrom's hall of shame for the most expensive journals currently published (<http://www.journalprices.com>). But for all those that recognize such events and processes there are many more for whom such events have 'taken a while to get our attention', as Ron Kirby, the University of California mathematician who led the editorial revolt against Reed Elsevier's pricing strategy at the journal *Topography*, said recently.

This special issue is an invitation to begin to change that. It is a call for contributions that directly and critically explore the dynamics, problems, tensions, and issues that surround the political economy of academic journal publishing. Part of this is an invitation to explore alternative ways of organizing the production of academic work, particularly the theory, politics and organization of open access publishing, which is, perhaps, the most promising initiative to challenge corporate forms of journal publishing today. This exploration of alternatives is an acknowledgement that the writer and academic author could be regarded, at various moments, as agent, challenger and also victim of hegemonic regimes. We invite inter-disciplinary contributions from around the world and particularly welcome submissions from countries of the Global South, which have seen particular growth of open access publishing initiatives.

Possible topics include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Political economy of open access publishing
- Academic publishing and the knowledge society
- How to organize an open access journal?
- Political economy of corporate and university press publishing
- The place of journal publishing in the overall apparatus of academic publishing
- Historical perspectives of academic journal publishing
- The hegemony of UK/US publishing & referencing and its global economy
- Issues of censorship in the process of publishing
- Issues of inclusion/exclusion in journal publishing
- Academic publishing in the Global South
- Desires and identities connected to journal publishing
- The public sphere and journal publishing: Who do we really reach?
- The role of journal publishing in the setup and maintenance of professions and disciplines
- Cases of open access publishing
- The organisation of open access repositories
- Case histories of open access repositories
- Copyright vs Copyleft
- Publishing and language: the hegemony of English
- Intellectual property and the impact on academic publishing
- What is a journal's 'impact' and how to measure it?
- The specific role of *ephemera: theory & politics in organization* in the world of journal publishing and potential 'alternative impact factor measurements'
- Academic evaluation and performance measurement systems (such as the RAE in the UK)
- Publishing outside academia

Full papers should be submitted to the special issue editors via email by 1 November 2008. Papers should be between 5000 and 9000 words; multimedia work is welcome. All submissions should follow *ephemera's* submission guidelines: <http://www.ephemeraweb.org/journal/submit.htm>. All relevant submissions will undergo a double blind review process. The special issue is scheduled to be published in late 2009.

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## 2nd Conference of Practical Criticism in the Managerial Social Sciences

*University of Leicester, 8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2009*

### Call for Papers

#### Background

Occasioned by a sense that there has occurred an atrophy of the critical function in the academic study of management, the First Conference of Practical Criticism in the Social Sciences of Management (PC Conference) was held at the University of Leicester School of Management in January 2008. The gathering was considered very successful by those who attended; the presentations and debate being of a high standard and very enjoyable. A selection of the papers from that first conference is available in the University of Leicester Research Archive at <https://ra.le.ac.uk/handle/2381/3591> and refereed versions, together with any replies received from those authors whose work was criticised, are to be published in *Ephemeria* towards the end of 2008. Thus encouraged, we invite submissions for a Second Conference to be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of January, also at University of Leicester School of Management.

#### Rationale

As the strong programme in the sociology of science reminds us, there are centripetal tendencies at work in any formally-open field of enquiry. Where careers are made on the basis of 'becoming an authority', that authority is routinely exercised through the various instruments of what Bourdieu called 'professorial power'. So it is that examinerships, appointments committees, editorships and the advisory boards of grant-giving bodies are used to favour loyalists and infiltrate them into positions of influence. Thus consolidated through a network of alliances, professorial power is in a strong position to suppress any interrogation of its academic basis.

Coexisting with these authoritarian tendencies the social sciences of management have also undergone a kind of Balkanisation. The uncertain and contested relationship between management research and practice, has made it possible for the energetic and determined scholar to fashion 'new' fields of knowledge as an alternative to an apprenticeship of conformity and deference. Once institutionalised, academic authority in these new fields is able to consolidate itself through the mechanisms of censorship and self-censorship already described.

The result of this dialectic of differentiation and conformity is a deformation of the critical process in management research. There is criticism a-plenty between the quasi-independent fiefdoms into which the field has fragmented but little of it within them. Between academic regimes, there are exchanges of critical position-statements but there is little detailed re-appraisal of particular pieces of research except insofar as they embody the approach of a particular school. Experience suggests that criticism of the first type ('paradigm wars') is largely ineffective, possibly because it poses no threat to authority relationships within the academic regime at which it is directed. Criticism of the second type, on the other hand, is fundamental to academic production, if only because what stands in the literature can be legitimately cited in argument. It is, however, very much the exception, because of the threat which it poses to academic authority.

On the assumption that their refereeing and editorial procedures are a sufficient guarantee of what they publish, journals appear to operate a kind of double jeopardy rule, wherein what has survived the refereeing process is normally exempt from subsequent criticism. The notes of dissent which occasionally accompany some articles are only an apparent exception since these ordinarily originate in the refereeing process itself. Thus insulated from criticism, the standing of the authority-figures within particular academic regimes becomes both self-confirming and self-perpetuating.

Their standing as academics is attested by a mass of publications certified by a refereeing process which simultaneously refracts their own authority and protects it.

Observing similar processes of collusion around the manufacture of reputations in the literary London of the 1920s, the critic F.R. Leavis coined the evocative term 'flank-rubbing'. In these terms, the Leicester Conference of Practical Criticism is directed against flank-rubbing and its products in the social sciences of management. Its principle means of doing so are modelled on the close-reading techniques of practical criticism pioneered by Leavis' mentor I.A. Richards. Particular works by academics who are prominent within their fields of study are subject to a detailed examination in respect of the arguments they make, the evidence and the representations of previous scholarship on which they are based and the validity of their claims to have made important and original contributions. What is to be scrutinised, in other words, are the standards of scholarship which are being implicitly promulgated through the influence-networks of managerial social science.

That said, the form which contributions might take is flexible. Some contributions to the first conference critiqued the processes of refereeing and reputation-building in themselves, sometimes in general terms, sometimes with reference to particular cases. Others were aimed at a revision of our view of the corpus of scholarship on management, seeking to resuscitate scholarly contributions which have been obliterated by the contemporary noise of reputation-building. What matters is that contributions should be aimed at opening up the process of academic production to critical scrutiny where presently it is closed.

### **Submission and Selection of Papers**

Papers will be selected by a committee which includes Peter Armstrong, Campbell Jones, Simon Lilley, Geoff Lightfoot and Martin Parker of Leicester University and Cliff Oswick of Queen Mary, University of London. Please send abstracts, of around 600-800 words, via e-mail to [p.armstrong@le.ac.uk](mailto:p.armstrong@le.ac.uk) by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008. The abstracts should include details, where appropriate, of the work(s) to be criticised and the grounds of criticism. Successful submissions will be notified by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008. Complete papers should be received by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

### **Publication**

We will invite presenters to make their papers widely accessible through the Leicester Research Archive. A selection of the best papers presented at the conference will be published in *The Leading Journal in the Field* in late 2009 or early 2010.

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## **The Business of Ethnography**

***Department of Intercultural Communication and Management, Copenhagen Business School, 20-22 October, 2008***

### **Faculty**

Rita Denny, Gideon Kunda, Brian Moeran, Patricia Sunderland

### **Course Coordinator**

Brian Moeran

### **Prerequisite**

Participants must be enrolled as Ph.D. students in an institution of tertiary education

## Prerequisite/progression of the course

There is an important requirement for all would-be participants and it must be completed prior to the start of the course itself.

All participants must conduct a short period of fieldwork (minimum 10 days, maximum three weeks) in an organizational or other setting of their choice. This may be a company of some kind, a factory, city office, department or other store, train station, airport, golf club, football stadium, bar, restaurant, street corner neighbourhood, supermarket, theme park, and so on. The main criterion in your selection of a fieldwork site is that it should have some physical bounded form. This will help you carry out your participant observation research.

Once you have selected your fieldwork site, you are asked to liaise with Brian Moeran to ensure that you are on the right track and that your choice is acceptable. Then you are on your own!

It is up to you to decide what – if any – equipment you wish to use during the course of your research. Some fieldworkers use video cameras; others tape recorders; yet others notebooks. Some believe in writing everything down on their laptop; others memorise their conversations and interviews, and write them down later. It is suggested that, for the purposes of this course, you at least make use of a notebook to record what you see, hear, smell, taste and touch during yours time in the field.

Once you have completed your fieldwork, you will be expected to write a ten page description (4,000 words) of all that you have observed and experienced in the field. This description should seek to structure the random events and conversations that you have witnessed, but it should not resort to academic theories of any kind. In other words, your aim should be to write an informative account of what you have chosen to study, in such a way that the fieldwork site itself, what people do there, and how they communicate with one another is readily understandable by someone who has no knowledge thereof. You are asked, in short, to present a social world.

This account must be presented to the course coordinator, Brian Moeran, by Friday September 26. It will then be made available on Sitescape to all other participants for reading prior to the start of the course. These fieldwork accounts will form the basis of the group sessions during the first two days.

In order to ensure that you are able to carry out fieldwork and write up your findings in time, the following timetable is suggested:

- *July 1:* Selection of fieldwork site, and liaison with Brian Moeran
- *July-August:* Fieldwork research
- *September:* Writing up of fieldwork data.
- *Friday September 26:* Presentation of written fieldwork account

## Aim of the course

The aims of the course in *The Business of Ethnography* are:

- To have participating students carry out a short period of fieldwork prior to the course itself, and thereby enable them to experience first-hand some of the excitement and difficulties involved in ethnography.
- To provide a forum in which students can first describe their fieldwork in written form, and then discuss common issues among these written ethnographies and experiences in the field.
- To provide an overview of the main theoretical issues in fieldwork and to take up the challenges of ethnography of organizations and marketing, with a view to translating theory into practice and vice versa.
- To discuss the practicalities of fieldwork and the everyday reality of data collection, as well as to examine ways in which to interpret such data in the writing up of fieldwork as ethnography.

## Course content

It is fast becoming recognised that the standard methodological tools of qualitative and quantitative research (ranging from in-depth interviews to surveys and questionnaires) are inadequate to grasp in totality the everyday practices of business organizations or consumers. As a result, both managers and marketers are beginning to look around for



different ways of studying and understanding business methods, organizational set-ups, social structures and consumer lifestyles.

One hitherto relatively untried methodology is that of fieldwork. Strictly speaking, the word fieldwork refers to an intensive, ideally long-term, form of participant observation used to conduct research in an office, factory, city hall, police precinct, residential neighbourhood, shopping mall, theme park, and so on. Ethnography refers to the writing up of that fieldwork as a book, article or Ph.D. thesis. Both terms have been borrowed from the discipline of anthropology.

Bringing together four experienced ethnographers and leading experts in the field, this course in *The Business of Ethnography* will give research students first-hand experience of an ethnographic situation, as well as acquaint them with the aims and practices of ethnography as a methodological tool in the study of business organizations and marketing.

### **Teaching methods**

The course will comprise plenary session lectures, followed by question/answer sessions and discussion in the mornings; and, in the afternoons, more informal group work in which participants present their own fieldwork experiences, interpret videotapes, and engage in intensive discussion.

### **Monday, October 20**

0930-1000 Registration

1000-1050 Plenary Session Introduction: "The Business of Ethnography" (Brian Moeran)

1100-1200 Plenary Session Lecture: "The Lone Ranger or Partners in Crime? Doing Fieldwork" (Rita Denny, Patricia Sunderland and Brian Moeran)

1200-1300 Lunch

1300-1600 Group Work: Participants' Ethnographies (RD, BM and PS)

### **Tuesday, October 21**

0930-1200 Plenary Session Lecture and Discussion: "The Ethnography of Consumers" (Rita Denny and Patricia Sunderland)

1200-1300 Lunch

1300-1600 Group Work: Participants' Ethnographies (RD, BM and PS)

1800- Course Participants' Dinner

### **Wednesday, October 22**

0930-1200 Plenary Session Lecture and Discussion: "The Practicalities of Fieldwork: Everyday Reality behind Data Collection" (Gideon Kunda)

1200-1300 Lunch

1300-1600 Lecture and Discussion: "Writing Ethnography" (Gideon Kunda and Brian Moeran)

### **Course literature**

It is recommended that you read the following books prior to the course, in order to prepare you for the lectures and discussions that follow.

Kunda, Gideon 2006 *Engineering Culture*. (2nd Edition) Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Miller, Daniel 1998 *A Theory of Shopping*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Moeran, Brian 2005 *The Business of Ethnography*. Oxford: Berg.

Spradley, James 1979 *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.

Sunderland, Patricia L. and Rita M. Denny 2007 *Doing Anthropology in Consumer Research*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Books.

Van Maanen, John 1988 *Tales of the Field*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

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## A picture paints a thousand words?

Here are some pictures from the last SCOS board meeting in Lille, France. Any captions welcome....we will publish them next time around ! Academics with poking sticks.....dangerous.



Our bijou bunch !



Enjoying the hospitality...

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### ...and finally

We hope you've enjoyed this edition of *Notework*. Please continue to support your glocal, locally global, globally local SCOS museletter by sending your contributions to us. Any suggestions for new features, don't hesitate to contact us.

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