

Museletter of the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism

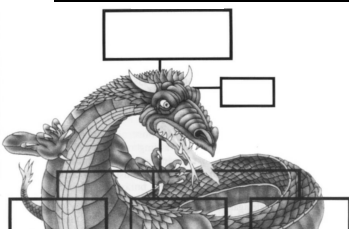


Notework **November 2010**

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.

Visit: <http://www.scos.org> for further details or
Email: smatil@essex.ac.uk to join

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We're happy to present here the latest issue of *Notework*, hoping that it provides a forum for all you

what's going on.

While this issue arrives on the interweb thing a little later than

usual, we hope this has given it time to mature a little, like a fine wine, or possibly indeed like an over-ripe cheese. What we have for you in this issue are some differing responses to the very successful SCOS conference in Lille held in the summer. Sam and Beatriz, the conference organisers, give us an overall report and their reflections on the event, Laura Freeman, a first-time SCOS attendee shares a revelatory account of our occasionally eccentric crowd, and Rose and Burkard report on the 'Social Dreaming' strand of the conference which they hosted. All in all, a varied palate of experiences and thoughts which we hope go some way to reflecting the strengths of our network.

We also have a first response, from our regional rep in Aotearoa/New Zealand, to the ASCOS conference held in Melbourne at the end of November, while many here in Europe were shivering in an unseasonably early and snowy start to winter. Further reports

from this event will hopefully make it into the next *Notework*, so if you want to contribute any thoughts and responses to your editors, please do!

Elsewhere we have other regional reports for you, our ever informative notes from the chair, opportunities to get involved with the SCOS network and help things happen, and musings on the topic of vision from Tony Yue.

And while much of this issue looks to the recent past, and some of the activities we've been involved with, we'd also like to look to the future. Details of the forthcoming SCOS conference hosted in Istanbul, to which many of us will be looking forward, are included. We hope to see you all there! But not only this - in a period of change and, in parts of Europe and elsewhere, contestation of the direction some of the institutional contexts many of us experience are pushing and being pushed, we'd like to open up the pages of *Notework* much more as a forum where we can reflect, as a critical

community, where we are going. So, please consider joining (or starting!) the debates you feel strongly about on these pages.

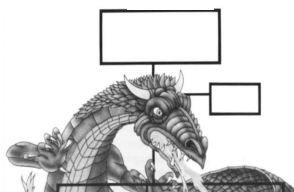
Your editors

Anke and Steve

In this issue...

SCOS – who are we?	3
Notes from the Chair	4
SCOS 2011 CFP	6
Musings of a Board Sec.	9
SCOS 2010 Reports	10
The Musery	20
SCOS regional reports	21
Calls & Announcements	25

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

Accustomed as I now am, my beloved Constant Reader, to addressing you via the medium of these Notes, I am extremely happy to report that our 2010 'Vision' conference in Lille in July was nothing short of a rip-roaring success. Our delightful hosts at IAE – who provided all our rooms gratis – deserve a huge vote of thanks, so big SCOS props to Xavier LeCocq and Benoit Demil (especially for their delightful welcome presentation on the Wednesday evening ☺) A particularly large hug goes to the angelic and gorgeous Katy Hovelaque without whom, Sam and Bea tell me, the conference

simply would not have happened. I also need to mention Lauren Bingham from the University of Surrey who I know was always a pillar of supportive strength both prior to and during the conference; and warm thanks likewise to Youcef Bousalham who helped out with registration. And of course to Sam and Bea themselves for organizing such a stimulating, innovative, colourful, welcoming and generally fabulous event. On a personal note, I was so pleased to see the SCOS massive in full effect (all 135 of us!!!), especially all the newcomers and even more so the large numbers of doctoral students in attendance. As someone who first came to SCOS about a hundred years ago as a doctoral student, it was a huge pleasure to meet you all. Please come back next year! (PS if you want to see some appalling pictures of me and some very nice ones of everyone else as well as of beautiful Lille, check out the SCOS 2010 Afterword site at <http://www.scos.org/2010/Lille/Afterword.html>).

On the subject of next year's conference, I am very pleased to announce that our dates for the 'Recovery' conference at Bosphorus University in Istanbul are now confirmed as 14.7.11 to 17.7.11, carefully timed not to clash with either EGOS or CMS. The call for papers is at http://www.scos.org/2011_CallForPapers.pdf. Our recent Board meeting in Istanbul went swimmingly: the Bosphorus campus is gorgeous (see left) and the city itself is a vibrant revelation.



Some of us used our Saturday afternoon wisely to check out the cultural wonders on offer; others (me and your Meetings Secretary) decided on a more ethnographic approach involving intensive participant observation of various retail emporia. At the time of writing the abstract submission date is set as the end of this month but in true SCOS tradition I have unearthed my crystal ball and it tells me that this will be extended into the New Year so please click on the link and get tapping away on your abstract.

The theme is of course almost too apposite to be true at the moment; and certainly in this little corner of the world where we are all still reeling from the coalition government's Comprehensive Spending Review. Thousands of students and faculty took to the streets of London on the 10th November to protest against the frankly draconian plans for higher education, which look set to decimate the university sector here in years to come.

You may have seen some of the coverage: although I was there, I will confine my comments to saying that I had a very uplifting day and I am simply sorry that the media chose only to focus on the events at Conservative HQ. I am also conscious of the mid-term election results in the US, and while I am relieved that the Democrats retained control of the Senate, the swing to Republican control of Congress and their victories in various gubernatorial roles is very depressing, especially the success of the Tea Party candidates across the country.

On a much more positive note, Barcelona in 2012 (theme: 'Displacement', *provisional* dates 11.7.12-14.7.12) is now well into the planning stage and of course the call will be launched next summer in Istanbul. Thanks to Hugo Gaggiotti at the University of the West of England and Diana Marre of the UAB for all their hard work so far. Warsaw in 2013 is also now confirmed, under the good offices of Beata Glinka, and the theme will be something along the lines of 'Creative deconstruction'. We even have a provisional bid in for as far ahead as 2014, which is absolutely wonderful (again more news

on this in my next set of Notes) but as ever do get in touch (j.brewis@le.ac.uk) if you think you might be able to host us in future.

I also promised in the May 2010 Notes that I would announce my replacement as Chair next summer (after the Istanbul conference) here, as well as the new editors of *Culture and Organization*. Cue drum roll, fanfare and rolling out of the SCOS red carpet the new Chair will be our dear friend Ann Rippin of the University of the West of England. Further, as of January 2011, Damian O'Doherty replaces Peter Case as *C&O* co-editor and next summer I step into Simon Lilley's equally hard to fill shoes. I'd like at this point to actually try and express just how important Peter has been to SCOS over the years, as I won't get another chance before he runs for the hills. As well as his editorial role, he has been a long serving Board member *per se* and a former Chair. We love you loads Peter, and we will miss your wisdom, grace, compassion and tact. Thank you more than any of us can say for everything you have given us over the years. On a related note, the Board and I (or is that the royal 'we'?) are likewise massively grateful to Peter Pelzer who has been our regional representative for Germany for *thirteen years* but is now stepping down. This would usually be my prompt for several rubbish jokes about most prison sentences being shorter, time off for good behaviour etc., but instead I'd just like to say many, many thanks to Peter P. as well – your humour, kindness and sagacity will also be sadly missed by all of us.

Finishing with the usual pointless update on Minutiae of Your Chair's Existence, I am still watching any series at all, whenever and wherever, of *Next Top Model* (don't even start me on the result of the most recent British cycle!) and spending most other available minutes listening to lovely little indie bands and dancing in a strange *Tales of the Unexpected* fashion, typically in my friend Paula's living room. It's a hard job but someone's gotta do it ... so until next time ...

May the road rise with you

Jo

RECOVERY

**29th Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism
Istanbul, Turkey 14th July – 17th July 2011**

Call for papers

Motivation

As the world lives through the impact and aftershocks of the economic crisis, at the 29th SCOS conference we will be dreaming of recovery. What this recovery might look like, and how we might experience it, naturally depends on perspective. The radical left will be dreaming of an ongoing Habermasian legitimation crisis, in which recovery involves a global waking up to the inequities and environmental degradation which capitalism can be seen to generate. Moving much further right on the political spectrum, those in the neo-liberal Hayekian camp will, we presume, construct recovery as a swift return to free market economics without the ‘unnecessary’ intervention of an ‘always clumsy’ government of whatever kind. And of course there will be an innumerable number of way stations in between, such that there are a myriad possible recoveries we might envisage. But what better surroundings than Istanbul in which to have such a plurality of dreams? We will not only be dreaming of these many potential recoveries there but also experiencing them through the variety of regeneration projects parked in the heart of the city, consisting of a range of urban initiatives around ecological, financial, social, political and spiritual recovery in its metropolis and its microcosms.

Recovery then is an evocative and often circuitous concept of change which we can approach from multiple vantage points. There is, for example, the possibility of exploring recovery as a process of change leading to improved health and well-being. As such recovery can be framed as a process of healing and transformation for the better. As suggested above, this necessitates conceptualizing malaise or decline (which itself can be done in myriad ways) and of what might constitute the converse. There is also an interesting temporal, quasi-Foucauldian question here of whether recovery should be seen as a process – perhaps a never-ending one – or as the end state of wellness (to recollect an earlier SCOS theme from Cambridge in 2003). But then recovery might be about (re-)discovery of a real or imagined (or both/ and) time and place. Organizational and individual memory allows us possibilities of excavation which can help us uncover history not only as an absolute singularity but also as a colourful range of possibilities, and to reflect on the inevitably reconstructionist qualities of nostalgia and the dangers of forgetting. Indeed recovering could equally be interpreted as a process of concealment, obfuscation or mystification, or some kind of revisionism – or, on the other hand, as revelation and unveiling. To recover can also signify to get something back, to have it returned, to reclaim it as the ‘rightful’ owner or to be compensated for its loss. Still further, we can see recovery as extraction, of what lies beneath and is not immediately accessible – as in the extraction of natural substances such as oil, and the enormous environmental controversies surrounding such activities. And recovery can also signify reconstituting useful substances from refuse or waste. In all of these approaches to framing recovery – which are by no means exhaustive – it is experienced by individuals and organizations. So there is a

movement from past through present to future, which might be supported, resisted, imagined and unimagined.

Istanbul is a magical city which provides an ideal venue in which we can discover, uncover and recover inspirations plentiful enough to aid us in framing individual and organizational recovery. Indeed we hope that the experience of Istanbul itself will also help SCOS participants to recover from any misconceptions they have about this great city, which is often constructed as a bridge between the east and the west, as it sits at the crossroads of civilizations. Istanbul literally straddles two continents and, depending again on perspective, it divides or unites the two. We will try to recover, reinvigorate, revisit and reinterpret both these tired frames themselves, and recover from them by exploring the possibilities of division, union and transcendence. This also allows us to remember and resurface themes, ideas and debates from our conferences in Manchester (2008) and in Copenhagen and Malmö (2009). Likewise, and building on our Lille (2010) conference theme, Istanbul can be understood as a city of mirrors, in which everyone can find a city that she or he is looking for. We can see empires and their constituent religions and ideologies rising and falling all at once in this city of contradictions, i.e. once a capital city for two past empires and yet with the feel of a small village in parts and similarly a crossroads for many religions but yet in a secular country. Istanbul is also a city where we can see ourselves, as all of these lenses can be read as projections of our deep fears, desires, loves, hates - but never our indifference. Thus, and as with any reflection, we will discover that Istanbul is not a place of impartiality, objectivity, dispassion and moderation: it is much more than that. We will submit our predominantly western gazes to what may itself become a journey of recovery, understood as repair and regeneration, in this city of mirrors.

Possible themes of recovery include, but are absolutely not limited to:

- Rediscovery of frames of the past, present and future at work
- Repair, regeneration and renewal in organizations
- Memory, nostalgia, forgetting
- Concealment, deceit, complicity, manipulation and recidivism in organizations
- The limits of recovery/ failure to recover: deterioration, loss, death
- Signs and signifiers of recovery in organizations
- Body, soul and mind at work
- Recovery as imaginary
- The aesthetics of recovery
- Redemption, reparation and recuperation: from pre- to post-recovery
- Spaces, places and times of recovery
- Ecologies of recovery and work systems as ecologies of healing
- Relationships of recovery and healing, and which transcend toxicity
- The East and West, or North and South, of recovery
- Heroes and heroics, healing and salvation
- Resistance to recovery
- What can be recovered? Organizational reclamations or compensations

As always, alternative interpretations of the theme are both invited and encouraged. SCOS 2011 will also have an open stream, allowing for the presentation of papers of more general interest to the SCOS community. In addition we welcome suggestions for workshops or similar events in line with the proposed theme. Outlines of workshops should be the same length as a paper abstract and should give an indication of the resources needed, the number of participants, the time required, the approach to be taken and the session's objectives. Please identify 'open stream' or 'workshop' on your abstract as appropriate.

Venue

The 29th SCOS conference will be held at Bogazici (Bosphorus) University, which benefits from a rich history, upholds a strong tradition of educating the brightest young people in Turkey and enjoys imposing views of the Bosphorus sea. Graduates of Bosphorus University hold highly prized posts in public, private and third sector organisations in Turkey and internationally.



The university was established in 1863 as the first American school outside of the United States. It is located on the European side of the Bosphorus in Istanbul. The conference will be held on the South Campus of the university which is in close proximity to Bebek and Etiler districts, both of which boast a large number of hotels, bars, and restaurants.

Organizers

The main organizers are Mustafa Özbilgin, University of East Anglia, UK, and Ahmet Yener, Orgics, UK.

Abstracts

Abstracts of no more than 500 words, in Word format, should be submitted as e-mail attachments to scossubmission@orgics.org.

Note: Deadline extended to December 20th 2010

See <http://www.scos2011.org/>

Musings of a Board Secretary....

Secretary/ Elections Officer's Report

Dear Everyone, as well as being the Secretary to the Board, I'm also the Elections Officer, and I hope you don't mind me taking up the space to flag up two posts which are coming up for replacement to encourage you to think of contributing to the running of our organisation! When I call for volunteers please put yourselves forward!

We are also looking for a new Germany Representative after Peter Pelzer's amazing commitment has sadly come to an end – thank you Peter for your endurance and valuable contribution.

Any person considering volunteering has to be aware that they should have the resources to attend at least 2 of the 3 Meetings held each year, and that the term of office you would be in position for is usually 3 years.

Membership/Database Secretary (currently filled by Sumo)

Responsibility: Notifications to SCOS members via the mailing list, keeping membership records up-to-date, communicating with other Board members concerning membership data (e.g. election officer).

Remarks: The most visible part of this task is receiving then assembling the flurry of emails we receive informing us of opportunities etc, however the back office role of maintaining the database and providing lists to people wanting to contact the membership is a continuing feature the person should be aware is continuous as well.

Meetings Secretary (currently filled by Kat)

Responsibility: Planning and facilitation of future Board meetings, liaising with local hosts and communicating details of venue and accommodation to representatives.

Remarks: The Board meets three times a year. The one at annual conference is relatively straightforward to organise, as accommodation and venue are already arranged. Another meeting enables the Board to visit and see the proposed facilities for an imminent conference, and so the conference organisers help out with the meeting venue, and

make suggestions about the hotel and restaurant bookings for the attendees, but sometimes the meeting is at a convenient central location not associated with a conference, and the meeting secretary acts more independently. The date of the next meeting is set at the end of the previous one – so no diary co-ordination is necessary.

Representative for Germany

Responsibility: Promotion of SCOS activities and events in the region represented, to develop membership base in regions where SCOS is presently under represented or not represented at all. Regional representatives are not required to attend Board meetings, however, as with Executive members, representatives are required to send reports to the Meetings Secretary in advance where attendance is not possible, as well as to the *Notework* editor for publication in the next issue.

So shall we check whether people have sent Steve and Anke their reports?
Happy New Year for 2011!

Lynne Baxter, Secretary and Elections Officer

Your board are currently:

Chair: Jo Brewis (UK) **Meetings Secretary:** Kat Riach (UK) **Secretary & Elections Officer:** Lynne Baxter (UK), **2010 Conference:** Sam Warren (UK) and Beatriz Acevedo (UK) **2010 Conference:** Mustafa Ozbilgin (Turkey) and Ahmet Yener (Turkey) **Membership Secretary:** Sumohon Matilal (UK) **Treasurer:** Nina Kivinen (Finland) **Notework Editors:** Steve Vallance (UK) and Anke Strauß **Web Officer:** David Sköld (Sweden) **Journal Editors (C&O):** Peter Case (UK) and Simon Lilley (UK) **Regional representatives:** Jan Schapper (Australia), Marja Flory (Benelux), Lena Olaison (Nordic Countries), Rowland Curtis (UK), Jean Helms-Mills and Albert Mills (North America), Thomas Lennerfors (Japan), Janet Sayers (New Zealand) and Beatriz Acevedo (Latin America).



Conference Report Lille 2010

Organisers: Sam Warren and Beatriz Acevedo

Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism • December 2010

Conference report: Lille 2010

Organisers: Sam Warren & Beatriz Acevedo

The spirit

First of all, we would like to thank the Board for their trust and support in the development of this conference. We think that we've responded to that trust by making our best effort in creating a space for "serious fun". This year, the topic of vision allows the group to have some interesting discussions during the sessions, including some unexpected papers and 'visions' from people who normally belong to other type of 'academic' or 'professional' tribes. We think that we have managed to attract more members to SCOS and most importantly to create a context of conversations and exchange amongst the participants. We have received a number of written and verbal messages praising the spirit of the conference, the networking events and the quality of the papers. We are very happy and thrilled with all of that!

Key players

As we have said many times, and this time in writing, we think that the generous help and enthusiasm of the IAE team was a key factor in the success of the conference, which really stress the necessity of developing strong ties with the host organization. Katy Hovelaque was our constant angel, enthusiastic and engaged, and always helpful! Also, Lauren Bingham was great in Uni Surrey. We would also like to thank David Skold who helped us to keep and update a sometimes difficult website; without him we would not have succeeded in maintaining a visual presence during the preparation and implementation of the conference. Also to all the Board members who helped us with the process of peer-reviewing and their support in the number of moments we found ourselves in trouble, or not knowing what to do.

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Delegates & Bursaries

135 delegates attended the conference (in 30°C heat!) in Lille, in July this year. A few people submitted abstracts and later withdrew (no more than 15?) and there were only a handful of no-shows to the conference.

The £3k from SCOS funded 5 PhD students' fee & accommodation costs @ c.£660 per head. The bursary recipients were:

Ana-Maria Carreira (Argentina)

Anke Strauß (UK, Essex)

Anna Chourdaki (UK, Surrey)

Jun Luo (UK, Essex)

Steve MacDonald (UK, Anglia Ruskin)

These were the only people who applied for the bursaries so there was no competitive process. All met the criteria of hardship, a good abstract and 'scossiness'. We had a couple of (very) late enquiries which we had to turn down. We think that for a future conference it is important to emphasize the possibility of bursaries, then it can become a more competitive situation. Bursary holders helped in the running of the conference in various ways and have been asked to contribute a piece to *Notework*.

The SCOS levy has been paid for all delegates and the delegate list sent to T&F via Nina as SCOS Treasurer.

We didn't really have any troublesome delegates or difficult requests.

Papers and workshops

114 papers were presented and five workshops held including Social Dreaming, Madness with Dolls, Glittering Organization, Filmic Affect, and The Art of Peer Reviewing. All were well attended (even the 8:15 social dreaming sessions had 8-12 people each day!) The quality of papers was really exceptional, and the vast majority of them were firmly on the theme of 'Vision'. We streamed into 4 parallel sessions a day plus workshops and built in longer coffee and lunch breaks (30 mins plus 90 mins respectively) to allow folk to mingle – and to take advantage of the French 'lazy lunch' culture. We will be editing the usual C&O special issue, which is scheduled for issue 18.3, which is the third issue of 2012, with the eminent Prof Brewis as our overseeing editor. In addition we are planning to put together a book proposal on 'Vision and Leadership' or 'Images of Leadership' since there were quite a few interesting papers on this theme. We have yet to approach publishers, so any ideas from the board gratefully welcomed!

Organization and procedures

Doing business with French companies is culturally interesting. As Peter Pelzer rightly warned us, there is a great importance placed on hierarchy and formality in business relationships, to the point that we had to have contracts for absolutely everything. Although this seemed a pain at the time, it meant we didn't have to put down deposits for any goods or services, just sign an agreement that we would pay up. Very handy for organizing a conference! As previous organizers have noted, having someone 'on the ground' in the conference city is essential. Without Katy Hovelaque at IAE this conference would not have run. She managed to arrange, book and deal with everything in Lille where Bea and I often did not even get a reply from the companies concerned as we weren't French! (and still aren't...)

Accommodation

L'Office du Tourisme were great in offering their services to us for free but in practice, the somewhat cumbersome booking process, plus refusal to accept certain credit cards made the whole thing a bit of a pain. On polling the delegates however, it seemed that a large majority of people had just booked independently through hotels.com or similar without even using the service. This made us wonder if the tedious stage of planning and securing accommodation in bulk is necessary in these days of independent travel?

Money matters

Generous sponsorship was received from:

Uni. of Surrey £3000

Anglia Ruskin £1500

IAE – all facilities and admin time non-chargeable, plus £1500 towards socials!

The conference fee was set at a break-even of 80 delegates with a £25 per delegate 'buffer' and at an exchange rate of €1 = £1. In retrospect we set the fee too high. In part this is because we consider the break-even of 80 is now too low for SCOS who regularly attract 120+ delegates each year. We'd suggest future conferences use £100 as a BE figure. We also based the fee on estimates for catering and social events that turned out to be higher than the suppliers we actually used due to a myriad of unforeseen circumstances! In June, the conference was projected to make a massive surplus and so the money was recycled in the

form of digital cameras in the conference bags for delegates, a more salubrious Friday night event. We also paid Surrey a whopping 20% of costs for administration and finance of the conference, amounting to c. £10k. Bea, Sam and IAE received approx £1200 into their personal research accounts. IAE are going to use the money to support student activities in SCOS's name J

“Words of advice for young organizers...”

Well, it may look a bit obvious but planning and preparing are key aspects of the organization. Be sure that your local host/partner is really committed to deal the whole range of situations that may arise in the process of organizing. Keeping a good budget control is crucial, especially when calculating the costs of the conference fees. We received very good feedback regarding the ‘goodies’ and conference bags, thinks like the cameras, the caleidoscopes, the mirrors... these are little details that engage people (well, some others may consider them childish, but we did not hear those comments ;-). Most importantly, the key for a successful partnership is to trust each other: to delegate and distribute responsibilities and keeping a record of all the meetings and activities to do. Although at times we were very stressed with this conference, we managed to enjoy ourselves and thus to transmit this enthusiasm to the participants.

SCOS in youtube

Short version of the visual memory in http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOnSg-U3_Ig



With Love from Lille, 2010

A bunch of SCOSsers: a novice's initiation

By Laura Freeman

It's a Wednesday in July and I've just gone through passport control at St Pancras International, ready to board the Eurostar for Lille and my first ever external conference as a Leicester PhD student. My travelling companion is Geoff Lightfoot, he of the sandals, backpack and flowing tresses, and as we look around for somewhere to sit he's approached by a uniformed representative of the UK Borders Agency.

- Good afternoon sir, and where are you heading today?
- Lille.
- Lille, you say?
- Yes.
- And why are you visiting Lille?
- For an academic conference.
- And what's the conference?
- It's the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism.
- The Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism?
- Yes.

Clearly nonplussed, our uniformed friend leaves us to it, presumably off to find another stereotype to question. But looking back, this process of articulating where we were going, and why, symbolises the starting point of my SCOS conference experience.

As I'm writing this now, the UK's experiencing sub-zero temperatures and Geoff's sandals are mercifully but a distant memory¹. Those beautifully hot and sunny few days in Lille seem like an incredibly long time ago, but the experience I had there has definitely endured. So, in keeping with the 'Vision' theme, let me share with you some of my conference revelations...

This first one might need to be prefaced a bit. I've only been to an academic conference once before, as a Masters student, and my abiding memories of that are watching numerous Euro '96 matches and my friend Marie-Hélène drunkenly biting a chunk out of her pint glass. Nothing since then had happened to alter my general impression of conferences, based on the empirical evidence presented by the shabby state of those returning from them and the sorry tales that emerge, which was that conferences are generally debauched gossip-generating fests. It was with a sense of gleeful anticipation mixed with trepidation, therefore, that I approached the SCOS conference, only to be confronted with

Revelation #1

Conferences are really hard work!

¹ Does that make him Geoff Heavyfoot in winter?

As I've just mentioned, this was my first academic conference in a long time, and my first as an org studies PhD-er. As a part-time student with a full-time job, I'm used to dropping in on individual seminars as and when time permits. Having three days of presentations was a delightful luxury, but I hadn't anticipated how tiring I would find it. At the end of each session my brain would be whirring with thoughts and ideas and there was barely any time to process anything before launching into something new.

Revelation #2

It's OK to be a butterfly

I also loved that the 'Vision' theme had been interpreted in so many different ways, and that so many disciplinary boundaries were crossed. It was such a pleasure to be able to pick and choose what to go to, and not to have to be instrumental in my choices because of their 'usefulness' or 'relevance'. Instead I chose sessions because I knew the speakers, or because the title intrigued me, or because they were in the least hot of the rooms - and I relished the randomness of it all. So, rather like being at a buffet where you just have to sample a bit of everything that's on offer, I grazed my way through Pope Innocent X, social networks, *Deal or No Deal*, Christmas, Anita Roddick, *The Wire*, spiritual mediums and so on and so forth. A veritable smorgasbord of intellectual stimulation!

Revelation #3

It's OK to present work in progress

Now this one really was a revelation! I think that when you're fairly new to this game, there's a tendency to assume that you have to produce and present something 'complete' in order to seem credible. You have to have all the answers, which involves knowing everything so that you're prepared for any eventualities. So because I have more questions than answers, I can't present anything myself yet, and because I'll never have all the answers, I'll never be able to present... except it's not like that! To hear people presenting work in progress, asking for suggestions as to where they should go, preventing something just because they thought it was interesting and wanted to share it was really refreshing. This probably sounds so naïve, but it was a huge relief to me to realise that it's not only just as credible to do that, but it's also a constructive and rewarding experience to be part of it. This gave me a renewed sense of confidence in my own work, and a renewed enthusiasm to get out there and share it with others. Before I attended the SCOS conference I wouldn't have dreamed of presenting my work to others; as a result of the SCOS conference I'm preparing to give my first research seminar presentation in January.

Revelation #4

The legendary SCOS friendliness is no myth

"You'll like SCOS", everybody said. "They're a really friendly bunch". I certainly hoped that would be the case: I had visions otherwise of playing gooseberry on the beautiful academic bromance that is Lightfoot & Lilley (the Beavis & Butthead of CMS) for three days and it takes a stronger constitution than mine to do that! But fortunately that wasn't necessary. It was great to spend time with Leicester people in a different setting, meet up again with former colleagues and friends, and above all to meet

some brilliant new people. "I won't be asking any questions", I muttered on the first day, "They'll all think I'm stupid". Well, the relaxed, laid-back vibe which was for me a real feature of the conference (and indicative of how brilliantly well it had been organised), soon made me feel sufficiently welcomed and included. So I did ask questions, and if people did think I was stupid, they were much too friendly to let on!

Leading, gratifyingly, to

Revelation #5

Conferences can be all of the above *and* still be debauched gossip-generating fests!

Yay! In that regard I wasn't disappointed. But I'm far too discreet to divulge details (sort of) and in any case I'm still trying to block some of the memories out. Besides, she who lives in glass houses... "Are any of your PhD students presenting this time?" someone enquired of Jo. "Only that one over there," she said, pointing at me as I stood there standing on a table with Sam Warren belting out *I Will Always Love You* without any consideration for such niceties as the lyrics. Or the tune.

Does that make me a total SCOSser? I do hope so!

Report from the Collective Unconscious: Social Dreaming at SCOS “Imagining of Past, Present and Future”

Rose Redding Mersky and Burkard Sievers

Hosting the first SCOS Social Dreaming Matrix in Lille last June was an enlightening and stimulating experience for us. Social Dreaming is based on the idea that dreams are not exclusively the ‘property’ of the individual, but have a social dimension as well. The thoughts that emerge can form the basis for a deeper understanding of what takes place under the surface of a system.

Our roles are called “hosts” to suggest that participants are invited to come. No one is required to speak or to share a dream. Each participant manages his/her own participation.

Social Dreaming has two elements: The Matrix, where dreams are shared and associations and amplifications are offered, and the Reflection Group, where we discuss the experience of the matrix and our thoughts about the theme.

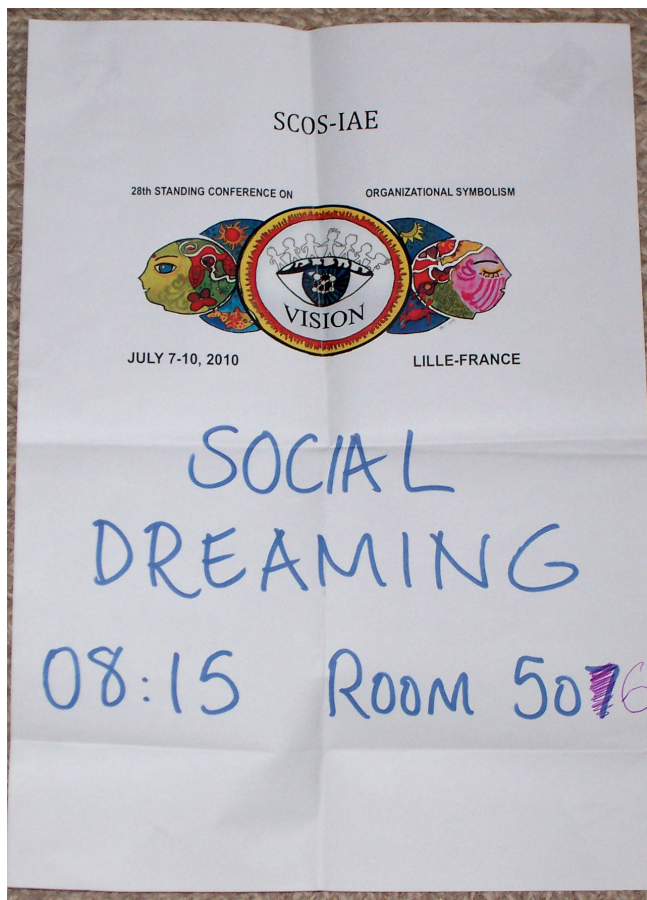
Free Association comes from psychoanalysis and is anything that comes to one’s mind during the course of the matrix, for example an earlier personal experience related to the content of a dream. Very often associations are recent dreams.

Amplifications are those cultural and political elements that come to mind, such as current events, music, literature and film. An example may be a current museum exhibit or movie.

We held three morning Matrixes from 8:15 to 9:15 and three Reflection Sessions from 4:15 to 5:15. Not only did Social Dreaming frame each day, as the first and last events of the conference (with the exception of the opening orientation session). It also bookmarked the entire conference, as it was its first and last event. Apart from the opening orientation session, Social Dreaming was the only event where the whole group was invited to meet and work together.

We estimate that approximately 40 conference participants participated in at least one event of Social Dreaming. They came from all over the world: Finland, Sweden, UK, Ireland, Australia, Germany, US. There appeared to be a great interest in our activity, as those who attended were eagerly asked about it during the conference. Many people apologized to us for not being able to come. We experienced very much that the conference was in Social Dreaming and Social Dreaming was in the conference. We were very aware that holding such an event so early in the day would be a bit challenging, given the SCOS tradition of late-night socializing.

We noted that we were not exactly part of the SCOS mainstream. No SCOS board member or senior SCOS member participated. We hosts represented two extremes of SCOS relatedness. Burkard is a senior SCOS member and Rose a ‘virgin’.



We found ourselves asking what were we to the conference? Were we working on issues on behalf of the conference that were somehow “too hot to handle”? Using dream images from the matrix, were we the “enemy within”, “frivolous” or did we add a bit of color? Perhaps we were a kind of penumbra or shadow. We were struck by the contrast between the great interest expressed in Social Dreaming and the relatively low turnout. We also noticed that a key issue all of us were (and still are) facing – i.e. the financial crisis – never appeared in any of our work.

Interestingly each matrix seemed to be working at one aspect of the theme, in chronological order. The first matrix concerned issues of arrival and anticipation (the Past); the second concerned issues of legitimacy and being fraudulent (the Present) and the 3rd concerned a realization that

Social Dreaming does not provide any answers, but it offers an experience to help them integrate the conference (the future). While doctoral students were a strong presence in the first matrix, the last matrix consisted of a more “mature” group of participants. We hosts were the only ones who attended all the matrixes (along with our two recorders Anna Choudaki and Jun Luo). Many people came twice. No one came to more than one Reflection Session. Two participants in the last reflection session had not participated in any matrix.

One way we think about Social Dreaming is that it serves as a place where anxieties and concerns for which there is no explicit place in the regular system can be talked about. These concerns are considered (using Bollas’ term) the ‘unthought known’, that is those thoughts that are in awareness but not able to be acknowledged and thought about.

Our first matrix, which dealt largely with arrival and anticipation, also dealt with various traumas, such as a stolen bicycle and a briefcase. There was a link made to the anxiety of stolen ideas in such an event. We were aware that SCOS was now 28, but at the same time someone noted that the clock at the conference venue stopped at 5:30.

The second matrix seemed to focus primarily on the existing experience of the conference. There were dreams about previous doctoral exams and, in one case, a dead supervisor. Issues about performing and offering the right dream also emerged.

The last matrix, which included a dream about babies in grey bundles, had to do with questions of bringing the color back, so that the children would not fade away. Or would that mean that we were too frivolous? As someone said: “You never know what is around the next corner”.

The work of the matrix, of course, has stayed largely with those of us who participated and hosted. Thanks to the wonderful work of our recorders, we have a transcript of the day, which we distributed to participants. One wrote back to describe her experience:

“The most valuable thing for me was that being in the matrix initiated new kind of thinking or thought processes that would not have been otherwise possible. So the value didn’t have that much to do with what was actually said, it was more about what kind of thinking was going in my head while I was participating.”

We feel this describes beautiful what happens when the unthought known is given a space to arise for reflection. We are very grateful to conference co-chairs Beatrix Acevedo and Sam Warren for inviting us to hold this event.

Further References:

Social Dreaming as a method has been developed by Gordon Lawrence since the early 1980s. Further details of Social Dreaming can be found at www.socialdreaming.com. Also in:

Lawrence, W.G. (1998). *Social Dreaming @ Work*. London: Karnac Books.*

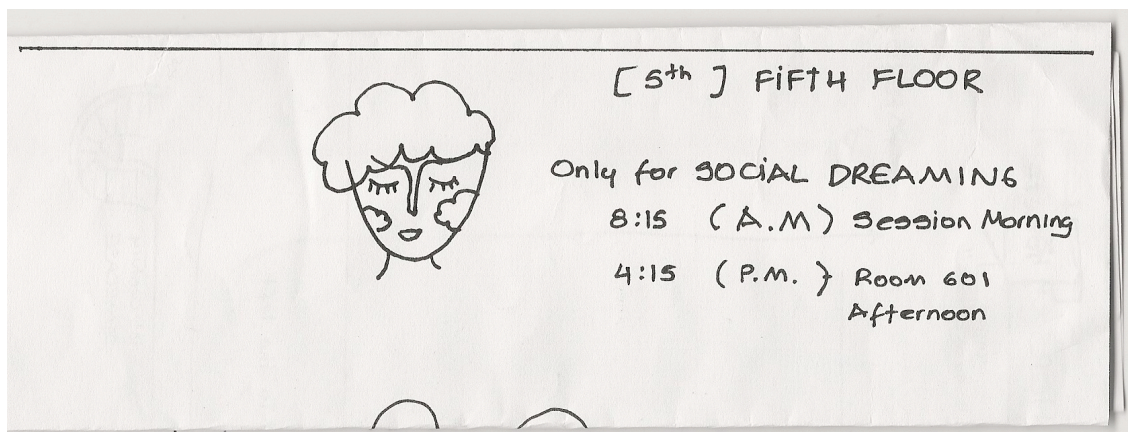
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* Translated into Italian, published Rome: Borla

*# Translated into Hungarian, published Budapest: Lelekben Otthon Kiado



Serious Fun in Alice's Wonderland or the Vision of Working Together

By Anthony (Tony) R. Yue

Sometimes events just seem to conspire to allow for obvious synergies and lately it seems to me that the recent examinations which Luc Peters and I have been involved in concerning mirrors and reflections are products of just such consilience. With the most recent SCOS behind us, the topic of Vision still fresh in our minds, and the excellent use of digital technology to democratize the reflected interpretations of conference experiences to ourselves at the gala dinner, some thoughts regarding mirrors seem apropos...

I think in particular that the capturing and then displaying of visual imagery at the conference and then replaying it to ourselves, is interesting. Luc and I were fortunate to have an expert in optical technology available at our presentation regarding Claude Mirrors and organizational studies, and he mentioned something important and curious to us. He spoke of the problem of mirrors and how the observer must be present within the reflection in order to view it in the first instance. This insertion of the viewer in the viewed is fascinating and has far reaching onto-epistemological implications, indeed pointing towards a different kind of philosophically situated understanding of hermeneutic social construction.

In a way this harkens back to what started our weird fascination with mirrors in the first place, when Luc and I spent some time thinking about DJs, remixing and performativity. We came to tentative conclusions that when viewed through the lenses of a Baudrillardian hyperreality, with attendant collapse of production and consumption, and Ranciere's understandings of Platonic mimesis, that the "mirroring" of DJ mimetic work was a special and important example. Indeed we went so far as to suggest at that time that the representations of the work being done by the DJ acted as pedagogy, even without the reflections of mimetic production being intended to act as such; essentially, Jumbotrons as tools of process for an ignorant schoolmaster. If reflected understandings teach us something, then what then of our Gala dinner during which we saw ourselves seeing ourselves? And is this only a reflection in so far as we are present in the picture? If the asynchronous temporal quality of the reflections in the case of our dinner presentation is an issue, then are we examining historiography (that is, the construction of history(s))? Gosh, a history of the present sounds suspiciously familiar, but our present discussions seem to point towards a very (situated) individual level of understanding just such an history. Perhaps this might be an emancipatory history of/by/for the individual? ...or indeed maybe simply the localized site of ideological influence and perpetuation...

Vision, seeing, hiding...the viewer, the watched, the revealed and the concealed. Like Sartre's famous voyeur peeping through the keyhole, our potentiality is one thing (largely concealed), but when we are aware of being watched ourselves, then our very being becomes both revealed and constrained at the same time. How then to interrogate the mirror, the reflection, which is only possible when we insert ourselves into the reflected picture. We reveal a picture which is both seen by and contains ourselves. The will to power seems an antecedent to the revealing of the self in the reflection; that is, potentiality seems relegated to the act which allows us to see ourselves in the picture, but limited by the framing. Could the choice to be reflectively reflexive be the choice to put ourselves in a constrained space where we see ourselves seeing ourselves? We return to the mythological origins of narcissism...

Nevertheless, life is lived and the moving images of dancing in the funky finger food place in Lille remain. And we wonder if a Deleuzian “film as social reality” is enough. In between the frames there is space, negotiations and potentiality: what of the dance moves unresolved by the lens and the tortuous potential of a less than inspired DJ in between his already memorable actions? We wonder, and yet our musings always have us in the picture, the possibilities contained in our politics, the reflections simply reflections of reflections of ourselves...

SCOS Regional Reports: News From Around The Globe.

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

Peter Pelzer (German Rep)

Every term ends – even if the term was quite long as in this case. Somebody told me an incredible amount of years I shall have spent on the board. In this last contribution for the country rep's column I'd like to thank Notework's readers for their interest in that perhaps strange mixture between ranting and comment on snippets of German academic and/or political life. I sincerely hope that the SCOS members go on to produce important stuff challenging the normal middle of the road stuff available everywhere else. See you at one of the next conferences!

Lena Olaison (Nordic rep)

The idyllic image of being Swede – revisualised and a glance towards recovery

In the CFP to this summer's SCOS conference in Lille the following question was posed: "Who has the power to see and who is too weak to shield themselves from gaze(s)?" I have revisited this question during the fall, as I have made a few observations in the aftermath of this year's election in Sweden. These events have, insignificant as they might seem, shaken the self-image of what being Swede looks like. I'm not thinking so much about the image of blond and blue eyes, although that also have its roles to play, but rather the image of our society as the best of all possible and, further, how this image, from a superior position, tend to be used argumentation for political decisions or even just in vague references to explain 'how things are'.

So let's look at three examples of the idyllic image of Sweden, and its revisualisation.

The image of our way of democracy: We have a firm view of Sweden as democratic, and as an image of our way of democracy, we emphasise free elections. To ensure that others, particularly those we so often refer to as 'less-developed countries', hold our high standards we demand that they accept election observers. All while declining similar offers when holding elections ourselves, like this year. Well, in hindsight it might have been a good idea to accept those observers. For example, the Riksdag majority was decided by very few votes and in a certain region with less than ten votes. In the same region a plastic bag with over 150 ballots were found in the polling station. Other examples include problems at embassies, both in terms of who could vote, and votes being mailed to late; polling stations without sufficient personal and/or without possibility to privacy when voting, and many others.

The image of tolerance and acceptance: As Swedes, we see ourselves as a tolerant people, compared to others. To prove our point we often refer to the fact that we have not had a right-wing extremist party in parliament (Riksdag), as a few other European countries had. In the recent election this image was smashed into teeny tiny pieces by the supporters of the The Swedish Democrats, a party that after this year's election holds 20 seats in the Riksdag (making them bigger than both the Christian Democrats and the reformed Left). As any such (racist) party, they use make use of a national romantic imagery, thus making

claims of what constitutes a Swede. And, in what can only be seen as a desperate attempt to take the Swedish image of tolerance back, one of our largest newspapers, Aftonbladet, launched a campaign with an image of a hand making a stop sign, and in it was written 'we like different' (sic!). So, basically, in a campaign pushing for tolerance, we protested against those (voters) that we found to be thinking differently from the rest of us, claiming that 'we like different' (you might have seen this image on Swedes' Face book).

The image of corruption. It is a common view that corruption in Sweden is minimal, perhaps even non-existing. Corruption, as image, is, however, something we use to explain circumstances of the world. So, it was, and still is, an unpleasant surprise for many when in the spring of 2010 a media scoop revealed the far-going corruption within the public administration of Sweden's second city of Gothenburg, where the acceptance of bribes and unfair dealings in receiving municipal contracts occurs to be institutionalized.

So where am I going with my observations? I think most of us can find some of this imagery in the rhetoric of the industrialised world; our societies are seen as superior, and the problems for global problems lie on the other side of the binary couple of the narrow-minded us-them imagery (i.e. Developing world/Industrialised world; East/West; South/North). And yes, it's wrong of me, of course, to feel satisfaction over electoral rigging, racism and corruption in my developed northern country of the west. But, on the other hand, in the wake of the financial crisis; collapsed climate negotiations in Copenhagen and soon in Mexico; G20 meetings going nowhere; and an increasingly desperate need for aid around the globe, to revisualise the image we have of ourselves and our role in the world, perhaps giving us a slightly more unsteady gaze, might be one way leading away from here. Towards recovery, one might hope. Something, by coincidence, we will dream about next summer, in Istanbul, Turkey. See you all there!

Rowland Curtis (UK Rep)

SCOS UK Rep Report

Rowland Curtis – November 2010

r.curtis@qmul.ac.uk

As many of you will be familiar, it's been a lively week in the UK for student and academic politics (8th-12th Nov). After a weekend in Istanbul with the SCOS board being, mightily impressed by the venue and preparations for next year's SCOS conference, I returned to follow a week of conflict and protest on the streets and campuses of London and elsewhere in the UK. The background to this unrest has been the current government's response to the Browne report, an inquiry set up by the previous Labour government to give recommendations on the funding of higher education in the UK. The publication of the report has been responded to by the current Conservative-Liberal coalition government by a commitment to raise the cap on domestic student fees from just over £3,000 to £9,000 against a background of a proposed 30% cut in the overall budget for higher education. The fact that the Liberal Democrat component of the coalition pledged pre-election not to increase tuition fees has been taken particularly badly by the many whose vote was won on this very promise, and many Lib Dem MPs now look vulnerable in constituencies where they have been very dependent on the student and/or academic vote.

A combined national student union (NUS) and academic union (UCU) demonstration this Wednesday (10th November 2010) involved an estimated 52,000 people – around twice the expected amount – and an invasion by a group of activists of the Conservative party headquarters on Millbank by the Thames.



In recent weeks and months, many have lamented the lack of popular protest in the UK in comparison with say the Greeks and the French, in the face of the apparent unaccountability of the banks and bankers for the current economic crisis. Following in the face of the proposals for a radical Thatcherite programme of government spending cuts in the recent fiscal budget, contrary perhaps to first impressions, we would seem to have the beginnings here of a significant backlash. Indeed, a [Guardian newspaper editorial article](#) this week entitled *Demonstration Effect*, suggested that with a number of other cuts about to be announced in detail in coming weeks including welfare reform, the higher education demo may yet prove to be a lightning rod for wider discontent, setting an example that could be a tipping point in the consolidation of various different sections of British society setting up in opposition to current government policy. A sit-in at Manchester University the day after the demonstration appears to be a precursor to a further national day of student activism later this month, and, echoes of '68. [A public letter](#) by the heads of a number of student unions a member of the national executive and a number of academics, dissented from the official line of the NUS, voicing their support for the occupation, and suggesting its proportionality to the economic violence of the current government agenda. The national trades union association (TUC) has also today announced its solidarity with the students, with the express intention of coordinating action in the future. Watch this space...

Janet Sayers Report from New Zealand

Kia ora. Things are pretty good here downunder downunder. In the conference circuit we have just had the ACSCOS event in Melbourne which I recently returned from. This was a successful event in fantastic Melbourne organised by Julie and Jan who made a terrific job of organising the event and the location was lovely and quality of papers was excellent as usual. However, I still needed to rest and so between drinking too much and enjoying the presentations (Lynne Baxter's was a highlight as was Debbie Jones) and other social and tourist-type activities, I relaxed in my large hotel room and watched the beginning of the television series, 'Underbelly' which retells the real events of the 1995-2004 gangland war in Melbourne. Yoicks!! The Melbourne I saw was nothing like that!

It was nice to see so many European colleagues make the trip. The experience of having dinner right next to Phar Lap's (a famous horse in case you missed it) taxidermied hide was rather cool. I expect the Australian reps will have a lot more to say about the conference, but it was good to see several Kiwis make the trip over the ditch (as we say down here). Next year there is OIL, which is the Organisation, Identity, Locality Conference, being held in Palmerston North (see Craig Prichard's ode to Palmerston North - link is below), and also APROS is being held in Auckland next November 2011. The website links are given below. Please come - both events will be worth the trip and are suitable for SCOSers. Personally I have had a pretty good year. It is lovely and warm here right now and we will be heading to the beach for a picnic for Xmas and have a surfing holiday planned. <http://daveyboyd.com/2007/11/20/a-killer-surf-in-new-zealand/>.

Hopefully no Orca though ;o) You needed to be at ACSCOS to get the joke in-joke. P.S. Fellow ACSCOSers - check out these cool picture of Orca surfing up north in November. Made the front page in NZ

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/image.cfm?c_id=1&gal_cid=1&gallery_id=115171#7189429

The highlight of life in NZ this year (in the world according to Janet) was the release of the best most brilliant film of the year 'Boy'. If you haven't seen it you MUST. It is a beautiful whimsical story about family on NZ's East Coast and invites polysemous readings! (I can feel a paper coming on)... Forget Peter Jackson, Taika Waititi rules!
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSbxwnMO0LA&feature=channel> The low point was of course the recent Pike River Mine disaster and the loss of 29 lives. The

repercussions will be felt for a long time in the mining industry for years to come, and those families must be having a terrible time coming up to Xmas. NZ was on its knees through the whole thing. Anyway, all the Best for Xmas and New Zealand Kia kaha, Janet Sayers

OIL: Contact Craig Prichard for more details

APROS: <http://www.apros.org/?cat=3>

Phar Lap: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phar_Lap

Craig's song about PN:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbYruzT6IV0>

Calls and announcements

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Gender Renewals? Gender, Work and Organization, International Workshop Series 22-24th June, 2011 VU University Amsterdam

Workshop organisers:

Deborah Kerfoot, Keele University, ENGLAND
Ida Sabelis, VU University, Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS

Gender as a central theme in social science research in the field of work and organisation has achieved contemporary significance beyond the confines of early discussions of women at work. Set against the backdrop of the present economic climate, it has been suggested that the impact of business cultures and managerial theories, including current ideas about „crisis“, render gender a peripheral theme. Moreover, explicitly addressing gender is, in some contexts, seen as increasingly ambivalent in debates over diversity, in negotiations over organizational policies, in general discussions over parenthood, starting families and other links vis-à-vis working life. Is the collective character of gender being replaced by the individual interest in identity? Have we “done gender” to the point where we should go looking for a different concept? Or should we state the opposite: that gender is more important than ever precisely because the current crisis can only be met by confronting work and organization with its lack of addressing and tackling gender issues?

As a part of the GWO portfolio of activities, the GWO International Workshop series aims to gather scholars on a distinct theme or topic. The workshops are separate from our larger and more broadly ranging biennial international interdisciplinary conference. As part of the GWO International Workshop series, ‘Gender Renewals’ signals opportunities that current feelings of ‘crisis’ may provide for taking gender a step further. Is gender itself in crises? Are we at a junction both in theory and in practice between new ways of addressing gender or complying with feelings of crisis? Should we reposition and sharpen the gender perspective? These questions and others are an overarching theme for the 2011 workshop.

The GWO ‘Gender Renewals’ Workshop welcomes papers that touch upon the central theme from:

gender relations and management; gendered lives in the workplace; sexuality at work; identity in organisations; organising the public sector; organisation/disorganization via gender; the body and emotions at work; gender and ethics; gendered knowledge and education; equality, management and diversity; gender politics, entrepreneurship; gender and globalization; post-colonial theory and gender; career perspectives via gender; love and hate in the organization; sexualities and organisation; global organisational politics; men and masculinities; narratives and stories of gender at work; methodology; emergent new ways of working; gender and technologies; leadership and gender; intimidation, harassment and discrimination; work/life balance; un/equal pay; networking; race, ethnicity and gender; social exclusion; gender and disability; professionalism; intimacy at work; gender and friendship; gender, environmentalism and the organisation.

This list of topics is suggestive rather than exhaustive. Contributors may choose to draw on material from a wide range of empirical spheres and theoretical perspectives.

Abstracts of approximately 500 words (ONE page, Word document, single spaced, excluding references) are invited by 31st December 2010 with decisions on acceptance to be made within one month. All abstracts will be peer reviewed. New and young scholars with 'work in progress' papers are welcomed. In the case of co-authored papers, ONE person should be identified as the corresponding author. Note that due to restrictions of space, multiple submissions by the same author will not be timetabled. Abstracts should be emailed to n.j.nixon@mngt.keele.ac.uk
Abstracts should include **FULL** contact details, including your name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, and e-mail address.

The GWO International Workshop will be held at VU University Campus, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Visit the VU's website via: <http://www.vu.nl/en/index.asp>

The University occupies a central campus and has good road and rail access. Obviously, Amsterdam needs no introduction: its canal shaped city plan invites museum visits, canal strolls, and the use of bicycles and boats.

Journal Editors: Deborah Kerfoot, Keele University, ENGLAND
David Knights, Bristol Business School, ENGLAND
Ida Sabelis, VU University, Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS
Joint Editors in Chief, *Gender, Work and Organization*

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WATCH OUR WEBSITES FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/gwao



Call for Papers – Special Issue of Organization ‘In Search of Corporate Responsibility’

Guest Editors

Peter Fleming , Queen Mary College, University of London.

Christina Garsten, Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research, Stockholm University.

John Roberts, University of Sydney,

Deadline: 31st October 2011

Corporate responsibility remains an alluring but troublesome notion. Many years after Milton Friedman famously argued that the only responsibility of the firm was to make profits, the visible character of many such firms now appear to signify the opposite. It would be hard to find a website of a major corporation that does not include declarations of its commitment to social and environmental responsibility. Yet we remain rightly skeptical as to the precise status of such remote representations of corporate goodness. Can we allow ourselves to believe them, or are they merely cynical re-presentations of capitalism without any referent in reality? Are they a form of enlightened self-interest in response to external threats from an increasingly media savvy set of stakeholders? Or do they signal a more proactive and predatory embrace of the environmental and social as a source of corporate innovation and reinvigoration?

In this special issue we are seeking contributions that seek to test and elucidate the rhetoric of corporate responsibility through a critical exploration of its practices and their substantive effects. There is conceptual work to be done here to tease apart the narcissistic allure of the rhetorical embrace of corporate responsibility from the more demanding work of actually following the assignation of responsibility. However, such conceptual work should ideally be complemented by empirical studies that take us much closer to the points of tension, friction and/or leverage in and through which individuals within and beyond organizations seek to challenge, confront or deflect current corporate practices.

Specifically we are interested in papers that critically explore:-

- The labour, challenges and dilemmas of specific campaigns or processes of corporate engagement by NGOs or SMOs.
- The history of the emergence of specific corporate responsibility initiatives as a tactical response to these various forms of opposition from social movements.
- The distinctiveness of conceptions of contemporary notions of corporate responsibility when set in the context of traditional conceptions of exchange and reciprocity.

- The functioning of corporate responsibility as a form of containment and appropriation in which criticism is pacified and repackaged in the form of social accounting protocols.
- Corporate responsibility initiatives that serve as a kind of parasitical capture of anti-corporate values and movements in which a firm utilizes emancipatory criticisms of itself to enhance productivity in an entrepreneurial valorization of its own crisis?
- The fate of attempts to promote responsibility through ethical investment products, and the integration of ESG within investment decision making and processes of investor engagement with companies.
- The dynamics of multi stakeholder dialogues as these are being used in standard setting, impact assessment and assurance processes, and the elusive potential for reciprocal learning that is claimed as a potential within these.
- The mobilisation of external criticism within firms by those seeking to change operational practices; the discursive processes through which reputation risk is advertised as a threat to the identification of staff and customers of a firm.
- The translation of responsibility into mundane but pervasive measurement and control processes.
- Processes of identification as these are shaped, threatened and consoled in struggles for corporate responsibility.

Submission: Papers must be submitted electronically by 31st October 2011 to SAGETrack at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/organization>

Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines published in Organization on the Journal's website:

<http://www.uk.sagepub.com/journals/Journal200981#tabview=manuscriptSubmission>

Papers should be between 5000 and 10000 words excluding references, and will be blind reviewed following the Journal's standard review processes. Accepted papers will be published in May 2013..... For further information please contact one of the guest editors:

Peter Fleming (P.Fleming@qmul.ac.uk)

Christina Garsten (christina.garsten@socant.su.se),

John Roberts (john.roberts@sydney.edu.au)

....and finally

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

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