



Renewing the Critical - Reinvigorating the Classic

Track Chair

Dr Robert McMurry, University of York
rm517@york.ac.uk

Co-Organisers

Alison Pullen, University of Technology, Sydney School of Management
Professor Carl Rhodes, University of Technology, Sydney School of Management
Dr Martin Wood, University of York

As a relatively young academic discipline, organization and management studies has an uneasy relationship both with the practice that it seeks to research and theorize, and the scholarly traditions which inform its work. Unlike more established professions such as law and medicine, there is no mandatory point of educational passage to becoming a manager. Notwithstanding the global expansion of MBA education, being a manager requires schooling the harried field of practice itself. When management research engages more directly with established scholarly traditions it can most often be seen as being irrelevant to the practicing manager. Research is thus seen as either elitist or obscurantist; disengaged from the places and people that it reports on. These distinctions, while culturally strong, create a bifurcation that limits the potential for scholarship to engage with the world of which it is a part.

In this track, we invite theoretical or empirical papers that question and disrupt the hackneyed distinctions between the scholarly and intellectual on one side, and the managerialist, mainstream and practice-oriented on the other. Eschewing negative and 'finger pointing' critique, we are interested in the possibilities for management research that can reinvigorate our shared intellectual heritage, while pointing to the development of a positive and future oriented research agenda.

Suggested areas for consideration include, but are not limited to:

- The history of critique in theory and practice
- The meaning of scholarship in researching practice
- Renewing classic themes of management theory
- The uptake of gendered critiques of management
- Theorizing with practitioners
- The management theorist as a public intellectual
- The future of critique in management
- Case studies of critical engagement with practice
- The value of theory in a pragmatic world
- Critical yet affirmative forms of scholarship