

Current Issues in Management and Business Ethics:

Social Movements and the Politics of Business Responsibility

Doktorandenseminar
Universität Zürich

September 9-12, October 20-23, 2014

Location:

UNK-E-2, Universitätsstr. 84, 8006 Zürich
(Tram-Station Winkelriedstrasse, Line 9 & 10).

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Registration

Please register for this doctoral seminar by sending an email to Patrick Haack (patrick.haack@uzh.ch) until August 29, 2014. For questions regarding the seminar, please contact Klaus Weber (klausweber@northwestern.edu). The workshop is worth 3 ECTS points.

Schedule and Topics

9/9, 9-12: Session 1 – Social Movements and the Politics of the Corporation

9/10, 9-12: Session 2 – Contestation and Responsibility

9/11, 9-12: Session 3 – Cooperation and Innovation

9/12, 9-12: Session 4 – Social Enterprises and Sustainability

10/20, 9-12: Session 5 – Topic tbd (Fallback: Institutions and Organizational Forms)

10/22, 9-12: Session 6 – Topic tbd (Fallback: Markets and Consumption)

10/23, 9-12: Session 7 – Topic tbd (Fallback: Global Dimensions and Corporate Activism)

Course Overview

The purpose of this seminar is to examine the conceptual and empirical role of social movements and other civil society actors in shaping corporate behavior. The sessions represent a political perspective on corporate ethics, morality and responsibility, but a largely descriptive rather than a normative one. The course is designed for participants with a basic understanding of organization theory. It does not require advanced reading or knowledge of social movement or political research. The class is most useful for students seeking to learn more about how contested collective action and civil society dynamics underpins modern corporations and their publics.

The course is split into two blocks. The first four sessions, taught in September, offer an overview of core ideas and research areas. The second three sessions, taught in October, address selective special and advanced topics and include presentations of participants' research. The course starts with an introduction to the intersection between social activism and business organizations (Sessions 1). Sessions 2 to 4 examine different pathways through which movements influence the economy, and forms of interaction between companies and civil society actors. Sessions 5 to 7 address selected topics that will be decided during the first block of the seminar based on the interests of the group. I will then provide readings for each session. The topics listed in this syllabus are fallback options if no other topics are requested.

Format and Discussions

The course is organized as a research seminar and mostly based on the collective discussion of the assigned readings. Everyone must read every required paper since there are no student 'discussion leaders' that summarize papers. I facilitate and guide the conversations, provide additional background and clarify and re-cap points as needed. In the course of a session the conversation will inevitably broaden to go beyond the papers, but we will begin with a thorough understanding of the papers as concrete examples of research. Your responsibility is to engage each other in developing the best critical understanding of each paper and the larger topics. In addition to the readings, we will also dedicate time at the beginning and end of each session to identify and discuss research ideas. To make the classes successful please read all assigned papers and form your own view about the following:

1. What is the basic argument/point made by the author(s)? What are its strengths?
2. What are the weaknesses of the argument, and/or the empirical method?
3. If you disagree with an argument or method, what would it take to convince you?
4. What are the scope conditions, under what circumstances is the argument meant to apply, (e.g. only to U.S. non-profits, family businesses in 19th century Italy, etc.)
5. What modifications would be necessary to extend the argument? Are there critical differences between these authors' arguments and those of others we have read?
6. Can these differences be resolved through an empirical test?
7. What alternative explanations can account for the findings of the authors?

Work Assignments

1. Discussion comments and questions.

Before each class session 2-7, email a brief (100-300 word) memo about the required readings to me. The memo should simply contain 2-3 questions that you would like to see addressed during the discussion and perhaps a brief comment on them. The questions can be about one of the papers, about the general theme of the day, or about connections with other research. This can include clarifications, apparent gaps, flaws or boundary conditions, applications and implications of the ideas, or anything else that you would like to discuss. You can send the memos as early as you like, but no later than 18:00 on the day before the class.

2. Three research idea mini-proposals.

Three one page (single spaced) mini proposals are due by 8am on Wednesday, 9/10, Thursday 9/11 and Friday 9/12. Email the proposal to me *and the entire class*. Please do not exceed the page limit, and do not feel obliged to fill a page if you can keep it shorter. The idea is that you develop a new idea and get feedback before over-committing with a longer paper. The proposal should speak (very broadly) to the topics of the previous or upcoming class session. The proposal includes the title of the proposed article, a one sentence summary of the point the prospective article will make or the question it will answer, followed by a commentary explaining why this is interesting and what contribution you feel it might

make. If you propose an empirical study, also include a few sentences about a suitable setting and methodology. These are very short statements, so craft them carefully. They hone your skill in working with the conceptual vocabulary of the course and in expressing your ideas in a succinct way. We will discuss these mini-proposal in class, but you do not need to prepare a formal presentation.

3. A proposal for an empirical research project.

Before the second block of classes, you are required to complete a short proposal for an empirical study, of 10-15 pages in length (more is fine if you are already working on an existing project that relates to the class). The research proposal is not to summarize the material covered in class, but to pose a new question and describe how you would find an answer to it. Lay out your conceptual argument and research question in the first 4-6 pages of the proposal, and then spend the rest of the document describing how you would conduct a research project to address them. This assignment is due on October 17 at 20:00. Each student will formally present this proposal in the final class sessions of that week. The presentation slots will be agreed in session 4.

Grading

50% Class participation, inc. memos and discussion

50% Research proposal, document and presentation

(Note that the research idea mini proposals are not graded – you should explore ideas freely with these)

Topics and Required Readings

1 – Social Movements, Politics and Organizations

- Weber, K., King, B.G. forthcoming. "Social movement theory in organization studies." *Oxford Handbook of Sociology, Social Theory and Organization Studies*. P. Adler, P. du Gay, G. Morgan, M. Reed (eds.) Oxford University Press. [distributed by email before the first class]
- Zald, Mayer N, Calvin Morrill, and Hayagreeva Rao. 2005. "The impact of social movements on organizations: Environment and responses." Pp. 253-279 in *Social movements and organization theory*, edited by Davis, McAdam, Scott, and Zald. New York: Cambridge University Press. [distributed by email before the first class]
- King, Brayden G. and Nicholas Pearce. 2010. "The contentiousness of markets: Politics, social movements and institutional change in markets." *Annual Review of Sociology* 36:249-67.
- Weber, Klaus, Hayagreeva Rao, and L. G. Thomas 2009: 'From Streets to Suites: How the Anti-Biotech Movement Affected German Pharmaceutical Firms.' *American Sociological Review*, 74: 106-127.

2 – Contestation, Response and Responsibility

- Baron, David P. 2003. "Private politics." *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy* 12(1):31-66.
- Campbell, John L. 2007. Why would corporations behave in socially responsible ways? An institutional theory of Corporate Social Responsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(3): 946-967.
- Briscoe, Forrest and Sean Safford. 2008. "The Nixon-in China effect: Activism, imitation and the institutionalization of contentious practices." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 53:460-491.
- Kellogg, Katherine C. 2011. "Making the cut: Using status-based countertactics to block social movement implementation and micro-institutional change in surgery." *Organization Science*. 23(6): 1546-1570.

3 – Engagement, Cooperation and Innovation

- Scherer, Andreas Georg, and Guido Palazzo. 2007. "Toward a political conception of corporate responsibility: Business and society seen from a Habermasian perspective." *Academy of Management Review* 32:1096-120.
- Bartley, Tim. 2007. "Institutional emergence in an era of globalization: The rise of transnational private regulation of labor and environmental conditions." *American Journal of Sociology* 113:297-351.
- Weber, Klaus, Kathryn Heinze, and Michaela DeSoucey. 2008. "Forage for thought: Mobilizing codes in the movement for grass-fed meat and dairy products." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 53:529-67.
- Sine, Wesley D, and Brandon H Lee. 2009. "Tilting at windmills? The environmental movement and the emergence of the U.S. wind energy sector." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 54:123-55.

4 – Social Enterprises and Sustainability

- Dacin, M Tina, Peter A Dacin, and Paul Tracey. 2011. "Social entrepreneurship: A critique and future directions." *Organization Science* 22(5):1203-13.
- Schneiberg, Marc, Marissa King, and Thomas Smith. 2008. "Social movements and organizational form: Cooperative alternatives to corporations in the American insurance, dairy, and grain industries." *American Sociological Review* 73(4):635-67.
- Tracey, Paul, Nelson Phillips, and Owen Jarvis. 2011. "Bridging institutional entrepreneurship and the creation of new organizational forms: a multilevel model." *Organization Science* 22(1):60-80.
- Battilana, Julie, and Silvia Dorado. "Building sustainable hybrid organizations: The case of commercial microfinance organizations." *Academy of Management Journal* 53.6 (2010): 1419-1440.

5 – TBD (Fallback topic: Institutions, Fields)

- Fligstein, Neil, and Doug McAdam. 2011. "Toward a general theory of strategic action fields." *Sociological Theory* 29(1):1-26.
- Michael Lounsbury. 2001. "Institutional sources of practice variation: Staffing college and university recycling programs." *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 46: 29-56.

6 – TBD (Fallback topics: Consumption, Communication Technology)

Kozinets, Robert V and Jay M Handelman. 2004. "Adversaries of consumption: Consumer movements, activism, and ideology." *Journal of Consumer Research* 31:691-704.

Kelly Garrett, R. 2006. "Protest in an information society: A review of literature on social movements and new ICTs." *Information, Communication & Society* 9(02):202-24.

7 – TBD (Fallback topics: Corporate Activism, Regulation)

Walker, Edward T. 2009. "Privatizing participation: Civic change and the organizational dynamics of grassroots lobbying firms." *American Sociological Review* 74(1):83-105.

Vogel, David. 2010. "The private regulation of global corporate conduct: achievements and limitations." *Business & Society* 49(1):68-87.

Advanced Reading Resource List

To follow.