

Track no. 2: Engaged scholarship

Call for Papers:

Engaged scholarship

Ester Barinaga, Associate Prof.,
Dpt. of Management, Politics and Philosophy, Copenhagen Business School
eb.lpf@cbs.dk

Karin Berglund, Associate Prof.,
Dpt of Management, Organisation and Society, Stockholm University School of Business
Karin.Berglund@fek.su.se

Caroline Wigren-Kristoferson, Associate Prof.,
CIRCLE, Lund University
Caroline.Wigren@circle.lu.se

Some fifteen years ago, Ernest L. Boyer, former president of the Carnegie Foundation, coined the term “scholarship of engagement.” Finding fault in the current relation between the universe of the university and that of its surrounding community, Boyer urged us to “connect the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers and to our cities...” (Boyer, 1996). Particularly in North America, Boyer’s plea sparked a movement of scholarly efforts to engage with communities beyond university campuses. More centrally, it highlighted the role of the intellectual in the contemporary context.

Engaged scholarship refers to reciprocal, collaborative relations between the faculty member and the public that aim at the amelioration of communities, the co-production of knowledge, and the articulation of university practices embedded in the community. Challenging traditional forms of scholarship, engaged scholarship stresses the transformational significance of research co-produced with the affected publics. Developing dialectical practices, scholars are both advancing civic renewal, as well providing a broader and more vital meaning to scholarship. Further, by building upon the participation of non-academics, of those affected by the social issues that are the object of inquiry, engaged scholars are contributing to develop the democratic potential of processes of knowledge creation.

Still emerging as it is, the field of engaged scholarship covers, however, a wealth of terms, practices, perspectives on power and notions of democracy. Accordingly, “public scholarship”, “participatory research”, “community partnership”, “action research”, “public information networks”, “activist research,” and “civic literacy scholarship” are all terms used to discuss a scholarship of engagement. Diverse as these terms may be, they share a focus both on *intervention* in the socio-economic issues they study and on *engagement with the publics* affected by the particular issue.

The development of this field has been particularly strong in those disciplines that have a natural inclination for community service: education, social work, health prevention, or religious-run university colleges. In this track we would like to broaden the discussion to include business schools. How do we scholars in business universities engage ourselves as well as students in social issues, of our immediate communities and beyond? How do we take a concern for power into our relations with the

organizations we study? What are the forms of intervention we work with and how do we engage with those publics affected by the problems we study? How do we design our teaching and research to include those our actions so often affect? Are we still giving voice to managers only, or do we give space to the many voices? Do we relate to socio-economic disempowerment in our work at large and if so, how?

In this conference stream we want to emphasize business scholars' ability to study how different forms of power are constituted in society, not only to expose contradictions – social, political or economic – but also *to take action* against the oppressive elements of reality (Freire, 1973). Following the critical pedagogue Paulo Freire, a word may be deprived of its action-dimension, becoming an empty signifier and thus deterring reflection. To provoke our thoughts on education and research practices in business schools, we argue that many of our words are at the risk of becoming poor of action and reflection. It is our view that through engagement with those we study, 'our words' can be transformed and (again) become part of social transformation.

We invite papers that explicate and interrogate various ontological, epistemological, and practical concerns in the emerging field of engaged scholarship. Potential topics include:

- Exemplars of scholarly engagement in communities beyond the campus
- Overviews and/or detailed descriptions of emerging practices in education and beyond campus
- Elaborations on the epistemological legitimacy of engaged scholarship
- Representational concerns, including when, where, and how to publish/publicize engaged research
- Post-colonial discussions of power relations between the engaged scholar, the affected publics and other institutional actors

We are currently soliciting abstracts for proposed papers. Abstracts should be no longer than 300 and include a maximum of 5 keywords.

Submit your abstracts and keywords by January 31, 2013: