

Call for Papers

Cynical? Constructive? Comfortable? Critical? – Rethinking the **C** in Critical Management Studies

CMS 8 Stream

The 8th International Conference in Critical Management Studies

July 10-12, 2013

University of Manchester

Convenors

Ronald Hartz (Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany)

Matthias Rätzer (Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany)

Elke Weik (University of Leicester, UK)

In recent years, contributions by, among others, Clegg (2006) and Spicer et al. (2009) have sparked a debate on the practical relevance and (critical) 'performativity' of CMS. Spicer et al. (2009) see authors arguing 'against management' (Parker 2002) and stressing the 'non-performative intent' (Fournier and Grey 2000) as promoting a (paternalistic) comfort zone and supporting a 'cynicism which pervades CMS'. Following the discussion over the years, the convenors increasingly feel uncomfortable with this new avenue of thinking and the impact it has on the evolution of the CMS community. We believe that for many management scholars CMS is a more or less comfortable »haven« in which to share ideas and critically engage in the study "*of, and sometimes against, management rather than [in] the development of techniques or legitimations for management*" (Alvesson et al. 2009: 1, emphasis in original). In contrast, the new twist towards a 'pragmatic' and 'constructive' direction for CMS (as opposed to 'negativism' and 'intellectualism'), actualize and support, as we see it, first, a widespread distrust of critical thinking (Adorno 1977). Second, in focusing on managerial and organizational practices it eclipses the interdependence of these practices with the societal, political or economic relations on a global scale. Having said that, we nevertheless share the critics' dissatisfaction with the societal impact of CMS and want to explore avenues of critical, constructive engagement.

In the stream, we would welcome papers that re-initiate a debate which already has been conducted almost two decades ago and to transport it to contemporary structures, actors and discourses. In doing so, we neither want to evoke nostalgia about 'the good old critical times' nor do we want to limit the discussion to the new performativity in CMS. Rather, we would like to throw the first stone on ourselves as part of the CMS community to discuss the relationship between critique and constructive intervention as well as its consequences for our identities as critical researchers.

We invite contributions that deal with, but are not limited to, the following areas and questions:

- Reflections on the changes of what 'Critical' in CMS means and how it is constructed. We are both interested in a genealogy of critique as well as performativity in CMS. You may also want to think about the following questions:
 - From revolution to bureaucracy: Is managerial advice all that is left to us?
 - Where has the excitement gone: What happened to anti-Management, anti-Organization theory, de-differentiation, alternative economies and the rest?
 - Of legislators and interpreters: Is academia the wrong place for CMS?
- Reflections on roots, buds, and neighbours:
 - We're not alone in this: The C's in Critical Marketing, Critical Finance, Political Economy, Economic Sociology, Critical Discourse Analysis etc. What can we learn from these efforts and how can it inspire our own work?
 - Any (real) news from theory? We are interested in contributions dealing with contemporary critical theorists (e.g. Boltanski, Honneth, Badiou, Agamben) and their suggestions regarding praxis.
 - Opening the 'message in a bottle': What about Marx, Bakunin, Nietzsche, Gramsci, Adorno? We look forward to papers who challenge the status of the 'classics' as mere footnotes of CMS.
- Finally: Stop moaning! or How to be more than a caller in the desert: We are living in times of crisis, protest and societal changes which (at least) need attention and reflection. Therefore, we especially invite case studies or other empirical material on successful change, protests and disturbances.

Submission of Abstracts

Please send abstracts or any questions to Ronald Hartz (ronald.hartz@wirtschaft.tu-chemnitz.de).

Abstracts should be a maximum 500/1000 words, A4 paper, single spaced, 12 point font. Deadline **31st January 2013**.

Notification of paper acceptance: 22nd February 2013.

Full papers will be expected by **1st May 2013**.

Your abstract should include:

- Title
- The focus, aims and objectives of the paper
- The research evidence base underpinning the paper
- How the paper will contribute to the theme

References

Adorno, Theodor W. (1977): Kritik. In Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft II. Frankfurt/Main. Suhrkamp, 785-793.

Alvesson, Mats; Bridgman, Todd; Willmott, Hugh (2009): Introduction, in: Alvesson, Mats; Bridgman, Todd; Willmott, Hugh (Ed.): The Oxford Handbook of Critical Management Studies. New York: Oxford University Press, 1-28.

Clegg, Stewart; Kornberger, Martin; Carter, Chris; Rhodes, Carl (2006): For Management?, in: Management Learning, 37(7), 7-27.

Parker, Martin (2002): Against management: Organization in the age of managerialism. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Spicer, André; Alvesson, Mats; Kärreman, Dan (2009): Critical performativity: The unfinished business of critical management studies, in: Human Relations, 62(4), 537-560.

Contact Details and Profiles

Ronald Hartz (lead convenor for administrative purposes), Dr. rer. pol., is Junior Professor for European Management at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany. His research interests currently encompass discourse analysis, critical management studies and alternative forms of organizing.

Email: ronald.hartz@wirtschaft.tu-chemnitz.de

Matthias Rätzer is research assistant at the Chair of European Management at Chemnitz University of Technology. His major research is on discursive formations in elderly care and the resulting effects on care home structures. Further interests may be located in conceptions of altruism and heterotopic forms of organizing.

Email: matthias.raetzer@wirtschaft.tu-chemnitz.de

Elke Weik, Dr. rer. pol., is a lecturer at the School of Management at the University of Leicester. She specialises in organization theory and social theory. Her major focus of research is process theories of organisation and neo-institutionalist theory focussing on wine and universities (not necessarily in connection).

Email: e.weik@le.ac.uk