Call for Papers

Special Issue on

The Passion for Knowledge

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Why do people and their organizations seek out knowledge? Most of the recurrent explanations emphasize the instrumental use of knowledge: in order to solve problems, to gain competitive advantages, to exploit innovation commercially, or to contribute to the well-being of future generations. But besides the rationality and purposiveness of knowledge-gathering, there is another aspect that may be undervalued in organization studies: that of a search for knowledge driven by a love of knowledge for its own sake.

As in the arts, which are the best example of human non-instrumental activity, we commit ourselves to knowledge for its own sake. We engage in art and in knowing for the love of creation; both forms of activity may be seen as an endeavour without a specific purpose. Is it possible to conceive practical knowledge in this way? Does the knowledge developed and conserved in communities of practitioners resemble the poetic art? Is there any relationship between sensible knowledge (the one achieved through the five senses and the aesthetic judgment), poetic art and rational processes of knowing?

By focusing on the relation between passion and knowledge, we aim to expand the current debate and to explore a less intentional, less instrumental, more reflexive aspect of knowledge and knowing in organizations.

Papers may:

• Explore the relationship between knowing and desiring, having in mind the social construction and destruction of knowledge;
• Apply ideas from practice-based studies of knowing and learning to contexts and situations where the thirst for knowledge is the driving force behind organizational behaviour;
• Critically interpret what are the interest and passions that trigger the search and belief in the possession of knowledge;
• Investigate if there are particular organizational arrangements and processes that can support and foster the passion for knowledge;
• Develop implications about the role of language and objects in shaping desire for knowledge. How do artifacts participate in the knowing and learning process? How do they sustain the passion for knowing;
• Discuss tacit knowledge, aesthetics and the passion for knowledge;
• Offer new vocabularies to describe the situated and sensuous nature of knowing.

Submission Procedure: Papers should be sent electronically and dated before September 26, 2005 (submitter's local date) to organization@som.umass.edu as Word email attachments, indicating The Passion for Knowledge in the subject line. Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines published in every issue of ORGANIZATION, also at the journal's website: http://www.sagepub.co.uk/journalManuscript.aspx?pid=105723&sc=1. Papers should be between 5000 and 8000 words, and will be blind reviewed following the journal's standard process. For further information contact Silvia Gherardi <silvia.gherardi@soc.unitn.it>