Gender, Work and Organization
5th international interdisciplinary conference, 27th – 29th June 2007
Call for Abstracts

Gender and Organization in Popular Culture

Stream Convenors
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Whether it be in television, the cinema, popular novels, magazines, advertisements or the other myriad mass media in which popular culture can be located, social representations of gender relations are dramatically illustrated. In many cases, the site for such representations is organized work. It is only recently, however, that research has turned its attention to such issues. While there are some exemplary contributions, the critical possibilities of studying gender and organizations in popular culture are very much nascent. This stream seeks to provide an arena through which this area of study can be further developed.

In deploying the term popular culture, we are referring to forms of entertainment that are mass produced and widely consumed. Popular culture is a contemporary phenomenon enabled by industrialization, urbanization and mass communication technologies. Commonly contrasted against traditional folk culture and high culture, popular culture is usually considered to include media such as popular music, television, cinema, literature, and magazines. For those who study organizations, popular culture is of interest because it contains within it many representations of organized work. For this reason, some in organization studies have turned their attention to the investigation of forms of popular culture as diverse as science fiction films, popular music, detective novels, children’s books, television cartoons, and blockbuster movies. Across cultural studies, media studies and gender studies, interrogations of gender in popular culture have developed into a sophisticated analysis and critique. Popular culture emerges here as a site in and through which gender constructions, relations and politics are played out.

In this stream we seek papers that can be located between and beyond the study of gender in popular culture, and the study of organizations in popular culture. More specifically, we are interested in papers that provide a critical analysis of the way that gender in organizations is represented, constructed, subverted, and re-imagined in popular culture. Whether it be an analysis of the representations of gender in organizations, an examination of the consumption of gendered symbols and stories, an interrogation of the gendered production popular culture by organizations, or theoretical considerations of gendered organizations and popular culture, the primary aim is to analyse the relations between gender, organization and popular culture. In pursuing this aim, popular culture can be regarded as multiple and ambivalent in the way that it connects with gender, organizations and gendered organizations. Popular culture cannot here be analyzed as a monological system portraying or perpetuating a singular perspective on gender and organizations. Instead there are multiple and diverse possibilities for inequality and equality, oppression and liberation, materiality and
representation, silence and voice, marginalization and dominance. Areas of interest which draw on diverse theoretical perspectives include, but are not limited to:

The representation of gender and sexual stereotypes in popular culture
The relation between the gendered production and consumption of popular culture
The critique of masculine dominance in the production of popular culture
Critical, resistant and subversive portrayals of gender in popular culture
Analysis of popular culture as it is specifically targeted at women, men, boys and girls
The representation of men and women as managers
The representation of sexuality in organizations
The productive use of popular culture, in its consumption, to challenge gendered hegemonies
Critiques of gender neutrality in theoretical approaches to popular culture and organization
The representation of sexualized and gendered bodies
The subversion of gender inequalities in organizations
The relation between gender, organizational forms and work practices
Humour and parody in relation to gendered identities
Feminist politics in popular culture
Methodological discussion of ways and means of writing about and with popular culture

Abstracts should be one page, single space and of approximately 500 words (excluding any references) giving title of paper, keywords, contact details including your name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address. Submission date for abstracts is 1st November 2006. All abstracts will be peer reviewed. Please note that due to restrictions of space, multiple submissions by the same author will not be timetabled. New and young scholars with 'work in progress' papers are welcomed. Abstracts should be emailed to Carl.Rhodes@uts.edu.au

State the title of the stream to which you are submitting your abstract.