



VISION: Call for papers Culture and Organization

Guest Editors:

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Following the successful SCOS conference on the same theme, held in Lille in July 2010, this special issue takes Vision as a central motif of contemporary management practice. We invite submissions that address vision and organisation as intersecting conceptual, ideological and cultural practices. To *envisage* and to *visualise* – we are told – is the ultimate goal of organizational action. Having the ability to see the future in one's mind's eye is, we might argue, the cornerstone of true (visionary) leadership. For to see into the future is to anticipate, be ready for and above all to attempt control of that which is unknown, unknowable and cannot be seen. Thus, all management disciplines are fundamentally concerned with vision. But to see is also to be seen. Who has the power to see and who is too weak to shield themselves from others' gaze(s)? Gaze is political – especially so in a mass mediated society where image is coming to stand for experience itself. Organizational images both reproduce and disrupt established orders of seeing. What is more, these ocular technologies of order are not new but have a long history in organization studies that is often belied by neophilic tendencies to emphasise 'The Visual' as a leitmotif of only our relatively recent past and present.

Vision also sees through things. It is transparency – seeing things as they 'really are'. We say that those with vision can 'see' things that other 'less gifted' individuals cannot. What does this mean for organizations? How do organizations seek to see? How do they hope that others will see them? The artefacts that construct the corporation in others' eyes are techniques of transparency: "Look! You can see through us! We are clear! We are *accountable!*" In certain cultural contexts, to see is to believe: thus, if organizations make visible processes, products, ideas, ideals and so on, their public/s may believe in their existence or in their good intentions. In this complex game, visions can be also used to obscure or to hide... as Foucault said, visibility is (also) a trap. If you are looking at something you cannot be looking at/for something else at the same time – thus vision is also illusion, perhaps even trickery. In this process, organisations may determine what can be seen or what/who is not seen, thus issues related to diversity, equality, identity and difference might be included here.

Further, vision locates us in time and space in an ocular relation with the world. To rely on one's sight is to flatten the embodied sensorium, to rely on 1/5, 6, 7, 8, ∞th of our being-in-the-world. So vision is impoverished, partial and that is before we begin to think about the partiality of sight itself. We therefore also welcome critical approaches to the visual study of organization: what do we blind ourselves to if we are too busy 'looking' at/ for things?

We envisage papers that address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

Cultural aspects of vision and ways of seeing
How the images of organization infuse everyday culture (corporate aesthetics, architecture, film, TV)
Vision as a central management motif (strategic vision, visionary leadership etc.)
Surveillance, accounting, accountability, transparency and discipline
Dreams, fantasy, imagination and visual expressions of the unconscious in organizations
Visible identities – organizational, personal and professional
Gaze, diversity and the Other
Reading organization through the visual arts
Cyber visions: Second Life/Facebook/MySpace media
Blindness, the senses and the limits of vision

Although we do not wish to rule out methodological papers, we nonetheless encourage authors of such papers to focus on the utility of visual methods for understanding organizational life.

Papers should be submitted to both guest editors at beatriz.acevedo@anglia.ac.uk and swarren@essex.ac.uk by **Friday 29th April 2011**. Informal enquiries can also be made of the guest editors at these addresses. Please ensure papers are no more than 8000 words and prepared according to the standard conventions of C&O (see <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/journal.asp?issn=1475-9551&linktype=44>). The issue is scheduled for publication in the second half of 2012.