

## Call for Papers: The Novel and Organization

A workshop hosted by the Department of Accounting, Finance and Management  
at the University of Essex from the 10th to 12th May, 2007

For a number of years now management and organizational researchers have been using novels in a number of ways, for example as a teaching aid to communicate the complexity and ambiguity of organizational life, as a means of deconstructing modes of representation in academic writing, or as a research lens through which to analyse social perceptions of work and organization. Each of these approaches has generated a significant body of academic commentary – a ‘literature’ on Literature – which engages directly with the novel.

In this workshop, we want to focus attention on the specificities of the novel and the means by which it has come to dominate discussions of ‘Literature’ both within organization studies and in the humanities more generally. Why is it that the novel has been privileged as the exemplary form of Literature? How can we further develop our understanding not only of the value of the novel but also of its limitations: its political, ethical, epistemological and even ontological commitments? How might an examination of these commitments inform the ways in which we engage with ‘the novel’ as a particular way of organizing and representing experience?

Our hope is that, by exploring both novels *about* organization and the organization *of* the novel, the workshop will enable critical reflection upon the uses and abuses of the novel within studies of management and organization. Specific topics which papers might focus upon include:

- The social organization and history of the novel. For example:
  - The emergence of novelists, readers, narrators, characters etc. within particular sets of social relations.
  - Forms of work and organization portrayed in early novels.
- The ways in which the novel represents and communicates knowledge. For example:
  - What assumptions are built into the form of the novel about reality, realism and truth?
  - How have novels served to challenge socially dominant constructions of reality?
- The role of the novel in the reproduction of management knowledge. For example:
  - In writing about novels, how do organizational scholars focus upon, reflect, and reproduce a particular community of ‘taste’?
  - To what extent does a knowledge of classical canons serve to reinforce a distinct managerial class?
- The novel and reading as modes of socialization. For example:
  - What is the function of children’s fiction in early socialization into work, management and organization?
  - Is the novel still a significant medium of socialization or has it been replaced by other forms and media?

Please note that these are just suggestions and papers addressing the broader themes of the workshop are welcome. If you would like to discuss an idea for a paper or poster session before submitting an abstract, please feel free to contact the organizers directly.

The deadline for submission of abstracts is **1<sup>st</sup> December 2006**. Acceptance of papers will be notified by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

Chris Land and Martyna Sliwa  
[cland@essex.ac.uk](mailto:cland@essex.ac.uk)  
[masliwa@essex.ac.uk](mailto:masliwa@essex.ac.uk)