

SIMONA GIORGI

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EDUCATION

Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
Ph.D. in Management and Organizations, minor in Sociology (expected May 2010)
M.S. in Management and Organizations, 2006

Università Bocconi, Milan, Italy
B.S. in Business Administration, *summa cum laude*, 1997-2001

The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
Exchange student, 2000

DISSERTATION SYNOPSIS

Title. Symbols of Substance: Symbolic Actions and Substantive Interests in Actors' Strategies of Influence

Committee. Edward J. Zajac (Chair), Brayden King, Susan Perkins, Klaus Weber, and Tina Dacin (external member, Queen's School of Business)

My dissertation explores how organizational actors use cultural competence to affect favorable institutional change. In particular, I focus on the interplay between symbols and substance, more specifically between language and interests both of the focal organization and of its target audience. In two distinct, but related essays I examine the following research questions: First, how do symbols facilitate the process of exerting influence by appealing to the audience's interests? Second, how can the use of symbols hinder effective influence even when interests seem aligned?

I examine the first question through a historical analysis of the automobile industry's struggle in the 1960s and 1970s with the issue and regulation of safety in the U.S., while I address the second question through a multi-method analysis of an environmental non-profit organization in Chicago that aims at building allies for its proposed innovation. Using as a baseline explanation the traditional argument that material interests drive behavior and that talk is essentially 'cheap', in this dissertation I show how symbols matter, in particular in creating – or failing to create – 'bridges' between parties' interests. I expect my findings to contribute to a burgeoning body of work on agency, stakeholders' management, and language in neoinstitutional theory and strategy.

RESEARCH

My research interests lie at the intersection of institutional theory, cultural sociology, and strategic management. My doctoral dissertation explores the challenges of agency in institutional environments with a focus on language.

Book chapters

Rao, H. and S. Giorgi. 2006. "Code breaking: how entrepreneurs exploit cultural logics to generate institutional change." *Research in Organizational Behavior*, vol. 27, pp. 279-314

Working papers

Giorgi, S. and E. Zajac. 2009. "Braking the Law: How the U.S. Auto Industry Symbolically Managed the Concept of Automotive Safety." (Chapter of dissertation)
[ready for journal submission]

Giorgi, S. 2009. "Wild by Design? Agency, cooperation, and values in a Chicago community of environmental non-profit organizations." (Chapter of dissertation)

Giorgi, S. and K. Weber. 2009. "From Frame to Fame: Framing Repertoires and Status among Security Analysts in the Biotechnology Industry, 1986-2006."
[ready for journal submission]

Work in progress

Weber, K. and S. Giorgi. 2009. "Worthy Rhetorics: Analyst Discourse and the Valuation of Biotech Stocks."

Humphreys, A. and S. Giorgi. 2009. "The Ways and Means of Legitimation: Assessing Normative and Regulative Legitimacy on Multiple Socio-Political Levels."

Rao, H. and S. Giorgi. 2009. "Code violation? How Slow Food transformed itself from a gastronomic movement into an eco-gastronomic movement."

PRESENTATIONS

Trading in Good and Evil? Challenges and Opportunities of Market Solutions to Environmental Problems, All-Academy Symposium Theme Session on Markets and the Environment, Organizer and Co-Chair, *Academy of Management*, Chicago, August 9, 2009

The Logics of Politics: The U.S. automobile industry's struggle with safety regulation, paper presentation, *Academy of Management*, Chicago, August 10, 2009

Perspectives on Governance, Session Chair, *Academy of Management*, Chicago, August 10, 2009

Wild by Design? Environmental Entrepreneurship, Conceptions of Value, and Allies Mobilization in a Chicago Community of Non-Profit Organizations, *The University of Alberta Second International Conference on Institutions, Innovation and Space*, June 2009

Nature Talks: Language, Values, and Identities in Cooperation, DePaul University, Environmental Science Program, *Institute for Nature and Culture*, Chicago, May 22, 2009

Worthy Rhetorics: Analyst Discourse and the Valuation of Biotech Stocks, *Academy of Management*, Market Devices symposium, Anaheim, CA, August 11, 2008

Marks of Distinction: Style as a Source of Status among Security Analysts, 1986-2005, *Informs*, Organization Science workshop, Seattle, November 3, 2007

Managing Political Life: How the U.S. Automobile Industry Re-Constructed Product Safety, *Strategic Management Society*, San Diego, October 17, 2007

Marks of Distinction: Style as a Source of Status among Security Analysts, 1986-2005, *American Sociological Association*, Section in Economic Sociology. New York, August 14, 2007

Code Breaking: How Entrepreneurs Exploit Institutional Logics to Generate Institutional Change, *Academy of Management*, Symposium on Code Makers and Code Breakers: Food as a Field of Cultural Contestation, Philadelphia, August 2007

Constructing Politics: Organizations as Systems of Political and Cultural Influence, OMT Dissertation Proposal Workshop, *Academy of Management*, Philadelphia, August 2007

Marks of Distinction: Style as a Source of Status among Security Analysts, Culture and Society workshop, Sociology Department, Northwestern University, Evanston, January 11, 2007

Marks of Distinction: Style as a Source of Status among Security Analysts, 1986-2005, *Academy of Management*, Atlanta, August 15, 2006

Cultural Repertoires of Markets and Markets for Cultural Repertoires, *Midwestern Conference for Culture, Language, and Cognition*, Northwestern University, Evanston, May 14, 2005

Breaking the Code: How Actors Utilize Logics to Generate Institutional Change, *Culture and Society workshop*, Sociology Department, Northwestern University, Evanston, April 15, 2005

BUSINESS CASES

Harvard Business School Cases

Kodak, with Giovanni Gavetti and Rebecca Henderson, 2003-2004

Kodak and the Digital Revolution, N9-705-448 (*most popular*)

Kodak (A), N9-703-503 (*most popular*)

Kodak (B), N9-704-456

Dell, with Jan Rivkin, 2004

Matching Dell (B), N9-704-476

Matching Dell: Dell Computer Corporation, 1999-2003, N9-704-452

Matching Dell: The Personal Computer Industry, 1999-2003, N9-704-451

Matching Dell: IBM's Personal Computer Division, 1999-2003, N9-704-453

Matching Dell: Compaq and HP, 1999-2003, N9-704-454

Matching Dell: Gateway, 1999-2003, N9-704-455

Dell, with Jan Rivkin, M.E. Porter, and F. Nabavi, 2004

Matching Dell: The Personal Computer Industry in 1998, N9-704-445

Matching Dell: Dell Computer Corporation in 1998, N9-704-446

Matching Dell: HP's Personal Computer Division in 1998, N9-704-449

Matching Dell: Gateway in 1998, N9-704-450

Other Cases

Qubica, 2002

Qubica. Trovare l'America a Bologna, Università Bocconi, SDA

Autogrill, with Rossella Cappetta, 2002

Replicanti di successo. Il caso Autogrill. *Economia & Management*, 2002, vol.4

WORK EXPERIENCE

Harvard Business School, Strategy Department, research associate for Giovanni Gavetti and Jan Rivkin, 2002 – 2004

Università Bocconi, Milan, research, 2001

Bain & Co., Milan, business analyst, 2000

GRANTS AND AWARDS

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Targeted Watershed Project, grant for a study on stakeholders' management on environmental innovation in Chicago (around \$16,000, still in progress), 2009

University of Alberta, Canada, conference travel fellowship (2009)

Dispute Resolution Research Center, Northwestern University, grant for study on cooperation among environmental non-profit organizations in Chicago (\$4,550), 2008

Università Bocconi, research grant, 2001-2002; Best Graduating Student award, 2001

Soroptimist, Award for Young Women's Leadership, 1998

TEACHING

Teaching Assistant, Kellogg School of Management

MORS – 430: Leadership in Organizations (Professor Brian Uzzi, 2006-2008; Professor Klaus Weber, 2005-2006)

This course provides students with the social science tools needed to solve organizational problems and influence the actions of individuals, groups, and organizations. It prepares leaders to understand how to best organize and motivate the human capital of the firm, manage social networks and alliances, and lead strategic change.

MORS – 454: Creating and Managing Strategic Alliances (Professor Ed Zajac, 2008)

This course examines the theory and practice of creating and managing different types of strategic alliances such as joint ventures, licensing agreements, buyer-supplier partnerships and consortia. The goal is to help students understand the costs and benefits of strategic alliances (and why such alliances may be preferred over other strategies such as internal development or mergers and acquisitions). In addition, the course covers how to design alliances, and how to avoid the many potential problems and complications in managing these relationships. It also provides a framework for managing multiple alliances at once.

MORS – 453: Power in Organizations: Sources, Strategies, Skills (Professor Brayden King, 2009, Professor Klaus Weber, 2007, and Professor Willie Ocasio, 2006)

This course aims at developing students' ability to create, and use sources of power beyond formal authority, with a focus on the rules of the game, basic power diagnostics, the management of strategic dependencies and persuasion processes, and working in entrepreneurial contexts. The course also raises issues of career dynamics in the context of the development of leadership abilities.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND AFFILIATIONS

Kellogg School of Management, Department of Management and Organizations. Internal academic service: PhD admission committee, 2006 and 2007. New doctoral student recruiting event (interviews), 2008 and 2009. Co-Chair of Doctoral Student Committee, 2009.

Strategic Management Journal - Ad hoc reviewer

Organization Science - Ad hoc reviewer

Academy of Management (OMT and OB) - Reviewer, 2006- 2009

Strategic Management Society, Informs, Academy of Management (OMT, BPS sections), American Sociological Association - Member

REFERENCES

Professor Edward J. Zajac (Dissertation Committee's Chair)
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Professor Susan E. Perkins
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Professor Klaus Weber
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Professor Tina Dacin (external member)
Queen's School of Business | Strategy and Organizational Behaviour
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