



# How Matter Matters: Objects, Artifacts, and Materiality in Organization Studies (Perspectives on Process Organization Studies)

*By Paul R. Carlile, Davide Nicolini, Ann Langley, Haridimos Tsoukas*

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Although human lives towards the second half of the twentieth century became increasingly mediated by objects and artifacts and have depended heavily on the functioning of technical systems, materiality in a broad sense became relatively marginalized as a topic of research interest. This volume contributes to redressing the balance by drawing together the work of scholars involved in exploring the sociomaterial dimensions of organizational life. It will look at the way material objects and artifacts are conceived in organizations, and how they function in interaction with human agents.

The book offers a new conceptual repertoire and vocabulary that allows deeper thought and discussion about the inherent entanglement of the social and material. Like the preceding volumes in the Perspectives on Process Organization Studies series, the book displays the richness that characterizes process thinking, and combines philosophical reflections with novel conceptual perspectives and insightful empirical analyses.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

Review from previous edition: Praise for the series:

"As we become more willing to convert reified entities into differentiated streams, the resulting images of process have become more viable and more elusive. Organization becomes organizing, being becomes becoming, construction becomes constructing. But as we see ourselves saying more words that end in 'ing,' what must we be thinking? That is not always clear. But now, under the experienced guidance of editors Langley and Tsoukas, there is an annual forum that moves us toward continuity and consolidation in process studies. This book series promises to be a vigorous, thoughtful forum dedicated to improvements in the substance and craft of process articulation."

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"Perspectives on Process Organization Studies will be the definitive annual volume of theories and research that advance our understanding of process questions dealing with how things emerge, grow, develop, and terminate over time. I applaud Professors Ann Langley and Haridimos Tsoukas for launching this important book series, and encourage colleagues to submit their process research and subscribe to PROS."

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"The recent decades witnessed conspicuous changes in organization theory: a slow but inexorable shift from the focus on structures to the focus on processes. The whirlwinds of the global economy made it clear that everything flows, even if change itself can become stable. While the interest in processes of organizing is not new, it is now acquiring a distinct presence, as more and more voices join in. A forum is therefore needed where such voices can speak to one another, and to the interested readers. The series Perspectives on Process Organization Studies will provide an excellent forum of that kind, both for those for whom a processual perspective is a matter of ontology, and those who see it as an epistemological choice."

--Barbara Czarniawska, Professor of Management Studies, School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden

### **About the Author**

Paul R. Carlile is Professor at Boston University School of Management. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Michigan and was an Assistant Professor of Organization Studies at MIT's Sloan School of Management. Paul studied Philosophy and Anthropology at Brigham Young University and also earned a Masters in Organizational Behavior there. Paul has also founded two information technology companies developing tools for creating and sharing knowledge.

Davide Nicolini is Professor of Organization Studies at Warwick Business School where he co-directs the

IKON Research Centre and the Warwick Institute of Health. Prior to joining the University of Warwick he held positions at The Tavistock Institute in London and the University of Trento and Bergamo in Italy. His work has appeared in journals such as *Organization Science*, *Organization Studies*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *Human Relations*, *Management Learning*, and *Social Science and Medicine*. From 2009 he is associate editor of journal *Management Learning*. His new book *Practice Theory, Work, and Organization* will be published in 2012 by OUP.

Ann Langley is Professor of Management at HEC Montreal and Canada Research Chair in Strategic Management in pluralistic settings. Her research focuses on strategic change, leadership, innovation, and the use of management tools in complex organizations with an emphasis on processual research approaches. She has published over 50 articles and two books.

Haridimos Tsoukas holds the Columbia Ship Management Chair in Strategic Management at the University of Cyprus, Cyprus and is a Professor of Organization Studies at Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, UK. He has published widely in several leading academic journals, including the *Academy of Management Review*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Organization Studies*, *Organization Science*, *Journal of Management Studies*, and *Human Relations*. He was the Editor-in-Chief of *Organization Studies* (2003-2008), and the editor (with Christian Knudsen) of *The Oxford Handbook of Organization Theory: Meta-theoretical Perspectives* (2003) and author of *Complex Knowledge: Studies in Organizational Epistemology* (2005), both published by Oxford University Press. He has also edited *Organizations as Knowledge Systems* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, with N. Mylonopoulos) and *Managing the Future: Foresight in the Knowledge Economy* (Blackwell, 2004, with J. Shepherd).

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