



The 84th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management

2024 Program / Schedule / Agenda

NOTE: The information in this document is as of **13 July 2024**. Scheduling and other program changes after that date are not reflected in this document. Please refer to the online Annual Meeting program at <https://program.aom.org/> for the most up-to-date information.

Governance and Strategic Decision-Making: Insights from History

Session Moderator: **Bradley Gerald Bowden**, *Journal of Management History*

This session focuses on examining the historical dimensions of governance and strategic decision-making, aiming to uncover the factors that shape organizational behavior and performance over time.

MH: **Markets and Managers in a Dynamic Economy: An Australian Farming Enterprise's Experiences**

Author: **Kaylee Boccalatte**, -
Author: **Bradley Gerald Bowden**, *Journal of Management History*

This paper explores the relationship between management and markets through an examination of the experiences of an Australian family-owned sugar farm in Queensland's Burdekin region; an area of delta-river lands akin to the Mississippi delta of Louisiana. In considering what causes businesses like BT Farms to "make or buy," that is, to vertically integrate or outsource to the market, this paper draws on the "transaction cost economics" pioneered by Oliver Williamson and subsequently exploited by Alfred Chandler. It also, however, draws on the pioneering work of John F. Mee, who searched for the source of a "dynamic economy" in the relationship between "the cumulative forces in the environment" and "the nature of management philosophy applied to business and industrial enterprises."

MH: **Deconstructing Corporate Purpose: A Conceptual Framework in an Evolutionary Perspective**

Author: **Salvatore Esposito De Falco**, *Sapienza U. of Rome*
Author: **Raffaella Montera**, *Pegaso U.*
Author: **Nicola Cucari**, *Sapienza U. of Rome*

This paper introduces a novel multi-dimensional co-evolutionary framework for understanding and analysing corporate purpose, addressing its under-conceptualized nature and diverse interpretations in contemporary business studies. Grounded in the principles of coevolution and integrating Esposito De Falco's (2012) framework on the genesis and evolution of firms, our work advances a unique theoretical typology of corporate purpose. This typology elucidates the evolutionary pathway of corporate purpose through the "3S" dimensions (structural, systemic, and strategic), offering organizations a guide to align their strategies with both their identity and public image. By examining corporate purpose through these dimensions, we highlight the interconnectedness of an organization's intrinsic identity (structural), its engagement within its ecosystem (systemic), and the alignment of purpose with actionable strategies (strategic). This multi-dimensional approach reveals how corporate purpose guides firms through a transformative journey from their genesis to their interactions with stakeholders and broader market dynamics. To do this, the paper delineates four distinct typologies of corporate purpose: purpose washing, formal purpose, promising purpose, and deep purpose. These typologies are systematically organized within a synthesis matrix, providing a nuanced and detailed understanding of how corporate purpose manifests and evolves within different organizational contexts. Central to the study are two key propositions. The first proposition positions corporate purpose as the "metabolism of firms", drawing a parallel with biological metabolism to underscore its crucial role in ensuring business survival, prosperity, and evolutionary adaptation. The second proposition emphasizes the importance of a sequential progression across the genetic, relational, and phenotypic stages of corporate purpose, which is critical for the design of genuinely purposeful organizations. By moving beyond a purely definitional approach, this paper contributes significantly to the ontological understanding of corporate purpose. It sheds light on the dynamics of purpose in organizations, highlighting its strategic importance and the need for alignment between a firm's identity and actions. Our paper provides a valuable resource for academics and practitioners alike, seeking to navigate the complexities of corporate purpose in a dynamic business landscape. Keywords: Corporate purpose; evolutionary perspective; genotype; relational dimension; phenotype; corporate purpose typologies

MH: **Residential Sorting & Organizational Rigidity at The Eastman Kodak Company (1945-2005)**

Author: **Jonathan Palmer**, *Harvard Business School*

This paper seeks to identify structural antecedents that contributed to The Eastman Kodak Company's rigid response to the digital imaging revolution -- a revolution that began inside Kodak itself! This paper examines the interplay between both Kodak (specifically, its business model and organizational structure) and its home city of Rochester (specifically, its geographic development and social structure) from 1945-2005. Using newly digitized historical records, as well as computer vision techniques, this paper tracks how residential sorting along Kodak's departmental lines segregated Kodak's digital pioneers from the executives controlling the company. This paper adds another angle to the reevaluation of the history of one of America's most iconic companies.

MH: **The Evolutionary Dimension of Pandemic Management: An Italian Historical Case**

Author: **Christian Rainero**, *U. of Turin*
Author: **Renato Civitillo**, *U. Federico II Napoli*
Author: **Stefano Amelio**, *U. of Insubria, Varese*
Author: **Giuseppe Modarelli**, *U. of Turin*

The authors, considering accounting practice as a technology rather than a technique, attribute to accounting an interpretative paradigm focused on the variables of the theory of technology-acceptance, highlighting how this can generate strategic-responses. The case-study of the Naples plague in 1656 is studied at both synchronic and diachronic levels, analysing at documental level primary and secondary sources, in order to identify the breaking points of institutional social practice, as represented by the adverse reaction to the imposition of lazzarettos accounting, which, due to urgent needs, was requested by law but was not implemented in practice. These conditions allowed the organisational dimension to prevail over the accounting one, although the latter was already widespread at the mercantile level. The main character of the rituals in burial activities related to the accounting of the dead appears (1656) to have transformed transiently from a numerical dimension into physical accounting (bones in mass graves).

Author: **Pasi Nevalainen**, *U. of Jyväskylä*

This paper analyzes the rise and decline of the state-owned electronics company Valco (1976–1980), which produced components (CRT-tubes) for the television manufacturing industry. The company's scandalous failure has been identified as one of the largest investment errors in Finland's economic history. Instead of the company becoming the new state-run flagship of the electronics industry, it faced numerous startup problems, caused political scandals, and eventually drifted into insolvency. The company's humiliating failure had immediate economic and human consequences in the local context, but in retrospect, it became a symbol of failed industrial politics that marked the entire state-owned enterprise sector for decades. As a consequence of Valco's failure, the Finnish state largely abandoned the use of state ownership as a tool of industrial policy, opening up better opportunities for the rise of the private electronics industry, such as Nokia, as a national flagship in electronics. The Valco case demonstrates not only a) concrete weaknesses associated with state ownership when it is attempted to be used as a tool for creating a new industrial sector but also b) serves as an example of a single historical event that has greater significance in the turn of economic policy.

KEY TO SYMBOLS



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