Remaking Jobs and Organisations: A Schatzkian Practice Perspective

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Dissertation submitted to the
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Technology, Sydney
In fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Education

January 2013
Certificate of Authorship/Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Candidate

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Acknowledgements

This research has been an individual endeavour, but one that could not have been achieved without the support, encouragement and practical advice of many people. I thank Hermine Scheeres who has been my principal supervisor for the past four years and whose tireless advice and expertise guided me through the conceptual and practical milestones of this research. I am also deeply grateful for Hermine’s endless encouragement which has been a guiding light in all my dark moments. I thank my second supervisor, David Boud, whose experience, expertise and guidance got me started and through the first very fragile years of my candidature and for his leadership of the Australian Research Council project, in which I participated as a researcher. I would like to thank Hermine and David for the opportunities, support and guidance they gave me in publishing some of the ideas from this research. I thank Guentor Plum for his editing advice. To the organisations who welcomed me as a researcher and to the numerous participants who so generously shared their experiences, I thank you. I am most grateful to the participants, for helping me see into their lives as workers, as practitioners and as constructors of everyday organisational life. I say thanks to my dear friends and colleagues at UTS, Mary, Marie and Donna, for being always so willing to cheer me on, have coffee, dispense tissues and advice, and for the fantastic discussions that we’ve had. I benefitted immensely from your experiences as researchers, students, wives and mothers. I thank my parents Franco and Laura, for teaching me to value learning. Finally, I would like to give a special thanks to my dear husband Craig for his encouragement and for supporting me tirelessly in so many ways, and to my sons Thomas and Lars, whose beautiful smiles and excitement for discovering life inspires me every day.
List of Publications

The following list represents my published book chapters, journal articles and refereed conference papers. Some of these publications are referenced throughout this thesis document to support my points on the conceptualisations of remaking of jobs and organisational practices from my investigation.

**Book Chapters:**


**Refereed Journal Articles:**


**Refereed Conference Papers:**


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Abstract

This thesis is an empirical study of aspects of the work of three Australian organisations in order to show how a Schatzkian view of ‘practice’ can illuminate conceptualisations of organisations, change, jobs, workers and knowing in ways that challenge prevailing managerialist theorisations of the same. In particular, this thesis draws on Schatzkian notions of practice and social site (Schatzki, 2002, 2005, 2006), where workers and organisations are positioned as interconnected in a mutually constitutive relationship through practices.

By adopting an overarching ethnographic approach, using multiple case studies, narrative inspired semi-structured interviews, observations and document reviews, this thesis demonstrates empirically the mutually constitutive relationship among organisations and social site, as it emerges through the phenomenon of change. Through the interplay of practices in and beyond organisations, ongoing change and stability are explicated as co-occurring phenomena and as inherent features of organisations and social site. By drawing attention to the day-to-day activities of workers, this research demonstrates further the mutually constitutive relationship among workers and organisations. Through workers’ enactments of job and organisational practices in their day-to-day work, they are changing and remaking those practices, and at the same time, workers’ possibilities of such change and remaking are framed by already existing organisational practices. Finally, by considering how workers come to know what to do, this research demonstrates the ways in which workers, as they actively remake their jobs and organisational practices, are at the same time remaking their own and organisational knowing in practice.

This research makes a number of contributions. It extends, in a small way, the organisational, management and practice literatures by bringing together, in a critical discussion, the multiple and diverse perspectives for understanding organisational phenomena. Second, the empirical application of Schatzkian theorisations of practice and social site demonstrates the robustness of these theorisations — how these theorisations hold up in practice. Finally, by bridging Schatzkian theorisations with the work of other practice theorists that focus on knowing in practice, this research extends Schatzki’s work by making explicit links
between Schatzkian notions of practical intelligibility and organisational practice memory with theorisations of knowing in practice.