



ISM SEMINAR

Spring Term 2016-17

Speaker: Professor Emmanuelle Vaast, McGill University

Title: Identity work in a new occupation's online community - A grounded process model of a data scientists' community

Date: Wednesday 22 March 2017

Venue: M2, WBS Teaching Centre

Time: 14:00

Abstract: This paper examines how participants in a new occupation's online community engage in identity work, i.e. address issues associated with what the occupation does and with who its practitioners are. Building upon scholarships on occupational identity, identity work, IT identity, and online communities, it examines how participants in an online community of data scientists, i.e., a new, much talked about occupation whose identity and practices were still in formation, engaged in identity work. The study develops a grounded process model that explains how participating in a new occupation's online community enables participants to engage in individual and collective individual work. Individually, participants get to experiment for themselves with the identity in formation of the new occupation. Yet, collectively, participants in the online community may not be able to settle key issues and dilemmas associated with the new occupation's identity. This study holds implications for scholarship on online communities, on identity work in online communities, and on the relationships between occupational and IT identities.

Key words: occupational identity, IT identity, online community, qualitative research, multi-level analysis, liminality.

Biography: Emmanuelle Vaast is Associate Professor of Information Systems at the Desautels Faculty of Management of McGill University. She has long been fascinated by the reproduction and transformation of practices associated with Information Technology use. More recently, her work has also dealt with the emergence of new forms of organizing and collective engagement associated with social media. Her research has been published, among others, at MIS Quarterly, Information Systems Research, Organization Science, Journal of MIS, and Academy of Management Annals.

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