

## Brown Bag Seminar OHRM

Term:	Spring 2014
Speaker:	Marianna Fotaki, Professor of Business Ethics
Title:	Co-production: A means of democratizing public services or a race to the bottom?
Date:	Wednesday, 22 January 2014
Venue:	E2.02, Social Studies Boardroom, Warwick Business School
Time:	13.00 – 14.00 hours
Abstract	<p>The involvement of civil society in the production of public services is of increasing importance as fiscal and financial crises put pressure on public spending. With its historical roots in civil rights and social care in the USA (Östrom and Baugh 1973), co-production has also served as a means of pursuing alternative social and political projects (Unger 2000). Various forms of co-production have been implemented since (Alford 2009; Bovaird 2007; Pestoff 2006). These range from truly collaborative and radical arrangements between the users and providers of services as well as social enterprises, democratic for-benefit institutions such as open sources communities termed as peer-to-peer co-production (Bauwens 2012), partnerships with private and voluntary organizations and spontaneous initiatives emerging from the society itself in response to crisis and reduction of services provided due to austerity measures. Such trends are also often premised on the re-invention of the notion of public value (Alford 2002) via social innovations that could have potentially wide ranging consequences for the future of how public services are provided. The need to build knowledge about the challenges, opportunities and choices that lie ahead is a key to understanding if co-production in public services and users taking over public services ushers a new era of welfare or rather instigates a race to the bottom. In addition to leading to fragmentation and potential quality issues such shifting the burden on those who have limited ability to enact them could also create negative equity implications for less affluent, less educated and needier individuals (Fotaki 2011).</p>
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