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Ian Colville, Andrew D. Brown and Annie Pye  
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## ***Human Relations* special issue call for papers: Sensemaking, organising and storytelling**

Guest editors: Ian Colville, Andrew D. Brown (University of Bath) and Annie Pye (University of Exeter)

Sensemaking, organizing and storytelling are three conceptual fields in organization studies that are clearly interrelated, yet these linkages remain open for development. The purpose of this Special Issue is to explore theoretically and exploit practically these inherent yet underdeveloped linkages between sensemaking, organizing and storytelling to further their individual and joint understandings.

Although these three elements are, perhaps, most easily located in the Weickian tradition, each term has an intellectual history that is distinct from this and as a result, each has attracted the attention of a range of scholars across the social sciences. For example, storytelling as part of the narrative turn is a significant movement in social psychology, sociology and the humanities, and in recent times, it has burgeoned in organization and management studies. Despite the obvious links between storytelling and sensemaking, overlaps between them remain relatively unexplored, and this cross-over provides an opportunity for fecundity and theory development from whichever side the sensemaking and storytelling link is approached. ‘Organizing’ similarly provides the opportunity for rich and varied connections. For instance, viewed as a grammar for reducing equivocality it immediately links to the concerns of those working within the linguistic turn in general, and more immediately to those scholars in the ‘practices field’ of communication studies. There is, in short, broad scope to bring social theory and social practice together through further empirical and theoretical research in this field.

As a bridge between sensemaking and storytelling, organizing also invites contributions from process scholars who currently build on the dynamism of the adverbial nature of organizing to reverse the ontological priorities in reconstructing the way we understand social, organizational and cognitive change. In addition, this opens a pathway to the strategy-as-practice movement for which the use of the gerund, via the three 'ings' of sense-making, organizing and storytelling, invites the practice approach to meet the process orientation. Together these three themes of sensemaking, organizing and storytelling provide tremendous scope for further developing our knowledge and understanding of action that lies at the heart of organization (and management) studies and has inspired this Special Issue.

To be considered for this Special Issue, submissions must fit with the Aim and Scope of *Human Relations* – please see:

[http://www.tavoinstitute.org/humanrelations/about\\_journal/aims.html](http://www.tavoinstitute.org/humanrelations/about_journal/aims.html).

While we do not intend to be prescriptive, such papers may address such questions as:

- How is sensemaking accomplished through storytelling and with what implications for processes of organizing?
- How do processes of communication inform aspects of organizing such as decision making, strategizing, identity regulation, leadership and change?
- How can existing frameworks for analysing stories contribute to our understanding of communication and organizing?
- How are storytelling, communication and organizing suffused with power, and what are the implications of these relations of power for organizational processes and outcomes?
- If following is a defining aspect of leading, how is our understanding of leadership enhanced by distinguishing between sensemaking and sense-giving?
- How will the rise of organizing without and beyond organization in society affect our views of organization and social movement?
- What new narratives will be created as a means of making sense of/with current political and economic equivocal ties?
- What is the unfolding story of our times and how will a consideration of process and pragmatic philosophy help us catch it as it happens?

We welcome conceptual and empirical papers that make clear contributions to thinking about salient issues that connect sensemaking, processes of

organizing and storytelling. Independent of the specific methods that are employed, papers should place a strong emphasis on theory development. Submissions that have the potential to invigorate current and stimulate future debates and research in these areas are particularly welcome.

Contributors should note:

- This call is open and competitive, and the submitted papers will be blind reviewed in the normal way.
- Submitted papers must be based on original material not under consideration by any other journal or outlet.
- For empirical papers based on data sets from which multiple papers have been generated, the Guest Editors must be provided with copies of all other papers based on the same data.
- The Guest Editors will select five papers to be included in the Special Issue; additional high quality papers submitted in this process may be published in other issues of the journal.

**The deadline for submission is 31 March 2010.**

This Special Issue is intended for publication in late 2011 or early 2012.

Papers to be considered for this Special Issue should be submitted online in accordance with our submission guidelines:

[http://www.tavainstitute.org/humanrelations/submit\\_paper.html](http://www.tavainstitute.org/humanrelations/submit_paper.html).

Please indicate in your covering letter that the paper is intended for this Special Issue.

Please direct any questions about the submission process, or any administrative matter, to Claire Castle, Managing Editor:

[humanrelationsjournal@tavainstitute.org](mailto:humanrelationsjournal@tavainstitute.org).

The Guest Editors of this Special Issue are very happy to discuss initial ideas for papers with potential authors, and may be contacted directly:

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