

ARIMA INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM

Montréal, July 7- 8, 2020

as part of the

14th International Conference of the International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR)

CALL FOR PAPERS

REPERTOIRES OF INTERACTION:

CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION AND CONFRONTATION
IN SERVICE DELIVERY, GOVERNANCE AND ADVOCACY

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: OCTOBER 26, 2019

[INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSIONS](#)

The objective of this colloquium is to explore inter-organisational and cross-sector relations, for example, amongst public and civil society actors, by opening the “black box” of micro-level interactions. These networks or partnerships emerge, or are mandated, to deal with complex problems in the context of, for example, the coproduction of social services, new forms of territorial or environmental governance, or advocacy and citizens’ rights movements. Actors’ *repertoires of interaction* can be understood as the stock of skills, behaviors, tactics and discourses that people use to sustain and control ongoing mutual exchanges (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). While they are almost always structured by institutional and organisational norms and power differences, the constructivist, micro-level approach recognizes that agency is not the preserve of the institutionally powerful (Scott, 1990). Regardless of the models, structures and systems prescribed or put in place, cross-sector relations are ultimately accomplished through situated interactions amongst actors in local sites (Fine, 2014).

By focusing on micro-level dynamics (e.g. Vaara & Whittington, 2012; Fine & Tavory, 2019; Emirbayer, 1997), colloquium papers will empirically contribute to our understanding of how change is constructed or resisted through the creative routines of collaboration and negotiation, or through disruptive practices (e.g. Chalmers & Balan-Vnuk, 2013; Lee & Zhang, 2013). Papers will take as their focal point, the routine or exceptional interactions, negotiations, and communications through which actors collaborate or confront each other in partnership-working or net-working spaces, or in spaces of protest, claims-making and contentious infra-politics (outside the realm of formal political processes). They will seek to discover the rich and varied undercurrent of cross-sector relations, and the ways that relational dynamics are locally produced, navigated and controlled by social actors. Ultimately, studies at the micro-level will help us understand, not what *should* happen in these spaces, but how people interacting with each other *make* it happen.

Papers will empirically explore the contacts, communications, transactions, confrontations, deliberations, altercations, exchanges, negotiations, strategies, acts of repression and resistance that constitute the repertoires of cross-sector interaction under specific national, sub-national and transnational regimes. They will be interested in face-to-face dialogue, and in efforts and strategies aimed at drawing attention to issues, building linkages, persuasion, mutual comprehension, trust, ensuring collaboration between people and coordination between organisations, resisting and influencing perceived adversaries, etc. They may employ – and make contributions to – relational and agency-based approaches, such as interactionism and the negotiated order (Bishop & Waring, 2016); practice-based analysis (Tello-Rozas et al, 2015) and strategy-as-practice (Johnson et al, 2007); sense-making (Weik et al, 2005);), advocacy coalitions (Sabatier, 2007; Hadden, 2018), field analysis (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Fligstein & McAdam, 2011; Macmillan, 2015); network theory (Fine & Kleinman, 1983; Diani, 2003,

2013; Bottero & Crossley, 2011) and actor-network theory (Mouritsen et al, 2010; Bilodeau et al, 2019; Touati et Mailet, 2018); the dynamics of contention (McAdam et al, 2003) and many other perspectives that either call for, or allow for, micro-level analyses. We envision attracting papers that might take up issues such as the following:

Coproduction and the evolving welfare-state – civil society relation: how does it work in practice?

There has historically existed a relation of “dependent interdependence” (Zhang, 2015) between welfare states and third sectors. Today, the considerable literature produced since the 1990’s on the commercialization and marketization of the relationship, has given way to the study of inter-organisational collaboration, coproduction and citizen or service user participation. Some see these practices as potentially increasing the legitimacy and democracy of public services and ensuring their viability in times of public sector austerity (Pestoff, 2009). But others argue that collaboration may be more of a myth than a reality in the context of coproduction, a discourse that has not led to fundamentally changed power relations between public institutional and community-based actors (Essen and al, 2016). Another stream of the literature is interested in the nature and role of leaders and entrepreneurs, though less often in an interactionist perspective (but see for ex. Furnari and Rolbina, 2018). Contributions to this colloquium might look at actors in cross-sector collaborative situations, respond together, or in tension with each other, to the now-established context of contracting, competition, performance accountability and, in many cases, austerity; or how they arrive at an interaction order that may include unequal rights and unequal exposure to risks. For example:

- How do lay, volunteer or community-based actors experience coproduction? What are the assigned tasks and relationships with professionals that, in their experience, actually constitute coproduction or peer-participation? From the point of view of these actors, how does coproduction turn out to be empowering or exploitative?
- How do third sector actors “work the system” in order to maintain autonomy, stay resilient or innovate under increasingly bureaucratic, competitive or unstable conditions? How do “delinquency”, “deviance” or “uncodified actions” figure into their strategies (Teasdale and Dey, 2019; Janse van Rensburg and al, 2018).
- How does collaborative interaction or negotiation across sectors operate to reframe issues, or arrive at shared definitions of problems? How do negotiations unfold that lead to collective decisions about resource contributions, coordinating or authority relations, shifting roles, alliance-building, etc.? How are different forms of power asymmetry employed, resisted or mitigated in the context of such negotiations?

Governance networks: dynamics and “performance” within new public governance

Collaborative governance (Emerson and Nabatchi, 2015) through intersectoral networks involving governmental and civil society partners, is becoming an increasingly familiar mode of operation for addressing local socioeconomic development, socio-environmental planning, refugee reception, crisis management, etc. Whether under the banner of localism, decentralisation, territorial development, or transnational strategies, non-governmental actors, from philanthropic foundations to NGOs to local associations and organizations, are being called upon to contribute their knowledge, expertise, experience or resources. How their multilevel relations with sub-national, national, inter- or transnational authorities unfold on the ground, at the micro level, is not often studied (but see, Olssen and al, 2007). Beyond the well-documented aspects of leadership and entrepreneurship, more complex interactions ultimately determine to what extent, and by what means, governance networks fulfill their mandated or systemic promise, or not (Schmachtel, 2016). Contributions to this colloquium should address how the “choreographies of governance” (Swyngedouw, 2009) are actually performed. For example:

- What are the strategies by which meaningful collaborative governance is constructed and maintained, or disrupted and disputed ? How are internal threats, such as power differentials, deployed by actors, and navigated, resisted, mediated, or neutralized by others? How do particular types of actors, such as institutional entrepreneurs or unauthorized interlopers, intervene in ways that either support or disrupt the dynamics of collaboration?
- How are exogenous threats, pressures, obstacles, interference and even sabotage experienced, and effectively neutralized (or not) by actors in collaborative governance networks? How are unstable or undemocratic institutional and political conditions experienced and handled ?
- How do the dynamics of deliberation, decision-making or controversy management operate in governance networks? To what extent – and how - are they affected by the negotiated order constructed within the network, as opposed to the normative order imposed from without?

Facing off: cross-sector interactions in advocacy, claims-making and citizens' rights movements

Not all cross-sector relations are intended to be collaborative. Collaboration and conflict may be simultaneously deployed in many coproduction and network government circumstances, as complementary tactics. In other situations, the sole objective pursued by one party in relation to the other is contentious claims-making, protest, or social transformation (Jasper and Duyvendak, 2015). For example, in relation to AIDS advocacy, the U.S. pro-life movement, the LGBT* movement, or protest and pro-democracy movements in the Middle East (Volpi and Clark, 2019), Hongkong and elsewhere, green movements (Hoff, 2017), and animal rights movements all seek to change the behavior of powerholders. Creating the identity boundaries of movements and developing strategies for mobilizing allies lend themselves to micro-level analysis (e.g. Mische, 2003). But confrontation, power mobilisation, conflict and control are some of the principal dynamics of cross-sector contention and are less often studied. They, too, are put into practice through repertoires of interaction including acts of aggressing, exposing, politicizing, publicizing, demanding, threatening, influencing, coopting, etc. Questions at the micro-level might include:

- How do actors strategically assess each others' strategies? Are their own strategies based on their perception of the other's response, or rather on some other basis (Krinsky and Barker, 2018)?
- How does a negotiated order emerge in the presence of long-standing adversarial relations (Abers and al, 2014)? How does this develop at different scales of protest (local, national, international)?
- Social media have replaced face-to-face interaction framing issues, and creating identity and community boundaries (Lim, 2012). How are they reciprocally deployed to shape repertoires of contention and to provoke and maintain contentious interaction?

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