



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
Lundquist College of Business

SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS PRACTICES

The Potential for Risk Governance through Organizational Safety Culture

Jennifer Howard-Grenville

Associate Professor of
Management, University of Oregon

jhg@uoregon.edu

Discussant

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Organizational theory perspectives on culture and ‘sustainability’

- Limited empirical work on culture and environmental management
 - More work on safety culture
 - Safety can be put in personal terms
- Combination of practices contributes to safety culture
 - Modeling, codification, communication, incentives, & training
 - As well, employees must feel able, as a group or individual, to act on company commitments

Bertels, S., Papania L., and Papania, D. 2010. Embedding sustainability in organizational culture: A systematic review of the body of knowledge. *Network for Business Sustainability*. Access at <http://nbs.net/topic/culture/>.

Howard-Grenville, J., Bertels, S., & Lahneman, B. 2013. Sustainability: How it shapes and is shaped by organizational culture and climate. In B. Schneider & K. Barbera (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Climate and Culture*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Forthcoming.



Organizational culture literature

- Long emphasis on shared values
- Increasing attention to culture as patterns of day-to-day practices
 - People use “repertoires” of cultural resources (Swidler, 2003)
 - Cultural resources reside at the group, organization, or industry level
 - Resources may “move” from industry to organization, or organization to industry

Weber, K. and M. T. Dacin. (2011). The cultural construction of organizational life: Introduction to the special issue. *Organization Science*, 22 (2), 287-298.

Swidler, A. (2003). *Talk of love: How culture matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago.