CMS 2017

**Subtheme:** Heroes and heroism

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‘Heroes do not receive material rewards for their hardships. Heroes must be willing to downplay their own exceptional abilities. Heroes abide by norms of anonymity; they must avoid being recognized as heroes’ (Adapted from Lois, 1999: 123)

This call for papers seeks contributions from a range of disciplines, which interrogate the nature of heroes and heroism in organizations and society. Recognising, after Lois, that ‘heroes’ often avoid identification, and that the nature of heroism is heavily mediated by emotional, organizational and cultural dimensions, how can we then define it – what makes work and workers heroic? Who, for Critical Management scholars and more widely, are our heroes? Do we have any? Can we have any? Why, if at all, do organizations possess or require heroes?

There are organizations that seem to be culturally associated with heroism such as the military, medicine and emergency services, and we welcome contributions based on research in these areas and related forms of ‘extreme work’ (Granter et al 2015). These could speak to issues of leadership – the leader as ‘saviour’ (Fisher and Phillips 2015: 36), for example, but might also reflect on organizational dimensions of heroism from the perspective of the everyday ranks of middle and frontline workers (Hyde et al. 2016). Associations of work and the heroic go well beyond ‘cops, teachers, and counsellors’ (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003) and we are also interested in the normalization of heroism in working life in the era of precarity. Have heroic notions of striving, passion, and beating the crunch come to serve as ‘neo normative control mechanisms’ (Pettica Harris et al 2015: 573)? The notion of the anti-hero is also relevant and we welcome papers which speak to the notion of the heroic and ‘alternative organizations’ (Parker, 2012). Since popular management books offer guidance from the mafia, for example (Ferrante 2015), contributions may seek to interrogate the anti-heroes, the dark side of heroism, or even organizational villains.

We are interested in the notion of hero figures in our own discipline. Theoretical and discursive papers are also welcome and themes might include notions or risk or sacrifice in research, or the idea of praxis; work which sets out not just to describe the world, but to change it.

To submit your paper of for an informal discussion, please contact:

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**References:**


