

Program Session #: **729** | Submission: **10657** | Sponsor(s): **(MED)**  
Scheduled: **Monday, Aug 12 2013 8:00AM - 9:30AM** at **WDW Coronado Springs  
Resort in Coronado M**

## **Questioning self-interest: Addressing the hidden moral impact of management theory and education**

### *Questioning Self-Interest*

Chair: **Dirk C. Moosmayer**; Nottingham U. Business School China;

Discussant: **Sandra Waddock**; Boston College;

In the decade after Enron's collapse, the convictions of a host of top managers in various high profile fraud cases made headlines. Although these scandals appear to present textbook examples of the moral hazard problem in principal-agent relationships, we suggest that an overemphasis on narrowly focused self-interest as a core underlying assumption of human behavior might in fact inadvertently lead to profit-maximizing greed. Thus, in this symposium we question self-interest as a key concept of capitalism. Building on two recent AMLE publications by presenters Wang and Moosmayer, we explore the tensions that exist between the hidden moral impact of economics education, namely an increase in self-interested, greedy behavior, and management academics' intentions to shape socially responsible graduates. After establishing this contradiction, we next consider pedagogical, philosophical, and political approaches to overcoming these unintended negative impacts of economic theory: Hühn develops the idea that economic theory reduces its own practical relevance by negating learning and suggests that the consideration of learning would increase the predictive power of our models and re-humanize economic theory. This impulse is taken up by Dierksmeier, who suggests considering freedom as a practical condition of being human. He conceptualizes self-determination and the resulting freedom to shape business practice as a responsibility that is in conflict with today's research methods' emphasis on methodological rigor and mathematical predictability. Finally, building on Dierksmeier, Gohl develops a pragmatistic perspective and proposes conceptualizing management as an activity that creates value through dialogical conflict resolution rather than mathematical optimization.

*Search Terms: Self-Interest Values , Epistemology , Management Theory and Education*

### **Self-interest and greed as an unintended outcome of management education**

Presenter: **Long Wang**; City U. of Hong Kong;

### **Management academics' intention to transcend self-interest values**

Presenter: **Dirk C. Moosmayer**; Nottingham U. Business School China;

### **Learning to overcome unintended self-interest**

Presenter: **Matthias Hühn**; Kuehne Logistics U.;

### **On the freedom to question self-interest**

Presenter: **Claus Dierksmeier**; The U. of Tuebingen;

### **From Self-interest to Purpose-Driven Contextual Interest: An Interdisciplinary Pragmatistic View**

Presenter: **Christopher Gohl**; Global Ethic Institute;