

Abstracts

Alena Bleicher

Decision Making in spite of Ignorance – The Revitalization of Contaminated Areas

Processes of decision concerning environmental processes or the impact of human activities on the natural environment often lack secure and robust knowledge. Nevertheless, such situations do not necessarily lead to uncertainties in environmental decision-making. The analysis of processes of revitalizing contaminated areas has shown that related actors explicitly deal with the unknown, i.e. with ignorance. Involved actors experiment with and find strategies dealing productively with ignorance, which aren't necessarily products of scientific knowledge. Hence, other strategies of dealing with non-knowledge need to be considered as well. Based on a dynamic concept of ignorance this paper shows how actors define the relevance of ignorance. Analyzing two revitalization projects, the paper offers an analytical model of decision, which takes into account the unknown. It also tackles issues like the legitimacy of decision-making, the understanding of failures, the preparedness for unforeseen developments as well as strategies for dealing with unexpected surprises.

Daniel Lois and Nadia Lois

Living apart together – A long-lasting alternative? The impact of occupational positions and partnership-related expectations on staying in a partnership with separate households

Based on data of the German Family Panel (N = 1118 respondents aged 25 to 39), this study explores different types of individuals in comparatively long-lasting partnerships with separate households ("living apart together", LAT). A cluster analysis considering occupational positions and partnership-related expectations, in conjunction with subsequent longitudinal event history analyses, suggests that need for autonomy exerts a negative effect on the transition rate into cohabitation. Respondents in long-distance relationships show a higher transition rate into cohabitation and a lower risk of a separation than expected. Job-related mobility seems to be less relevant for the consolidation and stability of partnerships with separate households than a precarious job situation characterized by unemployment and low income.

Jochen Hirschle

Religious Change in Consumer Society

Does the increasing proliferation of consumption opportunities changes the social routine activities of individuals, and thereby reduces attendance rates at religious services? Following Durkheim, religion provides symbols, rites and collective representations that enable individuals to act socially. By providing a range of socio-cultural-related products, services and infrastructures (trend sports, bars, holiday resorts, theme parks, shopping malls, museums), the market incrementally fulfills similar functions – that is, it enables individuals to engage socially –, and thereby supplants traditional religion as the central medium to reproduce social

Soziale Welt 63 (2012), S. 185 – 186

relations. The paper uses a sample of young German Catholics from the Socio-economic Panel Study (1984-2009) applying bivariate and multilevel-regression analyses. Results indicate that with waxing income, respondents increasingly engage in consumption-related leisure activities, while attendance rates at religious services significantly decrease.

Till Jansen

Board level Co-Determination as arrangement of politics and economy

Current research regards Co-Determination either as a political or as an economical issue. This article proposes to understand Co-Determination as a problem of different logical spaces (contextures) in organisational decision-making. While employee representatives care about the legitimacy of a decision, shareholder representatives observe the scarcity of resources and efficiency. The paper asks how these different logics are arranged in decision-making. A case study that focuses on framing processes shows, that this arrangement may be reached by delinking different settings. While the official board meetings are economically framed, meetings of the employee representatives are framed politically. A connection between both is established by informal agreements between the head of employee representatives and the chairman. It allows a compromise that can be presented in both settings as economically rational as well as a political success.