Introduction

Since the dawn of what has become known as the ‘information society’, knowledge has been understood as a—and, in many cases, the—key element producing organizational success. Given the value placed on knowledge and the concomitant resource-based view of the firm, perhaps it was logical that early scholarship was devoted to understanding knowledge as a resource or commodity to be gathered, protected, managed, accumulated, and assessed. Knowledge, then, is a thing located in brains or bodies—or their analogues at the level of the collective.

Scholarship on knowledge thus sought to speak to the elements that produce organizational effectiveness: it tended to be less concerned with using knowledge as an explanatory device in understanding organizational processes. The advent of a practice-based perspective on knowledge has provided a useful alternative and accompaniment. A practice-based line of thinking attends to knowing, as a complex sociomaterial activity, rather than knowledge (seen, again, as a commodity). Research on knowing is less concerned with identifying the location of knowledge, and more with examining activity through which knowledge must be either developed or deployed to address organizationally-relevant problems.

Research on knowledge and knowing is often positioned as oppositional, a suggestion that the lines of thought diverge ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically. Such a departure was not present for those who first articulated perspectives on knowing (e.g., Brown and Duguid, 1991; Cook and Brown, 1999), but empirical work transcending the opposition—work emphasizing the capacity of the stances to accompany one another—has been rare.

*Human Relations* has been at the vanguard of efforts to bring together the scholarship of knowledge and knowing. The articles that have pursued this path provide rich accounts of organizing practice, wrestle with complexities of discursivity and materiality in organizing, and articulate the value(s) of this work for organizational action. This Virtual Special Issue brings this work together, with the introductory essay explaining how the scholarship appearing in *Human Relations* has contributed—both through single articles, as well as the work taken as a whole—to deepening the field’s understanding of the interplay of knowledge and knowing in organizing.

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