Murder, Mayhem and Gunfights: The soviet on the Monongahela (and why it should matter to a Critical Organisation Studies)

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Abstract

This paper will use an elaboration of contrasting stories told about the origins of a certain instance of management knowledge, and a related case study, to interrogate the elisions, absences and foreclosing of what is considered the proper field of organisation studies. It will suggest that ‘managerial knowledges’ derive not only from the pages of management textbooks or the mouths of management gurus, however foundational, but also from the development of management practice on the shopfloor, in a hostile environment of class struggle, and also, sometimes, from the barrel of a gun. Building on the perspective of Tronti’s Workers and Capital, I will be suggesting an instance of the development of management practice which will be contextualised as being enabled only by a particular instance in the violent struggle for control of the means of production. In doing this, I will also have cause to mention several dead white men, a two-headed calf, the origins of Bourbon, and Bill Gates’ spectacles.

Biography

Steve is an actual research student in the School of Management. His research interests are broad and varied, and occasionally relate to the thesis he is supposed to be writing.