

EDITORIAL PREFACE

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To begin this issue we have an article by Fabienne Kürner, Caroline Kramer, Hartmut Klüver and Stefan Norra from Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany relating to climate change. It is titled “Combining Actor-Network Theory and the Concept of Ecosystem Services to Assess the Development of Arctic Shipping Routes”. The article begins by noting that one of the many effects of global warming is to alter the Arctic on different ecological and social levels which include rising resource availabilities and shifting power relations. The article considers interdependencies of both the natural sphere, based on the geography, and the social sphere, involving humans, as these are strongly interwoven and sensitive even to small alterations. Their case study of Arctic shipping routes highlights this, making use of ANT, and identifies mediators of Arctic actor-networks located in the overlapping zone between these two spheres. The authors also then make use of an enlarged ecosystem services approach to develop a methodology to quantify these mediators and the power relations around them.

“Living with a Dam (A Case of Care Practices in Large Technical Systems)” has been contributed by Tihomir Mitev of Plovdiv University “P.Hilendarski”, Bulgaria. The

article discusses the issue of safe functioning of large technical systems and questions the principles of ‘operating and living together’ in heterogeneous communities, arguing that personal interactions between humans, nature, and technology are crucial for the sustainable operation of socio-technical systems. The research presented discusses results of an ethnographic case study carried out in one of the biggest hydro-energy systems in Bulgaria: that of Kardzhali dam. To make it clear how an intersubjective space between humans and non-humans is being formed and could contribute to sustainable functioning of the dam, the article explores the micro layer of actors’ interactions – their co-existence in everyday life. In searching for pathways of possible dialogue between Actor-Network Theory and phenomenology the analysis reveals in what way ‘growing together’ with technology and ‘feeling its own rhythm and its own breathing’, in the words of the dam’s chief, have a crucial contribution to the safe operation of the whole hydroelectric system.

The next article, by Ailsa Haxell from Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, is titled: “Interfering in Hinterlands of Discontent; Making a Difference Differ-

ently”. The author begins by stating that given that youth work is frequently entered into with the intention of making a difference in young people’s lives, this article has been undertaken with the intention of making a difference differently. The article draws on actor-network theory and the concept of hinterlands, influences shaping the practice of text counselling, at a youth oriented helpline. It notes that this is, however, a contested space as there is no evidence base for such practice. It goes on to say that for new practices there never is. The author then asks the questions: ‘How then does novel practice come into being and become accepted?’ and ‘how does this occur for people whose ways of engaging involves being neither seen nor heard?’

In an entirely different vein is: “The Sentiment Revealed in Social Networks during the Games of the Brazilian Team in the World Cup of 2014: A Conceptual Approach of Actor-Network Theory” by Rita Paulino from the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. The author points out that participation of people in social networks is a contemporary phenomenon that presents not only the flow of explicit information in data form but also some information from the network’s own movement. The article then purposes that revealing information is implied in participatory movements of sociotechnical networks and in particular during the games of the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil. The author indicates that by following the movements of social networks we can view information that reflects feelings and actions that are implied in the connections about facts and events.

The final article “Developing a Web 2.0 Business Portal to Benefit SMEs, Industry, Local Government and Consumers” is by Darren Bednarski and Arthur Tatnall from Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia. This article presents a research study into the development of a Web 2.0 B2B and B2C horizontal portal from the perspective of Actor-Network Theory,

and the benefits for its participants particularly Small and Medium Enterprises. The research presented highlights a major factor in proposing the referenced business model combining Web 2.0 tools and traditional online search with the critical factors underpinning its need and success. The article also briefly examines user expectations and experiences when engaging in e-commerce and the rise of Web 2.0 and social commerce in creating a virtual workforce where SMEs are able to compete more effectively against their larger counterparts.

This issue of IJANTTI has five articles, some shorter and some longer. While some issues of IJANTTI have had a small number of quite long articles (around 10,000 words each), and others a greater number of shorter articles (3,500-5,000 words each), the journal accepts articles of any length from 3,500 words up to about 12,000 words. Also, articles do not have to relate specifically to Actor-Network Theory, but could instead relate to other socio-technical approaches to the investigation of Technological Innovation. We welcome articles comparing other approaches to socio-technical research with ANT, and also other approaches to technological innovation with innovation translation.

Not all readers will agree with all the articles in this, or indeed other issues of IJANTTI; of either their content or of their research approach. This is to be expected with a controversial lens like actor-network theory that gives due credence to the influences and interactions of both humans and not humans. As a reader if you find that you disagree with the sentiments or approach of a given article please write to us (preferably in the form of another article) to offer your point of view.

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IJANTTI

Arthur Tatnall is an Associate Professor at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia. In his PhD he used actor-network theory to investigate adoption of Visual Basic in the curriculum of an Australian university. Arthur's research interests include technological innovation, history of technology, project management, information systems curriculum, information technology in educational management and electronic business. Much of his research is based on the use of actor-network theory. Arthur is a Fellow of the Australian Computer Society and active in the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) as Chair of IFIP WG3.4 – ICT in Professional and Vocational Education and Chair of IFIP WG9.7 – History of Computing. He has published widely in journals, books, book chapters and conference. Arthur is also Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Actor-Network Theory and Technological Innovation and Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Education and Information Technologies.