Alternating between partial and complete organization: The case of Anonymous[1]

Dennis Schoeneborn, Leuphana University Lüneburg & Copenhagen Business School

Leonhard Dobusch, University of Innsbruck

This is the accepted, pre-print version of the following book chapter: Schoeneborn, D. & Dobusch, L. (2019). Alternating between partial and complete organization: The case of Anonymous. In: G. Ahrne & N. Brunsson (Eds.), *Organization outside organizations: The abundance of partial organization in social life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The notion of 'partial organization', as introduced by Ahrne and Brunsson (2011), has contributed to organization theory in various significant ways: First, the concept has widened the focus of organizational scholarship to a study of a heterogeneous landscape of rudimentary organizational phenomena – beyond formal and conventional exemplars of organization. Second, by specifying five constitutive elements of 'complete' organization (membership, hierarchies, rules, monitoring, and sanction mechanisms), the notion of partial organization offers a taxonomy that allows for the examination of social formations regarding their degree of 'organizationality' (Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015). Last but not least, the notion of partial organization provides organizational scholarship with a new programmatic agenda (cf. Ahrne, Brunsson, & Seidl, 2016): Instead of being solely concerned with the study of organizations as a specific empirical phenomenon, the idea here is to see the concept of organization as a theoretical lens through which scholars can study various social formations *as* organization (e.g., social movements, Haug, 2013; terrorist networks, Schoeneborn & Scherer, 2012; or families and intimate relations, see Chapter 11).

[1] Authors' note: In this chapter, we draw on data excerpts from a larger empirical study on the Anonymous case (that was published as Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015) and discuss its implications for theories of partial organization.

These merits notwithstanding, in this chapter we develop the argument that the notion of partial organization needs to be further developed: Thus far, the concept has been employed primarily as either (1) an analytical tool to distinguish between decided orders on the one hand and such other forms of order as networks and institutions on the other (see Chapter 1) or (2) an analytical means of assessing whether certain social formations exhibit characteristics of a decided order, and thus can be seen as either 'complete' or 'partial' organizations. At the same time, the underlying assumption in most of these works seems to be that a state of 'completeness' or 'partialness' would usually be durable. Therefore, recent works call for further research into the dynamics of the way a social formation can reach 'organizationality' to a greater or lesser degree (Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015) – that is, by moving from a state of partialness to completeness and vice-versa (cf. Chapter 1 and 2; Ahrne, Brunsson, & Seidl, 2016; Rasche, de Bakker, & Moon, 2013). In response to this call, we argue that a processual and dynamic theory of partial organization is needed; it would allow us to understand in greater depth how and the extent to which decided orders are able to add and subtract organizational elements. This, in turn, raises questions of how the various elements of organization are interconnected, what is the 'glue' that holds them together, and how sticky is this glue, anyway?

In what follows, we advance the argument that theoretical perspectives that focus on such communicative events as the key constitutive elements of organization (e.g., Bencherki & Cooren, 2011; Blaschke, Schoeneborn, & Seidl, 2012; McPhee & Zaug, 2009) can serve as a useful explanatory lens for studying the dynamic interrelations and 'stickiness' of the different organizational elements of decided orders. We illustrate our theoretical considerations by presenting selected results from our empirical investigations of the case of the hacker collective, Anonymous (cf. Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015). Our main finding in the Anonymous case is that longer periods of 'partialness' alternate with temporary punctuations, during which the social collective accomplishes a 'completion' of its

organizationality. In this chapter, we demonstrate how our analysis of this case can inform previous theorizations of partial organization (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Ahrne, Brunsson & Seidl, 2016; Apelt *et al.*, 2017) and contribute to the development of a processual theory of partial organization.

A communication-centred perspective on how the elements of (partial) organization interrelate

To tackle the question of how different organizational elements of decided orders interrelate dynamically, we suggest turning to a theoretical stream that has gained increasing attention in organizational scholarship over the past two decades: the *communication as constitutive of organization* (CCO) perspective (Ashcraft, Kuhn & Cooren, 2009; Brummans *et al.*, 2014; Schoeneborn & Vásquez, 2017; Schoeneborn *et al.*, 2014). This choice is based on two main reasons. First, we argue that the CCO perspective exhibits a natural fit in this context. Similar to Ahrne and Brunsson's notion of partial organization (2011), CCO scholarship is offering a 'low-threshold' theory of what can be an organization (Schoeneborn & Vásquez, 2017). Seen from a CCO viewpoint, rudimentary forms of organization and organizing can emerge spontaneously in various social settings. The organizationality of a social formation is established as soon as communication events occur on behalf of a collective of actors – the organization – and recursively relate to each other in a networked form (cf. Bencherki & Cooren, 2011; Blaschke *et al.*, 2012; Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015) In the same context, some works in CCO scholarship (e.g., Schoeneborn, 2011) focus on decisional communication as the specific type of communicative events with the capacity to constitute and form organizations (in the tradition of March & Simon, 1958; or Luhmann, 2018). This theoretical focus, in turn, exhibits compatibilities with Ahrne and Brunsson's (2011) minimum definition of organization as a 'decided order'. Second, the CCO perspective allows us to understand organizations as 'ongoing and precarious accomplishments' that need to be continuously enacted and re-enacted in communication events (Cooren *et al.*, 2011: 1150).

Thus, CCO scholarship can provide theories of partial organization with a processual understanding of how the various organizational elements interrelate and jointly constitute organizational phenomena. In the following, we briefly sketch how this particular interplay is theorized in CCO scholarship.

The Four Flows model by McPhee and Zaug (2009) suggests that four specific processes or ‘flows’ of communication jointly constitute organization: *membership negotiation* (interactions that clarify the inclusion and exclusion of individuals and establish an organizational boundary), *self-structuring* (self-reflexive interactions aimed at the design and control of organizational processes), *activity coordination* (interactions in which organizational members or groups dynamically adapt to situational circumstances), and *institutional positioning* (interactions that shape an organization’s relationship to its environment, e.g., to customers, suppliers, competitors, or other stakeholders). However, organizations are assumed to emerge only when all four flows co-occur (Browning *et al.*, 2009). As Schoeneborn (2011) has argued, the four flows can ultimately be boiled down to decisional communication in the sense of Luhmann (2018). In that regard, if compared to Ahrne and Brunsson’s framework (2011), the model by McPhee and Zaug (2009) represents a different way of specifying and distinguishing the very elements that constitute organization as a decided order. Strikingly, however, McPhee and Zaug (2009) understand all these constitutive elements as flows and thus as inherently processual in character. For instance, the element of membership is seen here as recurrent processes of negotiation, which individuals are authorized to partake of or not in the organizational endeavour.

Importantly, McPhee and Zaug’s Four Flows model (2009) tends to de-centralize the role of the individual human actor in constituting the organizational endeavour – which is similar, in this respect, to other CCO approaches, such as Luhmann’s (2018) or Taylor & Van Every’s (2000). Again, this feature becomes particularly relevant when considering the flow of membership negotiation. What matters for the constitution and perpetuation of organization

is not the specific individual member as such, but rather a sequence of communication events that explicitly or implicitly draw a boundary between the inclusion and exclusion of members. Recent works from CCO scholarship propose, along the same line of thinking, to replace the individual-centric category of 'membership' with the activity-centric notion of 'contributorship' (Bencherki & Snack, 2016; Chapter 4). In this way, the Four Flows model (McPhee & Zaug, 2009) offers a useful vocabulary for developing further the idea of partial organization towards a processual understanding because it emphasizes an organization's need to reinstate continuously its very constitutive elements (or 'flows', in their terminology). Yet the model raises the question of *how* organizations actually ensure this continuous co-occurrence of the four flows that constitute their existence.

This question, in turn, can be answered by drawing on Bencherki and Cooren's (2011) theoretical considerations. Their article shares with larger CCO scholarship the assumption that the constitution of organizations proceeds in and through communicative events (defined as distinct incidents of meaning negotiation via talk and/or text that occur in a specific spatio-temporal context; see also Blaschke *et al.*, 2012; Vásquez & Cooren, 2013). The authors argue, however, that various and scattered communicative events are held together in what they call a 'possessive' constitutive relationship. This relationship, in turn, is driven by the interplay of two alternating dynamics: attribution and appropriation. *Attribution* links communication events with 'the organization' as a common reference point or social address. Such attributions typically occur in speech acts but are independent from whether the author of an attributive claim is a member or non-member of the organization. For instance, attributions can involve speech acts by individuals claiming to have the authority to execute actions on behalf of an organizational actor (e.g., Columbus proclaiming Cuba to be Spanish territory in the name of the Spanish Crown; see the example given by Taylor & Cooren, 1997: 428–429). Alternatively, they can involve speech acts by third parties that ascribe a perceived action to an organizational actor (e.g., news media reports that initially attributed the Madrid

bombings in 2004 to the Basque separatist terrorist organization ETA, even if the attacks later turned out to have been executed by single perpetrators sympathizing with jihadism; cf. Corman & Schiefelbein, 2008).

Appropriation, in turn, works in the opposite direction. Over time, through the aggregation of attributions of communication events towards an organizational address, an organizational address begins to develop a life of its own in the sense of 'possessing' the very communication events that constitute its existence in the first place. The dynamic of appropriation requires that a boundary be drawn between what is included in the organizational endeavour and what is not. One empirical example would be an organization that retrospectively claims an action as having been executed on its behalf: the so-called Islamic State's (IS) retrospective announcement that it was responsible for shooting down Russian Metrojet Flight 9268 over the Sinai peninsula in 2015, for instance, in revenge for Russian air strikes in Syria. These extreme examples of organization allow us to highlight the core dynamics of Bencherki and Cooren´s model (2011) in a pronounced form. We assume, however, that such attribution-appropriation dynamics also occur continuously in more conventional organizational settings (e.g., business firms or state bureaucracies), where they do not depend on spectacular communicative events, but are stabilized through contractual relations, for example. In turn, the possessive capacity of organizations increases the likelihood that new and consecutive communication events are executed and are attributed to the organizational address. In this regard, Bencherki and Cooren's (2011) conceptualizations imply a self-reinforcing cycle (cf. Sydow, Schreyögg & Koch, 2009) of an attributive movement from communicative events and actions *towards* the organizational address and, *au retour*, an appropriating movement from the organizational address towards communicative events (cf. Figure 1). Whereas Bencherki and Cooren (2011) aim with their model at describing the communicative constitution of organizations more generally, we believe that the model can be particularly useful in explaining the interconnection among the various

organizational elements of decided orders (Ahrne, Brunsson & Seidl, 2016), as we elaborate in a next step.

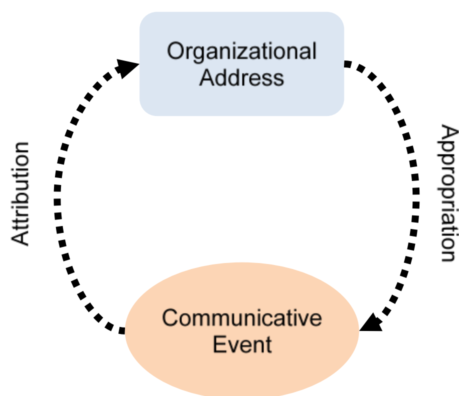

Figure 1: Attribution–appropriation dynamics in the communicative constitution of organization (our own visualization, based on Bencherki & Cooren, 2011)

Empirical illustration: The case of Anonymous

In the following, we illustrate our theoretical considerations by drawing on selected insights from our larger empirical research project on the 'hacktivist' (i.e. hacker and activist) collective, Anonymous (see Dobusch and Schoeneborn, 2015, for a more detailed description of the study's findings). Anonymous is an organized group of hackers where 'members' conceal their personal identity from both external observers and other self-declared members. Various such groups that attribute their actions to Anonymous as a social address engage in collective actions of a political and non-political nature, such as taking down or infiltrating websites or participating in street protests. Anonymous is part of a larger community of online activists propagating free software, access to knowledge, and Internet freedom more generally (cf. Coleman, 2013).

In this chapter, we argue that Anonymous can be seen as a form of 'decided order', in the sense that Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) use the term, as hackers engage in interconnected,

collaborative episodes of organizing and decision making on behalf of Anonymous as a collective entity. Each hacker operation (e.g., a distributed denial of service attack in order to temporarily shut down a website) comprises a number of interconnected events of 'decisional communication' (in the sense of Luhmann, 2018; or Seidl, 2005). Via pertinent online communication channels (e.g., Twitter and Facebook accounts or such collaborative web-authoring tools as etherpads), hackers coordinate themselves and reach such collective decisions as who to attack, when to attack their target, and how to attack it. Although each hacker operation comprises a series of collectively made decisions, the question remains whether these dispersed episodes are ever cross-connected, thus collectively forming a 'decided order' in the sense of a larger organizational endeavour (cf. the question of 'scaling up' from local interactions to organizational entities or actors, as discussed by Blaschke *et al.*, 2012; Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009.) We argue that such cross-connectivity among hacker operations is at least ensured by sharing the same signifier – Anonymous – as a joint organizational address and reference point. Another indication that the various operations form a joint organizational endeavour is that we can empirically observe efforts of boundary maintenance in this case – that is, debates among hackers over which hacker operation should be seen as part of Anonymous and which should not (cf. Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015).

In this sense, while Anonymous can be understood as a decided order, we argue that it is simultaneously a partial organization, especially in that it lacks decision making on formal membership or on formal, written rules. In the Anonymous case, anyone can simply contribute to the organizational endeavour by announcing and executing hacker operations on its behalf – and without subscribing to any formal rules or attaining individual membership status beforehand. Rather, membership is performatively accomplished by self-attributing one's communicative actions to Anonymous, in conjunction with third-party observers abstaining from challenging or even corroborating these attributions. These features allow Anonymous to operate in a decentralized, fluid, and flexible way (cf. Coleman, 2014), while

rendering Anonymous' identity and boundary highly precarious: If anyone can speak on behalf of Anonymous, who *cannot* speak on behalf of Anonymous then?

To tackle this puzzle, in our research project on the Anonymous case, we have studied in detail especially those hacker operations that had given rise to extensive public contestations and negotiations on whether these operations were executed on behalf of Anonymous as an organizational actor. In the context of our theoretical considerations, one of those contested episodes – the so-called *OpFacebook* hacker operation – is particularly relevant (cf. Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015). In August 2011, a group claiming to be part of Anonymous declared War on Facebook, announcing that an upcoming takedown of the social media networking site would occur on November 5, 2011, via a newly established Twitter account called OpFacebook. The announcement had been prepared collaboratively through *PiratePad*, a public online tool for anonymous collaborative writing. The announcement triggered debates and caused confusion among external observers (e.g., among news media and online bloggers), especially with regards to the authenticity of the planned hacker operation and its links to Anonymous. Assessments ranged from doubtful statements (e.g., in a news post on CNet.com: 'Is Anonymous unanimous on Facebook plot?') to confirmatory statements (e.g., by PCMag.com: 'if a few people get together in the name of Anonymous and decide to hack Facebook on November 5, Anonymous is behind the planned Facebook hack'). In turn, other groups, attributing their communicative acts to Anonymous initially renounced the authenticity of Operation Facebook via a post on the pertinent Twitter account, *AnonOps*: 'TO PRESS: […] #OpFacebook is just ANOTHER FAKE'. Some backpedalling on the same channel followed this message: '#OpFacebook is being organised by some Anons. This does not necessarily mean that all of #Anonymous agrees with it.' So for several weeks, both outside observers and self-declared members of Anonymous were uncertain if the communicative acts of the OpFacebook operations could be rightfully attributed to Anonymous as an organizational actor.

This public debate was ultimately settled with a publicly staged performance. On November 4, 2011 – just one day before the planned attack on Facebook – the individual identity of the alleged originator of OpFacebook was exposed publicly in yet another open letter, published again via the Twitter account, AnonOps:

> One skiddy queer chap named Anthony [last name redacted] from the US in Ohio decided to take it upon himself to have some lulz with creating an imaginary opfacebook and pawning it off as a legit anon op. Despite us telling this mate several times we did not support his op, he continued to push his agenda for lulz. This op is phony but he continues to say it's an anon op.

This announcement declared the end of Operation Facebook as an 'official' Anonymous operation. The hackers that used the AnonOps account evidently accomplished this form of closure by relatively harsh sanctioning mechanisms, in that they revealed the hacker Anthony's full name and personal contact information. With this public sanctioning, they managed to indicate retrospectively a clear (hierarchical) distinction between those 'members' who have the authority to establish such a sanction mechanism and a 'non-member', who is excluded by being de-anonymized. More specifically, the hacker pseudonyms used to announce and organize OpFacebook were delegitimized by revealing the individual identity behind them, and their respective communicative acts were thereby retroactively disattributed from Anonymous.

In hacker jargon, this practice is also known as *doxing*: compiling documents and personal information that allow for the exposing of another hacker's identity (cf. Coleman, 2014: 418). In the OpFacebook episode, the practice of doxing served as an effective means of proving that those hackers who revealed the other hacker's actual identity were more skilful, and thus need to be seen as the 'real' (members of) Anonymous. This is also shown by the fact that after the public exposure of the hacker named Anthony, the debates about the

connection between the OpFacebook episode and Anonymous were finally settled and did not continue.

Towards a processual understanding of partial organization In this final section, we re-describe the Anonymous case and the OpFacebook episode by drawing on the theoretical terminology we have introduced earlier. We believe that the Anonymous case is particularly useful as a basis for advancing the notion of partial organization towards a processual and event-based understanding: On the one hand, in principle, Anonymous leaves the boundary open on who can partake in and contribute to the organizing activities and thus can be seen as partial organization in the membership dimension. On the other hand, the OpFacebook episode and Anthony's public exposure and exclusion shows that Anonymous seems to have the capacity to add certain organizational elements at least situationally, thus leading to a temporary 'completion' of an otherwise partial organization. In other words, at least for the duration of the event, the social collective, Anonymous, acts as if it were a full-fledged organization. In that sense, certain social collectives such as Anonymous demonstrate the ability to alternate between a continuous state of 'partialness' on the one hand and a situationally mobilized state of 'completeness' on the other hand. Importantly, this completeness is accomplished only through a certain communicative event, as the OpFacebook episode illustrates.

Going beyond our initial study on the Anonymous case (Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015), we interpret the staged performance of the doxing practice in the OpFacebook episode as a communicative event wherein all five organizational elements fall into place – in a 'cascade' or 'domino' effect. More specifically, through the performative act of (1) *sanctioning* one individual hacker (i.e. publicly naming and shaming the initiator of OpFacebook), hackers operating in the name of Anonymous convincingly demonstrated the collective's ability to (2) *monitor* its contributors (given that it was the precondition for the

sanctioning in the first place). Furthermore, (3) the practice of sanctioning involved the showcasing of implicit *rules* about appropriate acts on behalf of Anonymous (at least in the sense of a case-by-case precedence), (4) the showcasing of *hierarchies* (i.e. in the sense that some hackers evidently are skilled enough to 'hack other hackers'), and (5) the showcasing of a *membership* category (i.e. at least in the sense of an distinction between inclusion and exclusion). In other words, through the communicative event of doxing an individual hacker, Anthony, Anonymous publicly 'celebrated' a decision that convincingly demonstrated the social collective's ability to mobilize all five elements of complete organization, at least situationally.

Coming back to our initial question about the glue that holds the five organizational elements together, at least in the Anonymous case it seems that this stickiness is accomplished through a temporal simultaneity and a choreographed and staged performance in a particular communicative event. In the OpFacebook episode, it is the public exposure of one individual hacker that brings all five elements to the fore simultaneously, even if those elements were mobilized only in preparation for the staged performance and do not necessarily represent durable capabilities of the social collective. In that sense, we argue that theories of the performativity of certain speech acts (cf. Gond *et al.*, 2016) can provide the theory of partial organization with an event-based explanation of how the five elements of organization can be set into interrelation (in line with larger considerations on a communicative constitution of partial organization; see Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015; Schoeneborn & Scherer, 2012). Declarative speech acts such as public sanctioning or excommunication, for instance (cf. Cooren, 2004: 386), allow for showcasing organizationality by performing various organizational elements and capabilities simultaneously.

We further believe that the dynamics between the various organizational elements of partial and complete organization (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011) can be better understood by drawing on the idea that the communicative constitution of organizations occurs through

alternating dynamics of attributions and appropriations (see Bencherki & Cooren, 2011). In the OpFacebook episode, we can perceive public debates in which organizing activities (e.g., the planned takedown of Facebook) rather than individual actors get attributed to Anonymous as organizational address. Yet the fluid and partial character of the organizational endeavour can be overburdened by too many such attributions, in that these contributions create ambiguities about which activities count as part of Anonymous and which do not. In the OpFacebook episode, such attributions led, at some point, to the opposite movement of disappropriation (e.g., the public exposure and exclusion of an individual actor to disappropriate the activities initiated by this actor). Strikingly, however, this disappropriation focused primarily on the membership dimension, through re-attributing the hacker practices that were initially undertaken on behalf of Anonymous to yet another type of social address: the individual hacker who was exposed and excluded.

In summary, the idea of a communicative constitution of (partial and complete) organizations, and especially the idea of attribution–appropriation dynamics, allows us to understand the interplay of the elements of partial organization as alternations between moments of being partial and fluid (that allows for multiple and polyphonic attributions), on the one hand; and occasional moments of being complete (in which a movement of disappropriation settles the polyphony and reinstates a boundary), on the other hand. Taken together, our chapter contributes to theories of partial organization in two main ways: First, we directly respond to earlier calls for a processual view on partial organization (see Ahrne, Brunsson & Seidl, 2016; Rasche, de Bakker & Moon, 2013; Rasche & Seidl, in this book). More specifically, by applying a communication-centred understanding to the phenomenon of organization (e.g., Ashcraft, Kuhn & Cooren, 2009; Bencherki & Cooren, 2011; McPhee & Zaug, 2009), we add to the further development of theories of partial organization by demonstrating that the elements of organization are not given, but need to be instantiated again and again in processual form through visible organizational practices attributed to an

organizational address. In the same context, we present the argument that certain organizational phenomena (such as Anonymous) appear to be able to alternate between a state of partialness and completeness in back-and-forth movements.

For future research on partial organizational phenomena, this perspective implies to focus empirical research specifically on speech acts that establish such attributive or (dis-) appropriating links to and from an organizational address (see Bencherki & Cooren, 2011). Furthermore, with our study of the Anonymous case, we believe that we have identified a pattern of alternations between a continuous partial character and situational completion that is likely to apply to a particular sub-species of partial organization as well: those that remain partial in the membership dimension (e.g., other social-movement-like organizations, such as Wikipedia: Puranam, Alexy & Reitzig, 2014; or al Qaeda: Comas, Shrivastava & Martin, 2015). Further research is needed to validate whether this identified process pattern can be traced in this form for other exemplars of this sub-type.

References

Ahrne, G., & Brunsson, N. (2011). Organization outside organizations: The significance of partial organization. *Organization*, *18*, 83–104.

Ahrne, G., Brunsson, N., & Seidl, D. (2016). Resurrecting organization by going beyond organizations. *European Management Journal*, *34*(2), 93–101.

Apelt, M., Besio, C., Corsi, G., von Groddeck, V., Grothe-Hammer, M., & Tacke, V. (2017). Resurrecting organization without renouncing society: A response to Ahrne, Brunsson and Seidl. *European Management Journal*, *35*(1), 8–14.

Ashcraft, K. L., Kuhn, T. R., & Cooren, F. (2009). Constitutional amendments: "Material-izing" organizational communication. *Academy of Management Annals*, *3*, 1–64.

Bencherki, N. & Cooren, F. (2011). Having to be: the possessive constitution of organization. *Human Relations*, *64*, 1579–1607.

Bencherki, N. & Snack, J. P. (2016). Contributorship and partial inclusion: A communicative perspective. *Management Communication Quarterly, 30*(3), 279–304.

Blaschke, S., Schoeneborn, D., & Seidl, D. (2012). Organizations as networks of communication episodes: Turning the network perspective inside out. *Organization Studies*, *33*(7), 879–906.

Browning, L. D., Greene, R.W., Sitkin, S. B., Sutcliffe, K.M., & Obstfeld, D. (2009). Constitutive complexity. In L. L. Putnam & A. M. Nicotera (Eds.), *Building theories of organization: The constitutive role of communication* (pp. 89–116). New York, NY: Routledge.

Brummans, B., Cooren, F., Robichaud, D., & Taylor, J. R. (2014). Approaches in research on the communicative constitution of organizations. In Putnam, L. L. & Mumby, D. (Eds.), *Sage handbook of organizational communication* (3rd ed.) (pp. 173–194). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Coleman, G. (2013). *Coding freedom: The ethics and aesthetics of hacking*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Coleman, G. (2014). *Hacker, hoaxer, whistleblower, spy: The many faces of Anonymous*. New York: Verso.

Comas, J., Shrivastava, P., & Martin, E. C. (2015). Terrorism as formal organization, network, and social movement. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *24*(1), 47–60.

Cooren, F. (2004). Textual agency: How texts do things in organizational settings. *Organization*, *11*(3), 373–393.

Cooren, F., & Fairhurst, G. T. (2009). Dislocation and stabilization: How to scale up from interactions to organization. In L. L. Putnam, & A. M. Nicotera (Eds.), *Building theories of organization: the constitutive role of communication* (pp. 117–152). New York, NY: Routledge.

Cooren, F., Kuhn, T., Cornelissen, J. P., & Clark, T. (2011). Communication, organizing and organization: An overview and introduction to the special issue. *Organization Studies*, *32*(9), 1149–1170.

Corman, S. R. & Schiefelbein, J. S. (2008). Communication and media strategy in the Islamist war of ideas. In S. R. Corman, A. Threthewey, & H. R. Goodall Jr. (Eds.), *Weapons of mass persuasion: Strategic communication to combat violent terrorism* (pp. 69–96). New York: Lang.

Dobusch, L., & Schoeneborn, D. (2015). Fluidity, identity, and organizationality: The communicative constitution of Anonymous. *Journal of Management Studies*, *52*(8), 1005–1035.

Gond, J. P., Cabantous, L., Harding, N., & Learmonth, M. (2016). What do we mean by performativity in organizational and management theory? The uses and abuses of performativity. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *18*(4), 440–463.

Haug, C. (2013). Organizing spaces: Meeting arenas as a social movement infrastructure between organization, network, and institution. *Organization Studies*, *34*(5–6), 705–732.

Luhmann, N. (2018). *Organization and decision*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

McPhee, R. D. & Zaug, P. (2009). The communicative constitution of organizations: A framework for explanation'. In Putnam, L. L. & Nicotera, A. M. (Eds.), *Building theories of organization: The constitutive role of communication* (pp. 21–47). New York: Routledge.

Puranam, P., Alexy, O., & Reitzig, M. (2014). What's "new" about new forms of organizing? *Academy of Management Review*, *39*(2), 162–180.

Rasche, A., De Bakker, F. G., & Moon, J. (2013). Complete and partial organizing for corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *115*(4), 651–663.

Schoeneborn, D. (2011). Organization as communication A Luhmannian perspective. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *25*(4), 663–689.

Schoeneborn, D., & Scherer, A. G. (2012). Clandestine organizations, al Qaeda, and the paradox of (in)visibility: A response to Stohl and Stohl. *Organization Studies*, *33*(7), 963–971.

Schoeneborn, D. & Vásquez, C. (2017). Communication as constitutive of organization. In: C. R. Scott & L. K. Lewis (Eds.). *International encyclopedia of organizational communication*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Schoeneborn, D., Blaschke, S., Cooren, F., McPhee, R. D., Seidl, D., & Taylor, J. R. (2014). The three schools of CCO thinking: Interactive dialogue and systematic comparison. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *28*(2), 285–316.

Seidl, D. (2005). Organization and interaction. In D. Seidl, & K. H. Becker (Eds.), *Niklas Luhmann and organization studies* (pp. 145-170). Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.

Sydow, J., Schreyögg, G., & Koch, J. (2009). Organizational path dependence: Opening the black box. *Academy of Management Review*, *34*(4), 689–709.

Taylor, J. R. & Cooren, F. (1997). "What makes communication "organizational"? How the many voices of a collectivity become the one voice of an organization. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *27*, 409–438.

Taylor, J. R. & Van Every, E. (2000). *The emergent organization: Communication as its site and surface*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Vásquez, C. & Cooren, F. (2013). Spacing practices: The communicative configuration of organizing through space-times. Communication Theory, *23*, 25–47.

Author Bios

Dennis Schoeneborn is Professor of Organization Studies at Leuphana University, Lüneburg, Germany; and Professor of Organization, Communication, and CSR at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark. He is currently serving as main coordinator of the Standing Working Group "Organization as Communication" at the European Group of Organizational Studies (EGOS). He is also a member of the Editorial Boards of *Organization Studies*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, and *Business & Society*. His current research is focused on the communicative constitution of rudimentary forms of organization.

Leonhard Dobusch is Professor of Business Administration, with a focus on Organization, at the University of Innsbruck, Austria. He is a member of the Editorial Board of *Organization Studies* and co-founder of the Momentum conference series. He holds degrees in Law and in Business Studies. His research interests include the management of digital communities and private regulation via standards, specifically in the field of transnational copyright.