

## **IPLAI Independent Reading Group Proposal Winter 2016**

### **Title:**

Collective Leadership for Collaborative Consumption

### **Summary:**

This reading group will examine **the emergence and trend towards collaborative consumption**. Companies or online platforms that participate in collaborative consumption are often considered to be a part of the sharing economy, an economy driven by the peer-to-peer sharing of goods and services, usually facilitated by technology. Examples of such companies range from ZipCar or CommuneAuto (considered “product-as-a-service”) to Airbnb and Uber (considered “collaborative consumption”). In this reading group, we ask, what are the parameters and implications of these trends for society, organizations and individuals?

Some benefits of the sharing economy – e.g., such organizations facilitate access to goods or services that were difficult to access before, or provide goods or services at lower prices to consumers – are evident. However, it is important to examine the sharing economy from multiple perspectives in order to understand both potential benefits and important challenges:

- What does the growth of the sharing economy mean for the labour force of the future, from both individual and organizational perspectives?
- What is the impact on the role of education in training this labour force?
- What are the implications for social equity and stratification?
- What are the broader societal impacts of companies like Uber and Airbnb?
- How will regulatory frameworks be adjusted to meet these important shifts in the economy?

The goal of this reading group is to explore the sharing economy from multiple disciplinary perspectives – the legal, technological, labour/education, management/organizational, and more – in order to broaden our understanding of the larger implications of the sharing economy, both positive and negative. We use the term ‘collective leadership’ in the sense that collaborative knowledge sharing is essential to leading new knowledge creation in this area. Bringing new understanding and solutions to the complex, non-linear and multifaceted issues or ‘wicked problems’ - such as the emerging shared economy requires/collaborative consumption - requires collective leadership on several levels.

### **Participants and Format:**

The group will meet for six, 2-hour sessions between late January and mid-April, and will consist of a small number of core faculty members from different fields, as well as

interested PhD and postdoctoral students. The group will be coordinated by professors Jui Ramaprasad (Information Systems) and Suzanne Gagnon (Organizational Behaviour) of the Desautels Faculty of Management.

As far as we are aware, there is no multidisciplinary reading group considering this topic at present within the university. That said, the topic is of high importance both academically and practically, and we expect that colleagues from a variety of fields are actively thinking about issues related to collaborative consumption and the sharing economy. We hope to attract some of these colleagues to our reading group. Participation will generate possibilities for future collaborations among group members, whether in research or teaching.

Group members will be asked to read two or three core readings for each meeting, one more “academic” article and the other(s) from popular or business media. We will ask different participants each week to act as lead-off discussant and responder.

We propose to meet on Wednesdays from 4:00pm to 6:00PM at Salon 1861, on the following dates:

Wed, Jan 27  
Wed, Feb 10  
Wed, Feb 24  
Wed, March 9  
Wed, March 23  
Wed, April 6

### **Weekly Topics and Readings:**

Please note: A Dropbox folder will be created in which several other readings on each topic will be included, for group members’ reference. Members can also share other readings of interest.

#### **1. Framing our reading group**

- a. What do we mean by collaborative consumption and the sharing economy?  
Surfacing different perspectives.
  - b. Wicked Problems
  - c. Disruptive Innovation
    - i. How might it apply outside organizations?
  - d. Use the PESTEL Framework to help create topics
- Reading 1: **Bloomberg Brief: The Sharing Economy**, June 2015.
  - Reading 2: **Wicked Problems and Clumsy Solutions: the Role of Leadership**, Grint, Keith, 2008. BAMM Publications

## 2. Economic perspectives

- a. Jobs/Employment Trends
    - i. Global Crisis facilitates growth of shared economy due to distrust in finance and big business
  - b. Labor Force/Preparation & Training
  - c. Can the sharing economy tackle poverty?
- Reading 1: **The Shared Economy: It is time to start caring about sharing; value creating factors in the shared economy**; Böckmann, Marco, 2013. University of Twente, Netherlands. Faculty of Management and Governance.
  - Reading 2: **Sharing and Caring: The “sharing economy” invokes vague leftist sentiments while moving towards more precarious employment**. Slee, Tom, 2015. Jacobin.
  - Reading 3: **Could online marketplaces tackle poverty?** Rowan, Wingham, 2010. Slivers of Time Working.

## 3. Social perspectives

- a. Social Capital
  - b. Quality of social engagement
  - c. How is society organized?
    - i. Demographics
    - ii. Aging Population
      - 1. How do people over XX use technology?
    - iii. Race
- Reading 1: TBD
  - Reading 2: TBD

## 4. Technology

- a. How does technology serve as an enabler in the sharing economy?
  - b. Privacy and Security
- Reading 1: TBD
  - Reading 2: TBD

## 5. Environmental

- Reading 1: TBD
- Reading 2: TBD

## 6. Political & Legal perspectives

*“The sharing economy is characterized by an entirely different power dynamic between consumers, companies and governments.” (Johal and Zon, 2015)*

- a. Governments
- b. Regulation
- c. Unions
- Reading 1: **The Modern Online Gig Economy, Consumer Benefit, and the Importance of Regulatory Humility**; Rinehart, Will, 2015.
- Reading 2: **Smarter regulation for the sharing economy**; The Guardian. Frenken, Koen and Meelen, Toon, 2015.