

## Extended Abstract Comment Form

### Preconference Symposium "Interrogating Information Realities of Information and Communication Systems" ASIST 2006.

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*Please fill out the following information about the abstract that you are reviewing for the preconference symposium. Use as much space as you think is necessary.*

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**Name of commenter:** David W. McDonald and Peyina Lin

**1. Title of abstract reviewed:** Who killed the knowledge analysts? A short history of Knowledge Working (KW) in a public sector agency

**2. Eprint # of abstract reviewed:** 1478

**3. The main question or concern this research addresses is:** The authors investigated the formation and disintegration of a knowledge management initiative in a public sector agency. They focus on the role of the 'knowledge analyst'— to answer "Why did the role fail?" This paper is one in a series which seeks to explain idiographically the conflict and contradictions that take place in knowledge-management-discourse in organizations.

**4. The most interesting thing about the research described by the abstract is:**

KM initiatives have had varying success across the public and private sector. The authors have analyzed this specific case using a novel approach. If the results were to clearly illustrate that instability of a knowledge network across organizational subsidiaries contributed to the demise of the KM initiative, then the results could potentially be applied to solving problems in other cross-organizational KM projects.

**5. The biggest question I had after reading the abstract was:**

How did you arrive at the five discourse elements of 'value', 'psychology', 'object', 'practice', and 'structure'? How do the discourse elements you have identified work together as a framework, if that was intended? Can you explain how you are interpreting Foucault in relation to these categories? Did the categories always work in helping you understand formation and dissipation of discourse in knowledge networks? Could you have discovered something else if you had utilized a different framework? You mention that the five discourse

elements converge as the focus of “managerial attention” – Could you illustrate that with your data more clearly?

You mention that you have a research agenda based on the work of Foucault. How does the present work contribute to your Foucaultian-framework?

**6. The author should look at the following topics or sources as they continue their study:**

This work might benefit from the prior studies about the “visibility” of work. It seems that the work of KAs in the organization and the transformation of various forms of knowledge work are somewhat invisible. As well, since there was clearly a work transformation initiative by the PSA, linking the study to prior studies of transformation could be very useful. Two possible examples are:

Jeanette Blomberg , Lucy Suchman , Randall Trigg, Back to work: renewing old agendas for cooperative design, Computers and design in context, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1997

Suchman, L.A. Making Work Visible. *Communications of the ACM*, 38 (9). 56-64.

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**<http://slisweb.lis.wisc.edu/~kreschen/dlistcomment.htm>**