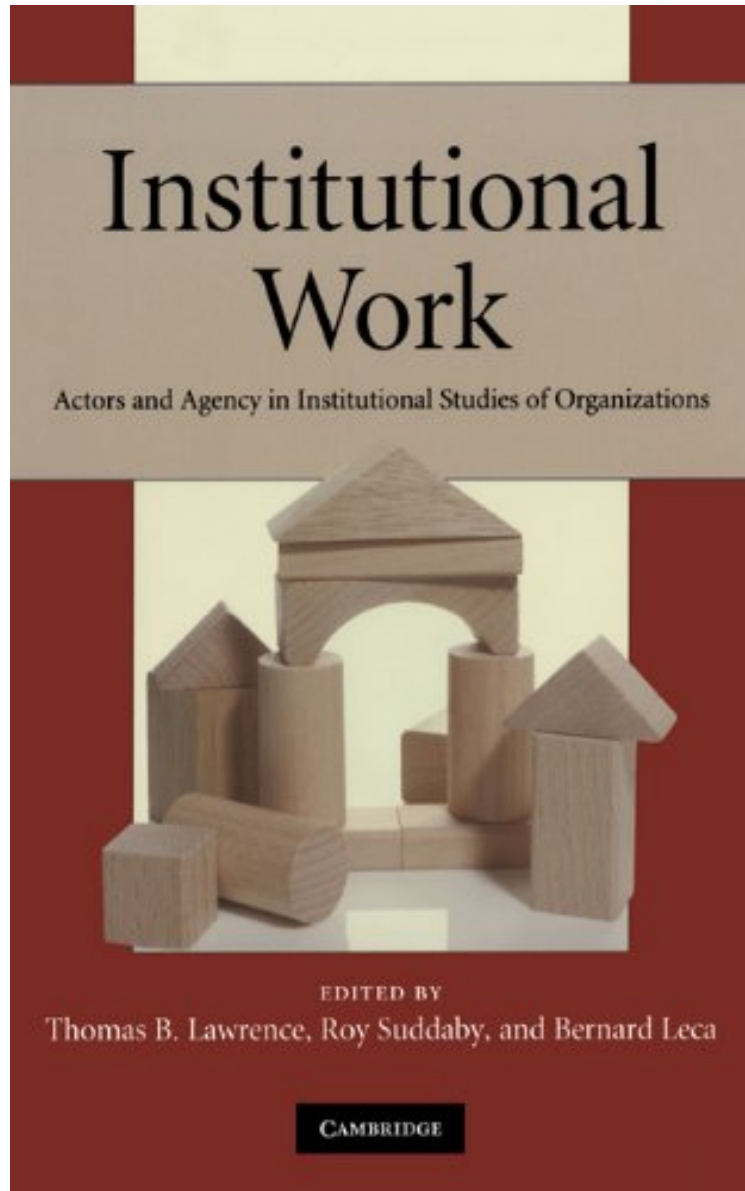


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# Institutional Work: Actors and Agency in Institutional Studies of Organizations

*Thomas B. Lawrence*

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**Thomas B. Lawrence : Institutional Work: Actors and Agency in Institutional Studies of Organizations** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Institutional Work: Actors and Agency in Institutional Studies of Organizations:

The 'institutional' approach to organizational research has shown how enduring features of social life - such as marriage and bureaucracy - act as mechanisms of social control. Such approaches have traditionally focused attention on the relationships between organizations and the fields in which they operate, providing strong accounts of the processes through which institutions govern action. In contrast, the study of institutional work reorients these traditional concerns, shifting the focus to understanding how action affects institutions. This book sets a research agenda within the field of institutional work by analyzing the ways in which individuals, groups, and organizations work to create, maintain, and disrupt the institutions that structure their lives. Through a series of essays and case studies, it explores the conceptual core of institutional work, identifies institutional work strategies, provides exemplars for future empirical research, and embeds the concept within broader sociological debates and ideas.

"Max Weber told us that institutions cannot be understood without considering the historical aggregation of individual activities. For many years, though, institutional theory had done little with this insight, focusing instead on the role of institutions as powerful social constraints. Priorities have clearly changed and this volume belongs with the contemporary lively 'deconstruction' of the institutional 'iron cage.' It is a welcome and timely contribution, demonstrating through a series of rich empirical explorations that institutions are created, changed and maintained through work, activities, practices, and discourses. We need more books of this kind, emphasizing the conflictual, messy, contradictory, ambiguous, processual, and ongoing nature of institutional work." Marie-Laure Djelic, Professor, ESSEC Business School

"The concept of institutional work is one of the most exciting conceptual developments in institutional theory in the last decade. It provides an invaluable conceptual framework for understanding the institutional effects of purposeful action and has connected conversations about institutional maintenance and change in a powerful new way. In this volume, Lawrence, Suddaby, and Leca expand on their early work on the topic and bring together an impressive group of scholars to further develop the concept through inspired theorizing and direct empirical application. This book is an absolute must for anyone interested in the future of institutional theory. I highly recommend you read it today!" Nelson Phillips, Professor of Strategy and Organizational Behaviour, Imperial College Business School

About the Author Thomas B. Lawrence is the Weyerhaeuser Professor of Change Management and Director of the CMA Centre for Strategic Change and Performance Measurement in the Faculty of Business Administration at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada. Roy Suddaby is Associate Professor of Management and Rice Faculty Fellow at the Alberta School of Business, University of Alberta, Canada. Bernard Leca is Assistant Professor in the Department of Management and Strategy at Groupe ESC Rouen, France.