Call for Papers

“Positioning Theory Across the Disciplines”

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The 2017 Positioning Theory Conference takes place in Oxford from 9 to 12 July 2017 and has been designed to bring together scholars from different disciplines who all use Positioning Theory in their work in order to develop a high quality, interactive event that contributes to the development and growth of Positioning Theory research communities globally.

Positioning Theory was first introduced in social sciences by Davies and Harré (1990). In that paper positioning activities were regarded as constructs for the discursive production of selves, whereby selves are in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story-lines (Davies and Harré, 1990, p.48). By presenting positions, speech acts and story-lines as ‘a mutually determining triad’, the concept of position became part of a theory that can be situated in the social constructionist movement in the social sciences and the related narrative or discursive turn.

Harré and Van Langenhove (1991) provided the first systematic overview of the theory and introduced different conceptual refinements of the theory, such as the differences between first and second order positions, performative and accounting positioning, moral and personal positioning, self and other positioning and tacit and intentional positioning. In 1999, a first edited volume appeared (Harré and Van Langenhove, 1999) in which the application of Positioning Theory was further broadened to issues such as intergroup relations or national identities. In that same volume, Positioning Theory was advocated as a starting point for reflecting upon the many different aspects of social life. And indeed gradually, other authors referred to Positioning Theory as framework for mostly social discourse analysis. Examples include the study of teacher-learner interactions, counselling practices, managerial changes processes, public relation policies and international relations. By 2008, Harré and his collaborators (see Moghaddam and Harré, 2010) could claim that the Positioning Theory applications had undergone a very natural expansion of scale, from the analysis of the dynamics of person-to-person encounters to the unfolding of interactions between nation states.

As noted by Harré and Moghaddam (2017), the issue of positioning is deeply embedded in the whole program of social representation research: “Once some body of knowledge has been identified and its content established, that is a social representation of some matter has been made explicit, the question of how it is to be realized arises – and that requires attention to the way rights and duties are distributed among the people who share the representation. Bringing the pattern of rights and duties to light must be an integral part of the research efforts inspired
by the hypothesis that a social representation is shaping the content and form of what people are doing.

In association with the editors of *Papers on Social Representations*, the conference organizers wish to propose a **special issue** which can provide an opportunity for disseminating some of the works presented during the conference.

All participants to the Oxford conference can submit their manuscript for this special issue according to the thematic field of the conference.

This special issue is intended to deepen specific theoretical and methodological issues raised from positioning theory, as well as to develop the contribution of the Positioning Theory perspective for the understanding of contemporary issues (e.g., environment, health, globalization social changes, education, security, and so on).

Papers should be submitted according to Papers on Social Representations submission guidelines (see [http://www.psych.lse.ac.uk/psr/](http://www.psych.lse.ac.uk/psr/)). All submitted papers (between 3000 and 7000 words) will be peer reviewed for publication on the understanding that they have not been previously published elsewhere and are not currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Those interested in contributing to this special issue can contact the guest editors for information: Luk Van Langenhove ([Luk.Van.Langenhove@vub.be](mailto:Luk.Van.Langenhove@vub.be)), Christine Redman ([redmanc@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:redmanc@unimelb.edu.au)) and Melanie James ([melanie.james@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:melanie.james@newcastle.edu.au))

The deadline for submissions is **30 September 2017**.