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Markets from Culture

Institutional Logics and Organizational Decisions in Higher Education Publishing

Patricia H. Thornton

Institutional logics, the underlying organizing principles of societal sectors, influence organizational decision making. Any shift in institutional logics results in a shift in attention to alternative problems and solutions and in new determinants for organizational decisions. Examining changes in institutional logics in higher-education publishing, this book links cultural analysis with organizational decision making to develop a theory of attention and explain how decision makers concentrate on certain market characteristics to the exclusion of others.

Analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data from the 1950s to the 1990s, the author shows how higher education publishing moved from a culture of independent domestic publishers focused on creating markets for books based on personal, relational networks to a culture of international conglomerates focused on creating markets from corporate hierarchies. This book offers broader lessons beyond publishing—its theory is applicable to explaining institutional changes in organizational leadership, strategy, and structure occurring in other industries.

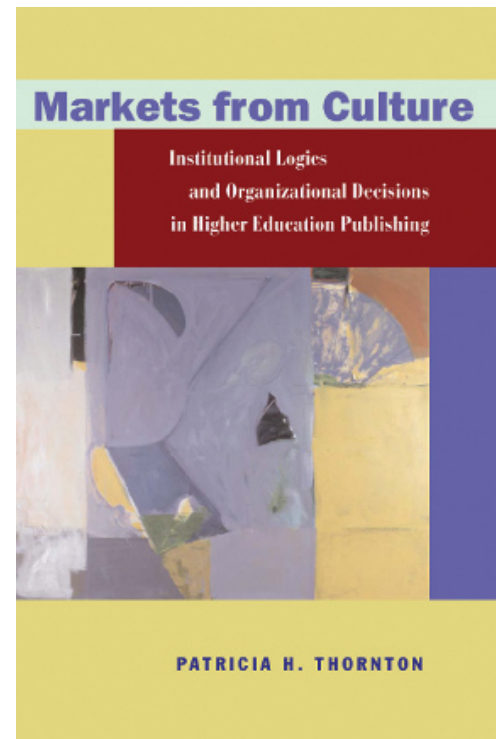


Table of Contents

1. Acknowledgements
2. Institutional Change and Organizational Decisions
3. The Historical Change in Institutional Logics
4. A Theory of Attention
5. Quantitative Data and Methods
6. Attention to the Sources of Power
7. Attention to the Sources of Structure
8. Attention to the Sources of Strategy
9. Meta analysis: Markets from Culture

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Patricia Thornton is Associate Professor at Duke University, Fuqua School of Business. She is the recipient of the American Sociological Association's W. Richard Scott award for the best organizations research article.

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