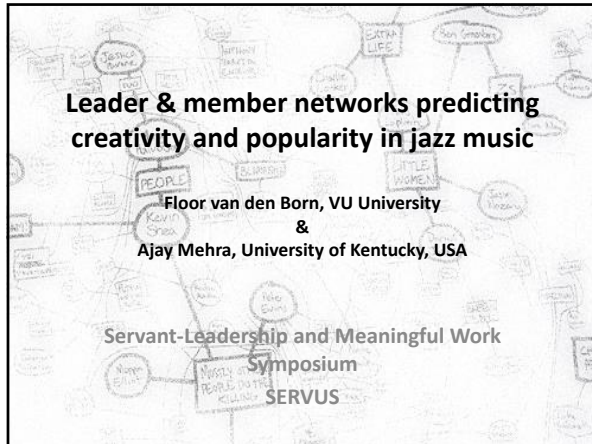


Leader & member networks predicting creativity and popularity in jazz music

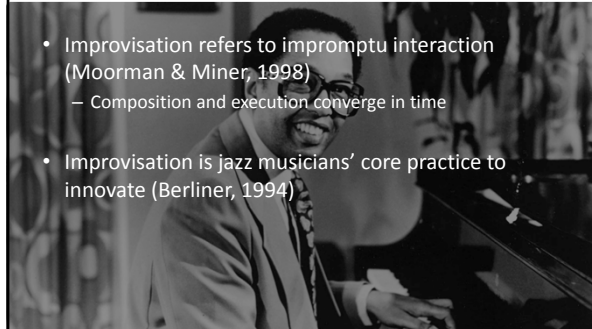
Floor van den Born, VU University
&
Ajay Mehra, University of Kentucky, USA

Servant-Leadership and Meaningful Work
Symposium
SERVUS




Improvisation

- Improvisation refers to impromptu interaction (Moorman & Miner, 1998)
 - Composition and execution converge in time
- Improvisation is jazz musicians' core practice to innovate (Berliner, 1994)



When the muse does not strike



Core tension

Deliberate techniques to divert from existing norms, standards, and conventions.

- Creativity: diversion from existing standards, practices and conventions

Conventions: stuff that people like because they recognize it and/or have heard it before

- Popularity: product acceptance among audiences

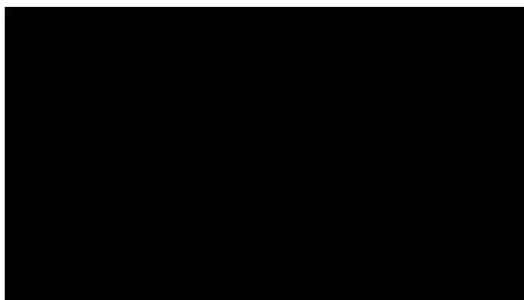


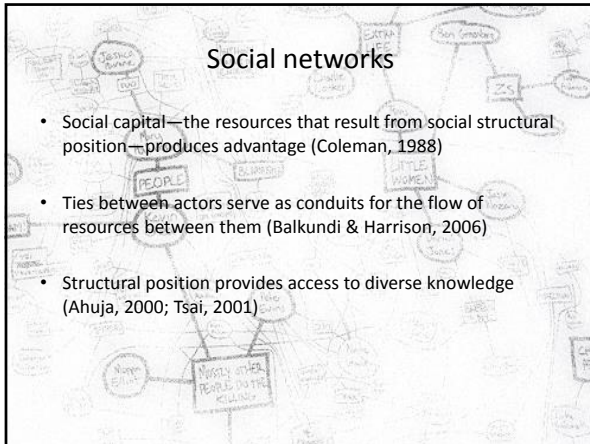
Core tension



Divergence from exiting ideas

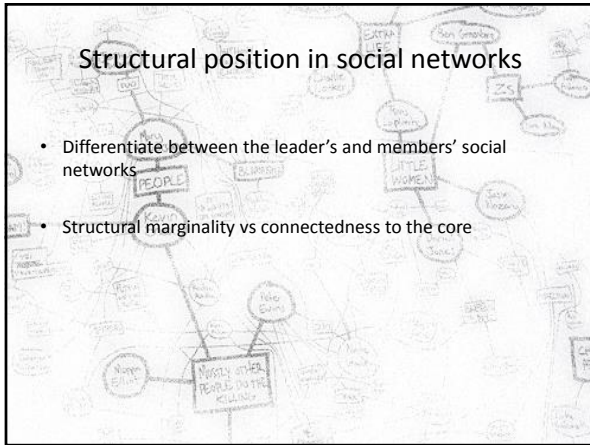
(Cole Porter's "What is this thing called love?" (1929) vs. Charles Mingus' "What love" (1961))





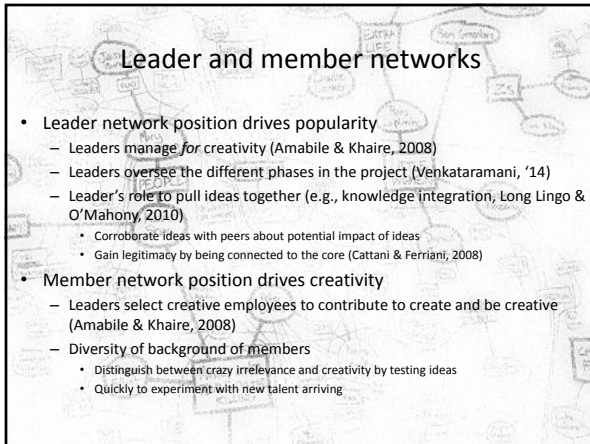
Social networks

- Social capital—the resources that result from social structural position—produces advantage (Coleman, 1988)
- Ties between actors serve as conduits for the flow of resources between them (Balkundi & Harrison, 2006)
- Structural position provides access to diverse knowledge (Ahuja, 2000; Tsai, 2001)



Structural position in social networks

- Differentiate between the leader's and members' social networks
- Structural marginality vs connectedness to the core



Leader and member networks

- Leader network position drives popularity
 - Leaders manage *for* creativity (Amabile & Khair, 2008)
 - Leaders oversee the different phases in the project (Venkataramani, '14)
 - Leader's role to pull ideas together (e.g., knowledge integration, Long Lingo & O'Mahony, 2010)
 - Corroborate ideas with peers about potential impact of ideas
 - Gain legitimacy by being connected to the core (Cattani & Ferriani, 2008)
- Member network position drives creativity
 - Leaders select creative employees to contribute to create and be creative (Amabile & Khair, 2008)
 - Diversity of background of members
 - Distinguish between crazy irrelevance and creativity by testing ideas
 - Quickly to experiment with new talent arriving

Leader connectedness

David Crowell

Kenny Werner

Member connectedness

Ari Hoenig Trio

Taylor Ho Bynum Sextet

Networking exercise

- Networking is important but oftentimes feels uncomfortable
- Short exercise (adapted from Janasz & Forret, 2008) to gain insight in
 - How much you are networking
 - Where you are focusing your networking efforts

Debrief

- How much are you networking, and why?
- Experience?
- Career goals?

Improvisational challenge

- “To improvise, actors must simultaneously identify new challenges and generate responses, with little or no time to prepare. In fact, the process of improvising is one single step: a response is generated and executed as the task is presented” (Fisher & Amabile, 2009)

Role division: teams of 4, one leader, three members

→ However, preparation must happen previously, outside of the frame of action.

- 2 minutes prep 1
- 2 minutes prep 2
- 2x4 minutes improvisational conversation

Debrief

For leaders:

- How did you stimulate creativity (divergence) and popularity (convention)?
- What improvisational actions did you apply to motivate team members to create ideas that have the potential to become popular?
- What was your own role in the creative process?
 - Did you contribute more to creating divergence or convergence?
- What keywords were used by whom?

What are the differences in experience for those who network more / less?

For team members:

- How did the leader simulate creativity and popularity?
- What did you do to achieve your goals?
 - The timid, the joker, the subordinate: did your respective strategies work?
- How did the leader reply improvisationally?
- What did you think about the improvisational conversation?
 - Member interactions, fluency of the conversation, creativity, success?

Exercise conclusion

- What can leaders do to stimulate the generation of popular (in contrast to creative) ideas among team members?
 - And what can members do?
- What can leaders do to stimulate their creativity?
 - How can members facilitate the leader to become more creative?
- What can teams do to deal with the tension between creativity and popularity?
- What is the role of networking capabilities?
