Ecological sustainability in highly-participative workplaces

(MBA thesis research, Justin Ellerby)

CASC 2015
How does being a highly-participative workplace (HPW) foster (and challenge) pro-ecological business outcomes?
(My) definitions:

“participative”: non-mgmt choice/voice > traditional

“pro-ecological”: minimizing impacts
Participation ☐ Eco-Sustainability

- “Continuous process improvement”
- “Organizational citizenship”
- Workforce preferences/ values
Participation  <->  Eco-Sustainability
South Mountain Company (pro-eco construction, WC)

- "Value-driven" founder
  - Initial selection under sole ownership
  - Values allowed for conversion
- Craft and cathedrals
- Place-based connections (demos, "bequethals")
- Workers > Owners?
- Kantian + virtues-based org?
- Little measured
New Belgium Brewery
(democratic 100% ESOP)

- "Value-driven" founder, conversion to WC
- Craft -> everything metricized
- Cheerleading, general excellence, volition
- Green ops, not green product
“Worker Co-op C”
(cap-intensive service)

- Heterogeneity -> Bureaucracy
- ES as “marketing to workers” (not much to customers)
  - Part siloed, part $-driven
- Equipment change demo’d at first
- ES Champion (emergent, knowledge, dedication)
  - vs. GT “saboteur” and “double agent”
- Relative comp varies
- External orgs: B2B ES mentoring, ES certs, B2B customers, even student researchers
“Worker Co-op D”
(labor-intensive manufacturing)

- Very successful product, but...
- Most ES ideologues couldn’t maintain
- Rare for decent comp
  --> Heterogeneity of ethnicity and values
- Going along? ES not a “bennie” to all
“Worker Co-op D”
(pro-eco building trades)

- WC created to co-ordinates among ages, experiences, finances, knowledges

- Flexibility
  - Market volatility -> need for fairness
  - “Side-job” for most
  - Supports family life
Questions?

justin.b.ellerby@gmail.com
Phone: (530) 746-8681 (USA)
Skype: justin.ellerby

MBA in Community Economic Development, 2015,
Cape Breton University

B.S. 2007, University of California at Davis