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Formulating a High-quality, High-impact Defense Acquisition Research Program

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Panel 11 - Formulating a High-Quality, Hi-Impact Defense Acquisition Research Program

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Where are the opportunities for learning, scholarly collaboration, and practical application?

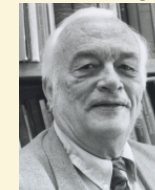
Academic platforms?



Mechanism design

Focuses on information costs, design elements – authority (decision/property rights), responsibility (targets), accounts (rules for measuring performance in terms of targets), and payoffs (specified algorithms for allocating payoffs contingent upon measured performance) – and their complementarity

Big names: *Leo Hurwicz* *Bill Vickery*



Successful spin-off from acquisition research

Academic interest: *High* Utility for Acquisition Professionals: *Low*



Privatization/Make-buy/ economics of organization

Armory system, depot maintenance,

Hillmann, Henning and Gathmann, Christina, "From Privateering to Navy: How Sea Power Became a Public Good" (March 2008). Available at SSRN:

<http://ssrn.com/abstract=1112111>

Academic interest: *Moderate*

Utility for Acquisition Professionals: *High*



Industrial organization

We know competition works. We don't really know why. Which mechanisms are activated by competition and which are suppressed by its absence?

Collaboration and cooperation also work. So?

What about the DoD's market power? Is that all good?

Academic interest: *High, but the translation problem is severe*

Utility for Acquisition Professionals: *Moderate*



Capital budgeting/ valuation

Ex ante project assessment, cost estimation

Ex post project assessment, cost measurement

Academic interest: *Low*

Utility for Acquisition Professionals: *High*

The language barrier is very high (the same conclusion probably applies to risk management, since it is basically the same field)



Project management

Cost, control, value-added models

Academic interest: *Moderate*

Utility for Acquisition Professionals: *High*



Supply-chain, value-chain management

Consumer driven, demand-pull models, life-cycle focus, relational systems, network analysis

Academic interest: *Moderate to high*

Utility for Acquisition Professionals: *High*



Innovation/knowledge management

Academic interest: *High*

Utility for Acquisition Professionals: *High*



What have I missed?





Where are the opportunities for learning, scholarly collaboration, and practical application?

Practitioner defined problems? That is probably the best place to start



Why that is easier said than done

It is very hard to get you guys to describe your problems in tractable manner.

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My research

- How should human agents use their minds to contrive actions aimed at converting existing conditions into preferred conditions?
- How should communities of researchers and educators assist practitioners in doing so?



The design perspective



- The design perspective poses what-to-do questions, such as
 - How to organize?
 - How to innovate?
 - How to produce efficiently?
 - How to identify and mitigate risks?
- The design school also provides answers in the form of “practice theories”



How, Indeed?

- *Investigate* cases whose performance characteristics are outstanding
- *Assume* that performance is attributable to social processes in which practice features play a contingent and instrumental role
- *Attribute* a practice's performance to the activation or suppression of social mechanisms



How can real-world actors utilize such research?

- Contrive features that activate the same sorts of constructive mechanisms in the target situation as have worked elsewhere
- Contrive process design features that –in combination with actor participation and operating context – suppress those mechanisms whose effects would undermine a practice's performance