

## FABIO FONTI

Free University of Bozen-Bolzano  
School of Economics and Management  
Building E, 2° floor, office 2.04  
Piazza Università 1 - 39100 Bolzano - Italy  
Phone: +39-0471-013293 (work), +39-329-0799329 (mobile) - Email: [fabio.fonti@gmail.com](mailto:fabio.fonti@gmail.com)

### ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

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Nov 2009-Present Free University of Bozen-Bolzano  
Research Assistant Professor  
July 02-June 09 Boston College, Department of Organization Studies  
Assistant Professor

### EDUCATION

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October 2003 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
PhD in Business Administration  
*Major: Organizational Behavior*  
*Minor: Social Networks*  
June 1995 University of Urbino (Italy)  
BA in Economics and Business, Summa cum Laude

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Organizational and strategic implications of social networks (intra-and inter-organizational), with a focus on embeddedness, multiplexity, social capital and evolution  
Knowledge management and communities of practice  
Industrial districts  
Managerial cognition  
Social network analysis

### GRANTS PENDING (APPLIED FOR)

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2009 University of Pescara (Italy) and Bocconi University (Italy), Funds for Fundamental Research Initiatives, Italian Ministry of Research (€ 800,000)

### GRANTS AWARDED

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2006 University of Bologna (Italy), Funds for Fundamental Research Initiatives, Italian Ministry of Research (€ 261,000)  
2006 University of Pescara (Italy), Funds for Fundamental Research Initiatives, Italian Ministry of Research (€ 200,000)  
2004, 2003, 2002 Boston College, Research Expense Grant  
2003 Boston College, Research Incentive Grant (\$15,000)  
2003 Boston College, Teaching, Advising and Mentoring Expense Grant  
2001 ESRI, Grant for European Summer Research Institute Summer School  
2000 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, CIBER Center, Research Grant

### HONORS AND AWARDS

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2008 National Communication Association Conference (San Diego, CA)  
Top Paper Award for Organizational Communication

2008, 2006, 2003	Organization and Management Theory (OMT) Division, AoM Best Reviewer Award
2004	Organization Science Winter Conference (Steamboat Springs, CO) VIP (Very Interesting Presentation) Award
2002	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Robert Ferber Dissertation Award (for excellence in Survey Research)
2000-2002	Social Science Research Council Fellow, "The Corporation as a Social Institution" program
2001	Management and Organizational Cognition (MOC) Division, AoM Best Reviewer Award
Fall 1999	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 'Incomplete List' – List of Teachers ranked as Excellent by Students
Spring 1999	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 'Incomplete List' – List of Teachers ranked as Excellent by Students
1998	International Communication Assoc. Conference (Jerusalem, Israel) Top Paper Award for Organizational Communication

#### PUBLICATIONS

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Lomi, A., Negro, G., & Fonti, F. 2008. Evolutionary perspectives on interorganizational relations. S. Cropper, M. Ebers, C. Huxham, and P. S. Ring, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Inter-Organizational Relations*. Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press: 313-338.

Ferriani, S., Fonti, F., & Corrado, R. Forthcoming. Legami sociali, rapporti economici e legami procurati da terzi: Uno studio sulle determinati dell'embeddedness nei cluster geografici. C. Boari, ed., *Dinamiche evolutive nei cluster geografici di imprese*. Milan (Italy): Il Mulino.

Fonti, F. Forthcoming. Joint book review – Ash Amin and Joanne Roberts (eds.), *Community, Economic Creativity, and Organization* and Jason Hughes, Nick Jewson and Lorna Unwin (eds.), *Communities of practice: Critical perspectives*. *Organization Studies*.

#### WORKS UNDER REVIEW

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Lomi, A., & Fonti, F. Markets from networks and the propensity of companies to collaborate: An empirical test of two mechanisms. Under review at *Economic Letters*.

Contractor, N., Whitbred, R., Fonti, F., & Steglich, C. Understanding the ties that bind: A longitudinal investigation of the evolution of a communication network. Under review at *Communication Monographs*.

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., Maoret, M. Seeing through an opaque prism: The role of Cognitive Aggregated Structures in network perception. Under review at *Journal of Management Studies*.

#### WORKING PAPERS

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Fonti, F., Maoret, M., & Montanari, F. Re-thinking the “war for talent”: Team stability and relational legacy as determinants of team performance.

*Target journal: Academy of Management Journal*

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., Steglich, C., & Maoret, M. To broker or to reach closure? A longitudinal investigation of the dynamics of social capital.

*Target journal: Social Networks*

Fonti, F. Multiplexity and space: The impact of multiplexity and *locales* on firm’s performance.

*Target journal: Administrative Science Quarterly*

Fonti, F., & Lomi, A. Cross-classifications: An empirical study of multiplex identities in organizational communities.

*Target journal: American Journal of Sociology*

Ferriani, S., Fonti, F., & Corrado, R. Social ties, economic ties, and third party referrals: Explaining the evolution of multiplex networks in geographic clusters.

*Target journal: Organization Science*

Fonti, F., & Narduzzo, A. Sustaining communities of practice: The relevance of network roles in supporting knowledge creation and exchange.

*Target journal: Management Science*

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., & Maoret, M. The origins of social capital: Dispositional and endogenous antecedents of brokerage and closure.

*Target journal: Journal of Management Studies*

Fonti, F. Interorganizational trust and the robustness of network effects.

*Target journal: Academy of Management Journal*

Whitbred, R., Fonti, F., Steglich, C., & Contractor, N. From micro-actions to macro-structure: A structural approach to the evolution of organizational networks.

*Target journal: Human Communication Research*

#### SELECTED WORKS IN PROGRESS

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Steglich, C., Fonti, F., & Whitbred, R. Detecting equilibrium in dynamic networks: Actor-based and exponential random graph modeling approaches.

Fonti, F., & Lomi, A. The relational basis of absorptive capacity: Exploring the role of organizational identities and multiplexity on inter-organizational knowledge acquisition and transfer.

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., & Maoret, M. Where do strong and weak ties come from? An investigation of the antecedents of tie strength.

Fonti, F., Narduzzo, A., & Prencipe, A. How do communities affect work practices? Cognitive and structural determinants of communities of practice performance.

#### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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Fonti, F., Maoret, M., & Montanari, F. Re-thinking the “war for talent”: Team stability and relational legacy as determinants of team performance. Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, August 7-11, 2009.

Steglich, C., Fonti, F., & Whitbred, R.. Dynamic networks in stochastic equilibrium. 5<sup>th</sup> UK Social Networks Conference. London (UK), July 3-5, 2009.

Fonti, F., & Narduzzo, A. Sustaining communities of practice: The relevance of network roles in supporting knowledge creation and exchange. 25<sup>th</sup> European Group for Organization Studies (EGOS) Colloquium. Barcelona (Spain), July 2-4, 2009.

Fonti, F., Narduzzo, A., & Prencipe, A. 2009. How do communities affect work practices? Cognitive and structural determinants of communities of practice performance. 25<sup>th</sup> European Group for Organization Studies (EGOS) Colloquium. Barcelona (Spain), July 2-4, 2009.

Whitbred, R., Fonti, F., Contractor, N., & Steglich, C. From micro-actions to macro-structure: A structural approach to the evolution of organizational networks. National Communication Association Annual Convention. San Diego, CA, November 21-24 2008. [This paper received NCA's Top Paper Award for Organizational Communication.](#)

Lomi, A., & Fonti, F. Markets from networks and the propensity of companies to collaborate: An empirical test of two mechanisms. 5<sup>th</sup> Conference on Applications of Social Network Analysis. Zurich (Switzerland), September 12-13, 2008.

Fonti, F., & Lomi, A. Cross-classifications: An empirical study of multiplex identities in organizational communities. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Anaheim, CA, August 8-13, 2008.

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., & Steglich, C. To broker or to reach closure? A longitudinal investigation of the dynamics of social capital. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Anaheim, CA, August 8-13, 2008.

Fonti, F., & Narduzzo, A. Sustaining communities of practice: The relevance of network roles in supporting knowledge creation and exchange. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Anaheim, CA, August 8-13, 2008.

Fonti, F., Corrado, R., & Ferriani, S. 2007. Geographical clustering and network evolution: A study on the determinants of interfirm networking. Workshop on Scientific and Managerial Knowledge, Cass Business School. London, December 17-18, 2007.

Fonti, F., & Narduzzo, A. 2007. Sustaining communities of practice: The relevance of network roles in supporting knowledge creation and exchange. 1<sup>st</sup> Workshop "The practice of communities: Research and applications on work practices and communities." Bolzano (Italy), July 1-3, 2007.

Fonti, F., Narduzzo, A., & Prencipe, A. 2007. The structure of communities of practice: Antecedents and consequences across organizational contexts. 1<sup>st</sup> Workshop "The practice of communities: Research and applications on work practices and communities." Bolzano (Italy), July 1-3, 2007.

Whitbred, R., Fonti, F., & Steglich, C. 2007. A longitudinal investigation of the evolution of a communication network. 57<sup>th</sup> International Communication Association Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA, May 24-28, 2007.

Fonti, F., Montanari, F., & Maoret, M. 2006. Exploring the micro-foundations of organizational routines: The role of network stability and relational intensity. Workshop on Scientific and Managerial Knowledge, Cass Business School. London, December 7-8, 2006.

Fonti, F. 2006. Networks and space: Reconsidering the effects of locales on firm's performance. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA, August 11-16, 2006.

Fonti, F. 2006. Localized, generalized or both? Interorganizational trust and the robustness of network effects. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA, August 11-16, 2006.

Fonti, F., Montanari, F., & Maoret, M. 2006. Exploring the micro-foundations of organizational routines: The role of network stability and relational intensity. 22<sup>nd</sup> European Group for Organization Studies (EGOS) Colloquium. Bergen (Norway), July 6-8, 2006.

Fonti, F., Maoret, M., & Mollona, E. 2006. The role of multiplexity and space in the evolution and sustainability of networks: An agent-based modeling approach. Conference on "Rethinking Economies: Clusters, Network Organization & the Informal Economy." Bologna (Italy), June 29-30, 2006.

Ferriani, S., Corrado, R., & Fonti, F. 2006. Geographical clustering and network evolution: A study on the determinants of interfirm networking. Conference on "Rethinking Economies: Clusters, Network Organization & the Informal Economy." Bologna (Italy), June 29-30, 2006.

Fonti, F. 2006. Networks and space: *Locales* as moderators of the link between embeddedness and firm performance. Workshop on Scientific and Managerial Knowledge, Cass Business School. London, May 15-16, 2006.

Contractor, N., Fonti, F., Steglich, C., Su, C., & Whitbred, R. 2005. Understanding the ties that bind: A longitudinal investigation of communication network evolution. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Honolulu, HI, August 5-10, 2005.

Fonti, F., & Narduzzo, A. 2005. Sustaining communities of practice: The role of communication in supporting knowledge creation and exchange. 21<sup>st</sup> European Group for Organization Studies (EGOS) Colloquium. Berlin (Germany), July 1-3 2005.

Contractor, N., Fonti, F., Steglich, C., Su, C., & Whitbred, R. 2005. Understanding the ties that bind: A longitudinal investigation of the evolution of a communication network. 55<sup>th</sup> International Communication Association Conference. New York, NY, May 26-30 2005.

Fonti, F., & Montanari, F. 2004. Between change and stability: The team-based foundation of firms' competitive advantage. 24<sup>th</sup> Strategic Management Society (SMS) Conference. San Juan, Puerto Rico (USA), October 31-November 3, 2004.

Fonti, F., & Narduzzo, A. 2004. Beyond the oxymoron: How 'cultivating communities of practice' may actually start to make sense. 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Organization Science Winter Conference. Steamboat Springs, CO, February 5-8, 2004. This presentation received the VIP (Very Interesting Presentation) Award.

Fonti, F. 2003. One relationship is not enough: Toward a theory of multiplex embeddedness. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Seattle, WA, August 1-6, 2003.

Fonti, F., & Castellucci, F. 2003. Creation and diffusion of knowledge via personnel migration: The case of the America's Cup. 19<sup>th</sup> European Group for Organization Studies (EGOS) Colloquium. Copenhagen (Denmark), July 3-5, 2003.

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., & Contractor, N. 2000. Focusing on the forest when you can't see all the trees: The importance of Cognitive Aggregated Structures (CAS) in new organizational forms. Academy of Management Annual Meeting. Toronto, Ontario, August 4-9, 2000.

Houston, R., Rice, R.E., Whitbred, R., & Fonti, F. 2000. The influence of individual and structural aspects of self-producing systems and job satisfaction at the Western Transit Authority. Sunbelt XX, International Sunbelt Social Network Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia, April 13-16, 2000.

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., & Contractor, N. 2000. Adding perception to the landscape: Introducing cognitive social capital. Sunbelt XX, International Sunbelt Social Network Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia, April 13-16, 2000.

Contractor, N., Whitbred, R., Fonti, F., Hyatt, A., O'Keefe, B., & Jones, P. 2000. Structuration theory and self-organizing networks. Sixth Annual Organization Science Winter Conference. Keystone, CO, February 9-13, 2000.

Contractor, N., Whitbred, R., Fonti, F., Hyatt, A., O'Keefe, B., & Jones, P. 1998. Self-organizing communication networks in organizations: Validation of a computational modeling using exogenous and endogenous theoretical mechanisms. 48<sup>th</sup> International Communication Association Annual Conference, Jerusalem (Israel), July 20-24, 1998. This paper received ICA's Top Paper Award for Organizational Communication.

Fonti, F., Contractor, N., & Whitbred, R. 1998 Focusing on the forest when you can't see all the trees II: Antecedents and outcomes of Cognitive Aggregated Structures (CAS) in a virtual organization. ICA/NCA Joint International Conference: "Communication: Organizing for the Future." Rome (Italy), July 15-18, 1998.

Fonti, F., Whitbred, R., & Contractor, N. 1998. Focusing on the forest when you can't see all the trees: The influence of Cognitive Aggregated Structures (CAS) in a virtual organization. Sunbelt XVIII, International Sunbelt Social Network Conference. Sitges (Spain), May 27-31, 1998.

Whitbred, R., & Fonti, F. 1997. Building social capital in 'bureaucratic', 'platform', and 'virtual' organizations. 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Organizational Communication Mini-Conference. Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, October 4-5, 1997.

Fonti, F. 1997. Social structure and economic action: A network approach. EMOT (European Management and Organizations in Transition) Summer School on "Relational Perspective in Organizational Research." Bologna, Italy, September 1997.

Contractor, N., Whitbred, N., & Fonti, F. 1997. Self-organizing communication networks in organizations: Validation of a computational modeling using exogenous and endogenous theoretical mechanisms. Alta Conference on Self-Organizing Systems. Alta, UT, August 1997.

Fonti, F. 1997. Social structure and economic action: The effects of network evolution on organizational performance. Sunbelt XVII, International Sunbelt Social Network Conference. San Diego, CA, February 1997.

#### INVITED TALKS

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Re-thinking the "war for talent": Team stability and relational intensity as determinants of team performance.

Imperial College, London (UK), June 3, 2008

IESE (University of Navarra), Barcelona (Spain), May 29, 2008

Universita' della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano (Switzerland), December 21, 2006

University of Bologna, Bologna (Italy), July 4, 2006

Sustaining communities of practice: The relevance of network roles in supporting knowledge creation and exchange.

ESADE, Barcelona (Spain), May 28, 2008

Geographical clustering and network evolution: A study on the determinants of interfirm networking.  
University of Bologna, Bologna (Italy), June 28, 2007

Complexity theory and the evolution of communication networks.  
Plenary talk, Understanding Complex Systems Symposium. Urbana, IL, May 19, 2004

One relationship is not enough: Toward a theory of multiplex embeddedness.  
University of Urbino, Urbino (Italy), June 17, 2003  
University of Modena, Modena (Italy), June 18, 2003  
University of Bologna, Bologna (Italy), June 26, 2003

#### WORKSHOPS AND SYMPOSIA ORGANIZED

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“Knowledge dissemination and learning in communities of practice: Bringing practice back in.” Sub-theme track, 25<sup>th</sup> EGOS Colloquium, Barcelona (Spain), July 2-4, 2009. Co-organized with Alessandro Narduzzo (University of Bolzano, Italy) and Martha Feldman (University of California, Irvine).

“The practice of communities.” Bolzano (Italy), July 1-3, 2007. Conference on communities and work practices. Co-organized with Alessandro Narduzzo (University of Bolzano, Italy) and Andrea Prencipe (SPRU – University of Sussex, UK).

#### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND MEMBERSHIPS

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##### *Ad Hoc Reviewer*

Administrative Science Quarterly  
Academy of Management Journal  
American Journal of Sociology  
Organization Science  
Organization Studies  
Industrial & Corporate Change  
Management Learning  
Journal of Social Structure  
Journal of Computational and Mathematical Organization Theory  
Swiss National Science Foundation (Switzerland)  
Social Science Research Council (The Netherlands)  
University of Lugano (Switzerland)  
Academy of Management Conference (OMT, MOC and BPS divisions).

##### *Member*

Academy of Management, European Group for Organization Studies (EGOS), Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS)

##### *Boston College service activities*

CSOM Undergraduate Curriculum Task Force	Summer 2004
Special Programs Task Force on International Aspects of CSOM	Summer 2004
Faculty Advisor, Freshmen Orientation Sessions	Summer 2004 & Summer 2003
Educational Policy Committee	2002-2004

##### *Academy of Management service activities*

Listserv Administrator, CogNet (MOC Division email list)	Jan 2001 – May 2009
Doctoral Student Member-at-Large, MOC Division Executive Committee	2000-2001
Chair, New Doctoral Students Consortium	1998
Chair, Speakers Panel Selection Committee, New Doctoral Students Consortium	1997

## TEACHING OVERVIEW

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I have effectively taught several management, OT and OB courses at the graduate and undergraduate level (below, you can find an exhaustive list of the classes I have either taught or am scheduled to teach). At Boston College I have developed a new format for “Managing People and Organizations” (core MBA class), concentrating it over four, eight-hour Saturdays. I have found this format to be very effective in teaching this kind of classes, since it allows me to focus for longer periods on distinct modules, which bring together several related topics. My performance has been consistently good: I was included twice on the "List of teachers ranked as excellent by their students" at Illinois, while at Boston College I have consistently obtained ratings in the 4s (out of 5), ranking above the average for my department both in overall evaluation and course difficulty. At the corporate level, my overall evaluation for a one-week module I recently taught at a Fortune 500 Co. was 4.9/5.0. Evaluations and sample syllabi are available upon request.

## TEACHING INTERESTS

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Organizational behavior, knowledge management, social networks, strategic management, organization theory

## CLASSES TAUGHT

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### *Undergraduate – Illinois*

Introduction to Management

Organization Theory

### *Undergraduate – Boston College*

Organizational Behavior (macro orientation, focused on topics such as network and KM)

Current topics in Management

### *MBA & Executive – Boston College*

Managing People and Organizations (core MBA) – Weekly class

Managing People and Organizations (core MBA) – Weekend modules

### *MBA & Executive – Other*

Managing strategic resources: People and organizations – One-week module (Fortune 500 Co., in-house Master in International Business Engineering)

Networks, knowledge and communities of practice – One-week module (Fortune 500 Co., in-house Master in International Business Engineering)

The relational advantage: Networks and knowledge management – One-week module (Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna, Pisa, Italy, Master in Innovation and Service Engineering)

### *Doctoral – Boston College*

Networks and Knowledge Management (directed reading class)

Guest appearances in colleagues’ Micro OB, Macro OB, and Social Networks doctoral classes