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..... Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy Issues

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The Policy Studies Organization

Budding Scholars Conference

Joe Hamm – *Michigan State University*

"Trust and Natural Resource Management: Three Critical Classes of Trust Antecedents"

Trust has been widely accepted as important for effective natural resource management (e.g., Bratanova, Morrison, Fife-Schaw, Chenoweth, & Mangold, 2013; Leahy & Anderson, 2008) but this emphasis has no more resulted in a consistent understanding of trust in this context than it has in the myriad other contexts in which it has been investigated (e.g., Earle, 2010; Levi & Stoker, 2000; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). Increasingly however, the interdisciplinary scholarship of trust is beginning to converge on a notion of the construct that provides some guidance for understanding it. Specifically trust is increasingly understood to be the trustor's willingness to accept vulnerability in dealing with the trust target and that this willingness is driven by a number of bases of, or reasons for, accepting vulnerability (i.e., trusting; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). This presentation will argue that there are three critical classes of trust bases that are conceptually and statistically distinct. In particular, it will argue that the critical classes of bases of trust are the trustworthiness bases (e.g., "I trust them because they are worthy of my trust"), general bases (e.g., "I trust because I am a trusting person"), and motivated bases (e.g., "I trust because I need to"). The presentation will then investigate the relative influence of these classes, hypothesizing specifically that there are conditions under which the classes are likely to become more or less important.

Biography

Joe Hamm is Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice and Environmental Science at Michigan State University and part of the university's Global Water Initiative. A psychologist by training, his work lies at the nexus of institutions and the public where he investigates what trust is, how best to appropriately measure it, and its connection to "outcomes" like cooperation and compliance. Although he continues to work with institutions like the courts and local government, much of his work focuses on natural resource institutions where he is especially interested in the role that trust plays in encouraging voluntary conservation-related behavior.