

> Thursday, December 17th, 2020

11:00 - 12:30

ICOR RESEARCH SEMINAR

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EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY



ABSTRACT

**“Looking Behind the Curtain or the Social Construction of Greed. Categories, Status and Institutions in US and Italian Community Pharmacy”
By Giuseppe Delmestri (WU Vienna)**

Who are greedier, the professional owner-pharmacists who want to pass their single store to their heirs, or the capitalist shareowner of pharmacy chains? This question was (and still is) at the center of debates in community pharmacy in the US and Italy. Comparing historically the USA and Italy, where the profession faced similar institutional and sociotechnical challenges, we ground a theoretical explanation of why its status persisted in Italy and not in the US. Background institutions in the US and Italy, respectively the market and the State, set the burden of proof differentially on the professional and corporate logics in the 1910'-1920'. Corporate pharmacy became dominant in the US while the profession in Italy. Exclusive attention to foreground conflicts between two logics would leave this unexplained. Later in the 1960', the membership of the organizational category of pharmacy in different classes (retail business vs. health care) determined the different reactions to the challenge of pharmacists being turned into shopkeepers. In the US, due to insufficient category distinctiveness, the *organizational* category 'pharmacy' dissolved within the retail business class (the meaning of pharmacy becoming restricted to an *employed occupation*). In Italy, increasing category distinctiveness, i.e. pharmacy looking increasingly different from the rest of health care, elicited the State to validate pharmacists' status by reserving them ownership (the meaning of pharmacy extending also to an organizational category).