The Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing invite you to a seminar:

“Old Problems and New Ways of Thinking About Women Entrepreneurs”

When: 10:30 – 11:30 am, Thursday, 7 October, 2010
Where: Room -1.18, Business 2, Building N72, Nathan campus
Food: Morning tea will be served; please RSVP

Abstract: There has been a dramatic expansion of scholarly activity in women’s entrepreneurship recently. Nevertheless many scholars are calling for new directions in the field. Limitations of approaches which assume either that women’s entrepreneurship is essentially different from men’s or that women’s entrepreneurial experience can be subsumed into that of men, have both been found wanting (eg Ahl 2004). An extended view of entrepreneurship, and a commitment to capturing the heterogeneity of women’s entrepreneurship, both properly linked to theory, is needed so that old problems can be reframed in new ways.

The radical subjectivist (RS) approach to economics is an appropriate new theoretical approach to entrepreneurship. Building on and extending Austrian economics, and using an interdisciplinary perspective, it focuses on disequilibrium markets and the processes driving them. The RS view defines three elements of entrepreneurial organising: empathy (from psychology), modularity (from strategy and organization theory), and self-organisation (from complexity theory). Empathy helps entrepreneurs organize subjectively imagined novel ideas in their minds; modularity helps them organise heterogeneous resources in their firms; self-organising helps them organise disequilibrium markets in their environments. Examining women behaving entrepreneurially in the relatively under-researched domain of family business helps further our understanding of different types of women entrepreneurs. Thus in this paper I use an RS approach to entrepreneurship in the context of family firms to:

a) look anew at women’s entrepreneurial behaviour in family firms; and from this,  
b) reframe some old debates in women entrepreneurship research.

Speaker: Mary Barrett is Professor in the School of Management and Marketing at the University of Wollongong. Her research focuses on gender issues in the workplace, especially this relates to workplace communication, women’s career development, and women as managers and entrepreneurs. She has published five books as well as numerous book chapters and academic journal articles on these topics.

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