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COLLECTION

## Old and new stories: Narrative and innovation in public management

**Wednesday 6 June 2012** 12.30 - 1.30pm, light lunch provided

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**Professor Sanford Borins** Professor of Strategic Management, University of Toronto;  
Research Fellow, Ash Center for Democratic Governance & Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School

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**Weston Theatre** JG Crawford Building 132, Lennox Crossing, ANU



Story-telling is as old as humankind. Yet it is also new, in that recently we have increasingly turned to it as a method of communication and persuasion in political and policy discourse. Practitioners who have taken 'the narrative turn' see story-telling as more effective than the traditional rationalistic and evidence-based approach in establishing an emotional connection with an audience. In this presentation, I will outline a model of organisational narratives and apply it to political narratives as well as narratives used by public sector organisations.

Innovation represents a priority for public sector organisations having to meet the challenges of a changing environment, wicked problems, and the pressure to improve service despite having to make do with diminishing resources. Innovation awards provide an opportunity for the public sector's innovators to tell their stories. My current research is based on recent applications to the Harvard Kennedy School's Innovations in American Government Awards, which represents a rich database of stories about innovation. I will apply the tools of narrative analysis to these stories to develop lessons about both innovation and story-telling in the public sector.

Sanford Borins is Professor of Strategic Management at the University of Toronto. He has been a visiting professor at the Harvard Kennedy School and the Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California at Berkeley, and Scholar-in-Residence in the Ontario Cabinet Office. He is currently a research fellow at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School.

He is the author of numerous articles as well as nine books, including *Governing Fables: Learning from Public Sector Narratives* (2011); *Innovations in Government: Research, Recognition, and Replication* (2008) and *Innovating with Integrity* (1998).

**This event is supported by the Australian National Institute of Public Policy and the HC Coombs Policy Forum with funding from the Australian Government under the 'Enhancing Public Policy Initiative'.**

Presented by

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Registration required

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