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Trustee professionalism transformed: Recruiting committed professionals

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Abstract
This article explores how employing organizations articulate the competencies, values and personal qualities that they expect professionals to possess, and how they envision and appeal to certain professional identities when recruiting new employees. The article is prompted by the influential view put forth by sociologist Steven Brint, i.e. that professional work both consists of and is legitimized as specialized expertise. With the rise of large organizations, professionals no longer identify as the social trustees that the classical sociology of professions posited. If we accept Brint's and others' claims that management and organizations increasingly shape professionalism and professional work, it is crucial to understand what professionalism looks like from the employers' points of view, and, more specifically, whether employers are interested in only expertise. This article explores these implications by analysing Norwegian job advertisements for engineers, trained social workers and registered nurses within both public and private employing organizations, i.e. professional spaces that Brint associates with expert professionalism and social trustee professionalism, respectively. The analysis reveals that public service and private commercial organizations alike appeal to social responsibility and personal commitment, which indicates the presence of persistent, albeit transformed, versions of trustee professionalism.

Keywords
Employers, engineers, interdisciplinarity, organization, registered nurses, social trustee professionalism, social workers

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Introduction

Is the responsibility of professionals limited to providing specialist expertise, or does it also entail other kinds of social and personal responsibility? Sociologist Steven Brint (1994) has argued that the classic ideal of professionalism – a 'social trustee' professionalism where practitioners embody and express broader social values – has been replaced by a narrower conception of professionalism as skilled expert work requiring higher education. According to Brint, the tendency towards identifying and legitimizing professionalism exclusively as specialized expertise is in large part a result of changes in the organizational context of professional work. Inspired by Brint's and others' claims that any effort to reconstruct professional responsibility must account for the decisive role of formal organizations in shaping and allocating professional responsibilities (Brint, 2015: 94), this article explores how employing organizations envision different versions of professionalism.

Brint's is certainly not the only reinterpretation of professionalism that stems from this realization. Theories of 'new professionalism' (Evetts, 2011), 'hybrid professionalism' (Noordegraaf, 2015) and 'organizational professionalism' (Evetts, 2013; Faulconbridge and Muzio, 2008) all emphasize that today's professionals are not the self-employed practitioners of the classical (Anglo-American) sociology of professions. Rather, professional work today is embedded within organizations and tangled up in competing logics of managerialism, commercialism and public accountability.

Accordingly, an emphasis on expert professionalism is only one suggested implication of the organizational embeddedness of professions. A different take is Mirko Noordegraaf's claim that organizational professionalism requires a specific type of *connective* expertise (Noordegraaf, 2015). Another turn is the revival of professionalism as a normative value, enacted by professionals whose altruism, service orientation and civil engagement make them worthy of trust from clients, managers and other members of the broader society (Evetts, 2013; Freidson, 2001; Sullivan and Shulman, 2005). Yet another interpretation identifies appeals to professionalism as a disciplinary mechanism applied by managers to inculcate self-controlled and self-motivated employees willing to perform in ways the organization defines as appropriate (Fournier, 1999).

As the broader organizational turn in the study of professions suggests, we need to analyse organizations that employ professionals in order to come to grips with different versions of professionalism. In this article, we therefore explore how such employing organizations articulate the competencies, values and personal characteristics that they expect from the professionals they hire, and how they envision and appeal to certain professional identities and ideals when recruiting new employees. We do so by analysing Norwegian job advertisements for engineers, registered nurses and trained social workers within both public and private organizations and corporations. As Brint strongly associates engineering with expert professionalism and identifies social work as a possible refuge of social trustee professionalism, these are ideal cases for comparison. Given Brint's framework, advertisements for registered nurses could be just as likely to lean in both directions, as this profession is, on the one hand, a largely public-sector, care-oriented profession, but on the other hand, has a strong emphasis on the specific educational credentials associated with expert professionalism.

Our approach centres on what employing organizations expect when they hire professionals, i.e. a professionalism 'from above' (McLelland, 1990) and not necessarily one that is driven by the professionals themselves. For this reason, we do not define professions in terms of traits such as collegial organization, for example, or whether a professional association controls entry. Drawing on Evetts's (2003) recommendation that sociologists should not 'attempt to draw a hard and fast line between professions and other occupational groups', we start out from an inclusive definition of professions as a knowledge-based category of occupations requiring higher education. Professionalism could mean many things; here, it denotes how employing organizations articulate the competencies, characteristics and values required of professional employees. These definitions have methodological implications for this study. Instead of restricting the analysis to positions that are the exclusive jurisdiction of one profession, we select job advertisements based on those professional backgrounds that the employing organizations deem fit for the positions.

So, what might professionalism look like from the employers' point of view? Our analysis shows that although formal expertise is certainly important and in most cases necessary, it is far from sufficient. A striking feature of the advertisements was that they sought out professionals who were expected to be: (1) both motivated and committed to the job; (2) interested in socializing and cooperating with their colleagues, clients and customers; and (3) prepared to connect and collaborate across organizational and professional boundaries. These findings suggest, first, that employing organizations do not necessarily favour a narrow species of expert professionalism but instead consider a wide array of qualities and motivations. Second, while the findings provide support for Noordegraaf's emphasis on connective capacities, we elaborate on Noordegraaf's notion by pointing out that the abilities to organize and network are also commonly linked to sociability, commitment and motivation. Whereas these findings point to a lasting prevalence of values that the sociology of professions often sorts under the rubrics of professional responsibility and professional commitment, we argue that these notions are notoriously vague. We therefore outline alternative interpretations of today's organizationally embedded professional responsibility.

Theory

Our point of departure is Brint's claim that a *social trustee professionalism* has yielded to an *expert professionalism* during the latter half of the twentieth century. This thesis was originally meant to describe changes in American professionalism from the Progressive Era onwards, but since its formulation in the mid-1990s, it has also been commonly invoked to highlight the importance of specialized expertise in contemporary professionalism in other contexts (Abbott, 2015).

Brint (1994: 8, 36) used the term 'social trustee professionalism' to describe a loosely defined set of values that professionals identified with and used to legitimize their position, and most importantly, such values tended to be expressed within a rhetoric of broader social purpose, public service and a sense of moral superiority. While lawyers and doctors were the main propagators of this version of professionalism in its prime in the early twentieth century, it was also an inclusive repertoire; social workers could use

it to identify themselves with the 'respectable' professional classes, while engineers could strive for the recognition associated with social responsibility. One question for us, then, is whether a similar rhetoric of social trustee professionalism still factors into the way employers envision professional work despite Brint's claim that it has slowly vanished in recent decades.

As the labels suggest, the distinction between social trusteeship and expert professionalism is to some extent based on the importance of expertise. We should note, however, that Brint presents the former as 'a commitment to the public welfare and high ethical standards combined with a claim to specialized authority over a limited sphere of formal knowledge' (1994: 36). Although social trusteeship entails more than specialized formal knowledge, it nonetheless rests upon this kind of expertise.

Expert professionalism, on the other hand, is defined in terms that disregard any wider social purpose, focusing solely on specialized training and skill refinement that can be put to use 'in the service of purposes determined by organizational authorities or market forces' (Brint, 1994: 7). According to Brint, expert professionalism has been particularly appealing to commercial ventures like accounting and engineering, where professionals 'did not feel the need for an ideology that helped to differentiate high-minded professionals from low-minded business people' (Brint, 2015: 92). Thus, in contrast to the inclusive character of social trustee professionalism, this conception of expert professionalism raises the question of whether it is largely relevant for professions in industry and commerce, like engineering, or if it also appeals to professionals in the non-profit or public sectors, including, for instance, trained social workers and registered nurses.

The apparent rise of expert professionalism and demise of social trustee professionalism have often been attributed to the increasing importance of hierarchical organization and a concomitant decline of collegial forms of governance (Muzio and Kirkpatrick, 2011). To some extent, Brint's portrayal of social trustee professionalism echoes the canonical mid-twentieth century definitions of professions as collegial organizations; thus it also draws parallels with Eliot Freidson's (2001) reinvigoration of professionalism as a separate logic, in which professionalism serves as an alternative to both market-based and bureaucratic modes of organizing work.

In Brint's outline, however, hierarchical organization is not detrimental to professionalism per se, but is instead compatible with different varieties of professionalism. Whereas proponents of social trusteeship chided the narrow specialization that pervaded capitalist *industrial* and *commercial* organization, the regulatory state served as an inspiration. Accordingly, social trustee professionalism could be sustained by professions within public welfare organizations and social workers in particular (Brint, 1994: 37).

Brint's claims should not be read as a declensionist narrative. He argues that the core social responsibility of professionals is and should be their technical expertise, not their civic engagement. Moreover, any wider social purpose could just as well be outsourced to specialized entities within an organization. This view of specialist expertise as the main component of professionalism is widespread (cf. Gorman and Sandefur, 2011) but not without its opponents. Theorists like William Sullivan (2015) share the conviction that technical expertise has displaced the ideals of social trusteeship. Their valuations of this outcome differ, however, as Sullivan wishes to uphold the connection between advanced education, service to society and the idea that a profession is a vocation or

calling. Furthermore, Sullivan emphasizes that professions rely on a social contract with the public. Consequently, professional responsibility should not only mean that one must assume responsibility for the quality and standards of the field of practice, but also to do so 'in a way that serves the larger society' (Sullivan and Shulman, 2005: 30).

A contrasting body of literature emphasizes how the rhetoric of professionalism is applied by managers as a way of governing professional conduct from a distance (Fournier, 1999; Hodgson, 2002; Thornborrow and Brown, 2009). According to such views, being a professional is not merely about controlling a specific body of knowledge. It is also about conducting oneself, as Fournier (1999: 285) emphasizes, 'in ways that are recognised as legitimate and worthy of the "professional label" both by the relevant profession itself and by other constituents in that network (e.g. the clients, the state, the market)'. Because 'it is an attractive prospect for an occupation to be considered a profession and for occupational workers to be identified as professionals' (Evetts, 2003: 396), organizations may use a rhetoric of professionalism to motivate employees to act in ways the organization deems appropriate.

All of this underlines the importance of situating the rise of expert professionalism within a broader discussion of the relationship between professions and organizations. The classical Anglo-American sociology of professions presupposed a tension between organizations and professions. In contrast, a continental European tradition (Burrage and Torstendahl, 1990) as well as more recent Anglophone scholarship emphasizes the crucial role of organizations, including both the state and private bureaucracies, in professional development.

Some of these scholars emphasize the ways in which organizations enable new forms of professional cooperation and coordination (Evetts, 2006). Theorists such as Noordegraaf have emphasized that organizations can be resources for professionals to use. In particular, Noordegraaf (2015, 2016; Noordegraaf et al., 2014) highlights the importance of the connective capacities of 'organizing professionalism', that is, how professionals coordinate and cooperate with clients, different parts of the organization, and other professions both within and outside the organization.

The kinds of connective capacities that Noordegraaf describes are mostly acquired skills and methods, not unlike the formalized knowledge of Brint's expert professionalism. However, there might be other aspects of connective capacities that are harder to formalize. Historian of science Steven Shapin (2008) has described the continuous importance of trustworthiness and personal virtue in industrial research organizations during the twentieth century, despite trends supporting institutionalized cooperation and specialized formal knowledge. In Shapin's usage, the term 'virtue' includes the personal abilities, reputations and characteristics along with the interpersonal relationships engineers and scientists deem necessary for conducting research and trusting one another. If virtue is important in such emblems of formalized knowledge, we should expect them to be important elsewhere as well. Similarly, Sullivan has suggested that the prevalence of project teams and flexible networks within large organizations might 'place new demands on workers not just for productivity but for commitment, trustworthiness, and the ability to think for the good of the team and the project' (Sullivan, 2015: 72; see also Adler et al., 2008). The question for us, then, is whether such demands are also put forth by employing organizations when they recruit professionals.

Method

Brint's most recent claims about the prevalence of expert professionalism are based on analyses of speeches given by the leaders of American professional associations (Brint, 2015; Brint and Levy, 1999). However, Brint himself has previously argued that 'professional associations . . . are of secondary importance in the constitution of professions' (Brint, 1994: 24). Likewise, Daniel Muzio and Ian Kirkpatrick emphasize 'the importance of [employing] organizations as key sites or targets for professional development' (Muzio and Kirkpatrick, 2011: 391). If we take these claims seriously, then analysing the speeches by representatives of professional associations might not be the best way to continue this investigation. Therefore, we have opted for another type of utterance that expresses the expectations of professionalism: job advertisements for engineers, registered nurses and trained social workers. Job advertisements are texts that are written precisely for the purpose of defining what is expected from professionals as employees, and they are consequently valuable sources for understanding professionalism(s) as comprised of organizationally embedded ideas.

Job advertisements as a data source have been used in a number of studies of the skills required of ideal employees and the values held by organizations (Harper, 2012; Jørgensen and Rutgers, 2014; Kuokkanen et al., 2013). They have also been used in examinations of marketization in higher education (Fairclough, 1993) and studies on the differences between occupations or employing organizations (Bennett, 2002). Hence, we consider such documents to be valuable sources for exploring organizations' expectations of professionalism.

Despite these advantages, it should be noted that such advertisements do not give access to the applicants' motivations for applying for a particular job, nor do they help us determine what skills employees actually put to use. What the advertisements do give us information about is what the employers expect from employees, what they expect potential employees to be attracted by, and, possibly, what they *want* the potential employees to be motivated by. As such, advertisements reflect *ideal values* (Harper, 2012; Kuokkanen et al., 2013) as they enact two types of goals: (1) making the job appear attractive, and (2) signalling what kind of candidate the employer desires.

Unlike observational data, job advertisements do not give us any direct access to how recruitment processes proceed (i.e. what employers actually emphasize in interviews and how they compare candidates). However, since the criteria mentioned in advertisements may be applied in lawsuits over discrimination or unfair treatment, the criteria must be considered in the evaluation of candidates. This provision is likely to discourage employers from including irrelevant qualities, but it could also (hypothetically) incentivize vaguely defined criteria. For instance, many advertisements state that successful applicants must be personally suitable for the job, which leaves a lot of room for discretion. The vast majority, however, also describe the desirable qualities of prospective employees in far more detail, making it plausible that the advertisements reflect how employers envision their ideal professionals.

We have selected job advertisements for engineers, registered nurses and trained social workers (with a bachelor's degree in social work), which could be expected to differ markedly in how they envision professionals as employees. Given Brint's theorizing

of professionals in public welfare services, one would expect advertisements for social workers in particular to emphasize ideals of social trustee professionalism. In contrast, Brint has argued that the engineering profession has wholeheartedly distanced itself from social trusteeship and embraced expert professionalism instead. Given Brint's framework, the advertisements for registered nurses could be as likely to lean in both directions. As they too address public welfare professionals, they could be expected to emphasize ideals of social trustee professionalism. However, as the ties between a specific education, licensing requirements and professional jurisdiction are far stronger in nursing than in social work (and perhaps even engineering), one could also expect these advertisements to emphasize specialized expertise. These differences make the three sets of job advertisements suitable cases for exploring different versions of professionalism within organizationally embedded professional work.

The data material consisted of a total of 276 randomly selected job advertisements from the two dominant job advertisement websites in Norway (nav.no and finn.no) on a random day in November 2015. Most of these were initially retrieved for a broader research project about competence requirements in the health and social care sector. From this broader research project, we have selected 160 advertisements that were explicitly directed towards registered nurses, and 62 that identified candidates with bachelor's degrees in social work as suitable candidates either directly or as a matter of course.

To allow for a broader comparison for the present article, we retrieved 54 job advertisements for engineers from the online job boards in early 2017 as well as those posted in 2015's October and November issues of the major engineering journal *Teknisk ukeblad* ('Technical Weekly Magazine'), one of the main recruitment channels for engineers in Norway.

The vast majority of advertised positions for registered nurses and social workers were within municipal services, public hospitals or the front-line labour and welfare offices. The engineering advertisements were more evenly distributed among municipalities, state-owned enterprises, governmental agencies, private manufacturers, construction companies and consultancy firms.

Approach

Our approach to analysing the job advertisements involved several steps. First, we specifically looked for how the concepts of 'profession', 'professional' and 'professionalism' were applied in the advertisements. These concepts were not frequently used, but in a few instances, they pointed to a specific occupational group; to a way of acting and performing work, combined with being responsible or efficient; to organizational values (professionalism); or to the collegiate community (professional working environment, or committed, professional and pleasant co-workers).

Therefore, we turned our attention from the rhetorical use of the term 'professionalism' itself to a broader investigation of the competencies and qualities employers required of future employees, and which aspects of the organization the employers emphasized in order to appeal to the jobseekers. By doing so, we combined a theoretically driven approach focused on the prevalence of expert professionalism, social trustee

professionalism and connective or organizational professionalism, and an inductive approach open to a variety of other qualities and competencies.

According to Brint's definition, expert professionalism is a version of professionalism that emphasizes expert knowledge in the service of purposes determined by organizational authorities or market forces. According to this view, professionals are motivated by personal advancement rather than any 'aims' society might have for professional service. We operationalized this definition by focusing on appeals to motivation based on professional or personal self-interest as well as statements that emphasized the applicants' education, certifications, experience or other specific competencies. We also looked at whether the employing organization highlighted career opportunities (or professional development), technological resources or competent co-workers.

Brint's concept of social trustee professionalism depicts professionals as guided by an appreciation of larger social purposes and of serving important social ends. We operationalized this view by singling out statements that envisioned jobseekers with commitments to social purposes, or those that mentioned the social value or the societal impact of the employing organization and its tasks. Although Brint also draws attention to public advocacy as an element of social trustee professionalism, his use of welfare professionals as an example (as those serving the downtrodden and poor) also ties social trusteeship more directly to the job itself. As our data consisted of job advertisements, we focused primarily on social trustee professionalism in the latter sense.

Brint also suggests that the ideals of social trustee professionalism are prominent in public welfare services, and among social workers in particular, whereas expert professionalism dominates capitalist industrial and commercial organizations and the engineering profession. Therefore, we also looked specifically for least likely cases in the form of, for example, advertisements for engineers from private, commercialized organizations appealing to a social trustee professionalism.

In addition to the dichotomy between social trustee and expert professionalism, we coded for statements that stressed competencies that could be sorted under Noordegraaf's and Evetts's concepts of connective and organizational professionalism, i.e. the capacity to work and communicate across organizational and professional divisions. At the same time, and in a more inductive manner, we looked out for whether the advertisements linked these competencies and commitments to other qualities.

In the initial phase, the first author focused on the advertisements for engineers and registered nurses, while the second author focused on the advertisements for social workers. We were both nonetheless familiar with all three sets of job advertisements, and we continuously discussed preliminary findings and adjusted our approaches while analysing the data.

Analysis

The job advertisements typically included a short description of the employer and a list of keywords about the tasks required of the employee. They then listed the required qualifications, and what the employer had to offer. The standardized format of online job board posts also included a section about personal qualities that required employers to consider and reflect on such aspects of potential employees. However, even the shorter

and less standardized advertisements in the *Teknisk ukeblad* mentioned a variety of personal qualities.

Appealing to expert professionalism

Nearly all of the advertisements required that the applicant was able to document expertise that was relevant to the job. What counted as relevant expertise varied, however. For the advertisements for registered nurses, a licence and specific formal education from a university or university college were mandatory, with experience as a preferred addition. In the vast majority of the advertisements addressing social workers, social work was not the only higher education considered relevant. Similarly, many engineering advertisements simply stated that applicants should have relevant educational backgrounds. However, whereas specified formal education and licences were indispensable for applying for a job as a registered nurse, some engineering and social work advertisements stated that relevant experience could compensate for a lack of the preferred specific education.

Important as education and experience may be, however, nearly all of the ads also required a variety of other qualities and, notably, motivations. Some of these were directly related to expertise, signalling that the employers envisioned jobseekers to whom expert professionalism would be appealing. For example, some employers emphasized that they had new technology and equipment. This was perhaps unsurprising in the engineering advertisements, but it was also frequently included in the advertisements for registered nurses. For instance, a hospital ad stated the following: 'We provide comprehensive intensive care medical treatment, including advanced respiratory support and continuous renal replacement therapy, for a population of approximately 100,000 people'.

Similarly, many advertisements underlined exciting opportunities for professional development. For instance, a state-owned property developer stated that they spend a lot of resources on developing co-workers because 'the best workplace is also a continuing education'. The advertised position was described as 'challenging', a recurring theme across the three sectors. For example, a public infrastructure company needed 'co-workers who wish to develop themselves facing new challenges', and a hospital offered a 'challenging and meaningful job'. Similarly, an ad for a palliative nurse stated that 'palliation is an exciting branch consisting of active treatment, nursing and care for patients with incurable disease and short life expectancy'.

Often, opportunities for professional development were linked to the colleagues. Most advertisements for social workers emphasized that they had 'competent and committed co-workers', and comparable phrasings were frequent in the other advertisements as well. Others appealed to ambitions of professional development by linking such interests to the size, reputation and impact of the organization. One ad stated, 'As one of the country's biggest hospitals with 8,500 employees and a large number of professional teams, we have the largest competence community in the region'. Accentuation of size and global networks was even more frequent in the advertisements for engineers, which also often emphasized international connections by writing the advertisements in English. An offshore oil supply company, for instance, presented itself as 'among the world's

leading manufacturers of offshore control cables and high-voltage submarine cables' and offered a 'challenging and inspiring work environment in an international corporation'.

By emphasizing professional development within large or even global organizations and networks, these advertisements associated expertise with connective capacities. At the same time, the focus on size, importance and influence could also point towards societal responsibility. A municipality, for instance, presented its civil engineering projects in the following way: 'We offer challenging and interesting tasks in a municipality that sees rapid development, and which faces several exciting plans and projects involving huge infrastructure measures and transformations that will shape the city's development for the next 100 years'. Hence, even as these advertisements may speak to applicants who want to develop their professional expertise, they also allude to its social ramifications.

Appealing to organizationally mediated social responsibility

Following Brint's thesis, one would expect the advertisements for registered nurses and trained social workers in the public and non-profit sectors to contain references to social trustee professionalism, whereas private-sector engineering advertisements would not. However, the advertisements illustrated that such a sharp sector distinction did not make sense. We found advertisements from commercial consultancy firms strongly appealing to engineers' social responsibility, and advertisements from public hospitals focusing only on registered nurses' specialized and technological expertise.

As we have seen, some advertisements emphasized that the job had consequences well beyond the employing organization. Whereas most of these advertisements presented such influence as a motivating challenge, not all of them framed it explicitly as a matter of professional responsibility. The prevalence of explicit appeals to social responsibility was higher among the advertisements for technical and social work positions than for the advertisements for registered nurses.

This finding suggests that the division between technical or commercial professionals on the one hand and welfare professionals on the other is not as clear-cut as Brint posits. For instance, a municipal public utilities company in charge of wastewater and water supply boasted of 'BIG PROJECTS / LEADING TECHNOLOGY / EXCITING FIELD OF WORK'. The advertisement combined this with an appeal to the potential employee's sense of responsibility for the environment: 'CLEAN WATER - FOR YOU, THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE FUTURE'. Moreover, such appeals to shaping an environmentally friendly future were not restricted to public engineering positions. As a case in point, a company involved in the production of electric vehicles urged prospective employees to 'Shape mobility for a more sustainable future!' Another consulting company offered employees the opportunity to participate in 'environmentally conscious social planning'. Somewhat curiously, a weapons manufacturer emphasized that the company was concerned with 'environmentally friendly demilitarization'.

Many of the advertisements placed the societal responsibility firmly in the hands of the employing organization as a set of values that the entire organization adhered to. The sense of responsibility in these cases was not linked to the collegial organization of ideal-typical social trustee professionalism, but was instead rooted in the values of the

respective bureaucratic organizations. This kind of organizationally mediated social responsibility was also present in the job advertisements for trained social workers and registered nurses. For instance, the ads for positions in the labour and welfare offices started by presenting their vision (to 'give people opportunities') and their goal (to have more people participating in the labour market), and some explicitly appealed to applicants who supported the vision, values and goals of the organization.

The advertisements for registered nurses mentioning societal responsibility generally did so in similarly generic presentations of the values of the respective municipality or regional health authority. An urban municipality, for instance, presented itself as 'competent, open, reliable and socially engaged', while another stated that they 'want people with ambitions – for themselves and for society'. These advertisements for registered nurses illustrate that even in cases where social responsibility is presented as a general objective of the organization, the advertisements may nonetheless appeal to the individual employee's societal engagement. The advertisements for jobs in engineering often spoke directly to the potential employee about how 'you' can create an eco-friendly future, for instance, with clear links to the specific position. Also, the labour and welfare offices often addressed the potential employee directly: 'We are looking for you – you are determined and committed, and wish to take on meaningful and varied responsibilities' or 'want to make a difference'. In these ways, the advertisements appealed to a social engagement marked not only by the applicants' loyalty, but also by their personal commitment.

Appealing to motivation and commitment

Despite the frequency of explicit appeals to societal responsibility, this theme did not dominate the advertisements. The way it was most commonly framed, however, exemplifies a wider tendency: when the advertisements mentioned social responsibility, it was usually by appealing to the applicant's motivation, interests and drive. Social responsibility was therefore posited as one aspect that makes a job attractive and motivating. While such calls for civic engagement were undeniably featured in a substantial number of advertisements, appeals to engagement in a wider sense of dedication, motivation and enthusiasm formed a remarkably more dominant theme. Some advertisements combined these, like a public infrastructure agency stating that they 'emphasize loyalty to the company's ethical guidelines and our values which are open, professional and engaged'. Likewise, a humanitarian organization offered registered nurses 'organizational experience as part of the world's largest humanitarian organization', appealing to both the candidates' ambitions for professional development and a sense of being part of something important.

In some cases, the advertisements emphasized engagement in itself. A construction engineering company was searching for someone who 'shows engagement and is good-humoured, even in demanding situations'. Another company needed a 'new, engaged co-worker'. In such cases, the advertisements established clear links between enthusiasm, engagement and commitment on the one hand, and the ideal of a positive and sociable colleague on the other. Nevertheless, other advertisements, particularly advertisements for staff with managerial responsibilities, stressed the ability to motivate *others*.

Moreover, advertisements for trained social workers emphasized that employees should be able to inspire confidence, motivation and personal change, requirements associated with the task of establishing working relationships with clients.

Some advertisements explicitly emphasized a commitment to the relevant expert knowledge. An engineering position, for instance, required 'strong interest and motivation for machine control' as well as a 'good-humoured and positive attitude'. A public infrastructure company stated that they 'need your knowledge and go-ahead-spirit!' A hospital wanted to hire 'you' if 'you enjoy practising the entire range of the nursing profession, like to work with senior citizens and you are good-humoured'. A municipality asked specifically for 'engagement in social work'.

In these cases, the distinction between what the employing organization offers and what it expects breaks down. While the advertisements frequently requested commitment and enthusiasm, they also (and often simultaneously) presented these traits as something the employer was actually offering the potential employee. When the advertisements listed personal characteristics, they were often formulated in terms of what the potential employee was eager to do; likewise, when they listed what the employer could offer the potential employee, they often mentioned competent and committed colleagues.

At one level, these two-pronged appeals to motivation answer the demands of the genre: job advertisements also aim to attract applicants. This notwithstanding, the appeals to engagement and motivation suggest that employers are concerned with far more than specialized knowledge and formal expertise in this respect. The qualities they value constitute more than a narrow expert professionalism. Thus, in addition to 'knowing their stuff', the employees should also show interest and dedication.

However, it is far from clear what engagement actually means to the employers, and whether they consciously distinguish between civic engagement, commitment to the well-being of their clients, strong enthusiasm for professional knowledge or simply being a good-humoured addition to the workplace community. There is a variety not only of meanings but also of values and objects to be committed to: the future, the environment, health, the local community, professional challenges, personal development, service user involvement, patients' and other citizens' well-being, the opportunity to work for a large international company, scenic surroundings or even a nice office space. Engagement, motivation and commitment, then, were associated not only with civic engagement, but also with a host of other issues. This could mean that, in the eyes of the employer, commitment is not easily separated from qualifications or, as we shall see, the ability to function in an organizational setting.

Connective capacities and professional commitment

A particularly prominent link between engagement and organizational setting can be found in the way most advertisements highlighted commitment to and enthusiasm about connecting different aspects or areas of the organization. Around half of the engineering ads highlighted interdisciplinarity as an attractive feature of the employing organization, like how one municipality could 'offer a job in an enthusiastic and interdisciplinary work environment that has a high score on job satisfaction'. Along similar lines, a construction

engineering company stated that 'it is encouraging and fulfilling to work with exciting projects with many interdisciplinary challenges'. Although slightly fewer of the nursing advertisements mentioned interdisciplinarity, it was still mentioned more often than stereotypical values like 'care'. For instance, a regional health authority characteristically boasted that they 'offer a very good and interdisciplinary work environment with highly competent colleagues'. As we can see, these advertisements also linked interdisciplinarity to a good work environment and amiable colleagues.

In the social work advertisements, interdisciplinarity was usually not mentioned as a workplace quality. Instead, these advertisements asked for team workers in a more general way. Nearly all of the advertisements specified that the potential employee should possess skills in teamwork and interprofessional collaboration, and our findings were similar for the engineering and nursing ads. Likewise, the attention to interdisciplinarity in nursing and engineering formed part of a wider rhetoric of cooperation, communication and networking. If we combine the valuation of interdisciplinarity with (1) the ability to communicate with patients, next-of-kin or clients, (2) the capacity to see the value of documentation and digital systems, (3) the motivation to cooperate across sections, firms and institutions, and (4) an understanding of the value of regional and international networks, different kinds of connectedness marked the vast majority of all advertisements.

The combination and overlap between this form of organizing professionalism and the emphasis on the committed and enthusiastic co-worker paint a picture of professional work that includes more than specialized expert knowledge. Potential employees are expected to transgress their own field of expertise, and communicate and organize work across disciplinary and organizational boundaries. To some extent, the demand for such abilities supports the claim that Noordegraaf has made about *connective* or *organizing* professionalism. However, the recurring importance of professional commitment or engagement points beyond Noordegraaf's definition, which focuses more strictly on capacities, capabilities and skills. On the one hand, the ideals of professional commitment or engagement more closely resemble the classic formulations of professionalism, including Brint's social trustee professionalism, by highlighting the individual commitment of the professional. The focus on interdisciplinarity, the organization and network, on the other hand, is far removed from the classic ideals of an independent professional practitioner.

Discussion

While our analysis reveals the persistence or, possibly, the revival of social purposes in the recruitment of professionals, these social purposes are often organizationally mediated. Although the advertisements alluded to wider societal values, these were closely identified with the employing organizations' mandates or public images, be it healthy cities or inclusive labour markets. Our findings thus underpin Brint's argument that it is impossible to understand any form of social trustee professionalism 'without appreciating the fundamental significance of organizations for absorbing society's claims on professionals and for shaping the contours of professional responsibilities' (2015: 105).

This organizationally mediated social responsibility also supports Brint's expectation that social trusteeship operates at the organizational level. Nevertheless, our findings are at odds with Brint's depiction of *how* the employing organizations normally shape professional responsibility, namely by outsourcing this kind of responsibility to specialized departments while professionals focus on their respective narrow areas of expertise. Instead, we have found that when recruiting professionals, not even the most commercialized private consultancy firms ask merely for expertise. When emphasizing expertise, they often expect employees to be motivated and enthusiastic about particular tasks. This could mean that, in the eyes of the employer, commitment and engagement are not easily separated from technical expertise. In a similar vein, employing organizations also request and appeal to identification with organizational missions or mandates. Although social trusteeship is firmly embedded in the organization, it is also expected to be an important motivation for the individual applicant.

These findings also point to a lasting prevalence of values that the sociology of professions often sorts under the rubrics of professional responsibility and professional commitment. At the same time, however, they may point towards phenomena that organizational psychologists conceptualize as 'work engagement' (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008), or to the sociological studies of 'fun at work' (Fincham, 2016). Whereas such studies generally focus on employees' experiences and need fulfilment, we suggest that engagement and fun are also interpreted by employing organizations as desirable professional qualities. While acknowledging that these notions and the boundaries between them are notoriously vague, our analysis ultimately suggests that there are several varieties and images of professional responsibility, commitment and engagement at work.

One variety is the obligation to care for one's professional competence because of the social ramifications of one's work. While this certainly invokes key aspects of expert professionalism, it also resonates with an expectation of professionals assuming responsibility not only for the quality of one's own work, but also for the entire field's social contract (Sullivan and Shulman, 2005: 30). The advertisements did not, however, articulate the importance of one's work as an appeal to engage in public debate or politics. It would, of course, be truly astonishing if job advertisements encouraged professionals to be whistle-blowers or criticize their employer in public, and the absence can neither support nor refute claims about the actual conditions of professionals engaging in public debate. Still, appeals to organizationally mediated social responsibility may well dampen rather than foster other aspects of social trustee professionalism. For instance, such interests might be at odds with another recurring theme in the advertisements: a clear dedication to both the required tasks and the clients, service users, customers or the public. As Brint (2015) argues, if the social responsibility of expert professionalism is to employ craft skills to improve the circumstances of the clients, stressing loyalty to the employing organization's mandate might foster tensions between these two central aspects of expert professionalism.

Appeals to social responsibility – or to engagement and enthusiasm, for that matter – might also be ideal for sorting out applicants who are formally qualified but seem grumpy or just a bad fit. This latter interpretation of social trusteeship and engagement as a form of sociability points to another way in which the advertisements envisioned professional responsibility, namely that professional services are collectively produced. Such

advertisements would appeal to professionals who acknowledge that their own specialist skills are but parts of wider arrays of necessary skills, an image of professional responsibility that fits Brint's notion of the 'collective organizational worker' (2015: 100). Professional responsibility in this sense requires a totality of efforts provided through interprofessional coordination and collaboration, and in many cases also involving the crossing of organizational boundaries.

This finding provides support for Noordegraaf's emphasis on the connective capacities that are required of professionals working in interdisciplinary teams and multifunctional organizations. Although this departs from the image of the professional as a specialized expert, such capacities might have become more important precisely because of increased specialization. Registered nurses, for instance, must be able to coordinate and advise patients as they are referred between general practitioners, emergency departments, specialists, hospitals, municipal facilities and labyrinthine welfare bureaucracies. Likewise, case management requires social workers to coordinate components of a service delivery system.

Whereas the kinds of connective capacities that Noordegraaf has in mind mostly relate to acquired skills and practices, our findings illustrate that connective capacities may also require relational and emotional work. In other words, connective capacities may necessitate demonstrations of personal virtue and trustworthiness in relation to clients, managers and the members of the broader society. For instance, in order to provide patients or clients with the correct information in a sensitive way and establish trusting relationships in confusing situations, it is necessary to feel (or display) a certain level of commitment.

The emotional and relational aspects of connective capacities also extend to colleagues, including co-workers from other professions. We found that the ability to organize and network was commonly linked to commitment, engagement and being good-humoured or sociable. This recurring combination might be understood as a way to ensure that the organization recruits colleagues who get along in order to allow cooperation to run smoothly. This is reminiscent of the notion of 'collaborative communities' (Adler et al., 2008), in which co-workers share a strong commitment to the welfare of each other. Interestingly, Sullivan (2015) suggests extending this commitment beyond such 'collaborative communities' to the public at large by using workplace solidarity to foster societal solidarity. In contrast, our findings might imply that employers think of this relationship the other way around: that is, that a common commitment to broader social purposes could make it easier to work together as a team. Shared social responsibility, as mediated by the organization, could enable connective capacities.

As our study has been limited to Norway and to a synchronic analysis, we do not challenge Brint's interpretation of American professionalism. Certain aspects of Nordic societies, including high levels of generalized trust, universalist welfare states, egalitarian democracy and tripartite cooperation between employers, trade unions and government, could make employers particularly susceptible to appeals to social trusteeship. Such questions of Nordic exceptionalism would be an interesting line of enquiry for further comparative research. Nonetheless, ours and similar findings in the Nordic countries (Kuokkanen et al., 2013) suggest that certain aspects of social trustee professionalism may be at work even in employers' visions of the ideal employee.

Conclusion

While employing organizations certainly envision prospective employees as expert professionals, many also present their organizations as having a social purpose; in addition, they often present such higher purposes as an attractive feature of the organization. Thus, civic and social engagement appear both as an ideal and as a marketing device for attracting the most desirable jobseekers. Seen this way, social purposes are instruments, not commitments. Nevertheless, the mere existence of appeals to social and professional responsibility in public service and private commercialized organizations alike indicates the presence of persistent, albeit transformed, versions of trustee professionalism.

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Résumé

Dans cet article, nous examinons comment les organismes employeurs exposent les compétences, les valeurs et les qualités personnelles qu'ils attendent des professionnels, et comment ils envisagent et font appel à certaines identités professionnelles lors du recrutement de nouveaux employés. L'article s'inspire de la thèse influente du sociologue Steven Brint, selon laquelle le travail professionnel à la fois consiste en une expertise spécialisée et est légitimé en tant que telle. Avec la montée en puissance des grandes organisations, les professionnels ne s'identifient plus comme les garants sociaux décrits par la sociologie classique des professions. Si l'on accepte les affirmations de Brint et d'autres auteurs selon lesquelles les employeurs et les organisations modèlent de plus en plus le professionnalisme et le travail professionnel, il est essentiel de comprendre à quoi ressemble le professionnalisme du point de vue des employeurs et, en particulier, si ces derniers ne s'intéressent qu'à la seule qualité professionnelle d'expert. Nous en explorons les implications en analysant des offres d'emploi en Norvège pour ingénieurs, travailleurs sociaux qualifiés et infirmières diplômées au sein d'organisations aussi bien publiques que privées d'employeurs, c'est-à-dire d'espaces professionnels que Brint associe respectivement au professionnalisme d'expertise (*expert professionalism*) et au professionnalisme fiduciaire (*social trustee professionalism*). Notre analyse révèle qu'aussi bien les organismes de service public que les organismes commerciaux privés en appellent à la responsabilité sociale et à l'engagement personnel, ce qui indique la présence de versions persistantes, bien que transformées, du professionnalisme fiduciaire.

Mots-clés

Employeurs, infirmières diplômées, ingénieurs, interdisciplinarité, organisation, professionnalisme fiduciaire, travailleurs sociaux

Resumen

En este artículo, exploramos cómo las organizaciones empleadoras articulan las competencias, los valores y las cualidades personales que esperan que posean los

profesionales, y cómo imaginan y apelan a ciertas identidades profesionales al reclutar a nuevos empleados. El artículo se inspira en la influyente tesis planteada por el sociólogo Steven Brint, según la cual, el trabajo profesional consiste en una experiencia especializada a la vez que está legitimado en tanto experiencia especializada. Con el surgimiento de las grandes organizaciones, los profesionales ya no se identifican como los gestores sociales descritos por la sociología clásica de las profesiones. Si aceptamos las afirmaciones de Brint y otros autores de que la dirección y las organizaciones son cada vez más influyentes al modelar el profesionalismo y al trabajo profesional, es fundamental comprender cómo se ve el profesionalismo desde el punto de vista de los empleadores y, más específicamente, si los empleadores están interesados únicamente en la cualidad profesional de experto. Se exploran estas implicaciones analizando los anuncios de trabajo en Noruega para ingenieros, trabajadores sociales capacitados y enfermeras tituladas en el seno de organizaciones empleadoras tanto públicas como privadas, es decir, espacios profesionales que Brint asocia con el profesionalismo experto y profesionalismo fiduciario, respectivamente. El análisis revela que tanto las organizaciones de servicio público como las privadas de tipo comercial apelan a la responsabilidad social y al compromiso personal, lo que indica la presencia de versiones persistentes, aunque transformadas, del profesionalismo fiduciario.

Palabras clave
Empleadores, enfermeras tituladas, ingenieros, interdisciplinariedad, organización, profesionalismo fiduciario, trabajadores sociales