

Kathleen  
Eisenhardt  
*Stanford University*

The Lean Startup:  
Past, Present, and Future

#LeanAOM

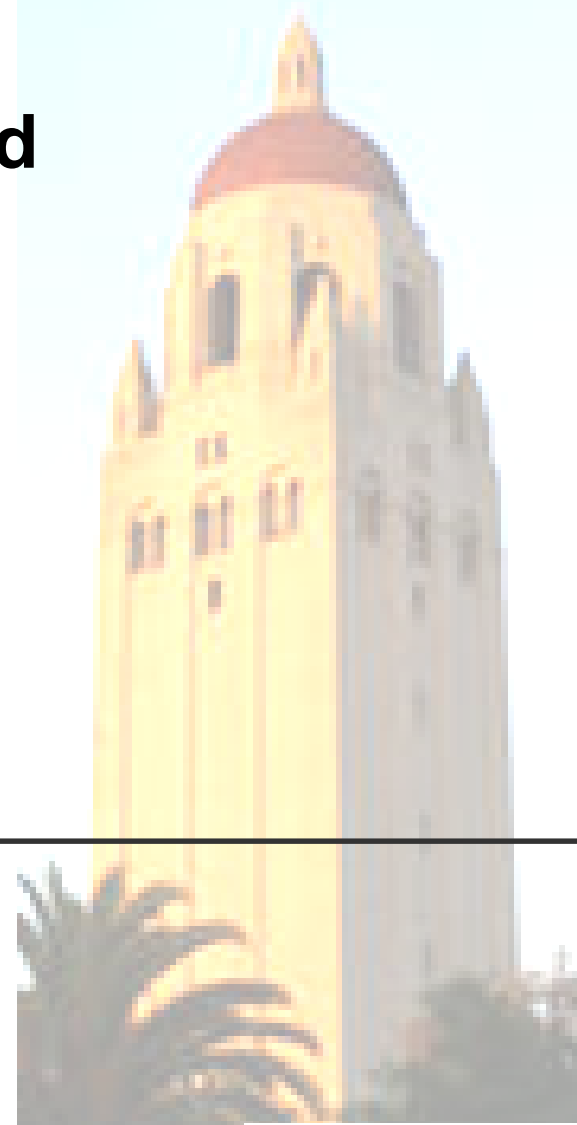
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# The Lean Startup: Past, Present and Future

**Kathleen M. Eisenhardt**  
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# LEAN STARTUP ESSENTIALS



## ■ Experimentation

- Product focused
- Customer centric

## ■ Rapid Iteration

- Minimally viable product

## ■ Learning

- Confirm and next step e.g., Step through the biz model canvas

## ■ In short, all about action/doing

# PROGRESS ON LEAN STARTUP



## ■ WELL-KNOWN IN RESEARCH LITERATURE

- Contingency theory of Lawrence & Lorsch in 1960's
- Lean manufacturing in 1990s'
- And more since then

## ■ WELL PACKAGED BY PRACTITIONERS

- Blank, Reis, Osterwalder, etc.
- Well done but not much underlying theoretical argument



## ■ STRATEGY AS LOGIC OF OPPORTUNITY

- Not positioning, not RBV
- Dynamic capabilities –(Teece, Helfat, Eisenhardt, Zoott etc) - LS logic is implicit

## ■ ORGANIZATION DESIGN AT EDGE OF CHAOS

- Loose coupling (Weick 1995)
- Simple rules (Bingham & Eisenhardt 2011)
- Complex adaptive systems – LS is silent

## ■ PROCESSES AS CENTRAL

- Bricolage & effectuation: Make do with resources on hand (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Sarasvarthy, 2002))
- Learning: Improvisation (Baker et al., 2003), experimentation (Miner et al., 2001), trial & error (Bingham et al., 2007)
- LS on point but superficial



## ■ EXPERIMENTATION

- Fit of problems, experimentation strategies and institutional form – (DJI V. 3DR (Bremner & Eisenhardt, 2018))

## ■ PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESSES

- How to put processes like learning to work
- Strategy and business models as complex, novel design problems – (2 SIDED MARKETS (Ott & Eisenhardt, 2018))

## ■ CAPABILITY BUILDING

- Capability + Strategy - (SPOTIFY V. PANDORA, STITCH FIX V. RENT THE RUNWAY -(Tidhar & Eisenhardt, 2018))



## ***SUPERIOR STRATEGISTS*** (Bingham & Eisenhardt, SS, 2018)

- **SEE BIGGER PLAYING FIELD**
  - Substitutes, complements, etc not just rivals
- **SHAPE THE PLAYING FIELD**
- **PLAY THE CORRECT GAME**
  - Ecosystems, marketplaces, VC=0
- **IDENTIFY/RESOLVE BOTTLENECKS**

# SUMMARY



Lean startup is igniting interest at nexus  
of strategy, structure and process.

Basics of “doing” are known but much  
room for theoretical elaboration & depth.

Basics of “thinking” are wide open.





# Thank You

Kathleen Eisenhardt