

Culture and Organization

November 2023 – Books Available for Review



***Culture and Organization* publishes four types of book review:**

1. ***Standard Book Reviews*** of recent publications that relate to the broad themes and critical ethos of the journal. (2000 words)
2. ***Comparative Book Reviews*** of two or three books (3000 words). Suggested combinations of the current books available are at the bottom of this document.
1. ***'Relevance to CMS' Book Reviews*** in which reviewers engage critically with classic, new, overlooked or counter-intuitive texts that hold relevance to the field of critical management and organization (1500 words)
3. ***'In Dialogue' Book Reviews*** (3000 words) – reviews written in dialogue between two reviewers or a review and the author of the book.

If you are interested in reviewing one of more of the following books, please contact the Book Review Editor (Peter Watt) via peter.watt@lancaster.ac.uk

N.B., We are also open to suggestions of books for review. Please contact Pete on the above address if there is a book you would like to be considered for review outside of this list.



Sven Lindqvist, *Dig Where You Stand: How to Research a Job*, Repeater Books: London, 2022. 394 Pages.

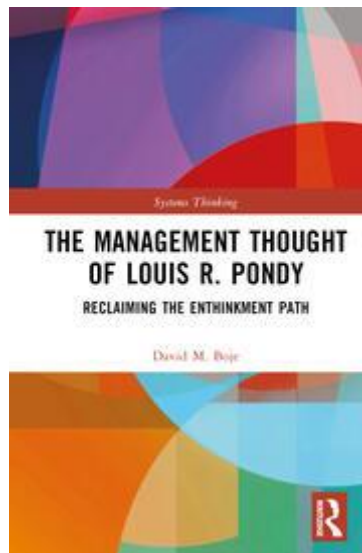
On the 45th anniversary of its initial publication in Swedish, Sven Lindqvist's polemic on history, politics and power is finally available in English for the first time.

This volume brings *Dig Where You Stand*, Sven Lindqvist's classic text on history, power and politics, to English-speaking audiences for the first time.

First published in 1978, *Dig Where You Stand* is a rallying cry for workers to become researchers, to follow the money, take on the role as experts on their job, and “dig” out its hidden histories in order to take a vital step towards social and economic transformation.

A how-to guide that inspired an entire movement, it makes the case that everyone – not just academics – can learn how to critically and rigorously explore history, especially their own history, and in doing so find a blueprint for how to transform society for the better.

In a world where the balance of power is overwhelmingly stacked against the working-class, *Dig Where You Stand*'s manifesto for the empowerment of workers through self-education, historical research and political solidarity is as important and relevant today as it was in 1978.

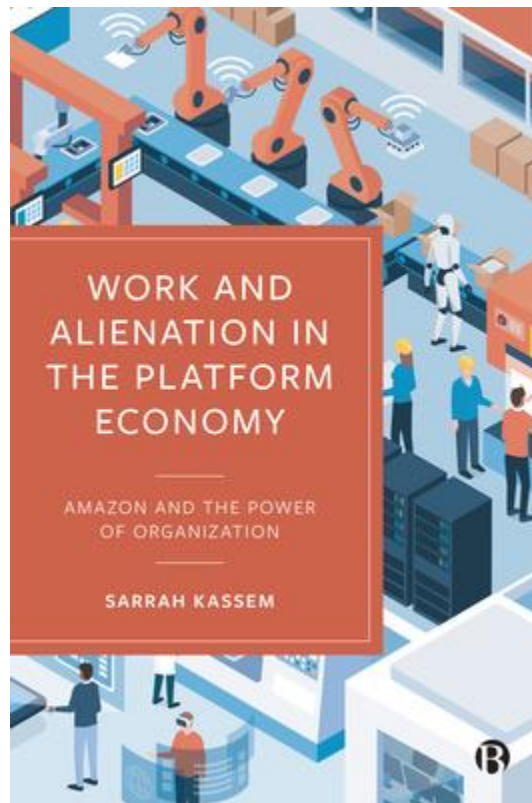


David M. Boje, *The Management Thought of Louis R. Pondy: Reclaiming the Entthinkment Path*, Routledge, 2023: London. 242 Pages. ISBN 9781032189673

Louis R. Pondy was a leading management and organizational studies scholar whose work on open systems helped launch and define the future of the field. This book offers an assessment of Pondy's contribution, through critical reflection on what happened to the relationship between conflict theory and "beyond open systems."

Exploring the ways in which Louis R. Pondy theorizes conflict and systems, and how he challenged the status quo paradigms, this book offers a historical analysis on Pondy's work and the relation to contemporary management theory. The author develops a Triple Loop framework, building on Pondy's theories as well as the work of Gregory Bateson, to demonstrate a beyond-open-systems approach and existing single- or double-loop systems.

Demonstrating the value and legacy of Louis R. Pondy, this book will have international appeal to researchers, academics and students across management disciplines and organizational studies, including systems thinking and conflict resolution.

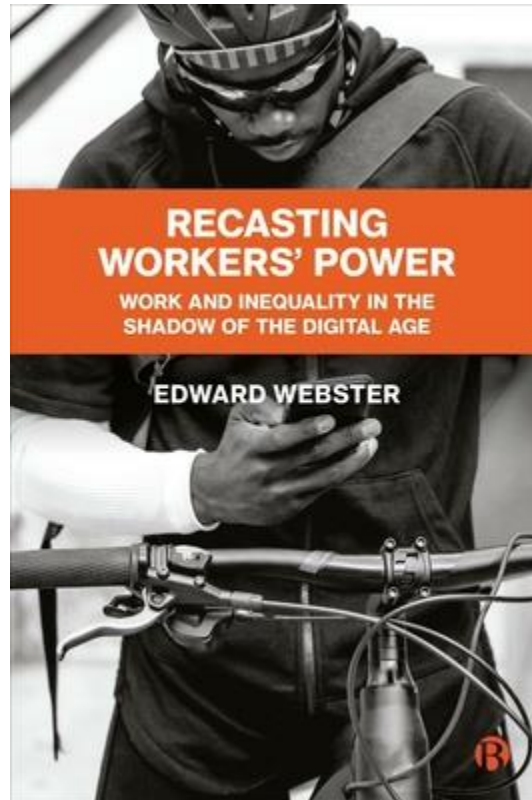


Sarrah Kassem, *Work and Alienation in the Platform Economy Amazon and the Power of Organization*. Bristol University Press: Bristol, 2023. 222 Pages. ISBN 978-1529226553

Once hidden behind the veils of entrepreneurship, it is now clear that platforms are reshaping the world of work, and Amazon has been a forerunner in setting the trend.

This book examines two key and contrasting Amazon platforms that differ in how they organize workers: its e-commerce platform and digital labor platform (Mechanical Turk). With access to the people who are working at the heart of these platforms, it explores how different working conditions alienate workers, and how, despite these conditions, workers organize within their political-economic contexts to express their agency in traditional and alternative ways.

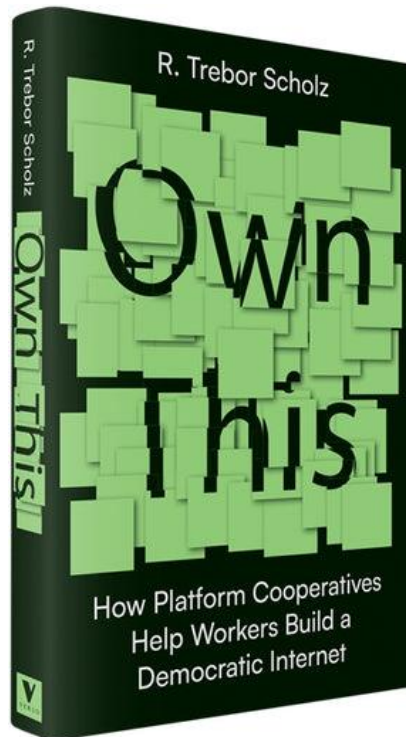
Written for social scientists studying and researching the platform economy, this is a timely and important analysis of work and workers on the (digital) shop floor.



Edward Webster and Lynford Dor, *Recasting Workers' Power: Work and Inequality in the Shadow of the Digital Age*. Bristol University Press: Bristol, 2023. 200 Pages. ISBN 978-1529218794

Much of the debate on the future of work has focused on responses to technological trends in the Global North, with little evidence on how these trends are impacting work and workers in the Global South.

Drawing on a rich selection of ethnographic studies of precarious work in Africa, this innovative book discusses how globalisation and digitalisation are drivers for structural change and examines their implications for labour. Bringing together global labour studies and inequality studies, it explores the role of digital technology in new business models, and ways in which digitalisation can be harnessed for counter mobilisation by the new worker.



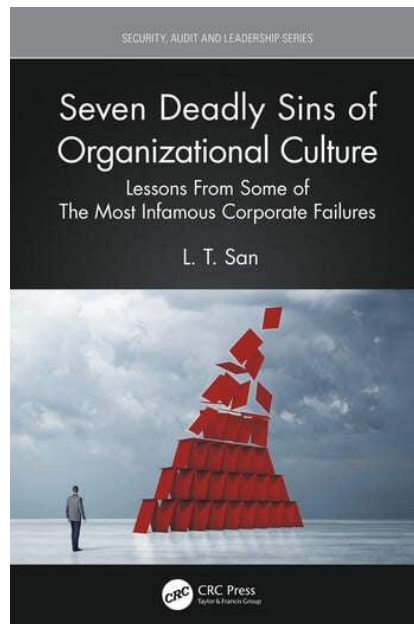
R. Trebor Scholz, *Own This!: How Platform Cooperatives Help Workers Build a Democratic Internet*. Verso Books: New York, 2023. 240 Pages. ISBN: 978-1839764554

What if taxi drivers in New York City or rickshaw operators in Bangalore could start a worker-owned and-operated alternative to Uber with stable hourly wages?

Platform cooperatives reimagine a world where domestic workers can double their income by establishing their own platform—an internet where platforms such as Twitch, Twitter, and Roblox were owned by their streamers, users, and creators. What if small fishing communities in Mexico or farmers in Kerala had the power to determine what data they collected about their work and how they utilized that data?

Platform cooperatives are not a figment of the utopian imagination, but rather a reality that is transforming industries today. Collectives that leverage technology offer an urgent and practical solution to shift how businesses are owned and controlled, allowing workers to make decisions together. In this book, researcher and activist Trebor Scholz explores how these new forms of business, powered by peer principles, are paving the way for a more equitable economy that benefits everyone.

Own This! sets out a program that could change the ways we live, work, and organize.

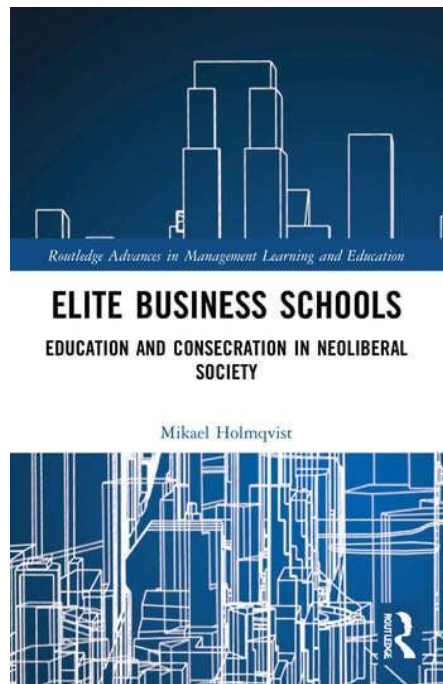


L.T. San, *Seven Deadly Sins of Organizational Culture: Lessons from some of the Most Infamous Corporate Failures*. CRC Press: Florida, 2023. 142 Pages. ISBN 978-1032265469

This book is about the primary symptoms present in a dysfunctional culture that could have devastating outcomes for any organization. The book outlines each of the seven sins in each chapter.

Each of the first seven chapters starts with a famous quote related to each of the sins and then immediately recounts stories ripped from the headlines describing well-known corporate failures but with a personal touch from former employees who experienced those stories from inside the company.

The seven sins of organizational culture are linked with seven different corporate scandals that serve as a "lesson learned" as well as seven stories of organizations that have been successful.

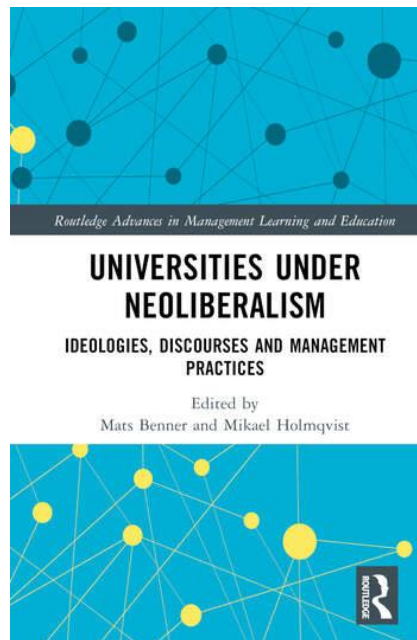


Mikael Holmqvist, *Elite Business Schools: Education and Consecration in Neoliberal Society*. Routledge: London, 2023. 206 Pages. ISBN 978-1032110356

Social scientists are paying increasing attention to the business and financial elites: There's a great need to understand who these elites are, what they do, and what makes them tick, as individuals but also as a class. By examining elite business schools, the institutions that train and prepare people to assume important leadership and decision-making positions in business, finance and related sectors, we may also learn how the economic elites are made. A key argument in this book is that elite schools are known to create powerful groups in society, offering them the intellectual and analytical means to act as leaders, but, most importantly, the social, moral and aesthetic skills that are deemed necessary to exercise power; in all essential respects elite schools consecrate people. By dominating much of higher education today, and by doing so in a way that creates and reproduces a market-based organization and control of society, elite business schools represent certain interests and ideologies that affect the lives of most people. In understanding how the modern economy is run, elite business schools, therefore, represent critical study objects.

This book, based on an in-depth study of the Stockholm School of Economics (SSE), offers a sociological analysis of the world of elite business schools. Specifically, this book examines the consecration of SSE's students from a number of perspectives and in a number of situations, focusing on student union activities, school culture, faculty behavior, teaching, courses and alumni events, noting the symbolic importance of economics and particularly the school's unique relation among the world's business schools to the Nobel Prize.

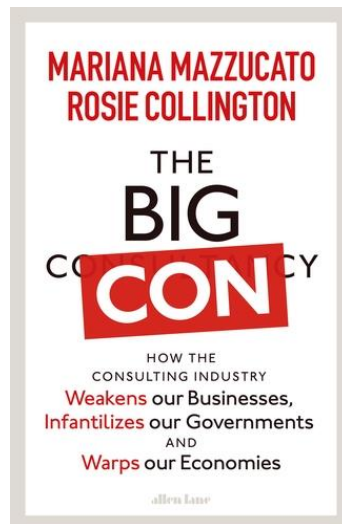
The book addresses the topics with regards to the sociology of elites, management education and organizational studies and will be of interest to researchers, academics, and students also interested in business history, higher education studies, and sociology of education.



Mats Benner, Mikael Holmqvist (Eds), *Universities under Neoliberalism Ideologies, Discourses and Management Practices*. Routledge: London, 2023. 148 Pages. ISBN: 978-1032159294

The COVID-19 pandemic, the surge of populism, the climate crisis and many other destabilizing factors in our time, all point at the expectation of trustworthy knowledge and reliable organization devoted to knowledge production and dissemination. However, universities remain enmeshed in economic liberalization and ensuing cultural struggles where their funding, governance and practices reflect market imprints – even academic ideals such as originality, or social ideals such as relevance have been transformed into measurable units and thereby risk losing their historical sway. This predicament is the focus of this book.

The book explores the rise of neo-liberalization in academic system in a highly unlikely place: Sweden, a country with a strong social democratic tradition and a long history of state regulation of higher education. As an advanced welfare state with a powerful labour movement and a large public sector, market ideals and practices have been carefully curtailed historically. This notwithstanding, a neoliberal university model has evolved there, reshaping notions of academic identities, institutional directions and notions of quality. This edited collection will be of value to researchers, academics and students with an interest in organizational studies, governance, management, higher education, sociology and politics.



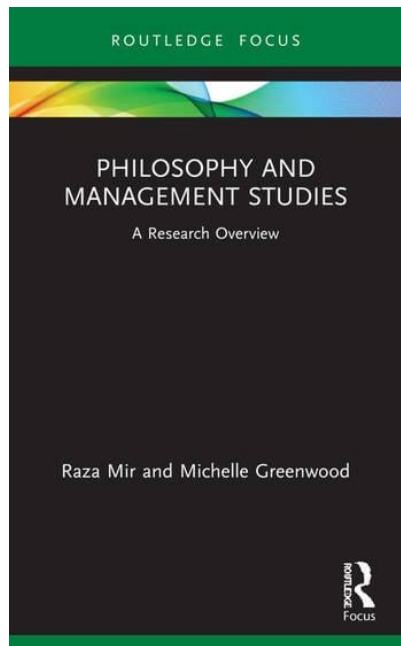
Mariana Mazzucato and Rosie Collington, *The Big Con How the Consulting Industry Weakens our Businesses, Infantilizes our Governments and Warps our Economies*. Allen Lane: London, 2023. 369 Pages. ISBN 978-0241573082

There is an entrenched relationship between the consulting industry and the way business and government are managed today which must change.

Mariana Mazzucato and Rosie Collington show that our economies' reliance on companies such as McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group, Bain & Company, PwC, Deloitte, KPMG and EY stunts innovation, obfuscates corporate and political accountability and impedes our collective mission of halting climate breakdown.

The 'Big Con' describes the confidence trick the consulting industry performs in contracts with hollowed-out and risk-averse governments and shareholder value-maximizing firms. It grew from the 1980s and 1990s in the wake of reforms by both the neoliberal right and Third Way progressives, and it thrives on the ills of modern capitalism, from financialization and privatization to the climate crisis. It is possible because of the unique power that big consultancies wield through extensive contracts and networks - as advisors, legitimators and outsourcers - and the illusion that they are objective sources of expertise and capacity. To make matters worse, our best and brightest graduates are often redirected away from public service into consulting. In all these ways, the Big Con weakens our businesses, infantilizes our governments and warps our economies.

Mazzucato and Collington expertly debunk the myth that consultancies always add value to the economy. With a wealth of original research, they argue brilliantly for investment and collective intelligence *within* all organizations and communities, and for a new system in which public and private sectors work innovatively for the common good. We must recalibrate the role of consultants and rebuild economies and governments that are fit for purpose.

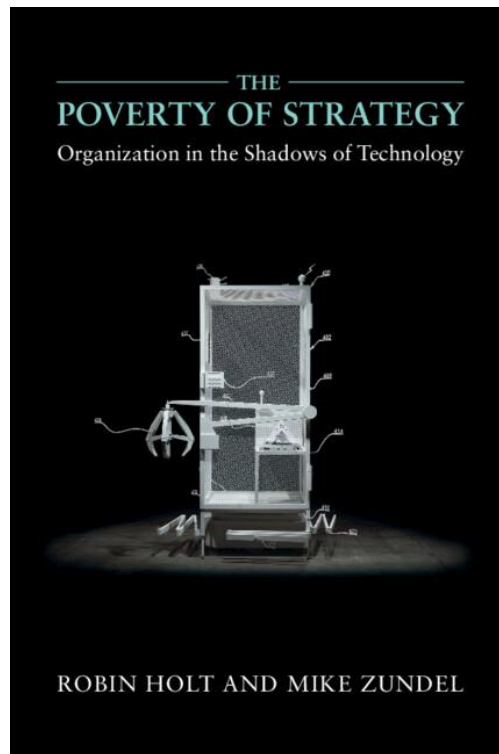


Raza Mir and Michelle Greenwood, *Philosophy and Management Studies: A Research Overview*. Routledge: London, 2023. 116 Pages. ISBN 978-1032073637

Irrespective of whether one thinks of philosophy explicitly, each organizational researcher is a philosopher. A philosophical position is predicated on a variety of approaches relating to ontology, epistemology, methodology, ethics, and political positions. Depending on where one stands with regard to these philosophical building blocks, their orientation may be characterized as positivist, realist, critical-realist, and constructivist, with pragmatist and political considerations weighing in as well. Also, management theories all inhabit the same spectrum of philosophical positions that enrich them and add to their relevance to the world of firms and organizations. This book provides a broad-based commentary on the terrain of philosophy as it pertains to management studies, especially for the relatively unfamiliar organizational theorist.

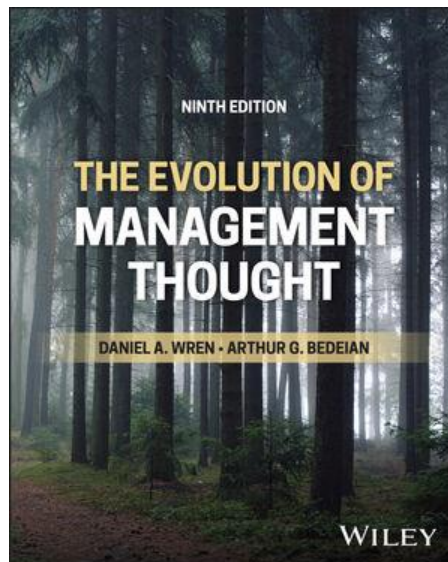
This book serves as a succinct overview of the field of management philosophy as well as a roadmap for those readers who wish to explore the terrain further. The book argues that all knowledge inquiry invokes philosophy and philosophical thinking, and that the artificial separation between philosophy and social science is fallacious. Just as philosophy is everywhere, so is power, and for better or worse they go hand in hand. Hence, philosophical positions are political positions. The authors do not shy from addressing the politics of their own research practice or the subjects of their inquiry.

Philosophy and Management Studies targets a new generation of management researchers, whose interest in philosophy vastly exceeds their resources to engage with it, partly because of their unfamiliarity with its often mystifying and outsider-unfriendly conventions. It seeks to bridge the chasm between interest in philosophy in organizational studies and knowledge about it. It is not for the trained philosopher or the expert, but for a relative newcomer.



Robin Holt and Mike Zundel, *The Poverty of Strategy: Organization in the Shadows of Technology*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2023. 275 Pages. ISBN 978-1107150324

At least since the ancient Greeks, strategists have sought to direct and distinguish organized activity through planned, rational decision-making, through the imaginative creation of vision, or through the assertion of will. In all cases, argue Holt and Zundel, strategy impoverishes, not because it only ever offers limited view of organized life, but because it is dedicated to concealing these limits behind grand generalities. The situation is exacerbated when machines and algorithms, not humans, organize. Holt and Zundel draw on philosophy, literature, media theory, art, mathematics, computing, and military thinking in an attempt to rescue strategy by isolating what, they argue, remains its essence: strategy is a continual organizational struggle towards authenticity. This, too, is a condition of poverty, but one that sets in place an unhomely condition of questionability as opposed to one of distinctive settlement. It is, argue Holt and Zundel, the sole gift of strategy to thoughtfully refuse rather than impose, organizational imperatives.



Daniel A. Wren and Arthur G. Bedeian, *The Evolution of Management Thought* (9th Edition). Wiley: New Jersey, 2024. 432 Pages. ISBN 978-1394202317

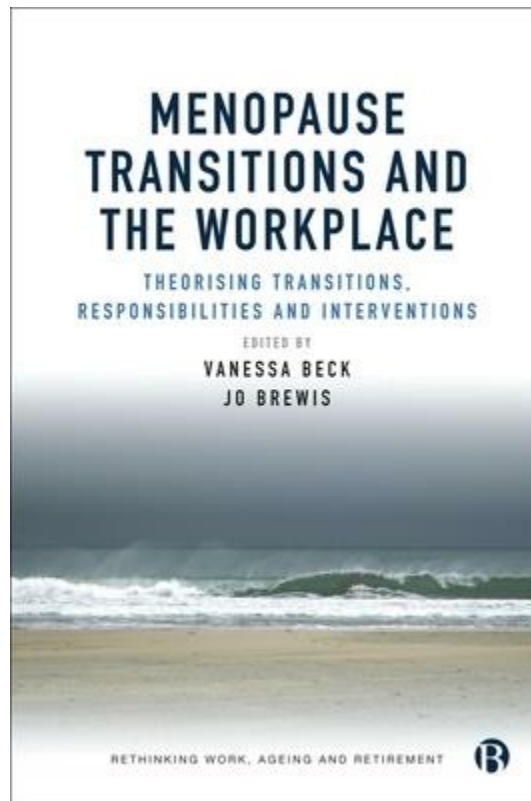
The new edition of the canonical text on the history and development of management thought

Far more than a chronicle of the historical development of modern management's many roots, the newly released ninth edition of *The Evolution of Management Thought* by Daniel A. Wren and Arthur G. Bedeian is a fascinating telling of how ideas about the nature of work, the nature of human beings, and the nature of organizations have changed throughout history.

Its methodology is *analytic*, *synthetic*, and *interdisciplinary*. It is *analytic*, in that it examines the backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs of people who made significant contributions to management thinking. It is *synthetic*, in that it weaves developmental trends, social movements, and environmental forces into a conceptual framework for understanding how management thinking has evolved within and across generations. It is *interdisciplinary*, in that it draws insights from economics, history, political science, psychology, and sociology to explain why management thinking has developed as it has.

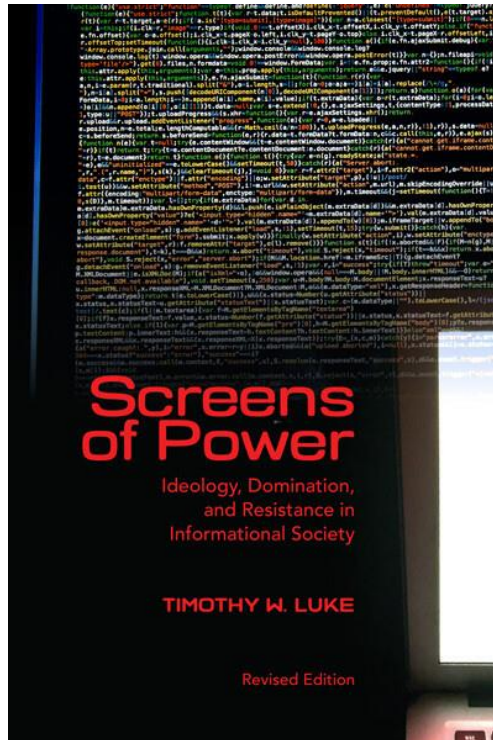
The authors trace the intellectual history of modern management thought as an activity and as an academic discipline in a way that makes reading *The Evolution of Management Thought* a thoroughly enjoyable encounter.

Designed for upper-level and graduate courses, this new edition further cements *The Evolution of Management Thought's* place as the standard text in the field of management history for more than half a century.



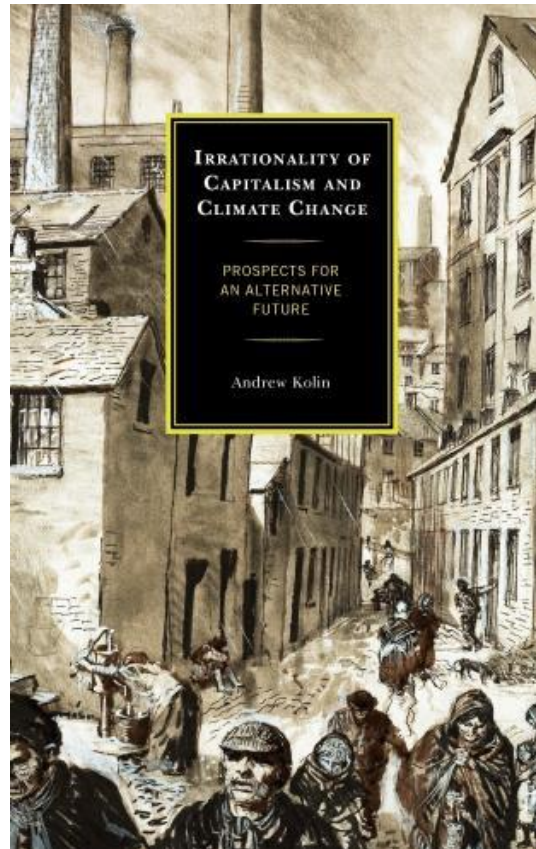
Vanessa Beck and Jo Brewis (ed.), *Menopause Transitions and the Workplace Theorizing Transitions, Responsibilities and Interventions*. Bristol University Press: Bristol, 2024. 176 Pages. ISBN 978-1529215700

The symptoms of menopause transitions have profound implications for work and are, in turn, affected by work. Despite this, the topic is rarely discussed in management and organization studies. Providing an overview of existing knowledge in the field of menopause in the workplace, this collection re-theorises the management of human resources as it relates to the connections between gender, age and the body in the workplace environment with an intersectional analysis. Offering theoretical frameworks from experts as well as possible practical approaches that can be implemented in workplaces to support women transitioning through menopause, this is a go-to reference for academics and policy makers working in the field.



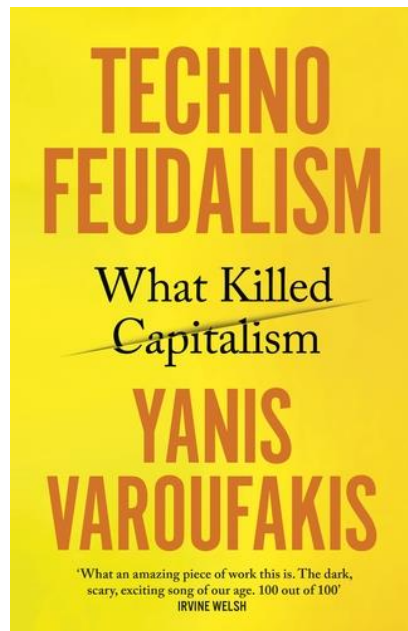
Timothy W. Luk, *Screens of Power: Ideology, Domination, and Resistance in Informational Society (Revised Edition)*. Telos Press: New York, 2020. 340 Pages. ISBN 978-0914386803

This new edition of *Screens of Power: Ideology, Domination, and Resistance in Informational Society*, first published in 1989, reintroduces the innovative critique of informational culture, politics, and society outlined by Timothy W. Luke in Telos and other publications during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Working with insights derived from the Frankfurt School, Christopher Lasch, Michel Foucault, Guy Debord, and Jean Baudrillard, Luke maps out decisive conflicts and contradictions that leading modern economies and societies faced during the Cold War. At stake here is how to organize effectively the challenging political, social, and cultural transitions from industrial to informational institutions, practices, and values—a far-reaching transformation that continues to unfold today. The original edition has influenced research in the fields of visual studies, sociology, rhetorical analysis, politics, mass communications, government, information studies, economics, and cultural studies. During the COVID-19 pandemic of the 2020s, far more people are reconfiguring key aspects of their everyday life to flow across billions of screens. As they connect through the signs and systems of application platforms, computer networks, data centers, and software servers, this new edition highlights the significance of Luke's original explorations of the politics behind informatics as well as Telos's ongoing project of developing "a critical theory of the contemporary."



Andrew Kolin, *Irrationality of Capitalism and Climate Change: Prospects for an Alternative Future*. Rowman and Littlefield: New York City, 2022. 128 Pages. ISBN 978-1666901993

The overwhelming scientific evidence indicates that planet Earth is in the process of undergoing dramatic climate change, which threatens to undermine the quality of life around the world. *Irrationality of Capitalism and Climate Change* demonstrates how the roots of humanity's assault on the environment are directly associated with the origins of capitalism, an irrational social system in which reproduction of capital on a global scale is destructive to the environment. The author begins with a philosophical analysis of the role that reason and passion assume in social systems., then traces the local and regional environmental effects of preindustrial social systems. The author argues that nations are faced with a global challenge, to construct life-affirming policy that functions as an alternative to the global devastation that the accumulation of capital causes. The book concludes by proposing rational socialism, a life-affirming social system that functions in harmony with the environment.



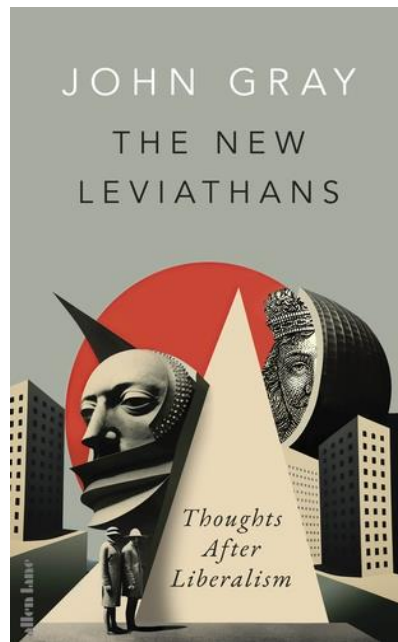
Yanis Varoufakis, *Technofeudalism: What Killed Capitalism*. Bodley Head: London, 2023. 304 Pages. ISBN: 978-1847927279

Capitalism is dead. The #1 bestselling economist shows how the owners of big tech have become the world's feudal overlords.

In his boldest and most far-reaching book yet, world-famous economist Yanis Varoufakis argues that capitalism is dead and a new economic era has begun.

Insane sums of money that were supposed to re-float our economies in the wake of the financial crisis and the pandemic have ended up supercharging big tech's hold over every aspect of the economy. Capitalism's twin pillars - markets and profit - have been replaced with big tech's platforms and rents. Meanwhile, with every click and scroll, we labour like serfs to increase its power. Welcome to technofeudalism.

Drawing on stories from Greek Myth and pop culture, from Homer to *Mad Men*, Varoufakis explains this revolutionary transformation: how it enslaves our minds, how it rewrites the rules of global power and ultimately what it will take overthrow it.



John Gray, *The New Leviathans Thoughts After Liberalism*. Allen Lane: London, 2023. 192 Pages. ISBN 978-0241554951

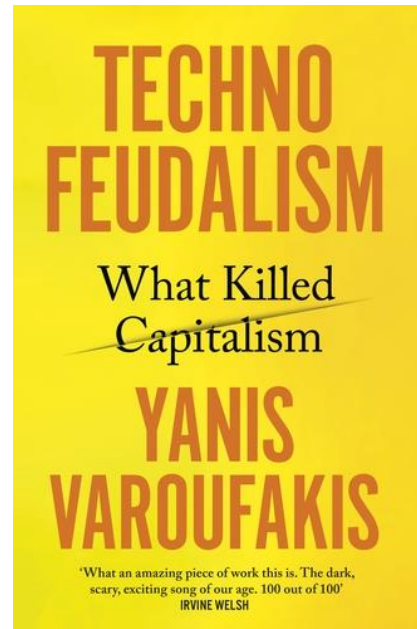
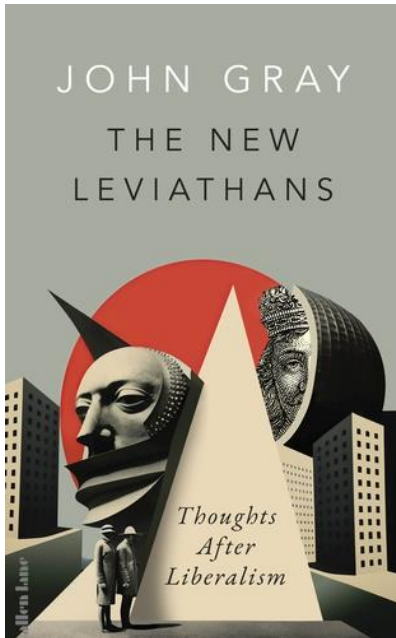
Ever since its publication in 1651, Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* has unsettled and challenged how we understand the world. Condemned and vilified by each new generation, Hobbes' cold political vision continues to see through any number of political and ethical vanities.

In his wonderfully stimulating book *The New Leviathans*, John Gray allows us to understand the world of the 2020s with all its contradictions, moral horrors and disappointments through a new reading of Hobbes' classic work. The collapse of the USSR ushered in an era of near-apoplectic triumphalism in the West: a genuine belief that a rational, liberal, well-managed future now awaited humankind and that tyranny, nationalism and unreason lay in the past. Since then, so many terrible events have occurred and so many poisonous ideas flourished, and yet still our liberal certainties treat them as aberrations which will somehow dissolve away. Hobbes would not be so confident.

Filled with fascinating and challenging perceptions, *The New Leviathans* is a powerful meditation on historical and current folly. As a species we always seem to be struggling to face the reality of base and delusive human instincts. Might a more self-aware, realistic and disabused ethics help us all?

Suggested Comparative Book Reviews:

Yanis Varoufakis, *Technofeudalism: What Killed Capitalism* and John Gray's *The New Leviathans Thoughts After Liberalism*

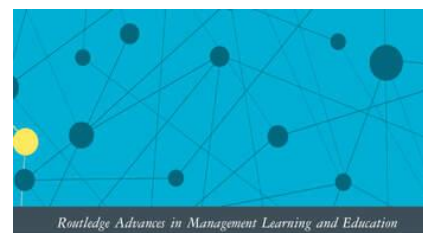


Mikael Holmqvist, *Elite Business Schools: Education and Consecration in Neoliberal Society* and Mats Benner, Mikael Holmqvist (Eds), *Universities under Neoliberalism Ideologies, Discourses and Management Practices*.



ELITE BUSINESS SCHOOLS
EDUCATION AND CONSECRATION IN NEOLIBERAL SOCIETY

Mikael Holmqvist



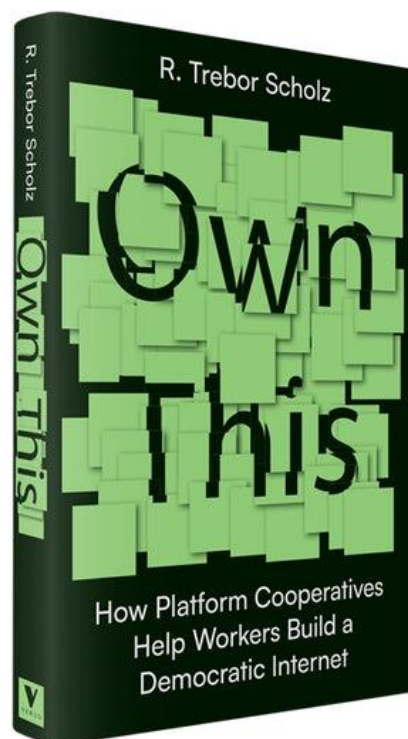
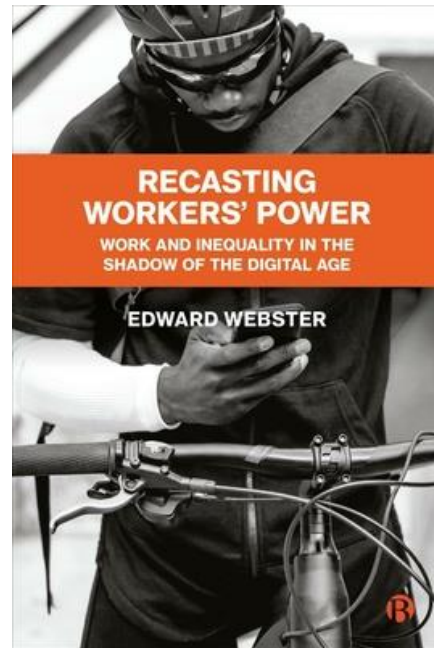
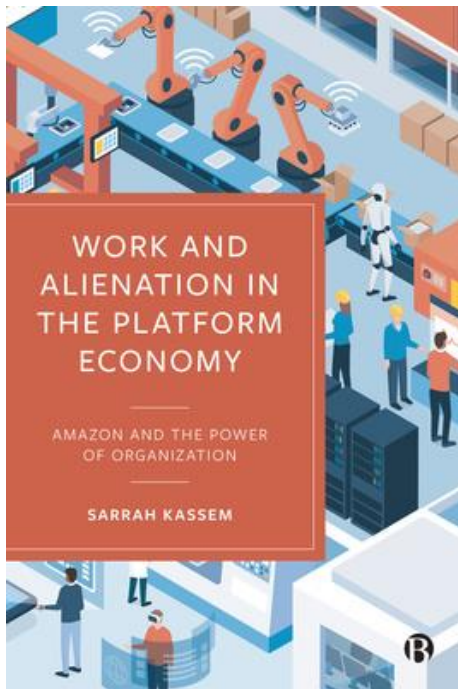
UNIVERSITIES UNDER NEOLIBERALISM

IDEOLOGIES, DISCOURSES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Edited by
Mats Benner and Mikael Holmqvist



Sarrah Kassem's *Work and Alienation in the Platform Economy Amazon and the Power of Organization*, Edward Webster and Lynford Dor, *Recasting Workers' Power: Work and Inequality in the Shadow of the Digital Age*, and/or R. Trebor Scholz, *Own This!: How Platform Cooperatives Help Workers Build a Democratic Internet*



As ever, we are open to further suggestions and contact from authors.