

Book review

Organization

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Corpi (Dis)organizzati: Etica lavoro e organizzare femminista [Disorganized bodies: Ethic work and feminist organizing] by Daniela Pianezzi, Napoli: Editoriale Scientifica (Editorial series: puntOorg), 2022, pp. 227, €16.00 ISBN 9791259764881

Preamble – There is a book next to the computer that asks to become the subject of a book review. Where should a book review start? From the title? From the analytical index? From the table of contents? From the bibliography? From the illustration? From the foreword by Luigi Maria Sicca? From the afterword by Melissa Tyler? Or from what its need to be better developed? No, no, no. . . the book review should start from the colors. An intense green cover showcases the photograph of a sculpture by Paolo Valerio titled *Disorganised bodies. . . , and Surrounding*. Brown and blue are the colors of the sculpture made from barely identifiable remains. To the touch, the cover is slightly rough. Like books of old times, the paper of the pages has a straw-like color. All this makes the book next to the computer an elegant, sophisticated, and delightful object. And there is a catching title entangled with pages, colors, and words. An attractive and unusual title marked by *(Dis)*. How is *(Dis)* used? Does the adjective *organized* become its opposite? Or does *(Dis)* indicate deprivation or opposition? Perhaps *(Dis)* is all that, but also much more. All these characteristics are an invitation to be caressed by the pages, to smell their scent, to taste them here and there. It is not necessary to read them all.

The text – *(Dis)organized bodies* delves into the multifaceted nature of feminism. It differs from other book in the field due to its interdisciplinary approach, which combines the fields of organization studies, accounting, philosophy, and the sociology of work. By integrating insights from these diverse disciplines, the book offers a unique and comprehensive exploration of the complex landscape of feminisms that have emerged over the past few decades. The book offers readers a valuable roadmap to navigate this significant topic, particularly for those approaching it for the first time. The book serves as an invitation to critically examine the enduring presence of the Cartesian modern dualism between mind and body. It prompts to question how this dualism functions as an ontological, epistemological, and moral framework that influences our perception and comprehension of the world and organizations.

In recent years, there has been a notable resurgence of the term feminism in public discourse. Previously considered outdated, obsolete, and politicized, this term has now regained relevance and is undergoing a process of redefinition and reimagination by diverse social actors. Consequently, feminism has been resignified in various ways, giving rise to the construction of radically different models of social living. The book's exploration of feminism variations is centered on the body and

uses it as an analytical key due to its multifaceted nature – concept, metaphor, and subject of inquiry. By examining the ways in which feminism operates, it disrupts and challenges the enduring dualism between mind and body that permeates our understanding of the world, unveiling its impact as an ontological, epistemological, and moral framework. This framework reinforces a hierarchical understanding of value, where certain types of subjects, work and knowledge are elevated, while others are devalued or made invisible. A prime illustration of this is the production-reproduction dualism, which has resulted in organization studies emphasizing the labor acknowledged by modern capitalism, specifically entrepreneurial and wage labor, while marginalizing embodied and emotional labor. By engaging with this inquiry, the book challenges conventional assumptions and offers new insights into our understanding of the complex relationship between values, work and the body. By acknowledging and engaging in a critical examination of the multifaceted ways in which feminisms disrupt and challenge these binary frameworks, the book invites to challenge and redefine notions of labor and research valuation, embracing a more inclusive and holistic perspective that acknowledges the importance of both rational and embodied ways of knowing and working.

The book is organized into five chapters. In the first – *The (in)productive- body-* it provides a comprehensive and critical analysis of neoliberal feminism, which, due to its alignment with the economic systems prevalent in contemporary society, has managed to establish itself as a dominant ideology. The chapter traces the roots of neoliberal feminism back to the liberal feminism of the 1950s, highlighting how it found its initial articulation in the influential work of de Beauvoir. The overarching conclusion drawn in the chapter is that, aligned with neoliberal ideology, this form of feminism has resulted in the rationalization and commodification of feminist issues. There is a risk that this approach may weaken the original liberal feminist political project, which found its seminal expression in the writings of de Beauvoir (1949). The second chapter – *The (re)productive body-* delves into a distinct form of feminism, critical-socialist feminism, which has emerged in dynamic opposition to neoliberal feminism. This feminist perspective presents a radically different conceptualization of the interplay between feminism, ethics, and economics. Specifically, it challenges the conventional dualism that dichotomizes productive labor from reproductive labor, raising crucial questions about which types of labor are recognized as work and which workers are valued. One pivotal aspect of critical feminism lies in its recognition of the intricate interconnections between class, race, and gender as fundamental in comprehending the social organization of diversity. By shifting the feminist focus from a Western-centric viewpoint to a more global and inclusive perspective, this form of feminism addresses the complexities of diversity and inequality. Furthermore, this feminist theorization concerning issues of value and labor has sparked collective and local resistances against the hegemony of neoliberal feminism. *The Post-modern body* is the title of the third chapter which offers an exploration of the influential work of Butler (1993). Drawing upon Butler's work, this chapter deeply explores the intricate connections between bodies, discourse, gender, and power. Butler's formulation of a feminist framework that challenges the essentialist nature of the feminist political subject takes center stage. By engaging with Butler's work, the chapter opens up avenues for problematizing the relationship between organizational practices and the politics of bodies and highlights how Butler's theories on the mattering of subjects and recognition have transcended the confines of traditional postmodern theory, expanding to encompass a critical analysis of how power is deeply inscribed within individuals' corporeal existence. Butler's work paves the way for a re-evaluation of organizational perspectives on the body and materiality, urging a critical reconsideration of the links between organizational practices and the embodiment of power. One significant case that exemplifies this re-evaluation is transgendering. Chapter four is dedicated to *The posthuman body*. It serves as a guide for exploring the key contributions of posthuman feminism, with a particular focus on the formulation by Braidotti

(2022). By delving into the philosophical foundations of this feminism, the chapter examines the work of Baruch Spinoza, specifically his conception of the body as matter and its relationship to nature and reality. Through an engagement with Spinoza's theoretical system, posthuman feminism challenges the entrenched dualism between mind and body. It expands the scope of the feminist political subject beyond the human, encompassing the broader realm of materiality. Building upon the concept of matter, the chapter interrogates the various ways in which work and workers are valued. It also explores how this theoretical framework has influenced organizational literature, opening up new possibilities and imaginaries fueled by the transformative potential of contemporary technologies. This chapter is innovative, well written and sophisticated, and critical organizational scholars will benefit and enjoy reading it. However, this part of the book would have gained from the concept of *vital materiality* that runs through human bodies and nonhuman (see Bennett, 2010). This idea could be a point of departure for future studies on ethic, work and (dis)organized bodies. The last chapter, *A proposal for a corporal ethics*, centers on the ethical values and ideals that underpin the feminisms discussed in the preceding chapters. It elucidates how recent feminisms have introduced a novel ethical framework that challenges the modern ethics which has served as the foundation for neoliberal feminism. Rather than presenting a prescriptive ethical model, the chapter facilitates a dialog among the key contributions of the various theoretical approaches examined. It invites readers to continuously question the values that shape their actions and collective existence. The chapter poses inquiries about envisioning alternative ways of coexisting, organizing, and valuing work and individuals, suggesting that moving beyond a normative perspective of independence is essential.

In the *Conclusion* the book is focused on the field of organization studies, identifying barriers in the existing literature and highlighting the potential for utilizing the ethical framework outlined in Chapter five. The book invites researchers to explore new avenues of inquiry and expand the current knowledge base in this field. The conclusion serves as a roadmap for future research, outlining areas where further investigation is needed and suggesting how the ethical framework presented can inform and enrich future studies in organization studies and related disciplines.

(In)conclusion - This book is not for those who: think that feminism is a waste of time; are annoyed by immigrants, LGBTQIA+ and disabled people; their core values are God, homeland and family; look for management takeaways; do not like green color.

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