

Barbara Sieben and Åsa Wettergren (Eds.)

### **Emotionalizing Organizations and Organizing Emotions**

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In this latest addition to the growing number of edited collections on organisational emotions, Barbara Sieben and Åsa Wettergren have compiled an international and diverse range of essays, where they seek to highlight hitherto underexplored processes and interactions. In particular they want to shed light on everyday routines and incidents affecting employees, customers and clients, such as queuing, bullying, professional detachment and complaints against staff. For the editors, these are "...arenas where emotions are produced and where structural settings become tied to individual motives and actions through emotion" (pg.8).

The editors acknowledge that the volume's contributions are broadly within the post-structural and interpretive tradition, in that they are "*local/emergent* with respect to the origin of concepts and questions" (pg.9). They offer an interpretation of organisational emotion as layered and differentiated, whereby it is able to manifest itself in a variety of interrelated forms: as an *object* of work to influence others, as a *means* to get the job done or as a *condition* of performing the work appropriately. This array of manifestations is only part of Sieben and Wettergren's emotion equation. Emotion is also either an *antecedent* or *consequence* of work, which in turn is either an *authoritative* or *allocative* resource, where the former is controlled by the organisation and the latter by the individual.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 is on *Emotionalizing Organizations* in which the essays explore how emotions are interwoven and instrumental in organisational processes. Part 2, *Organizing Emotions*, shifts the focus to the effects of organisational structures and processes on *emotion regimes*, resources, rules and control, as variously experienced by employees, customers and clients.

Part 1 comprises eight chapters on a disparate range of emotion laden, interactive processes, including: the role of 'fantasy' in customer service (Gabriel); the stabilising function of 'gut feelings' for small workplace cultures in recruitment and selection (Imdorf); an assessment of the necessary presence of employee 'self-confidence' for successful workplace 'empowerment' practices (Poder); and how queuing for work and residential permits produces emotions that mirror the wider social conditions of migrant workers in Madrid (Pérez). The most potent contribution in Part 1 is Fineman's exploration of the effects of what he calls *emotionologies* (social emotions generated by popular discourses/ideologies e.g. 'consumer authority') on the employee experience, especially when specific to particular occupations. His focus is on UK social work, an occupation that has experienced disparaging media coverage in recent years. This negative portrayal and subsequent public emotionology, Fineman argues, has interwoven with the increasing marketisation of public services, whereby the social worker's role has been transformed into one of a cost conscious 'care manager' servicing a 'customer'. He explores how the "emotionologies of social work practice are located firmly in its structural and political context" (pg. 31) via the case of a successful complaint by a client's daughter against a social worker who is unsupported by her managers. As Fineman explains, the "... public rhetoric of consumer satisfaction becomes a bureaucratic end in itself... Accordingly, the newly empowered consumer who shouts the loudest is very likely to be heard and must be appeased" (pg. 37).

The shorter Part 2 is made up of five chapters on a range of organisational *emotion regimes*. First, there is a fascinating, if incongruous, critical assessment of the Italian Communist Party's

construction of a formally 'de-emotionalised' culture of mobilisation in the late 1940s (Cossu). This is then followed by two essays on cases of organisational change - the German federal labour agency (Terpe and Paierl) and Australian childcare homes (King) - where management seek to impose new emotion regimes on the workforce in the name of 'modernisation' and best 'client-centred' practice. In both cases, the new work regimes seek to instil in employees a greater degree of internal emotion management and policing. The final essay by Baumeler dovetails with Fineman's contribution by arguing that the current popular notion of *emotional intelligence* (EI) is in effect "... a contemporary organisational regime of emotional conduct – imposed by the flexible new capitalism" (pg. 281). EI, she argues requires "... an enterprising subject equipped with autonomy, creativity and a capacity for self-motivation" (pg. 281), who complies with the labour market demands of neo-liberal capitalism. Nevertheless, Baumeler is clear that "... individual resistance... against the commodification of emotions is always possible" (pg. 288).

Sieben and Wettergren are successful in their aim of highlighting the emotional content of organisational processes and interaction that are rarely studied. However, there is also the sense that the disparate range of contributions leaves the volume with a precarious sense of cohesion, even with the loose, encompassing theoretical framework offered by the editors in their introduction. Finally, despite Baumeler's claim about the ever-present potential for individual resistance, the volume is largely silent on individual, let alone collective, resistance to the inequalities of organisational emotionalising.