Ursula Plesner and Emil Husted, **Digital Organizing: Revisiting Themes in Organization Studies**, London, UK: Red Globe Press, 2020, 272 pp., $59.99 (paperback).

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A widely accepted assumption of technological development is the disruptive effect it has on organizations. Although this treatment of technology as overpowering seems self-evident with increasing digitalization, there are underlying organizing mechanisms that facilitate or constrain the process of reconfiguring organizational practices, norms, and values. Authors Ursula Plesner and Emil Husted succinctly examine these mechanisms in their book **Digital Organizing: Revisiting Themes in Organization Studies**.

The motivation behind their book is to seek to disentangle the relationship between organizing and digital technologies through a holistic approach informed by classical and contemporary organizational theories. By considering these strands of literature as complementary, the reader is encouraged "to think 'organizationally' about digitalization rather than 'digitally' about organization" (p. 17). In this manner, digitalization is reified as an organizational process unfolding at micro and macro levels. Further, this process is examined through a multifaceted framework accentuating the interrelatedness of technological affordances, subjectification, and social contexts. Drawing from paradigms of technological determinism, social constructivism, and sociomaterialism, the authors compare and contrast the various conditions and outcomes implicated in digital organizing. While the book is rich in academic literature, recent case studies are included to unpack the influence of digital technologies in organizing processes in a coherent and lucid fashion.

As faculty members of the Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, Associate Professor Plesner and Assistant Professor Husted have compiled their academic and professional knowledge into a publication that speaks to both nascent and seasoned scholars, as well as industry practitioners. Although centered in organization studies, the authors' expertise bleeds into the content of the book by incorporating aspects of other fields, including sociology, management, economics, political science, information systems, and critical theory.

The outline of the book consists of two main parts, totaling eleven chapters. Each chapter contains a brief summary highlighting the main objective, the historical context of the classical and contemporary concepts, and their application in different paradigms. Part I, "Digital Organizing," covers chapters 1–3 and provides a concise description of digitalization in technical and social terms, followed by the involvement of technology in the organizational context. Part II, "Revisiting Themes in Organization
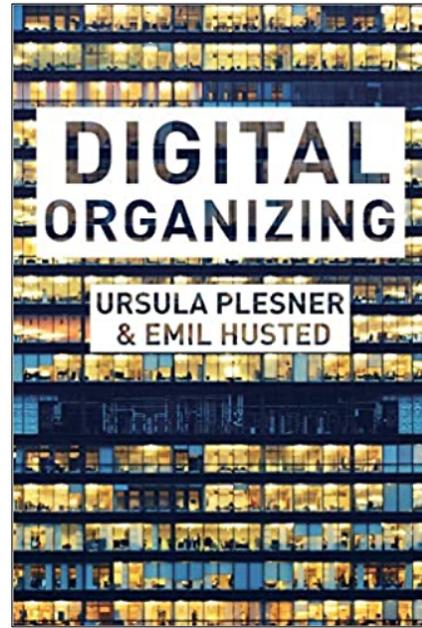
Studies," comprises chapters 4–11 and elaborates on Part I by introducing a *duality of concepts* in which complementary theories from classical and contemporary organization studies are explained and applied. The last chapter, chapter 11, differs from the rest, as it serves as a review of all of the concepts by situating them critically across individual, organizational, and societal dimensions.

Chapter 1 sets the foundation by identifying the key features of digitalization pertaining to technological disruption. The authors suggest that algorithmic thinking, exponentiality, and connectivity have reconfigured organizational thinking. While this reconfiguration has been previously discussed in terms of technological disruption, the authors provide a contrasting account that problematizes the surrendering of human agency to novel technologies. Rather than focusing on dystopian or utopian outcomes of digitalization, this process is framed through an organizational lens to address the (im)possibilities of organizational change. Chapter 2 extends this debate by examining how classical organizational themes have previously engaged with persistent organizational problems in the technological landscape. Special considerations of historical contexts help illustrate the extent to which technology has been formally examined in organization studies. Although the study of technology varies in form and volume, historical accounts draw important conclusions from each technological development phase and their corresponding epistemological frame, ranging from early scientific management to sociomateriality. In chapter 3, the authors introduce the paradigms of technological determinism, social constructivism, and sociomaterialism as a means to examine the relationship between technology and organization. Moreover, the concept of affordances is presented as the conceptual thread across these perspectives to bridge different levels of analysis across sociotechnical contexts. Indeed, these paradigms serve as "focal points" (p. 71) that address the multifaceted nature of organizational phenomena.

Chapter 4 examines the interaction between structure and infrastructure. The authors expand on the bureaucratic notion of structure by unpacking the intricacies found in the reconfigurations of (in)formal structures enabled by digital technologies. Whether one speaks of networked organizations as fluid assemblages or distributed virtual organizations, these reconfigurations are grounded on digital infrastructures dictating some actions over others. As such, infrastructures contain underlying political motivations and power differentials that lead to unintended consequences of technological appropriation and mobilization of resources, as exemplified in the evolution of Occupy Wall Street Facebook groups.

In chapter 5, the authors introduce the concepts of production and produsage to investigate how the conventional relationship between one's role and products has been reordered to fit the knowledge economy. More precisely, digital technologies have positioned user-centered models as the core functioning for organizational presence across media platforms. This reconfiguration of organization is afforded by digital technologies. However, the mere potential of an affordance arguably fails to translate into presumed enactments. Therefore, emphasis is placed on the liberating and constraining technical features and the relation to their environment.

Internal and external collaboration is intrinsic to organizations. Chapter 6 expands on notions of collaboration by incorporating co-creation. The openness of communication channels afforded by digital technologies has reorganized how value is premeditated, generated, and sustained. As demonstrated by

the authors, the Yelp model relies on openness and engagement. This form of organizing is not only a new form of collaboration but also underscores the importance of organizational transparency.

Chapter 7 exemplifies the sociomaterial approach to digital technologies and organizing by treating knowledge and data about the environment as co-products expressed through organizational performance. Drawing from knowledge management and organizational learning literature, the authors inverse the data-knowledge relationship to question how organizations make sense of data in their daily practices. Accounting for biases embedded in data management practices, the role of human knowledge and interpretation is accentuated and deemed fundamental to the transformation and reproduction of norms, habits, and meaning.

In chapter 8, communication and interactivity are extensively interrelated with other concepts such as production-produsage and legitimacy-transparency. This chapter highlights the communication as constitutive of organizations tradition as social constructivist to the degree that interaction involves dialogic exchanges between the organization and the public. Further, the authors incorporate a sociomaterial lens to navigate how technological affordances may be incongruous in practice with strategic plans of an organization's Twitter account.

The dual concepts of legitimacy and transparency in chapter 9 are strongly related to the concepts of communication-interactivity. This chapter emphasizes how organizations gain, maintain, and repair legitimacy in the digital space. A lack of control over digital communication channels and expectations of dialogue has made organizations vulnerable to public scrutiny through ranking mechanisms afforded by digital technologies. An even more complex issue of organizational "openness" guided by algorithms and intellectual property imposes new modes of organization and interaction with stakeholders.

Chapter 10 focuses on power and empowerment. Conventional views on technological affordances have underscored the liberating force of innovations. However, the authors complicate this view by integrating pervasive surveillance, subjectification, and knowledge differentials into reformed notions of liberation. Organizations face complex challenges as power boundaries blur and oscillate in the process of subjectification. As such, knowledge and expertise are increasingly intertwined with power and counterpower afforded by digital technologies.

Lastly, chapter 11 encompasses the conditions and consequences across the individual, organizational, and societal dimensions in which digital organizing operates. At the individual level, the merging of work with private life imposes a new order that undermines or empowers individuals by overstating the value of skills and performance. Regarding organizations, modes of interaction are institutionalized through digital technologies that afford and constrain certain actions eschewing power dynamics. This discrepancy of agentic potential is evident in public and civil organizations that rely on private resources to design, implement, operate, and repair digital technology infrastructures. At the societal level, the timeless and spaceless nature of data presents issues of knowledge manipulation in digital organizing operations. Increasing privatization of data collection and management redistributes power toward corporations, leading to the reproduction of private and public interdependencies. Evidently, the relationship between digital technologies and organizing is both promising and problematic.

Digital Organizing: Revisiting Themes in Organization Studies cohesively assembles digitalization with classical and contemporary organization theories. The authors seamlessly recapitulate on the previously unacknowledged relationship between technology and organization. Further, they expand on this deficiency to shed light on various frames in which digital technologies enable or constrain organizing processes. Primarily drawing from sociomateriality and social constructivism, this work paves the way forward by considering theoretical intersectionality in organization studies. More concretely, the authors consider both past and current approaches to organizing equally valuable in tackling organizational problems through distinct yet complementary vantage points. Although the cases presented are relevant and conceptually sound, the conceptual operationalization is limited in addressing the boundaries in which organization phenomena unfolds. Nonetheless, this book serves as a useful introduction and reference for organization scholars and industry professionals.