

Reason's Neglect

Rationality and Organizing

Barbara Townley

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

□ CONTENTS

FIGURE	xii
LIST OF BOXES	xiii
1 Foucault and rationality	1
Why rationality?	3
Whose reason?	6
Why Foucault?	9
Foucault . . . how?	13
The importance of analysing practice	15
The argument: A pictorial representation	19
PART I DISEMBEDED RATIONALITY	
Introduction	22
2 Economic rationality	27
Purposeful individuals	27
The anthropomorphization of organizations	31
Bounded rationality	34
Decision-making	36
The new rationality	39
Conclusions	44
3 Bureaucratic rationality	46
Bureaucracy	46
Bureaucracy and rationality	49
The response to uncertainty: Domination through knowledge	52
Conclusions	65
4 Technocratic rationality	66
Technology and organization	66
Technology as technique	68

Management as science	72
Technocratic administration?	78
Which science?	84
Management as practice	86
Conclusions	87

PART II **EMBEDDED RATIONALITY**

Introduction	90
--------------	----

5 Institutional rationality 95

The rationalization of value spheres	95
The institution of reason	97
Institutional theory and rationalized myths	101
Institutional logics	107
Rationality institutionalized?	109
Institutional 'rationality'?	110
Conclusions	112

6 Contextual rationality 113

Hidden from reason: A Romantic legacy	113
Rationality versus community	119
Culture as competence: Rendering rational	125
Rationality as thick description? A narrative rationality	128
Conclusion: Rational communities?	130

7 Situational rationality 132

A presumption of logic	132
The rationality of situated action	134
Situated knowledge	138
Situated studies	142
Conclusions	152

PART III **THE 'OTHER' OF REASON**

Introduction	154
--------------	-----

8 Embodied rationality 159

The body	159
Embodied thinking and knowledge	162

The emotions	168
Emotions in organizations	170
Rational emotions?	177
The 'irrational' unconscious	179
Conclusions	185

PART IV **CONCLUSIONS**

9 Collective rationality	189
Collective action	190
Collective action and the 'collective good'	193
Collective reasoning	194
Collective reasoning and the 'collective good'	197
The collective within organization studies	200
Collective reasoning and practice	201
Conclusions	205
10 Practical reason	206
Practical concerns	207
Practical rationalities	210
Practical reason	213
Conclusion	218
APPENDIX	220
NOTES	222
REFERENCES	251
GLOSSARY	274
INDEX	276