

Empowerment in the balance

Hans Pruijt, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Department of Public Administration and Sociology

Submitted for publication: Pruijt, Hans. (2022) Empowerment The Balance. In Georgios O. Tsobanoglou, & Aikaterini T. Kokkinou (Eds.) *Sustaining Communities: Prospects And Challenges*. Hauppauge, NY : Nova Science Publishers, Inc., Pp. 3-18. <https://doi.org/10.52305/ZCWG3228>

Abstract

The critical literature on empowerment alerts us that it is a power relationship in itself but does not move much beyond this. This is unsatisfactory because first in social movements, and later in the wider society as well, empowerment has become an important paradigm and an espoused goal. It is fraught with internal contradictions. The Foucauldian view of empowerment as a power relationship and the theoretical paradox of positive freedom suggest that it entails a contradiction between autonomy and control. Empowering someone also tends to imply the notion that given qualities in the latter are lacking. Thus, empowerment programs suffer from the contradiction that a more precise focus on a target group, while good for efficiency and effectiveness, can lead to stigmatization. Concerns voiced in the literature that empowerment meshes with neoliberal development can be taken as indications of a contradiction between ambition and the risk of programmed failure. A further contradiction exists along the dimension individual vs. collective. Empowerment can be analyzed as a four-dimensional balancing act, in which each dimension corresponds to one of the four inherent internal contradictions of the concept. Examples are drawn from social movements, in particular urban squatting, social policy, education reform and worker mobilization.

Introduction

The concept of empowerment has spread from its origin in social movements across virtually all sectors of society (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). The critical literature focuses on debunking a common sense, face-value understanding of empowerment as a transfer of power, and instead exposes empowerment as a power relation, that is as a technique to turn people into self-policing citizens (Cruikshank, 1999; Rose, 1999).

However, because empowerment represents a paradigm that corresponds to real needs, it is important to move beyond debunking. In discussions on social change, the concept can be used as a positive goal and a means at the same time. This combination is already present in the oldest publication that I was

able to locate in which the term 'empowerment' figures in the sense of controlling one's own destiny (Tolbert, 1968).

Empowerment is also valuable as a conceptual tool for thinking about social movement ideology. In this role, it complements more conventional concepts such as social justice, freedom and autonomy which are all to some extent deficient. The concept of social justice clearly captures a goal that is prevalent in social movements, however, unlike empowerment, it is not process oriented and thereby does not say anything about how it could be brought about. Freedom, although clearly important in social movements, is such a flexible concept that it is vulnerable to being co-opted into neo-liberal ideology. In this case, it can help justify policies that lead to abandoning people in need (Harvey, 2005). Finally, autonomy is often seen as the goal of a particular social movement (Martinez, 2020), but the concept has an individualistic bias. We need to understand why people pursuing autonomy can organize themselves into collectives, as for example in the case of the 1970s cooperative work movement (Neumann, 2008). Empowerment can as easily be individual as collective.

Empowerment is also a valuable conceptual asset because it does not suffer from the problems that Popper (1962) associated with utopist blueprint-for-an-ideal-society based 'social engineering.' These problems entail that nobody can possibly possess sufficient knowledge to be able to design a good system and that such a system can only be implemented in an authoritarian way. The idea of empowerment leads away from blueprint models and phantasies about central planning.

The interest in empowerment also matches a general change in people's value preferences. Since the start in 1970 of a series of surveys that allows for comparison over time, more and more respondents indicated that they found self-realization important. In addition, increasingly respondents tended to favor a type of society in which ideas are more important than money and in which citizens have a large say about work, the living environment and government policy (Inglehart, 1977; 1990).

Finally, a theoretical reason for taking empowerment seriously is that the concept can fulfill a role as a signifier for the opposite of domination (Stewart, 2000). Concepts such as freedom and autonomy only indicate the absence of domination, not the opposite. A concept that signifies the opposite of domination should preserve the characteristic that it involves a type of relationship, and the concept of empowerment has this feature.

The central idea underlying this paper is to conceptualize empowerment as a balancing act that is structured by its internal contradictions. It builds on hints in Cruikshank's (1999, p. 54) work that actors involved in empowerment can consciously experience such contradictions or tensions. Cruikshank (1999) notes that in American anti-poverty programs 'the danger was to encroach upon individual freedom by acting too much or too little. Hence, self-help schemes underwent constant revisions and reform' and that 'the will to empower, or the desire to help the poor, had to be balanced against the imperative that the poor must help themselves. The subjectivity of the poor had to be balanced against their subjection' (1999, p. 74).

[Empowerment as a four-dimensional balancing act](#)

Taken together, the literature suggests that it is possible to distill four different internal contradictions. On the basis of these four contradictions, empowerment can be pictured as a four-dimensional balancing act.

The contradiction between autonomy and control

Cruikshank (1999, p. 72) writes that 'the will to empower is neither clearly liberatory nor clearly repressive' and that 'the will to empower contains the twin possibilities of domination and freedom' (1999, p. 2). A central tenet of her Foucault-inspired analysis is that empowerment is an asymmetric relationship, a power relationship in which knowledgeable actors induce others to want to become active, self-policing responsible citizens. The asymmetric nature of the relationship is essential. Otherwise, we are simply dealing with freedom from interference and there would be no need to invoke the concept of empowerment.

This implies that there is a contradiction between autonomy and control. Autonomy is an important aspect of empowerment. It is the ability to act while not being controlled by steering impulses from one's environment or internalized goals, to reflect, choose and formulate possibilities (Riesman, 1950, p. 250; Mills, 1959, p. 193). Such reflection includes both thinking of ways to realize given goals in the most efficient way, i.e. instrumental rationality (Horkheimer, 1941, p. 368) and thinking about goals and their relation to values, i.e., substantive reason (Weber, 1921, p. 44-45).

Empowerment is undertaken with the aim of bringing autonomy about, while simultaneously, to a variable degree, it clashes with autonomy, because it is an asymmetrical relationship that involves structural and/or normative control in the form of regulation, management or influence. This is similar to what has been called the paradox of positive freedom (Carter, 2007). Fromm (1942, p. 232) defines positive freedom as 'the full realization of the individual's potentialities, together with his ability to live actively and spontaneously.' Other characteristics of positive freedom are that it is seen as something that only exists when it is being exercised (Carter, 2007), and as a constructive activity (De Beauvoir, 1947). Positive freedom comes with expectations about what someone else's self-realization should entail; it is charged with morality (Berlin, 1969, p. 124-131). There is a scenario possible in which members of the target group refuse to display the expected activity or do not want to participate. McKee (2009) describes such cases in the field of social and housing policy.

In a debate on a given empowerment program, and in the actual implementation, this contradiction makes several positions possible. One can argue for little control to minimize the clash with autonomy, or criticize a given initiative for being more a form of discipline or coercion than empowerment. Conversely, some may deem control too loose, and contributing to passivity among those to be empowered.

The contradiction between focus and stigmatization

Cruikshank (1999) not only theorizes empowerment as an asymmetric relationship, as indicated above, but as one in which those who have the will to empower understand those to be empowered as deficient in terms of autonomy. We can see this as a disqualifying effect, a self-defeating aspect of empowerment. This is because labeling those to be empowered as deficient can hardly be empowering. If the empowerment efforts are directed at specific identifiable people, stigmatization can result. An obvious strategy to deal with this risk is to define a wide target group for an empowerment initiative. However, defining a very wide target group might not be efficient when resources are scarce. It also precludes the possibility of obtaining legitimacy for the empowerment initiative by classifying the target

group as needy. The absence of a clearly defined target group may also make it difficult to develop a coherent strategy.

The contradiction between ambition and the risk of programmed failure

A third contradiction is apparent in the suggestion made by several authors that empowerment, after being promoted by activists in the 1960s and 1970s, became incorporated in neo-liberalism. Harvey (2005), for example, maintains that activists in the American students' movement and related movements failed to link freedom to social justice and thereby unwittingly provided a building block for neo-liberal ideology. In a similar vein, Neumann (2008) describes a development towards neoliberalism that started in the collectives that made up the German anti-hierarchical cooperatives movement of the 1970s. Its participants attached great value to their autonomy, attempted to limit the division of labor and were prepared to put in long hours to make their collective enterprises viable. Then, the need to increase efficiency gradually took precedence over political motives. Subsequently, activists who transformed themselves into management gurus carried the organizational competences acquired within the movement over to the world of regular business. Neumann claims that, in this way, they contributed to the shaping of the 'neo-liberal organization of work' in which managers increase production by instrumentalizing employees' autonomy.

According to Boltanski and Chiapello (2005), the Mai 1968 alternative movement's 'artistic critique' on the bureaucratic systems and authoritarian work relations of that era led to a shift in management guru theory. They show that that management guru texts of the 1960s attach great importance to security, while such texts from the 1990s stress that creativity, discovery, enrichment, genuine autonomy, self-realization and horizontal networking, and emphatically not security, became the characteristics that make jobs coveted. Collins (2000, p. 246) writes: 'in the name of empowerment, workers have been disempowered.'

Cruikshank (1999, p. 68) describes how American conservative politicians hijacked the empowerment discourse to legitimate their program of privatization of social services, and market-oriented solutions to social issues. In the Netherlands, the sale of social housing to tenants was promoted as 'empowerment' (Bobbe and Reimerink, 2006). Hogsbro et al. (2009) state that in Denmark, in the field of social services for the disabled, a drive to reduce the dominance of professionals, and instead mobilize networks of disabled individuals, first started in progressive policy circles and was later embraced by conservatives. The gist of these observations is that we are witnessing a push towards self-reliance, but that the empowering effect is compromised by a concomitant lack of protection and support. The contradiction between the ambition to foster self-sufficiency and the risk that those to be empowered will find themselves having been set up to fail because of a lack of protection and support can be seen as always present in empowerment, but to a variable degree.

Empowerment programs entail the use of a discursive frame designed to organize experience by simplifying and condensing aspects of 'the world out there,' to find resonance and to guide action (Benford, 2000). These empowerment frames challenge people to undertake some sort of activity that pushes their limits and that thereby is risky. If the desired results materialize, this imparts a sense of do-it-yourself accomplishment. Such an experience of success boosts learning, awareness of acquired capabilities, and energy and thereby reinforces the transformation process (Morgan, 1997, p. 198-199).

But if the necessary resources are not available the empowerment initiative can turn into a programmed failure in which self-confidence is damaged. The latter is reinforced by the emphasis placed on people's own responsibility, that is inherent in empowerment. In the extreme case, an empowerment frame can entice people to start on an impossible mission that can cause them to blame themselves for problems due to forces beyond their control. Thus, the realism of empowerment schemes and the risk of programmed failure are a basis for debate. A potential issue is how much risk, for example in the shape of exposure to market forces, should vulnerable people take and how much protection is required. And when the empowerment relationship entails the granting of resources, one may question whether these resources are adequate to limit the risk of failure. Finally, given initiatives might be criticized for not showing enough ambition, i.e., for staying too much on the safe side.

The contradiction between individual and collective action

A fourth internal tension exists between individual and collective action. Originally, when the concept of empowerment was still exclusively in the social movement domain it always had a dimension of collective action. Eventually, when empowerment was taken up in various institutionalized contexts, the collective dimension seems to have been obscured. For example, Collins (2000, p. 45) notes that managers tend to see empowerment as 'an individualized relationship built upon flexibility to reflect the needs of the customer.' In Bobbe and Reimerink's (2006) book about tenant empowerment, in which they define it as tenants buying the apartment that they rent, there is not a single line about the possibility that tenants take control over their situation by means of collective action. Conceiving of empowerment as having an internal tension between individual and collective action is a way to acknowledge the role of collective action as a possible source of power.

Some ambitions remain out of reach when action remains limited to the individual level and are only realistic when cooperation takes place. Cooperation, in turn, comes at the expense of individual autonomy, especially if it involves participation in a large, strong organization. As an example, Bachrach and Botwinick (1992, p. 98-99) suggest that proponents of increased workplace democracy face the dilemma that strong unions are needed to bring workplace democracy about, which in turn clashes with the idea that there should be a strong influence of the shop floor level.

The metaphor of a balancing act

A balancing act entails striving to find an optimum, and at least to try to prevent a scenario that boils down to a combination of tight control, programmed failure, stigmatization and individualization, in other words a course of action that amounts to disqualifying a group of people as unfit and then forcing them to try something that is bound to fail, while leading them to blame themselves for failure to boot. Likewise, the balancing act involves avoiding a scenario in which people in a target group find that everything is being taken care of for them, without any action being expected on their part, without focus and in which people are not addressed as individuals.

Example 1: urban squatting

An example of a social movement that was built on empowerment is the squatters' movement. It flows forth from an activist promoted master frame that enables 'cognitive liberation' (Nepstad, 1997, p. 471)

by letting people see empty buildings as opportunities and imagine that collective support for occupying those buildings can be organized. In Amsterdam in 1966 activists from the anarchist Provo Movement launched such a frame in the form of a 'White Houses Plan.' A 'working group' announced that they would distribute lists of empty houses and would paint doors and doorjambs of empty homes white. The 'Woningbureau (Housing Bureau) de Kraker' was established in 1969 and published a squatters' manual (Kaulingfreks et al., 2009). This empowerment frame still has an appeal. After 55 years it still mobilizes home-seekers and people or groups wishing to create cultural or social spaces such as artist's workspaces, art galleries, or give-away shops.

Above, I have described empowerment as a four-dimensional balancing game. Can this be seen in urban squatting? In squatting there is a contradiction or tension between on the one hand, autonomy and, on the other hand, pressure, control and influence. In organized squatting there is often a form of selection, in which activists gauge if aspiring squatters are likely to fulfill the expectations. After the squatting action, squatters exert and experience normative pressure, for example in the case of large buildings that require the occupants to contribute to collective services, such as heat and electricity, and sometimes also directed at preventing fire and noise disturbances. Interviews conducted in 1981 by Wietsma, Vonk and Van der Burght (1982) with squatters in Amsterdam show that in some parts of the scene there was a normative pressure towards violent action, while participating in confrontations with the police boosted status. This tendency led to opposition within the movement (Pruijt, 2011). Furthermore, adjustment by individual squatters was possible because normative pressure varied depending on where, how and with whom one lived. A squatter could adjust normative pressure more or less to her or his own preferences, for instance by leaving a house that was dominated by activist-minded squatters and to start living with people who were more interested in having a warm, friendly atmosphere in the house.

Balancing between ambition and risk, in the case of the squatters' movement trying to prevent that home seekers wind up in a dangerous situation that they themselves cannot judge, is done by providing guidance through squatters advisory services. Squatting groups offer help with the actual action of squatting, technical support and assistance in making buildings habitable, and by setting up telephone trees to mobilize support in case of an eviction threat.

The tension between on the one hand a focus on a target group and, on the other hand, the occurrence of stigmatization, can be found in the shape of the existence of different models of squatting. In some cases, middle class activists organized squatting to help poor people. An example is formed by squatting actions in Paris that were intended to force the provision of housing for people who were labeled as 'precarious' (Pechu, 2010). In this type of squatting, a key part of the legitimating strategy consists of making appeals based on the deprived position of the squatters. Stigmatization is a potential side effect of this. Opposite of this model is squatting as an alternative housing strategy, in which not making claims but helping oneself to housing is key. In squatting as an alternative housing strategy, squatters do not try to gain legitimacy by portraying themselves as being in a deprived position, while stigmatization is being avoided (Pruijt, 2013). Moreover, in this model, activists tend to at least pretend that all squatters are equal.

The fourth dimension on which balancing takes place is the tension between collective and individual action. There is individual adjustment, in the form of being able to choose between living collectively or

more individually, and also how intensively one participates in the squatting group. Adjustment on the movement level takes place in the shape of staging small-scale and decentralized action and scaling it up when required. Occasionally, collective threats, especially in the shape of proposed anti-squatting legislation, prompted large-scale mobilization. In the Netherlands, this included national squatting days, which simultaneously were a protest against proposed anti-squatting legislation and facilitated the squatting of large buildings (Pruijt, 2020).

Example 2: secondary education reform and student protest

In 1999 in the Netherlands, a nation-wide reform started in secondary education, specifically the final years. Among the aims were a more active and autonomous way of learning and giving students more responsibility for their own learning processes (Tweede Fase Adviespunt, 2005). The idea was to let students organize as many learning activities as possible themselves, while taking into account the need for 'equipment before empowerment,' which means 'first making sure that students possess the necessary skills and attitudes and only then give them the space to learn to exercise these autonomously' (Simons, 1995, p. 37-47). During implementation vast differences along the axis autonomy – control emerged. Approaches ranged from, on the one hand, giving up teaching altogether and instead focusing on providing support, on the other hand, producing detailed written instructions for the students to follow (Tweede Fase Adviespunt, 2005). Tensions arose that were related to the ambition – risk contradiction. Right away students experienced anxiety because of an overwhelming amount of responsibility and independence that suddenly was forced upon them. Moreover, they were required to produce an unheard of quantity of time-consuming papers, practical assignments and presentations (Students Lambert Franckens College, 1999). The students felt that they were being used as guinea pigs, because teachers were unprepared or at least not well prepared for the new pedagogy of the Study House. LAKS (Landelijk Aktie Komitee Scholieren, National Action Committee Secondary School Students), that supported the underlying ideas of the Study House, criticized the government for having allocated too little time for its implementation (Auerbach, 2004; Students Lambert Franckens College, 1999).

Students in Vlissingen decided to organize a national strike, in which LAKS joined (Auerbach, 2004). On 6 December 1999, 20,000 students assembled on the Malieveld in The Hague for a protest manifestation. After a peaceful start, students clashed with the police and windows were smashed. Education Secretary Adelmund immediately decided to alleviate pressure by reducing (by one) the number of subjects that students needed to master for their final exams (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2008).

Example 3: union organizing

For an example of an intervention that relates to the individual – collective contradiction we turn to the world of labor relations. Counteracting a management-driven, individualizing take on empowerment is a relatively new union strategy, organizing, that is also based on empowerment. Organizers search for a topic that leads to much indignation among employees and define attainable goals. They mobilize active union members to take action and make a collective presence in a campaign that is organized in a bottom-up fashion. For this, organizers look for potential leaders among employees, applying the criterion that these persons should be highly trusted by their colleagues. Organizers then try to convince

these workers to take up the leadership role that seems to be cut out for them. Kloosterboer (2007) indicates that this can involve 'mild psychological pressure.'

A result of this strategy was the successful cleaners' strike in 2010, the longest strike in the Netherlands since 1933. It involved direct action, such as a 'millionaire tour' by bus, stopping by the homes of owners of cleaning companies, and an almost week-long sit-in at the Utrecht railway station. It seems that in this case, the individualizing empowerment discourse on work fueled expectations that contributed to collective action. Cleaner and strike leader Judy Lock stated: 'First one must have self-respect, only then one can ask it of others [...] And if you don't receive it, you have to go get it. Cleaners should be proud about their skills like all other workers. If you act as being inferior, you cannot expect others to appreciate you. It seems to me that we have shown that we are a proud group of people, not miserable souls' (Heuts, 2011, p. 25).

Example 4: employability policy

In the 1990s, management gurus and policy makers formulated the ambition of getting employees fully in control of their own careers. The idea was that this can be achieved by investing more in employability which can be defined as empowerment in terms of career (Gazier, 2001; Schmid, 2006), and that this makes employee protection obsolete. Implementation in collective labor agreements and company policy followed, and this became institutionalized (Pruijt and Dérogée, 2010).

In the Netherlands, labor relations are characterized by constant negotiation and consultation between stakeholders, and state influence. The various approaches taken by the actors during the initial implementation and institutionalization phases can be analyzed as a discursive space that is structured by the contradictions of empowerment (Pruijt and Yerkes, 2014). On the axis of ambition and risk lies the issue whether investing in employability will make protection against dismissals obsolete. Trade union representatives found this too risky. They did embrace the idea of investing in employability as employee empowerment but objected against linking this to the abolishment of protection against dismissals. We could read this as an attempt to avert the risk of a programmed failure. Such a risk seems real, especially for older workers (Roobol et al., 2021).

There was also an issue related to the focus - stigmatization contradiction. When Dutch employers started to promote the concept of employability in the early 1990s, at first this met with resistance from the trade union movement. Trade unionists tended to see it as a management ploy to brand workers as non-employable, with the objective of making it easier to dismiss them. After an internal debate, they came up with a new strategy: going along with the idea of investing in employees' employability, but with the restriction that employability programs should apply to everybody.

Example 5: welfare policy

The final example comes from the field of welfare policy, which is subject to attempts to transform the welfare state from a safety net into a trampoline. What follows is an interpretation of an insider account about participation in a reintegration scheme for the unemployed (Alberelli, 2010). The ambition seems to have been to make the participants fit for the labor market by exposure to a simulated job routine coupled with positive thinking. The work leader regularly made statements such as 'you have to be

positive. That is good. In this way, you can take control of your life' (Alberelli, 2010, p. 20). The program included compulsory training based on 'neuro-linguistic programming.'

The risk was experiencing a demoralizing wasting of time. No one in Alberelli's group was able to secure a job, the closest thing was that two of the participants returned to the temporary subsidized work that they had been doing before entering the program, thus moving from one scheme to the next and then back again.

There was one participant, however, who experienced an effect that could be seen as empowerment. This individual had initially been afraid to look people in the face and had tended to speak incoherently, but gradually displayed a much more effective social behavior. Thus, Alberelli's account can be seen as an indication that an approach based on individual needs could have been useful. Discussing such an approach, in turn, could open up a potential debate relating to the focus – stigmatization contradiction.

Conclusion and discussion

The central argument in this paper is theoretical. Instead of conflating empowerment with its opposite, which seems a possible implication of a critical analysis of the concept, empowerment can be seen as a discursive space that is structured by contradictions. The view that empowerment is a power relationship in itself, which coincides with the philosophical paradox of positive freedom (Carter, 2007), points to a contradiction between autonomy and control. The notion that empowerment is a power-knowledge link, that can disqualify those to be empowered, suggests a further internal contradiction, one between focus and stigmatization.

In the literature, empowerment is sometimes associated with neoliberalism, and seen as an ideology that beautifies policies that strip away protection and expose vulnerable people to market forces. However, some ambition to increase self-sufficiency is inherent in empowerment. Thus there seems to be a contradiction between, on the one hand, ambition, and on the other hand, the risk of programmed failure. Taking responsibility and being stimulated by one's own individual accomplishment is clearly part of empowerment, but an over-emphasis on this would mean an amputation of the possibility for collective action. This suggests a contradiction along the dimension individual vs. collective.

A metaphor that can help model possible agency and discourse regarding these four contradictions is balancing: we can see empowerment as a four-dimensional balancing act in which each dimension corresponds to one of the four inherent internal contradictions of the concept. A question that lies ahead is: can we learn more about empowerment by generalizing across contexts?

References

- Alberelli, R. (2010). *Paradijs BV. Op weg naar werk [Paradise Ltd. On the road to work.]* Utrecht: Uitgeverij Parterre.
- Auerbach, A. (2004). 'Tweede fase [Second phase]', in H. Steenbruggen (ed.) *Scholieren aan het woord, 20 jaar LAKS [Students speak, LAKS 20 years]*. Amsterdam: Landelijk Aktie Komitee Scholieren.
- Bachrach, P. and A. Botwinick (1992). *Power and empowerment A Radical Theory of Participatory Democracy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Beauvoir, S. de (1947). *Pour une morale de l'ambiguïté [The Ethics of Ambiguity]*. Parijs: Gallimard.

- Benford, R. D. (2000). 'Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment', *Annual review of sociology*, 26, 611–639.
- Berlin, I. (1969). *Four essays on liberty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bobbe, L. and Reimerink, L (2006). *Empowerment in de Volkshuisvesting. Brandstof voor bewoners*. [Empowerment in public housing. Fuel for tenants]. Rotterdam: SEV.
- Boltanski L. and Chiapello, E, (2005). *The New Spirit of Capitalism*. Londen: Verso.
- Carter, I. (2007). 'Positive and Negative Liberty' in: Zalta, E. N, (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford, URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberty-positive-negative/> ,accessed on 13 October 2011.
- Collins, D. (2000). *Management Fads and Buzzwords. Critical-Practical Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Conger, J. A. and Kanungo, R. N. (1988). The Empowerment Process: Integrating Theory And Practice. *The Academy of Management Review* 13:3, 471-481.
- Cruikshank, B. (1999). *The will to empower. Democratic citizens and other subjects*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Fromm, E. (1942). *Fear of Freedom*. London: Routledge.
- Gazier, B. (2001). 'Employability - The Complexity of a Policy Notion'. In Weinert, P., Baukens, M., Bollerot, P., Pineschi-Gapenne, M. and Walwei, U. (eds) *Employability: From Theory to Practice*. Somerset, NJ: Transaction Publishers, pp. 3–23.
- Harvey, D. (2005). *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Heuts, P. (2011). *Tegenmacht [Counter power]*. Utrecht: FNV Bondgenoten.
- Hogebro, K., Pruijt, H., Pokrovsky, N., and Tsobanoglou, G. (2009). Sociological Practice and the Socio-Technics of Governance, in: Denis, A. and Kalekin-Fishman, D. (eds) *The ISA Handbook in Contemporary International Sociology. Conflict, Competition, Cooperation*. London: Sage, 42-57.
- Horkheimer, M. (1941). The End of Reason. *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science* IX: 3, 366-388.
- Inglehart, R. F. (1977). *The silent revolution: changing values and political styles among Western publics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, R. F. (1990). *Culture shift in advanced industrial society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kaulingfreks, F., Combrink, T., Schrauwen, I., Egas, G., Cafard, J., Rensen, P., Wieland, V., van Ouwkerk, M., Schmidt, D., Hallegraef, D., Oudenampsen, M., Feith, V., van der Velden, L., Rosinga, B., and Bouwknecht, P. (2009). *Witboek Kraken. Krakend Nederland presenteert: 132 bladzijden met meer dan 80 kraakpanden in 20 steden [Whitebook Squatting. Squatting Netherlands presents: 132 pages with more than 80 squats in 20 cities]*. Breda: De Papieren Tijger.
- Kloosterboer, D. (2007). *Innovative trade union strategies*. Amsterdam: Stichting FNV Pers, www.newunionism.net/library/organizing/FNV%20-%20Innovative%20Trade%20Union%20Strategies%20-%202007.pdf.
- Martínez, M. (2020). *Squatters in the Capitalist City. Housing, Justice, and Urban Politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Mckee, K. (2009). Post-Foucauldian governmentality: What does it offer critical social policy analysis? *Critical Social Policy* 29(3), 465-486.
- Mills, C. W. (1959). *The Sociological Imagination*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Morgan, G. (1996). *Images of Organization*, 2nd ed. London: Sage.

- Neumann, A. (2008). *Kleine geile Firmen. Alternativprojekte zwischen Revolte und Management*. [Small hip companies. Alternative projects between rebellion and management.] Hamburg: Edition Nautilus.
- Pechu, C. (2010). *Squat et squatters [Squat and squatters]*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po.
- Popper, K. (1962). *The open society and its enemies*. Londen: Routledge.
- Pruijt, H. (2013). The Logic of Urban Squatting. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(1), 19-45.
- Pruijt, H. (2020). *City-Level Action in a City-Wide Urban Commons. Amsterdam, 1977-1983*. *Partecipazione e Conflitto* 13(3), 1324-1337.
- Pruijt, H. and Dérogée, P. (2010). Employability and job security, friends or foes? The paradoxical reception of employacurity in the Netherlands. *Socio-economic Review* 8(3), 437-460.
- Pruijt, H. and Yerkes, M. A. (2014). *Empowerment as Contested Terrain. Employability of the Dutch workforce*. *European Societies*, 16(1) 48-67.
- Riesman, D. (1950). *The Lonely Crowd. A study of the changing American character*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Roobol, C., Pruijt, H., Koster, F., and Leijten, F.R.M. (2021). *Developmental proactivity and professional ability as older workers' employability resources. A longitudinal study explaining career events*. *International Journal of Business Science and Applied Management* 16(2), 64-88.
- Rose, N. (1999). *Powers of Freedom. Reframing Political Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schmid, G. (2006). Social risk management through transitional labour markets. *Socio-Economic Review* 4, 1–33.
- Simons, R. J. (1995). 'Zelfstandig leren in het studiehuis' [Independent learning in the study house] in Simons, P.R.J. Wijnen, W.H.F.W. en Zuylen, J.G.G. (eds.) *Het studiehuis [The study house]* Tilburg: MesoConsult:, 37-47.
- Stewart, A. (2000). *Theories of power and domination*. Londen: Sage.
- Students Lambert Franckens College (1999). *Staking 2e Fase [Strike 2nd Phase]*, <http://home.tiscali.nl/~5763/tweedefase/index.html> , accessed on 23 September 2011.
- Tolbert, R. (1968). Needed: a compatible ideology. Toward Empowerment. *Negro Digest*, XVII: 10 4-12.
- Tweede Fase Adviespunt (2005). *Zeven jaar Tweede Fase, een balans. Evaluatie Tweede fase*. The Hague: Tweede Fase Adviespunt.
- Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal. (2008) (Vergaderjaar 2007–2008, 31 007) *Parlementair onderzoek Onderwijsvernieuwingen*.
- Weber, M. (1921). *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft [Economy and Society]*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr
- Wietsma, A., Vonk, J. and van der Burght , F. (1982). *Als je leven je lief is. Vraaggesprekken met krakers en kraaksters* [If you hold your life dearly. Interviews with squatters and women squatters]. Amsterdam: Lont.
- Yerkes, M. (2011). *Transforming the Dutch welfare state. Social risks and corporatist reform*. Bristol: The Policy Press.