

Acknowledgements

There is a sense in which the crafting and diffusion of catchwords and doctrines say something important about our times. Calls for ‘accountability’ are now rampant. What do they express about our world today? What do they imply for people and for organizations? And how are they organized? This book was born of an interest in questions of this kind, an interest that we share with many colleagues. We believe that through the close examination of current key ideas like accountability, we can generate some understanding of the dominant narratives, normative claims and organizing metaphors that influence contemporary organizations.

This book was built through close and intensive discussions with our co-writers. We are grateful to all of them for their contributions – for their ideas and for their constructive criticism of the various versions of text. The writing of this book has indeed been a collegial venture.

We have also benefited greatly from the support and critical eyes of our colleagues at Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research: Score. We consider the theme of this book to be tightly linked to the core of Score’s main research interests and activities, which has enriched the discussions around our arguments.

Several colleagues outside of Score have also been influential in the process of fashioning ideas. Our colleagues at Södertörn University College and at the Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University have contributed their fresh perspectives. Likewise, we have benefited greatly from the stimulating contact with colleagues at Stanford University, the London School of Economics, and Cambridge University.

Some of the ideas in these chapters were tested at the conference of the European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS) in Bergen in 2006. Our co-organizers, Chris Grey and Bas Koene, and all the participants at the session Organizing Accountability, contributed in valuable ways to the discussion. As it turned out, accountability for this book is nested into several relations and milieux. Finally, we are grateful for the ambitious and careful language editing of the entire manuscript by Nina Colwill.

Magnus Boström and Christina Garsten
Stockholm