Gender and Diversity in Organizations:
Exploring ‘the Other’ at Work

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by

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the synopsis of a ‘Habilitationsschrift’ is to provide the committee with a concise overview of the contribution made to a specific field of research, a guide to the pile of articles that form the main body of this testimonial piece of academic qualification. It should develop a ‘read thread’ and a ‘good story’, pulling together all the bits and pieces one has written over the last ten years.

Putting together this compilation of articles, conference papers, and book chapters, and reviewing the empirical studies that these writings build on, I realized, probably like everyone who has engaged in this process, that this is no simple task to be done over a weekend or two spent without the family. Neither my own writing nor the scholarly debates I have contributed to have had time to take a break and rest; they are all moving, changing and evolving, even as I am writing this today. How do I interpret the scholarly debate in the field of gender and diversity in organizations now, almost ten years after the earlier controversies to which the main body of this ‘Habilitationsschrift’ responds? Therefore, where is the starting point from which I should start to compile, to summarize? Or, must I rewrite the bits and pieces that I typed into the computer years ago, suddenly realizing that they are also contributing to something else? Or, even worse, should I instead rewrite them, positioning them in a different context and different light in order to pull out other aspects that seem even more important to me now?

This synopsis aims at providing a concise overview of the major debates in the field of ‘gender and diversity in organizations’ that have been relevant for my work. Its major objective is to point out the contributions my publications are making and how they connect to the discipline of Organization Studies. While these debates should be quite familiar to those scholars acting as referees for this ‘Habilitation’ as they are experts in this very field and have themselves contributed to them, my contributions should also become obvious for those so far unfamiliar with this organizational sub-discipline. As the analysis of gender and diversity in organizations is by definition an interdisciplinary endeavor, it provides ample connection points to organizational sub-disciplines such as organizational identity, culture and routines, but also to strategy, change, and human resource management. Engaging with this topic from diverse disciplinary backgrounds could then be interpreted as ‘act[ing] as a catalyst and connect[ing] yet unconnected theories with the politico-ethical realities that constitute and reconstitute organizations’ (Kornberger, Carter, & Ross-Smith, 2010, p. 790). In that vein, I...
invite the readers of this synopsis to engage with the topic that inspired both my empirical work and my writings over the last decade and its contributions to Organization Studies.

Struggling with this diversity in readers and complexity in topics and time, while aiming to keep matters as straightforward as possible, I have tried to pause for a moment and recap what I have been doing in my research and writing that forms the body of this ‘Habilitation’ on the ‘exploration of the Other’ in Organization Studies. The following pages are structured as follows. I first establish the notion of ‘the Other’ as the major entry point of this synopsis and then introduce the four major perspectives on ‘the Other’ that my research has contributed to and that also structure the main part of this synopsis: the ‘re-invented’, the ‘marginalized’, the ‘agentic’ and the ‘investigated Other’. Finally, I provide an overview of the five research projects that build the empirical basis for this research, followed by a short summary of my contributions to Organization Studies.

2. Exploring ‘the Other’ at Work

In other words, [Judith] Butler seeks to explore and elaborate upon one of Hegel’s most fundamental concerns - the way in which any Self, or subject position, requires an Other, or alterity, for its own constitution and existence. (Borgerson, 2005, p. 64)

As identity is only possible through difference, becoming ‘Other’ is inevitable. For instance, Simone de Beauvoir (1949/2010), in her analysis of the construction of women, points out that women are defined through what they are not; hence, she theorized women as the second and therefore ‘Other’ sex. Throughout the 20th century, French feminists further developed the concept of ‘the Other’, contributing an analysis of ‘the dualistic processes by which the normative and the deviant, centres and margins, core and periphery and the powerful and the powerless are identified and differentiated’ (Özbilgin & Woodward, 2004, p. 676).

Throughout the 1990s, ‘the Other’ emerged in organization studies (Hearn, 1996; Holvino, 1997; Marshall, 1995; Martin, 1994; Nkomo, 1992; Rastetter, 1994) then, in the years after the millennium change the topic was further developed and also differentiated (Czarniawska & Höpfl, 2002). Depicting four vital conversations as relevant both for this specific decade and for my work, the notion of the Other serves as both an entry point and a connecting link to all four of them. First, organizational change initiatives are increasingly relevant to equality and inclusion in organizational practice. Second, scholars are increasingly interested in theorizing ‘women’ and other marginalized identities as the excluded ‘Other’ in organizations and organizational theory’. Third, serious attempts are being made to analyze the consequences of the ‘decentred subject’ (Hall, 2008). Fourth, in more general terms, the
engagement with the discursive and the practice turn in gender studies anticipated the practice turn that was vital for many organizational disciplines (Whittington, 2011) in the second half of the 2000s (Pullen & Knights, 2007). Situating my contributions within these conversations in terms of theoretical background, major research gaps and empirical focus, I organize this exploration as ten distinctive contributions grouped around four themes: The ‘re-invented Other’, the ‘marginalized Other’, the ‘agentic Other’, and the ‘investigated Other’ (see table 1).

### Table 1: Contributions and Major Themes of ‘Exploring the Other’

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<th>How can we explain the paradoxical effects of organizational interventions?</th>
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<th>The investigated Other</th>
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To begin with, in the chapter on the ‘re-invented Other’, the notion of ‘the Other’ stands for the increased impact that analyses of diversity are having in efforts to understand today’s workplaces and organizations. More and more, both enterprises and communities are faced with globalized markets, increased mobility and migration (Clegg, 2003), as well as major changes in gender relations and the organization of the family (Maihofer, 2004). These trends have triggered an increased interest in organizational interventions such as diversity management, and initiatives towards equal opportunities and family friendliness, both for their practical implications and in academic research (Calás & Smircich, 2009), thereby placing an emphasis on organizational change and learning towards organizations becoming more ‘inclusive’ (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Ely & Meyerson, 2000; Meyerson & Kolb, 2000). However, researchers have found that changes that aimed to include ‘the Other’ instead helped to preserve the status quo (Britton & Logan, 2008; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2008) and hence led to a paradoxical effect: ‘re-inventing’ what was already there (Hearn, 2000; Holvino, 1997). Drawing on discourse analytical perspectives in organization studies (Philips & Hardy, 2002), my research analyzed the discourses that produce, reproduce or eventually transform...
these paradoxical effects in three distinctive change initiatives: equal opportunities, diversity management and family friendliness.

Second, the ‘marginalized Other’ refers to a long-standing tradition of research on the ‘gendered organization’ (Acker, 1990; 1998; Ely & Padavic, 2007; Martin & Collinson, 2002; Britton, 2000; Britton & Logan, 2008; Calás & Smircich, 2009; Townsley, 2003). This research analyzes how formal and informal work practices, norms and policies, and the discourse and rhetoric in everyday organizational practices, categorize ‘women’ as the ‘Other’ that is either absent or depicted as deviant. Furthermore, what count as ‘female values’ are constantly devalued in the context of organizations (Bendl, 2008). Resonating with postcolonial and queer theory (Bendl, Fleischmann & Hofmann, 2009; Prasad, 2006; Parker, 2002), the Other is understood here along a binary distinction: it serves as a repository for all that which is the opposite of the ‘core privileged moral, ethical and aesthetic attributes which define’ the self-image (Beatty, 2007, p. 34-35; Prasad, 1997) What counts as the ‘ideal worker’ (Acker, 1990) is a white, European, middle or upper class heterosexual male; against this, everyone else becomes ‘diverse’ or ‘Other’ and hence a marginalized identity (Nkomo & Cox, 1996, p. 349; Calás & Smircich, 2000).

However, as Nkomo and Cox pointed out convincingly in their 1996 handbook article, despite the abundant research on marginalized identities, we do not yet know much about the practices that produce them (see also Riach, 2007 on Ageism; Ely & Padavic, 2007). Drawing on the analytical concepts of discursive psychology as a specific theoretical take on organizational discourse (Alvesson & Kärremann, 2011; Ashcraft, 2006), my contributions in this section explore various facets of the question of how marginalized identities are produced in micro-discursive practices.

Third, although empirical studies analyzing the driving forces for the success or failure of diversity management initiatives in organizations point to the importance of the position of the diversity manager (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006), change agency is still an under-researched aspect in organizational change processes (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2008; Meyerson, 2003; Meyerson & Scully, 1995; Tatli & Özbilgin, 2009). Departing from the analysis of ‘the Other’ as marginalized, in my chapter on the ‘agentic Other’ I explore the possibilities of theorizing the marginalized position as a source of change agency.

From the backdrop of ‘decentred subjectivity’ (Hall, 2008; Wetherell, 2008; 2010), the concept of identity has undergone major transformations and is now somewhat fluid and variable. Identity became something that is ‘done’ by referencing the excluded ‘Other’, thereby no longer treating categories such as women and men (or the migrants, the disabled,
Julia C. Nentwich

the Swiss) as self-evident. For instance, in her critique of the feminist construction of the stable subject ‘woman’, Judith Butler ‘introduces a concept of decentred subjectivity in which the subject is open-ended and indeterminate except when it is fixed in place by culturally constituted gendered practices’ (Gherardi, 2005, p. 222). The subject has become ‘the necessary scene of agency’ (Butler 1990, p. 147): If subjects perform their identities in slightly different ways, they may thereby subvert and hence change the norms in place. Further elaborating on the concepts of performativity and subversion, I contributed an empirical analysis of ‘troubling’ norms, and hence of subjects developing change agency in two highly relevant societal change processes: organizing new forms of parenthood within the context of the ‘new father’, and the women’s struggle for the right to vote in the Swiss cantons of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Appenzell Ausserrhoden.

The fourth and final theme in this synopsis is the ‘investigated Other’, which explores issues around conceptualizing and designing empirical studies after the practice turn. Theorizing gender identity as no longer a fixed entity, but as something that is ‘said and done’ (Martin, 2003) is of course also easier said than done in empirical studies. If gender is no longer the fixed category that can be defined before the research is conducted, the researcher must also analyze the actual practices of constructing or performing that identity. Instead of taking women and men at face value, researchers have to be careful not to reify everyday taken-for-granted assumptions about gender but to critically investigate how they actually came into being (Fournier & Smith, 2006). Therefore, in empirical research, being a man or a woman should be the outcome of a practice rather than the starting point. Contributing to this theme, I present in more detail my (and my co-author’s) publications that review and discuss the conceptualization of gender in empirical studies in the fields of organization and management studies and organizational psychology, as well as sustainable consumption, and point out their consequences for theory development and empirical designs.
3. **The ‘Re-Invented Other’**

Dealing with inequality in organizations has been a key issue of organizational interventions promoting equal opportunities, gender mainstreaming, and diversity management, among other aims (Britton & Logan, 2008; Benschop, Mills, Mills & Tienari, 2012; Hanappi-Egger, 2007; Krell, Ortlieb & Sieben, 2011; Kirton & Greene, 2005). Although the business case has been a vital source of debate throughout the last decade (Ruigrok, 2012; April & Shockley, 2007), the impact seems to be more on the level of organizational practices than on outcomes (Rijamampilina & Carmichael, 2005, p. 110). For instance, a study in the US banking sector has shown that whether or not racial diversity has a positive impact on a firm’s performance depends on the firm’s strategy and on ‘how organization leaders and participants respond to and manage diversity’ (Richard, 2000, p. 174), shedding light on matters of leadership and organizational culture. Others have emphasized organizational change and learning (Ely & Thomas, 2001). Installing ‘cultures of mutual learning and cooperation’ (Kochan et al., 2003, p. 19) is seen as crucial for engendering change, and power is the crucial issue in exploring the management of diversity (Litvin, 2006).

However, as organizational research has shown, interventions aiming at well-defined identity categories such as ‘women’ or ‘working mothers’ often contribute to paradoxical effects (Ainsworth, Knox & O’Flynn, 2010; Cavenaugh, 1997). As programmes address the identified ‘special’ needs of ‘the Other’, they tend to reify differences. Meanwhile, as the norms of the ‘ideal worker’ are rarely questioned, existing privilege is merely reproduced (Tienari, Quack & Theobald, 2002; Ostendorp & Steyaert, 2009) and interventions neglect the asymmetric power relations in place (Holvino & Kamp, 2009). Overall, research on organizational change programmes hints at the conclusion that these interventions are contributing to continuity instead of change (Britton & Logan, 2008).

Investigating this paradoxical effect of organizational change initiatives, I adopted a discourse analytical perspective on organizations (Grant, Harvey, Oswick & Putnam, 2004). Because it views organizations as communicative processes, this perspective enables a distinctive analysis of the paradoxes of organizational change (Rhodes & Brown, 2005, p. 177). Furthermore, as discourse analysis is always also an analysis of power in organizations, it ‘facilitates the problematization of the status quo’ (Alvesson & Kärremann, 2011, p. 1124). Analyzing three distinctive paradoxes of organizational interventions—diversity management, family friendliness and equal opportunities—my co-authors and myself were able to reveal...
the ways that specific contexts resulted in a reproduction of the status quo and hence only ‘re-invented’ the Other.

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<td><strong>Complementary</strong></td>
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3.1 Diversity Management: Traditional and New Diversity in Switzerland (Contribution 1)

In 1997, diversity was ‘a significantly under-researched and under-theorized phenomenon in the management literature’ (Prasad & Mills, 1997, p. 5); since then, it has travelled around the globe and produced many localized versions (see also Prasad, Pringle & Konrad, 2006; Meriläinen, Tienari, Katila, & Benschop, 2009; Calás, Holgerson & Smircich, 2009.) In recent years, analyzing these local versions and contexts has become a central issue in research. In 2010 Alain Klarsfeld published an edited volume, portraying perspectives on diversity management and equal treatment at work from 10 European and 6 non-European countries. Together with Chris Steyaert and Brigitte Liebig, I contributed a chapter to that volume (B5) and, in a translated and more elaborated version, an article to the first volume of the German-language journal ‘Diversitas’ (B7) on diversity management in Switzerland.

In this contribution we provide an overview of both the history of the concept and the descriptive statistics on cultural and gender diversity in the Swiss context. In addition, we
briefly outline the legal situation. We identify a paradox in how the ‘global idea’ (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005) of diversity management has travelled to the Swiss context: Although Switzerland as a country has quite a long tradition of dealing with diversity and it remains a key element of Switzerland’s self-concept, its management is a fairly new concept to Swiss companies, one not considered relevant (Filler et al., 2006). Even topics such as language diversity that prove to be crucial for everyday working life, that are supported by legislation and acknowledged for their social relevance, do not receive extensive attention in the organizational context. As the new, managerial concept of ‘diversity’ is not well connected to the traditionally cherished diversity in Switzerland, it serves as a fashionable concept that leads to the maintaining status quo instead of change.

I came to a similar conclusion in an earlier book chapter on ‘equity and diversity at Swiss universities’ (B2): ‘While gender and the issue of equality and equal opportunities between women and men grew more important in Swiss universities during the 1990s, other ‘diversity’ topics have not yet caught up’ (Nentwich, 2006, p. 151). In fact, diversity management in Switzerland might still be an underestimated organizational intervention, leaving important topics for organizations underexplored.

3.2 Family Friendliness: Preserving the Status Quo (Contribution 2)

Although diversity management has not yet been taken up by Swiss companies, other, more specific organizational interventions aiming at the inclusion of ‘the Other’ have nevertheless been relevant in the Swiss context. Especially for SMBs, a good example is becoming a ‘family friendly’ employer that helps its employees to bridge the work-family conflict.

Looking at the case of ‘family friendliness’, Anja Ostendorp and myself were able to show in our research project how the gap between work and family was (re)negotiated through six different interpretative repertoires of family friendliness, all capturing different understandings of what ‘family friendliness’ could mean (A1). Crucially, throughout these repertoires, traditional notions of the heterosexual, patriarchal family were preserved rather than changed, thereby contributing to gender inequality. Our analysis showed that some of the repertoires in use even worked against the overall objective of supporting gender equality. Hence, the change intervention of ‘family friendliness’ in fact preserved the status quo.
3.3 Equal Opportunities: Negotiating ‘Sameness’ and ‘Difference’ (Contribution 3)

In a single-authored conference paper and later publication (C1, A2) I am taking up the paradox of ‘sameness’ and ‘difference’ that is a key issue throughout change initiatives aiming towards equality (Benschop & Verloo, 2011). From a sameness perspective, organizations aim at decreasing discrimination and prejudice towards ‘the Other’, but the difference perspective would credit the Other for contributing something new and so far excluded or marginalized, for instance in the business case for diversity. Applying discourse analysis techniques, I analysed the interpretative repertoires (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) that professional change agents in Switzerland draw upon in order to construct the subject and the objectives of their daily work. By conceptualizing the paradox of ‘sameness’ and ‘difference’ as an ideological dilemma (Billig et al., 1988) I could leave behind the idea of opposing approaches and see three perspectives that provide different possibilities for change and change agency. Furthermore, the notion of the ideological dilemma also focuses on the consequences of a certain meaning in a specific context and hence on the effects of the paradox. My analysis sheds light on how people negotiate the dilemma between sameness and difference. I conclude that the simultaneous use of all possible theoretical perspectives might be a worthwhile objective for exploring new avenues for organizational change that aims at equality.

4. The ‘Marginalized Other’

… discourse performs ordering and ranking of subject positions by ‘marginalizing’ the ‘other’, by confining ‘places of otherness’ to the margins. (Fournier, 1998, p. 63)

Research on gender and organizations highlights the roles that organizations and organizational practices play in constructing gender. For instance, gendered identities are re-negotiated according to organizational norms and expectations, showing how organizations are not gender-neutral but sites of continuous struggle and re-definition (Alveson, 1998; Calás & Smircich, 1992; 1996; 2006; Martin, 1990). Gender became something that is done in organizational practices, thereby emphasizing the construction of identities along the well-established binaries of ‘the One’ and ‘the Other’ (Nkomo & Cox, 1996) and shedding light on modernity’s taken-for-granted practices of exclusion that result in privileging the Same and marginalizing the Other (Hall, 2008).

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1 This section draws on my elaborations on discursive psychology, new racism, gender scripts and doing and undoing gender in C4, C7, C8, B10.
Understanding this categorization process as a discursive practice (Nkomo & Cox, 1996; Wetherell, 2010), I investigated, with my co-authors, the micro-discursive moves that speakers use and the variability of discourses available for constructing and excluding the ‘Other’ along the well-known binary of ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). From this perspective, what is at stake is the discursive construction of binary differences. With reference to ethnicity and gender, these discursive practices have been depicted as ‘modern’ or ‘new’ racisms or sexisms (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Swim, Aikin, Hall & Hunter, 1995), or, more recently ‘ageism’ (Riach, 2007) throughout the social psychological literature. As equality and anti-racism serve as important core values of liberal-democratic societies, both racism and sexism have become more subtle and covert. The discourse analytical focus shows how people’s shifting between repertoires camouflages the racist consequences of their talk. In fact, ‘liberal arguments’ are used ‘for illiberal ends’, as Augoustinos and Every (2007) put it, thereby creating a strong discourse of ‘us’ that makes the overt and obvious forms of racism redundant. In a similar vein, classical topics of liberal discourse are used to camouflage the resulting consequences of exclusion.

However, the Other is not only constructed through discourse, but also through artefacts. For instance, when designers develop a technological artefact, they inscribe stereotypical assumptions about the future users, both female and male, into the design of the object. This inscription is de-inscribed later, for instance when users make sense of the object by using it (Akrich 1992). The concept of ‘gender scripts’ captures both the practices of inscribing and de-inscribing ‘representations of masculinities and femininities in technological artifacts. (...) Technologies are represented as objects of identity projects – objects that may stabilize or de-stabilize hegemonic representations’ (Oudshoorn & Pinch, 2003, p. 10). Therefore, producing and using technologies can be interpreted as social practices which are deeply intertwined with the practices of ‘Othering’.

Ellen van Oost’s (2003) study on shavers is a striking example of gender scripts, demonstrating how the design culture at Philips helps to stabilize hegemonic representations of gender. The ‘Philishave’ device, intended for men, is characterized by its technical features, while the ‘Ladyshave’ design renders shaving an aspect of cosmetics and hides the technical character of the device; for instance, it has no screws that would allow the user to take it apart. The premise for the design philosophy draws on the well-known symbolic dichotomy of male instrumentality and female expressiveness, as the shavers are associated either with rational goal achievement through the use of technology or with the sphere of emotions and bodily care. The assumption about the users is that women, in contrast to men,
dislike the association with technology and prefer the association with aesthetics. Thus, the
design of the shaver constructs femininity as disinterest in technology and commitment to
values of beauty. Both femininity as technophobe and emotional, and the shaver as a
technological artefact, are constructed at the same time. Here, gender and technological
artefacts are both source and consequence of the same process (Faulkner 2001, p. 81) and
therefore co-construct each other. Or, as Judy Wajcman (2002, p. 358) puts it, ‘masculinities
and femininities are constituted simultaneously with the production and consumption of
technologies.’ The shaver example also demonstrates how symbolic gender binaries are used
to organize the gendered practices of everyday life, thereby turning men’s shaving practices
into something different from women’s shaving practices. In the words of Sandra Harding
(1986, p. 17), gendered social life is the consequence of ‘appealing to these gender dualisms
to organize social activity, of dividing necessary social activities between different groups of
humans’. Thus, femininity is inscribed into the design of the shaver thereby constructing
technological disinterest or incompetence as feminine. Both femininity as technophobe and
the shaver as a technological artefact are constructed at the same time, thereby marginalizing
women and femininity in the context of technology.

In the following paragraphs, I briefly summarize my contributions to the exploration
of the micro-discursive construction of three distinctive ‘marginalized Others’: the ethnic
Other constructed in discourse on ‘living together’ in city neighbourhoods, qualitative
research as a marginalized Other in science, and ‘home making’ as a perspective on
sustainable home heating that is dominated by a more enforced understanding of heating as a
matter of ‘facility management.’

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4.1 Discursive Manoeuvres of Self-Other Formation (Contribution 4)

In our research project on the discursive construction of ‘living together’ in city neighbourhoods (R4), the construction of a ‘generalized’ Other was identified as a crucial topic. Throughout all the group discussions, differences in ethnicity, nationality and religion played a major role for the discursive positioning of self and Other. This was achieved by categorizing groups along very general social identity categories, such as ‘the foreigners’ or ‘the Yugoslavian’ and a stereotyped, over-generalization of characteristics attributed to them. In a similar vein, distinctive groups of ‘the good’ and ‘the bad’ foreigner were created. Thus speakers achieved a positive positioning of themselves and their in-groups and a negative positioning of ‘the Other’. The complex discursive manoeuvres of new racism not only contribute to the categorization of a positive in-group and a negative out-group, but also result in certain possibilities of subject positioning resulting from the acts of balancing ideological dilemmas. Throughout several conference presentations as well as one major journal publication (A6) we investigated the interpretative repertoires and ideological dilemmas involved in positioning the self and the Other and similarities and differences that I observed in these positioning practices between sexism and racism (C6).

4.2 The Self-Marginalization of Qualitative Research (Contribution 5)

In a conference paper and later journal publication (C3, A3), Pascal Dey and myself conducted a critical analysis of the self-marginalization at work in the then very vital process of establishing qualitative research as a valid and legitimate alternative to mainstream
quantitative research. Taking Eberle’s (2005) attempt at de-marginalizing qualitative research in Switzerland as an example, we investigated the discursive construction of ‘qualitative research’ in this context. Our analysis showed that what is called ‘qualitative research’ is decisively delimited by positivist associations of ‘good research’. We also found that although Eberle was striving to increase the legitimacy of qualitative research, his argument at the same time resulted in reifying two crucial binaries and (re)marginalizing qualitative research. For instance, by invoking positivist quality criteria, he not only reifies the binary between qualitative and quantitative research, but also subordinates the qualitative pole of research to an inferior and hence marginalized position. Furthermore, qualitative research is legitimated as ‘scientific’ through constructing a second distinction, that between research and ‘nonresearch’ such as the arts, journalism and fiction. By engaging in identity politics along these two binaries, the argument for qualitative research tends to reify its marginal position instead of challenging it.

4.3 Reproducing Gender in Design: Scripting the Other through Artefacts

(Contribution 6)

In the research project on the relevance of gender in the context of home heating I explored, together with Ursula Offenberger, the relevance of materiality for the discursive construction of difference (R5). We analyzed the display and design of sustainable heating devices in marketing booklets and at trade fairs (B4, C7). We were able to identify two different gender scripts that were relevant throughout the acquisition phase: home heating configured as ‘facility management’ or as ‘home making’. Home heating as facility management is reduced to generally technology-related objects such as boilers and associated with symbolically masculine values like technical rationality, control, and abstract understanding of heat energy. Meanwhile, home heating as ‘home making’ is related to the use of stoves and associated with symbolically feminine values of aesthetics, care and well-being as well as emotional, concrete and holistic experiences of heat energy. Furthermore, the gendered spatial order of family homes (Wajcman, 1991, pp. 106f), differentiating between symbolically feminine areas of living and symbolically masculine areas of technical supply infrastructure, is reproduced and mirrored in differences in design, highlighting the technical or aesthetic aspects of the heating technology respectively. The understanding of home heating as an issue of technology was installed through the inscription of gender into the artefact, thereby marginalizing the aesthetic and holistic experience as ‘the Other’, and less important for an estimate of
sustainability effects. This distinction also proved relevant in couples’ accounts of their acquisition process (B9, B10, C8).

With reference to the main insights of the theory of the ‘gendered organization’ (Acker, 1990; 1998), this study vitally showed that technology is far from being gender neutral, but in fact is ‘gendered’ both in design and in the shifting meanings that are attributed in the sense-making process.

5. The ‘Agentic Other’

Lines of exclusion and inclusion, them and us, commonality and difference, otherness and identity are not immutable but contingent, temporal and liable to shift (…). (Fournier, p. 83)

Against the backdrop of the postmodern turn in both organizational and gender studies, and especially the legacy of Judith Butler’s (1990, 1993, 1997, 2004, 2010) work on the performativity and materiality of gendered subjectivities, analyses of ‘doing gender’ became analyses of the gendered practices that show how the stability and instability of gender identity are ‘done’ as well as ‘undone’. While gender can be ‘done’ in repetitive ways, always supporting the same dualisms, it can also be troubled, ‘undone’, or ‘done’ differently (Kelan, 2010). While ‘doing gender’ emphasizes the construction of identities along the well-established binaries of ‘the One’ and ‘the Other’ and hence establishes the Other as marginalized, ‘undoing gender’ sheds light on the power of rupture, trouble and subversion that lie within every interaction (Butler, 1990, 2004). ‘Undoing gender’ emphasizes the agentic side of becoming Other.

This is what Meyerson and Scully have coined as what ‘tempered radicals’ do (Meyerson, 2003; Meyerson & Scully, 1995). By engaging with the ambivalences of masculinity and femininity at work, they are seen as ‘vital sources of resistance, alternative ideas, and transformation within their organizations’ (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 586), challenging and troubling the symbolic gender order and thereby developing change agency (Fournier & Kelemen, 2001; McDowell, 1997). Although this way of practicing resistance can be unpredictable and fragile (Kondo, 1990; Pilgeram, 2008) and not without its dangers (Collinson, 2005; Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007; Martin, 2003), the marginalized position can be a source of change agency.

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2 This section draws on my elaboration of change as trouble in A4, A5 and a paper co-authored by Özbilgin and Tatli on change agency from a Butlerian and Bourdieuan perspective, currently being revised for resubmission at Culture and Organization.
Drawing on Butler (1993), becoming a subject is a performative act. Performativity may be summarized as the process through which gendered subjects are constituted by regulatory notions within a heterosexual matrix. In fact, for Butler subjects are constructed by the positions the discourse allows. Following speech act theory, some of these positions speak to, or ‘interpellate’ individuals and in orienting toward these discourses subjects are reinstated. In citing specific subject positions people render themselves legible but at the same time what is legible as a human being is defined within fairly narrow limits. Which subjects can be formed depends on restrictive and heterosexual gender norms. In fact, to say that gender is performative is not to say that it is arbitrary. How gender is done depends upon a certain context, cultural background and history, as those are the locations where the available discourses have evolved. Every performance draws upon this normative context. Because this norm seems natural, we have not questioned it and it has become hegemonic.

Thus, the subject is constructed through repetitive forms of enactment, which at the same time reconstruct the socially established binary norm. Through this process of continual repetition –making copies of copies of performances – the norm is constructed as apparently natural. However, change becomes possible here through the disruption and rupture of the very binary norms that brought the subject into being. Butler believes it is impossible to not perform or not do gender; therefore change may be possible only if people perform their identities in slightly different ways – that is, if they displace the norms. In this sense, Butler is inviting ‘gender trouble’: inviting people to engage in actions that subvert the normative configurations. Butler is following Derrida here, assuming that change requires questioning or troubling the norms in place. If subjects perform their identities in slightly different ways they may thereby displace and change the norms. Changing norms through subversive performances also results in the possibility of new ways of practicing identity (Borgerson, 2005).

From a more methodological point of view, Butler’s perspective lacks an empirical programme for studying how doing and undoing gender is performed in everyday practices (Kelan, 2009b). In this case, however, discursive psychology is also providing the ‘analytical programme for studying discourse practices’ (Speer, 2005, p. 82). For instance, Davies and Harré (1990, p. 46; Wetherell, 1998) elaborate on ‘subject positions’, empirically grounding Butler’s notion of subjectivation through everyday practices. As they engage in a discussion, speakers draw on repertoires and react towards the repertoires made relevant by others (Davies & Harré, 1990). Hence, becoming a subject is always a process of positioning oneself within the culturally shared discourses (Wetherell, 2003). Analyzing the manoeuvres of
subject positioning, a discourse psychological analysis makes it possible to incorporate ‘both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire’ (Billig 1988, p. 97). Drawing on Butler’s concept of ‘change as trouble’ I empirically analyzed the possibilities for change and change agency respectively in two empirical cases. The first involved attempts to subvert the heterosexual family through new ways of becoming a father or a mother (A4, C2) and the second involved attempts to develop change agency in the political change process of the women’s struggle for the right to vote in the cantons of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Appenzell Ausserrhoden (A5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Relevant Publications for the ‘Agentic Other’</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complementary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 ‘Active Fathers’ as pioneers in a societal change process? Possibilities of gender trouble in the work-life context. 21st European Group of Organizational Studies Colloquium (EGOS), Berlin, Germany, July 2005.</td>
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</table>

### 5.1 Change as Trouble (Contribution 7)

With a focus on the organization of gender in heterosexual parenthood, I conducted a secondary analysis of interview material I had initially collected for my doctoral dissertation project. Throughout these 21 interviews with employees at a scientific research institute in Switzerland I explored the discursive construction of different possibilities of positioning. I found that a total of four different scenarios of heterosexual parenthood were constructed in the interviews. In all four scenarios, the interviewees constructed different subject positions for mothers and fathers drawing mainly on two major topoi: ‘the importance of the paid job’ and ‘the importance of the child’. However, when accounting for non-traditional scenarios, they introduced these topoi differently, resulting in different subject positions for parents and also different basic assumptions about the relationship between work and family.

My analysis raised two important points. First, subversion in the sense of Butler’s (1990, 1993) gender trouble will challenge the dominant discourses of gendered parenthood in some contexts, but it always raises the danger of reifying it in others. Subversive practices and discourses are always in danger of being domesticated by the dominant logic, and their
success always depends on the audience interpreting the action in question. Second, it will only become possible to create new discourses and meanings of parenthood when new subject positions are taken up at the same time, and vice versa. Engaging in ‘alternative’ practices – for instance, active fathering or lesbian parenting – is not enough to trouble the dominant gendered logic. A lesbian mother drawing on the discourse of biological motherhood in order to explain why she works part time is reifying the norm of the gender binary just like the house-husband arguing that his wife has to work because he is unemployed. My analysis has shown that heterosexual practices do have the potential to be subversive if we explore alternative ways of positioning within or outside the normative gendered discourse of parenthood.

5.2 Agency as Discursive Positioning (Contribution 8)

Engaging more thoroughly with concept of change agency as a discursive practice as put forward in more recent publications by Butler (1997, 2004, 2010), I explore how change agency comes with the practices of subjectivation. In her conception, the subject cannot be depicted as the victim of normative discourses and hence a mere discursive effect, but as an active agent within this process always also constituting the very norms that bring the subject into being. Here, agency lies within the process of subjectivation, a two-sided process of both submitting and referencing specific discourses in order to become a subject.

In article A5, my objective was to demonstrate this conceptualization of agency in empirical material from the women’s struggle for the right to vote in the Swiss cantons of Appenzell. As that change process very much depended on being perceived as coming from the inside as a prerequisite for developing a powerful position, the negotiation of being perceived as insider and outsider was crucial for developing what Gergen (1989) coined as ‘warranting voice’, a powerful standpoint in the debate. While the outsider as ‘the Other’ is somewhat silenced and delegitimized, obtaining a legitimate position from which to speak is crucial for developing a voice that can be heard. As Crenshaw (1992) shows in her analysis of Anita Hill’s testimony, speech can be ‘de-authorized not simply because of what they say but because there is no legitimate position from which they can say it (…)’ (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1996, p. 9). Developing a legitimate position in the women’s struggle for the right to vote was a balancing act between two poles: provocation and conformity, and change coming from within or from the outside.

However, while women had to be perceived as coming from the inside in order to obtain a powerful position to speak, the norms that have to be subverted from a Butlerian
perspective might only be challenged if they were performed slightly differently. In Appenzell, due to the tight and very closed social space, the outsider’s perspective was indispensable. Indeed, the interviewees mainly attributed change agency to individuals coming from the outside, who could act more courageously than those from the inside. While being perceived as from the ‘inside’ was important for gaining a powerful voice, coming from the ‘outside’ proved highly relevant for being able to subvert the norms in place. Hence, being able to balance this binary opposition of outsider and insider was crucial for women to obtain change agency in this context.

6. Investigating ‘the Other’

... how can we write about gender and acknowledge the importance of gender, without reproducing the problematic aspects of the gender binary? (Linstead & Brewis, 2004, p. 360)

As already pointed out through the three preceding sections, and anticipating the discursive and practice turn(s) in organization studies (Alvesson & Kärremann, 2000; Grant, Keeney & Oswick, 2001; Grant, Hardy, Oswick & Putnam, 2004; Orlikowski, 2000; Whittington, 2006, 2011), research on gender and organizing began to theorize the ‘doing’ of gender in organizations as social practices (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001, 2007; Poggio, 2006; Martin, 2003) that are enacted through language and hence discourse (Schatzki, Cetina, & von Savigny, 2001). Organizational practices as well as gender are made meaningful through discourses that produce, reproduce and transform objects, categories or relationships that actors draw upon when making sense of the world (Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Ashcraft, 2004). In consequence, in organization studies, gender became something one does rather than is (Britton, 2000), emphasizing the relevance of discursive and embodied practices such as talk, action and bodily displays that enact the binary symbolic order of femininity and masculinity (Gherardi, 1994, 1995; Kelan, 2009a; Martin, 2003; McDowell, 1997).

This, however, is easier said than done. For instance, Fournier and Smith (2006) criticize Metcalfe and Linstead (2003) for claiming to undertake a ‘post-structuralist feminist reading’ stressing ‘plurality rather than unity’ (Fournier & Smith, 2006, p. 144, cf. Metcalfe & Linstead, 2003, p. 98) while at the same time linking ‘soft managerial practices’ to the ‘feminine’ and teamwork, theorised as privileging control and performance, to the ‘masculine’. Fournier and Smith (2006, p. 144) state that at this point ‘essentialism seems to relentlessly creep back.’ The result is a form of ‘clichéd constructivism’ (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000) ‘relying on standard signifiers and theoretical gestures towards the fluidity of gendered

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3 This section draws on my and Elisabeth Kelan’s critical review of empirical research on doing gender (C4).
identity’ (Fournier & Smith, 2006, p. 142), which seem to be difficult to realize in empirical projects.

By analyzing how ‘doing gender’ was conceptualized and operationalized in empirical studies in several contexts, in the next two contributions I show how the recent shift in theorizing gender was taken into account in empirical studies in the fields of organization studies, management, organizational psychology and sustainable consumption. Furthermore, I indicate the relevance of reconsidering research designs for the scholarly analysis of ‘doing gender’ as the major future challenge for empirical studies.

### Table 5: Relevant Publications for ‘Investigating the Other’

**Core**

|---|---|

**Complementary**

6.1 Conceptualizing Gender in Management, Organizational Psychology, and Sustainable Consumption (Contribution 9)

In several publications with different co-authors, I elaborated on the consequences of theorizing gender (and diversity) as a social practice. In a book chapter written together with Elisabeth Kelan, we outlined the consequences of seeing gender as a social practice instead of as a variable for management research (B3). That chapter provides researchers with fresh insights into how gender happens at work and transcends the essentialist assumptions entailed in much research on gender at work since it shows how gender is constructed in a given situation. For instance, only a few studies so far have questioned the assumption that there are things like a ‘female’ management style (Wajcman, 1996) or ‘feminine leadership’ (Billing & Alvesson, 2000; Fletcher, 2004). An understanding of gender as a social practice allows researchers to analyze how gender segregation is retained in a work context through interactional achievements. Organizations are also gendered insofar as they invoke certain ways in which gender ought to be done. ‘Doing gender’ is linked to doing hierarchies where the masculine is valued more highly than the feminine. Gender itself is highly flexible and what is gendered as feminine in one context could be gendered as masculine in another context. A shift towards ‘feminine skills’ in various work contexts might therefore not evidently lead to a revaluation of women workers. Janne Tienari and myself elaborated on these conceptual developments in the context of managing diversity (B11).

In a 2009 conference paper (C5) and a more elaborated book chapter published in a handbook on psychology and gender in 2010 (B6), Martina Stangel-Meseke and myself provided an analysis of empirical studies on gender in German-speaking work and organizational psychology according to four different perspectives on gender: women and men as variables, as a gendered standpoint (women’s and men’s studies), as gender relations, and as a social practice. Our review shows that almost all studies have been conducted from the first three perspectives, meaning that researchers rarely take up contemporary sociological perspectives, such as those in research on gender relations as well as practice perspectives. The consequence is that gender is essentialized throughout these studies, leaving unanswered the crucial questions on the co-construction of gender and organizing.

By conceptualizing gender from multiple perspectives—those of identity, structures and the symbolic—we developed an analytical frame for discussing the highly heterogeneous results and conceptual insights from six projects in the research programme ‘Sustainable consumption – from knowledge to action’ (B8). Unpacking both the results and the conceptual assumptions, we were able to show that the analysis of gender in research on
sustainable consumption would benefit greatly from moving beyond gender as a variable and taking into account the structural and symbolic dimensions of gender (as well as consumption).

6.2 Consequences for Empirical Research (Contribution 10)

Taking up the methodological consequences of theorizing gender as a social practice, Elisabeth Kelan and myself argue in our 2007 conference paper that in a more developed version is currently being revised for a second review round at Gender, Work and Organization (C4), that the methodological pitfalls are definitely not a ‘matter of intellectual sloppiness’ (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 6), but a serious and important issue in the way that doing gender is operationalised in empirical studies. Reviewing empirical studies on doing gender in organizational and work contexts, we identify five themes that play a crucial role for understanding doing gender: structures, hierarchies, identity, flexibility and context specificity, and gradual relevance/subversion. We designed this topology to categorize the specific challenges facing empirical studies. Our analysis shows that while gender identity is theorized as flexible and context specific, gradually relevant and also subversive, all too often it is analyzed as a static construct, an attribute of individuals as women and men or of structures, such as masculine or feminine occupations or tasks. We conclude that future empirical research should focus instead on the situative construction and put more effort into its empirical definitions of what is seen as masculinity or femininity, not only in a specific context but in the situation being analyzed. Hence, future researchers could benefit from using this topology as a structure to operationalize and construct their research designs.

With a focus on my own empirical research designs, I analyzed in depth the positioning practices in an interview setting that resulted in specifically gendered interpretations in a book chapter published in 2003 (B1). In this very early contribution I demonstrated the situatedness of the sensemaking process in an interview setting. Instead of taking the notions of women and men at face value, researchers must be careful not to reify everyday, taken-for-granted assumptions about gender; instead they must critically investigate how those assumptions actually came into being.
7. Research Projects and Empirical Sites

Five distinctive research projects form the main empirical basis for the publications compiled in this synopsis (see Table 6). I have conducted all these projects in close collaboration with my colleagues at the research institute of organizational psychology (OPSY), especially with Dr. Anja Ostendorp and Prof. Chris Steyaert, and with Prof. R. Wüstenhagen at the Institute for Economy and the Environment (IWOe).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1 Gender Equality</td>
<td>Women’s commission, University of St.Gallen (partly)</td>
<td>10 interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2 Family Friendliness (with A. Ostendorp)</td>
<td>Grundlagenforschungsfonds, University of St. Gallen</td>
<td>3 group discussions, 3 interviews, questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3 Women’s right to vote in Appenzell</td>
<td>Grundlagenforschungsfonds, University of St. Gallen</td>
<td>11 interviews, document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4 Living together (with C. Steyaert, A. Ostendorp and N. Soccodata)</td>
<td>Kanton St. Gallen, Eidgenössische Kommission für Ausländer, Grundlagenforschungsfonds, University of St. Gallen</td>
<td>21 group discussions, 16 interviews with neighbors, 10 with integration experts, participant observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5 Intertwined practices of gender and technology (with U. Offenberger)</td>
<td>BMBF Germany, Programme ‘From Knowledge to Action - New paths towards Sustainable Consumption’</td>
<td>8 interviews, participant observation, document analysis</td>
</tr>
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8. ‘Soziale und diskursive Prozesse der Vergeschlechtlichung nachhaltiger Technologien zur Energieversorgung in Wohngebäuden’, as part of the research cluster ‘Social, ecological and economical dimensions of sustainable consumption in residential buildings (Seco@home)’, 2008-2010, 36 months, main applicant R. Wüstenhagen, in collaboration with U. Offenberger.
They all rely on qualitative methodology in a framework of discourse analysis and ethnography. Interviews, group discussions and observations were the main methods applied. The empirical research focused on different organizational contexts, in which differences were made relevant. While three projects focused on issues of organizational change interventions (R1-3), one tackled the everyday constructions of inclusion and exclusion in city neighborhoods (R4) and one the intertwined practices of constructing gender and technology and its relevance for the consumption of sustainable heating technologies in residential buildings (R5). In fact, on a very descriptive level the projects fit nicely into Braidotti’s (1999, p. 83) categorization of three major Others of modernity: while research projects 1-3 address women as the Other, Project 4’s major focus is on the migrated Other and Project 5 addresses nature, here as ‘caring for nature’, as the third major Other.

7.1 Gender Equality: The Discursive Construction of Equal Opportunities (R1)
This project that I conducted very early and parallel to my dissertational research project aimed at exploring the everyday practices of equal opportunity officers (Gleichstellungsbeauftragte) in Switzerland. In ten problem-centered interviews (Witzel, 2000) I explored the history of the position of the equal opportunity officer in each organization, their perspective on gender relations in the organization, and their subjective motivation for becoming a change agent as well as the organization’s motivation for establishing that position. Furthermore, I was interested in what these equality professionals saw as successful achievement of change. I also asked about critical incidents (Chell, 1998), both positive and negative, which they had experienced on the job and asked them to evaluate them. Each individual interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. Conducting a discourse analysis, I interrogated how change agents made sense of equal opportunities. I was interested in the themes and theories the interviewed women used to articulate their views on gender equality and their everyday practices (Gill, 2000; Potter and Wetherell, 1987).

7.2 Family Friendliness in Organizations (R2)
Analyzing the construction of ‘family friendliness’ in the context of various Swiss competitions for family friendly companies, in this study I investigated different understandings in the construction process. I conducted this discourse analytical study in a team with Anja Ostendorp, with initial support from Prof. P. Dachler. Our guiding question was what potential family friendliness interventions had for change in the gendered division of labour, responsibility and space. The research design included multiple perspectives,
combining three group discussions with experts, three problem-centered (Witzel, 2000) interviews with responsible managers in companies, and several open-ended questions from 41 applications submitted for a competition on family-friendly companies. By performing a discourse analysis we identified six different interpretative repertoires and analyzed them for their consequences, functions and effects.

7.3 The Relevance of Agency in Societal Change Projects: The Political Struggle for Women’s Right to Vote in the Swiss Cantons of Appenzell (R3)

Shifting perspective from organizational change interventions towards gender equality in project one and two, this project investigated organizing for change in a societal case: women’s right to vote in the Swiss cantons of Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Appenzell Innerrhoden. Only in a public vote in 1989 did the male citizens of the canton of Appenzell-Ausserrhoden approve women’s right to vote; that change took two more years in Catholic and even more conservative Appenzell-Innerrhoden. There, in 1991, the Swiss national court forced the canton to change the situation in order to establish gender equality. Hence, the two cantons are both recent and interesting examples of change happening due to both legal and normative pressure as well as different forms of political activism.

The case study draws on both interviews and documents. I conducted 8 in-depth interviews with individuals who acted as change agents in the process. I selected my interview partners according to the following criteria: heterogeneity of their position within the change process (one member of Parliament, the initiator of the national court case, several men and women active in relevant political groups), geography (5 individuals from Ausserrhoden, 3 from Innerrhoden), as well as gender (2 men, 6 women). To contextualize the change in the historical setting, I analyzed publicly available documents and literature.

7.4 Living together: Inclusion and Exclusion in Talk about Community Relations

This research project, conducted in collaboration with Anja Ostendorp, Chris Steyaert and Nicola Soccedato, investigated the discursive constructions of ‘integration’ in city neighborhoods. Using the criteria of ‘theoretical sampling’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) we conducted 21 group discussions (Liebig & Nentwig-Gesemann, 2002; Steyaert & Bouwen, 2004), 16 interviews with actors in the neighbourhoods and 10 problem-centred interviews (Witzel, 2000) with integration actors. Additionally, we conducted participant observations in the neighbourhoods and day-long shadowing of the neighbourhoods’ policemen.
(Czarniawska, 2007) in three different neighbourhoods of a medium-sized city in German-speaking Switzerland.

Choosing mostly ‘natural’ groups (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Verkuyten et al., 1994: 284), we mainly followed the idea of having the participants develop their own narrative without too much interference from the facilitators. As our research interest focused on the construction of difference in a more general way, we started discussions by asking them to elaborate on a very open and general question: ‘You live in this neighbourhood. Could you please tell us something about what it’s like to live in this neighbourhood?’ The discussions all lasted for about 90 minutes with a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 11 persons participating. We had representatives from local sports clubs, youth groups, schools, caring institutions for the handicapped and elderly, and other actors of everyday life in neighbourhoods, such as janitors, priests, innkeepers, and shop owners, as well as informal groups of neighbours and members of a pensioners’ table.

Conducting a discourse analysis, we investigated the construction of interpretative repertoires, ideological dilemmas and the rhetorical strategies that people draw on to enable social practices of inclusion and exclusion (Potter, 2003; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). We regularly discussed results within the research team and also in the research project’s support group, which consisted of representatives of the funding agencies and several actors in the field.

7.5 Intertwined Practices of Gender and Technology

This research project can be traced back to a series of very vital discussions with Rolf Wüstenhagen, now ‘Good Energies’ Professor at the University of St. Gallen’s Institute for Economy and the Environment (IWOe) on the relevance of gender in sustainable consumption. Together with Ursula Offenberger, who is involved in this study for her PhD project, we conducted a qualitative sub-study within the ‘from knowledge to action’ research programme of the German Ministry of Research and Education, on the gendered practices of user-technology relations throughout the acquisition process in the context of domestic heat energy consumption.

The empirical data consist of marketing materials and ethnographic observations collected at trade fairs for building and living exhibiting home heating technologies as well as semi-structured interviews in eight households with heterosexual couples who had gone through the process of deciding on a new and more sustainable heating system in the past year. The interviews lasted about an hour each. The heating energy systems installed in the interviewees’ homes mainly relied on solid biofuels (such as wood or wood pellets), solar
thermal and geothermal energy or a combination of these; in single cases other resources like oil or air-source heat pumps were also part of the solution. In two cases, stoves placed in the living area were part of the heating system, connected to the warm water central heating via a thermal storing unit.

Analyzing the data, we followed the general processual ideas of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). While both the observational material and the document analysis allowed us to analyze gender as a symbolic order inscribed into the material structure of technological artifacts as well as into the spatial order of the house, the interviews enabled us to conduct an in-depth analysis of the interviewees’ sense-making practices and hence revealed the fluidity of gender constructions. The interviews allowed us to reconstruct the interviewees’ narrative of the acquisition (and decision) process and also to see how gender is performed throughout the interview situation.

8. Summary

This synopsis provides a concise overview of my contributions to the field of gender and diversity in organizations. Organizing my publications as 10 contributions to four distinctive themes of ‘exploring the Other’ allowed me to briefly situate my work in the context of the field’s four major debates of the last decade. First, my contributions to the theme of the ‘re-invented Other’ showed how the paradoxical effects of organizational interventions towards equality can be explained from a discourse analytical perspective. Second, I provided a thorough analysis of the practices through which marginalized identities are achieved in micro-discursive practices. Third, I empirically investigated the possibilities of change and change agency as a discursive practice and, fourth, I provided insights into the challenges of investigating ‘doing gender’ as a fluid, flexible and shifting practice and the consequences for theory building respectively. In fact, in developing these four themes, I also contributed to the larger field of discourse and practice-based studies in organizations. By further introducing discourse psychological concepts to the research on organizations, my research facilitated insights on investigating discourse as a distinctive social practice and provided concise concepts for the analysis of everyday practices in organizations. By introducing Judith Butler’s concepts of performativity and subversion to questions of organizational change, I pointed out her further impact for organizational theory. Furthermore, my research draws attention to the relevance of new ways of theorizing change agency in organizational change.
9. References


Hearn, J. (1996). Deconstructing the dominant: Making the one(s) the other(s). *Organization, 3*, 611–626.


