Gender, Work & Organization special section call for papers:

Changing writing/Writing for change

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‘Writing is precisely the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought, the precursory movement of a transformation of social and cultural structures’. (Cixous, 1976: 879)

Drawing from feminist philosophy, practice and movements, this special section aims to open up a space for inquiring into the intersections between change and academic writing. At the heart of this inquiry is an exploration of alternatives to the dominant masculine academic writing style and how such writing might drive change in both the OS Academy, organizations and by extension, society. Gender, Work and Organization is the journal where the seeds to this conversation, in the field of management and organization studies, have been germinating. In 2015, the journal published the special issue “Feminine Writing of Organizations” which was a significant springboard for articulating the need to critically discuss the implicit and explicit gendered character of writing in organization and
management studies. Specific tracks during the Gender, Work and Organization conference in 2016 and 2018 continued to explore how radical possibilities for writing in the study of gender and organization can defy the political, ethical and aesthetic constraints handed down from masculine scientific traditions.

Through these initiatives fundamental questions has been raised, such as: How can we experiment to show, through the very structure of our text, that research about gender and organization does not have to be limited by the genre constraints of the male pen? How can we expose and question the undeclared masculinity of dominant writing styles, structures and genres? What writing can we perform differently while remaining legitimate, or changing the parameters of legitimacy, in organization studies? Which writing can perform us so as to create new experiments in academic subjectivity?

In working with the momentum among the community of scholars driving this work we here call for an invigoration of writing’s heritage and promise as a catalyst for individual and social change. This is a writing that challenges and is fecund with richer ways of living in organizations; a writing that might forge connections between readers and writers within and beyond our academy. To that aim we dream of activity and activism, (utopian) possibilities for living differently in the academy, in organizations and of worlds colliding in wonder.

Writing itself might just have a potential to put ‘political fissures in the status quo… as ruptures in imperialistic research routines’ where activism is evoked by raising ethical consciousness; fluid collaborations between body, paper and stage ‘imagining and creating possibilities for personal and political transformation’ (Spry, 2011: 31).

At the same time, one could just as well argue that it is not only the bombastic (masculine?) forces of change that will make a meaningful and progressive difference. Also, in working
from what already exists, from what already is at play, there seems to be room for so many different smaller changes; yet ones that make a real sensory and experiential difference, including representation of the slow scholarship movement in our writing (i.e. Bolous Walker, 2017). This leads to the central questions that informs our call for papers: what are the different possibilities of change and how are these possibilities connected to our writing practices?

We already have, within the bound of our own disciplinary fences, a movement of dynamic belays, protecting us as we climb unforeseen ridges. These come in the form of experimental poetry (Beavan, 2019; Kostera, 1997); textiles (Rippin, 2015); dialogue (Helin, 2016); ficto-criticism (Rhodes, 2015); meat writing (Sayers, 2016); bisexual writing (Phillips et al 2014); creative academic fiction (Lipton, 2014); cyborg writing (Prasad, 2016); dirty writing (Pullen and Rhodes, 2008) embodied writing (Hopfl, 2007; Fotaki et al 2014). This special section will build these explorations, posing, but not being limited to:

- What are the (many) radical possibilities for transformational writing in relation to gender and organization?
- What feminist philosophies are generative for changing writing/writing for change?
- What kind of writing can scholars engage in – not only for creating change somewhere “out there” – but for us in the moment of writing?
- Through what kinds of writing engagement enable the articulation and experience of passion, joy, confidence?
- How can critical awareness be raised amongst writers, readers and peer reviewers of the way writing can variously bolster privilege and or resist discrimination?
- How can different forms of writing reach out to possible readers and provoke engagement and resonance within them?
• What are the manifold interconnections between writing and ethics?
• What are the standards for writing for change? Should there be standards? Can there be standards in engaging with creative multiplicities?
• How does feminist movements use writing for fostering change and what can we learn from them?
• What can us as academics learn from activists ways of writing?
• How may our writing contribute to the ‘worlds and words of feminized resistances’ (Motta and Seppälä, 2016)?
• From current critique towards reflexivity, in particular from post-human perspectives, what are the generative alternatives we can see?
• Academic writing practices are to a large extent inherited through teaching, at undergraduate, graduate but also PhD programs. What signs of change are present in relation to writing and teaching, what changes might be expected in the future?
• What writing possibilities may be generative for multiplicity and advances in gender and organization knowledges, especially connected to writers of non-traditional academic traditions?

Submission guidelines

Submit your manuscript online at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/gwo. The manuscript should be submitted in 3 separate files: title page; main text file; figures. Please note that as all submissions will be subject to double-blind peer review, the main text file should not include any information that might identify the authors.

Further details about the submission procedure and manuscript types can be found here:

Please direct any questions to Jenny Helin at jenny.helin@fek.uu.se.

The deadline for submissions is 1st of January 2020.

References


Lipton B. (November 2014)."Cinderella. HerStory: An Alternate Pedagogical Approach to Aboriginal Women’s History." Creative Approaches to Research 7(2).


Prasad A. (2016) Cyborg writing as a political act: Reading Donna Haraway in organization studies Gender, Work, and Organization 23(4): 431-446


**Special section editors**

*Katie Beavan*, PhD, University of West of England. Her PhD in organization studies, is focused on (Re)Writing women in organizations and is presented in multiple féminine feminist discourses, including poetics, lyric essaying, performative social theatre and performative autoethnography. Beavan is passionate about enlarging the concept of what knowledge might be in the Academy, including creating knowledge intersubjectively and flesh-to-flesh. Her research is also focused on the potentiality of intellectual and embodied feminist activism – research to change not just interpret the world and to connect with the practitioner community.

*Benedikte Borgström* is Assistant Professor at the Department of Urban Studies, Malmö University, Sweden. Her current research engages in such writing that has a potential to add to “privileged knowledge”, inquiring writing in the margins. Beside research and teaching in areas of writing and other qualitative methods, Benedikte is researching and teaching organizing of transport markets.

*Jenny Helin* is Associate Professor at the Department of Business Studies, Uppsala University in Sweden. Working in the areas of organization studies and philosophy, her current research investigates poetic, dialogic and imaginative understanding of organizational life. Helin is passionately inquiring into generative ways of developing collaborative research methods and academic writing practices.
Carl Rhodes is Professor of Organization Studies at the University of Technology, Sydney Business School. His research investigates the ethical and political dimensions of business and organizations. Current projects focus on cultural and gender diversity and discrimination in leadership, and contemporary business practice’s relationship with democracy and justice. A long-time advocate for the democraticization of academic writing, he has contributed to debates on reflexivity, vulnerability, femininity, power, plurality and genre non-conformism in the production and inscription of academic work.