

Gender, Work and Organization
6th international interdisciplinary conference
21st – 23rd June, 2010

Call for abstracts

Theorizing resistance: practicing gender, change and resistance

Stream Convenors

Marieke van den Brink, Nijmegen School of Management, Netherlands

Elisabeth Kelan, King's College, London, UK

Julia Nentwich, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

The aim of this stream is to advance contemporary thinking about gender and organizational theory by bringing together international scholars with an interest in change and resistance towards gender equality initiatives in organizational settings.

Despite decades of equal-opportunities legislation and affirmative action initiatives, progress towards gender equality in organizations remains painfully slow, regardless of organizational or national context. While open forms of resistance and backlash, for instance micro-political actions (Van den Brink 2009), have not at all disappeared, more subtle forms of resistance have developed lately. The (liberal) discourse of seeing (gender) equality as a major achievement of modernity provides a strong normative background for ignoring and delegitimizing factual inequalities in modern societies. In fact, it seems that the arena of gender discrimination itself has changed. This change has been described as 'rhetoric modernisation' (Wetterer, 2003), 'dethematisation' (Müller, Müller-Franke, Pfeil & Wilz, 2007) or 'gender fatigue' (Kelan, 2009), thereby identifying a strong ideological dilemma between strong beliefs in equality while ignoring the facticity of inequality. On the one hand, gender discrimination is acknowledged as something possible but unacceptable within the workplace, but on the other hand it is framed as something that has been dealt with in the past and that is no longer relevant for day-to-day interactions (Czarniawska & Calás, 1997). There is a clash between the rhetoric around gender diversity and the actual implementation of these initiatives in daily situations, which provides an interesting setting for feminist inquiry in the context of (multinational) organizations.

We would like to explore approaches theorizing resistance as social practices performed in contexts, specific to events, actors and other practices (Prasad and Prasad, 2000). This track invites theoretically and/or empirically informed papers from different disciplines that deepen our understanding of change, resistance, discursive, rhetoric and micro-political practices that impede gender equality on an everyday basis. We welcome papers that:

- develop theoretical approaches to researching power and resistance in organizations
- provide an analysis of any of the multiple forms of resistance or power struggles towards gender equality policies and/or practices
- explore the micro-politics of resistance
- suggest how changes in culture might be facilitated
- engage feminist theoretical perspectives on resistance and change
- explore the role of different forms of masculinities in change processes
- discuss intersectionality and its importance for organizational change

Abstracts of approximately 500 words (ONE page, Word document, single spaced, excluding references) are invited by 1st November 2009 with decisions on acceptance to be made by stream leaders within one month. All abstracts will be peer reviewed. New and young scholars with 'work in progress' papers are welcomed. In the case of co-authored papers, ONE person should be identified as the corresponding author. Note that due to restrictions of space, multiple submissions by the same author will not be timetabled. Abstracts should be emailed to elisabeth.kelan@kcl.ac.uk julia.nentwich@unisg.ch mcl.vandenbrink@fm.ru.nl Abstracts should include **FULL** contact details, including your name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, and e-mail address. *State the title of the stream to which you are submitting your abstract.*