The *good* academic: re-imagining *good* research in organization and management studies

How might the current discourse surrounding *good* research be re-imagined and re-constituted? We argue that the current criteria and expectations surrounding what constitute *good* research may actually be restrictive to the potential that lies within qualitative research. The aim of this special issue (SI) is, therefore, to challenge the performative work of doing traditionally accepted *good* research and offer alternatives. We are pleased to present five contributions that problematize the way in which *good* qualitative research is traditionally accepted and legitimated within the sphere of doing and publishing organizational research. These five articles draw on a variety of methodological approaches and creatively invoke alternative ways that help us think about how *good* research can be (re)imagined. Our hope is that this SI creates a space for an ongoing discussion about the alternative ways in which qualitative methods and methodologies can be imagined, evaluated and accepted in the broad research community.

A call to go beyond criteria

We open this SI by asking, "What is *good* research in organization and management studies?" Criteria for evaluating the rigor and trustworthiness of qualitative research were popularized with Guba's (1981) focus on credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These guidelines, however, have been criticized not only for stemming from positivist research – mirroring reliability and validity measures – but also because of the attempt to universally apply these criteria to justify what constitutes *good* research (e.g. Amis and Silk, 2008; Brinkmann, 2007; Devers, 1999; Johnson *et al.*, 2006; Tracy, 2010). In this SI, we play with the notion of the "virtual cult of criteria" (Tracy, 2010, p. 838), aiming to provoke a conversation about what makes *good* qualitative research, from the perspective of different theoretical and methodological traditions. As the parameters of what makes for *good* qualitative research sway, so do the ways in which researchers depict the qualitative research process. However, as Punch (1986) suggests, "[A]uthentic and candid accounts of the backstage story of research projects are few and far between" (p. 18). A number of scholars working within various qualitative traditions (e.g. Behar, 1996; Cole, 2013; Cunliffe and Alcadipani, 2016; Davies and Spencer, 2010; Donnelly *et al.*, 2013; Koning and Ooi, 2013; Özkazanç-Pan, 2012; Peticca-Harris *et al.*, 2016) have begun to unpack how qualitative research is conducted, suggesting that it may not be a politically or emotionally neutral or straightforward process. These scholars have endeavored to problematize the dominant tendency to neuter the research process and to present it as a ready-made and by-plan design. As Özkazanç-Pan (2012) argues, we, "as researchers are forced, unnecessarily to differentiate between 'good politics' and 'good science'" and, as such, our published work ends up becoming a "faint shadow of the original paper submission" (p. 210). Unfortunately, despite the many calls for more authentic and candid behind-the-scenes accounts, the majority of published qualitative studies continues to gloss over, sanitize or omit the difficult encounters and micro-politics that researchers inevitably experience in the field, thus marginalizing and stigmatizing these critical experiences.

Our inspiration for organizing this SI stems from what we see as a fundamental need to not only unveil, but also reflect upon the implications of researchers' experiences with

Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal
Vol. 14 No. 1, 2019
pp. 2-9
© Emerald Publishing Limited
1746-5648
DOI 10.1108/QROM-03-2019-681

"doing" qualitative research. As Donnelly *et al.* (2013) have attested in their SI in *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*, there are "stories behind the stories, inclusive of the emotions, frustrations, and challenges that go along with research" (p. 5). In our SI, we build on this body of research and attempt to decenter the way in which a certain kind of methodological rigor and relevance has been elevated and privileged within academic research. We are therefore motivated to challenge both the assumption that there is one "right" way of conducting research and the norms within academia that surround the ways in which research is evaluated as good. As a result, we ask such questions as, "What makes for *good* research?" And "Who (and what) is our research *good* for? Is it for our participants, for the creation of knowledge, or, dare we say it, for ourselves?" This SI is dedicated to exploring, deepening and widening our understanding of what may constitute good qualitative research, as well as to create a space where we may consider the multiplicity of ways in which qualitative research may be considered *good* beyond positivist rigor.

Contributions to this SI

Inspired by the developments discussed above, the overarching goal of this SI is to make space for greater methodological pluralism (Harley, 2015). To this end, we invited contributions, that problematize, from different perspectives, the existing criteria used to determine *good* research and that consider what elements of the research process may be forgotten or hidden, questioning why these may not be traditionally accepted as *good* science. In doing so, we have built a small but, we believe, important body of work in which authors have engaged with these ideas in order to think about alternative ways in which *good* qualitative research may be conceptualized and conducted. In the spirit of greater methodological pluralism we, as editors, were keen on including contributions that draw on different ways of conducting qualitative research. We are therefore very happy to present five contributions that discuss various qualitative methodological approaches, such as at-home ethnography (see David Vickers), autoethnographic research as a living story (see Hurd *et al.*), archeological story analysis (see John Luhman), Indigenous-based methodologies mixed with autoethnography (see Stefanie Ruel) and a reflexive confessional account on the various identity states a researcher may experience (see Victoria Pagan). We feel that these contributions, which draw from different methodological perspectives, not only question the normative and homogenizing pressures associated with conducting good research, but also unmask the vulnerabilities of the researcher and the beauty inherent in the chaos of doing qualitative work.

David Vickers' article, "At-home ethnography: A method for practitioners," opens this SI by arguing that clean and tidy accounts are preferred and legitimated in published research, over reports that show and explore messiness and complexity. In order to enhance how ethnography is often depicted and thought about, Vickers explores at-home ethnography (i.e. ethnographic research on everyday work practices, in a setting that is familiar to the researcher and in which s/he participates), digging deep into the behind-the-scenes messiness of this type of research, and reflexively considering research practices alongside fine-grained, *in situ* managerial accounts. At its core, Vickers rejects dominant positivist assumptions and criticisms about both the time it takes to conduct practice-based research and insider accounts as being anecdotal and thus not "scientific." Instead, he argues for a reflexive approach that does not focus on the published product, only, but rather on the product in tandem with the producer, the process and practices. Constant throughout this exploration is a refusal to airbrush away the researcher's dilemmas, which he addresses through reflexivity. In his attempt to deconstruct the backstage messiness of at-home ethnography, Vickers highlights the physical and mental fatigue that is part of the process of conducting quality, in-depth research. His paper provides a bold openness, an honesty and an overall awareness of dilemmas researchers may face.

In doing so, he allows readers to better judge research quality, encouraging them to learn from their research process.

Fiona Hurd, Suzette Dyer and Mary Fitzpatrick's paper, "'Good' things take time: A living story of research as 'life,'" comes next. Hurd and colleagues critique the hegemonic "publish or perish" culture within the landscape of a neoliberal university, which places a heavy emphasis on productivity and quick turnaround times for published research. Countering such ideals, Hurd and colleagues implore us to slow down our research process and consider the passage of time, so that we can give both ourselves and our research time to "breathe." As the authors argue, taking the time to embrace disorder and messiness in the research process is important, as it allows us to not only carve the space to capture richer and more authentic stories, but also – and perhaps more importantly – honor our research participants, their experiences and their stories, which are fragments of, and thus provide glimpses into, dominant narratives. Hurd and colleagues' paper also does justice to the idea that research affects – and is affected by – the researcher in a variety of important ways relating to, for instance, the fluidity of the research process and one's own life, the researcher's (re)positioning as insider or outsider, and the relational underpinnings of the research process. The authors propose that qualitative research should not be viewed as a sterile process but, rather, it should be celebrated as a fragmented and often chaotic living story. By extension, Hurd *et al.*'s paper speaks to the embodiment associated with doing good research by highlighting and discussing the ways in which they were affected by the research process. Doing so provided them with an opportunity to think more carefully about the affective relations between researchers and research participants. Hurd and colleagues' article thus gives us an opportunity to learn from the grittiness of their research process while highlighting the importance of authentically narrating and reflecting upon our experiences as researchers.

John Luhman's contribution, "Reimagining organizational storytelling research as archeological story analysis," problematizes storytelling inquiry that relies on *ex situ* interviews, which, he argues, tend to ignore time, context and process. By digging deep into Karl Weick's (2004) and Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981, 1984, 1986) position on storytelling, Luhman challenges dominant approaches for collecting stories that gloss over context and process. In an attempt to re-imagine what might constitute a *good* research practice for collecting stories, the author proposes taking an approach akin to ethnographic participant observation when conducting storytelling research. Specifically, Luhman proposes "archeological story analysis," a three-step method for analyzing, in a more convincing manner, stories that are collected out of context and process. This new method uses archeology's approach to interpreting artifacts as a metaphor for interpreting organizational stories, which he suggests can be viewed as cultural artifacts. What this implies is an epistemological stance of seeing stories as "dead language," which can then be interpreted as a means to infer a coherent overall story. Fundamental to this process is, as Luhman points out, to engage in reflexivity so that, through questioning assumptions and considering multivocal interpretations, meaning can be understood in relation to a greater whole.

Stefanie Ruel's paper, "An open letter to the Universe: a poststructural reflection on conducting 'good' research," examines her own experiences during her doctoral studies through an autoethnographic account that relies on Indigenous-based methodologies to showcase the inter-connectivity of her network, the broader community, and characteristics of the physical world: the Sun, the Earth and the Universe. Through an open letter addressed to the Universe, Ruel reflexively recounts her experiences in the field as she tried to collect data for her doctoral research. These experiences include tensions she endured, concerning deeply entrenched power relations that are inherent to the Canadian space industry, which she is a part of and uses as the site of her research. Similarly, to other papers

in the SI, Ruel critically explores the incongruences and blemishes associated with *good* research and *good* management, highlighting that they may be at odds with each other. In other words, what might make qualitative research "good" also presents the potential to sever relationships and career possibilities in other realms of business. Through her account, Ruel reminds us of the importance of acknowledging and reflecting upon one's emotions and experiences in the field. Ruel's paper also creates a space for us to consider our own views by reflexively asking ourselves, "Would we continue with a research project if it meant jeopardizing our own career?" In doing so, Ruel emphasizes the need to be brave, not only to perhaps put career motivations aside to focus on the importance of the research itself, but also to be bold in sharing and discussing the backstageness of qualitative research through a new and unique methodological approach.

Victoria Pagan's article, "Being and becoming a 'good' qualitative researcher? Liminality and the risk of limbo," concludes this SI by proposing that *good* qualitative research does not just involve "doing," but also "being" and "becoming." Pagan's paper highlights the unsettling and in-betweenness of a good qualitative research as it intersects with the various identity states of "good qualitative researcher" that one may experience within the academy. Becoming and being a good researcher is neither a *criteria* nor an *outcome*; as Pagan asserts, it is a *process*. Drawing on her experiences as a PhD Student, Pagan examines this liminal stage of acceptance and also aggregation (i.e. completing the PhD), and points to the unpredictability and precariousness of being a doctoral student. In doing so, Pagan reminds us of the power relations inherent in being a PhD student and highlights the role of others (e.g. journal editors, reviewers, PhD supervisors, committee members, peers in one's organization) in the process of becoming a legitimate, *good* researcher (at least in the eyes of the academic elites, which she describes as elder, established researchers). Moreover, Pagan contends that when conducting research, researchers are placed front and center, thus exposing themselves to the uncertainty of the research process and academia writ large. Like other papers in this SI, Pagan's paper points to vulnerability and bravery as important aspects of the process of conducting *good* research.

Exposing ourselves for the sake of good research?

All the papers included in this SI help us answer the question that originally inspired our efforts: "How might the current discourse surrounding *good* research be re-imagined and re-constituted?" We feel that these five contributions bring with them the power to push us, as qualitative researchers, to start breaking free from the shackles of what is commonly accepted as good research. They do so by, for example, encouraging us to embrace messiness and disorder in the research process (see David Vickers' and Fiona Hurd and colleagues' papers) and dig deeper into the complex selves that we embody as we navigate the research process and, at times, as we stumble upon the elaborate power relations that surround us (see Stefanie Ruel's and Victoria's Pagan's papers). The papers in this SI also show us that the field of qualitative research is still a fertile ground for new discoveries and, thus, that it is possible to creatively conceive of alternative and unique ways for conducting good qualitative research. In particular, they show us that this is possible by fearlessly turning the gaze upon ourselves, not only as individual researchers but also as part of a broader academic community, problematizing current "doings," and offering thoughtful method(ologies)s for conducting good research (see John Luhman and Stefanie Ruel's papers for examples). This, we believe, is the beauty of "doing" qualitative research.

Surely, there is a sense of vulnerability and unpredictability that can arise from turning the gaze upon ourselves, trying new things and being honest about what drives us to do so. Indeed, at times this can lead to overwhelming feelings of anxiety and even fear – fear of being overly dependent on others' judgments of our worth as academics and practitioners, or on the power that others hold over our careers, perhaps even fear of losing one's own

sense of self (see Stefanie Ruel's and Victoria Pagan's papers). Such feelings are certainly not unfounded, as there are certain risks associated with being honest and fearlessly questioning the dominant ways of doing things, at times possibly implying severe consequences. As King (2003) asserts, "once a story is told, it cannot be called back. Once told, it is loose in the world" (p. 10). There is therefore a "nakedness" (Peticca-Harris *et al.*, 2016, p. 397) associated with revealing – and perhaps even questioning – too much. Thus, by exposing our fallacies, are we risking to be perceived as "weak" academics? What might be the consequences of challenging the commonly accepted ways of doing things that do not sit well with us? As both Vickers and Ruel poignantly show in their papers, striving to conduct *good* research could have resulted in serious negative consequences for their careers. Similarly, we are aware of the pressure to publish in "top tier" journals, particularly as this is now not only a criterion for tenure (see Adler and Harzing, 2009), but in many cases, for even securing a tenure-track academic position, particularly in a North American context.

Thinking about alternative ways in which *good* qualitative research may be conceptualized and conducted also entails a certain boldness and bravery. Related to this is, for example, the way in which the contributors to this SI expose their emotional baggage as they navigate the research process. As Cunliffe and Alcadipani (2016) suggest, "we need to relax the taboo" (p. 2) when we share our own emotionally and politically laden "tales from the field." We therefore applaud the SI contributors for revealing dilemmas and difficult choices they had to make during the research process, including the need to treat participants (who were also employees) fairly when faced with a company-wide redundancy (as in Vickers paper), the risks associated with voicing the experiences of participants (as in Hurd *et al.*'s paper), or deciding whether to continue with the research when a key gatekeeper vehemently suggested that the "truth" behind participants' experiences remain hidden (as in Ruel's paper).

Despite these challenges, the SI contributors are still very candid and honest, acknowledging an element of performativity in doing so: the need to present oneself as the *good* (legitimate) academic who does good research and, perhaps because of this, feeling compelled to hide their research struggles. By courageously sharing their struggles in this SI, the contributors remind us that we are all human instruments of research, always at risk for experiencing anxieties, insecurities and dilemmas. But when facing such difficult (yet very real!) feelings, how do the institutionalized expectations and understandings of *good* research affect how we conduct our research? The articles in this SI show that there is a temptation to put these aside, tucked away and hidden from the watchful eye of the Academy. After all, feelings present a potential threat to the positivist rigor that dominates mainstream research and the pressures are just too high to appear weak. But, by not questioning these pressures and, consequently, by complying with them, are we then not setting ourselves up for being both victims to and complicit in the normative requirements for *good* research? The contributions presented within this SI begin a dialogue on how we may question, critique and problematize the current status quo, as a means to advance qualitative inquiry and the way in which we publish our work. Without falling down a prescriptive trap, our contributors suggest that *good* research involves turning the "quality" gaze onto *how* we think about and ultimately *do* research. In this way, they promote a new wave of reflection on traditional qualitative research questions.

These queries relate to an underlying theme found within all of the contributions: the need for greater reflexivity. For instance, when thinking about the ethics associated with her research, Victoria Pagan's work questions what she coins as her own selfish desires to be the *good* academic while ignoring not only herself in the process, but also others – her research participants. This takes us back to the question of "For whom is good research, good?" Such a focus encourages us to ask ourselves if "doing something" with the work that we generate from our research participants is also "making something" (Ashcraft, 2017, p. 49) beyond a

mere publication; that is, what difference does it make not only to our research community but also for our research participants? We propose that *good* research practice need not simply be covered in textbooks, or legitimated via a journal publication; rather, it should be one that allows us to develop an ethico-political awareness that is anchored in "captured experience" (Ashcraft, 2017, p. 52). This means that we should be brave enough to neither put our academic careers first nor obsessively focus on playing the academic game. Instead, we should gather the courage to focus on empowering and improving the lives of everyone who makes our research possible and this most definitely places our research participants at the top of the list, as for without them there would simply be no research to begin with.

The SI contributors also remind us that being reflexive about one's research and the research process involves the passage of time and the need to pause. For instance, due to the risks associated with the safety and anonymity of participants with group interviews and issues surrounding a low response rate, Hurd and colleagues felt the need to take a break from their study. In a rather serendipitous manner, by distancing themselves from the study, Hurd *et al.* allowed their study to go through a process of "maturing" which eventually resulted in "altered perspectives" on how to tackle many of their previous challenges. Providing a different example, Ruel explains the need to take a break from interviewing due to the sheer physical and mental toll that it was taking on her. Giving not only her research, but most importantly, herself time and space allowed Ruel to acknowledge that the anxiety and anger she experienced during her research should not be ignored but, rather, elevated and explored as part of the research itself.

These ideas of pausing, breaking away or breaking free from one's research is in stark contrast with the "academic capitalism" (Hermann, 2012) that pervades the academy and that pushes us to obsessively focus on research productivity and the mass production of research output. Although many of us are aware of this tendency to produce standardised "fast food research" (Marinetto, 2018), and even express our dislike for it, we seem to continue to be complicit in it. Thus, in a brave attempt to push us, as an academic community, to reflect on – and potentially stop – the mindless cranking of fast research output, some of the articles in this SI speak to the importance of slowing down the research process for the sake of researchers themselves, their participants and the quality of the research itself. We acknowledge that as academics in today's neoliberal university landscape, slowing down may just not be an easy feat due to concerns surrounding tenure, promotion, journal rankings and league tables (see Mingers and Willmott, 2013; Robinson *et al.*, 2017). However, we applaud the contributors to this SI, as they have encouraged us to reflexively think about the motivations behind our research and to consider if the only goal behind producing *good* work is for it to end up getting quickly published in a *good* journal. Perhaps, we need to consider the potential of slow scholarship and continue exploring "alternatives to the fast-paced, metric-oriented neoliberal university" (Mountz *et al.*, 2015, p. 1235). As some of the SI contributors show, slowing down helps us embrace and – perhaps more importantly – respect ourselves as complex human instruments of research that need time to process experiences in the field, reflect on instincts and emotions, generate new and imaginative insights for theorizing and, overall, develop thoughtful theories while conducting impactful research.

Concluding comments

The aim of this SI was to interrogate, unsettle and disrupt the idea of parameters, criteria, rigor and trustworthiness for qualitative research. As a result, we present five contributions from authors who daringly ventured "out of the box" of commonly accepted ways of doing qualitative research to creatively reflect upon and continue to explore the fascinating world of qualitative research. The contributors' honest and candid "tales from the field" have demonstrated that universally applied "standards" may restrict qualitative research, and that what may be considered *good* research for one group or set of interests may not

necessarily be good research for another group or set of interests. The diversity of approaches in this SI has carved a space that allows for greater pluralism in what may constitute *good* research. By rendering many of the invisible aspects and vulnerabilities of research visible, the papers in this SI have also given us an opportunity to pause and reflect upon the ways in which we may conduct our own research. The contributions remind us of the importance – and necessity – to be brave, candid and honest about the research process and with our writing, even if this entails exposing some of our vulnerabilities and weaknesses. The result of this SI is, we hope, a forum for ongoing discussion about the alternative ways in which *good* qualitative methods and methodologies can be imagined, evaluated and accepted in the broad research community.

Nadia deGama
Independent Researcher, Cambridge, UK
Sara R.S.T.A. Elias
Peter B. Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria, Victoria BC, Canada, and
Amanda Peticca-Harris
Grenoble Ecole de Management, Grenoble, France

References

Adler, P. and Harzing, A. (2009), “When knowledge wins: transcending the sense and nonsense of academic rankings”, *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 72-95.

Amis, J.M. and Silk, M. (2008), “The philosophy and politics of quality in qualitative organizational research”, *Organizational Research Methods*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 456-480.

Ashcraft, K. (2017), “ ‘Submission to the rule of excellence’: ordinary affect and precarious resistance in the labour of organization and management studies”, *Organization*, Vol. 24 No. 1, pp. 36-58.

Bakhtin, M.M. (1981), *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (translated by Emerson, C. and Holquist, M. and edited by Holquist, M.), University of Texas Press, Austin, TX.

Bakhtin, M.M. (1984), *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* (translated and edited by Emerson, C.), University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN.

Bakhtin, M.M. (1986), *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (translated by McGee, V.W.), University of Texas Press, Austin, TX.

Behar, R. (1996), *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart*, Beacon Press, Boston, MA.

Brinkmann, S. (2007), “The good qualitative researcher”, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, Vol. 4 Nos 1/2, pp. 127-144.

Cole, C. (2013), “Stories from the lived and living fieldwork process”, *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 50-69.

Cunliffe, A.L. and Alcadipani, F. (2016), “The politics of access in fieldwork: Immersion, backstage dramas, and deception”, *Organizational Research Methods*, doi: 10.1177/1094428116639134.

Davies, J. and Spencer, D. (Eds) (2010), *Emotions in the Field: The Psychology and Anthropology of Fieldwork Experience*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.

Devers, K.J. (1999), “How will we know ‘good’ qualitative research when we see it? Beginning the dialogue in health services research”, *Health Services Research*, Vol. 34 No. 5, pp. 1153-1188.

Donnelly, P.F., Yiannis, G. and Özkazanç-Pan, B. (2013), “Untold stories of the field and beyond: narrating the chaos”, *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 4-15.

Guba, E.G. (1981), “Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries”, *Educational Communication and Technology Journal*, Vol. 29 No. 2, pp. 75-91.

Harley, D. (2015), “The one best way? ‘Scientific’ research on HRM and the threat to critical scholarship”, *Human Resource Management Journal*, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 399-407.

Hermann, A. (2012), “ ‘Criteria against ourselves?’ Embracing the opportunities of qualitative inquiry”, *International Review of Qualitative Research*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 135-152.

Johnson, P., Buehring, A., Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (2006), “Evaluating qualitative management research: towards a contingent criteriology”, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 131-156.

King, T. (2003), *The Truth about Stories: A Native Narrative*, House of Anansi Press, Toronto.

Koning, J. and Ooi, C. (2013), “Awkward encounters and ethnography”, *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 16-32.

Marinetto, M. (2018), “Fast food research in the era of unplanned obsolescence”, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 55 No. 6, pp. 1014-1020.

Mingers, J. and Willmott, H. (2013), “Taylorizing business school research: on the ‘one best way’ performative effects of journal ranking lists”, *Human Relations*, Vol. 66, pp. 1051-1073.

Mountz, A., Bonds, A., Mansfield, B., Loyd, J., Hyndman, J., Walton-Roberts, M., Basu, R., Whitson, R., Hawkins, R., Hamilton, T. and Curran, W. (2015), “For slow scholarship: a feminist politics of resistance through collective action in the neoliberal university”, *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 1235-1259.

Özkazanç-Pan, B. (2012), “Publishing without betrayal: critical scholarship meets mainstream journals”, *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Vol. 28, pp. 209-217.

Peticca-Harris, A., deGama, N. and Elias, R.S.T.A. (2016), “A dynamic process model for finding informants and gaining access in qualitative research”, *Organizational Research Methods*, Vol. 19 No. 3, pp. 376-401.

Punch, M. (1986), *The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork*, Sage, London.

Robinson, S., Ratle, O. and Bristow, A. (2017), “Labour pains: starting a career within the neoliberal university”, *Ephemera*, Vol. 17, pp. 481-508.

Tracy, S.J. (2010), “Qualitative quality: eight ‘big tent’ criteria for excellent qualitative research”, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 16 No. 10, pp. 837-851.

Weick, K.E. (2004), “A bias for conversation: acting discursively in organizations”, in Grant, D., Hardy, C., Oswick, C. and Putnam, L. (Eds), *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Discourse*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 405-412.