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Deflated in shame and puffed up in pride: How affective practices matter for entrepreneuring

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Abstract

At the heart of the processual term 'entrepreneuring' lies something inherently optimistic: a belief that a better world could be reached beyond the actual. Embracing this perspective, we move away from a focus on entrepreneurial mastery and seek conditions for entrepreneuring understood as social change, foregrounding its affective dimension. We do so by researching and writing differently; in adopting (and adapting) the ethnography of practices (praxiography), we centre the body as the cause, subject and instrument of the stories we tell. By reading affect with (posthumanist) practice theory, we expand the notion of affective practices to inquire how shame and pride *matter* for entrepreneuring within small family businesses. Employing a visceral, sensory and embodied style of crafting our text, we invite readers to *sense* as well as interpret. The article contributes to the literature in two ways: first, it proposes a novel methodological approach for studying and writing about affective practices; second, it builds an understanding of how affective practices disrupt the already organised and make room for better futures yet to come.

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship is political. Framed by decades of powerful narratives, entrepreneurship considered as economic imperative has been woven into our public and private lives, normalising the primacy of economic interests (Farias et al., 2019) and obscuring the intimacy between the political and enterprise economy (Hjorth and Steyaert, 2009). Whilst a more recent understanding of entrepreneurship as a process of becoming (Steyaert, 2007) emphasises organisation-creation (Hjorth, 2014; Hjorth and Holt, 2022; Katz and Gartner, 1988), highlighting its potential for disrupting the existing order and driving social change (Calás et al., 2009; Farias et al., 2019; Hjorth and Steyaert, 2009), research on organisation-creation in the already organised realities remains scarce. Yet, this should be our priority. In the face of today's grand challenges, thinking processually about entrepreneurship brings hope as it dares us to imagine beyond the actual and to consider conditions of possibility for a world yet to be made.

In this article, we think processually as we examine how qualitatively different organisations (Champenois et al., 2025) can emerge in the already organised, economised 'reality' of entrepreneurship reduced to the enterprise. We adopt the term 'entrepreneuring' (Steyaert, 2007) to signal a departure from views conflating entrepreneurship with economic enterprise. We suggest that to account for what a processual stance demands in studying entrepreneuring, we need to become sensitised to the 'embodied, affect-based and embedded nature' of entrepreneuring 'on the level of everyday practices' (Champenois et al., 2025: 50). This entails considering entrepreneuring within an 'ontology of relatedness' (Steyaert, 2007: 472), with an awareness of the inseparability of materiality, including the matter of bodies, and meaning-making. It also calls for 'upgrading the importance of affect' (Champenois, 2025: 50) to explain how organisation-creation emerges in the already organised.

To date, numerous studies of entrepreneurship have adopted practice-based approaches (e.g. Champenois et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2020; Verduijn and Andersen, 2022) to challenge the idea of human mastery. However, the importance of materiality (without reducing it to 'things'), intensities and affect in entrepreneuring is yet to be fully explored, as we still know little about how the modification of physical, visceral and sensate body's capacities (Massumi, 2002) enables disruptions of temporally sedimented orders. As Gherardi (2017a: 210) points out, 'the turn to affect has rarely been put in relation with the turn to practice'. Therein lies both a challenge and an opportunity: to examine how thinking about affect in relation to practice, and about practice in relation to affect, may enable inquiring into conditions of rupturing established continuity and organisation-creation.

Building upon and extending Wetherell's (2012) concept of affective practice, we adopt a posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi, 2017b, 2021) that allows us to transgress the duality of the social and material, and to foreground 'the lively, intelligent, and

self-organizing matter of bodies' (Braidotti, 2013: 35) as the site of affect. Following Wetherell (2012: 19), we approach affective practice as a 'figuration where body possibilities and routines become recruited or entangled together with meaning-making and with other social and material figurations', and where the body becomes 'more intrusive than it ordinarily is' (Wetherell, 2012: 97). In considering affective practices as performative, we do not ask what individuals 'do' within a practice, but *what practices do* (Gherardi, 2017a), and more specifically, we ask: *What can affective practices do for entrepreneuring, in the already organised world?*

Taking seriously the idea that 'studying organization-in-creation requires changing our perceptions and methodologies' (Katz and Gartner, 1988: 437), we adopt an entrepreneurial approach to researching entrepreneurship (Hjorth, 2022). First, we ponder: Can entrepreneuring be re-imagined outside the realm of glamorous ventures, perhaps in a local garage, or a small manufacturer struggling to continue as usual? What if, instead of prioritising economic growth and consumption, entrepreneurship was to prioritise the needs of communities and frugal use of resources? Second, acknowledging that processual thinking about entrepreneuring points to multiplicity and becoming, we try to imagine: How should we study entrepreneuring, knowing that we do not simply research what is there, but we are actively participating in the creation of the world being researched? And how do we craft our text about affective practices, that is, something that is not easily graspable? We explore these questions in the context of small family businesses in the northwest of England.

In our search for a novel methodological approach to studying and writing about affective practices, we draw on Mol's (2002) praxiography, which enables us to move away from *ethnos*, writing about people (as in traditional ethnography), to *praxis*, and thus to focus on studying practices, including researchers' practice. By centring ontological multiplicity, praxiography 'lays bare the permanent possibility of alternative configurations' (Mol, 2002: 164), the view we embrace in adopting the processual and relational perspective on entrepreneuring. What makes this approach especially relevant for our study is that praxiography allows us to view bodies as the instrument, the cause and the topic of stories we tell (Frank, 2013). Resonating with early feminist ethnography and more recent approaches such as affective ethnography (Gherardi, 2019), praxiography eschews 'the subject-object division and the purposeful being in the world as ontologically fundamental' (Pallesen, 2017: 3). Positioned within, rather than outside, the research practice, we thus seek to 'produce different knowledge and produce knowledge differently' (Lather, 2001: 200), embracing writing from our bodies (Fotaki et al., 2014; Gilmore et al., 2019; Pullen et al., 2020). We argue for embodied, sensuous and affective writing in inquiring into what bodies can do, what they might become and how practices temporarily stabilise particular kinds of bodies – insights crucial for understanding how affective practices matter for entrepreneuring.

Our study makes two contributions to the literature on entrepreneurship and affect: (1) it puts forward a novel methodological approach to studying and writing about affective practices; (2) it builds an understanding of the ways in which affective practices matter for entrepreneuring. Whilst we did not set out to write in a formulaically organised and structured way, we made an effort to reduce the messiness to ease the reader into the particular style of our text. Below, we first draw on the extant literature to explain the

interwoven theoretical inspirations behind our research and to expand on Wetherell's (2012) notion of affective practice adhering to a processual, relational ontology. We then present our methodological approach along with empirical insights into how affective practices matter for entrepreneuring. Finally, we discuss our study's contributions and put forward future research directions.

Conceptual framing

How affect matters for enterprise and entrepreneuring

Thinking processually about entrepreneurship as organisation-creation sensitises us to the political of entrepreneurship, reminding us that what has been considered 'a universal grammar of entrepreneurship' (Anderson, 2015: 45) has not been innocently grounded in a socially disembedded sphere of economics. Rather, as Farias et al. (2019: 556) argue, this has been 'a political move', impinging on the dominant normality blinkering us to entrepreneurship's political role in shaping contemporary societies (e.g. Marsh and Thomas, 2017).

Yet, a processual approach implies the 'real' is not closed off, but a performative outcome of open-ended material-discursive practices (Orlikowski, 2007). Entrepreneurship, like other artificially stabilised phenomena, 'is' 'multiple' (Mol, 2002) – it could have come about in different versions, each precariously stabilised through different practices. This thinking goes beyond considering different 'perspectives' on entrepreneurship; it necessitates a closer examination of the multiplicity of entrepreneurship and an inquiry into how and why entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs and business owners (along with other 'entities') become temporarily firmed up in certain ways.

Within the entrepreneurship literature, interwoven discourses of an enterprising self, theoretical fictions of *homo oeconomicus*, material reconfigurations of markets and states, and academic and religious systems configure the reality of a managerial form of entrepreneurship as 'enterprise' disguised as entrepreneurship (Hjorth and Holt, 2016). In reducing entrepreneurship to enterprise, these specific materialisations constitute entrepreneurship solely as an economic function fulfilled by actions of the exceptional entrepreneurs, rather than locating it within everyday practices (Steyaert and Katz, 2004). The 'reality' of entrepreneurship constituted in specific practices leaves outside 'the social and the societal' (Farias et al., 2019: 557) and performs enterprising individuals, driven by the prospect of 'calculated returns' (Hjorth and Holt, 2016: 52).

This highlights the importance of attending to both *enterprise* in its narrow economic and managerial form (what was actualised) and *entrepreneuring* (what could have been actualised), as a potentially subverting *enterprise*. In other words, the materialisation of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs emerging in the course of enterprise practices does not close off the 'reality' of entrepreneurship in its *entrepreneuring* form. A processual approach re-imagines entrepreneurship as a space of creative possibilities that maximise human capacities instead of economic returns (Steyaert and Katz, 2004).

The affective dimension of this approach has gained recognition as increasingly critical (Clough, 2008; Massumi, 2010). Affect, understood as a non-conscious, non-cognitive intensity (Colebrook, 2001), hits, captures and moves us into new states of being

(Massumi, 1996). As Massumi (1996), inspired by the works of Spinoza and Deleuze, notes, affect – emerging in bodies encountering each other – is associated with bodily changes, either augmenting or decreasing body's capacity to act. This view, rooted in 'refusing to ground mind and body on different substances' (Jaquet, 2018: 6), approaches affect as processual ongoingness, and encourages us to explore 'in-betweenness' as intra-connections both symbolic and material (Gherardi, 2017a: 355). Here, the focus of inquiry shifts from human actions to affect's inherently political capacity (Clough, 2008; Seigworth and Gregg, 2010) in stabilising (Massumi, 2010) or transforming social order (e.g. Marsh and Śliwa, 2022).

Concurring with Hjorth (2013), we see the need for the literature on entrepreneurship to consider affect as a critical force for disrupting stability and clearing space for the new. Embracing a processual view of entrepreneuring (Steyaert, 2007) necessitates giving primacy to 'embodied, partly unreflexive or socially routinized and affectively charged phenomena' (Holm and Beyes, 2022: 231). This invites us to inquire into how affect matters for entrepreneuring.

A handful of studies paved the way to explore how affect increases or diminishes body's capacity to act (Cockayne, 2016; Dashtipour and Rumens, 2018; Hjorth, 2013; Katila et al., 2020). For instance, scholars have examined how affect matters for entrepreneurs' identity construction (Katila et al., 2019), for staging social entrepreneurship (Mauksch, 2017) and for creating support for entrepreneurial universities (Katila et al., 2021). This research situates affect outside consciousness, exceeding signification to account for the inherently undetermined nature of affect, altering us to the mobilisation of affective capacity (Clough, 2008) 'in favour of the addictive pursuit of commodified non-necessities' (Braidotti, 2006: 152).

Notwithstanding the pertinence of these considerations for our study, we note that scholarly work on affect rarely connects virtual intensities to 'actual lives' or engages with 'the corporeality of affect' (Pullen et al., 2017: 111). Despite the urgency 'to understand how bodies [. . .] become empowered and mobilized socially and politically' (Knudsen and Stage, 2015: 4) through affective modulation, we still know little about how the modification of visceral and sensate body's capacities (Massumi, 2002) matters for entrepreneuring. This leaves us with pressing questions: how, by considering bodies as sites of affect, can we account for the entanglement of affect in enterprise practices constituting the enterprising self, and how does this matter for organisation-creation in the already organised world? And, perhaps even more importantly, how do we empirically unravel this? In searching for answers, we turn to posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi, 2017b, 2021).

Posthumanist practice theory and affective practices

Both the turn to affect and posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi, 2017a) emphasise becoming rather than being, decentre the human subject, and share the centrality of sociomateriality, bridging the mind and body divide. Despite these commonalities, the conversation between the turn to affect and the turn to practice 'has not yet been fully articulated' (Gherardi, 2017a: 345). When affect is put in relation to practice, it is often viewed either as a dimension of practices (Reckwitz, 2017) or, at most, as a practice in

its own right (Wetherell, 2012), with both interpretations still rooted in a human-centred practice theory. Whilst these contributions successfully challenge the prevailing reductionist, overly positive accounts of entrepreneurial endeavours (Verduijn and Andersen, 2022), they remain committed to equalling the notion of practice with the role and intentions (agency) of entrepreneurs (Gherardi and Laasch, 2022). By contrast, the prefix of post- (as post-dualistic/post-exceptionalism) in a posthumanist practice theory hints at the ontological shift from humanistic assumptions of exceptionality of a seemingly independent human, towards interconnections with all beings (Braidotti, 2000; Gherardi, 2017b; Haraway, 2003). What differentiates a posthumanist practice theory from human-centred approaches is the importance of materiality, considered as 'the "watershed" [. . .] between these two approaches' (Cozza and Gherardi, 2023a: 9). Drawing on contemporary work addressing the notion of the human and feminist (new) materialism (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2000; Haraway, 2003), a posthumanist practice theory rejects the separation between 'subjects' and 'objects', and the social and the material. These contributions can only be understood as emerging from past feminist (particularly Black feminist and postcolonial) scholarship. As Cozza and Gherardi (2023b: 49) note, materialism 'has always been present in feminism'. Feminist thinking has long been engaged with the body and with 'healing unnecessary divisions' (Lorde, 1984: 9) between body and mind, sensing and thinking, feeling and knowing (Ahmed, 2008).

In sensitising us to the materiality of the body and the relevance (but not the prominence) of the social and the discursive, a posthumanist practice theory subverts the duality of body and mind (Gherardi, 2017b), pointing towards a processual and relational ontology instead. This resonates with 'the turn to matter' (Braidotti, 2000; DeLanda, 1996), advancing the dynamic view of materiality by breaking binaries between the material and the discursive, nature and culture and mind and body, considering the matter as processual, transformative and agential, but not severed from meaning-making (Haraway, 2003).

In light of this, we argue that whilst Deleuzian interpretation of affect based on the ontology of forces and intensities (Massumi, 2002) offers insights into 'what affect does' (Gherardi, 2019: 744), a posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi, 2017b, 2021) provides an analytical lens for studying the social and the material as an entanglement of unextractable elements. Recognising the need to pay attention to the matter of bodies, and to embrace connecting affect with embodied and lived experiences (Pullen et al., 2017), we thus put the turn to affect in conversation with the (posthumanist) turn to practice. In this regard, we find Wetherell's (2012: 19) concept of 'affective practice', which she defines as 'a figuration where body possibilities and routines become recruited or entangled together with meaning-making and with other social and material figurations' and 'an organic complex in which all the parts relationally constitute each other', helpful. While this approach effectively challenges humanism, we diverge from Wetherell's (2012) view that dismisses affect as a force independent of language and interpretation. Our approach also avoids ascribing passivity to materiality and instead embraces the view of materiality as agentic yet unextractable from meaning-making (Haraway, 2003). In expanding Wetherell's (2012) notion of affective practice, we remain committed to a processual, relational view of the world (Chia, 2017; Nayak and Chia, 2011; Steyaert, 2007), and therefore to approaching materiality in terms of a process, whereby essentialising configures 'reality' and constitutes 'entities' always in a relative and never fixed accomplishment.

This leads us to recognising that bodies, too, are materialised as an artificially stabilised practical accomplishment (Davis, 2014) and cannot be reduced to individual entities with defined boundaries (Deleuze, 1997). This is important since affective practices 'are' those where the body becomes 'more intrusive than it ordinarily is' (Wetherell, 2012: 97).

In foregrounding the bodies that might enact affect, we emphasise the relations between the embodied and visceral inseparable from other heterogenous elements. We argue that affective practices, as all practices, emerge from the intertwined, co-constitutive relationship between the social and material (Orlikowski, 2007). We do not think of bodies as substances, static entities, but as constantly becoming. This allows us to avoid reducing affect to its partial expressions (emotions) as inscribed in the passivity of a culturally constructed body. It thus enables us to approach shame and pride not as simply residing within the mind or an individual body's response but instead, by seeing body as 'multiple' (Mol, 2002), we engage with the productive potentialities of shame and pride for entrepreneuring. This, we hope, opens up a new way of thinking about how affective practices matter for entrepreneuring.

Affective practices and conditions of potentiality for organisation-creation

Seeking conditions of possibility for entrepreneuring necessitates a shift from human-centred approaches towards multiplicity. Processual thinking demands inquiring beyond what is visible and present and, instead, towards thinking about the invisible, yet real world of the virtual, which might become realised through intensities and affect; body's capacities to act (Clough, 2008). In underscoring the importance of body as a matter of affectivity, fluids and energy flows, never passive or imprinted with discourse, a posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi, 2017b, 2021) offers a lens to inquire into what the body can do. We argue that emerging from the intertwined, constitutive relationship between the social and material, including the matter of bodies (Gherardi, 2019), affective practices as all practices are open to re-arrangements and different materialisations. In constituting an entrepreneur, a business owner, a competitor, organisations (along with other 'entities'), within the taken-for-granted materialisations of enterprise practices, affective practices leave aside the social to constitute the economised 'reality'. Whilst these materialisations do not exclude affect from mattering, they displace its subversive potential and mobilise the modification of body's capacities (Massumi, 2002) in the pursuit of profit. It is precisely the ability 'of affect to produce an economic effect' (Massumi, 2002: 45) that makes evoking specific affective configurations – optimism, confidence, resilience, shame and pride, among others – particularly productive for sedimenting the enterprising subject (Nikunen and Kolehmainen, 2024). Yet, as with all practices, affective practices can both reinforce dominant normality and also exceed sedimented categories.

Just as practices are multiple, so, too, are the realities they produce (Mol, 1999). Another 'version' (Mol, 2002) of an entrepreneur and entrepreneurship might come into being when body's capacities entangled with social and material figurations come to the fore. We argue that seemingly nonrelated (yet entangled) affective practices displace a human-embodied 'enterprising' subject constituted by the reductive, economised materialisation of enterprise disguised as entrepreneurship, thus unsettling the already organised normality.

Consequently, rather than seeking entrepreneuring in the agency of an entrepreneur, we attribute it to the destabilising force of affective practices and point to their political potentialities. This is not a confrontational, intentional refusal of 'entrepreneurialisation' (Champenois et al., 2023: 1) and enterprise; the significance lies in the multiplicity of 'reality' and 'social entities' since there is no 'singular version of out-thereness' (Law, 2004: 53). We therefore understand affective practices as enacting the political potentialities by displacing temporarily firmed normality of enterprise and bringing into being entrepreneuring, thus breaking worlds apart. Attuning to when the abnormal, economised materialisation of entrepreneurship becomes unsettled in and through affective practices provides insight into conditions of possibility beyond the limit of the normal. When the new finds its way, breaking 'enterprise solution-at-work' and creating 'a temporary opening in the common' (Farias et al., 2019: 561), we are dealing with entrepreneuring.

Methodology

Becoming-with praxiography

Studying entrepreneuring as becoming requires sensitivity to how multiple potential realities emerge as a specific materialisation through practices (Nayak and Chia, 2011). In processual thinking, entrepreneurs, firms and other entities are not definitive; rather, they are 'underway, becoming and perishing, without end' (Hjorth et al., 2015: 599). To explore how a temporary 'singular reality' emerges from such multiplicity and to understand how entrepreneuring comes into being, we turn to praxiography (Mol, 2002), the ethnography of practices.

Yet, seeking conditions of possibility beyond the capacity of an individual agent (Steyaert, 2007) necessitates attuning to the intensities of affect and bodily potential (Champenois et al., 2025; Massumi, 2002). These 'shuttling intensities' (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010: 2) that emerge between bodies, elude language (Fotaki et al., 2017), challenging us to find 'ways of knowing the indistinct and slippery without trying to grasp and hold them tight' (Law, 2004: 10). Considering this, we add nuance to praxiography to study affective practices, focussing on what they 'do', rather than what they 'are'. Inspired by feminist and affective ethnographies (Gherardi, 2019; Harding et al., 2022), which consider the body as a vital tool of inquiry, we position the researcher's body as a seismograph – sensitively attuned to the visceral intensities and the 'texture of embodied life' (Fotaki et al., 2017: 8). Here, the praxiographer becomes enveloped in the 'field', in the unfolding of the everydayness of family businesses over an extended period of time. Through her porous body, she attunes to the moments when hers and other bodies feel and sense more intrusively (across different settings and situations) and these embodied moments become our 'data'. Importantly, the praxiographer's body is not considered a detached, passive receptor. It does not simply register or collect impressions from the outside world. Neither is the praxiographer a fixed unity, authoritatively reporting on what s/he thinks is happening in the field. Rather, the 'self' of the praxiographer becomes unsettled and dissolved in its becoming-with the field. Only through the attunement to how 'bodies affect and are affected by other bodies' (Gherardi, 2019: 748) can we inquire into how affective practices open up conditions of possibility and allow different 'versions' to unfold (Mol, 2002).

Traditionally, this might be where we 'step back' and insert a reflective account drawing on our inner, individual mental activities. Here, 'self-reflexive desperation' (Mol, 2002: 158) is no longer required; instead, undertaking processual research invokes responsibility for what we, as researchers, do and how our actions play a part in ordering reality (Rescher, 1996). What we think, theorise, the methods we use and how we write become an intervention, 'a practice that interferes with other practices to create realities' (Mol, 2002: 158), thus is productive of what appears 'real'. However, since the 'real' is 'implicated in political' (Lüthy and Steyaert, 2019: 665), how we theorise entrepreneurship as enterprise or entrepreneuring matters. It also matters how we theorise affective practices, including shame and pride, either (re-)producing 'versions' in service of enterprise or bringing into being 'versions' in service of entrepreneuring. In addition, it involves recognising that in the research process the researcher's 'self' becomes transformed, through moments when boundaries between the 'self' and the 'field' become blurred, bringing forth the realisation that different realities, not necessarily grounded in the logic of enterprise, may become possible.

Doing fieldwork differently

Here, we describe how our two praxiographic stories became fleshed out; this section is written by the second author who conducted the fieldwork and will refer to herself as 'I' in this section.

I met with nine small family businesses in the northwest of England, highly diverse in terms of the industry type, size and age of business, and yet similar in the entanglement of the family and the business. It was the latter that drew my attention since when tense bodies are torn between family and business, this becomes a rich context for studying affective practices. I was in the field for over 17 months (October 2018 to January 2020) and visited each site twice, 6 months apart, to reveal each site's potential to 'become otherwise' and to capture its evolving multiplicity and emergent possibilities over time (Pallesen, 2017). This amounted to 508 hours in the field, resulting in 239,839 words across 600 pages of intensive field notes.[1]

During the fieldwork, I had a simple thought: I wanted to attune to multiplicity to become sensitive to the subtle different versions of practices in their unfolding and becoming (Mol, 2002). But how does one attune to and account for multiplicity? I needed to start by accepting that I am not the author-ity of knowing and that each practice carries its own reality – these realities coexist, often aligning, sometimes colliding. In one version, enterprise practices and affective practices overlap to form a coordinated reality: one in which profit-seeking is seen as essential, and failure as intolerable. But what happens as I move a 'little further along, or slightly later' (Mol, 2002: 117)? My felt-body, enveloped by the figurations of slumped bodies, puffed chests, beads of sweat, deep sighs, whoops, guttural growls building from the throat, blurs into the field, erasing the boundary between my 'self' and the 'field'. In becoming enveloped, my chest senses warmth, my spine catches a chill and my stomach sinks. In these embodied moments, I do not yet know 'what they might mean in an order of representations' but wonder 'where they might go' (Stewart, 2007: 3). This exceeds a mere physical sensation; these are moments of pre-understanding, before a flash of

consciousness brings meaning with it. In and through arresting these moments, the ungraspable, non-conscious (Colebrook, 2001) activation of body's capacities – emerging when bodies encounter one another – becomes palpable, if only for a moment. Through the intensities and body's capacities, the 'nextness' (Massumi, 2002: 232) of what will be 'rolls into the world' (Champenois et al., 2025: 50), materialising affective practices for 'a state of potentiality' (Stewart, 2007: 3). Here, when the coordination begins to fray, other 'versions' can surface. These multiple realities do not simply compete to become the 'true one reality', they coexist – each enacting a different 'version' (Mol, 2002) of what entrepreneurship could become. These 'modes of embodied and situated attunement' (Jørgensen and Beyes, 2023: 10), whilst difficult to articulate, are essential for our understanding of affective practices.

At some point, these sensuous bodily data have to become words (Dahlman, 2024), since words remain the dominant way of communicating academic research. With my body as a research instrument (Harding et al., 2022), my field notes grew rich with the embodied experience of the ongoing flux (Nayak and Chia, 2011), and imbued with my physicality. When my co-authors enter the entanglement of affective practices and research practices, through conversations and readings of these notes, a new layer of intensity unfolds. The notes are not just words on a screen but provoke reactions in their bodies, evoking sensations of shame or pride that pierce through and what turned into data was that which made us all feel peculiar, resonating in the body and mind (MacLure, 2013).

Knowing differently

The three authors' thinking with the data remained open to the visceral, lived quality of each encounter, allowing curiosity to guide us (Jackson, 2017). We began by tuning into the tensions that the researcher's body, acting as a seismograph, sensed in the field (Dahlman, 2024). The researcher's sensation – such as tension in her shoulders and the instinct to hold her breath, as noted in her field notes – surfaced in our analytical conversations, bringing the unspoken viscerality of these experiences circulating in our discussions. Working through the varying tensions in the fieldnotes, we collectively felt the 'stickiness of data' (Bispo and Gherardi, 2019: 377), as certain sensations and intensities lingered in our bodies, haunting us and demanding attention (MacLure, 2013), turning our bodies into a source of knowledge. In our becoming-with data, we became caught in shame and pride, as they set something into motion and did something to us (Jackson, 2017; Koro-Ljungberg and MacLure, 2013). Our bodies ruminated, deliberated and comprehended, recognising shame and pride through our gut feelings (in the field and when reading the embodied fieldnotes) and through the turning in of our stomachs, pounding of our hearts, and shivers running up our spines (Wilson, 2015). Shame pierced us: the body in the field and the body behind the screen felt a visceral pain, swept away by the forward momentum of becoming-with the data. Yet, with pride we could surf 'the intensity of the event' (MacLure, 2013: 662); the comforting warmth was less unsettling – but no less important to us. In another sideways move, we opened ourselves to the 'possibility that things might be done differently' (Mol, 2002: 164).

When our gazes intensified on our screens, we felt excitement and energy to see what came next (MacLure, 2010).

Writing differently

We asked ourselves: how do we write up our praxiography? How can we describe the bodily sensations and vibrations felt within the researcher's body (Gherardi, 2023; Harding et al., 2022)? Since 'new ways of doing research require new ways for writing it up' (Pullen et al., 2020: 2), we experiment with 'writing differently' (Gilmore et al., 2019, 2024; Pullen et al., 2020) our praxiographic stories as a mode of engaging with a world that is always in becoming. We adopt an embodied and relational writing style (Gherardi, 2023; Gilmore et al., 2019) that invites readers into the unfolding relational dynamics of our research (Simpson and Revsbæk, 2022). In so doing, we allow the empirical material to remain 'active' and vibrant, and never fully closed off (Mol, 2002).

We write our stories from the body (Fotaki et al., 2014; Gilmore et al., 2019; Pullen et al., 2020), 'working from the inside out' (Anzaldúa, 2015: 5). The porous body (Pullen and Rhodes, 2015) – its sensitive skin, its resonant muscles, its remembering organs, our gut feelings (Wilson, 2015) – mediates our connection to the world, inscribing memories and sensations that seep into our text (Pullen and Rhodes, 2008). In this practice, writing dissolves the artificial separation between thought and sensation (Pullen et al., 2020), the thinking mind and feeling body (Poldner et al., 2019), creating a space where what is felt and what is thought blur into an inseparable relation that reshapes our academic texts.

We exchanged a vocabulary of representation with one of intensities, movements and flows and experiment with a textual style (Beavan, 2021; Mol, 2002) to invite our readers into 'a sensory connection' between our bodies, their bodies and our texts (Gherardi, 2023: 5): regular text for what I could see, *italics for what I could hear* and **bold for the vibrations and intensities my body could feel**. As you, our reader, plunge with us into the messy, visceral, unfolding process of knowing shame and pride, you, too, become part of making the text more than mere ink on the page (Weatherall, 2023).

Praxiographic stories

Our praxiographic stories (Gherardi, 2023) are made up of 'sketches from different scenes' (Mol, 2002: 53), which we assemble into 'acts'. Each part contains: (1) an overview of the story, to help orient the reader; (2) a praxiographic story detailing the unfolding affective practices; and (3) a discussion of possibilities for alternative enactments of doing business, brought about by affective practices of shame and pride.

Praxiographic story 1: 'Deflated in shame'

In this story, we visit an agricultural manufacturer, passing through a long lineage of fathers and sons. The perpetuation of the company's rich legacy as a cornerstone of the local community and family dynasty weighs heavily on the current owner-manager's shoulders, who, alongside his close friend and 'right-hand man', is featured throughout this story. When a machine malfunctions, the sole engineer with the knowledge to repair

it cannot be reached. Unable to fix the machine, all involved are defeated with a sense of failure, unworthiness and inadequacy that deepens the burden of failing the family legacy. In seeking an increased reliance on an expert's advice and a digital overhaul, a shift from the sole economic imperative to a new value of a more sustainable feed sourcing and educational outreach becomes actualised.

Act one. Board meeting. Furrowed brows. Upturned lips. Sighs. Temple rubbing. Blank notepads, blank stares. *Long tepid silences*. An empty chair. A forlorn glance, who's missing? Alarm *ringing* in the distance. A concerned voice, *we have 75% of employees nearing retirement*. An exasperated breath . . . No-one wants to have this conversation. Eyes averted. Checking watch – is it time to leave? Again, that concerned voice, *no younger generation coming in . . . in the '90s we had BSE and then foot and mouth in the* 2000*s . . . not a very attractive industry to come into . . . nearing a stage of not being able to operate at full capacity due to retirements and lack of a recruitment pool*. **I feel tense. I look around the room expectantly. Mouth dry. My tightening muscles yearn for someone to fill the silence**. **I struggle to sit still. My breathing becomes shallow.** No answer, no resolution.

Walking down corridor. Arm grabbed. Stopped in tracks. *Do you have a second?* A tale of missing spare parts. Broken machine. Production stopped. Couldn't find the parts. *The only employee who knows how to fix the problem wasn't available*. Deep sigh. Body slumps against the nearest wall. Foot kicks the wall. Breath escapes. Bridge of nose squeezed. **The walls feel too close. I shouldn't see this. I look away.** *This is a massive problem for us*.

Act two. Two friends. Two colleagues. Slumping shoulders. Bowed head. Avoiding eye contact. Fidgeting. Playing with hands. *I can't be the only [family name] who messes it all up. No one will be working the mill at this rate. On my watch.* Red cheeks, blushing. **This is visceral. Painful to watch. I can feel a pit in my stomach. My jaw tightens. I freeze. Muscles locked. Distress seeps through my skin.** *I'm afraid of letting everyone down. My family built this business. I wonder if I'm up to the task.* **Each doubt pierces into me and leaves me wounded. My body temperature rises. My senses are overwhelmed with the feeling of this place.** Hand on arm. Reassuring grasp. **My body opens. My face softens. I feel a warmth within. My arm screams at me to reach out and reassure but stays firmly by my side.** *I should have seen this coming, sometimes I wonder if I am really cut out for this.* Voice catches in the throat. **This shatters me. I feel this deeply. My stomach knots into a ball. My chest feels heavy. I want to help. My heart swells. The intensity of becoming-with shame unfolds here in my heart.** Gaze around the room. Eyes linger. Pictures of his father, grandfather, previous generations. Certificates of achievement. Plaques of commemoration. Memories. Name on the door. Trinkets on the desk. News articles framed of achievements. Reminders of before. Body and space reach into each other's textures to materialise shame. Shrink inward. Make the body small. Hang head. Arms scrunched in. Withdrawing. *I need some time alone.*

Local community event. People approach. Broad smiles. Stand tall. Chest out. Knowing handshakes. *Buzz* of chatter. **Hard to hear.** *Welcome back.* Pat on the back. *It's not a community event without a [family name] here*. Hard smile. Thin line. *I remember*

when it was your dad and his dad. Smile fades. *They did a lot for us then, good jobs for good people, almost everyone worked for the [family name]'s.* Face pales. Arms cross. Look around. Find an escape. *How are you getting on? Any plans we should know about?* Eyes dart around. Stutter. Words don't form. Find an escape. **Hand wants to extend. There is an ache in my chest. The empty space that follows vibrates through me. It chokes me. I find myself needing to gasp for breath. I mirror the need to escape. Fight or flight? Flight wins.** *Alarm bells ring in my ears*. **There are no alarms. My body feels barraged which make it possible for me to become viscerally aware of shame.** *Sorry, I've just got to . . .* Stride away. Hurry. Find a corner. Deep breath. *There's an expectation that your customers, employees, locals, feel part of your family, part of your business, which means a lot of cooks in the kitchen for what the expectations on the business are*.

Daily walk around. Machine still broken. Employee hoping to fix. Hammer in hand. Jacket pulled up over neck. **It's cold in here.** *This mill has been going since my grandad opened it, the machines you're using are the same ones he did*. Forlorn look. At machine. Around us. Up to the sky. **It is the same mill I have walked through again and again, yet it feels like the calm preceding the storm. The four walls of the mill feel oppressive. They suck the life out of the room. I feel like it is getting darker in here, despite mere seconds passing.** Walls high above, but heavy on his shoulders. Eyes brighten. Mouth twitches into a smile. *I was coming here from when I was this high*. Hand held low. *I've played in every one of these storage units*. Laughter turns to sadness. Sweet to sour. So much to lose. Objects, bodies and spaces blend together. They have witnessed the labour of multiple generations. The space cradles body: from a playful child to an eager young learner. To now, an owner-manager. **This space feels like a child's playground, like a family home. I can sense the burden of family legacy and the shame of self-perceived failings in the air. My ears feel like they could pop. The air feels electric, and I am restless. I shift my weight from one foot to the other.** *Dad taught me how to use this machine*. Long pause. Silence engulfs. **My body vibrates toward the details and nuances of the materials, bodies and sensations surrounding me. Body shrinks further. Another intimate moment I am privy to. I cradle my arms around my body. Rocking gently. Try to slow my beating heart. I feel smothered.** No response. Only sadness between the two. Downcast eyes. Deep furrowed brows. *I should have done something sooner. Maybe if I had been more proactive, we wouldn't be in this position now. It's my fault that we're struggling*. **A chill runs up my spine. I feel physically drained.**

Act three. Two colleagues. Director and his right-hand man. Shared office. Tech event last night. *Went well. Experts from the agri-food community targeting innovation for nature positive, resilient agriculture and food systems*. Met someone keen to develop technical systems. Meeting scheduled next day. Hope. Positivity. **Everything feels easier, lighter. The air is thinner. I breathe easy.** Next day. Two business owners. *These new tech systems can help you automate tasks, streamline operations, reducing the dependency on a large workforce*. Eyes focussed. Active listening. *Knowledge management systems that you can use which would help you to retain and transfer valuable institutional knowledge that your retiring employees would otherwise take with them*. An

email. To all employees: announcing full review of IT infrastructure and new business partnership . . . A conversation. *New data-driven approach, allocating resources to implement solutions like software for supply chain management, and tech, like AI tools for ingredient selection, so it can massively help us solve our problems*.

Months later. **I return. The space feels different. There is cheeriness.** Employee onboarding a new production manager. Indicating how feed is sourced. Own blend, but new ingredients. Hands grab grain and let it fall through fingers. **It sounds oddly satisfying falling back into the bag.** *We have run analytics on our feed blend to see how we can improve our efficiencies, we have changed to [brand] feed, which is certified under a sustainability certification programme that commits to using best agricultural practices* . . . Big smile. Glean in the eye. *Protecting worker welfare and producing on land which has not been deforested.* Know this product well. Stand behind it. Believe in it. *It can help farmers manage their water usage and space – which all contributes to improving their sustainability.*

Second to last day here. **Different feeling. I know these spaces. I know their technical language. I am more comfortable.** Standing in the mill. Mill work continues around. A technical support video is the purpose. *This is unusual for me to do one of these.* Grin from ear to ear. Clips microphone to chest. *Beep* of a digger reversing. *Let's go.* Explain priorities of educational outreach. Talking to a lens. Guidance offered. Optimal feeding practices. Herd management. Sustainable farming techniques, blended feeds that support this. Touches grain. Holds it in hand. Shows to camera. Excitement. Childlike. Enjoying himself.

Praxiographic analysis. We find that in the 'Deflated in shame' story, the routinised stability of everydayness in the agri-food sector becomes undermined when the sector-structuring stabilised practices lack correspondence with the material conditions on the ground. The sector, structured by an economic downturn and a lack of stability, becomes less enticing for the younger generation, resulting in reliance on an ageing workforce. In the 'broken machine incident', the entanglement of a broken machine, an absent older mechanic and the normative pressure to meet the orders and generate profit, produce palpable tensions. The broken machine symbolises a crack in the routinised practices which, due to the structurally conditioned shortage of competent workforce, can no longer continue as usual. This materialisation of tension on the ground brings to light the potential of affective practice of shame to either solidify the existing order, deactivate body's capacity to act or generate new potentialities by expanding body's capacity to change (Plotnikof and Pors, 2024). Shame, as an affective practice, is thus not bound solely to individual experience; it stretches across biological bodies, symbols and objects already entangled with the social without a predetermined outcome.

When the researcher, attuned to palpable tensions, becomes viscerally aware of shame, her porous body is not sealed off from the others, from the 'outside'. Here, the researcher's body is caught in a complex, dynamic entanglement of meaning-making and matter (including other bodies). She does not 'see' shame, she 'feels' its intensity in bodily arousal intertwined with cognition, but she sees what shame, materialised in service of profit, *does*; here, weaponised to solidify the entrepreneurial self, shame paralyses, presses bodies down and lowers heads under the weight of obligation to run a successful

business. Shame materialised as an individual's deficiency or a troubling psychological state ought to be actively avoided by a rational, profit seeking entrepreneur as constituted through the economised enterprise (Nikunen and Kolehmainen, 2024). Yet, this is one possible 'reality' of shame; there is always potential for another materialisation of shame. In thinking of shame as an affective practice, we recognise that the body entangled with meaning-making, reconfigures shame, however fleetingly, breaking it out of the affective regime of control (Clough, 2008). Shame interplays with entrepreneurial embeddedness understood as a 'process rather than a structural feature' (Champenois and Jack, 2022: 523), underscoring how ties, obligations and a sense of belonging to place interact with entrepreneurial practices, pointing towards the interdependencies between the symbolic and the material. Rather than depotentialising and paralysing, shame throws bodies into action, transforming everydayness. Through powering bodies up, shame 'can trigger radical, but not predetermined political action' (Pullen et al., 2017: 117). The productive materialisation of shame offers a glimpse into what a local place might become (Champenois et al., 2025). It is here, through the disruption in the already organised, that entrepreneuring alters the daily practices. In displacing an 'enterprising' subject constituted in and through enterprise practices, shame shifts the point of gravity from profit to continuity and brings to the fore the significance of the organisation within the community, opening up space for more creative ways of remaining its part and enacting new sustainable futures.

Praxiographic story 2: 'Puffed up in pride'

In the second story, we visit a vehicle repair shop, founded on a local farmer's land by a farmer and his wife, which has evolved into a bustling garage with young apprentices. Often affectionately called their 'baby' and bearing the family name, the couple cannot imagine themselves without the firm and the firm without them. In this story, we meet husband and wife and their young apprentice. When the apprentice agrees, without authorisation, to take on the unconventional task of repairing a horsebox, they feel compelled to undertake the repair. Successfully completing the repair, everyone involved shares a sense of triumph. Pride brings about responsible and sustainable consumption practices, displacing the primacy of profit.

Act one. A potential customer. Email received. Classic car. *Not for us. This is outside our remit, really, mate, we don't usually take on stuff like this, you know Fords, Vauxhalls, that's more us. We don't dabble in things we don't know. Knock at the door*. Apprentice emerges. Concerned look. Wringing hands. Stuttering start. Eyes closed. *You're not going to like what I've got to say*. **Body braces. Muscles tense**. All goes still. Job accepted. Horsebox. Client promised results. Eyes wide. Breath escapes, as if punched. *No authority! Not what we do*. Roll eyes. Head to the ceiling. Neck crumples. *What did you do that for?* Incredulity. *Big sigh*. Think. *We will have to do it now*. No choice. Stuck. *Your fault. It'll look bad on me, on all of us, if we turn around and say actually no, we can't do it*. Crumpled face. Annoyance. Get out. Later that day. Horsebox appears in garage. *No going back*.

Act two. Out of office. Back in garage. Preparing for war. Armour on coveralls. Worn blue cotton. Holes in places. Apprentice joins. Damage surveyed. Garage *echoes*. Wind *howls*. **I feel a draft on my neck. Shiver.** Turn up collar on neck. *Do you feel that?* Rub arms. *This place takes me back.* Story told. An arm almost lost. *Laughs. Long time ago now*. Plans unfold. Orders placed. Parts tagged. Pacing. Thinking. Pacing. Change in attire. Change in location. *It feels good to be back in these*. Pulls at coveralls. *Much comfier than that suit all day long, makes me think about how far I've come from me messing about on my dad's farm*. Next day. Hands (re)familiarising with tools. Welding. Hammering. *Haven't lost it*. Grin. Sparks fly. **Face feels warm. I step back from the heat.** Hands graze area. Pleased. Achievement. Blow on the welding tool. Like a weapon. Wild grin. *I've still got it*. **My head nods instinctively.** Mask down. Back to it. *I've not done this in a wee while, I forgot what it was like, hard graft*. **I find myself mirroring the grin. I feel part of the accomplishment. My body leans into the space. Toward the action. There is a pleasant feeling in my chest, a warmth.**

Later that week. Apprentice testing vehicle. Hope it functions correctly. Safe to use? Brakes, check. Electrical systems, check. All components work. Keen eyes watch. Hopeful. **It reminds me of a child at Christmas. My body mirrors the expectant hope, leans in for a better view, feels alert.** Thumbs up. Big smiles. Spring in step. Bodies bounce towards one another. *By George I think we've got it! Look at this!* Handshakes. Hugs. Slaps on the back. *Cheers*! **I feel giddy. Butterflies in my stomach. There is something in the air. It colours my vision. Vibrations in my gut lead to a laugh. I am gleeful. I join in on the celebrations. Pride materialises here through the intra-action: I am part of what materialises pride, my body celebrates and woops, I raise my arms in cheer.** Bursts of laughter **(my own too).** *This is your best work yet*. Need to document, to remember. Take photos. Bodies and the horsebox. Thumbs up. Smiles. *Well worth the week spent!* Problem solved. Share on social media. Celebrate. Relinquished time. But a customer in need championed and successful.

Two business owners usher customers in. Excitedly skip to garage. Ear to ear smiles. *You won't believe how she looks*. **The excitement vibrates through my shoes and into my feet and I find myself almost skipping too. I feel a sense of weightlessness.** Unveil horsebox. Expectant looks. Hands pat the horsebox. *Don't get me wrong, it was a hard job, but we've smashed it*. Jokes, not literally. *Laughs*. Glee. Happy customer. *This is incredible – well done!* Valued. Appreciated. Chest puffed. Head held high. Collective pride. Visible pleasure. Smiles, pats on the back, hi-fives, cheers. **The positive reinforcement from a happy customer affects me more than I expected. The praise emanates through the room to all present. I feel modest, like I want to lower my head and smile. As if I was part of this achievement. I sense the thrum of the bodies before me, their rhythms and movements. I sense how the mechanics feel valued.** They lower their heads and smile. **I feel energised. I am happy for them. This is an intense high.** Expanded posture. Visible for all to see. Slight head tilt. Capable. Useful. *I come from a farming background, we aren't people who just buy and replace, it's about being able to do things, fix things, be resourceful*. More photos. Handshakes. Grins before and behind the camera. **I find myself grinning, too. I feel invested in the problem the horsebox posed. I share their pride.** Share accomplishments on social media. Photos attached. Heartfelt caption. Fast typing. Intermittent smiles. *Every car holds a*

story, a piece of history, and a legacy of craftsmanship . . . This old girl will continue to live another day, all thanks to our stellar work and mechanics.

New email. *Ding*. Surprise spreads across face. Wide eyes. Open mouth. Raised eyebrows. Turns to pride. Head tilt returns. Nomination for community and eco-friendly award. Breathy gasp. Smile widens. Smile lines appear on the forehead. Clench fist. Raise to the chest. Shake ferociously. *Get in!* **This invigorates me.** Race across the corridor. Share success. *Open your email*. Wait expectantly. Beam. Two clenched fists shake above the head. Celebrate. Share with the community. Post on the website. *We are delighted to have been announced as finalists in two categories at the [local name] Awards! Thank you to all of those who helped make this happen, we couldn't be prouder of what we have all achieved here*.

Act three. Months later. Reception. Main lobby. Hands hang new award certificates up. On display. All to see. *Looks good*. Admire. Lingering stare. Hands reach out. Hold firmly. **I celebrate their success with them, silently. I smile fondly. I sense, feel and match their tempo.** Carbon-neutral status. Commitment to sustainability. Environmental responsibility. Comprehensive carbon management plan. Process optimisation. Sustainable products. Responsible purchasing. Formal recognition. *We've set the standard in the industry now*. Beams. Locally recognised. *We could do more. Make this place even greener*. Ideas spiral. Blurt suggestions. Hands wave. Enthusiasm. Solar panels on the roof. Supply chain improvements. Nods. Agreement.

Bustling garage. Unusual cars. Unimog. Van that is now a lab. Kennels in the boots of cars. Various states of disrepair. Mid-way conversion. Skilled mechanics. Meticulously dismantle. Oil smears. Rough hands. Assess vehicles. Catalogue salvageable components. The air is alive. Buzz of tools. Clatter of metal. Radio in the background. Bodies in the corner. Huddle around a whiteboard. Covered in sketches. New project. Converting the boot of standard vehicle. Two dog kennels. Specifications and calculations. *How are you getting on with that air-con conundrum, have you scratched your head enough for the answer to fall out?* Engineer explains. Potential resolutions. Discuss ideas. Energy efficiency. Sustainable materials. *My dad's farm had some lying around, so I thought I'd use them*. Forgotten treasure.

Devastated client. Crushed metal. Big accident. Grim determination. Hope is lost. Enter mechanic, no longer apprentice. Assesses damage. Touch. Step back. Look. Move forward. Confident nod. *You won't need to scrap this*. Raised eyebrow. Curious glimmer. Hope. Eager question. *How so?* Expert hands. Trace the contours. Find the pulse. *We can breathe life into her yet*. Smile spreads. Shared between two bodies. Tools in motion. Resurrecting.

Praxiographic analysis. In the second story, 'Puffed up in pride', we are drawn to the seemingly minor disturbance in the everydayness of doing business, when the unauthorised order must be fulfilled despite being outside the usual business scope. In a 'reality' configured by the economised enterprise disguised as entrepreneurship, profit – driven by high demand and turnover of orders – is prioritised in the everydayness of the local bustling garage. Routine orders are welcomed since these standardised jobs can be fulfilled quickly and profitably, whilst unique, time and labour-intensive repairs are rejected.

The 'choices', calculated purely on the basis of expected returns, are not freely 'made' by an agentic entrepreneur; rather, they are sedimented within the enterprise practices. Yet, when a non-standard order slips through and is fulfilled, the materialisation of pride in the service of economised enterprise is viscerally felt by the researcher. Her body, 'traversed and co-constructed by the affective impact of others' (Braidotti, 2022: 2) expands with a sense of energised weightlessness, joining in celebration, becoming-with pride. This 'reality' of pride materialised as a self-affirming, internal sense of superiority stemming out of individuals' success, configures a proud enterprising subject, closing off the political potential of pride (Nikunen and Kolehmainen, 2024).

But thinking of pride as an affective practice reminds us that pride is not reducible to a property of the individual (Clough, 2007), nor is it simply imprinted in the mind as a cultural script, independent from the passive body. Pride, like all affective practices, is inherently multiple: another 'version' of pride is always possible. Here, the puffed-up bodies, exceeding the influence of the conscious mind (Massumi, 2002), are more than just a 'backdrop' of practices; they play an active role in (temporarily) destabilising 'the dark side' (Johnsen et al., 2019) of pride. This alternative materialisation of pride produced in the engagement of inextricably intertwined mind and body amplifies body's capacity to act. Severed from the normalised economic leitmotif, pride can be productive (Probyn, 2005) for unsettling the established order. Seemingly unrelated shame as an affective practice disrupts and modifies – opening up space for entrepreneuring to emerge. On the ground, the unfolding of pride matters; it ruptures the artificial coherence of enterprise, undoes the sedimented entrepreneur and makes possible alternative ways of doing and becoming, where frugality replaces overconsumption.

Knowing-in-making

In exploring organisation-creation within the already organised, we turned our attention to affective practices that we study empirically in the context of small family businesses. Mobilising processual thinking and thus considering entrepreneuring as a process of becoming, we propose a move towards understanding an embodied and affective dimension of what drives entrepreneuring forward in the already organised (Champenois, 2025; Picard et al., 2024). Building upon contributions that draw attention to entrepreneuring's potentialities for social change (Calás et al., 2009; Farias et al., 2019; Hjorth and Holt, 2016), we 'deepen our knowledge of how affective, relational and material aspects of entrepreneuring intersect in organization creation at work' (Champenois et al., 2023: 3) through expanding Wetherell's (2012) concept of affective practices and mobilising a posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi, 2017b, 2021). This enables us to initiate a conversation between the turn to affect and the turn to (posthumanist) practice theory (Gherardi, 2017a), and to focus on affective practices in explaining how entrepreneuring breaks free from enterprise (Farias et al., 2019; Martí and Fernández, 2015; Picard et al., 2024). In doing so, we bring to the fore the moving matter of bodies, 'often glossed over in discursive approaches to embodiment' (van Amsterdam et al., 2023: 593).

This means that when thinking about how affective practices matter for entrepreneuring, we need to decouple shame and pride from a bounded, autonomous human body. By viewing the body as a multiple, an open-ended critical source (Poldner et al.,

2019), we attend to the productive potentialities of shame and pride in destabilising the artificial coherence of enterprise. The article makes two distinct contributions to the literature: (1) putting forward a novel methodological approach to studying and writing about affective practices; (2) building an understanding of the ways in which affective practices matter for entrepreneuring. We elaborate on each below.

A novel methodological approach to studying and writing about affective practices

Our first contribution is methodological, in that our research can serve as an exemplar for studying and writing about affective practices in a way that is rooted in taking seriously the central considerations of a processual approach: the multiplicity of phenomena, virtuality and the-not-yet actualised possibilities. Approaching entrepreneuring as becoming, and theorising shame and pride as open-ended affective practices, has a key important methodological implication: it is challenging to empirically operationalise (Fotaki et al., 2017; Langley and Tsoukas, 2016). To date, most contributions adopting a processual view of entrepreneuring tend to be more theoretical, with few (e.g. Hjorth, 2013; Verduyn, 2015) applying it to study entrepreneuring beyond 'a reductionist understanding of the entrepreneurship phenomena' (Parkkari and Verduijn, 2019: 35). This does not mean that insights gained through other approaches more typically used in entrepreneurship research, such as participant observation, interviews and ethnographic studies, are less valuable, yet these methods are not well suited to inquiries predicated on the view of the world as in constant flux (Tsoukas and Chia, 2002).

We propose praxiography as a method responding to the need for inquiring into entrepreneuring as a process of becoming. Praxiography, in recognising that the reality we live with is 'one performed in a variety of practices' (Mol, 1999: 74) and thus is inherently 'multiple' (Mol, 2002), offers a way of thinking about phenomena, not in terms of stable entities, but in eschewing 'thingification' (Rescher, 1996) points us toward 'multiplicitous becomings' (Simpson and Revsbæk, 2022: 6). With its emphasis on ontological multiplicity, praxiography is particularly suitable for inquiring into organisation-creation since 'what did become actual, what was actualized, is just one of the multiple differential potentials that could have been so' (Hjorth and Holt, 2022: 3).

Our study demonstrates how praxiography allows us to attend not only to what the reality of enterprise '*is*', but how its apparent singularity emerges from multiplicity and how another 'version' (Mol, 2002) of entrepreneurship as *entrepreneuring* might come into being. We thus propose that future studies of entrepreneuring not only consider praxiography as a method aligned with the primacy of process but also alert researchers to the political implications of their theoretical choices – an issue highly pertinent to scholars who view entrepreneuring as a force of social change. Furthermore, for studies specifically seeking to explore conditions of possibility at the level of intensities and affect, we propose a more nuanced style of praxiography. Following feminist ethnography and affective ethnography's (Gherardi, 2019; Lather, 2001; Pullen and Rhodes, 2015) approach to doing fieldwork, we suggest relying on the researcher's 'bodily capacity to affect/be affected' (Gherardi, 2019: 741) for studying affective practices. This is different from traditional ethnography, whereby the researcher is immersed in and reports

on the field whilst remaining a bounded, separate entity. By contrast, here, the praxiographer's body becomes opened up in attunement, and becomes both part of and produced by the 'field'. Although distinct from Mol's (2002) original praxiography, this approach preserves its core focus on practices (including affective practices) and the multiple realities they produce. By reframing praxiography to engage with affective practices, we can attend to multiple realities (rather than perspectives) of the entrepreneur, entrepreneuring, shame and pride, without reducing these to fixed 'entities'.

Engaging with multiplicity and elusive bodily intensities also necessitates a different style of writing that conveys less than conscious, not easily representable sensations, gut feelings and energies. Following authors who have previously argued for the need to 'write differently' (Gilmore et al., 2019, 2024; Pullen et al., 2020), we present an approach to writing praxiographic stories that aim at making affective practices – such as shame and pride – *felt* in our article; shifting the reader's modality from *thinking about* to *sensing from* (Shotter and Tsoukas, 2014). In putting forward this methodological approach to researching and writing about affective practices, we also call for an understanding of the practice of reading as the reader's encounter *with* the text, and not a detached reading *of* it.

The mattering of affective practices for entrepreneuring

Second, by offering deep insights into the political potential of affective practices, we contribute to the entrepreneuring literature (Gregori, 2024; Hjorth et al., 2015; Picard et al., 2024; Steyaert, 2007) addressing the need to upgrade the importance of affect (Champenois et al., 2025) in stabilising the already organised and for organisation-creation. In showing what shame and pride, conceptualised as open-ended affective practices, do, our study adds to a strand of literature highlighting the never predestined quality of affect; either in service of enterprise (affect's 'dark side', e.g. Johnsen et al., 2019) or for breaking 'enterprise solution-at-work' (Farias et al., 2019: 557). Whilst previous contributions recognised the importance of affect in entrepreneuring (Dashtipour and Rumens, 2018; Hjorth 2013; Katila et al., 2020, 2021), the research has yet to fully attend to how the agentic bodies constituted through the intertwinement of material and discursive (Harding et al., 2022) play a role in modifying and re-configuring shame and pride, and how this matters for de-sedimenting the enterprising subject and opening up potentialities for entrepreneuring.

Our study, by challenging a reductive understanding of shame and pride as residing in a passive body, offers insights into how, through affective practices, the new can become actualised. Shame, materialised in service of profit, depotentialises and deactivates bodies thus solidifying enterprise, perpetuating the already organised (Otto and Strauß, 2019). However, 'another' 'shame directed against being, and towards becoming' (Bewes, 2011: 33) is also possible. This 'version' (Mol, 2002) of shame 'interrupts, however briefly, the stupidities, cruelties and clichés that foster insensibility and indifference to life, to possibility and to becoming' (O'Donnell, 2017: 8). Our study shows how, shifting from paralysing to powering bodies up, shame becomes a productive force (Probyn, 2005; Pullen et al., 2017) for the emergence of new forms of organising, forms of relationality and being together (Martí and Fernández, 2015). This is not a conscious

political act. Shame, as in the 'Deflated in shame' story, activates body's capacities to challenge the taken-for-granted primacy of profit, shifting priorities toward community, preventing deforestation, conserving water and embracing sustainable farming techniques – in other words, breaking entrepreneuring free from enterprise. Our study also shows how pride, irreducible to a 'property' of an individual, can be leveraged to solidify a proud success-driven enterprising subject, keeping them 'invested in a situation that prevents their flourishing' (Otto and Strauß, 2019: 1818). Yet, when the alternative materialisation of pride, produced through the intertwinement of mind and body, comes about, it unsettles the artificially sedimented version of an entrepreneur and enterprise. Rather than guarding the dominant order, 'this' pride reconfigures existing modes of sociality (Fernández, 2016). In the 'Puffed up in pride' story, it is the less-than-conscious mobilisation of bodily potentials, rather than the act of an agentic entrepreneur, which suspends the attachment to high demand combined with quick and profitable turnover of clients' orders in favour of frugality, resourcefulness and sustainable alternatives.

Our study addresses the context of the already organised, with established ways of doing and thinking. So far, the importance of affect for guarding the established practices and for moving beyond the 'comfort zones' of 'assuring roles and templates' (Hjorth, 2022: 81) in the context of entrepreneurship, has largely escaped scholarly attention (Farias et al., 2019). Focussing on affective practices points us to the entanglement of sensate, moving matter of bodies with the social (and other material 'elements') and thus offers a more nuanced understanding of when and how new ways of organising become possible. This is particularly relevant in the context of the already organised, where appreciation of present arrangements, 'what is', is coupled with 'sensing the incipient organization-creation potential' (Hjorth and Reay, 2022: 167). 'What might be' in the context of already organised, is not an antagonistic political project creating lasting social realities (Lüthy and Steyaert, 2019). Entrepreneuring understood as organisation-creation cannot be simply attributed to the kind of things people do. Rather, the ordinary everydayness of seemingly insignificant affective practices, opens up a 'bloom space' (Stewart, 2010: 340) for organisation-creation in existing organisations. There is not, however, a predetermined 'effect' of materialisation of affective practices. Shame and pride might either be co-opted in service of enterprise or might have generative potentialities. Thus, instead of focussing on whether affective practices 'are' seemingly 'positive' or 'negative', what matters is 'where they might go' (Stewart, 2007: 3). In this regard, our study makes an important contribution to the understanding of how shame and pride matter for entrepreneuring; how organisation-creation comes into being.

Conclusions

Thinking processually and drawing on a posthumanist practice theory to study entrepreneurship, this article proposes a novel way of researching and writing about affective practices, and shows how affective practices matter for entrepreneuring, in the already organised world. Mobilising a processual approach leads us to (re)imagine a better world beyond the actual. As we engage in this (re)imagining, we need to move beyond seeking conditions of possibility for entrepreneuring in a conscious mind, to include embodied, less-than-conscious and often ungraspable forces at play. Whilst this is a challenging

task, it is urgent; we live in a 'reality' where the body's affective capacities are too often mobilised by enterprise and harnessed for economic value production. We call for future research addressing affective practices to build an understanding of both when, and in what conditions, affective practices matter for shifting artificially stabilised prevailing orders and when, and in what conditions, they cement over the crack (Hjorth and Reay, 2022), foreclosing possibilities for the new to emerge.

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Note

1 Whilst we could sense and feel affective practices unfolding across all nine cases, it was only upon returning that we glimpsed how affective practices mattered for entrepreneuring in opening up potentiality in five of the nine cases. The material that provoked us and interrupted our current understanding (Gherardi, 2019), seemingly choosing us as we chose it (MacLure, 2013), formed our two praxiographic stories, focussed on shame and pride.

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