Performing and unperforming entrepreneurial success: Confessions of a female role model

Sarah Marks

Published online: 24 Feb 2021.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 3994

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Citing articles: 9 View citing articles

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Performing and unperforming entrepreneurial success: Confessions of a female role model

Sarah Marks

School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London, UK

ABSTRACT

Female role models are increasingly used in enterprise support to encourage women to open businesses. Although varied in detail, their public narratives generally follow a limited number of plots where hard work overcomes all obstacles and leads to emotionally fulfilling, rewarding careers while societally enabled resource accumulation and financial returns are rarely mentioned. This autoethnographic inquiry critically examines one such publicly disseminated role model narrative, the author's own, and contrasts it with an alternative, unspoken story. Using a narrative approach, performative lens, and insights from the role model literature, it offers a theoretically informed analysis of these contrasting accounts exploring how the relationship between individual agency and social context is occluded in role model narratives. It theorizes a performative paradox where, in order to meet the politically charged imperative to "inspire and empower" disadvantaged aspirants, role models simultaneously perform shared social identity and deny its impact. Implications for enterprise support are discussed.

Introduction: Am I telling the right story?

How I became a *#girlboss: Part I*

I am a female entrepreneurial role model. As the founder of a successful, award-winning company I have been profiled in newspapers and invited to speak at entrepreneurship events, judge student entrepreneurship competitions and mentor nascent entrepreneurs. In interviews and speaking engagements I did not lie. But nor was I ever required, or felt compelled, to speak the whole truth. Instead, I delivered a semiscripted story providing what I understood the audience and the event facilitators wanted to hear.

Let me take you back 18 months or so to a women's entrepreneurship evening in London, organized by an enterprise support program funded by the charitable arm of a U.S.-based global investment bank. I have been invited to deliver an "inspiring and empowering" talk to aspiring entrepreneurs. I describe my initial idea and early setbacks and pass around an old, handmade prototype,

CONTACT Sarah Marks s.l.marks@qmul.ac.uk School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London, Bancroft Building, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS, UK

encouraging the audience to note the home-printed labels and hand-assembled contents. Then I bring out the glossy, factory-manufactured incarnation and drop names that will resonate with this UK audience and convey our success: "This is a best-seller in John Lewis and Waterstones," I proudly announce.

Later, attendees contact me on e-mail and social media: "It was lovely to meet you at the '#GirlBoss' evening. . . . I was so inspired by your business and vision and loved your openness during the discussion," one e-mail from a young woman started. Yet however "open" I appear, it was a carefully edited version of my entrepreneurial journey. There is a lot I don't tell. I don't tell them how much (or little) I pay myself. No one asks me, and the other three women on the panel are silent on this matter too. Listen to my story and you would conclude my "success" is all down to my own hard work. Nor would you doubt my "success." I'm on an expert panel. I've won awards. I look happy. I'm in John Lewis, for crissake!

I wonder if my role model story, and others like it, deceive by omission through presenting an overly optimistic, decontextualized view of entrepreneurship and its rewards. That my public narrative represents an exemplary postfeminist entrepreneurial journey (Byrne et al., 2019) or e-tale (Smith & Anderson, 2004) offers little reassurance: I am concerned that in telling this story "rightly," I did not tell the "right story" (Katz, 2004).

I hunt out the notes, samples, and photographs I prepared for the "GirlBoss" evening 18 months ago. Ah, there she is! The smiling mother, setting up her market stall with her charming children at the beginning of her journey, and here she is 10 years later, still smiling and elegantly dressed in the all-white headquarters of The Business, surrounded by her best-selling products. And here she is at the "GirlBoss" event itself, smiling (always) and posing for a selfie with some of the attendees. Looking through, I see glaring omissions and subtle misdirects. For a start, the "headquarters" was actually a hired studio artfully arranged for a one-day video shoot for U.S. marketing after soaring rents and flattening revenues had forced us to swap our London premises for a cheaper rural warehouse and a home office. What else, I wonder, was this successful entrepreneurial role model not saying? If I wasn't "inspiring and empowering" aspirant entrepreneurs, what would I have said?

I find the questions sent by the organizer ahead of the evening and my carefully prepared answers and decide to rewrite them unfettered by the imperative to inspire or empower anyone. It occurs to me the two versions could provide data for an analytic autoethnographic inquiry (Anderson, 2006) that contrasts my spoken or public narrative with an unspoken version, explores any differences, and seeks reflexive insight pertinent to the broader phenomena—the increasingly wide-spread promotion of female role models to encourage additional women entrepreneurs (Ahl & Marlow, 2019; Byrne et al., 2019; Rose, 2019).

Entrepreneurial narratives offer a rich source for researchers working within a social constructionist paradigm, but their analysis presents problems. Steyaert warns that many narrative scholars appear "more interested in the person behind the story than in the act of storytelling itself," (2007, p. 734). All too often, the individual as "unit of analysis" misleadingly becomes the "unit of explanation" (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson, 2007, p. 350), leaving the interplay with societal structures and cultural narratives, including the researcher's own, ignored. In championing narratives of women, or everyday entrepreneurs, even studies that ostensibly critique masculinized, neoliberal enterprise mythology may inadvertently reinforce Schumpeter's notion of the entrepreneur as creative disruptor and lone hero (Ogbor, 2000) or romanticize entrepreneurship's emancipatory potential (Alkhaled & Berglund, 2018). Consequently, I determine my unspoken narrative should answer Steyaert's plea to "downplay the focus on the individual entrepreneur" (2007, p. 733) and should deliberately focus on societal context rather than my own agency, thus addressing calls for more attention to contexts in entrepreneurship research (Steyaert & Katz, 2004; Welter, 2011; Wigren-Kristofersen et al., 2019).

Entrepreneurial agency and structural embeddedness

Entrepreneurship has been extensively theorized as embedded in, and shaped by, multiple structural and institutional contexts, including family (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003), gender (Brush et al., 2009; Marlow & McAdam, 2013), ethnicity (Jones & Ram, 2013), immigration (Kloosterman et al., 1999), class and education (Jayawarna et al., 2014), geographical location (Anderson & Jack, 2002), or intersecting social positions (Martinez Dy et al., 2017).

Often referencing Granovetter (1985) or Giddens (1984), these studies suggest that while current and historical social positions do not deterministically predict behavior, they powerfully enable and restrain individual agency by shaping the opportunities entrepreneurs detect (Brush et al., 2009) or create (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) and the resources they own or endeavor to control in terms of social, human, and economic capital (Jayawarna & Rouse, 2010; Jayawarna et al., 2014; Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990).

Jayawarna and Rouse (2010) succinctly theorize the complex relationship between entrepreneurial agency, resources, and social structures as the "socially situated capacity to apply resources to opportunity," (p. 8), which I use as a guiding conceptual framework in this inquiry. In examining my spoken and unspoken narratives, I pay particular attention to my acquisition and application of financial, social, human, and labor resources and how they were or were not embedded at the individual, household, and societal level. I also adopt Steyaert's (2007) notion of storytelling as "performance with performativity" (p. 745) as an appropriate lens. This acknowledges the

multifaceted nature of performativity (Gond et al., 2016) and suggests that role model narratives can be seen as embodied performances with generative and perlocutionary (Austin, 1962) potential.

Three questions guide the inquiry: What is not said or "hidden" in the public narrative? How is "inspiring and empowering" female entrepreneurial success performed? What might explain why differences occur between public and unspoken narratives?

In exploring these questions, the article makes a number of specific contributions to debates on methodologies and critical entrepreneurship studies (Essers et al., 2018; Fayolle et al., 2016; Tedmanson et al., 2012) that question whether entrepreneurship is a meritocratic field of economic opportunity (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). First, it challenges the ontological foundations of "true-to-life" accounts (Gartner, 2007) that underpin the usage of inspirational role models in enterprise education and support. Second, it identifies a series of discursive practices in the telling of entrepreneurial success stories that merit further investigation and problematization. Third, abstracting from the findings of my autoethnographic inquiry and drawing together insights from the psychological and narrative literatures, I abductively theorize a role model performative paradox where the politically given imperative to "inspire and empower" disadvantaged aspirants requires role models to simultaneously signal shared social identity and deny its impact on entrepreneurial outcomes. Together these contributions enable a deeply nuanced understanding of women's entrepreneurial success narratives and their discursive entanglement in public and academic discourses.

In exploring these questions, I show that creative qualitative methods can generate meaningful data and theoretical insights that meet the "modern-day entrepreneurship research challenges" (Hlady-Rispal et al., 2019) posed by the editors of this special issue. I demonstrate that autoethnography, as a method of sociological inquiry, can illuminate facets of entrepreneurial subjectivity and experience hidden by mainstream research practices. Moreover, by exploiting unrivaled access to the inner mind and invoking abductive logic, autoethnography can move beyond the illustration of preexisting theories and contribute to interdisciplinary theory-building.

The article is structured in a slightly unconventional way. As this special issue addresses methodologies, the article proceeds with a discussion of autoethnographic approaches and the research design for this study. Where one might normally expect findings, I present abridged versions of my spoken and unspoken narratives layered with analysis, followed by a discussion, implications for practice, and conclusion. I begin with a brief description of how I find myself at a juxtaposition of entrepreneurship and research.

Methodologies

Enactive research

For the last 30 months or so, I have been researching women's entrepreneurship for an ESRC-funded PhD, while jointly running the company I cofounded 13 years ago that provides the majority of my annual income. My working day is divided between academia and the business. The two lives are not incompatible. A few years ago, we radically restructured the company, switching production from London to China and outsourcing much of the work previously done in-house. Consequently, I no longer manage a staff of five to 10 from our own manufacturing premises but deal remotely with factories in China or distributors in the United States. The time differences allow ample time for research, and my past and current business experiences provide extensive empirical matter to contextualize and deepen my academic understanding of entrepreneurship.

Using the self as a source of knowledge is not without precedent in the entrepreneurship field, helped by the broader turn to reflexivity, which demands that scholars make themselves visible in the research process as situated cocreators of knowledge (Fletcher, 2011). Notably, Saras Sarasvathy used her own business experience as the academic starting point that led to her theories of entrepreneurial effectuation (Read & Dolmans, 2014; Sarasvathy, 2001). Bengt Johannisson (2011) also suggests that to fully understand entrepreneurship, researchers must "enact" it by undertaking entrepreneurial activities to make "intelligible the very emergence, the symbolic and material construction" of a venture" (p. 145). Rather than aim for detached neutrality, I decide to embrace my situated position as researcher and subject (Fletcher, 2011) and leverage, rather than neutralize, the deeply contextualized nature of the knowledge produced. I aim to use autoethnography as a narrative X-ray machine to make visible to what is often hidden from observers—what I'm thinking about what I'm saying. However, whether one can abstract or should theorize from personal experiences, is a contentious issue—even within autoethnography—as the following discussion of two opposing approaches notes.

Evocative or analytic autoethnography

Evocative or emotional autoethnography is a deeply personal, introspective, experimental style of inquiry that is associated with autoethnography as a genre, particularly in North America (Anderson, 2006). Evocative autoethnographers reflect on both deeply personal issues like child abuse (Rambo Ronai, 1995) or more abstract issues such as autoethnography itself (Holman Jones, 2005). They often use poetry, fiction, dramatic scripts, and performance pieces—sometimes collectively referred to as Creative Analytical Practices or

CAP (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005)—that deliberately blur boundaries between literature and social science (Denzin, 2006; Ellis & Bochner, 2006). For these researchers, autoethnography is an academic identity rather than a methodological choice.

In contrast, analytic autoethnography, as conceptualized by Anderson (2006), attempts to marry writing on personal experiences with explicit analysis to build "theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena" (p. 375). Anderson suggests that this focus on theory-building is necessary to counter the dominance of evocative autoethnography that may "have the unintended consequence of eclipsing other visions of what autoethnography can be and of obscuring the ways in which it may fit productively in other traditions of social inquiry" (p. 374). Anderson advises that five principles should underpin analytic autoethnography. The writer must: be a complete member researcher, practice analytic reflexivity, provide narrative visibility of self, include dialogue with others, and—most importantly—commit to theoretical analysis.

Leading members of the evocative school challenge this commitment to theory, rejecting all attempts to yoke autoethnography to traditional sociological inquiry and academic conventions such as generalizability (Denzin, 2006; Ellis & Bochner, 2006). Analysis, if it really must be a research objective, can be achieved through the story itself rather than treat the story as data to be analyzed (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). Denzin (2006) argues that the CAP researcher is a world apart from Anderson's analytic ethnographer. I would dispute this binary thinking, arguing that the creative voice can be analytic and the academic voice can be creative. My "unspoken narrative" is creative writing, inquiry, and analysis combined. However, as the method should serve the research question(s), I plan to interrogate my own creative writing with an additional stage of analysis to achieve what Learmonth and Humphreys (2011) call "double autoethnography" that seeks "to be both evocative, and to have analytic engagement" (p. 105) with relevant academic conversations. Notable recent examples of this approach in organization studies include R. Pelly's (2016, 2017) account of his experiences in the U.S. military and Liu's (2018) compelling tale of the postfeminist rise and fall of an academic poster girl.

Like Liu and Pelly, I aim to use theory "to integrate the real into the abstract" (Pelly, 2016, p. 494) and provide a conceptual bridge between personal experience and the broader phenomena. I argue that this is commensurate with an abductive approach to theory building, understood as a "conceptual leap" (Klag & Langley, 2013) or a "conjectural mode of inquiry through which we engender and entertain hunches, explanatory propositions, ideas and theoretical elements" (Locke et al., 2010, p. 908). The relationship between abduction, data, and theory is less clear than in inductive or deductive reasoning (Blaikie, 2000). In this study, abduction is not

used to seek proof of causality or predictive patterns but to uncover new possibilities of explanation (Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014). Used thus, I see analytic autoethnography as a method for accomplishing theoretically focused enactive entrepreneurship research (Fletcher, 2011; Johannisson, 2011).

Research design

With no universal rules for how autoethnographic inquiry should be structured (Pelly, 2017) but with Anderson's (2006) principles in mind, my research design is best understood as structured, overlapping stages of data collection, data production, and reflexive analysis. Importantly, writing is both data production and analysis combined.

Data collection
I gathered historic materials connected to the #GirlBoss event, including e-mails, photos, and my answers written at the time.

Data production
After reading my original answers, I composed alternatives, applying an understanding of entrepreneurship as the socially embedded application of resources to opportunities (Jayawarna & Rouse, 2010) as a sensitizing device to write in the contextual background of resource acquisition. I also probed my memory to write a reflexive vignette, *How I became a #GirlBoss*, which I draw on in the introduction and findings.

Reflexive analysis
As argued previously, the unspoken narrative constitutes an analysis of the public narrative, erasing traditional conventions that demand separation between empirical data, findings, and analysis. It was *through* my writing that I uncovered what was *not said* at #GirlBoss. However, to aid further analytic engagement with the field, I subsequently layered the two narratives together, question by question, and deliberately sought out and explored the divergences in reference to current critical discussions on postfeminist discourses (Lewis, 2014a; Lewis et al., 2017) and the promotion of women's entrepreneurship (Ahl & Marlow, 2019) (see Table 1).

Before returning to the #GirlBoss narrative, I briefly examine the growing popularity of female entrepreneurial role models, the psychological arguments underpinning their use, and narrative perspectives for deconstructing their stories. This provides the theoretical context for the performative paradox outlined in the discussion section by establishing the narrative and psychological roots of why and how "inspirational and empowering" tales work.

Table 1. Key divergences between the two narratives.

Organizer question	Public narrative	Unspoken narrative
Can you tell me a little bit about your story?	• Opportunity spotted • Perpetual, linear growth from kitchen table to global brand • Success ongoing and brings happiness and personal fulfillment	• Growth stalled • Not enough resources to overcome obstacles • Disappointment with financial returns • Doubts about decision to start business
Why did you become a founder?	• Fulfilling a dream • Solve childcare issues • Realize natural identity as a maker	• Make a lot of money • Complex but temporary decision to prioritize childcare
What were your biggest challenges when starting up? And how did you overcome them?	• Acquiring business knowhow • Google	• Capital and labor • Household finance and property-backed loans • Family support • Social networks
What was your greatest failure? How did you go about and learn from it?	• Optimism, self-belief, and determination • Losing a friendship • You have to pay a price for success.	• Inadequate salary • No pension • Not creating well-paid jobs for other people • Long-term financial security unlikely
What were some of the easiest mistakes that you could have avoided making when starting up?	• Not market-testing new products before production	• Choosing a sector with low barriers to entry and declining market
You can support yourself now, but when you started, how did you sustain yourself during the initial period?	• Part-time work	• Partner's salary
How do you go about deciding whether there is a marketplace for your product/service?	• Greenwich Market allowed us to inexpensively road test our products.	• Social position gave us privileged access to wealthiest consumers in our chosen market
How did you keep yourself motivated throughout all of the ups and downs of entrepreneurship?	• Celebrating small successes • Self-affirmation	• Misplaced optimism • Realization that goals and rewards have changed with household context

Political context and theoretical background

The popularity of the #GirlBoss evening and similar role model events within enterprise support is linked to two related factors—a perceived lack of women entrepreneurs and a dearth of visible female entrepreneurial role models (Kelley et al., 2017; Rose, 2019). In response to the politically problematized entrepreneurial gender gap, governments and institutions in the global north and south actively promote women entrepreneur "success" stories through media and enterprise support programs to persuade women from all backgrounds to open businesses (Byrne et al., 2019; Lewis, 2014a).

The UK, where this study is set, is no exception (Ahl and Marlow 2019). Since the turn of the century, numerous overlapping initiatives to recruit and promote female entrepreneurial role models have been launched by enterprise support agencies, high-street lenders, and social media giants such as Facebook.[1] Meanwhile, the mainstream media champions women entrepreneurs through profiles, interviews, and sponsorship of events and campaigns. The promotion of relatable entrepreneurial role models—underpinned by the intuitively normative logic that "you can't be it, if you can't see it"—is supported, to some extent, by academic research. While a few authors point out that the correlation between role models and increased entrepreneurial activity might not be causal, indicating the existence of other factors such as networks (Langowitz & Minniti, 2007), the majority concur that exposure to role model narratives, even for a short time in an experimental setting (Radu & Loue, 2008), can significantly affect entrepreneurial intentions.

Psychological studies: Entrepreneurship is feasible and desirable

Generally, entrepreneurship researchers assume that establishing a new business is "planned behavior" (Krueger et al., 2000), that intentions are the best predictor of planned behavior (Krueger et al., 2000; Liñán & Fayolle, 2015), and that strong entrepreneurial intentions rest on individual attitudes to entrepreneurship (Krueger, 2007). Therefore, role models primarily strengthen entrepreneurial intentions by positively influencing the underlying beliefs of individuals (Krueger et al., 2000). An effective role model can only trigger entrepreneurship "if they influence perceptions of desirability or, more likely perceptions of feasibility," of entrepreneurial actions (Krueger, 2000, p. 8). Role models do this by acting as inspirations—representations of future possible selves and behavioral guides (Morgenroth et al., 2015). Moreover, it appears vital that disadvantaged aspirants personally identify with the role model to trigger perceptional change. Dasgupta argues that through personal

---

[1]For example, *NatWest: Back Her Business, Enterprise Nation: Festival of Female Entrepreneurs, Facebook: She Means Business* (Facebook, n.d.) (see references NatWest Bank, 2020; Enterprise Nation, 2020 for more information).

identification, the disadvantaged aspirant is "innoculated" against negative stereotypes while confidence in their own abilities, or perceptions of feasibility is strengthened (Dasgupta, 2011a, 2011b; Morgenroth et al., 2015).

Many empirical studies find that women's lower entrepreneurial intentions correlate to reduced perceptions of individual feasibility or entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) compared to men (Langowitz & Minniti, 2007; Manolova et al., 2012). Therefore increasing women's entrepreneurial confidence is often presented as the principal rationale for promoting female role models (Ahl & Marlow, 2019; Burt, 2015; Rose, 2019) rather than instructional or vicarious learning.

Narrative approaches: How entrepreneurial success stories work

In the following brief discussion, I argue that while the psychological literature shows that influencing perceptions of desirability and feasibility (Krueger, 2000) are the key cognitive mechanism affecting entrepreneurial intentions, narrative analysis illustrates how these mechanisms are discursively enacted in role model stories.

In what they coin "e-tales" Smith and Anderson argue that entrepreneurs' personal accounts form moral tales that "exhort the listener to emulate the heroic feats embedded in the story" (Smith & Anderson, 2004, p. 143). Drakopoulou Dodd and Anderson call attention to the neoliberal doctrines of individual achievement, noting how such stories personify "ideologies of hard work, independence, thrift and a constellation of imputed Victorian values" (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson, 2007, p. 350). Narrative analysis highlights the importance of plot, sequence, and character to all stories (Czarniawska, 2004) and entrepreneur tales in particular (Smith, 2018). It is this narrative conveying of causality that turns a sequence of events into a story (Czarniawska, 2004), bestows morality on entrepreneurial stories, and gives them inspirational or generative (Smith, 2018) potential: "we see cause; hardwork, we see process, overcoming obstacles and we see the outcome of success" (Smith & Anderson, 2004, p. 134). In Weick's (1995) words, it is the "close coupling" of agency and consequence.

Ganz's notion of public narrative (Ganz, 2008, 2009, 2011),[2] based on three entwined stories of "self, us and now," is particularly useful for understanding how role model narratives can "inspire action" (Ganz, 2008, p. 1) in others. Ganz teaches "public narrative" as a motivational leadership communication strategy, effectively showing people how to use autoethnography as a narrative blueprint to motivate others. To Ganz, a "story of self" *is* all about agency, plot, and choice and is communicated primarily through

---

[2]Marshall Ganz's (2008, 2009, 2011) articulation of Public Narrative was brought to me by two anonymous reviewers who commented on an earlier draft of this article and has proved a very useful concept for deconstructing role model narratives.

describing the "moments when we faced a challenge, made a choice, experienced an outcome, and learned a moral," (Ganz, 2008, p. 10). Plot is established by narratively linking consequence to choice. Meanwhile, a "story of us" creates a shared social identity with an audience—whoever they are—by voicing shared values and becoming "an interpreter of shared experience" (2011, p. 286). Finally, a "story of now" sketches a threat to those values but also offers "a credible vision of how to get from here to there" (Ganz, 2008, p. 13). In the entrepreneurship context, the three strands could be illustrated by choosing to start a venture (self), the shared desire or value to build a better life (us), and the need to exploit an opportunity before someone else does (now). Ganz's public narrative is primarily directed at using autoethnography to craft a compelling motivational narrative. However, as I suggest in the discussion section of this article, his entwined stories of self, us, and now can also serve as tools for textual deconstruction, revealing how empowerment and inspiration are enacted through the role model's embodied narrative.

Gendering entrepreneurial success stories

Perhaps the most significant insights for analyzing my own entrepreneurial story are found in the feminist poststructuralist literature that examines the constitution of women's entrepreneurship through gendered discourse (Ahl, 2006; Hamilton, 2014). For a start, the habitual use of a feminized marker to distinguish the conversation on women entrepreneurs from entrepreneurs in general underscores that masculinity is the default position (Lewis, 2006). New entrepreneurial subjectivities such as mumpreneurs, female founder, and girlboss are not reflected in any corresponding male-gendered identities (Duberley & Carrigan, 2013; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018).

Researchers adopting a feminist poststructuralist perspective often invoke Gill's notion of a critical postfeminist lens (Gill, 2007) or a hegemonic, gendered neoliberal sensibility (Gill, 2017) to uncover how taken-for-granted discourses of "individualization, 'natural' sexual difference and retreat to the home as a matter of choice" (Lewis, 2014a, p. 1851) dominate public narratives of women's entrepreneurship (Ahl & Marlow, 2019). Recurrent themes identified suggest that women's enterprise is primarily depicted as being in home-based, hobby businesses (K. V. Lewis, 2014) or frivolous and fun (Byrne et al., 2019) and embraces rather than challenges traditional femininities.

Women entrepreneur role model stories are often feminized variations of the entrepreneurial hero myth (Byrne et al., 2019; K. V. Lewis, 2014) with the supposed need to "choose" between patriarchal domesticity or second-wave feminist labor equality the main battleground. The female entrepreneur is hailed a postfeminist heroine through self-transformation, actively choosing her economic and/or maternal role and taking full responsibility for her own well-being

(Rottenberg, 2014). Success in many publicly disseminated stories is primarily equated with achieving a "felicitous work-life balance" (Rottenberg, 2014) between these competing demands rather than commercial success. A recent analysis in this journal found that the "Entrepreneurial Superwomen" profiled rarely discussed income as a reward or motivation and often focused on the flexible combination of economic and family roles (Byrne et al., 2019).

Feminist critiques show that women's entrepreneurial role model stories, far from breaking down stereotypes, reinscribe traditional gendered division of labor (Achtenhagen & Welter 2011; Luckman, 2015). These narratives perpetuate the gendering of entrepreneurship by informing aspirants and other stakeholders what success is meant to look like and who may legitimately claim entrepreneurship (Eikhof et al., 2013). From this poststructural perspective, role model narratives are not just individualized explanations of venture emergence but have performative power or "truth effects" (Bruni et al., 2004b), constituting practices, knowledge, and subjectivities and collectively generating what Krueger (2000) might call the "cognitive infrastructure for entrepreneurship." By the same logic, the silences or what is not said in women's entrepreneurial tales may also have truth effects (Ahl, 2006), underpinning the search for occlusions in my own public story.

Findings

How I became a #girlboss: Part II

During research interviews with enterprise support organizations, I was, on several occasions, invited to share my experiences as a "successful" business founder at their events. Despite hesitations about researcher independence, I accept. I am both flattered and instrumentally motivated by the opportunity to access further research participants. I know the audience at this particular event will be made up of microbusiness owners and nascent entrepreneurs who have joined a free business-growth course. Maria, the organizer, e-mails a link to the event on Eventbrite and 10 questions to prepare. The Eventbrite advert reads:

Welcoming all entrepreneurs, founders, women and men in business, or those who are simply curious! Join our #GirlBoss panel … for an insightful discussion & Q&A session from inspirational, empowering women in business. A great opportunity to learn from this inspirational panel! Share their business journeys, learn how they have overcome obstacles on their route to success and discover what it really takes to run a start-up.

I hate the idea of being a "#GirlBoss" and raise it with Maria. She agrees it is extremely patronizing but confides that her male boss, a social media expert, has told her it generates far more traction than alternatives such as her preferred #femalefounder or #women entrepreneurs. I can see from her questions that a particular story is expected. However, despite misgivings, I do not withdraw. Instead, I reply, "Got everything. Great questions—looking forward to Tuesday," and prepare some "inspirational and

empowering" answers. I find the best way (for me) to appear memorably open and spontaneous is to be ruthlessly prepared and rehearsed.

An e-tale in two narratives: What is not said in the public narrative?

This section presents abbreviated versions of those answers and the alternative unspoken narrative, indented throughout, together with an analysis of the main divergences. Names have been changed.

> **Maria: Can you tell me a little bit about your story?**

> I founded The Business ... with my best-friend Kirsty at my kitchen table in H ... when we realized there was a gap in the market for imaginatively designed craft activities for kids.... Today, we export to Europe, Scandinavia, Australia, New Zealand, and we have just started exporting to the U.S.

Unspoken narrative. Although we have expanded our range and distribution network, we haven't substantially grown turnover for the last few years. The toy and children's gift market is shrinking ... and we have not had enough resources, skills, or motives to adapt substantially.... We have been unwilling to take on more debt and unable to find equity investors.... My move into academia was strongly predicated on no longer being satisfied with the economic or psychological returns I was receiving from being an entrepreneur.

Points of divergence. My public narrative opens with the archetypal entrepreneurial story where humble beginnings (kitchen table) are transformed via my own initiative into a thriving, growing business (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson, 2007; Smith & Anderson, 2004). Success is indicated by a permanent growth trajectory, although importantly, no actual figures are provided. By contrast, in the unspoken narrative doubts about the decision to be an entrepreneur, the difficulty of sustaining growth, disappointment with the financial returns, and our inability to solve strategic problems dominate.

> **Maria: Why did you become a founder?**

> I came up with the idea for The Business when I was trying to juggle part-time journalism, mostly from home while looking after my children, and Kirsty was doing the same. I was a business journalist during the initial dot-com boom, and I used to dream of starting a business. But I didn't know anything about tech, and I've always been a maker, sewing and knitting things, so ... it was inevitable that the business I founded was about making things.

Unspoken narrative. We also wanted to make a lot of money—which didn't seem impossible at the time;[3] ... we had different life goals when it came to

---

[3]In 2010, nostalgic homewares brand Cath Kidston sold a stake in her eponymous brand to U.S. buyout firm TA Associates in a deal thought to value the company at £100 million (Hopkins, 2010).

organizing work and childcare. Kirsty, a farmer's daughter, came from a very traditional background; becoming a founder meant she could prioritize her role as mother and a wife. She was a Mrs. and I was a Ms. . . . I returned to work full-time after my first child was born. That I was free-lancing at home while looking after two children while my husband worked full-time was, I told myself, a temporary choice triggered by relatively low salaries in journalism and the high cost of childcare. These different understandings of gendered work and household responsibilities created huge tension in our working relationship. I had always been career-focused and ambitious. . . . My parents had reinvented their identities through work. My mother left school at 16 to be a secretary, and my father was apprenticed at 14 to the family tailoring business. After I was born, they accessed adult education to retrain as a teacher and social worker respectively. Growing up, I studied diligently at an inner-city comprehensive to scrape into a Russell Group university and scrapped my way to become senior City reporter at a daily newspaper.

Points of divergence. In the public narrative, money is not mentioned as a reason for founding a business, underscoring widespread findings that women, particularly in postmaterial societies, are often motivated by social or environmental rather than pecuniary concerns (Hechavarria et al., 2017; Manolova et al., 2007). Entrepreneurial motivation stems mostly from the desire to balance work-life issues and realize a deep-rooted dream and natural feminine "maker" identity. I articulate home-orientated values as a positive agentic choice and demonstrate a willing "retreat to the home" (Gill, 2007; Lewis, 2014a).

There is a strong sense that I am one of those "dynamic individuals who can choose the nature of their entrepreneurial activities and overcome any obstacles that they may encounter" (Byrne et al., 2019, p. 175). Yet the choice of sector and push factors such as childcare costs (Dawson & Henley, 2012) suggest constrained, rather than free, choice (Marlow & McAdam, 2013), and the business opportunity I created was very much "nested" in my experience of motherhood (Brush et al., 2009). Nonetheless, deploying "free choice" to describe the transition to entrepreneurship inscribes postfeminist agency into my public narrative. I also note that I "dreamt" up my original idea. Dreaming, I suggest, is a feminized rendering of ambition and pecuniary motivation that avoids articulating values more commonly ascribed as male (Eagly, 1987) and the risk of pejorative assessments (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The unspoken narrative also reveals a more complex relationship with gender, work, identity, and explicit money objectives, shaped by classed historical experiences of social position (Jayawarna et al., 2014). Here we see strong career ambition and goals nurtured by my socially mobile parents' aspirations to join the professional classes.

Maria: What were your biggest challenges when starting up? And how did you overcome them?

We're not from manufacturing backgrounds, so we had to find out everything ourselves.... If we didn't know how to do things, we Googled it ... how to write a supply contracts, how to create wholesale pricing structures.... We found our Chinese manufacturers via Alibaba ... we did all the negotiations over e-mail.... We also won a small council grant of £1,500 for a fabric cutter.... Also, juggling childcare and business was a challenge—especially when we moved into our own premises.... Optimism is important too.... We just decided we had to go for it.

Unspoken narrative. We called in lots of favors.... My cofounder's husband was a well-known photographer. He provided all the images and photos shoots free of charge. His assistant built our first website.... My previous work experience was vital. As a business journalist, I was used to researching things I knew nothing about, to recognizing gaps in my own knowledge base, identifying where the vital information could be found, and confident, if necessary, in asking "experts" for information. ... We also knew consumer journalists and stylists who helped us get essential media exposure—a double-page spread for our first book, a spot in the Christmas shopping guide.... We looked the part too: White, young, well-spoken mothers in a rapidly gentrifying part of London. My children's primary school playground was where we recruited staff and children for marketing. I even scored an introduction to a publisher from the children's laureate[4] while waiting at the school gates. Most importantly, our respective spouses were the primary bread-winners, financing the household while we grew the business and looked after the family, helped by supportive parents who provided free childcare and labor at trade shows.

Points of divergence. I present a lack of knowledge and business knowhow as the biggest obstacle in the public narrative but one that can be easily overcome by individual strategies (Eikhof et al., 2013). Minimal start-up capital is required, and the transformation is presented as a natural, feminine journey. No masculinized business skills, networks, financial investment, or business partner are needed, just my best friend. Other steps are presented as average, everyday feminine activities, located in the familiar, unthreatening domestic sphere. I started at a kitchen table; home is no barrier. We tested our ideas on a market stall; no complex business plan required. This echoes observations that women's entrepreneurial skills are often presented as "an extension of what has been naturally learned through gender socialization" (Bruni et al., 2004b, p. 260) and that entrepreneurship as a career identity is a "route to achieving an identity congruity between gender and work" (Eikhof et al., 2013, p. 558).

---

[4]A high-profile three-year post in the United Kingdom awarded to a leading children's author.

Optimism or confidence is highlighted as a central internal resource, particularly when I take on the financial risk of a commercial lease. I do not mention the security provided by alternative household income. Indeed, husband, household, and parents are ignored, despite their collective support with finance and childcare. I mention a grant but not the multiple business loans secured against mine and my cofounder's respective homes. Yet in the unspoken narrative, the vital role played by socially embedded financial, social, and human capital are foregrounded. Prior and contemporary work experience in the creative and knowledge industries provided the network, skills, and expertise that enabled us to access information and brand The Business to customers and other stakeholders. Geographic and social location are also significant. Kirsty and I mirror our customers and those in the marketing infrastructure. These factors, unvoiced in the public narrative, illustrate the relationship between class, resources, and entrepreneurial pathways (Jayawarna et al., 2014).

> **Maria: How do you go about deciding whether there is a marketplace for your product/service?**

> Greenwich Craft market was invaluable … we used to make the kits by hand, take them down to Greenwich Craft Market at the weekend in my campervan. Now, our products are sold up and down the country.

Unspoken narrative. Picturesque, traditional Greenwich Craft Market is part of our founding myth. Mentioned in all our marketing material and media coverage, we actually did the market just a handful of times. It was cold, tiring, and only marginally profitable. Securing a pitch involved considerable effort buttering up the manager and projecting the right wholesome but aspirational image. Within weeks we switched to a potentially more lucrative wholesale model. More importantly, as urban, White, middle-class mothers, we embodied our target consumer market; we did not need to seek it out. Our children, their friends, and their parents reflected our customers and could be mined for feedback on product development or to create aspirational images and marketing.

Points of divergence. The public narrative suggests that the craft market as physical space and commercial sector is a democratic business arena with no barriers to entry. The unspoken narrative reveals the social and human capital needed for effective access and exploitation. From our professional, White, and middle-class backgrounds, we could present old-fashioned activities like knitting and sewing (ironically, the very activity my father had abandoned in his quest to escape his working-class Jewish background) in a modern aspirational way. Had we relied on those manual activities in a fundamental economic sense, we could not have repurposed them as aspirational leisure choices.

> **Maria: What was your greatest failure and how did you learn from it?**

> Although my cofounder and I remain on civil working terms, we are no longer friends, let alone best friends. It's tough working day in and day out with someone.

Unspoken narrative. I am disappointed that we have not made more money. I have not kept up with my husband's earning power or those of female peers in paid employment. I'm also disappointed we were not able to create sustainable well-paid jobs for our employees in the UK. Our brand success and visibility has not translated into the financial rewards that I hoped for.

Points of divergence. In the public narrative, failure is framed in terms of the social and psychological consequences. My confessional loss of friendship speaks of traditional female communal concerns (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002) rather than business performance. Articulating the emotional cost is also a highly gendered way of establishing my credentials as a successful female business owner drawing on the metanarrative that success comes at a price (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011). It is because I am a successful entrepreneur that I lost the friendship. It is because I am a woman that I feel the loss. The unspoken narrative's focus on financial rewards is inconsistent with the "paradox of the contented female business owner" (Eddleston & Powell, 2008) and much research that suggests women judge success on nonpecuniary ground (McGowan et al., 2012) and are satisfied with less profitable businesses than male business owners (Weber & Geneste, 2014). As I read back my own words, I reflect that to be publicly unsatisfied with the financial consequences of one's business is doubly taboo as a female role model. First, it undermines success, and second, it makes the speaker sound greedy, bitter, unfeminine, and *unlikable*. This self-criticism tallies with evidence that finds men and women consistently negatively judge women who negotiate for more money in job settings (see Babcock & Laschever, 2008 for a full discussion). The pursuit of likability can operate as a "gendered technology of self" (Gill, 2017) in women's entrepreneurial stories, silencing identity markers such as high monetary goals that might trigger unfavorable impressions. The unanswered second part of Maria's question references the popular idea that the right positive attitude and commitment to entrepreneurship can transform any setback into a further opportunity for self-improvement.

> **Maria: You can support yourself now, but when you started, how did you sustain yourself during the initial period?**

> I worked part-time at my newspaper and freelanced as a journalist until about 2010.

Unspoken narrative. My husband supported me—and he still does. As his earning capacity has risen, my contribution to the household as a percentage has diminished from half to less than a fifth.

Points of divergence. The question presupposes that entrepreneurial effort will be rewarded financially and that it will inevitably lead to a sustainable income stream. My public narrative does not challenge this, nor do those of the other panelists—or indeed any role model stories I have heard.[5] The unspoken narrative puts my income into a comparative context, showing that my position has deteriorated relatively and that entrepreneurship has not been a pathway to sustainable independence or financial equality (Ahl & Marlow, 2019).

> **Maria: How did you keep yourself motivated throughout all of the ups and downs of entrepreneurship?**

> It can be difficult to see how far you've come. I think you do need to take time to celebrate achievements such as getting into a major new retailer.

Unspoken narrative. Misplaced optimism? The intention was to sell the business, retire, or do something else. . . . Sometimes it feels like you don't have any choice but to keep going. And life and goals may change faster than the business. . . . A playground presence is not part of my entrepreneurial rewards these days—you cannot collect a 15-year-old from school. My lack of financial independence keeps me awake at night.

Points of divergence. Maria's question reflects the way positive thinking is now a fundamental part of the women's entrepreneurship discourse, equating self-belief with success and entrepreneurial confidence with agentic power (Ahl & Marlow, 2019). My public narrative picks up on this preoccupation with self-affirmation, calling to mind Gill and Orgad's recent work on "confidence culture" that inculcates the "self-responsible woman who turns inwards and through self-work and governing improves and strengthens her confidence and ambition," (Gill & Orgad, 2017, p. 15). Above all, the public narrative relies on a gendered emotional register of well-being; precise life balance or income details are not important, as long as entrepreneurship generates individual joy. Disappointment, regret, and doubt are entirely absent, only surfacing in the unspoken narrative, underlining Gill's (2017) reflection that postfeminist discourse fetishizes happiness and "outlaws" nonpositive emotions, such as anger and insecurity (p. 610). The unspoken narrative shows that age, business stage, and household context significantly impact how returns are interpreted as rewards and impact motivations. Some rewards are rendered obsolete by household changes, while middle age amplifies the desire for long-term financial security. This supports Carter's (2011) observation that to understand individual entrepreneurial benefits requires an

---

[5]I have since contacted the three other panelists; only one woman relied entirely on her business for all her (modest) income.

approach that "captures the processes of reward decision-making over the business life-cycle" (p. 39).

Ultimately, we see that success or the gendered rewards of entrepreneurship—the psychological and social return of being able to consider oneself a "good mother" (Duberley & Carrigan, 2013; Ekinsmyth, 2011; McGowan et al., 2012)—or self-actualization are only possible by actively taking up a neoliberal feminist identity that prioritizes a "felicitous work-life balance" (Rottenberg, 2014) or individual transformation. Indeed, it could be argued that my public narrative's embodied performance of postfeminist success is undone or unperformed by articulating liberal feminist goals of financial gender equality and independence (Bradley, 2007), nonpositive emotions, and doubting my agentic ability to conquer ongoing business struggles.

How is inspiring and empowering success enacted?

Of course, at the event, I don't reel off those answers as a single outpouring. I'm one of four women, and Maria, clipboard in hand, expertly navigates among us, weaving one narrative out of our individual stories. The staging of our cojoined narrative is also important in understanding their performative potential. Analyzing my account, I identify six discursive practices (see Figure 1) through
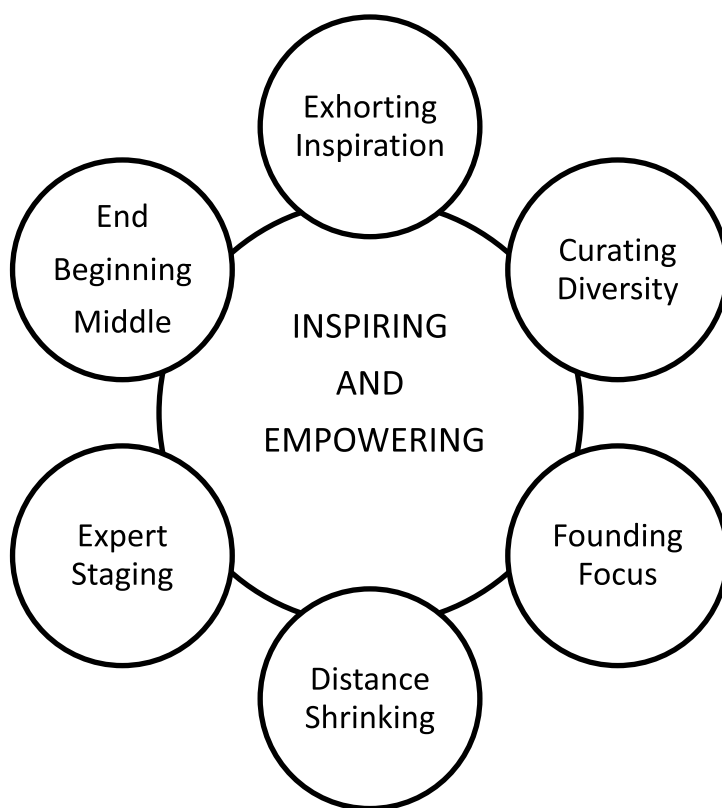
Figure 1. Discursive practices in the performance of entrepreneurial success.

which I suggest that our embodied performances enact inspiration and empowerment, or as the psychological literature indicates, desirability and feasibility.

Curated diversity. Although I am White, our panel of four is ethnically diverse with Black and Asian members, and we are (I guess) in our 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s, mirroring the diverse audience. While individually, I appear as an ethnic-majority woman, my narrative is delivered as an ensemble piece. The literature indicates that shared social identity is a key mechanism for triggering motivation through upward comparisons (Dasgupta, 2011a, 2011b; Morgenroth et al., 2015); the carefully curated panel blends our individual identities into a collective diversity that underscores the accessibility of entrepreneurship. Just by sitting together we imply that age, race, and background are not barriers to success.

Exhorting inspiration. Attendees are instructed to be "inspired" and "empowered" preceding, during, and after the event. The invite declares it a "great opportunity to learn from this inspirational panel," and the discussion is wrapped up with a final "takeaway" message. Attendees are thus charged to be correctly affected by the narrative and apply it to their own lives. Just choosing to listen to success stories, acknowledging oneself as inspired and empowered, and preferably tweeting about it[6] is a manifestation of the desired entrepreneurial mindset.

Expert staging. Our panel is introduced as successful experts within the trusted pedagogical setting of an enterprise support program. Small props such as a color backdrop with our photos, titles, and achievements evidence our status as "experts" and symbolize our "success." A young man arrives with a tripod and appears to film the event too; our words are worthy of preserving.

Founding focus. Maria's questions and the term "founder" or "female founder" suggests that *starting* a venture is the only prerequisite to take up this desirable subject identity. The narratives are front-loaded into the initial choice and early stages of business creation. Long-term viability, financial reality, and other consequences are omitted or glossed over. Our stories are crafted around an ontology of becoming rather than the reality of arriving.

Distance shrinking. The panel and audience are encouraged to mix and chat over drinks and snacks after the talks, indicating that the distance between experts and aspirants is not untraversable; entrepreneurship is feasible.

---

[6]Big-budget enterprise events routinely "live-stream" cherry-picked tweets attesting to the inspiring effects of role models' stories. A recent invitation to a large-scale online event billed as a "Festival of Female Entrepreneurs" came with the instruction "Share your excitement and posts in the lead-up and on the day at @********* and use the #FF20 hashtag."

BME. The fundamental storytelling structure of beginning-middle-end (Boje, 2011; Weick, 1995) is partially reversed as end-beginning-middle (EMB). While it may appear that the end of my story was missing in the public narrative, the outcome or "entrepreneurial success" is performatively established at the beginning rather than verbalized as the conclusion of the tale. This happens through the framing of myself and the other speakers as "inspirational and empowering women in business" in the event invitation. There is no need to narrate a precise conclusion because the outcome is already known and in the case of a live event, can be seen on stage before the audience's own eyes.

These "telling" practices are not unique to the event I am describing. I have witnessed them at many other entrepreneurship events. If you have attended any, you may have noticed them too. Collectively, they provide a powerful interpretative framework for role model narratives enhancing the perception that business ownership is both individually and culturally desirable and personally feasible. They also make it much harder to tell and hear other possible stories and outcomes.

Discussion

What might explain the divergences?

Reflecting on the divergences between the two e-tales, I can see how my unspoken narrative with its focus on social embeddedness provides a strong counternarrative to the master narrative of heroic individualized entrepreneurship that dominates public and academic storytelling (Smith & Anderson, 2004). While it shares some characteristics with Boje's antenarrative (2001a, 2011), I would argue it is an antinarrative rather than an antenarrative. Boje defines *antenarratives* as highly agentic, exploratory, fragmented stories that preexist and run parallel to the narrowing, fossilizing processes that spawn grand or master narratives (2011). Boje proposes antenarrative as prospective sensemaking or a "bet on the future" (2011). Yet multiple readings of my unspoken narrative suggest retrospective sensemaking (Weick, 1995)—an attempt to plot an alternative, causal, and historically contextualized explanation for a known outcome.

Attributing retrospective sensemaking to the unspoken narrative does not explicate why socially embedded resources were hidden in the public narrative of entrepreneurial success. The concept of privilege blindness, where advantages relating to societal position are taken for granted and normalized so an individual does not perceive them as such (Martinez Dy et al., 2017; Pratto & Stewart, 2012), may partially explain why self-authored narratives of entrepreneurial success rarely acknowledge the benefits of class, ethnicity, or gender. I concur in part. Reflexively unpacking the "special provisions" in my

"invisible knapsack of White privilege" (McIntosh, 1989, p. 33) while analyzing my narratives, I can see how establishing The Business depended greatly on "making social systems work for me" (McIntosh, 1989, p. 33). However, at the time of my #GirlBoss talk, I was also relatively aware of some societal advantages, mainly my household position and skin color. Was I then discounting social privilege to authenticate my success as "legitimate fortune" (Weber 1915, as cited in Friedman & Laurison, 2020, p. 4) or merit-staking?

In part, yes. However, in addition to the insights of privilege blindness theory, I now theorize a role model paradox that may also help explain the divergences and slippages between my public and unspoken narratives. Drawing on the literature as well as this inquiry, I argue that to "inspire and empower" disadvantaged or minority aspirants, role models must simultaneously perform and deny social embeddedness in their embodied narratives.

First, the psychological literature very clearly states that for disadvantaged aspirants to be inspired, for a narrative to have a performative effect and make entrepreneurship appear desirable and feasible entrepreneurship (Krueger, 2000), the aspirant must align themselves personally with the role model and attribute success to the role model's individual effort or behavior rather than luck, talent, or nepotism. As Dasgupta notes: "If they are perceived as too different from the self (despite their demographic similarity), if they are disliked, or viewed as superstars whose achievements are unobtainable then such exposure will not work" (Dasgupta, 2011b, p. 302). This coheres with entrepreneurship studies that find that peer stories rather than idol stories are more likely to "arouse" entrepreneurial intentions (Liu et al., 2019).

In my own story, gendered narratives of friendship, motherhood, innate feminine know-how, and sensibilities rather than hard-to-acquire business skills, as well as London neighborhoods, are used to establish "shared group membership" (Morgenroth et al., 2015) with an audience of urban female entrepreneurs. This recalls Ganz's "story of us," constructed through expressing "the values, the experiences shared by the us we hope to evoke at the time" (Ganz, 2011, p. 282). Moreover, through the event's curated diversity, my "story of us" melds into one of meritocratic hyperdiversity. Thus, socially embedded identity can be considered as accomplished through a situationally collective performance rather than as an individual ontological reflection.

However, to empower aspirants, the impact of embedded social position must be simultaneously denied. Three performative moves contribute to this denial. First, the role model narrative must avoid drawing attention to any socially embedded advantages. Second, entrepreneurial successes, including surmounting any structural barriers, must be cognitively attributed to individual agency or a "story of self" (Ganz, 2008, 2009, 2011) rather than luck or privileges accruing to a social identity. As we have seen, agency can be simply communicated through the heuristic of choice. Third, the consequence of

entrepreneurial agency—the "proof," if you like—is embodied in the narrator's identity as a successful role model. As a result of these moves, social position such as minority ethnicity or female gender are rendered inconsequential; they are performatively denied.

In this way, it could be argued that it is the imperative to inspire and empower that occludes the socially embedded nature of entrepreneurship in role model stories of success. Had I articulated a version closer to my unspoken narrative at the #GirlBoss evening, I doubt I would have inspired or motivated any entrepreneurs. My story would have lost its performative power. This is how I interpret Katz's (2004) warning that telling the story "rightly" risks not telling the "right story." In responding to the imperative to "inspire and empower," I draw on "the implicit concept of heroism" (Katz, 2004, p. 236) instead of telling a "story that gets at the heart of the process" (p. 238)—the centrality of context in understanding entrepreneurial success.

Limitations and implications for practice and future research

Real-life stories can be an effective way of transmitting knowledge, but this article indicates a need for a socially contextualized version of those stories, especially in enterprise support programs. Gender should not mask embedded advantages relating to class, ethnicity, and household circumstance. The ability to work full-time on a business should not be underestimated nor the importance of alternative household income. The financial consequences of entrepreneurship should be made clear. This is not to denigrate the nonpecuniary rewards of businesses ownership but to enable aspiring entrepreneurs to make better informed decisions. Without context, role model stories risk promoting a misleading version or even "false promise" of female entrepreneurship (Ahl & Marlow, 2019).

Autoethnography invites accusations of navel-gazing (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2012), but a focus on theory building can counter unproductive introspection and extend autoethnography's potential beyond the anecdotal illustration of preexisting theories. I would argue that autoethnography is a more intense and visible manifestation of the relationship that exists between any researcher and research subject. As this relationship cannot be disguised or altered through adopting an objective perspective, I have tried to leverage it and extract theoretical insights from this subjective intimacy.

Even so, the empirical focus on a single rather than multiple role models or indeed the listeners on the "other side" of the narrative means I am positing ideas for further investigation rather than unveiling causal explanations. While my research design may be difficult to replicate from an autoethnographical perspective, layering different versions of other role model stories could further illuminate the divergences between public and private narratives. Moreover, as I write, read, and revise, I'm only too aware that my unspoken

narrative is yet one more subjective perspective rather than "the truth." It is just another story, not the "whole story" (Gartner, 2007; Steyaert, 2007), written this time for an imagined audience of critical entrepreneurship scholars rather than aspirant entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

This article has sought to make a number of contributions to critical entrepreneurship debates. It leverages the author's position as situated subject and researcher (Fletcher, 2011) to elucidate the construction of entrepreneurial success stories and the occlusion of social contexts in public narratives. This allows me to empirically demonstrate how my own public narrative of success may have offered a partial and misleading representation of pathways to entrepreneurship and the consequences. However, it also seeks to extend theoretical insights by identifying a number of discursive and narrative practices underpinning my embodied performance of entrepreneurial success that I suggest are common to many inspirational role model stories. Additionally, it articulates a performative paradox in role model stories where the political imperative to inspire and empower disadvantaged entrepreneurs requires the simultaneous performance and denial of social embeddedness. Finally, in making these contributions, it demonstrates autoethnography's unique methodological potential to mine entrepreneurial experiences that are difficult to access through observation or positivist research design for theoretical development.

Acknowledgments

ORCID

Sarah Marks 🆔 http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3341-9636

References

Achtenhagen, L., & Welter, F. (2011). 'Surfing on the ironing board'—The representation of women's entrepreneurship in german newspapers. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *23*(9–10), 763–786. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2010.520338

Ahl, H. (2006). Why research on women entrepreneurs needs new directions. *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice*, *30*(5), 595–621. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2006.00138.x

Ahl, H., & Marlow, S. (2012). Exploring the dynamics of gender, feminism and entreprneurship: Advancing debate to escape a dead end? *Organization*, *19*(5), 543–562. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508412448695

Ahl, H., & Marlow, S. (2019). Exploring the false promise of entrepreneurship through a postfeminist critique of the enterprise policy discourse in Sweden and the UK. *Human Relations*, *74*(1), 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726719848480

Aldrich, H. E., & Cliff, J. E. (2003). The pervasive effects of family on entrepreneurship: Toward a family embeddedness perspective. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *18*(5), 573–596. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(03)00011-9

Alkhaled, S., & Berglund, K. (2018). 'And now I'm free': Women's empowerment and emancipation through entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia and Sweden. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *30*(7–8), 877–900. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2018.1500645

Alvarez, S. A., & Barney, J. B. (2007). Discovery and creation: Alternative theories of entrepreneurial action. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, *1*(1–2), 11–29. https://doi.org/10.1002/sej.4

Anderson, A. R., & Jack, S. (2002). The effects of embeddedness on the entrepreneurial process. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *17*(5), 467–487. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(01)00076-3

Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *35*(4), 373–395. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241605280449

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford University Press.

Babcock, L., & Laschever, S. (2008). *Women don't ask: The high cost of avoiding negotiation*. Piatkus.

Blaikie, N. (2000). *Designing social research*. Polity Press.

Boje, D. M. (2001a). *Narrative methods for organizational and communication research*. Sage.

Boje, D. M. (2011). *Storytelling and the future of orgnizations: An antenarrative handbook*. Taylor & Francis Group.

Bradley, H. (2007). *Gender*. Polity Press.

Bruni, A., Gherardi, S., & Poggio, B. (2004b). Entrepreneur-mentality, gender and the study of women entrepreneurs. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *17*(3), 256–268. https://doi.org/10.1108/09534810410538315

Brush, C., de Bruin, A. M., & Welter, F. (2009). A gender aware framework for women's entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, *1*(1), 8–24. https://doi.org/10.1108/17566260910942318

Burt, L. (2015). *Inclusive support for women in enterprise*. UK Government. Retrieved January 15, 2020, from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-support-for-women-in-enterprise-the-burt-report

Byrne, J., Fattoum, S., & Diaz Garcia, M. C. (2019). Role models and women entrepreneurs: Entrepreneurial superwoman has her say. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *57*(1), 154–184. https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12426

Carter, S. (2011). The rewards of entrepreneurship: Exploring the incomes, wealth and economic well-being of entrepreneurial households. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *35*(1), 39–55. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2010.00422.x

Czarniawska, B. (2004). *Narratives in social science research*. Sage.

Dasgupta, N. (2011a). Ingroup experts and peers as social vaccines who inoculate the self concept: The stereotype inoculation model. *Psychological Inquiry*, *22*(4), 231–246. https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2011.607313

Dasgupta, N. (2011b). With a little help from my colleagues: Strengthening the stereotype inoculation model with insights from fellow psychologists. *Psychological Inquiry*, *22*(4), 299–303. https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2011.631872

Dawson, C., & Henley, A. (2012). "Push" versus "pull" entrepreneurship: An ambiguous distinction? *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, *18*(6), 697–719. https://doi.org/10.1108/13552551211268139

Denzin, N. K. (2006). Analytic autoethnography, or Déjà Vu all over again. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *35*(4), 419–428. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286985

Doloriert, C., & Sambrook, S. (2012). Organisational autoethnography. *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, *1*(1), 83–89. https://doi.org/10.1108/20466741211220688

Drakopoulou Dodd, S., & Anderson, A. R. (2007). Mumpsimus and the mything of the individualistic entrepreneur. *International Small Business Journal*, *25*(4), 341–360. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242607078561

Duberley, J., & Carrigan, M. (2013). The career identities of 'mumpreneurs': Women's experiences of combining enterprise and motherhood. *International Small Business Journal*, *31*(6), 629–651. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242611435182

Eagly, A. H. (1987). *Sex differences in social behaviour: A social-role interpretation*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice towards female leaders. *Psychological Review*, *109*(3), 573–598. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573

Eddleston, K. A., & Powell, G. N. (2008). The role of gender identity in explaining sex differences in business owners' career satisfier preferences. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *23*(2), 244–256. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2006.11.002

Eikhof, D. R., Summers, J., & Carter, S. (2013). Women doing their own thing: Media representations of female entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, *19*(5), 547–564. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-09-2011-0107

Ekinsmyth, C. (2011). Challenging the boundaries of entrepreneurship: The spatialities and practices of UK 'mumpreneurs'. *Geoforum*, *42*(1), 104–114. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2010.10.005

Ellis, C. S., & Bochner, A. P. (2006). Analyzing analytic autoethnography: An autopsy. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *35*(4), 429–449. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286979

Enterprise Nation. (2020, October). *Festival of female entrepreneurs*. https://www.enterprisenation.com/learn-something/festival-of-female-entrepreneurs-2020/

Essers, C., Dey, P., Tedmanson, D., & Verduyn, K. (2018). Critical entrepreneurship studies. In *Critical perspectives on entrepreneurship* (pp. 1–14). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315675381-1

Facebook, #SheMeansBusiness: Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs (n.d.). Retrieved February 2, 2020, from https://shemeansbusiness.fb.com/uk/

Fayolle, A., Landstrom, H., Gartner, W., & Berglund, K. (2016). The institutionalization of entrepreneurship: Questioning the status quo and re-gaining hope for entrepreneurial research. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *28*(7–8), 477–486. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1221227

Fletcher, D. E. (2011). A curiosity for contexts : Entrepreneurship, enactive research and autoethnography. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *23*(January), 65–76. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2011.540414

Friedman, S., & Laurison, D. (2020). *The class ceiling: Why it pays to be privileged*. Polity Press.

Ganz, M. (2008). *What is public narrative?* New England Grassroots Environment Fund.

Ganz, M. (2009). *What is public narrative: Self, us & now* (public narrative worksheet). *Working Paper*. http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:30760283

Ganz, M. (2011). Public narrative, collective action, and power. In S. Odugbemi & T. Lee (Eds.), *Accountability through public opinion: From inertia to public action* (pp. 273–289). The World Bank.

Gartner, W. B. (2007). Entrepreneurial narrative and a science of the imagination. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *22*(5), 613–627. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2006.10.003

Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. University of California Press.

Gill, R. (2007). Postfeminist media culture: Elements of a sensibility. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *10*(2), 147–166. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549407075898

Gill, R. (2017). The affective, cultural and psychic life of postfeminism: A postfeminist sensibility 10 years on. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *20*(6), 606–626. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549417733003

Gill, R., & Orgad, S. (2017). Confidence culture and the remaking of feminism. *New Formations*, *91*(April), 16–34. https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:91.01.2017

Gond, J. P., Cabantous, L., Harding, N., & Learmonth, M. (2016). What do we mean by performativity in organizational and management theory? The uses and abuses of performativity. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *18*(4), 440–463. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12074

Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, *91*(3), 481–510. https://doi.org/10.1086/228311

Hamilton, E. (2014). Entrepreneurial narrative identity and gender: A double epistemological shift. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *52*((4)), 703–712. https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12127

Hechavarria, D., Terjesen, S., Ingram, A., & Justo, R. (2017). Taking care of business: The impact of culture and gender on entrepreneurs' blended value creation goals. *Small Business Economics*, *48*(1), 225–257. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-016-9747-4

Hlady-Rispal, M., Fayolle, A., & Gartner, A. W. (2019). In search of creative qualitative methods to capture modern-day entrepreneurship research challenges. *Journal of Small Business Management* (call for papers). http://entrepreneuriat.com/call-for-papers-journal-of-small-business-management-in-search-of-creative-qualitative-methods-to-capture-modern-day-entrepreneurship-research-challenges/

Hlady-Rispal, M., & Jouison-Laffitte, E. (2014). Qualitative research methods and epistemological frameworks: A review of publication trends in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship*, *52*(4), 594–614. https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12123

Holman Jones, S. (2005). Autoethnography: Making the personal political. In N. K. Denzin & S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 763–792). Sage.

Hopkins, K. (2010). Cath kidston in private equity buyout. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/mar/07/cath-kidston-private-equity-buyout

Jayawarna, D., & Rouse, J. (2010). Entrepreneur income creation as a situated capacity to apply resources to opportunity, *Paper presented at the institute of small business and entrepreneurship Conference, London*.

Jayawarna, D., Rouse, J., & Macpherson, A. (2014). Modelling pathways to entrepreneurship : A life course perspective. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *26*(3–4), 282–312. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2014.901420

Johannisson, B. (2011). Towards a practice theory of entrepreneuring. *Small Business Economics*, *36*(2), 135–150. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-009-9212-8

Jones, T., & Ram, M. (2013). *Entrepreneurship as ethnic minority liberation. Enterprise research centre research paper No.11*.

Katz, J. A. (2004). Reading the storybook of life; telling the right story versus telling the story rightly. In D. Hjorth & C. Steyaert (Eds.), *Narrative and discursive approaches in entrepreneurship* (pp. 233–244). Edward Elgar.

Kelley, D., Benjamin, B., Candida, B., Patricia, G., Mahnaz, M., Mahdi, M., Marcia, C., Monica, D., & Rene, H. (2017). *Global entrepreneurship monitor 2016/2017 report on women's entrepreneurship*. Babson College.

Klag, M., & Langley, A. (2013). Approaching the conceptual leap in qualitative research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *15*(2), 149–166. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2012.00349.x

Kloosterman, R., van der Luen, J., & Rath, J. (1999). Mixed embeddedness: (In)formal economic activities and immigrant businesses in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *23*(2), 252–266. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.00194

Krueger, N. F. (2000). The cognitive infrastructure of opportunity emergence. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *83*(7), 32–35. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-48543-8_9

Krueger, N. F. (2007). What lies beneath? The experiential essence of entrepreneurial thinking. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice, 31*(1), 123–138.

Krueger, N. F., Reilly, M. D., & Carsrud, A. L. (2000). Competing models of entrepreneurial intentions. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *15*(5), 411–432. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-9026(98)00033-0

Langowitz, N., & Minniti, M. (2007). The entrepreneurial propensity of women. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *781*(3), 341–364. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2007.00177.x

Learmonth, M., & Humphreys, M. (2011). Autoethnography and academic identity: Glimpsing business school doppelgangers. *Organization*, *19*(1), 99–117. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508411398056

Lewis, K. V. (2014). Public narratives of female entrepreneurship: Fairy tale or fact? *Labour and Industry:a Journal of the Social and Economic Relations of Work*, *24*(4), 331–334. https://doi.org/10.1080/10301763.2014.978967

Lewis, P. (2006). The quest for invisibility: Female entrepreneurs and the masculine norm of entrepreneurship. *Gender, Work and Organization*, *13*(5), 453–469. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2006.00317.x

Lewis, P. (2014a). Postfeminism, femininities and organization studies: Exploring a new agenda. *Organization Studies*, *35*(12), 1845–1866. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840614539315

Lewis, P., Benschop, Y., & Simpson, R. (2017). Postfeminism, gender and organization. *Gender Work and Organization*, *24*(3), 213–225. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12175

Liñán, F., & Fayolle, A. (2015). A systematic literature review on entrepreneurial intentions: Citation, thematic analyses, and research agenda. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, *11*(4), 907–933. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-015-0356-5

Liu, F., Ma, J., & Li, R. (2019). Which role model is more effective in entrepreneurship education? An investigation of storytelling on individual's entrepreneurial intention. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*(April), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00001

Liu, H. (2018). An embarrassment of riches: The seduction of postfeminism in the academy. *Organization*, *26*(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508418763980

Locke, K., Golden-Biddle, K., & Feldman, M. S. (2010). Making doubt generative: Rethinking the role of doubt in the research process. *Organization Science*, *19*(6), 907–918. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0398

Luckman, S. (2015). Women's micro-entrepreneurial home-working as post-fordist 'magical solution' to the work-life relationship. In L. Adkins, M. Dever, & Kovalainen (Eds.), *New arrangements of gender and labour in post-fordist times* (pp. 91–108). Palgrave Macmillan.

Manolova, T. S., Brush, C. G., & Edelman, L. F. (2007). What do women (and men) want? entrepreneurial expectancies of women and men nascent entrepreneurs. *Babson College Research paper (no 2008-1)*. http://ssrn.com/abstract=1060241

Manolova, T. S., Brush, C. G., Edelman, L. F., & Shaver, K. G. (2012). One size does not fit all: Entrepreneurial expectancies and growth intentions of US women and men nascent entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *24*(1–2), 7–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2012.637344

Marlow, S., & Martinez Dy, A. (2018). Annual review article: Is it time to rethink the gender agenda in entrepreneurship research? *International Small Business Journal: Researching Entrepreneurship*, *36*(1), 3–22. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242617738321

Marlow, S., & McAdam, M. (2013). Gender and entrepreneurship: Advancing debate and challenging myths; exploring the mystery of the under-performing female entrepreneur. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, *19*(1), 114–124. https://doi.org/10.1108/13552551311299288

Martinez Dy, A., Marlow, S., & Martin, L. (2017). A web of opportunity or the same old story? Women digital entrepreneurs and intersectionality theory. *Human Relations*, *70*(3), 286–311. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726716650730

McGowan, P., Redeker, C., & Cooper, S. (2012). Female entrepreneurship and the management of business and domestic roles: Motivations, expectations and realities. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *24*(1–2), 53–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2012.637351

McIntosh, P. (1989, July/August 31-5). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom*.

Morgenroth, T., Ryan, M. K., & Peters, K. (2015). The motivational theory of role modeling: How role models influence role aspirants' goals. *Review of General Psychology*, *19*(4), 465–483. https://doi.org/10.1037/gpr0000059

NatWest Bank. (2020, January). *Back her business*. https://natwestbackherbusiness.co.uk/

Ogbor, J. (2000). Mythicizing and reification in entrepreneurial discourse: Ideology- critique of entrepreneurial studies. *Journal of Management Studies*, *37*(5), 701–713. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00196

Pelly, R. D. M. (2016). A bureaucrat's journey from technocrat to entrepreneur through the creation of adhocracies. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *28*(7–8), 487–513. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1221226

Pelly, R. D. M. (2017). The story of captain baby face and the coffee maker: An entrepreneurial narrative perspective on corruption. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *26*(4), 390–405. https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492616675977

Pratto, F., & Stewart, A. L. (2012). Group dominance and the half-blindness of privilege. *Journal of Social Issues*, *68*(1), 28–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01734.x

Radu, M., & Loue, C. (2008). Motivational impact of role models as moderated by "ideal" vs. "ought self-guides" identifications. *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, *16*(4), 441–465. https://doi.org/10.1142/S0218495808000223

Rambo Ronai, C. (1995). Multiple reflections of childhood sex abuse: An argument for a layered account. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *23*(4), 395–426. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124195023004001

Read, S., & Dolmans, S. (2014). A review on effectuation. In A. Fayolle (Eds.), *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship* (pp. 238–26). Edward Elgar.

Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 959–978). Sage.

Rose, A. (2019). *The Alison Rose review of female entrepreneurship*. HM Treasury, UK Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-alison-rose-review-of-female-entrepreneurship (accessed January 2020)

Rottenberg, C. (2014). The rise of neoliberal feminism. *Cultural Studies*, *28*(3), 418–437. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2013.857361

Sarasvathy, S. D. (2001). Causation and effectuation: Toward a theoretical shift from economic inevitability to entrepreneurial contingency. *The Academy of Management Review*, *26*(2), 243–263. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2001.4378020

Smith, R. (2018). Reading liminal and temporal dimensionality in the baxter family 'public-narrative. *International Small Business Journal*, *3691*(1), 41–59. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242617698033

Smith, R., & Anderson, A. R. (2004). The devil is in the e-tale: Form and function in the entrepreneurial narrative. In D. Hjorth & C. Steyaert (Eds.), *Narrative and discursive approaches in entrepreneurship* (pp. 125–143). Edward Elgar.

Stevenson, H., & Jarillo, J. (1990). A paradigm of entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial management. *Strategic Management Journal*, *11*(5), 17–27. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2486667

Steyaert, C. (2007). Of course that is not the whole (toy) story: Entrepreneurship and the cat's cradle. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *22*(5), 733–751. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2006.10.004

Steyaert, C., & Katz, J. A. (2004). Reclaiming the space of entrepreneurship in society: Geographical, discursive and social dimensions. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *16*(3), 179–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/0898562042000197135

Tedmanson, D., Verduyn, K., Essers, C., & Gartner, W. B. (2012). Critical perspectives in entrepreneurship research. *Organization*, *19*(5), 531–541. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508412458495

Weber, P., & Geneste, L. (2014). Exploring gender-related perceptions of SME success. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, *6*(1), 15–27. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJGE-04-2013-0038

Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Sage.

Welter, F. (2011). Contextualizing entrepreneurship – Conceptual challenges and ways forward. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *35*(1), 165–184. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2010.00427.x

Wigren-Kristofersen, C., Korsgaard, S., Brundin, E., Hellerstedt, K., Agnete Alsos, G., & Grande, J. (2019). Entrepreneurship and embeddedness: Dynamic, processual and multi-layered perspectives. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *31*(9–10), 1011–1015. https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2019.1656868