Summary

When I first started on this research back in 2007, I was confronted with a myriad of actors and activities surrounding the issue of honour-related violence. These included actors as diverse as a theatre maker, migrant organizations, schools, scholars, politicians, women’s shelters, police investigators and victims of honour-related violence. I was intrigued by this widespread attention for the issue and went in search of a theoretical framework that would help me to make sense of this puzzle. I found the framework that I needed in the concepts of organizational field emergence and issue-based organizational fields, which had both been developed within institutional theory in organizational analysis. I combined this institutional framework with Bourdieu’s theory of practice, as his work appeared to offer a solution to institutional theory’s enduring quest for a balanced theory of action and power.

This research therefore served two purposes. On the one hand, I wished to empirically explore the actors and processes involved in the emergence of an issue-based organizational field, leading to the following research question:

*What actors and processes contributed to the emergence of the issue-based organizational field on honour-related violence in the Netherlands?*

On the other hand, I wished to explore the potential of Bourdieu’s work for institutional theory in organizational analysis, resulting in the following research question:

*How does Bourdieu’s theory of practice contribute to an understanding of the processes involved in organizational field emergence?*

I therefore conducted a case study of firstly the emergence of the issue and secondly the emergence of the honour-related violence field. This case study encompassed three components: 1.) a media analysis of Dutch national newspapers between 1990 and 2010, 2.) an analysis of the parliamentary debates on honour-related violence between 1990 and 2010 and 3.) an ethnographic field study that took place in 2007-2008.

I start this summary by briefly recapitulating the results of the case study. I then describe the empirical contribution of this study, focusing primarily on the critical preconditions for organizational field emergence and on the processes that shape the emerging
field configurations. I then turn to the second question and consider the added value of Bourdieu’s framework.

**The emergence of the Dutch honour-related violence field**

This study reconstructed the emergence of the issue of honour-related violence by tracing the emergence of the labels of *eerwraak* (i.e. honour killing) and *eergerelateerd geweld* (honour-related violence, ‘HRV’) within the Dutch media field and political field. This reconstruction reveals that the issue of honour-related violence first emerged in the Dutch public discourse around the turn of the millennium (Chapter 4).

The emergence of the issue was facilitated by *evolving macro-cultural discourses* on multiculturalism, gender equality, nationalism, citizenship and social cohesion (Chapter 6) and was driven by four *field-configuring events*: the shootings of Kezban, Hassan, Zarife and Gül (Chapter 5). This combination of macro-level and micro-level processes contributed to a *reconceptualization* of domestic violence against migrant women as honour-related violence. Moreover, the extensive media coverage of these incidents, the subsequent court cases and the warnings issued by various actors contributed to a *moral panic* about this issue: honour killings were perceived as a sign of migrants’ failure to integrate (Chapter 7). Together these three interrelated processes provide an explanation for the widespread public attention for the issue of honour-related violence at the beginning of the new millennium.

This case study shows that the attention for honour-related violence quickly spread to other fields, including the political field, where Gül’s murder functioned as a catalyst for heated parliamentary debates between MPs and ministers about reliable solutions to the problem. These debates triggered a number of state actions, for example the development of a clear problem definition, the development of an interministerial programme to combat honour-related violence and the allocation of funding. In this manner the state *officialized* the problem of honour-related violence, and heralded a new stage in the development of an issue-based organizational field (Chapter 8).

The actors, actions and processes described above all contributed to the issue’s emergence and the subsequent field emergence. Moreover, they influenced the *emerging field configurations*. However, these configurations (e.g. the emerging theoretical unification, the relevant types of capital and the positioning of the actors) were also food for debates between the actors entering this emerging field. It was through those debates and struggles that the HRV field’s configurations eventually took shape.
Data from the field ethnography show that by 2007-2008 the honour-related violence field had acquired a large number of actors: the police, women’s shelters, municipal authorities, support centres for domestic violence, schools, the Public Prosecution Service, the immigration service and migrant organizations. Moreover, some of these actors could be labelled as key actors, having gained that position by combining multiple types of capital that were deemed important within this particular field – economic capital, social capital and various types of informational capital. Within the emerging field the struggle for the relevant types of capital particularly revolved around informational capital, with different actors having access to different forms of knowledge: expert knowledge (e.g. subject-matter experts), practical knowledge (e.g. the police, women’s shelters, schools) and insider knowledge (migrant organizations) (Chapter 9).

The ethnographic data also reveal that by 2007-2008 various actors were “translating” the official problem definition to their own working environments. These separate translations led to differences in interpretation between actors. For instance, some focused primarily on the escalated forms of violence (e.g. the police) while others focused on early signs of honour-related violence (e.g. schools). Although these translations are an essential part of field emergence (Grodal 2007), they also caused disputes between actors, some of whom felt that not everyone had incorporated the definition in a suitable way (Chapter 10).

Yet the greatest struggle within this emerging field concerned the position of the migrant organizations. Migrant organizations were seen as bridge builders between state policy and the targeted migrant communities. Despite this key role, migrant organizations did not feel accepted as full and equal partners. For instance, they were not accepted as partners within the organizations involved in network collaboration. Based on this finding, it is my conclusion that the Dutch HRV field in fact comprised two distinct subfields: one consisting of the state and the various network partners and the other of the migrant organizations. Actors in the first field focused on protecting victims and prosecuting perpetrators. Actors in the second field worked on preventing of honour crimes by seeking to bring about a change in mentality within migrant communities.

Field emergence: a multi-layered process
This case study illustrates that the emergence of an issue-based organizational field is a multi-layered process in which various actors, actions and processes come together and influence each other. In the following I discuss the empirical contribution of this case study in greater detail, focusing on 1.) the phases in field emergence, 2.) the critical preconditions for field
emergence, and 3.) the processes that shape the emerging field configurations. In doing so I present an answer to the question What actors and processes contributed to the emergence of the issue-based organizational field on honour-related violence in the Netherlands?

The three phases of issue-based field emergence

This case study illustrates that several phases can be distinguished in the process of field emergence: the emergence of the issue, the officialization of the issue as a social problem and the emergence of the related issue-based organizational field. These different phases flow into one another and influence one another, yet remain distinct. In the following I discuss these phases in the emergence of the Dutch HRV field in greater detail.

Phase 1: issue emergence

An issue-based field can only emerge once an issue has emerged in the public discourse. I therefore studied how the issue of honour-related violence emerged in the Dutch public discourse. The preceding analysis reveals that a set of interrelated processes, actors and actions contributed to the issue’s emergence: a number of unplanned field-configuring events – honour killings – triggered the attention of a diverse group of actors. These actors were subsequently able to sound the alarm over these events within the media field, which was facilitated by both changes within macro-cultural discourses and the development of a label (i.e. eerwraak) that was compatible with the media field’s logic. The media’s representation of these events then led to the development of a moral panic about these honour killings, which were framed as non-Dutch types of violence (Part II).

Phase 2: officialization of the social problem

A next phase in the emergence of an issue-based field is the transformation of the issue into a discrete social problem. As Bourdieu et al. (1994) previously established, the findings of this case study illustrate how the state played a crucial role in officializing the problem of honour-related violence.

The moral panic that developed within the media field was seized and amplified by several MPs (e.g. Hirsi Ali and Albayrak), who subsequently sounded the alarm about this type of violence within the political field. During the parliamentary debates that followed (planned field-configuring events) these MPs used a range of instruments (e.g. motions and priority project status) to push the Members of Cabinet to take action against this type of violence. This eventually resulted in the development of a clear-cut definition of the problem,
the start of a pilot to establish the problem’s extent, the allocation of funding to various projects and pilots and lastly the development of an interministerial programme to combat honour-related violence. Together these actions helped to 1.) legitimize honour-related violence as a discrete social problem and 2.) demark honour-related violence from domestic violence (Chapter 8).

**Phase 3: field emergence**

While described as distinct and separate, the foregoing phases overlap and influence each other. This also holds true for the phase of *field emergence*. This study illustrates that various actors were already working to combat honour-related violence before the state took any action. This was the case in particular with a number of migrant organizations. However, these bottom-up initiatives were not always connected. What the *involvement of the state* facilitated, particularly through the development of the interministerial programme, was that the organizations fighting honour-related violence now knew about each other and each other’s activities. In the words of Hoffman (1999), they realized that they were partaking in a common debate.

As a consequence, the actors began to interact more and started to *struggle* with one another about the emerging field configurations. For example, once the migrant organizations became aware that other actors were working to fight honour-related violence through network collaboration, they also demanded a position within this network. Besides struggles for position, these conflicts with migrant organizations also included struggles about what type of knowledge had the greatest relevance (i.e. informational capital).

**Critical preconditions for field emergence**

According to Hoffman (1999:352) the emergence of an issue-based field is signalled by 1.) increased interaction between particular actors, 2.) an increase in the shared information load and 3.) the development of a mutual sense of awareness between actors that they are involved in a common debate. However, Hoffman does not examine in further detail how this increased interaction and shared information load comes about.

Based on my case study, it can be concluded that several distinct processes, actors and actions came together in the emergence of the Dutch HRV field, described here as critical preconditions for field emergence.
Table 6: Critical preconditions for the emergence of the Dutch HRV field

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**Process: field-configuring events**

The emergence of a new issue is strongly facilitated by the occurrence of critical events: events that trigger the attention of the media and are used by actors (i.e. key instigators) to draw attention to a specific issue. According to Hoffman and Ocasio (2001:414) these types of events “focus sustained public attention and invite the collective definition or redefinition of social problems”.

In this case the actual and attempted honour killings of Kezban, Hassan, Zarife and Gül functioned as critical events. Each generated a great deal of media attention and debate about the applicability of the “honour killing” label. Moreover, each successive incident caused the group of actors sounding the alarm on this particular issue to grow: first a friend, then an expert, a school director, women’s shelters and finally politicians (Chapter 5).

Besides functioning as critical events, these murders therefore became field-configuring events: they shaped the configurations of the emerging issue-based field by 1.) bringing together actors that would later become key actors within the Dutch HRV field and 2.) stimulating debates about the problem’s definition. This perspective on field-configuring events matches the definition of Meyer et al. (2005:1026), who describes field-configuring events as events that “encapsulate and shape” the development of a field.

Nonetheless, Meyer at al. (2005) attributes this function to temporary social organizations such as conferences and tradeshows, not to the types of unplanned field-configuring events described here. This can be explained by the fact that Meyer et al. (2005) did not study the development of issue-based fields, but focused on fields developing around particular products and technologies. As a consequence, they were not interested in events that triggered issue emergence.

Yet the type of events described by Mayer et al. (2005), denoted here as planned field-configuring events, were also present in the emerging HRV field. The debates between MPs and Members of Cabinet could, for instance, be described as classical field-configuring
events, having strongly contributed to the emergence and shape of the HRV field (Chapter 8). The same applies to the various conferences and meetings that were organized by other actors such as the police, municipal authorities and women’s shelters. These conferences and meetings contributed to field emergence by enabling the development of a shared information load and contributing to network building between the various actors.

Based on this case study I therefore posit that the occurrence of both unplanned and planned field-configuring events forms a critical precondition for field emergence. Unplanned events are necessary to stimulate issue emergence, while planned events are a condition for developing a network of actors with a shared understanding of the problem.

Process: evolving macro-cultural discourses

Following the work of Lawrence and Phillips (2004), this study also shows that the emergence of the issue of honour-related violence was facilitated by evolving macro-cultural discourses. Changes at the macro level create an opening to challenge issues at the micro level. In this case, the intertwining of gender issues with multicultural discourses led to disenchantment with the multicultural ideal, which in turn made it possible to criticize culture-linked forms of violence. In addition, evolving discourses on nationalism, citizenship and social cohesion created a climate in which such criticism was welcomed as a means of enforcing moral boundaries between “what is Dutch” and “what should not become Dutch” (Chapter 6). Macro-cultural discourses therefore not only provide the discursive backdrop for an issue-based field, changes in these macro-cultural discourses also form a critical precondition for issue and field emergence.

The inclusion of an analysis of these evolving discourses also makes it possible to explain why this particular issue emerged when it did. As explained in Part II, honour killings and honour-related violence were already happening in the Netherlands long before they were labelled as such. It was only after the changes in these macro-cultural discourses occurred that people started to separate these forms of violence from domestic violence.

Besides facilitating the emergence of a particular issue, macro-cultural discourses can also influence the actions taken to tackle the issue, actions that in turn reinforce those discourses. In this case, these discourses enabled actors within the political field to view honour-related violence as an integration issue, rather than seeing it as a specific type of domestic violence. As a consequence, a programme was developed to tackle this “new” type of violence. In this manner, the state not only officialized the problem as a distinct social
problem, it also reinforced the boundary between what was Dutch (i.e. domestic violence) and what was not Dutch (i.e. honour-related violence) (Chapter 8).

**Process: moral panic**

The general argument behind the concept of a moral panic is that the attention given to a particular social problem does not correlate to the “objective” gravity of the problem. Instead, the moral panic that develops over a social problem indicates concerns about broader societal changes and challenges (Chapter 7).

In this thesis I argue that the attention given to honour-related violence in the Netherlands is a case in point. While honour killings are serious crimes, the number of honour killings does not correlate to the extensive attention that these murders received. Moreover, I follow the reasoning of scholars such as Pratt Ewing (2008:154) by arguing that the sudden attention given to honour killings should be considered against the backdrop of evolving macro-cultural discourses on multiculturalism, gender inequality, nationalism, citizenship and social cohesion. The anxiety about the lack of integration by migrants subsequently facilitated the emergence of the HRV field, as the moral panic about honour killings united actors within and outside the political field to take action against this type of violence (Chapters 7 and 8).

Interestingly, what the emerging field addressed was not these underlying anxieties, but rather the symbol representing these anxieties: the honour killings. Moreover, by reaffirming the boundaries between Dutch violence (e.g. domestic violence) and migrant violence (e.g. honour killings), the field’s emergence paradoxically seems to have reaffirmed these anxieties rather than alleviating them.

The moral panic about honour killings not only facilitated the emergence of the Dutch HRV field but also structured the Dutch HRV field into two distinct sub-fields: one formed by network organizations that focused on protecting victims and prosecuting perpetrators, and a second formed by migrant organizations which focussed on achieving a change of mentality within their rank and file (Chapter 11, Figure 7). The othering discourses that accompanied the moral panic about honour killings and the underlying anxieties about migrants lacking integration contributed to a climate in which migrant organizations were not trusted as partners within the local collaboration networks.
**Actor: the media as a gatekeeper**

While issue-based organizational fields only emerge after multiple actors have committed to that particular issue, the involvement of two specific actors appears to be a critical precondition for any issue-based field emergence: the media and the state.

The involvement of the media is a precondition for field emergence given that the emergence of an issue depends strongly on the media’s role. The media field acts as a gatekeeper by deciding what actors to quote and what stories to tell. For instance, the present study illustrates how the media selected specific types of “stories” that matched the rules of the game applied by the media field. Only those honour killings that fitted those rules received extensive coverage in the media, while others received barely any mention whatsoever. Moreover, each honour killing involved a specific actor whom the media would quote at length when describing the incident (Chapters 4 and 5).

**Actor: the state as the constructor of social problems**

Similar to the media’s involvement, the state’s involvement seems to be a critical precondition for field emergence. As already argued by scholars such as Clegg (2010) and Bourdieu et al. (1994) this case study also illustrates the state’s extensive power to steer a field in a particular direction. Both the development of the policy definition and the interministerial programme should be seen in this light. Together they contributed to the construction of honour-related violence as a distinct social problem.

Moreover, occurrences within the political field impacted the emerging configurations of the Dutch HRV field. For instance, this study reveals that one of the state’s key values – developing a solid knowledge base – carried over from the political field to the HRV field. Not only did all the key actors have access to some type of informational capital, one of the key struggles within the emerging field also concerned the question of what type of informational capital was the most valuable.

Lastly, by commissioning the development of a clear-cut definition of the problem the state contributed to theoretical unification within the emerging field. The ethnographic field study shows that the interviewees had developed a shared understanding of the issue of honour-related violence: although they were unable to quote the policy definition, their descriptions generally corresponded to its key elements.

Irrespective of the major role that the state plays, this study also illustrates that the state’s power is limited by factors such as the general decentralization processes in the
Netherlands. As a consequence, the state could not exert any direct control over other key actors such as the police, women’s shelters and municipal authorities (Chapter 11).

**Action: labels and translation**

In her work on the emergence of the nanotechnology field, Grodal (2007:172-175) draws attention to the importance of a common label for field emergence. She argues that the adoption of a label by new actors (i.e. developing a shared information load) is a critical precondition for field emergence. However, she also finds that while it is important to have a common label it is similarly important to leave actors sufficient freedom to translate the label to their own working environments, arguing that this facilitates their commitment to the emerging field.

In this case, not one but two labels contributed to the emergence of the HRV field: *eerwraak* (i.e. honour killing) and *eergerelateerd geweld* (honour-related violence) (Chapter 4). The label *eerwraak* facilitated the emergence of the issue in the public discourse. It made the issue relevant to the media field, which revels in reporting on these types of critical events, i.e. events that a.) occur at public locations, b.) carry sufficient dramatic features, c.) are illustrative of failing government agencies and d.) provoke the interest of various actors who are willing to voice their concerns about the issue (Chapter 5).

The policy definition of honour-related violence subsequently facilitated the emergence of the field by enabling other actors to join. This new label and definition encompassed a much wider range of types of violence, making it feasible for other actors to see roles for themselves in combatting and preventing honour-related violence. Moreover, the ambiguity of the definition made it possible for the separate actors to translate it to their own working environments (Chapter 10). This process of translation signals a next stage in the emergence of fields.

As such, this case study supports Grodal’s proposition (2007) that the development of a common label and its subsequent translation to the respective working environments of the actors involved forms a critical precondition for field emergence.

**Action: struggles over the emerging field configurations**

Still, fields do not only come into being by exogenous forces (e.g. evolving discourses, critical events and state involvement). In fact, the actions of actors inside the field are what eventually facilitate field emergence and shape the emerging field configurations. Actors need to join the field first – in other words the issue needs to trigger their interest, their illusio.
Next, they must acknowledge their participation in a common debate and develop a shared information load (Hoffman 1999). In other words, they need to interact with one another. Moreover, Bourdieu (1977:190) indicates that these interactions will often include struggles for power.

This case study into field emergence reveals that the issue of honour-related violence did indeed trigger the interest of a wide variety of actors. It also illustrates how those actors interacted and how they were positioned in respect of each other. Moreover, the findings confirm Bourdieu’s argument by illustrating how actors struggled with one another over the relevant types of capital, the problem definition and their positions within the field. These struggles chiefly concerned the relevant type of knowledge (i.e. informational capital) and the position of migrant organizations within the field. It is through these struggles that the field’s eventual shape is determined (Chapters 9, 10 and 11).

In the above, I have provided an answer to the empirical question driving this research. In the following I focus on the case study’s theoretical contribution. In Part 1 I argued that to date institutional theory has been plagued by some persistent challenges, for example the development of a reliable theory of action that strikes the right balance between structure and agency, between macro-level developments and micro-level activities, and a clear conceptualization of processes of power and domination (Chapter 1). I subsequently argued that Bourdieu’s theory of practice offers institutionalists the necessary framework, as long as they apply the entirety of his theoretical concepts (i.e. habitus, field and capital). Yet the proof of the pudding is in the eating (Chapter 2). In this section I therefore formulate an answer to the question, *How does Bourdieu’s theory of practice contribute to an understanding of the processes involved in organizational field emergence?*

**Bourdieu and the structure-agency dilemma**

Bourdieu’s solution to the structure-agency dilemma lies in his conceptualization of action (i.e. practice). According to Bourdieu (1977) an actor’s perception of a given situation and his subsequent action are informed by both his habitus and his position within the field, which in turn is determined by the amount and value of his capital within that particular field: 

\[
\text{[(Habitus) (Capital)] + Field = Practice.}
\]

Bourdieu adds a historical component to his theory of practice, by arguing that each action feeds back into both the actor’s habitus and the field’s logic.
This means that each action, viewed here as an expression of agency, is informed by various components: the situation causing the action, the actor’s habitus and his position within the field. Based on this combination of components, the actor calculates what action is feasible (i.e. calculation of possibilities). His actions are consequently “structured” by his past experience (i.e. his habitus) and by his position within the field (i.e. the amount and value of his capital within that field) (Chapter 2).

Field emergence and evolving field configurations can then be explained by the fact that the decision to act brings together these various components. For instance, actors may be confronted with a new and unexpected situation (i.e. a critical event), and therefore arrive at a new calculation of possibilities. Moreover, through the feedback loop into the habitus and the field’s logic, Bourdieu ensures that each new action is informed by a slightly different habitus and field logic, as these have been informed by a previous action. Actors can therefore incrementally change their actions, even where the situation has not changed significantly.

The fact that an actor’s calculation of possibilities takes both the field’s logic (macro) and the actor’s habitus (micro) into consideration also helps Bourdieu to surmount the micro-macro divide within a single act, as both components influence the eventual action. In addition, the concept of nested fields helps to interrelate various levels of analysis (micro, meso and macro), since the processes can inform the action taken by the individual, organization or field.

Lastly, Bourdieu’s concept of capital and his conceptualization of fields as fields of power and fields of struggle make it possible to include a clear power conceptualization within his theory of practice. Bourdieu compares how a field functions to playing a game. The purpose of the game is to retrieve the trump card, i.e. the type of capital that is perceived as the most valuable type of capital within that specific field. At the same time, the actor’s ability (i.e. his power) to play the game is determined by the amount and value of the capital already in his possession (Bourdieu and Wacquant 19992: 98-99). Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence (1977:196-197) also directs attention to the more subtle processes of domination, which lie in the structuring function of both the field’s logic and the actor’s habitus, even though actors are mostly unaware of this (Chapter 2). Lastly, Bourdieu explicitly directs attention to the power that states have to determine a field’s configuration (introduction to Part III).

This discussion of Bourdieu’s theoretical concepts illustrates that the added value of his theory of practice lies in the combined use of his concepts. It is through the interrelationship between habitus, field, capital and action that Bourdieu strikes a balance
between structure and agency, between micro-level and macro-level developments, while incorporating a multi-layered power conceptualization. By focusing solely on the concept of field, institutionalists have lost that balance and remain unable to restore it. Moreover, they have lost the ability to incorporate a balanced approach to processes of power and domination (Clegg 2010).

**The added value of Bourdieu’s theory in practice**

By applying Bourdieu’s framework to this case study I have illustrated that the entirety of his theory is indeed greater than the sum of its parts. Using Bourdieu’s framework enables the study of the myriad processes, actors and actions involved in the emergence of an issue-based organizational field. Moreover, by applying his theory at multiple levels of analysis I was able to study the interrelatedness of the organizational field practices at the micro level, the meso level and the macro level.

For example, at the micro level Bourdieu’s framework enabled me to understand the dynamics within the political field. Actors here were confronted with a “new” type of violence: honour killings. Within this highly structured and formalized field, both MPs and ministers subsequently acted according to the rules of that particular field (i.e. the field’s logic). During parliamentary debates MPs would ask critical questions and use the instrument of motions to steer the government in a particular direction. In response the ministers would write letters to parliament explaining why they first sought to gain a better understanding of the extent and nature of the problem. Each successive debate then led to new actions and responses, ultimately combining to contribute to the officialization of honour-related violence as a distinct social problem.

At the same time, attention for macro-level developments enhanced my understanding of the processes at a meso and micro level. For instance, attention for the general...
decentralization processes made it possible to explain why the state was unable to direct the emerging HRV field from the top down. Instead, the state used a variety of instruments, for example commissioning studies, developing a problem definition and allocating funding to relevant actors, to enhance field development. Attention for changing macro-cultural discourses, in addition, helped to explain why honour-related violence was framed as an integration issue rather than as a distinct type of domestic violence.

**Updating Bourdieu's framework with the addition of institutional concepts**

At the same time, the present case study illustrates that some of the concepts from institutionalism can be useful additions to Bourdieu’s work. As explained above, this holds true in particular for the concepts of issue-based organizational fields, field-configuring events and label development. The concept of moral panic is another useful addition for studying the emergence of issue-based fields, shedding light on why a particular issue should suddenly appear in public discourses and subsequently generate large amounts of organizational activity. Moreover, the moral panic concept helps to explain the lack of trust between organizations making up local collaboration networks and migrant organizations, and thus the development of two distinct sub-fields within the emerging HRV field.

Although it is at times challenging, I feel that applying Bourdieu’s framework (i.e. painting the bigger picture, focusing on micro-level, meso-level and macro-level developments, and on both structure and agency) has enhanced our understanding of the processes and actors involved in the emergence of issue-based fields. Bourdieu’s theory of practice, his work on state power and social problems, makes it possible to study these processes in a balanced manner. I therefore wholeheartedly recommend that others follow this example and further explore Bourdieu’s potential for institutional theory.