

**Gender, Work and Organization**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Biennial International Interdisciplinary Conference**  
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**From organizational to field specific career scripts?**  
 An explorative analysis of female career capital.

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**ViCaPP – Vienna Career Panel Project**



<b>Start:</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Target:</b>	Business School Graduates (mainly WU Vienna)
<b>Goal:</b>	Reconstruction of graduates' careers, identifying changes in contemporal management of careers
<b>Theory:</b>	Pierre Bourdieu (field, habitus, capital)
<b>Diversification:</b>	International Comparision (German SOEP)

	Quantitative Part - Questionnaires			
Cohort	1970	1990	2000	2010
n	110	250	645	530
N	1535			
Rounds	1	7	8	2

	Qualitative Part – Interviews			
Cohort	1970	1990	2000	2010
N	11	16	17	(3)
Female	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>(2)</b>



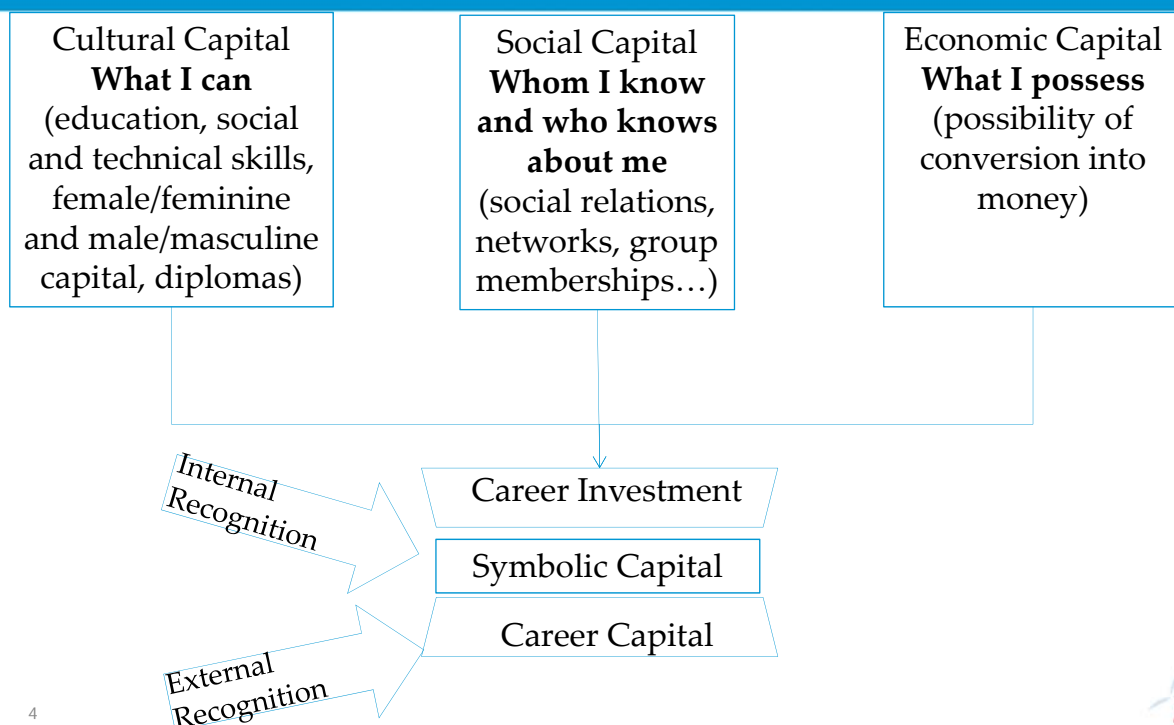
# Theoretical Background and research question

- Careers are perceived as movements in social fields
  - Career Field: Orthodoxy vs. heresy
  - Career Habitus: „Fit“ to field
  - Career Capital: Unique Portfolio, bounded by relationality
  
- Transitions are perceived as career investments
  - Reveals conversion ratios of guises of capital in one another
  - Goal: Improvement in the field, acquisition of symbolic capital/career capital
  
- How do agents with high female career capital explain career transitions in different graduates' cohorts?
  - Which guises of capital are applied prior to transition? How are the results of these transitions reflected in their career capital portfolio?
  - Did conversion rates change?

3

*Iellatchitch et al. (2003); Schneidhofer & Latzke (2011); Schneidhofer et al. (forthcoming)*

# Transitions in a praxis-economic sense



4

*Bourdieu (1986); Iellatchitch et al. (2003): 735; Huppatz (2009)*

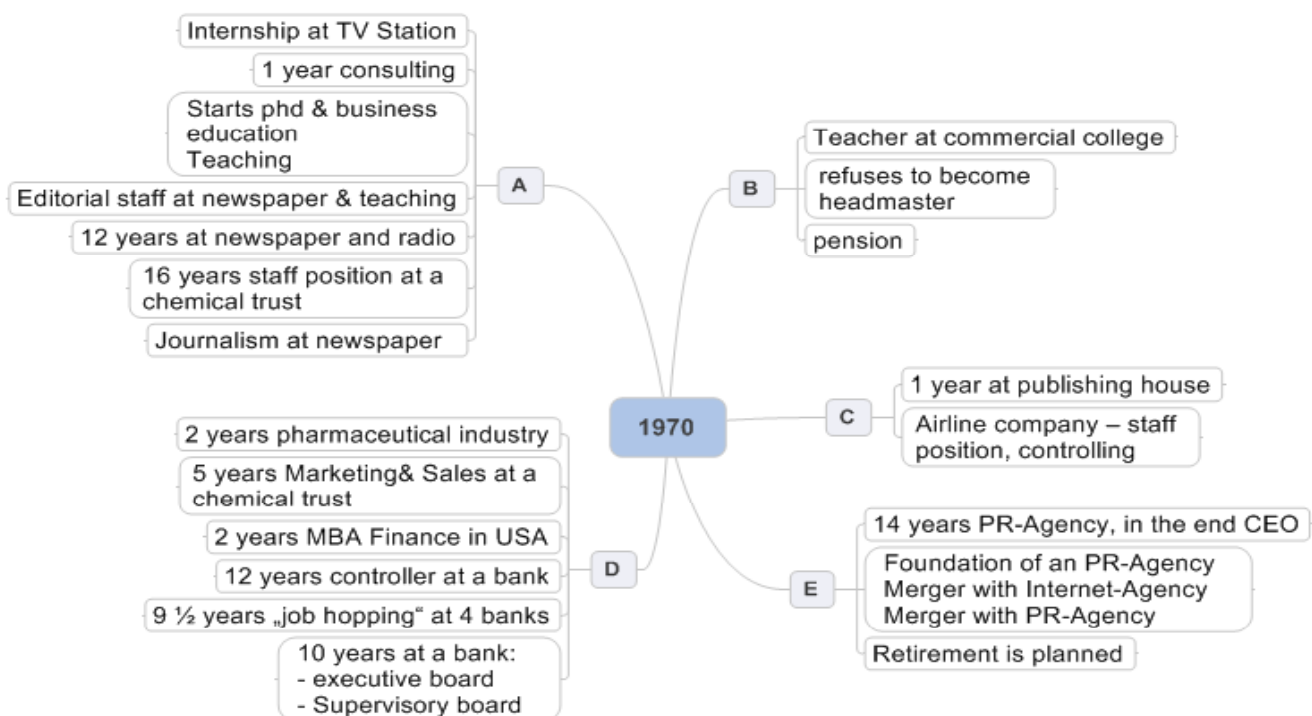
# Methodology and method

- Semi-structured f2f-interviews
- Female Interviewer, female interviewee
- German
- Fully transcribed (and translated)
- Analyst constructed concept (not an in vivo concept)
- Data coded with NVivo 9
- Relational methodology

5

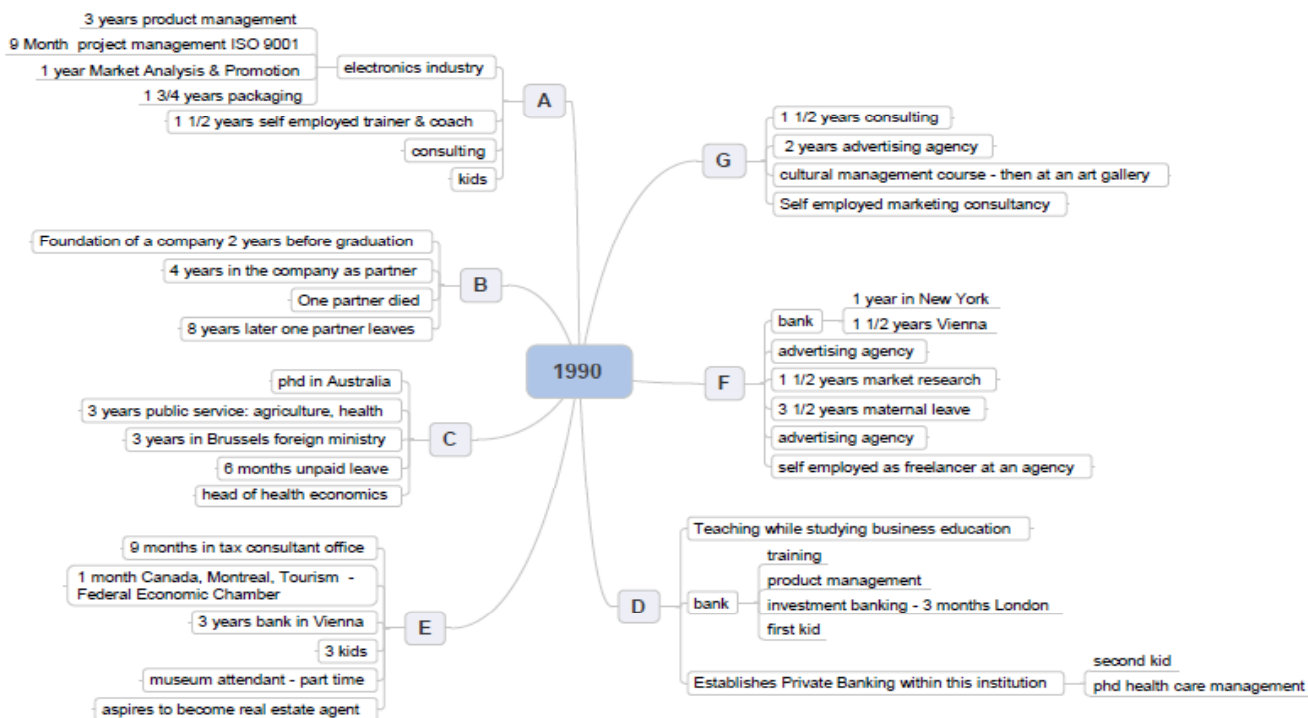
Gibbs (2009); Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr (2008)

# Transitions Sample 1970

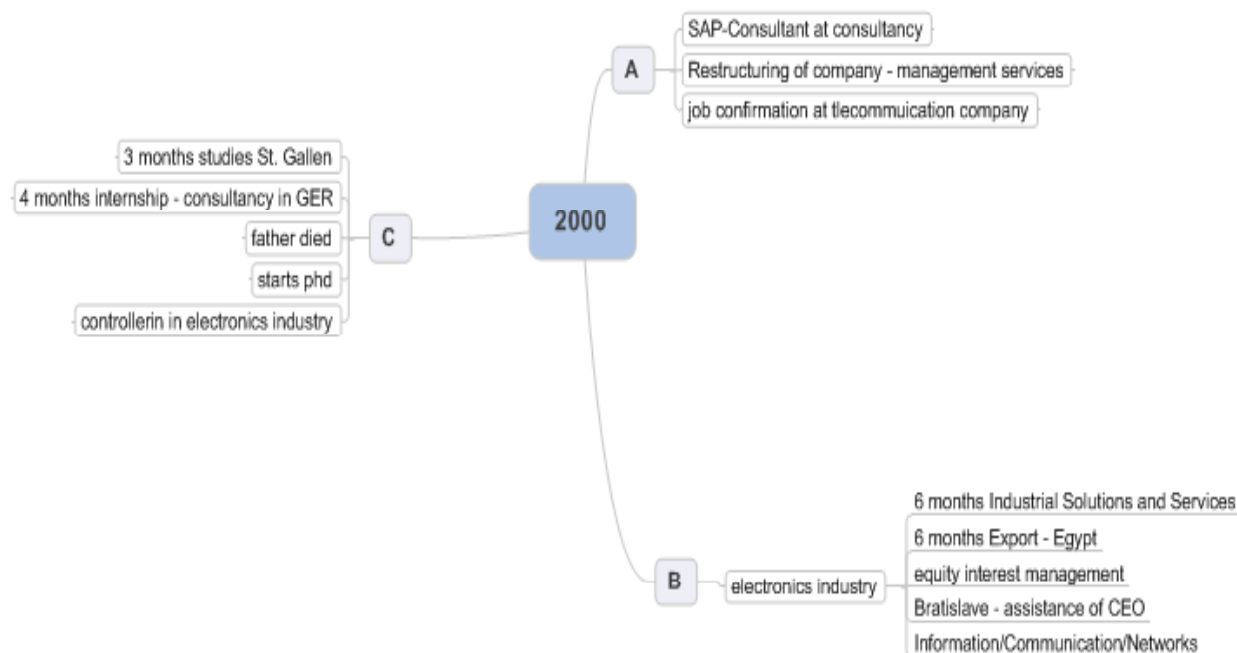


6

# Transitions Sample 1990



# Transitions Sample 2000



## Results 1: Differences

- Not that many
  - Apparently, less industry specific boundaries in the more recent cohort
  - Field specific boundaries remain stable
- Quantity of transitions remains stable
- Stories similar across cohorts and across career stages
  - The same game with different rules?
  - *„We used to give cars and tv-sets, now we do other pretty wild things to raise budgets in return“ (1990-F)*

9

## Results 2: Symbolic capital accumulation

- Social Capital represents the most valuable guise of capital
  - *(...)also later when I did not take part directly I still – I have to say this - kind of lived from it, from this network, because it simply accelerates the flow of information (1970–C)*
  - *(...)the same quality. But what decides then is the...protection and the connections (1990–F)*
- Cultural capital – even in embodied form – is only important at the beginning
  - *you leave University with theoretical knowledge, and this helps, but ... the problem is, companies are more than a accumulation of theories and there, there...there you have to learn a lot, especially, as I said before, with behavior and things like that (2000–C)*
- Economic capital does not play a significant role
  - *the money was kind of the basis, with the money I knew that I would be able to survive in the future (1990–G)*

10

## Results 3: Interplay of capital

- Social capital as leverage of cultural capital
  - (...)it depends heavily, I think, it depends on who is around you, who is close to you and if that person knows what you accomplish or know, like someone who is able to communicate that in one form or another – cause it is 'nice' if you work and work and nobody takes notice (2000–C)
- Institutionalized cultural capital puts embodied cultural capital in the background: Principle of isotimy
  - Clients, that have been older, especially men, did, as soon as I gave them my business card, despite my low position, somehow...interesting, but it had an effect....yes, that was definitely beneficial (1990–F)

11

## Results 4: Conversion of female and feminine capital

- Lack of male capital leads to exclusion to several sources of social capital
  - Membership in CV (1970-B)
  - Relationships with men eventually lead to the same end (1990-E)
- Adjustment of dispositions to the structures of the field via import of stereotypes: a paradox of doxa
  - Maybe I should have been more agentic or something like that. That might be true. Perhaps women tend to demand to little (1970–A)
  - Perhaps I am a typical case of a women insofar as, in a stage, in which a man would maybe have a career, says, no, I prefer it like that, I am at a level, which is quite ok and I try to handle this... (1990-C)
  - (...) cause I thought it was a waste of time (...) That's something I experience a lot with women. They deliver kindly but forget that decisions do not depend on deliverables, they get appreciation – great – but no step forward – at least rarely (1990–A)

12

## Results 5: Most obvious boundary

- Tension between reproduction and career field: a different paradox of intersectionality?
  - Might serve as decision basis for a specific career field
    - „Family business“ was not part of my game – but exactly that caught me (...) Only public sector enabled me to work half time (1990-C)
    - Flexible working hours, which I needed on the one hand for the children, that was basically the main reason and incentive [for self-employment] (1990–F)
  - Might serve as an excuse for not having goals pursued
    - Working from nine to five and then coming home around half past six completely exhausted, (...) controlling the homework of my children and all this stuff, I think it is a big step to let the family down like that. (1990-E)
  - Might be reconstructed as no big deal at all
    - I think no one took notice – not even my clients – that I delivered a child (1990–D)

13

## Caveats

- (Dis-)advantage of ceteris paribus design
  - Arguably, the amount of economic capital does not vary significantly due to high social origin
  - Institutionalised cultural capital (degrees, titles) is no boundary
- Retrospective vs. real-time experiences
  - Interviews in 2003 for 1970, 1990 and 2000 graduates
  - Interviews in 2010 for 1990, 2000 (and 2010 graduates)

14



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