LUND UNIVERSITY

IN AND OUT OF THE NORM:
EXPERIENCES OF NON-HETEROSEXUAL POLICE
OFFICERS IN THEIR WORKPLACES IN GERMANY

CRISTIN GIESSLER

Abstract

This thesis focuses on non-heterosexual police officers' experiences in their workplaces in Germany. It is based on seven semi-structured interviews with non-heterosexual police officers from different branches of the police force and two different federal states. Thereby the main focus lies on the different attitudes the participants encounter in their workplaces and furthermore how they deal with these kinds of attitudes. Analysis and interpretation of their experiences are informed by theories of organizational culture, gender, power, othering and sexual identity.
Encountered attitudes thereby range from those of discrimination, to the experience of support from colleagues and superiors. The ways in which participants deal with the negative attitudes towards them, are described as taking a confrontative or a passive stance. It is suggested that the heteronormative character, hierarchical power structures, and hegemonic masculine domination of the occupational site of the police force make it difficult for non-normative sexualities within the organization.

Keywords: Police, Non-Heterosexuality, Gender, Power

Acknowledgements

First, I want to thank everyone who has participated in this study. Clearly, this research project would have been impossible without you.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Mats Hilte, for all his time and constant guidance, Raili "Almighty", Magda "BW" and Marlene for inspirational talks and their critical thoughts and questions throughout the process. To my family and friends: I appreciate all the support and inspiration you have given me.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

Studying non-heterosexual police officers in Germany, two important trains of thought were foregoing this thesis. On the one hand there is the police organization, a powerful institution, which is the legitimate force of state. In western democratic countries, its task is to secure and sustain the prevailing norms in society and regulate and punish the deviant. The occupational culture of police has been male dominated for years (Fielding 1994) and even more so the importance of physical strength as a necessary feature of everyday police work and its masculine connotation. And secondly, there is the social construction of heterosexuality as the normative and legitimate sexuality, which is predominant in western societies (Butler 1990a). This construction is very much afflicted with gendered stereotypes concerning female masculinities and male femininities, especially in regard to this previously mentioned physical strength. To combine these two trains of thought and to put it simply: what is at stake is the socially constructed deviant within the realm of power.

The focus of this thesis is thereby on people's lived experiences. I use the umbrella term "non-heterosexuality" for political reasons, as well as to avoid forcing participants of this study into unwanted identity categories.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

In a previous essay (Giessler 2011) I have discussed the theoretical assumption of a potential discrepancy of being non-heterosexual and working for the police as well as the potential of a subversive character. This current work takes into account some of the previous ideas and theoretical arguments but is nonetheless heading into another direction.

The main aim is to find out and present a differentiated insight into non-heterosexual police officers' experiences in their workplaces in Germany. Therefore the general question of '*what kind of experiences do non-heterosexual police officers have in their workplaces?*' is further divided into two more specific questions:

- *What kind of attitudes do non-heterosexual police officers encounter in their workplaces?*
- *How do they deal with these kinds of attitudes?*

By following up these two questions, I wish to gain understanding of the different kinds of attitudes which the interviewees are confronted with by their colleagues and superiors. Because I do not want to restrict these attitudes as solely "sexually motivated" due to the non-heterosexuality of the interviewees, I choose to call them simply "attitudes" rather than already specifying it. In doing so, I acknowledge the possible influence of various factors such as gender, sexuality and age. The ways in which the interviewees deal with these encounters is thereby equally important, which is why I wish to explore people's strategies to manage these experiences.

The thesis is meant to be an explorative study on the micro-level and seeks to gain understanding and insight of people's lives, which are highly influenced by the dominant discourses on heterosexuality and subordination.

1.2 Thesis Outline

This thesis is organized in five main parts. The first section consists of background information of the police organization as well as its historical relation to homosexuality. This is followed by the second part, the theoretical background. I will introduce the chosen concepts and also give an insight into my prevailing assumptions, which have influenced the conceptualization of theory. Thereafter, the methodology and choice of method is described in the third part, which also includes reflections on ethics and limitations. This is followed by the presentation, analysis and interpretation of my empirical data, which is divided into the two parts of 'Experiences of Different Attitudes Towards the Interviewees' and 'Strategies of Managing Subordination'. Finally, I discuss the results and outlook and provide concluding remarks.

2 Police Organization in Germany

To do justice to the broad field of police organization in Germany, it would require a much more comprehensive discussion than I can offer here. Nevertheless, I will try to present an overview of and give insight into the organization and highlight some essential characteristics about how the police organisation is structured in Germany.

One of the most important characteristic of the German criminal justice system is that there is no such thing as "the police". Since the German reunification in 1990, the Federal Republic of Germany consists of 16 federal states, each of which has its own police force. Additionally, there are two police organisations, one at the national level, which is the Federal Criminal Police Office[1] and other the federal police[2]. Each of these 18 police units are organized differently. At the federal state level, there is a distinction between the criminal investigation department[3] and uniformed police[4] which is then also differentiated into higher and middle ranking civil service (Groß 2011). According to Martin Winter (1998), there are three essential features about the police organization in Germany. First, policing is the responsibility of the respective federal state (except for the two polices on the national level). That means its organization as well as police law lies in the area of responsibility of the federal state's government. Secondly, the police is statist. This means that, although it is on communal area, there is no municipal police because everything runs under the authority of the state. And thirdly, each police force is solely assigned to the political Department of the Interior in the respective federal state (Winter 1998, p. 82-84). As a consequence, the Ministers of the Interior in the 16 different states are the heads of the police and they also hold the political liability. Effectively, the police are under direct influence of the ruling political party, with the Ministry of Interior wielding the most influence. Thus, it can be said that standards and stances differ to a great extent amongst the different federal states due to different

---

[1] Bundeskriminalamt.
[2] Bundespolizei.
[3] Kriminalpolizei.
[4] Schutzpolizei.

governments but can also alter within, depending on the recent changes of the government. I will elaborate on this aspect in the next section.

Another aspect, which I believe is important to take into account, is the "issue" of women and police. After the federal republic of Germany was founded in 1949, the first police force to allow women to wear a uniform was Berlin in 1978. As explained before, the decision whether to allow women in the police or not was due to the federal states. For example, North-Rhine Westphalia gave their permission in 1982 and finally the state Bavaria was to allow women in the uniformed police in 1990 (Frevel and Kuschewski 2009, p. 66). Currently, 20 per cent of the employed police officers in Germany are women (Groß 2011).

Although the heterogeneous structures of the police have been disclosed, it is impossible in this research intention to investigate and differentiate between the police departments and further take into account the different state politics of the past years. Being aware of this background and the shortcoming of doing so, in this thesis I will nevertheless refer to it as "the police".

2.1 Historical Considerations on Police and Homosexuality

Before giving concrete examples concerning police and homosexuality, I believe it is important to point out the illegal status of the homosexual throughout the past. As part of the state's executive branch, the police had a major role in persecuting and punishing non-normative sexualities.

Despite the fact that Germany was going through a great deal of political, economic and geographical changes throughout the past 130 years, homosexuality and homosexual acts were regulated by law from the end of 19th century until 1994[5]. This particular article, §175 StGB [Strafgesetzbuch; German Criminal Code], was altered throughout the different epochs and under the influence of different political regimes. After Second World War, the Federal Republic of Germany adopted the earlier version of §175, which the Nazis introduced in their

---

[5] By giving this historical background, I only take into consideration the Federal Republic of Germany. The legal situation in the German Democratic Republic differed (for example) to the extent that the total ban of homosexuality (of man and women) was abolished in 1987.

1935 constitution. As a result, homosexuality and homosexual acts were under the prosecution of the state, which often meant loss of the workplace, loss of civil rights, and public humiliation (VelsPol NRW, p. 20). At that point, women were not the subject of legal persecution because the legal text was confined to men. The police prosecuted homosexuals by doing raids, playing agent provocateurs and exert physical violence on gay men[6] (Ibid). The total ban of homosexuality, which was underlying a legal text from Nazi Germany, was finally abolished in 1969. Yet, police still regulated the issue of homosexual acts between men and underage minors before its complete omission in 1994 (Steinke 2005).

Because of the illegal status of homosexuality throughout the German history and the police role as prosecutor of the state, the historical tensions between those two groups become somewhat obvious. But the legal frame still is important when it comes to sexual minorities today. Because of how the police force is organized in Germany, it is equally difficult to draw a general picture. As mentioned previously, the police force is under influence of the different federal governments, which is why their internal stance towards police specific guidelines as well as their outer images vary to a great extent. What was pointed out by Martin Winter (1998) gets reassured by Thomas Ulmer[7], the chairman of VelsPol Deutschland e.V[8]. It makes a great difference which federal state government is in power and which political opinions are thus represented. This assessment becomes apparent by looking at the following two examples.

For instance, in case of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the state government at that time (a coalition of the Social Democrats and the Green Party) had launched a campaign together with the police as a prevention of

---

[6] Obviously, just because the legal text penalizes homosexuality amongst men does not mean that women in reality did not have to suffer from physical or mental violence, raids or discrimination in general. This pre-stonewall situation in the US is for example described in the book "Stone Butch Blues" by Leslie Feinberg (1994).

[7] The presented information is given by Thomas Ulmer, the chairman of the nationwide VelsPol organization. It was collected in a 30 minute expert interview via Skype, in which he provided inside information on campaigns, policies and the work of VelsPol itself. He gave his permission to be quoted in this thesis.

[8] VelsPol is the German abbreviation for „Verband lesbischer und schwuler Polizeibediensteter" and is translated into „Association of lesbian and people in the German police force". There is one nationwide umbrella association and ten VelsPol associations on federal state level.

violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. The campaign "Liebe verdient Respekt" [Love deserves respect] not only addressed sexual minorities but also people with migration backgrounds[9]. It involved posters, showing among other things, same sex couples and it provided educational and explanatory work. After the state elections in 2005, the conservative party of Christian Democratic Union (CDU) formed the government and cut the money for the campaign. According to Thomas Ulmer, this is of great consequence because it shows which stance the state and its representatives are taking towards minorities.

A change of government was also involved in Baden-Württemberg. Since the federal state elections of 2011, the government for the first time is built on a coalition between the Green Party and the Social Democrats after 50 years of conservative government reign. According to Thomas Ulmer, since then a lot of changes have been introduced due to the Ministry of the Interior taking a more liberal stance towards the issue of homosexuality. Concretely, this means that homosexuality will be discussed as educational content in the training of the police cadet. Further, the job position of a contact person for same-sex ways of living[10] within the police force is likely to be established in the near future. This contact person deals both, with the interests of non-heterosexual people outside of the police and issues of non-heterosexual police officers within the organization. To reach out for more acceptance in society, the Ministry of the Interior has created an "action plan for tolerance and equality" which is meant to reduce homophobia within the state. This includes the reduction of heteronormative examples in school books and working towards more diversity concerning ethnic or sexual minorities. By this means, the police are supposed to act as a good example to show how the state treats gay and lesbian people within the police. How this is done, is supposed to be seen on information booths and in parades, on

---

[9] See: http://velspol-nrw.de/con/cms/front_content.php?idcat=168 for detailed information. Accessed 12.06.2012.
[10] Same-sex ways of living is translated from the German "gleichgeschlechtliche Lebensweisen", which is often used in officialese.

which the (uniformed) police can actively deal with the topic of homosexuality within the police force.

2.2 Organizational Policies concerning Anti-Discrimination

There is no specific law or policy which protects sexual minorities within the police from discrimination. What obviously applies in workplaces under civil and employment law is the General Act of Equal Treatment (AGG[11]), whose purpose is to target discrimination on the basis of race or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual identity[12]. Besides this, according to Thomas Ulmer, protection against discrimination is the responsibility of every duty station and its authorities, if they have an interior arrangement that concerns mobbing and discrimination. Nationwide there is an initiative called "Charta der Vielfalt" [Charter of Diversity] which is a voluntary undertaking by different organizations and companies to follow its goals. This includes the creation of diversity (including sexual minorities) and its recognition and appreciation in enterprise cultures (Charta der Vielfalt 2011). Since this is on voluntary grounds, few police departments and police headquarters have signed.[13]

Due to the lack of a de facto internal policy targeting the discrimination of sexual minorities, and the difficulty of providing proof of mobbing, it is very difficult for victims of mobbing to address the issues.

3 Previous Research

In my cross-section of previous research on the topic, I have chosen to focus on the aspect of non-normative sexualities in heteronormative work settings. Some of the studies combine non-heterosexuality and police work, whereas others deal with non-normative sexualities and coming outs in work places in general.

---

[11] Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz.

[12] In the European version of the General Act on Equal Treatment "sexual identity" is replaced by "sexual orientation".

[13] For example, the police headquarters of Stuttgart and Bielefeld.

Though all my studies are set within a western-centric frame, neither of the studies took place within the German context. Additionally, they all differ in choice of methods as well as in how the studies were carried out and/or its purpose. This study does not mean to compare any results or make comparisons concerning any cultural backgrounds or circumstances, it is rather meant to take into consideration certain aspects of previous findings and build upon them, in order to get a differentiated picture.

Marc Burke's study (1994) about lesbian, gay and bisexual police officers considers their deviant status within the police organization. According to Burke, non-equal rights, machismo culture and the police as regulator of deviance are all factors which make it difficult for the organization and its members to accept non-normative behaviour. As a result, Burke states that many of the police officers in his survey struggle with their non-conformist sexual orientation, which puts them at risk for suffering from psychological problems. Further, their ability to function comfortably in the police environment is constricted, and so is their possibility to fully focus on their work duties. Finally, he concludes that this affected non-heterosexual police officers private lives and prevented them from having satisfying personal relationships (Burke 1994, p. 201).

The research of Kristen Myers et al (2004) also departs from a deviant view point of non-heterosexual police officers. They follow up the question, how non-heterosexual police officers "manage their images as "good cops" in the face of gender norm violations associated with their sexual orientation" (Myers et al. 2004, p. 18). To a great extent they refer to Marc Burke's findings in his previous study, but they also extend their frame of analysis and take into consideration the impact of gender norms and associated stereotypes.

Philipp Lyons et al.'s study (2008) about non-heterosexual police officers is very particular. In their research, they focused on the relationship between employees and superiors and assessed the likelihood of police chiefs in Texas to hire gay and lesbian police officers. Furthermore, it takes into consideration the influence of the state policies which concern homosexuality (amongst men) and also the perception of heterosexual colleagues towards gay and lesbian officers.

The main goals of this research were to identify stereotypes, measure prejudices towards gay people, assess the intent of wanting to work with gay and lesbians and find out about the preferred social distance towards non-heterosexuals (Lyons et al. 2008, p. 108).

All of the presented researches are similar in how they have approached their research topics. By focussing on and pointing out the deviant character of the non-heterosexual police officer, I believe, the perspective is relatively limited and leaves almost no agency for the individuals themselves. Taking into account the theoretical implications and concepts, an ostensible discrepancy is not far-fetched. At the same time on the micro-level and for the individuals themselves it can also be seen as very abstract and might impose the deviant and discrepant character on the individual.

I have found the following two studies especially inspiring and fruitful for my own research intent. Beatrix Gusmano (2008) as well as James Ward and Diana Winstanley (2005) focus in their research on the act of coming out in the workplace. Because of the prevailing assumption of heterosexuality, people who want to be out at work must go through the process of coming out (Ward and Winstanley 2005, p. 451). All authors see this process as reiterative and the disclosure of their non-straight sexuality as a performative act (Ibid, p. 452; Gusmano 2008). I found that aspect to be very interesting, especially in regard to their findings concerning the agency of the individual. Beatrix Gusmano states that depending on how one's sexuality is disclosed, for example if it happens on a free basis or if it happens as an outing, the process of coming out can be seen as an act of showing one's agency, and can thus be empowering. And that of course can have a big impact on a person's life and the way of dealing with these experiences. Although my focus is not bound to coming out processes and/ or builds around these experiences, I think these studies are still important to take into account, especially in regard to the issue of agency.

4 Theoretical Framework

In order to get a closer picture and a holistic view on people's experiences, different aspects which could possibly influence these experiences, need to be taken into account. I believe that some of these aspects can be explained with the concepts which I will introduce in this section. But first, I will start out this chapter by disclosing my foregoing presumptions about reality and especially the modern way of thinking. By pointing out these ontological viewpoints, I seek to show its influence on and give reason for choosing my particular choice of theory and concepts.

4.1 Ontological and Epistemological Considerations

Since my choice of concepts and the way of how I have conceptualized them are influenced by certain ontological and epistemological assumptions, it only makes sense to make them explicit. Thereby, ontology and epistemology can be understood as assumptions about the nature of reality and how we know what we know (Ramazanoğlu & Holland 2002, p. 151).

For that reason, I want to first take into consideration and give a short outline on Martin Heidegger's metaphysics[14] about the contemporary age. I believe it is necessary to understand how the modern world and explicitly our way of thinking are functioning. Secondly, I want to consider Judith Butler's account on the heterosexual matrix, in which, I believe, Martin Heidegger's metaphysics retrieve.

All the concepts and definitions as well as identity politics which we use today in order to explain ourselves and social phenomena form part of the "world picture". Thereby, the term "world" means, according to Heidegger, the entirety of everything that is. Beside the contemporary materialities, this also includes history, nature, as well as its relations to each other (Heidegger 1977, p. 129). For example, according to Heidegger, the term "picture", entails more than just the

---

[14] I thereby focus on the two essays "The age of the world picture" and "The question concerning technology".

meaning of a picture of the world (in terms of a painting) and an imitation. Heidegger sees it as nothing less than the world itself in its whole entirety. "Hence world picture, when understood essentially, does not mean a picture of the world but the world conceived and grasped as picture" (Heidegger 1977, p. 129). What distinguishes the modern age then from previous ages is not that the "world pictures" differ, but the very idea of a "world picture" which is decisive of the modern age (Ibid, p. 130).

The question remains how humans are involved in this picture. This, according to Heidegger, happens by relating of "what is," so the entirety of everything that is to him/herself, and thus reflecting this originated connection between "what is" and the individual back to the realm of the norm. Here, this exact relation between what is and the individual becomes the significant coherence (Ibid, p. 131). The individual is irrefutably intertwined with the world picture, and thus plays the most important role in this relation. In Heidegger's terms, wo/man is now "the representative [*der Repräsentant*] of that which is, in the sense of that which has the character of object" (Heidegger 1977, p. 132). The very important notion about this is the relation between subjectivism and objectivism. Wo/man, respectively the representative, arises through objectified looking at the world and only through objectified representation the subject emerges (Ibid, p. 127-128). Following this line of thought, the subject can never be prior to object.

What does all this mean in concrete terms? Defining the "I" is only possible by being conscious about and through opposing, adapting, relating to the "we". A person defines her/himself and additionally understands the whole world as this relational interplay, which in Heidegger's terms is called "objectified representation". Without this, there cannot be a subject. In this sense, modern identity politics derive from this line of thought.

Heidegger further argues that the world picture is a collection of many small pictures (Heidegger 1977, p. 134). In other words this means we understand the world picture as built-up of many different boxes/categories which contour the modern world view and form the grid in western society. As a result, through

these social categories wo/man believes to understand what is going on in the world and make it possible to problematize and point out inequalities. At the same time these inequalities only exist because of the division of people into different social categories. And this is exactly the postmodern critique on identity politics.

With that said, I want to take into consideration Judith Butler's (1990a) theoretical conception of the heterosexual matrix. Since the social category of heterosexuality constitutes the normative sexual practice in the contemporary age, it is further clear that a hierarchical order is created and any non-heterosexual practice or identity is perceived as deviant. To understand the normative character of heterosexuality, I believe it is necessary to look into the construction of the sex-gender-desire cohesion. Essential to this is the binary division between the male and female sex. According to Butler (1990a), the assumingly male or female biological sex builds the ground for the social gender categories of masculine or feminine gender which is assumed to cause desire by and to the respective other gender. Along with this process goes a naturalization as well as normalization of heterosexual desire. Not least, because this is also supported by the idea of the necessity of human reproduction. Thus heterosexuality gets legitimized (Ibid, p. 150). All this can only happen on the basis of the division of stable sexes communicated through stable genders. Thus, a stable gender or a gender identity, such as female, is, according to Butler, a constant repetition of acts (Ibid, p. 191). Here, the reflection of Heideggerian thought is very much to be found in Butler's work. What underlies the work of both thinkers is the idea that there is no truth to be found which underlies the world picture in Heidegger's terms or a natural or normal foregoing which creates the heterosexual matrix. All that we know and take as given is entangled with how we view the world, respectively, the world picture. Through the involvement of humans, the constructionist notion of it becomes clear which is why, according to Heidegger and Butler; we deal with reality but not with the truth.

Having said that, and given as a theoretical outline of the thesis, this description of the contemporary western society enables me to take a refusal stance towards claiming any truth within this study. Dealing with the different

categories and boxes through which we understand ourselves as individual subjects, outline a certain view on people's realities and especially how they understand and give meaning to their world picture. The meaning that we project onto certain social categories, such as homo- or heterosexuality and the hierarchical order that structures this, determines how we understand the world and thus ourselves. Neither is there a truth nor a naturalization that underlies this relation. In this sense, the meaning we give to certain experiences and the way we explain such has nothing to do with the truth as long as it appears in this way of thinking. Nevertheless, it is how we make sense of our contemporary lives and is therefore very much connected to the reality we deal with in our everyday lives.

4.2 Choice of Concepts

Although I have been familiar with the concepts prior to the research, they evolved and developed out of the data and have therefore become a necessary tool in order to analyse the multi-layered experiences of the interviewees. It is suggested that even within the different concepts, different aspects are intertwined and intersect with each other and thus play an important role for its understanding. Further I will emphasise this choice of concepts and critically discuss in relation to my research intent. What is at stake is the dialectics between the individuals' agency within a structural frame. Even though the structural settings are theorized in a rigid way, I will try to consider the individual's capacity to act within and grant responsibility to the individual person. I am aware that this particular choice of concepts is only one way to make sense of the interviewees' stories.

4.2.1 Organizational and Occupational Culture

"A social establishment is any place surrounded by fixed barriers to perception in which a particular kind of activity regularly takes place", (Goffman 1959, p. 231). This definition certainly applies to the social establishment of the police workplace. This certain kind of activity Ervin Goffman talks about is shaped by a certain culture that particularly forms and shapes the unique character of the

respective organization. Studying phenomena which take place within the organization of police, it makes sense to look into the specific character of organization and occupational culture. I believe that many different entangled aspects influence certain experiences that then meet in this particular workplace. In this section, I will therefore highlight the cultural aspect of organization theory and, in line with Calvin Morrill, (2008) recognize the importance of the meaning that the members of the organization put into it. I have chosen this particular concept because I believe it plays an important role in the experiences made by the police officers, which is due to certain rules within the specific organization.

Within the frame of organizational culture, the question of how social structures are constructed and maintained is very central (Ibid, p. 16). In other words, the reproduction of instrumental social structures within the organization by its members is an important factor. This becomes very important issue when trying to find which attitudes people encounter and how they make sense of it. Nevertheless, scholars who were engaged with research concerning organizational culture could not agree upon a clear definition of the term 'culture'. Commonly they put emphasis on the meaning but otherwise their definitions vary concerning ideologies, values, practices, symbols, ritual, knowledge or coherent beliefs (Sackman; Simrcich in Morrill 2008, p. 24).

"To study an organization is to study not only what people do, but how they rationalize or explain the whys and wherefores of that work. Action is fluid, a movement, changeable, subject to definition and redefinition," (Manning 2008, p. 684). Taking this into consideration and being aware that there is no single definition for the term 'culture,' I will acknowledge that it has no fixed meaning but is rather a compilation of meanings, ideas and symbols. Importantly, culture evolves over time and throug construction, maintenance and reproduction by its members (Alvesson and Billing 2009, p. 117-118). Taking a cultural approach within organizational theory builds on the idea that the collective of the respective organization commonly shares ideas about the reality and the meaning of their workplace. This is at the core of the organizational theory (Ibid). This also involves homogeneity in the ways how people relate to the reality of this realm.

Consequently, the question arises about what happens if members of this collective deviate from this homogeneity. Mats Alvesson and Yvonne Billing (2009, p. 122) answer this question by pointing out the connection to certain expectations and norms that play an important part within organizations. Further, deviators often have to struggle with a rather high pressure towards conformance and a rather low level of tolerance. In line with this thinking, Morrill (2008) points toward: "(…) organizational deviance as routine part of the social order of organizations and underscores the importance of context, in that deviance is always defined in relation to the normative expectations of some group" (Morrill 2008, p. 33). Normative expectations of a group also involve certain practices that are constituted, expressed and reproduced through certain rituals, metaphors and actions. A particular ritual within an organization can express a lot of meanings. At the same time, vocabulary outlines action and shapes organizational practices and relations (Alvesson and Billing 2009, p. 125). The use of language is therefore an important notion within organizational culture. In order to understand the police as an organization, it is necessary to examine its particular meanings, symbols and language specificities.

Organizational culture also involves the workplace and of course a site in which it is constituted through interaction and performance by its co-workers. Thus, it only makes sense to take into account gender relations amongst organizational members. When talking about the organizational culture of police, I believe it is almost impossible not to take into consideration gendered relations and the impact of femininities and masculinities.

Police as an occupational culture is still said to tend towards hegemonic masculinity, with a distinction made between the men's work of crime fighting and the women's work of social service activities (Fielding 1994, p.55-56). Many scholars emphasize that the police as an occupational culture has a dichotomous relationship between men and women (e.g. Brown 2007; Fielding 1994; Garcia 2003). It is therefore necessary to take a closer look into gender construction, rather than only pointing out the hierarchical relationship by which the binary oppositions between the male and the female only gets reinforced.

4.2.2 Gender as a Concept

"Gender is always fused with other social, individual and material circumstances. Gender can never be treated as abstract from other issues" (Alvesson, Billing 2009, p. 135). We have already seen that gender is entangled in the concept of organizational culture, and how that influences our understanding of various realms of life. Even though it intersects with many other analytical categories, I do not see gender as a fixed unit with clearly defined and set boundaries, but rather as a relational entity itself. As an analytical category, it certainly cannot be universal, but is very much dependent on the respective contextual setting. Further it differs within time and space, which means that adjusted meanings have altered much throughout history as well as places. Because gender cannot stand by itself, neither simply "be", it cannot be seen as prior to existence but as a construction within the interaction and the performance between different genders. Or to put it in Judith Butler's terms:

> "Because there is neither an 'essence' that gender ex-presses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires; because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender creates the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all" (Butler 1990b, p. 522).

In line with Caroline Ramazanoğlu and Janet Holland (2002, p. 4) I see gender, sexuality, reproduction and identity as interrelated with each other and also socially and politically constituted.

For the purpose of this research intent, I do not see male and female genders as oppositional entities and perceive this binary opposition as rather hampering when analysing social phenomena through a gender lens. Instead of simply dealing with the categories of men and women or male and female, it is necessary to have a closer look into the constructions of masculinities as well as femininities as part of a gender perspective. Not least because gender is a social construct, it still greatly influences our everyday lives. Especially within an occupational site like the police organization with the "stereotyped qualities of hegemonic masculinity" (Fielding 1994, p. 51), the influences of gendered lives need to be taken into account.

Its relational character becomes clear at this point: the concepts of masculinity and femininity could not exist without the contraposition of the respective other (Connell 2005, p.68). Thus, there cannot be a definition of either of them without taking the other into account. As R.W. Connell (Ibid, p. 69) points out, differentiating between 'masculine' and 'feminine' is crucial for a gender analysis because these terms point beyond the simple sex categories of men and women. Focussing on masculinities and femininities, it offers an insight into how these groups of people differ among themselves. For this research intent and the entanglement of sexuality and gender, a differentiated analysis is especially essential.

Further, gender is commonly seen to constantly intersect with other forms of social dimension such as race and class (Ibid, p. 75). Similarly, sexuality, power and gender relations come into the picture when examining "(…) the main patterns of masculinities in the current Western gender order" (Connell 2005, p. 77). Connell describes the most powerful group of men as part of the hegemonic masculinity. According to her, hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the legitimate gender practice, which guarantees patriarchy and holds the dominant position of men and the subordinate position of women in society. In western societies it is associated with dominance and authority. This already indicates towards the notion of power and thus it is stated that a correlation between cultural ideal and institutional power can be seen as the precondition for the hegemony to be established (Ibid). However, not all men can be part of such a hegemonic masculinity and therefore the simple division between men as the bearers of hegemony versus women as the subordinates does not work here. Rather it is described as "the successful claim to authority, more than direct violence, that is the mark of hegemony (…)", (Connell 2005, p. 77).

Hegemonic masculinity cannot be met by many men, because its normative standards do make it difficult for the largest number to engage in practicing the hegemonic pattern (Ibid, p. 79). Also, this hegemonic masculinity, as the top and the most powerful group amongst men and especially its values, must be maintained and supported by someone in order to carry on with and sustain the

patterns. Connell, this is what characterizes "complicit masculinity". Those who belong to this group are seen to enjoy the existence of a superior hegemonic masculinity to which they can look up, and thus they are complicit in creating and maintaining the actual existence of hegemony (Connell 2005, p. 79).

Another distinction R.W. Connell makes and which is equally important to take into consideration, is the concept of "subordinate masculinity". As mentioned before, what underlies hegemonic masculinity is some sort of cultural ideal, which is present in the European/American society. In this sense, the normalized character of a heterosexual identity is an important factor when considering the subordination of homosexual men. Non-heterosexual men are seen to be subordinated due to numerous practices such as economic discrimination, political and cultural exclusion and personal boycotts (Ibid, p. 78). Even if these practices are not necessarily carried out, non-heterosexual men are still potentially exposed to it. What becomes clear here is the relational character again of these gendered interactions. Hegemonic masculinity does not exist without subordinate as well as complicit masculinity.

Further, gayness is, from the point of view of hegemonic masculinity, seen as closely related to femininity (Connell 2005, p. 78). However, it is then not only legitimate to question the term femininity but to go even further and ask: does masculinity necessarily refer to men/ male bodied only? Judith Jack Halberstam (1998) gives insight into female masculinity and states the contrary, that masculinity without men is possible. What is at stake here is to question the normative assumption we have about femininity: that the compulsory order of female sex is followed by a female gender. The examples of tomboyism and butchness show some obvious yet unconventional forms of masculinity (Halberstam 1998, p. 5 et seq.). In contrast to Connell's hierarchical groupings of different masculinities, Halberstam's approach derives from a queer perspective and is much less structured but offers room to negotiate genders irrespectively of people's sexes. Furthermore, it enables me to better understand the interviewees' experiences and primarily the female interviewees' self-portrayal in contrast to other women.

Another question which remains is the one of the placement of the non-heterosexual police officer who has not disclosed his/her sexuality yet. Although Connell does not claim that her model of masculinity is strict, impervious and impossible for members of each group to diffuse through the boundaries, questions concerning how people "move" within the model and who decides upon that still arise. Does the one who discloses his non-heterosexuality then automatically fall into subordinate group, and how would that process be carried out? In relation to the different kinds of attitudes non-heterosexual police officers encounter, I find this aspect to be important, especially in regard to how these attitudes might have changed after a disclosure of sexual orientation.

4.2.3 Power as a Concept

In the previous sections I have already touched upon the aspect of power. It is an important factor in the concept of organizational culture but is also one of the axes within gender relations. Not only because its entanglement in other theoretical concepts but also because power itself is an important issue within this research study, it is essential to take power as a concept into account. Especially in regard to the interviewee's experiences that concern discrimination and subordination, it is a useful tool for analysing and interpreting the data.

It is widely acknowledged that there is not just one "right" perspective on power but that all different perspectives explain important aspects of power (Haugaard 2010, p. 420-421). Therefore, the theorist or, the researcher in need chooses the definition of concept that will be most helpful to realize the research intent (Ibid, p.426).

Distinguishing power into 'episodic power,' 'dispositional power' and 'systemic power' (Clegg 1989) gives insight into the complex term. In Stewart Clegg's terms, *episodic power* indicates to an exertion of power that is connected to an individual agency. Further, the term *episodic* implies a temporary occasion in which the scope of action is to be determined by the individual. *Dispositional power* refers to the agent's inherent capacities and those capacities that could

possibly be inherited by the agent. Regardless of whether they make use of this capacity or not s*ystemic power* refers to the ways in which the respective social systems distribute "differentials of dispositional power on agents, thus structuring possibilities for action," (Haugaard 2010, p. 425). This way of theorizing power is especially interesting when applied to police officers. The decisions a police officer has to take every day constitute the exertion of *episodic power* and can thus be seen as an exercise of agency. Nevertheless, the notion of *dispositional power* is an important influential factor here. The police officer only has this *episodic power* because it gets assigned to their position by the respective state. Only this gives her/him the *disposition,* which defines his/her power. Thus, *dispositional power* lies outside of action, which constitutes the inherent character and the powerful status of a police officer who may or may not carry out this capacity. However, as I have already mentioned before, this particular disposition is not inherent to the individual her/himself, but in the role they possess. Therefore, "they are a reflection of a particular *system of power* in which such things as 'police officers' exist (…)", Haugaard 2010, p. 425).

This means, in short, that the police officer has power, but is also exposed to it, which again raises the question of the individual agency within an assumingly rigid structural system of power. It does not say so much about the distribution of power amongst police officers or within the police as an organization, taking into account the various hierarchies that structure this institution. Institutional power is the collective acceptance of the different functions within the institution and their hierarchical statuses. To maintain one's position in an institution, one must have the legitimate position to demand obedience rather than just being able to make other people do certain things (Stahl 2011, p. 351). This shows again a relational character. Further implying that institutional power depends on the acceptance of the people who belong to it. What does acceptance mean, though, in the context of institutional power? Titus Stahl (2011, p. 354) gives the following explanation. It means:

> "(…) to take accountability, or pragmatically speaking, to accept evaluations and
> sanctions from others. More precisely, it is necessary and sufficient for B having

> institutional power over A that in all (factual and counterfactual) scenarios in which A does not comply with B's demands, A is ready to accept accountability for failing to do so. Thus, B has institutional power (in a narrow sense) over A if and only if A *is ready to **treat*** B as someone who has power in the respective way, which is to say, if A *is ready to accept accountability* for her compliance or noncompliance with B's demands or, more generally, with the obligations entailed by B's institutional status" (Stahl 2011, p. 354; emphasis in the original).

We shall see this explanation later on illustrated in an empirical example. In line with this point of view, Stewart Clegg states that the issue of power within organizations must concern the hierarchical structures and how they relate to each other. The logical consequence of this is the implicit connection to 'legitimate power' and that it "(…) must also be a property of relations" (Clegg 1989, p.189). The relations amongst the organizational members and the power legitimization that is assigned to certain positions and its holders can actually make this hierarchical order possible.

Within legitimate power, according to Clegg (1989, p. 191), there is also a connection to "discipline and organizational virtue" which expresses the member's appreciation and performance of the individual's duty within the organization. This is also called "disciplinary practices" which refers to the relational character of the organization and its members: the hierarchical order of the latter is secured by such 'disciplinary practices' that shape and normalize the collective and organized bodies (Ibid). As already pointed out when introducing the concept of organizational culture, it is a characteristic of such to maintain and hold its homogenized core. Thereby essential mechanisms of power are surveillance and normalization. According to Michel Foucault (1977) like and through surveillance, normalization becomes an instrument of exercising power, which is used by the norm. Power is then constituted through the disciplinary practices of surveillance and normalization (Foucault 1977, p. 184). In the context of the organization that means that there can be many types of surveillance. Taking into consideration the body of police organization, this includes assessments, evaluations, supervision, legislation and/or reporting which to a great extent influence the relations within the body of police organization.

However, what underlies all these conceptualizations is the notion of domination of one over another, or, considering the *systemic power*, the state exerting power over institutions and individuals. Therefore, I also want to take into consideration the concept of 'em*power*ment,' which is essential in connection to agency. The question of how the individual's capacity is exerted and even if the individual can be held responsible within ostensible rigid systemic structures can be emphasised towards an agency viewpoint by conceptualizing empowerment.

Hyung Hur (2006, p. 524) identifies three essential ideas that are important to understand empowerment, which is a multidimensional concept. Firstly, it occurs in and is important in various social disciplines. Secondly, it occurs to individuals and/or collectives. Thirdly, it is defined as a social process because it always happens in relation to others but at the same time it can also be an outcome, which can be evaluated by individuals.

Analysing and interpreting some of the interviewees' experiences may not be possible without taking these aspects of power into consideration. Further, I believe that considering only the oppressive and subordinate notion of power is limiting for the analysis and would not do justice to the multidimensional stories of the interviewees. Even though discriminatory experiences are at hand, the encounter of supportive attitudes within the realm of police organization can also be found. This can thereby mean, that organizing in a collective under the umbrella of a non-heterosexual police officer "community" is the empowering mode for some or the individual support people encounter by their colleagues and/ or superiors. This will be shown later on the thesis.

Thus, Jean Baker Miller conceptualizes power as "the capacity to produce a change" (Miller quoted in Allen 2011), instead of focussing on the conventional notion of domination. In line with this, many (especially feminist) scholars conceptualize power in a non-dominant way and criticize this as masculine conception of power.

I believe all the aspects of power that I have pointed out are equally important for this study. Within the concept I see both conceptualizations as contributing as well as deriving from the social realm of interest. Though, I think

it is necessary to also view power as "power-from-within" which is understood as "the power of ability, of choice and engagement" (Hoagland quoted in Allen 2011). This enables the individual to have more personal agency and grant more control over their own lives as well as in retelling their personal stories. Considering Judith Butler's take on agency, it is important to consider the fact that everyone's agency has its discursive limits. Since agency does not stand in opposition to the constructed environment and is situated within a binary epistemological frame, one can only act within this construction (Butler 1990a, pp. 195-201). We shall see this later on, on a concrete example.

4.2.4 Othering and Othering Processes

Like theories of power, conceptualizations of othering and the process of othering vary from discipline to discipline. I consider this concept to be useful in explaining discriminatory experiences of non-heterosexual police officers. Sara Ahmed (2000, p. 21) provides a phenomenological approach and suggests that we would rather recognize certain people (strangers) as some-body, than fail to do so and admit to recognize them as any-body. Strangers, according to her, are not just seen as unknown people in a certain time and place, but rather "already recognized as not belonging" (Ahmed 2000, p. 21). The stranger is then recognized as someone unknown, an-other and simply not perceived as someone that belongs to the group of 'us'. Therefore, recognizing strangers not only produces the conceptualisation of who 'we' are but also includes necessary techniques, which help to differentiate a strange from a familiar person. This recognisability involves ways of living in which we find 'standardized situations'. When people and ways of life fall out of these 'standardized situations', the distinction is revealed (Ibid, pp. 21-24).

When Sara Ahmed (2000, p. 32 et seq.) argues that the stranger is already recognized as being dangerous simply because of the 'difference,' she evokes the idea of a binary relation between familiar and strange, good and bad, norm and abnorm. In this sense, the process of recognising someone as a stranger can be

called othering process. In Sara Ahmed's theory, othering can be seen as an oppressive action that creates inferiority and marginalization. For manifesting these differences and for the creation of the other, social categories are needed to be able to point out what marks the difference (Schwalbe et al 2000, p. 422). Considering dominant societal norms such as heterosexuality, especially in a normalizing institution like the police, I suggest that someone non-heterosexual is more likely to be recognized as an-other, rather than as part of the dominant majority. In this sense, there can be certain attributes, which deviate from prevailing norms within the police organization that is thus recognized as "other." Especially when taking into consideration the characteristics of the homogenous organizational culture, gender normatives and the power relations, the idea of othering people with non-normative sexualities within these structures is not far-fetched.

What additionally is at stake here is the potential danger of creating othering by the researchers themselves. By researching non-heterosexual police officers experiences within the workplace, I actually point out the potential special status of this situation and run the risk of othering these people myself. Being aware of this pitfall, I am consciously trying to avoid adding to this process.

4.2.5 Sexual Identity

Why is the concept of sexual identity important to the research? I have already mentioned that not all of the interviewees identified as lesbian or gay. Even though someone might not want to be categorized within these terms, the possibility of potential discrimination due to social categorization still exists. At the same time, other non-heterosexual police officers clearly identify themselves within the lesbian and gay identity framework and bound certain experiences they make to this sexual identity. This is why I have pointed out the specificities about the modern age and the underlying grid that consist of many of these social categorizations, particularly in this case concerning sexuality. Although there is no such thing as essential gender and/ or sexual identities, this can nevertheless be

the basis for potential discriminatory experiences, which is why I have chosen to include this concept. Therefore it is necessary to look into the construction and conceptualization of identity to further understand how people's identities influence their specific experiences.

This raises the question of what is meant, when talking about sexual identity. James Ward and Diana Winstanley (2003, p. 1256-1257) point out the connection to self- and social identity. Self-identity is concerned with the question of 'who am I'? It draws on personal experiences to constitute the 'I' as an individual being. Similarly, the term social identity is concerned with the idea of 'who am I?' but focuses more on other people's perception of 'I'. This is underlayed by a certain set of images and "social attributes perceived and reflected back by others" (Ward and Winstanley 2003, p. 1257). Thus, identity can be seen as relational, as something that is constituted through the relations with others. It is a self-assessment that is concerned with how we make sense of ourselves in relation to others (Stychin 2005, p. 92). As a relational and analytical category, sexual identity therefore cannot be essentialized as a 'natural' or 'biological' unit.

In this sense, a sexual identity is something that derives from how people define themselves by comparing, contradicting and adjusting with others. This happens in a context where the heterosexual norm is prevailing. So, when a minority sexual identity is defined in contrast to the dominant norm, it is therefore perceived as deviant. A collective sexual identity like gayness, thus has to deal with this internal conflict: a collective identity on the one hand, builds the ground for common struggle against oppressive structures and can be a political statement to fight for personal rights. Collective identity can lead to empowerment, since it can mean a site of resistance and empowerment for the individual.

On the other hand, "deviant" sexual identities are also the breeding ground for just this oppression, simply because it is constituted as a sexual minority group in contrast and shadow to the prevailing heterosexual norm. Because this dichotomy is acknowledged, the struggle takes place from a deviant and inferior position.

This is also an important issue within organization and occupational culture. It is widely recognized that sexuality in the context of workplace is a fairly under-researched area (Ward and Winstanley 2005; Gusmano 2008). It is suggested that the prevailing heterosexual norm in society as well as in workplaces expose the particular position of sexual minorities. According to Ward and Winstanley (2005, p. 448), the form of the disclosure of someone's "sexual identity" is a crucial event for the individual. They suggest that the performance of the individual coming out process is essential in determining a person's future position (Ibid, p. 451). Although this is not the focus of this thesis, several experiences and reactions of the police officers concern their coming out processes.

Therefore, sexual identity will be treated as an analytical category to gain a better understanding of the interviewees' diverse experiences. A central question is if, and how, the different experiences non-heterosexual police officers encountered were influenced by the notion of sexual identity.

5 Methodology and Methods

"Planning any social research project requires decisions on what to study, what information to produce, and how to go about making sense of it" (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002, p. 146). Therefore, in this chapter I will focus on the research process and thus articulate and discuss the many different aspects about how this study has been carried out.

5.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is an interpretative approach which deals with the understanding of meaning that people assign to different social phenomena taking place in their social worlds (Snape and Spencer 2003, p. 3). Taking a qualitative stance means to emphasise human thinking, acting, knowing and generally the different ways in which people understand themselves as individuals. By doing so it takes into consideration cultural settings, everyday life situations, and situated

aspects of people's lives (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, p. 12). Even though Kvale and Brinkmann (Ibid) state, that a qualitative research opposes a "technified" approach of how to study human lives, I do not mean to oppose qualitative and quantitative research methods and discuss its relation, differences or pros and cons. Rather I want to point out, that in order to appropriately meet the interest of this research, I believe that qualitative research methods offer the most access. With regard to the dialectics of agency and structure, taking a qualitative stance is a step to emphasise the individuals' capacity to act and to take responsibility even within ostensible rigid structures.

5.2 Interviews

An Interview, according to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 3) is a professional conversation with structure and purpose. Its purpose is to get hold of people's experiences and thus to produce scientific knowledge. Thereby it is clear that this process of knowledge production through conversations takes places within a social setting and is therefore always intersubjective (Ibid, p. 18). This means interviewee and interviewer construct this knowledge together, or more precisely their interaction constructs knowledge. Therefore, different interview participants create different interactions which means that different knowledge is produced (Ibid, p. 32).

Based on the idea that there is no such thing as absolute knowledge or an absolute truth, it only makes sense to perceive knowledge and knowledge production as something that is present in the relationship between individuals towards each other and the world (Ibid, p. 53).

Therefore, I have chosen semi-structured interviews as a methodological tool to gain in depth understanding and a holistic picture of the interviewees' experiences within their work settings. Semi-structured interviewing involves a script, which gives the interview a basic guidance (Ibid, p. 130). In the case of this study, the interview approach was orientated towards a purposive conversation and held only little structure. Within the range of semi-structured interviewing, it

is then rather a theme-centred conversation. Within the theme-centred interview, structuring questions are combined with questions that trigger the interviewees' narrative potential (Bohnsack et al. 2006, p.153). Because of the explorative-interpretative approach, the interview maintains an interactive structure. This also means that responsibility and allocation of power is shared between researcher and interviewee. By keeping the flexibility of the situation the interviewee can decide on the previously introduced interesting topics of the conversation and elaborate on the aspects that are most important to them. I did not have a fixed catalogue of questions, which allowed for flexibility during the interview sessions. Thus, it was not only possible for the interviewees to hold more agency by being able to decide upon the direction of the interview to a large extent, but also for myself to ask specifically about certain things the interviewees have come up with spontaneously. Nevertheless, I focussed on common themes during each interview to maintain the possibility of analysis and comparability. These themes included:

- Basic information about themselves
- Their concept of the police as a profession
- Police culture
- Coming Out(s) at work
- Social environment within the police

5.2.1 Sample

Qualitative research usually uses non-probability (also called criterion based or purposive) samples (Ritchie et al. 2003; Silverman 2010). The samples are chosen on purpose in order to reflect specific features that are important for the meaning of the study. Statistical representativeness is thereby irrelevant and the individual's experiences are emphasized. My approach in purposive sampling can be assigned to the category of homogeneous samples because they are "(…) chosen to give a detailed picture of a particular phenomenon- for example, individuals who belong to the same subculture or have the same characteristics.

This allows for detailed investigation of social processes in a specific context", (Ritchie et al. 2003, p. 79). Further David Silverman (2010) states that in purposive sampling those people who have the best knowledge and experiences in the study area of interest get involved. Consequently, it makes sense to apply this sampling technique to my own research intention.

Therefore I have chosen to contact the members of VelsPol (Association of lesbian and gay people in the police force) Berlin/Brandenburg, which is a regional association of the federal states Berlin and Brandenburg of gay and lesbian police officers. Although the title of the association is restricted to gay and lesbian police officers, they also include bisexual colleagues and trans-identity police officers. Four men answered my appeal for an interview via email. The age of the interviewees ranged from 39 to 56 years and their time of engagement within the police body varied between 15 and approximately 40 years. Three out of four interviews were conducted in public spaces chosen by the interviewees. One, by the interviewee's request, took place in my apartment. Via those interviewees who have already agreed on an interview, I tried to get in touch with some of their colleagues who could possibly be interested in talking to me. As Jane Ritchie et al. (2003, p. 94) states, it is not recommended to solely rely on snowball sampling, but this technique can still be applied as a supplement to get hold of more interviewees. In the context of the officers in Berlin/Brandenburg, my attempt to get more people interested in an interview, did not work out. The fact that I chose this specific association in the first place was mainly due to practical (geographical and monetary) reasons. And secondly I assumed that the number of people interested in doing an interview would be higher in fairly liberal places, which is why I chose the capital over rural areas of the country. I am aware of the fact that this is also highly problematic. I will elaborate on that aspect to a greater extent in chapter 5.5.

Although I have been trying to avoid personal contacts, I did take advantage of a friend who functioned as a gatekeeper and put me into contact with non-heterosexual police officers. This way I was able to conduct more interviews with three women in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg. Their ages varied

between 24 and 31 years and their time of occupation within the police ranged from five to 13 years. One interview took place in the interviewee's apartment; with another I meet in a public space and the third one took place in the conference room of the police station.

This thesis builds on data conducted through seven interviews with four male and three female police officers, of whom not all consider themselves as gay or lesbian is one of the reasons why I try to avoid these labels. In the next section, I will introduce the interviewees individually. They are organized chronologically. In order to protect people's anonymities, names and age have been altered. Also current occupations have not been described in depth, to the extent which, I believe, it does not influence the substance of their stories.

5.2.2 Introduction of the Interviewees

Alexander is in his late 30's and has been working as a police officer for approximately 20 years now. During this time, he has been working in different units of the police. This includes the riot police[15], uniformed police and patrol service. He is now positioned in the middle ranking civil service, as shift supervisor in his current department. Alexander is in a long-term relationship with his partner and has been living openly gay in his workplace for almost ten years. He had chosen the point of disclosure and decided to first tell his patrolling partner with whom he had been working for about two years up to that point. Alexander, according to his own statement, has never encountered any discrimination and has solely had good experiences after the disclosure of his sexuality.

The second person whom I have interviewed is Arne, who currently is in his 50's and has been a police officer for the past 40 years. Arne grew up in the former part of eastern Germany and therefore worked for the People's Police[16] until the

---

[15] Riot police are a part of the uniformed police force.
[16] People's Police is the official translation for the term Volkspolizei, which was the legitimate police force in the former German Democratic Republic.

reunion in 1990. Until then, he lived a double life and kept his sexuality completely secret. During this time he was also under investigation by the Stasi[17] and at risk of losing his job. A couple of years after the reunion, he decided to first come out to a colleague from the former west and says that he has not regretted this decision at all.

Johan, the third interviewee, is in his early forties and has been policeman for the past 20 years. He is working in higher service for the Federal Criminal Police Office. Due to his area of responsibility, Johan frequently goes on business trips. He never wanted anyone in his workplace to know that he is gay and therefore made a clear separation between work and private life. Nonetheless he was "outed" due to two colleagues gossiping about an incident which had happened on a business trip. He feels mistreated by superiors on one hand and relieved about not having to be secret about his private life anymore on the other hand.

Manuel, who is also in his early forties, has spent approximately the last 15 years within the police occupation. He is working in higher service and has been carrying out different jobs within the criminal investigation department. Unlike the other interviewees, he has been open about his sexuality in the workplace from the beginning. Manuel and his husband have been living in a civil partnership for the past couple of years.

Melissa is in her 20's and has been working for the police for the past five years. She is positioned in the middle raking civil service and has experience in working in the riot police as well as in the police station. Her range of experiences involves occupations in rural as well as urban areas. Melissa does not consider herself a lesbian and is currently, after being solely in relationships with men, in her first long term relationship with a woman. So far she has only told those colleagues

---

[17] Stasi is the shortcut for Staatssicherheit and was the ministry of secret service of the former German Democratic Republic.

and superiors whom she also considers to be friends about her same-sex relationship, and she does not want people to label her as a lesbian.

Carina is around 30 years old and currently employed in the middle ranking civil service. She has been a police officer for more than ten years and also changed her workplaces and fields of occupation within the police force a few times. She has experiences of working in small towns as well as in a city. Carina has been open about her sexuality after separating with her first girlfriend, a policewoman, who did not want to disclose their relationship within the police occupation. She identifies as lesbian and has not lied about it since that break up almost ten years ago. She now lives with her long term girlfriend and her girlfriend's daughter.

The last person whom I interviewed is Janine, who is in her twenties and is also employed in the middle ranking civil service. During the past approximately five years in which she has been working as police officer, she also gained experience in different fields such as riot police and police station. She is currently the only woman in her shift and it is well known that she identifies as lesbian.

5.2.3 Process of Interviewing and Transcription

All interviews I conducted within the time range of four weeks. They were all carried out in German language and recorded with a digital voice recorder. After explaining the following interview process and the idea of a theme based conversation, the aspect of confidentiality was discussed. Subsequently, the main themes were introduced in the beginning of the conversation. I explicitly said that it was up to the interviewees themselves with which topic they would like to start with. However in some cases, due to confusion and uncertainty what to start with, I encouraged the participants to start with basic information about themselves, in order to ease the access and possible tension. The lengths of the interviews ranged from 50 minutes to approximately one hour and 15 minutes.

In my judgement, the place of the interview did not influence the fluency of the interview process to a great extent. The interviewees chose the location

themselves in order to secure a comforting atmosphere. Nevertheless, background noises, especially in outdoor places but also in cafés, often led to distraction and interruption of the conversational flow.

Also, concerning the interview flow in general, there is rarely a pattern to be found amongst the interviewees. In almost all cases it was possible to ask narrative inducing questions which led them to tell their stories. However, in two cases, I could sense scepticism in the beginning. This means I had to ask more questions in the beginning of the interview situation but by the end of the conversation it had turned into a narrative, and I believe comfortable, conversation. Solely in one case I was not able to create a conversational atmosphere of the interview situation. She iteratively said she was probably not the right person to interview and was unsure whether the things she had said were the right things to say or helpful for me. After reassuring her several times, it was still difficult to encourage her to talk and involved me asking many questions.

The transcription of the interviews was done with the help of a program called F4 and by following a basic transcribing system according to Thorsten Dresing and Thorsten Pehl (2011). By using the basic rules of transcribing the interview, the focus lies more on the content and the meaning of what is said rather than focusing on linguistic details.

5.3 Analysis

Analysis and interpretation of the interview data was completed with the help of several social research approaches. It has, to a certain extent, been influenced by grounded theory. For example, I began the research project by exposing general research questions concerning the topic. Another characteristic of grounded theory is that after conducting the interview data, I have then started the analysis with this particular data and followed up leads what interviewees have pointed out (Chamaz 2003, pp. 85-87). Thereby I have kept an open eye on the topics which the interviewees have declared as crucial and which I have then taken into consideration. For example, because some interviewees mentioned support and

friendship with colleagues and superiors, this has become an important aspect within the thesis.

In line with the grounded theory approach I have used Herbert Blumer's (1969) take on "sensitizing concepts" in order to reach a closer viewpoint for further analysing and interpreting the data. Blumer opposes sensitizing concepts to definite concepts. Thereby definite concepts are characterized by a clear definition and assigned with fixed attributes (Blumer 1969, pp. 147-148). A sensitizing concept, on the contrary, lacks such specification and thus makes it impossible to move to the "ostensible relevant" content right away. Alternatively, it enables general guidance for the user towards an empirical stance, instead of providing prescription of what is most likely to occur (Ibid, p. 148).

In this sense I have used two sensitizing concepts to start out the analysis and interpretation. As an entry point to the empirical data, I chose to look into "different kinds of encountered attitudes" and "handling of these attitudes" to be able to see what kind of experiences the interviewees have made in their workplaces. This also allowed me to keep an open mind about different influential factors since very often the encountered attitudes are not sexually motivated, but rather were gendered, and thus intrinsically entangled with power structures.

What further influenced the analysis and interpretation of data was an abductive research stance. This indicates that there are always guesses, presumptions and speculations which influence a theorizing process (Locke 2009). Further, interpretations and analytical suggestions, which have generated throughout the research process are perceived as possible indicators of the respective structures or characterizations. Also by taking an abductive stance, I was aware that trying to theorize actual lived experience is a messy business and thus fallible (Ibid).

As I have already pointed out before, although I was familiar with most of the concepts prior to this research, they still emerged out of the data after having entered the data through the sensitizing concepts. In line with Kathy Chamaz (2003, p. 85) who states: "(…) sensitizing concepts provide a place to *start*, not

end" (emphasis in the original), I used the previously introduced concepts for further analysis and interpretation.

5.4 Ethics and Accountability

Even though "theme-based conversation" sounds more like two equalitarian participants having a dialogue than semi-structured interview, it is still a research interview and a professional conversation with dichotomous structures and power asymmetry (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, p. 33).

The asymmetrical power division between researcher and research subject is obvious in many ways. Being aware of the fact that researchers have trained skills which they can apply in interview settings, it is therefore clear that there is a possibility of (maybe even unintentionally) manipulating the interviewee by asking certain questions. Further, it might be called a professional conversation, but it is still a one-way dialogue in which the distribution of roles is very clear. And also after the interview is conducted, the power of the researcher becomes obvious. She/he is in control of what has been said and has therefore the monopoly of interpreting the data (Ibid, p.33-34).

Ethical considerations are therefore essential. Following basic rules like informed consent, keeping anonymity and confidentiality of the subject, and protecting participants from harm or deception is obligatory in carrying out the research intent (Lewis 2003, p.66-71; Bryman 2004, p. 509). Keeping this in mind, in my first email approach to the VelsPol association, I have asked permission to use a digital voice recorder and repeatedly asked for the interviewees' permission before starting the interview. Further, I have given the decision about where to meet for the interview to the participants and let them choose according to where they feel the most comfortable.

I have chosen to call this section "accountability" rather than "reliability and validity" because of the positivist connotation of those two terms and its significance in quantitative research. As I have already discussed in previous sections, I do not believe in the possibility of truth discovery, which is indicated

by using the terms validity and reliability. Nevertheless, not being concerned with the truth does not mean, I do not hold a moral responsibility for how knowledge is produced and authorized (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002, p. 14). In this sense, I was concerned in two ways. On one hand this touched upon the interview situation, in which I could only try to make sure not to influence the interviewee consciously and openly present myself and my research intent. On the other hand, this concerns my analysis and interpretation of the produced data, which requires a constant re-checking and questioning of what knowledge I have produced (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, pp. 249-252).

According to O'Reilly (2008, p. 60) "awareness of the potential for exploitation and the role of representation is a first step in trying to avoid it". With this in mind, I have tried to become clear about the unequal role distribution and also about the actual outcome for me as the researcher on one side as well as the participants on the other side. When thinking about interviewing police officers, one could assume that there is less dichotomous and power asymmetry between researcher and research subject than with other, maybe obviously neglected or marginalized groups of people (for example with an uncertain legal status). Yet, reflexivity of the researcher, sensitivity of representing other "cultures" and being aware of power-dynamics as well as gender dimensions, I believe is inevitable in every qualitative research.

Besides, the question of whether this research is contributing to anything else than knowledge production in academia, and if it has an impact on the interviewees' lives, still remains.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

Non-heterosexual police officers' experiences can be studied in many ways, within different theoretical frameworks and taking into account different aspects of people's lives. In previous chapters I have expressed my research intention and the ways I have carried out the study. Therefore it is obvious that it also contains

certain limitations, which need to be articulated. I will consequently point out some strains which could possibly influence and limit the research intent.

One of the most important aspects is that the police and its structure and organization in Germany cannot be examined in depths. Since each one of the 16 federal states in Germany has its own police force, which is under the influence of the respective federal state government, they are all organised and structured in different ways. Although they are all streaked by many levels of hierarchies, they still differ to a great extent. Not only do the state police forces differ to one another, but also within the state, there are different departments, each with very different tasks and differently organized hierarchical levels. Obviously, it cannot be assumed that from riot police to criminal investigation departments, the structures, atmospheres or social handling is the same. Therefore this study cannot offer an in depth analysis of the police, simply because this would go beyond the scope. All participants work in different strands of the police, which is why this study gives a first insight into everyday police life in general without examining the specificities of the different strands.

What also preponderates is the small number of interviewees. In this sense, a greater number of participants and a restriction to a particular place and police strain in Germany would have possibly been more insightful.

Further I acknowledge that choosing the area of Berlin/Brandenburg and my first letter of enquiry to VelsPol could have an influence of the research intent. "Many qualitative researchers employ (…) purposive and not random sampling methods. They seek out groups, settings and individuals where (…) the processes being studied are most likely to occur", (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, quoted in Silverman 2010, p.141). It is therefore necessary to keep in mind that my written appeal could have been selective and unintentionally address only people with certain kind of experiences, and thus could have influenced the outcome of the thesis.

6 Experiencing Different Attitudes

The following part is the description, analysis, and interpretation of the encountered attitudes of the interviewees by their superiors and colleagues. I have organized the interviewees' experiences into four different groups, to be able to give a more differentiated insight. Thereby, different discriminatory attitudes and the ways in which they are carried out are discussed. Likewise, I will emphasise not only the negative experiences, but also highlight positive and supportive experiences they have made within their workplaces. By gathering the interviewee's experiences into these groups, it is possible to get an overview of what kind of attitudes they encounter in the workplace. In doing so, I believe, it becomes more accessible for the reader and for further interpretation. What already became clear throughout the theory part is the intersection and inseparability of the theoretical concepts and social dimensions. Consequently, there are various aspects of these concepts to be found in each experience and thus not easily assigned to simply one or the other category.

It is important to mention that I did not intend to categorize the people in my research, but tried to group their diverse experiences.

6.1 Subordination through Normative Power

The presented experiences in this section contain obvious discriminatory attitudes. The experienced discrimination is thereby mostly characterized by subordination through normative power. This certainly entails the notion of normative gender construction within the occupational culture. It is important to mention that the interviewees themselves, while telling these stories, named it as discrimination or at least recognized the encounter of injustice. Further, the discrimination encountered in these stories is directly pointed to the interviewees, in most cases exerted by their superiors and colleagues through language. Thus, it can be seen as an active deed to the detriment of the interviewee.

Some of the experiences the interviewees shared, involved hostile and discriminatory attitudes by their superiors and colleagues, which were also

directed towards the interviewees' gender and sexuality. The way these attitudes were practiced towards the interviewees and how it was perceived by them, show resemblance in many ways. In the way these attitudes were carried out, the relational character of institutional power is revealed and the interplay amongst the involved actors is emphasised. In two cases, the discrimination and attitudes of the interviewees' superiors led to adverse careers through the negative assessment of the superior. This statement can be elucidated by taking into consideration Johan's and Janine's stories.

Johan is working for the Federal Crime Police Office and, due to his position, often going on foreign trips. He had decided not to reveal his sexuality in his workplace and to anyone within the police occupation. On one of these working trips, during their leisure time, he had met a man with whom he went back to his hotel. Two of Johan's colleagues had been sitting in the lobby and witnessed how he and this man crossed the hall together. Approximately six months later, aspersions were going around about how Johan had hooked up with "hustlers and prostitutes" while being on this business trip. After a couple of days the superior called him into his office for a personal management talk.

> *"And then he tells me, listen, when you are somewhere on a business trip, you neither take relatives, nor friends let alone prostitutes slash hustlers to your room. Literally. Direct quote. And then I asked, well, is this an official instruction? Answer: this is an announcement"* (Johan).

Later on, Johan finds out that it was not this particular superior's idea but that he was sent by a higher ranked superior to make this "announcement" to him.

What is pictured in this example is the assertion of power within an institutional setting. In fact, several hierarchical levels within the body of Federal Crime Police were involved when institutional power was exerted on Johan. The fact that his next superior in rank, the head of the division, was sent by higher ranked superiors, led to believe that the legitimate power which is intrinsically inscribed in this body of organization, has been exerted throughout the instances. This requires obviously the collective acceptance of the different hierarchical positions in rank. By reassuring himself, if it is "an official instruction", Johan

acknowledges his subordinate role and seemingly submits himself to the rigid structures within the organization.

Janine acted in a similar way when she was forced by her superior to change her report very shortly before the end of the shift. This example is one of several incidents she had encountered with her superior who she thinks treats her "differently"[18].

> *"And shortly before the end of the shift, he comes. Change this word, or look for another name for this word or something. And I was like what? And why and so on. Well, yeah, that doesn't fit. What do you do, you have to listen to him, he is your boss. [I] sat down and did it, just before six and rewrote the event. That was never the case, no talk of it that I ever did something wrong and now suddenly. I was like ok. He did that, over and over again"* (Janine).

Taking this into consideration, the aspect of 'acceptance' within the notion of institutional power becomes clear. The hierarchical order can only exist with the acceptance of the organizational members. At the same time, her superior misused the legitimate power, which is assigned to his position and the institution as a regulatory and discriminatory practice against Janine.

Prevailing norms, rules and expectations in police organization, have been perceived by superiors and colleagues as being violated by the interviewees. As Mats Alvesson and Yvonne Due Billing (2009, p. 122) state, the homogeneity within an organization makes it difficult for deviators because of the rather low level of tolerance and a high pressure of conformance. In this case, the homogenous character is tried to be secured by the respective superiors using their instruments of power. In line with this, Mark Burke (1994) also states in his study, that several factors within the police occupation make it difficult for the organization and its members to accept non-normative behaviour. That is the machismo culture and the notion of the police force as the regulator of deviance, which is intrinsically inscribed within the institution (Burke 1994, p. 201).

I assert that the discrimination is encountered through the prevailing dominant hierarchical structures in police occupation and because the

---

[18] Janine wondered several times throughout the interview why this superior treats her differently. In doing so, she considered "being different than other women", "being lesbian" and "being the one he didn't get", as possible reasons.

homogenous character has been "violated" by the interviewees. The experience of active detriment in the form of career threatening incidents is pointed out by the following quote, in which Johan talked to a friend and colleague about why he did not get promoted:

> *"This colleague gets promoted, this colleague and this colleague, everybody around me gets promoted, except me. How come? The answer was, then he took a deep breath and thought about what to say. Then he said, yes Johan, that is because you are a dazzling and difficult character. Yes, that is a nice phrasing, dazzling* [means][19] *gay, difficult* [means] *to speak up. That is a no-go. Absolute no-go in this combination* (Johan).

He sees the reason for his lack of career advancement to a combination of him being gay and him speaking up. These assigned attributes cannot be seen as the only reason why he experiences this kind of discrimination. Though, embedded within the context of the organizational structures, it becomes obvious that "a dazzling and difficult" character is not wanted within this body of occupation.

Similarly to this account, Janine's superior sees the homogenous character of the occupational setting threatened by her as well.

> *"(...) and then we had this Christmas party last year. And we eat and drink and everyone, yay, happy and then suddenly. Very funny actually. So we get some sparklers. Every woman got a sparkler. He looks at me and says: why do you have a sparkler? And I was like, eh, [...] because every woman got sparkler. He looks at me and says, well, yes. And I was like, what, yes. So, really crass[20]. (...)"*
> (Janine)

In line with her supervisor who questions her "womanhood", some of her colleagues go as far, in their gender related discrimination, as calling her "the it" and further using the nickname "Olli", short for her middle name Olivia, to tease her:

> *"And then suddenly one colleague in my shift calls after me; who is also the right-hand-man of my boss, they're close friends. Well, where is "the it"? And*

---

[19] Throughout the text, the comments in square brackets and non-italic letters are put to better understand the quote.

[20] Janine used the German expression "krass" a lot. It is a slang term in youth language and often used as an expression for astonishment or excitement. It can have a positive or a negative connotation. In this case it had a negative meaning. I translated it into "crass", being aware that it might not capture the full meaning.

> then I didn't react. And then he came into the room where I was and says to me,
> "the it", Olli", (Janine).

Gender related discrimination as experienced by these interviewees reveal again a relational character. At this point it becomes clear that the colleagues' and superiors' attitudes are not solely "sexually" motivated but practiced discrimination is very much gender related. Those superiors and colleagues, who exert power and discrimination over the interviewees, do this on the bases of their hierarchical power position and from a hegemonic masculine point of view. Johan, with the assigned "dazzling" character is seen as subordinate to the hegemonic masculinity, according to R.W. Connell's (2005) model of masculinities. This dichotomy only gets constituted by the relational character of the different masculinities. On one side, it is pointed out that women are subordinate within Connell's model of masculinities. At the same time, to understand the discrimination Janine encounters, it is not enough to only understand gender as a division of male masculinity and female femininity but also take into consideration female masculinity. The discrimination Janine encounters is connected to the normative gender categories and the heteronormative frame, in which her supervisor and colleagues have troubles to place her. In combination with his status of power, the hegemonic position of her superior becomes clear:

> "And (...) yes, so far he also always had every one [sex with the girls mentioned above]. Alongside, quasi. And then someone [like me] comes to his group [Dienstgruppe] who goes against this a bit. So I put up with a lot, he is my boss and that is alright. But if something doesn't suit me, then I'll say it. And this [behaviour] he isn't used to", (Janine).

Besides this explanation concerning her self-conception, she also takes into account her sexuality.

> "And then to see him making this volte-face was quite crass. Nowadays I say I am the one he didn't get maybe. But I have no idea. I don't know. Anyhow, many colleagues believe that" (...) I don't know if I can blame everything on my (...) on this being lesbian, or something. Yes, I'm a bit different", (Janine).

By pointing out that she sees herself as being different, it reveals how she gives meaning to the situation. Her explanation of why she encounters the discrimination is strongly connected to her "otherness".

6.2 Withdrawal and Heterosexism

"Well, it weren't direct hostilities. They didn't dare to go that far, I guess (...) Nevertheless, there were resentments" (Manuel). In contrast to what was discussed in the previous section, the following stories are more or less characterized by this statement and by a more subtle way of exerting discrimination. The main difference is that the shared stories here were not perceived as discrimination. I suggest that the more subtle way of carrying out the discriminatory attitude did not cause the interviewees to deal openly and immediately with the situation. Rather, it was perceived as "normal" behaviour within the police environment. However the discrimination might not always be exerted verbally, is less outspoken and confrontative and happens behind people's backs but it is still characterized by a dismissive notion.

The data has shown that there has been a tendency towards physical withdrawal and reservation by colleagues in different situations. Thereby, the withdrawal of physical contact on one side and a subtle way of reservation on the other side, can be seen as the two extreme ends of a discriminatory attitude towards some of the interviewees. Withdrawal and reservation could take place as a reaction by the interviewees' colleagues due to their categorization of 'us' and 'them'. Taking into consideration Sara Ahmed's (2000, p. 21) conceptualization of othering and the idea of belonging, it is stated that a stranger, rather than just being strange and un-known, is indeed recognized as somebody who does not belong. What emerges out of this way of thinking is also the conceptualization of who 'we' are. In this case the group of colleagues who show the resentments towards the interviewees. As a way of distinguishing between 'us' and 'them' and thus manifesting the difference, the social categories of homo- and heterosexuality have been used to 'other' non-heterosexual police officers. Even a previously

assumed familiarity in terms of belonging to the same gender, did not prevent these othering attitudes towards the interviewees. The following examples will illustrate this:

> *"And when I went into the shower, she quickly went out again.* [She said] *Ah, now she comes again. She is into women and I wouldn't shower with a man being naked either and so on and so forth"* (Carina).

Likewise, Manuel states:

> *"Yes, the only thing that I realized was that after doing sports the male classmates had tried to avoid showering with me. I took it easy and slowed down while changing clothes. This way I was more or less the last person taking a shower",* (Manuel).

Further, Manuel also encountered situations in which people did not tell him straight away that they have a problem with his sexuality, but expressed it in a more subtle way. During the police academy he once brought a cake for his birthday. A couple of month later someone had told him that a few classmates had refused to eat his cake because they claimed they did not know what was in it. The gesture of not eating cake together with their expressed suspicion, demonstrates the differentiation these colleagues did make between themselves and others like Manuel. Even though it was not directly pointed towards him.

Another pattern that can be found in the data is the existence of heterosexism within the police organization. Thereby, not only the male domination within the organizational culture is an important factor, but also the impact of the hegemonic masculinity, which influences and regulates certain attitudes the non-heterosexual police officers encounter. Analysing the following quotes, I will refer to Judith Butler's theorization of the heterosexual matrix.

The heterosexual norms in and outside of organizational and occupational culture are maintained through repetitive acts of involved social actors who by performing these acts create the gender binary out of which the compulsory heterosexual desire emerges (Butler 1990a). Additionally Judith Butler (1990b, p. 527) suggests that gender performances are governed by clear regulatory and punishing social conventions. This is not difficult to imagine within an occupational culture like the police. Therefore the encounter of heterosexist

attitudes towards the interviewees can be perceived as a demonstration of an assumingly stable, male and heterosexual gender performance. It is suggested that the assumption of the 'naturalness' of the binary gender frame the thus following heterosexual desire, and the hegemonic male domination within police occupational culture enables the persecutors to enact heterosexist behaviour on the interviewees.

> *"(...) then I just said, Manni, you know what, [...] I'm out and proud. First, some*
> *non-audible "I see" was going through the room. He looked at me and backed off*
> *a little and said, you can do whatever you want, as long as you don't hit on me",*
> (Manuel).

Hegemonic masculinity is expressed by Manuel's colleague through physically distancing himself and by pointing out his own very stable heterosexuality. He reassures this by making clear that his acceptance comes with a condition: Manuel can only do what he wants, as long as he physically stays away from him and thus not questions his heterosexuality. The hegemonic masculinity is not only shown through attitudes towards non-heterosexual male colleagues, but also within the performance with non-heterosexual female colleagues. Thereby the domination of heterosexuality and its exertion on the interviewees is an important factor.

In Carina's case, her colleagues went as far as showing her pornography during the night shift just to provoke her, she said. They wanted to see how she deals with the situation and asked her whether she liked the girl in the movie or not. Carina said that they were explicitly looking for her reaction when she sees a naked woman. I asked her whether or not she thinks they would have shown this also to other female colleagues. She said:

> *"Actually I think they wouldn't have dared if it was a heterosexual woman. With*
> *me it was just provocation (...) When is the point where she says, hey folks, that's*
> *it. (...) That was just to show that woman belongs to man and man belongs to*
> *woman. Not women among themselves and not men among themselves"* (Carina).

What is shown in this example is the demonstration of hegemonic masculinity and the therein grounded compulsory heterosexuality. The assumed natural and normal character of heterosexual desire is used to expose Carina's deviant status in this situation.

In another example Janine talks about her colleague, who feels challenged by the idea to "turn her straight"[21]. After people in her workplace got to know that she identifies as lesbian, all of a sudden several male colleagues had tried to hit on her. Knowing that she was not interested, she said, they took it as a challenge to being able to claim that they successfully turned her into a heterosexual woman.

> *"After the party we all went to our rooms and then he came back again and knocked on the door and really wanted to come in. But no way! [laughing] (…) And the next morning he was bragging about how he got me laid and stuff about how he turned me straight"* (Janine).

Likewise, Carina was confronted with similar approaches from several colleagues. Beside the fact that she got hit on, her colleagues showed their sexual attitudes towards her also in an overtly heterosexist way.

> *"You have never had a good cock, (…) you don't know what you're missing, (…) or the question, who of you is the man and such things. (…) Or that everybody assumed that every lesbian has thousands of vibrators in the drawer"* (Carina).

Here, the use of heterosexist language underlines the domination of hegemonic masculinity. This is also reinforced by Myers et al (2004, pp. 33-34) who state that police work is pervaded by sexism and pursue by concluding that the masculine and homophobic police culture continues to put pressure on gay and lesbian officers.

6.3 Normative Gossip, Clichés and Stereotypes

A lot of attitudes the interviewees have encountered by their superiors and colleagues were carried out through gossiping and spreading clichés within the police workplace. In representation of what was expressed by all the interviewees, Melissa states: *"The police really is the biggest gossip club you can imagine"*. Thereby, the appearance of gossip and gossiping was experienced in manifold ways and has not only been to the disadvantage of the interviewees but had also been consciously used in some cases.

---

[21] "To turn someone straight" is how I translated the German idiom "umpolen". It literally means "to reverse the polarity of". It is often used in the context of sexual desire to explain when a third person was involved and influenced someone's assumingly hetero- or homosexual desire into the other.

It is suggested that gossip, entangled with stereotypical clichés about non-normative sexualities, is used as a method to sustain the prevailing norms within the occupational culture of police force. Normative expectations within the police force concern the image of strong masculinity, which is connected to physical strength and perceived as a male attribute. Thereby, femininity as well as non-heterosexuality plays a subordinate role. Sustaining and reproducing these occupational norms takes place through certain practices which involves rituals, metaphors and actions. As stated by Alvesson and Billing (2009) the way in which and how language is used in organizations plays an important role. Especially, the use of certain metaphors and verbal expressions leads to the creation of normative atmosphere within the police with the result of othering those who fall out of these norms.

Carina described normative expectations by using metaphors to paraphrase how one should not behave as a police officer.

> *"Well, if you're a delicate creature[22], very sensitive that is, then you're probably doomed in the police. (...) You gotta man up. (...) But if you go and tell them, oh, that was pretty tough on me and oh, what's gonna happen to this woman, so if you present yourself so sensitive already (...) they'll turn it into ridicule and won't take you seriously"*, (Carina).

In this quote, Carina describes very nicely the two oppositional ends on the gender spectrum. There is the delicate, sensitive creature showing emotions on one side, which should clearly resemble feminine behaviour. And to describe the other side, she uses the metaphor "to man up", which she does not give further explanation to, but is perceived as an expected and also desirable attitude. In a way this refers to Mark Burke's study (1994) in which he argues that it is easier for lesbians within the occupational culture of the police because of the stereotypical assumption of the masculine lesbian. On the contrary, having interviewed gay, lesbian and heterosexual officers, Myers et al (2004, p. 34) state that lesbian women are exposed to even more pressure because they also have to prove that they are women.

---

[22] Delicate creature is used for the German expression "Pflänzchen", which literally means small plant.

In another example, Arne shared the experiences of how he and his patrolling partner were being called "the coloured guard" behind their backs. A coloured guard does not really fit into the picture of a male, masculine police force and indeed evokes the thought that they are being ridiculed by their colleagues. Therefore, I suggest that, whether one is exposed to pressure and normative expectations within the police culture, has less to do with being man or woman, or being gay or lesbian, but is strongly connected to the expectations of the hegemonic masculine gender construction which is dominating the sub-culture.

In this sense, non-normative sexualities within the occupational culture of the police are certainly still seen as a noticeable issue. The fact that the non-heterosexuality of police officers is a topic which is gossiped about leads to the assumption that it is perceived as deviant to prevailing norms and therefore evokes an interest to even talk about. Furthermore, the way it is talked about happens in a deprecatory manner that is connected to sexist stereotypes. Manuel, for example, talked about how he had heard a story about how gay men would stick pipes into their butts to let rats go through. As a sexual practice, this is actually not related to any kind of same sex orientation. Nonetheless, in this example it is still given as a practice, which is carried out by gay men to underpin their sexual abnormality in general.

Further, gossip can also be to the foremost detriment of the interviewee. In Johan's case, his non-heterosexuality was revealed through gossip. Thereby, the story altered to such a great extent that he, in the end, had a sexual relationship with "hustlers and prostitutes". It demonstrates again how a non-normative sexual relationship is morally assessed and equipped with an illegal twist. As a consequence, working for the Federal Criminal Police Office, this illegal twist can mean a great danger to his career.

6.4 Allies and Support: the Notion of Empowerment

The encounter of different attitudes does not only entail negative or discriminatory experiences. In every conversation I had with the interviewees, support and positive reaction by their colleagues had been mentioned.

Especially in connection to their coming outs, the interviewees shared several stories in which they emphasized the support and encouragement of some of their colleagues and/or superiors. For example, Alexander and Arne had crucial experiences after they had their coming outs in front of a colleague. Alexander shared this story:

> *"(...) I said, listen, I don't live alone but I also don't live with a woman. And I am, (...) I've been living with my boyfriend for eight years. Well, then he looked at me and said: and, do things change now? I say, well, I don't think so. (...) Because I had such good experience with this colleague, I started to tell other people as well",* (Alexander).

Indeed, this positive incident did influence his subsequent life within the police force. After living disclosed for many years, not being able to tell anything or lying about one's private life, this experience can be seen as an encouragement for further disclosure and open handling. Similarly to what Beatrix Gusmano (2008) depicts in her study, this also shows the importance of how the act of disclosing happens. Being able to tell this particular person he had intended to, in the moment he had chosen, and additionally the positive outcome for Alexander of the situation, builds indeed a breeding ground for him for his future work life. The notion of being in charge and being able to decide about time and space of a possible disclosure can be seen as the enactment of personal agency.

In line with this, Arne said a very crucial moment for him was when they were watching a documentary with colleagues and superiors and his colleague commented about how homosexuals would have been gassed back in the days (during Nazi-Germany). He said what was crucial about it was that he did not have to react, but his colleagues as well as superiors reacted for him.

> *"And I was pretty proud about how the colleagues reacted towards that. I didn't, that was the biggest win I would say actually. That I didn't have to say anything,*

like, it can't be like that, my colleagues reacted for me. (...) Especially also that

the superior reacted and said we need to react on this ex officio" (Arne).

In this example, Arne experienced support not only by his colleagues but also from his superior. This, he did not expect at all, also regarding his past as a police officer in the former eastern part of Germany. What can be seen in this story is the notion of empowerment as a social process between the people involved. Its relational entity becomes clear at this point. But as also stated by Hyung Hur (2006), empowerment happens not only in relation to others, but it can also be evaluated as an outcome of a certain situation. Arne most certainly did assess the situation as such.

Empowerment can also not solely happen to individuals but also occur as a collective phenomenon. This is highlighted in the next story:

"When we march with the CSD[23], as a closed formation[24] from the police so to

say, then this is surely a power, if there is all of a sudden 20, 30 men coming up,

solid. Yes (...) That impacted in Stuttgart, that impacted in München and in

*Leipzig. So these cities where it is problematic with gay police officers" (*Arne).

What is reflected in this quote is the notion of empowerment in a collective (Hyung Hur 2006) as well as through a "collective identity". Through their common struggle in these formations, they build a common ground against oppressive structures and thus feel empowered by their unification. The language he is using to describe this incident and the associated feeling of empowerment mostly consists of military terminology. With such, he is emphasising the site of resistance he and his colleagues are building and marching against the dominant norm.

In this sense, the conceptualization of the notion of power as being "the capacity to produce change" (Miller quoted in Allen 2011), is only one aspect in this example. Indeed, the power within this group of people can certainly have the capacity to change certain prevailing norms, but it is surely reinforcing others as well. The description of their dominant appearance on the gay pride with the

---

[23] CSD stands for Christopher Street Day, which is the annual gay pride festivals in Germany.
[24] The term "closed formation" was translated from the German "geschlossene Formation". It is meant to express a phalanx of gay police officers.

military terminology is rather a demonstration of power in a threating way and indeed a very hegemonic masculine presentation.

7 Managing Subordination

Similarly to the account of the interviewee's experiences, I gathered their different ways of dealing with the encountered attitudes into two groups, *confrontative* and *passive*. Being aware that this might run the risk of simplifying by only using two "categories", I believe this mapping is helpful for further analysis and interpretations concerning the intersecting social dimensions of power, gender and sexuality, othering and organizational culture. What is at stake is in which way the individual agency is used and how it is connected to the individuals' strategies of dealing with subordination. The question is not whether there is an agency or not, but in which way the agents make use of it. In this sense, taking a confrontative or a passive stance can both be seen as a demonstration of agency in ostensible rigid systems of power. At the same time, it does not mean that one person falls in either or category. Rather, I believe that everybody has the capacity to act out, though external circumstances need to be taken into account.

7.1 Confrontative

What do I mean with the term 'confrontative'? A big part of the conversations concerned the dealings with the various attitudes they have encountered by their superiors and colleagues in their workplaces. In some situations, the interviewees had taken a confrontative stance, which means they faced negative encounters in an active manner and/or standing up for themselves. Taking into consideration the aspect of agency, a confrontative handling is understood as the active use of one's capacity to act upon a possible discrimination and oppressive ways in which they were approached.

In a way, taking a confrontative stance and acting out on an encountered injustice, can be seen as a rebellion against the prevailing norms and the

legitimate power relations within the occupational culture of the police force. The questioning of legitimate hierarchical power relations can be seen in the following story, told by Johan. After Johan gets the (based on false assumptions) "announcement" by his superior, not "to hook up with hustlers and prostitutes" any longer while being on business trips, he counselled with a friend and colleague just to return to this superior and make a complaint:

> "Then we talked and I said, so, what you said there, does that apply to all the officers [Beamte] or is that a lex specialis for Johan. He says, no, that applies to everyone, that is generally valid. I say, look, if it is generally valid then it is no problem that you just spread it here as an official announcement. Written or via email, I would be satisfied with an email. Then he puffed out his cheeks and said, well then I just have to talk to, eh eh, the section leader. And I said no no, you also have to talk to the other section leaders, maybe also to the head of the department. [...] He was just wide-eyed; nothing ever came up about this again",
> (Johan).

Interestingly, Johan not only questions the legitimacy of this institutional power, which the superior holds but also uses it for his own good. By requesting another conversation and pointing out the legal steps his superior has to follow, Johan is using the hierarchical power apparatus to his own advantage. In other words, he turned, which was initially sought to harm him, into his own weapon. As a result of this, he did not have to suffer from an arbitrary "announcement" that was only meant to point out the deviant character of his non-normative sexuality. In this sense, by taking a confrontative stance, the experience of empowerment as a positive outcome (Hyuang Hur 2006) can be assessed in this situation.

Along the lines of "revolting" against institutional power, being rebellious against heteronormative assumptions and the othering of non-heterosexual sexualities can also be seen as taking a confrontative stance. Carina tells the story about how she reacted after one colleague approached her in a vulgar manner and asked her about who is the man in a lesbian relationship. She said:

> "And then I just said it's the one who has the longer clitoris. That was it and everybody laughed and that settled the matter. But that's the police, you can't be, that's what I mean with 'delicate plant'. Of course there is stupid sayings like this and if you're miffy then you lost, then they'll never let it go. So you gotta riposte

> *with a stupid saying, below the belt. Even if this is not who you are, but you are*
> *more or less forced to"* (Carina).

In both examples they interviewees "succeeded" with their reactions in the sense that their opponents were put to silence. In the latter example, Carina was not rebellious against the arbitrary of the hierarchical power structures but bridled against the compulsory heterosexual order, which is sought to be resembled in the lesbian relationship as well. On one hand, her outward reaction shows that she does not approve with how her colleague had approached her. On the other hand, Carina played along the rules. As she stated above, the perception of having to give backtalk is a necessity to survive in this environment. Similarly to this account, Myers et al (2004, pp. 32-34) gather experiences of lesbian police officers, in which they talk about that many encounters require taking a "tough" stance towards hostilities. Feeling the need to "fit in" (Ibid) resembles quite well what is highlighted in the previous story. The way Carina makes sense of this situation also adds to securing the prevailing norm of heteronormative hegemonic masculinity because she normalizes his approach and her reaction towards it. The norm which includes his right to ask such questions in this manner is maintained because she acknowledges this as the norm within the police and plays along. What is reflected in this situation is Judith Butler's conceptualization of agency (1990a, pp. 195-201), since Carina is acting in the exact binary frame without questioning the discursive limits. In this sense, both can be seen in this story: the notion of taking confrontative stance, because she bridled against her colleagues' defamatory approach and at the same time it involves the notion of complicity by sticking to the prevailing normative language within the occupational culture of police. This aspect will be elaborated in the following section.

7.2 Passive

Not all the strategies the interviewees showed were meant to oppose themselves against encountered injustice. Some of it was carried out in a passive mode, though in different ways. Under this umbrella, I also chose to tell those stories,

which are actually stances towards an assumingly negative attitude and not have been asserted directly on the interviewees.

In this sense, what emerged out of the interviewee's stories were certain commonalities in terms of passive strategies of handling attempts of subordination. As mentioned before, the issue of gossiping within the police has been used as a method for spreading the news about their sexual disclosure. As Ward and Winstanley (2005) have discussed in their study, the heteronormative presumption causes everybody who wants to be out in the workplace, to disclose their non-heterosexuality. Such a coming out cannot be seen as a single happening but is a continuum and a performative process in which the individual enacts a new gay or lesbian identity, rather than a truth which is revealed (Ibid, p. 452). Before Alexander came out in his workplace and to a colleague for the first time, he said he had "put out a few feelers" to see whether this patrolling partner of his would react positively about his disclosure or not. The fear of being discriminated had prevented him from disclosing his sexuality to anyone in his workplace for a very long time. After he could be somehow sure that this colleague "is not archconservative or negative", Alexander decided to tell him[25].

Thereby, it is obvious that the form of his disclosure was crucial for him and his further dealings with his sexuality in his workplace. As a next step in this coming out process, Alexander chose to use the issue of gossiping for his own good:

> *"Yes, I did that consciously then. So to say this one first, like I said, first colleagues with whom I had a trustful relationship and liked working with. (...) and then I always thought before the shift, tomorrow I'm patrolling with Nadine, then I will tell her. And so on and so forth. So, it was six or seven colleagues and back then it was clear, it's just like that in the police, the word will spread",*
> (Alexander).

Being able to decide about the right time and person for his disclosure, can in some way also be seen as taking a confrontative stance. In fact, similarly to Carina's example in the previous section, the boundaries are not at all clear but rather blurred. Alexander also choses to act within the prevailing heteronormative

---

[25] See quote on page 53.

discourse and uses his agency not to question the binary frame and the deviant position of the homosexual but to hesitantly and reluctantly play along and waiting for his colleagues to find out and eventually accept his sexuality.

Another commonality which was shown within the data was the issue of lying. This happened as a reaction towards questions about partners of the "opposite" sex. Alexander, for example, had invented a girlfriend for many years. He said he only talked about her when he was asked about it and would never start the conversation by himself. By doing so, he made up stories that she lives far away, so that he is less likely to get into trouble and having to introduce her.

> *"The one who lies needs a good memory and because of this you should always come up with quite a simple story. Like I said, better don't tell anything. Only if you were asked concretely (...) I never went into depth, only like, she is working, she can't come and so on. And for a long time, people were satisfied with that. But it's difficult of course. You gotta think of what you've told whom. As I said, the one who lies needs a good memory"* (Alexander).

This quote resembles quite well what is meant by the term "passive". Like he stated himself, he only reacted to these approaches when he was forced to. Thus, the way Alexander used to handle this situation was just to "pass". By lying and playing along, he never questioned the heteronormative frame within the occupational culture. Likewise Carina, Melissa and Janine shared stories about how they turned their girlfriends into boyfriends, avoided to say names or just did not point out that they would have a girlfriend instead of a boyfriend when being asked about partners.

> *"But when I talk about private things, I say my darling. So I never say my girlfriend or Sandra, to the people who don't know, but I always say my darling"*,
> (Melissa).

Melissa also has an experience in which she was confronted with the question of whether she is lesbian or not. She does not identify with this identity ascription and was being labelled by her colleague due to the stereotypical assumption that all girls who play football are lesbians. She retold the story like this:

> *"And then it was like, you play football as well, and they're all lesbians. What's going on in the cubicle; is everybody fumbling around? You also play football,*

> *what's going on, are you also into girls? And then I pulled back and just said,*
>
> *nah, well, not only"* (Melissa).

Melissa showed this reaction because she does not want to be labelled as a lesbian. Her non-identifying as such has less to do with political reasons and not wanting to engage in identity politics, but is more connected to her personal struggle with being in a same-sex relationship. Knowing that the gossip would spread soon, she tried to pull back in order to avoid this kind of conversation. Also due to the dominant point of view her superior was taking, and the oppressive manner he was pulling on her, she somehow passively tried to get out of this situation. In doing so, she was confronted with a dilemma: not to hit a nerve with telling "the truth" on one side, but remaining true to herself and her relationship on the other side.

Similarly to the stories connected to the interviewees' sexuality, there were also passive stances concerning the issue of appropriate gender roles.

> *"Actually, you shouldn't be, you mustn't be too feminine, but in any way you're*
> *not allowed to be manly either. Or not too manly. You have to fit into the halfway*
> *house, I somehow have this impression. On one side you're good for having fun,*
> *for drinking beers after duty. And you're maybe also able to laugh about the*
> *jokes or the coarse manly jokes. So in this sense, being a bit boisterous, but you*
> *mustn't cross the line. Otherwise you're immediately labelled as a lesbian, which*
> *is negative or, yes, like a butch* [Mannsweib], (Melissa).

Here, Melissa gives an insight into how she is negotiating her gender role within the occupational culture of police force. In order not to be labelled and to pass without troubles, she is careful not putting too much make-up on during her shift, or only in a very discreet manner.

This can again on one side be seen as a complicit reaction. As already mentioned in the previous section, the issue of complicit masculinity (Connell 2005) is an important factor when it comes to passive strategies. It is suggested that by taking a passive stance, the dominant character of the hegemonic masculinity is secured and maintained. Like shown in the previous quotes, the hierarchical orders, whether it concerns masculinities, power structures or prevailing norms within the occupational culture, is neither questioned nor

challenged and thus remains the same. On the contrary, such structures are reproduced over and over again. This not only happens through people's passive ways in managing the situations, but also how they make meaning of these happenings. By normalizing possible hostile attitudes, which have been encountered, the emphasis of that aspect is taken away. Acknowledging this attitude "as being natural within the environment", leads to the establishment of these structures. In this respect, Melissa is in some sense behaving like she thinks it is expected from her and thus underpinning the prevailing gender rules and the assumption of the natural state of heterosexuality.

What also became clear in the previous quotes is how the interviewees manage the risk of being stigmatized by their colleagues and superiors. Therefore, it concerns the issue of actual encountered subordination and the fear of being potentially exposed to subordination.

8 Discussion and Outlook

The aim of this thesis was to find out about and present non-heterosexual police officers' experiences in Germany. By following up the questions '*what kind of attitudes do non-heterosexual police officers encounter in their workplaces?'* and '*how do they deal with these kinds of attitudes?'*, I sought to specifically address the diverse attitudes seven interviewees have encountered in their workplaces and which strategies they have chosen in order to deal with these attitudes. The analysis of people's multi-layered experiences was carried out with the help of several theoretical concepts and approaches.

The underlying thought thereby was to study people of a sexual minority and constructed as deviant to the heterosexual norm, who work within an institution which is securing societal norms and the legitimate power of the state. Findings concerning the different attitudes the interviewees have encountered thereby vary from overt discrimination to the experience of support and empowerment.

Discriminatory practices were mirrored in subordination of the interviewees, which happened through normative power. This includes gender constructions within the binary gender frame, prevailing norms within the specific occupational culture of police forces and especially the hierarchical order within the police apparatus. Considering gender constructions, especially the impact of different levels of masculinities and the subordinate stance of femininity had an impact in people's experiences. In this sense also the attribution of femininity to the "homosexual" and the thereafter following depreciation, was to be found in some of the colleagues and superiors attitudes towards the interviewees. The superior position in rank was thereby used in many cases for exerting the different kinds of discrimination.

What further appeared in their stories was the issue of physical or verbal distancing after disclosure of the participant's sexuality, as a way of showing their deprecatory attitudes. In line with this, heterosexism was used to demonstrate the "right and wrong" of non-heterosexual relationships. Interestingly, in most cases, heterosexist comments and attitudes were not perceived as derogatory by the interviewees, or at least it was normalized and relativized within the police environment.

Another finding was the issue of gossiping, which was not only to the detriment of the interviewees but also consciously used in some cases. Already the issue of gossiping showed that there is often not just one single way to look at things. All of the interviewees mentioned throughout the interviews the support they have experienced by either colleagues or superiors. Furthermore, dealing with the experienced discrimination and subordination has differed not only from person to person but in different stories. That means I did not categorize the people according to whether they have taken a confrontative or a passive stance towards the discriminatory attitude they experienced but rather analysed the different strategies. Managing these discriminatory experiences happens thereby in an active, confrontative way or passively, while trying to deprive from the situation without creating trouble.

The issue of non-normative sexualities within the frame of institutional power, and specifically the case of non-heterosexual police officers' experiences in their workplaces in Germany, can be further studied by taking a more differentiated approach to the matter. Since one of the limitations of this research is the issue of federalism and the altering political backgrounds of the different states, subsequent research could focus on one particular federal state and one specific branch of police force. As a possible variation one could then also compare the situation of non-heterosexual police officers between the different states. For further research it could also be interesting to focus more on the gender aspect and look into gender specific experiences/ discrimination and maybe deepen the aspect of normalization as an "unquestioned" feature within the police organization.

The difficulty to possibly change existing rules and atmosphere that shape the structure of the police organization lies in the intrinsically embedded construction of norms and hegemonic masculinity. These are secured by those who possess the powerful positions and thus have little interest in changing the system. The problem exists not only for so called sexual minorities, but also "other" minorities who fall out of the norms as well. I therefore wish to have contributed to open up the discussion about the police organization in Germany as a heteronormative workplace with hardened hierarchical power structures and hegemonic masculine domination and its handling of non-normative identities within the organization.

9 References

Ahmed, Sara (2000). *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality.* London; New York: Routledge.

Allen, Amy, "Feminist Perspectives on Power", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/feminist-power/., accessed 26.06.2012.

Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (AGG). Available at: http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/agg/BJNR189710006.html, accessed 12.06.2012.

Alvesson, Mats; Due Billing, Yvonne (2009). *Understanding Gender and Organizations.* London: Sage.

Blumer, Herbert (1969). *Symbolic Interactionism. Perspective and Method.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bohnsack, Ralf; Marotzki, Winfried; Meuser, Michael (2006). *Hauptbegriffe qualitativer Sozialforschung. Ein Wörterbuch.* Stuttgart: Budrich.

Bryman, Alan (2004). *Social Research Methods.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Burke, Marc (1994). "Homosexuality As Deviance: The Case of the Gay Police Officer". *British Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 34 (2), 192-203.

Butler, Judith (1990a). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* New York: Routledge.

Butler, Judith (1990b). "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*. Ed. Sue-Ellen Case. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP.

Chamaz, Kathy (2003). Grounded theory. In: Smith, Jonathan A. (ed.) 2003. *Qualitative Psychology. A Practical Guide to Research Methods.* London: Sage.

Charta der Vielfalt (2011). Available at: http://www.charta-der-vielfalt.de/de/charta-der-vielfalt/ueber-die-charta.html. Accessed 12.06.2012.

Clegg, Stewart (1989). *Frameworks of Power*. London: Sage.

Connell, R.W. (2005). *Masculinities*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Dresing, Thorsten; Pehl, Thorsten (2011): *Praxisbuch Transkription.* Regelsysteme, Software und praktische Anleitungen für qualitative ForscherInnen. 1. Auflage. Marburg, 2011. Quelle: www.audiotranskription.de/praxisbuch (Download: 10.03.2012).

Fielding, Nigel (1994). Cop Canteen Culture. In: Newburn, Tim and Stanko, Elizabeth A. (eds.) 1994. *Men, Masculinities and Crime. Just Boys Doing Business?* New York: Routledge. Pp. 46-63.

Frevel, Bernhard; Kuschewski, Philipp (2009). "Police Organization and Police Reform in Germany: The Case of North Rhine-Westphalia". *German Police Studies*. Vol. 5 (2), pp. 49-89.

Garcia, Vanessa (2003). "'Difference' in the Police Department: Women, Policing and 'Doing Gender'". *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice,* Vol. 19 (3), pp. 330-344.

Giessler, Cristin (2011). *LGBTQ Police Officers.* Centre for Gender Studies. Lunds universitet. 2011.

Goffman, Erving (1959). *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* New York: Penguin Books.

Groß, Hermann (2011). Polizeien in Deutschland. Available at: http://www.bpb.de/76660/polizeien-in-deutschland?p=all, accessed 10.06.2012.

Gusmano, Beatrice (2008). "Coming Out Or Not? How Nonheterosexual People Manage Their Sexual Identity at work". *Journal of Workplace Rights*, Vol. 13 (4), pp. 473-496.

Haugaard, Mark (2010). "Power: A 'Family Resemblance' Concept," *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13 (4), pp. 419–438.

Heyes, Cressida, "Identity Politics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/identity-politics/, accessed 26.06.2012.

Hyung Hur, Mann (2006)."Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical Perspectives: Exploring a Typology of the Process and Components Across Disciplines". *Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol. 34 (5), pp. 523–540.

Kvale, Steinar; Brinkmann, Sven (2009). *Interviews. Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing.* London: Sage.

Lewis, Jane (2003). Design Issues. In: Ritchie, Jane and Lewis, Jane (eds.). *Qualitative Research Practice. A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers.* London: Sage.

Locke, Karen. "Abduction." In *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*, edited by Albert J. Mills, Gabrielle Durepos, and Elden Wiebe, 2-4. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2009. http://sage-ereference.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/view/casestudy/n1.xml.

Lyons, Philipp M. Jr.; DeValve, Michael J.; Garner, Randall L. (2008). "Texas Police Chief's Attitudes Toward Gay and Lesbian Police Officers". *Police Quarterly,* 11 (1), pp. 102-117.

Manning, Peter K. (2008). "Goffman on Organizations". *Organization Studies*, Vol. 29, pp. 6677-699.

Meyers, Kristen A.; Forest, Kay B.; Miller, Susan L. (2004). "Officer Friendly and the Tough Cop. Gay and Lesbians Navigate Homophobia and Policing". *Journal of Homosexuality,* Vol. 47 (1), pp. 17-37.

Morrill, Calvin (2008). "Culture and Organization Theory". *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* Vol. 619, pp. 15-40.

O'Reilly, Karen (2008). *Key Concepts in Ethnography.* London: Sage.

Ritchie, Jane; Lewis, Jane; Elam, Gillian (2003). Designing and Selecting Samples. In: Ritchie, Jane and Lewis, Jane (eds.). *Qualitative Research Practice. A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers.* London: Sage.

Ramazanoğlu, Caroline; Holland, Janet (2002). *Feminist Methodology: challenges and choices.* London: Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Schwalbe, Michael; Godwin, Sandra; Holden, Daphne; Schrock, Douglas; Thompson, Shealy; Wolkomir, Michele (2000). "Generic Processes in the Reproduction of Inequality: An Interactionist Analysis". *Social Forces*, Vol. 79(2), pp. 419-452.

Silverman, David (2010). *Doing Qualitative Research.* London: Sage.

Snape, Dawn; Spencer, Liz (2003). The Foundations of Qualitative Research. In: Ritchie, Jane and Lewis, Jane (eds.). *Qualitative Research Practice. A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers.* London: Sage.

Stahl, Titus (2011). Institutional Power, Collective Acceptance, and Recognition. In: Ikäheimo, H., Laitinen, A. (eds.): *Recognition and Social Ontology*. Leiden: Brill.

Steinke, Ron (2005). Forum-Recht-Online. Available at: http://www.velspol.de/images/stories/Publikationen/VelsPol-Folder-web.pdf, accessed 11.06.2012.

Stychin, Carl F. (2005)." Being Gay". *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 40:1, pp. 90-109.

VelsPol NRW (Verband lesbischer und schwuler Polizeibediensteter Nordrhein-Westfalen e.V.). *Sehen Sie einen Unterschied? Do you see a difference?* Available at: http://www.velspol.de/images/stories/Publikationen/VelsPol-Folder-web.pdf, accessed 11.06.2012.

Ward, James; Winstanley, Diana (2003). "The Absent Presence: Negative Space within Discourse and the Construction of Minority Sexual Identity in the Workplace". *Human Relations.* Vol. 2003 (56), pp. 1255-1280.

Ward, James; Winstanley, Diana (2005). "Coming out at work: performativity and the recognition and renegotiation of identity". *The Sociological Review* 2005, pp. 447-475.

Winter, Martin (1998). *Politikum Polizei: Macht und Funktion der Polizei in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland.* Münster: LiT.

Appendix: Call for Participants

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

mein Name ist Cristin Giessler und ich studiere Gender Studies an der Universität Lund in Schweden. Derzeit arbeite ich an meiner Masterthesis zum Thema „Erfahrungen von nicht-heterosexuellen Polizeibediensteten am Arbeitsplatz". Um einen Einblick zu bekommen, welche Erfahrungen Menschen gemacht haben und um herauszufinden wie mit diesen Erfahrungen umgegangen wird, möchte ich gerne Interviews durchführen. Die Gespräche würden ca. eine Stunde dauern und beinhalten eine offene Erzählung sowie einen ergänzenden Fragekatalog bei noch offenen Fragen. Die Interviews werden selbstverständlich anonymisiert behandelt. Für die Auswertung ist es jedoch wichtig, die Interviews auf Tonband aufzunehmen.

Ich würde mich sehr freuen, wenn ich auf diesem Wege Menschen finden würden, die sich vorstellen könnten, mit mir über ihre Erfahrungen zu sprechen. Mir ist klar, dass das ein persönliches und sensibles Thema ist. Mir liegt jedoch viel an dem Erleben der einzelnen Personen in Bezug auf ihre Erfahrungen und auch für meine Masterarbeit wäre es eine Bereicherung.

Ich wäre Ihnen deshalb sehr verbunden, wenn sie diese Email an möglichst viele Kolleginnen und Kollegen weiterleiten würden, die eventuell Interesse an einem Gespräch mit mir hätten. Der angedachte Zeitraum dafür wäre März 2012. Für Rückfragen stehe ich natürlich sehr gerne bereit. Bei eventuellen Fragen können Sie außerdem gerne Dr. Mats Hilte kontaktieren, der meine Arbeit betreut.

Über eine positive Antwort würde ich mich sehr freuen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Cristin Giessler

Kontakt:

Cristin Giessler
Karl-XII gatan 14b
222 20 Lund
Schweden

Email: cristin-lena.giessler.984@student.lu.se oder cristin.giessler@web.de
Mobil: +4917664295047 oder +46764188104

Dr. Mats Hilte

Socialhögskolan
Bredgatan 13
Box 23
22100 Lund

Email: Mats.Hilte@soch.lu.se
Telefon: +46 46-222 94 24