its collective sense. "A strong sense of starting together instead of waiting for others to act first will reduce the fear of individual sacrifices" (Stoll-Kleemann and O'Riordan, 2020, p. 12). People often consider themselves more influential and efficacious when deliberating what they can achieve collectively with the like-minded members of their climate culture than when contemplating their individual-level efficacy. When *united by a common cause*, groups of people have been found to gain an impetus that is much more powerful than the sum of their individual efforts. A collective approach that is delimited by shared cultural aspects may prevent us from arriving at what Norgaard (2011) cautions against when speaking of feelings of powerlessness, denial and resignation, when pondering how to make a difference as only one out of seven billion people on the planet. Shared ideas, conventions and interests, and their translation into collective action, can protect people against these negative feelings and experiences. "In getting things done collectively, perceived efficacy is concerned with people's beliefs in their joint capabilities to make [*a certain matter, e.g., climate change*] a national priority" (Bandura, 1997, p. 33).

2.4 Ways of knowing

As shown, responsibility should be considered in connection with efficacy. Importantly, however, both of these notions must also be contemplated in relation to knowing: Jonas writes that as human beings and because of the freedom we are endowed with through consciousness, we are able to take responsibility. Therefore, we also have a duty to educate ourselves. It is our knowledge about the impending catastrophe that obligates us to conserve the planet for future generations. Or in other words: "The responsibility weighs on those who know" (Tammer, 2009), and, by contrast: feliciter ignoravit – *ignorance is bliss*. And blissful it must indeed be to board a flight for a short trip and not find anything wrong with it today. An agent's efficacy is also influenced by their knowledge: "Is there anything science should not try to explain? Science is knowledge and knowledge is power – power to do good or evil" (Davies, 2012). Thus we see an *intertwining* or *concatenation* between the three concepts of responsibility, efficacy and knowledge, the last of which is attended to now.

In *The imperative of responsibility*, Jonas ascribes knowledge quintessential importance for moral considerations (1979, p. 28): "Power can only accrue when the options for action are distributed unequally, which in turn results from differentially distributed stocks of knowledge" (Tammer, 2009). Those who know carry a special integrative responsibility as it is their duty to involve all citizens in decisions concerning future courses of action (ibid.). However, in Jonas' view, this relation between responsibility and knowledge is bidirectional: knowledge is an obligation and Jonas holds the public responsible to inform itself about technological innovation's potentially detrimental consequences because in his eyes it is increasingly escaping

society's control. At the same time, "the recognition of ignorance ought to reflectively remind us that our power over the world is too large in order to adequately handle it" (Tammer, 2009). Thus Jonas stresses concomitantly that not everything can be known or foreseen.

Information deficit?

Nevertheless, much existing social-scientific literature on climate action emphasises the role of information provision in instigating climate action. This rests upon the idea of lay people lacking adequate knowledge to recognise the urgency of climate action. Ultimately, however, it has been shown that knowledge alone does not ignite responsible action (cf. Moser, 2006, p. 3). This is also confirmed by the often-cited *value-action gap* (mind-behaviour gap, attitude-behaviour gap): paradoxically, people who voice that they care about climate action and green values, often do not act accordingly at all (cf. Blake, 1999, p. 262ff.) – they thus somehow deny their knowledge about impending climate change. "Overall, there is no direct correlation between communication and behaviour change" (Nerlich et al., 2010, p. 5). Yet, this omnipresently propagated theory, the information deficit model, still assumes that the crux is presented by knowledge about climate change as an inherently complex issue remaining too cryptic for a passive and uninformed public: "The unspoken underlying assumptions typically are that people do not act because they either do not understand or do not care about the issue" (Moser, 2006, p. 5).

This is illustrated by target 12.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals on sustainable consumption (and production) which states: "[B]y 2030 [it counts to] ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development, and lifestyles in harmony with nature" (UN environment programme, 2015). Although admittedly there have previously been some attempts to include "people's values and circumstances (e.g., Peattie and Peattie, 2009; Seyfang and Paavola, 2008; Jackson, 2005), the provision of information is still a key focus" (Kenner, 2015, p. 10). Better informing the public has hitherto been an integral element of almost any climate action initiative: "What is distinctive about the ways in which some of these changes (towards unprecedented levels of consumption) have been characterised is the emphasis that is given to knowledge in the economic changes" (Goldblatt, 2004, p. 129).

There is evidence of a substantial and widening (cf. Miléř et al., 2012, p. 1438) rift between the knowledge of scientific experts on the one hand and the general public on the other, which in this view must be reduced as rapidly and efficiently as possible. Assuming that one does have responsibility to inform oneself about climate change, some argue that science also must better do its job to shed light on the issue. This type of 'deficit thinking' has been subject to growing criticism, and rightly so. For instance, "presenting evidence contrary to prior beliefs can

have the opposite effect and result in a strengthening of previously held beliefs, a phenomenon known as biased assimilation or a backfire effect" as Sauer et al. have shown (2021). Importantly, information deficit thinking also reduces people's responses to climate change to cognitive processes that revolve around factual knowledge, assuming "that the public are empty vessels waiting to be filled with useful information upon which they will then rationally act" (Nerlich et al., 2010, p. 4). Yet as Lidskog et al. write:

> […] for science to promote action, it is not sufficient that scientific advice is seen as competent and trustworthy. Such advice must also be perceived as meaningful and important, showing the need and urgency of taking action.
>
> Lidskog et al., 2020, p. 118; see also Davidson, 2012

This is mirrored in Welzer et al.'s critique of narrowly cognitivist approaches to climate policy whereby "information such as the predicted 2020 level of CO_2 in the atmosphere at 400 parts per million […] almost entirely overlooks what this means for the everyday reality of humankind, globally as well as regionally" (2010, p. 15). As they argue, there already exists an abundance of information, research and scientific work that amounts to an "explosion of information around climate change. Advice on how to reduce one's carbon footprint is provided almost daily in newspapers, adverts, books, and on websites" (2010, p. 10).

Alternative approaches that focus on desires and attitudes as determinants of human action do not fare much better, as they still focus on the cognitive in an assumed pre-determined static state of knowing that it counts to uncover. Therefore, it becomes "impossible to see how the contours and environmental costs of daily life evolve" (Shove, 2010, p. 1279). Instead, the focus must be shifted "away from the behaviour, action and motives of monological individuals" in viewing them instead as "members of groups and communities that constitute the context of their mundane activities" (Savolainen, 2007, p. 120, cited in ibid., p. 2).

Critique of rationality

Information deficit discourses are based on the assumption that people generally act by making informed, rational decisions. This discourse on rationality features frequently in the political and public sphere, as exemplified by the following statement made by the FDP (German liberal party) politician Christian Lindner: "To insist on meeting the Paris climate treaty is legitimate. […] However, we have to make sure that in implementing these targets, we do not only listen to our gut, but also to our head" (2019). This way of thinking has emerged from positivist, substantialist schools of thought such as behavioural psychology and (neo)classical economics. It

suggests that the solution is to simply install the right monetary incentives (Shove, 2010, p. 1276f.). The majority of contemporary political decisions are based on this logic, which by nature has to concentrate on the individual:

> The application of policies underpinned by notions of rational individuals, free in their choices (but also implicitly morally governed to make the correct choice) airbrush from view the complexities involved in addressing climate change in a context where the causes are endemic to industrial, capitalist societies.
>
> Butler, 2010, p. 184

Such misleading and wrongful initial assumptions unsurprisingly result in equally wrong but far-reaching consequences: the creed of rationality insinuates that citizens have the free choice to act in a climate-friendly manner. The fact that alternative climate-friendly products are much more expensive alone shows that this excludes some segments of society from the get-go. With this approach, society runs the risk of rendering climate action an elite project. Here, Beck poignantly points out that:

> … without a majority that consists of very diverse people who not only talk about climate policy but also act and vote accordingly, often against their own personal interests, climate policy is doomed to fail. It will only ever cease to be an elitist cloud-cuckoo-land if we find answers to an urgent and still largely taboo question: where is the support for ecological changes supposed to come from that in many cases undermine the lifestyles and consumption habits, the social status and the living conditions of the supporters and that in a time that is already shaped by uncertainty?
>
> Beck, 2010, p. 32

Today a chaotic jungle of information surrounds one's every day, which confirms that making straightforward rational choices remains an illusion. Repeatedly, supposedly climate-friendly and responsible choices have actually turned out to be even counterproductive. A new study by the institute of energy and environmental research in Heidelberg (IFEU) shows that the assumption that buying milk in glass bottles is an ecologically sound alternative is actually a misconception. One of the authors states that "for the time being, we cannot attest the glass recycling system for milk bottles a favourable eco-balance" (Dierig, 2019), as there are so few bottlers that on average one bottle travels a distance of 721 kilometres.

John Maynard Keynes (1937) extensively occupied himself with the recognition that the rationality principle was profoundly overrated, as he was convinced that omnipresent insecurity keeps people from rationally predicting the future – the

standard procedure in conventional behavioural theories. Keynes here follows David Hume who realised already in 1738 that since we cannot deductively determine what we are not experiencing, we have to resort back to "custom or a certain instinct of our nature […] – custom […] is the great guide of human life" (p. 16). These phenomena, social proof and the reliance on habits or custom, show that rationality is far away from always reflecting people's principal motive. Therefore, increasingly, the focus on the inherently exclusive expert-based rational knowledge and its superiority is being criticised:

> Rejecting these simplistic views of audiences, critics argue for an approach based on a better understanding of how to engage people […]: for example, through exploration of bottom-up, non-expert climate perceptions rather than top-down, expert understandings.
>
> Nerlich et al., 2010, p. 4

Jamison here finds it paradoxical that "the more expert knowledge we have, and the more use we make of it, the more calamitous the ensuing problems seem to be" (2001, p. 23). Accordingly, I argue that society does not have a climate-related deficit in conventional types of scientific 'rational' knowledge. Therefore, it must be looked for alternative conceptions to achieve meaningful climate action.

Alternative conceptions of linking knowledge with action

People in fact often act entirely *irrationally*. The conventional conception completely overlooks this reality that stems from societal dynamics and interpersonal motives: "Individuals determine appropriate behaviour for themselves [by] examin[ing] behaviour of others there, especially similar others" (Cialdini, 1993, cited in Cialdini et al., 1999, p. 1243) – a phenomenon that has been termed 'social proof' (cf. Cialdini et al., 1999, p. 1242). Thus, the realisation is long overdue that in most cases in modern society consuming has very little to do with the functionality of the product and everything to do with social valuation: "[…] people do not just act out of their self-interest as they also have social, moral and altruistic motivations like e.g., caring for strangers; people do not always base decisions on information – e.g., because some of it is not available and it is impossible to process all information before taking a decision; and also they act based on emotions" (Jackson, 2005, Orrell, 2012, both cited in Kenner, 2015, p. 09). Therefore, it counts to consider which material and social inequalities lie at the bottom of consumption practices, but the extreme responsibilisation of the individual leads to the complete neglect of such relational and relative aspects:

> Apparent, directly visible beings, whether individuals or groups, exist and subsist in and through difference; that is, they occupy relative positions in a space of relations which, although invisible and always difficult to show empirically, is the most real reality (the ens realissimum, as scholasticism would say) and the real principle of the behaviour of individuals and groups.
>
> Bourdieu, 1998, p. 31

One must thus urgently recognise the profound cultural difference that exists in relation to the perception of climate change in Germany. It is essential to finally take seriously the everyday life experiences (cf. Rau, 2018) of those social groups that do not usually speak out on or concern themselves with climate matters. As Bourdieu has argued in his magnum opus *Distinction*, human social behaviour is determined by one's (largely subconscious) perception of others in relation to oneself, as being either similar or different. In his eyes, all human action serves the purpose of expressing either belonging or distinction in relation to a particular societal subgroup.

Bourdieu goes on to say that those at the top practice distinction by consuming to stage their wealth and to set themselves apart from societal groups lower in status as this grants the security of maintaining their elite positions: "The leisure class, at the summit, cuts itself off from society and this is possible because the group of the wealthiest has grown sufficiently large that the richest no longer need to interact with the rest of the population" (Kempf, 2008, p. 65, cited in Kenner, 2015, p. 06). What they aspire to and thus consume is determined by their cultural preferences that due to the luxury of being detached (at least to an extent) from financial limitations follow what Bourdieu calls *a pure gaze*: "The pure gaze implies a break with the ordinary attitude towards the world, which, given the conditions in which it is performed, is also a social separation" (1984, p. 5). This 'pure gaze' and the types of consumption practices it steers practitioners towards are, according to Bourdieu, deeply internalised (beyond consciousness) from an early age onwards. In the upper classes these are detached from mundane everyday necessities: "The eye is a product of history reproduced by education" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 3). Here, Kenner points out that "in a context of extreme inequality […] [rich people] may be disconnected from the reality of the ecological crisis" (2015, p. 10), which may lead to them responding even less well to information campaigns. These schemes of classification:

> … make distinctions between what is good and what is bad, between what is right and what is wrong, between what is distinguished and what is vulgar, and so forth, but the distinctions are not identical. Thus, for instance, the same behaviour or

> even the same good can appear distinguished to one person, pretentious to someone else, and cheap or showy to yet another.
>
> Bourdieu, 1998, p. 8

For the climate activist, the V-label (for *vegan*) on medicine packaging may be the reason to reach for this and not another product. By contrast, the reader of the German meat-lover magazine BEEF may ridicule this labelling for it making zero sense to him. He finds *this stupid vegan hype completely ludicrous! What's not going to be vegan in a tablet?*. Some existing literature is already concerned with societal difference: similar to the Six Americas Study (Leiserowitz et al., 2009), Metag et al. (2015) distinguish five different groups within the German population in terms of their perceptions of climate change urgency. These groups also differ significantly according to how they access information on climate change – i.e., their media consumption and communication patterns. This gives insight in how to tailor climate change communication campaigns to specific audiences: members of 'the doubtful', for instance, do not actively seek out information on climate change. Here an indirect campaign that acts "as 'by-catch' whilst watching something else" (p. 15) is potentially more effective than direct climate change communication. "Until green consumption is automatic (embedded in the daily practices of all actors in society), the complexity of developing new meanings, materials and skills will continue to prevent truly sustainable consumption" (Boström and Davidson, 2018, p. 201, see also Huddart-Kennedy, 2018, p. 16).

Compatibility with the everyday

One avenue to consider here may thus be that the results presented by climate science are just too far away from the average person's daily life. So far, the appeals to the individual to consume greener have hardly been successful, since they have not been equipped to reach people *emotionally* – a requirement that the guild of the marketeers has recognised and used to its advantage for decades. "Emotion serves as the glue that binds us to norms, the performance of socially sanctioned roles and the maintenance of status hierarchies" (Ford and Norgaard, 2019, p. 221). Perhaps the lack of progress in climate action can be much better explained by *not-feeling* instead of *not-knowing*, as the deficit model completely ignores the significance of affective, emotional and bodily aspects of knowing (e.g., Lidskog et al. 2020). This also includes people's engagement in everyday practices that shape their experiences of being in the world (Rau, Davies, and Fahy, 2014; Greene, 2018). Underlying values, emotions and ways of life do not play a role in the messages sent out today when people are rationally asked to, for example, save energy and therefore money (cf. Nerlich et al., 2010). Hulme points out that in contrast to the IPCC-consensus on the anthro-

pogenic contribution to climate change, there is no consensus in sight concerning what the average person ought to do about all this in their everyday lives (2009/10, p. 41). As he goes on: "… by understanding the ways climate change connects with foundational human instincts of nostalgia, fear, pride and justice we open up a way of resituating culture and the human spirit at the centre of our understanding of climate" (ibid., p. 42). Thus, the assumption that consensus must be established on what climate change means[6] should be left behind. Instead, it counts to foster an atmosphere of diverse interpretations as such heterogeneity gives rise to multifaceted "creative applications of the idea of climate change" (ibid., p. 43), in which Hulme sees real opportunity. "We should be using the idea of climate change to reveal, animate and mobilise the latent human values of temperance, compassion and justice" (ibid.).

As the threat posed by climate change is generally perceived as abstract as well as spatially and temporally distant (Moser, 2010, p. 43), it is easily overshadowed by other personal challenges in people's everyday lives (ibid., p. 36). The lack of urgency is further fuelled by the fact that urbanisation leads to increasing numbers of people being shielded from actually experiencing the dynamics of nature:

> Living, working, learning, and playing most hours of the day in climate-controlled buildings, moving in protective vehicles through vastly human-altered landscapes, and spending relatively little time in attentive, observing, or interactive modes in nature makes it difficult to notice subtle, incremental environmental changes.
>
> Moser, 2010, p. 34; see also Glantz, 1999, cited in ibid., p. 34

All this renders climate change complex beyond human cognitive understanding. Here it helps to consider knowing together with efficacy.

Knowledge and efficacy

According to Bandura, "people select, construct, and negotiate environments partly on the basis of their self-beliefs of efficacy" (1994, p. 49). Albeit at least considering the role of environments, this conception that choices are bounded by beliefs in one's own self-efficacy is again profoundly cognitivist and individualistic: people do not arrive at self-efficacy beliefs by actively negotiating with themselves in their own heads about what is best to believe. What is missing here is the is the critical role

6 As Mike Hulme points out, in contrast to the scientific consensus on the anthropogenic contribution to climate change, there is "no comparable consensus – no single perspective or vantage point – that allows us to understand what this kaleidoscopic idea of climate change **means** for us and our descendants" (Hulme, 2009, p. 41, my emph.).

of efficacy-attributions endorsed by others. This encompasses not only what is being said to a person but crucially also what swings along with messages, often on an emotional level, and is then, often subconsciously, interpreted and kept. Therefore, it is entirely inconceivable that we can pinpoint to the origin of our beliefs as much of the time, the process never even surfaces on cognitive levels. It would be much more conducive for climate action to drop the conception of the individual as cognitive rational entity and consider *practitioners in context* instead. The way people choose to act is the result of manifold hopes, pressures and fears as well as material situations and practiced lifestyles that are both constituted by and actively constitute the social context in which people dwell. Therefore, the assumption that our behaviour lies solely in our own hands signifies a fatal, since potentially even paralysing, farce.

Bourdieu: Alternative to cognitivism

In a poignant attack against "what the philosophers of the Cambridge School called morbus mathematicus [that] wreaks havoc even in areas far removed from economics" (1990, p. 47), Bourdieu revolts against the hegemonic paradigm of *normal science* (cf. Kuhn, 1962) that takes the hard sciences to be the gold standard and rests upon mathematic models, deduction, rational action theory and methodological individualism:

> The people who construct them [mathematic models] often abandon themselves to the dogmatic temptation that Kant was already denouncing in mathematicians, and which means you move from the model of reality to the reality of the model.
>
> Bourdieu, 1990, p. 47f.

Bourdieu asks us to overcome this perspective, and to examine practices: "The principle of practices has to be sought instead in the relationship between external constraints which leave a very variable margin for choice, and dispositions[7] which are the product of economic and social processes that are more or less completely reducible to these constraints, as defined at a particular moment" (Bourdieu, [1977] 1990, p. 50). This is because the connection between social context and individual is crucially multidirectional, fluid and co-constitutive. Bourdieu had observed that

7 Burke et al. describe these dispositions as "unconscious internalisations of social constraints that are naturalised, comprise common sense, are so obvious, and feel so right and proper within a given cultural or social context that members of the group cannot further explain them – the just are" (2009, p. 64S).

agents express the same kinds of behaviour, especially when they belong to the same social group and that this is even the case when they are unfamiliar with each other:

> The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an expressed mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.
>
> Bourdieu, [1977] 1990, p. 53

For this reason, in this study it is argued for "choosing practices as socio-material units of analysis [as this] promotes forms of inquiry that challenge the dominance of conceptual and methodological individualism in research on environmental attitudes and behavior (Shove 2010; Shove et al. 2012; Rau, Davies, and Fahy, 2014)" (Rau, 2018, p. 218). Single and stable actions or behaviours cannot simply be selectively and separately targeted by nudges, as this is not how people in society actually operate: "Social context encompasses multiple realms including both cultural and social domains of influence, as illustrated in Bourdieu's concept of habitus (embodied history, presence of the past)" (Burke et al., 2009, p. 66S), and also importantly involves subconscious processes (cf. ibid.):

> Because the habitus is an infinite capacity for generating products – thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions – whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production, the conditioned and conditional freedom it provides is as remote from creation of unpredictable novelty as it is from simple mechanical reproduction of the original conditioning.
>
> Bourdieu, [1977] 1990, p. 55

Bourdieu's habitus can therefore be interpreted as the union between structure and agency, so between the positions that agents occupy in a social space and the types of behaviour that are commonplace in it. As an inherently cultural concept it rests upon people's everyday practices: "Habitus exists only in and through the practices of individuals and their interaction with each other and their environment; thus habitus is not just *manifest* in behaviour, it is an integral *part* of it (and vice versa)" (Jenkins, 2002, p. 75, orig. emph.). Bourdieu conceives of the social milieu as springing from processes of adaptation to the social groups' living conditions, where resources are divided unequally (cf. Lutz, 2016). Social milieus thus aid the largely subconscious formation of group specific forms of *habitus*, or *climate habitus* in this study. Bourdieu

sees differences in society to not only occur along socio-economic variables (vertical differentiation) but also along cultural factors (horizontal differentiation), which is why his concept is so uniquely equipped to be applied in the present study of climate cultures. This renders milieus in his definition no longer closed but dynamic. Here, habitus builds the nexus between people's practices and their social surroundings.

This is precisely why it makes sense to apply Bourdieu's concept of habitus to an investigation of responses to climate change: if it is the incorporated social structures that have become "second nature" (Jurt, 2010, p. 8) and not the cognitive individual structures that initiate acting, then it is essential to shift the focus from knowing onto what people actually do. Habitus is expressed through action, not through knowing. "In everyday practice it is principally the various life spheres that are important – work, leisure, family, neighbourhood etc. These have to be 'handled' by people, by steering and meaningfully integrating their interests, ideals, actions and emotions" (Bremer, 2004, p. 44). Thus, behaviour in each of these social areas is only one of the diverse elements of the everyday practice of an agent. It is the habitus that provides them with some form of regularity or logic, so that "in all areas of life there is, so to speak, the same handwriting of an actor discernible" (Bremer, 2004, p. 47).

Actions carry various, potentially opposing meanings in different social spaces. "As an acquired system of generative schemes, the habitus makes possible the production of all the thoughts, perceptions and actions inherent in the particular conditions of its production and only those" (Bourdieu, [1977] 1990, p. 55). Accordingly, habitus yields distinct modes of meaning and connotation in each of them: habitus thus

> … ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms.
>
> Bourdieu, [1977] 1990, p. 54

A praxeological perspective in the tradition of Bourdieu therefore allows overcoming the blatant deficits of current information-centrist, fact-idolising, individualist theories by permitting the recognition of the importance of emotional messages, feelings and relational knowledge. Authors of this multifariously shaped, dynamic and fluid school of thought that Andreas Reckwitz has referred to as "fertile pool of ideas" (2003, p. 112) are, amongst others, Anthony Giddens (see e.g., 1979), Theodore Schatzki (see e.g., 2016) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (see e.g., 1953) who have dealt with alternative forms of knowing like tacit knowledge or implicit knowledge that are of particular interest to this study. Practice theory's "two most central claims can be taken as the materiality of the social and cultural and the implicit, informal logic of

social life that oppose the rationalisms and intellectualisms of other social and cultural theories" (Reckwitz, 2003, p. 113). Such an analysis manages to read between the lines and thus come a little closer to reality. Melanie Jaeger-Erben (2017, p. 135ff.) also follows this tradition and shows that two completely different motives can be at play in the carrying out of a particular consumption practice (buying organic food) by two agents: for one person, the climate aspect is central, whilst for the other, the consumption decision is made based on other relevant practices (related to parenting) in the same realm. In an analysis that merely looks at individuals' rational decisions, this insight would remain entirely hidden.

Of course, in this study, it is not argued for a reduction of knowledge, but definitely for a more serious and intensive consideration of other types of knowledge, in particular relational, emotional and affective knowledge. Knowledge itself should be thought of as less cerebral or cognitive and instead as more emotional and embodied. Grappling with this alternative form of knowledge rests on the conviction that "individual persons, whether strategic or norm following, are inseparable from the transactional contexts within which they are embedded" (Emirbayer, 1997, p. 287). These contexts include not only the practices the agents perform but also the sometimes subconscious dispositions that spark their execution and that rest on societal regularities. Such relational approaches further stress the role of the historical and the material.

As shown so far, this study's core concepts, responsibility, efficacy and knowing have been extensively contemplated by various scholars. However, traditional perspectives like those that focus on the individual, information deficits and rationality theory approach these issues quite crudely. They have largely ceased to add value, which is not least verified by the fact that with them, meaningful climate action still leaves much to be desired. In some instances, relations between (two of) the core concepts have been discussed and the concatenation between them has been considered. However, a conception that truly integrates these three ideas is missing to this day. There is a clear need for an alternative approach that does justice to the dynamic of social structures and that recognises the importance of societal influences (cf. Rau, 2018, p. 209). Building on Kari Marie Norgaard's ground-breaking work on the connection between climate change, emotions, and everyday life that she developed in her book *Living in denial* (2011) and several other of her texts, this study contributes to closing this research gap.

2.5 The social organisation of denial

Norgaard's culturally sensitive approach reveals the inherently social nature of denial that affects her respondents' reactions to the threat of climate change: "[…] in wealthy nations, the key questions related to climate change have to do with denial"