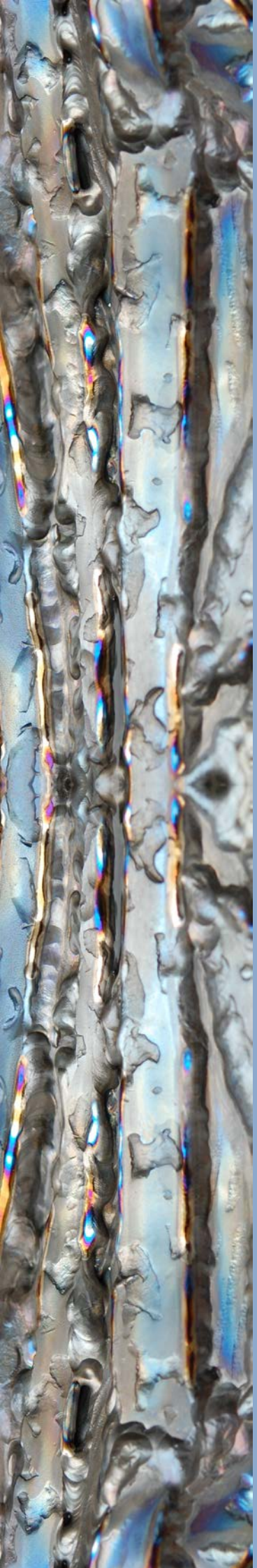

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CONTENTS

Articles

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Redefining the Sociological Paradigm: Emile Durkheim and the Scientific Study of Morality

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Abstract Whereas Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) has long been envisioned as a structuralist, quantitative, and positivist sociologist, some materials that Durkheim produced in the later stages of his career—namely, *Moral Education* (1961 [1902-1903]), *The Evolution of Educational Thought* (1977 [1904-1905]), *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1915 [1912]), and *Pragmatism and Sociology* (1983 [1913-1914]) attest to a very different conception of sociology—one with particular relevance to the study of human knowing, acting, and interchange.

Although scarcely known in the social sciences, Emile Durkheim's (1993 [1887]) "La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne" ["The Scientific Study of Morality in Germany"] is an exceptionally important statement for establishing the base of much of Durkheim's subsequent social thought and for comprehending the field of sociology more generally. This includes the structuralist-pragmatist divide and the more distinctively humanist approach to the study of community life that Durkheim most visibly develops later (1961 [1902-1903]; 1977 [1904-1905]; 1915 [1912]; 1983 [1913-1914]) in his career.

Keywords Emile Durkheim; Theory; Sociology; Morality; Pragmatism; German Social Realism; Wilhelm Wundt; Ethics; Folk Psychology; Aristotle; History; Symbolic Interaction

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There is only one way to understand collective phenomena, that is to study them in themselves. In other words, it is social psychology (die Völkerpsychologie) that alone can furnish the moral theorist with the materials he or she needs; this, according to Wundt, is the gateway (die Vorhalle) to ethics. It is in the history of language, of religion, of customs, and civilization in general that we can discover the traces of this development of which individual consciousness contains and knows only the initial impulses.

Emile Durkheim 1887 (Hall 1993:92 *Ethics and the Sociology of Morals* [*E&SM*])[1]

Ironically, one of the most consequential statements on "pragmatist" or "social realist" thought in Germany was developed by the French scholar Emile Durkheim (1993 [1887]). Although cast in reference to "the scientific study of morality" rather than "social realism" or "pragmatism" per se, Durkheim contends that several German scholars, of whom Wilhelm Wundt is most consequential, had developed an especially promising, interrelated set of approaches for studying community life in the social sciences. Still, Durkheim was unable and/or did not consider it appropriate to openly stress his indebtedness to the German social realists when pursuing his career as a French academic. Thus, it is only later, as a more established scholar, that Durkheim (1902-1914) more directly reengages [the pragmatist tradition] that he had found so intellectually compelling in his earlier contact with German social realism.[2]

In what follows, I consider the implications of a study leave in Germany taken by Emile Durkheim in 1885-1886 for the humanist/pragmatist sociology that would become prominent in Durkheim's later scholarly works (1915 [1912]; 1961 [1902-1903]; 1977 [1904-1905];1983 [1913-1914]). In developing this statement, I build on Durkheim's (1993 [1887]) article, "La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne" ("The Scientific Study of Morality in Germany") which appears in Robert T. Hall's English translation published in *Emile Durkheim: Ethics and the Sociology of Morals* [***E&SM***] in 1993.

[1] The page references in this paper to Emile Durkheim's "La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne" ["The Scientific Study of Morality in Germany"] are from Robert T. Hall's English translation—as found on pages 57-135 of Hall's (1993) *Emile Durkheim: Ethics and the Sociology of Morals* [E*&SM*]. I am very much indebted to Robert Hall for his translation and exceptionally insightful introduction to this text. Indeed, of the various commentators on Durkheim's works, it is Robert T. Hall who has most centrally grasped the importance of this 1887 statement for Durkheim's subsequent scholarship.

[2] In an attempt to succinctly capture the overarching essence of Durkheim's 1887 statement, Robert Alun Jones (1985; 1994; 1999; 2002) uses the term "social realism." This seems entirely appropriate to me, especially since it reminds readers of the particular cultural context in which Durkheim's statement was developed. Nonetheless, readers are advised that in this paper I am using the terms "social realism," "social pragmatism," and "pragmatism" in essentially interchangeable ways. Durkheim does not use any of these terms in his 1887 statement, but readers will recognize considerable overall affinity between these approaches to the study of human knowing, acting, and interchange and the concepts embedded in the specific articles Emile Durkheim discusses in the 1887 paper.
In addition to earlier discussions of "folk psychology" (*die Völkerpsychologie*) in German scholarship, the term "social realism" as used herein has many conceptual affinities with Aristotelian social thought (especially see *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Rhetoric*), as well as with what would later become known as American pragmatism, symbolic interactionism, social constructionism, interpretivism, and phenomenological sociology (see: Prus 1996; 2003; 2004; 2007a; 2007b; 2008; 2009a; 2009b; 2013a; 2015; 2017).
Most centrally, following Wilhelm Wundt (*Ethics*), Durkheim's emphasis is on studying the developmentally shaped, collectively enacted, and linguistically enabled conceptual foundations of community life. It is within the context of ongoing human life-worlds that *all* realms and instances of human knowing, acting, and interchange become meaningful and achieve some historically constituted continuity. Envisioned thusly, Emile Durkheim's depiction of "the social realist study of morality" represents an exceptionally enabling prototype for the study of all contexts and arenas of human group life.

Few sociologists seem familiar with Durkheim's 1887 statement and even fewer have considered the implications of Durkheim's encounter with "German social realism" (Jones 1999) during a study leave as a junior scholar—either for Durkheim's career as a sociologist or for the field of sociology and the study of human knowing and acting more specifically.[3]

Albeit notably compacted, Durkheim's 1887 text is important not only for (a) identifying some central features of Durkheim's approach to the study of human group life but also for (b) locating the conceptual core of these aspects of Durkheim's intellectual heritage and (c) enabling readers more adequately to appreciate some of the tensions that appear in Durkheim's subsequent analyses of community life.

Relatedly, this much overlooked statement also (d) alerts us to the role that some German scholars (especially Wilhelm Wundt) played in the development of Durkheim's pragmatist sociological approach to the study of human group life and (e) denotes another set of connections between classical Greek scholarship and contemporary pragmatist thought.

It is commonly assumed that Durkheim's sociology was primarily inspired by the positivist philosophy of Auguste Comte (1798-1857). Indeed, Durkheim's best-known works (*The Division of Labor in Society* [1893], *The Rules of Sociological Method* [1895], and *Suicide* [1897]) represent a structural-determinist, as well as a quantitative alternative (*Suicide*) to interpretivist/pragmatist viewpoints. Likewise, whereas one can locate some pragmatist themes in these three texts, emphases of these latter sorts generally have been envisioned as distinctively theoretically and methodologically marginal to his overall project.

Still, even though Durkheim's best-known texts (1947 [1893]; 1951 [1897]; 1958 [1895]) are noted for their structuralist, quantitative, and deductively rationalist emphases, it is likely that these texts also would have been more positivist, individualistic, and psychological in thrust—had Durkheim not had earlier contact with the German social realists.

Durkheim's education, if we may judge from some philosophy lectures that Durkheim delivered in 1883-1884 (Gross and Jones 2004), was very much the product of French social thought at his time. Thus, whereas Durkheim appears to possess a solid French philosophical background with a particular proclivity for analytic detail, the philosophical stances encountered in these lectures reflect the (structuralist, reductionist, deductive) rationalism of René Descartes (1596-1650), the raw individualism

[3] In developing this statement on Durkheim's encounter with German social realism, I also benefited from Robert Alun Jones' (1999) insightful historical commentary on Durkheim's career as a scholar—and in particular Jones' attentiveness to the contributions of Wilhelm Wundt to Durkheim's 1887 statement on the study of morality in Germany. While I am particularly grateful to Steven Lukes (1973) for the broad array of materials that he provides on Durkheim's scholarly career and publications, Lukes substantially understates the importance of Durkheim's encounter with German realism, as well as the humanist/pragmatist proclivities one encounters in Emile Durkheim's later works. Although providing an exceptionally extensive and highly detailed depiction of Durkheim's personal life and career, Marcel Fournier's (2013) biographical statement on Emile Durkheim also gives very little attention to what I have termed Durkheim's "sociological pragmatism" in his 1887 paper or in his later works (1902-1914). Fournier acknowledges Durkheim's subsequent attentiveness to history and ethnography as central features of the sociological enterprise in some of his later work, but, much like Lukes, Fournier is inattentive to the historical continuities of pragmatist Greek thought (from Aristotle via Wundt) in Durkheim's "The Scientific Study of Morality in Germany."

championed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and the (structuralist, largely ahistorical) scientific emphasis of the scholars who became central at the time of the French Revolution.[4]

Albeit seemingly limited, Durkheim appears to have had some exposure to classical Greek thought (notably including aspects of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*).[5] Still, Durkheim's material on Greek scholarship is not presented in particularly distinct terms but rather is interfused with French structuralism, scientism, and individualism. Accordingly, in his 1883-1884 lectures, human behavior is explained primarily in terms of individual psychological cognitions and tendencies. There is very little emphasis on the group or community life in Durkheim's early lectures on philosophy.

As Lukes (1973:86-95) observes, Durkheim had a long standing interest in morality, and his 1887 article on ethics and morality emerged as a result of a study leave that took him to several German universities. The French government had sponsored study leaves for promising young French scholars so that they might learn about the latest thought and research being developed in Germany.

Although many of his colleagues were notably disaffected with their study leave encounters in German academia, Durkheim (1993 [1887]) describes his contacts with particular German scholars as having given him a particularly clear conceptual paradigm and research agenda, as well as a much sharpened methodological standpoint for studying community life—and especially the matters of morality, regulation, and religion. As a result, the contrasts between Durkheim's (1883-1884) lectures and the statement on morality that he developed in 1887 following his (1885-1886) study leave in Germany are particularly striking. Still, the sources of Durkheim's ideas, along with the nature of their influence, have become a point of controversy.[6]

Drawing on Durkheim's 1887 paper, I will indicate his profound indebtedness to some German realists of whom Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) is particularly consequential.[7] Indeed, Wundt and the German social realists Durkheim discusses seem foundational for Durkheim's (a) subsequent emphasis on the collective consciousness, (b) insistence on the essentiality of the group (as in language, interaction, concepts, and meaning) for all realms of human

[4] This would include the encyclopedicists Denis Diderot (1713-1784) and Jean le Rond d'Alembert (1717-1783), among others, who championed a more notably rationalist, structuralist, ahistorical, allegedly scientific approach.

[5] Although Aristotle is often described as an objectivist or raw empiricist and Plato as an idealist, these characterizations not only disregard particularly consequential pragmatist motifs in Plato's texts (Prus 2009a, 2011a, 2011b, 2013b; Prus and Camara 2010) but also dismally fail to acknowledge the broader, more explicit nature of Aristotle's pragmatist approach to the study of the human condition (see: *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Rhetoric*, *Politics*, *Poetics*, and *Categories*; also see: Prus 2003; 2004; 2007a; 2008; 2009a; 2013a; 2013c; 2015; Prus and Camara 2010). Over the millennia Aristotle's scholarship has been represented in many different ways and across highly diverse realms of community life, but it is *Aristotelian pragmatism* (see" Prus 1999; 2003; 2004; Puddephatt and Prus 2007) that provides the conceptual foundations of 20th century American pragmatism (and pragmatism's sociological offshoot, symbolic interactionism), as well as the somewhat earlier German social realist tradition that Durkheim discusses.

[6] Had Durkheim (1993 [1887]) explicitly defined German social realism as but a variant of the pragmatist philosophy associated with Plato and (especially) Aristotle, he might have had received a more tolerant reception in the French academic community.

[7] I developed a much stronger appreciation of the impact of Wilhelm Wundt's analysis of morality on Durkheim's subsequent scholarship from directly examining Wundt's three volume *Ethics*. Indeed, there is much of fundamental sociological value to be gleaned from a more sustained examination of Wundt's *Ethics*.

knowing, acting, and interchange, (c) the notably relativist, pluralist humanist/pragmatist features of his subsequent sociological analyses, and (d) attentiveness to the developmental-historical flows—continuities and disjunctures—of community life.

In contrast to the position taken in the present statement, Steven Lukes (1973: especially 79-95) seems intent on minimizing the significance of Durkheim's contacts with the German social realists. Whereas Lukes generally distances Durkheim from a pragmatist viewpoint, Lukes partially may be responding to some comments Durkheim made in 1907.[8] Others, including Simon Deploige (1911), Pascal Gisbert (1959), Jeffrey Alexander (1986), Stjepan Mestrovic (1991), Robert Hall (1993), Robert Alun Jones (1994; 1999), and Mustafa Emirbayer (1996a; 1996b), would not concur with Lukes on this matter.[9] Readers may judge these viewpoints for themselves when they examine Durkheim's fuller (1993 [1887]) text or the synopsis provided in the present statement.

Although Durkheim addresses the works of some German political economists, legalists, historians, and philosophers who adapt a realist (essentially pragmatist) perspective with an emphasis on "what is" and "how things are accomplished," those who examine Durkheim's "La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne" may be surprised to see the particular prominence Durkheim gives to Wilhelm Wundt's *Ethics* (1914 [1886]).

Wilhelm Wundt may be only marginally known in sociological circles and then likely almost entirely as an experimental psychologist rather than a "folk psychologist." However, Durkheim's portrayal of Wundt's *Ethics* makes it clear that Wundt (in developing his historically informed comparative analysis of morality) has defined much of the agenda that Durkheim intends to follow over his career. Indeed, on the basis of Durkheim's commentary and a fuller examination of Wundt's text, *one might very well include Wilhelm Wundt*, the psychologist turned philosopher, historian, and analyst of community life, *among "the founding fathers of sociology."*

Still, as Durkheim indicates in his 1887 paper, Wundt was not alone in stressing the irreducible nature of the human group and the importance of attending to human activity, linguistic interchange, and the historical, developmental flows of human group life. Notably, thus, Durkheim describes this as a visible element of the German intellectual climate of the day.

[8] In 1907, and seemingly responding to more public (published) allegations that his sociology was very much a restatement of German social thought rather than having been derived from French sources, Durkheim would say that the major sources for his ideas were Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and (Spencer's student) Alfred Espinas (see: Lukes 1973:79-85). Whereas this claim generally seems much more appropriate for Durkheim's earlier works (1947 [1893]; 1951 [1897]; 1958 [1895]) than for his later scholarship, it notably disregards the interpretivist/pragmatist materials that Durkheim introduced in his 1890s texts. Claims of these sorts also understate the interpretivist-positivist tensions that Durkheim seems likely to have experienced in developing these three texts. Also see Alexander (1986), Emirbayer (1996a; 1996b), and Jones (1999). Durkheim's conceptual continuities with German social realism become more apparent when one examines his 1902-1903, 1904-1905, 1912, 1913-1914 texts in the light of his 1887 statement.

[9] Part of the failure of Steven Lukes (1973), Marcel Fournier (2013), and numerous other commentators to acknowledge the pragmatist features of Durkheim's work, as well as the connections of Durkheim with Wilhelm Wundt not only suggests a lack of awareness of Aristotle's pragmatism (Prus 2007a; 2008; 2013a; 2015) but also more direct familiarity with Wundt's *Ethics*—the primary source on which Durkheim built in his 1887 article. Still, given the many areas of social life in which Durkheim addressed during his life-time and the many statements he developed (published texts and articles, lectures, notes, correspondence), as well as the differing backgrounds and resources with which particular commentators have worked, significant diversity of emphases and interpretation seems inevitable.

Although very much overshadowed by the philosophies of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), as well as the moralism of Karl Marx (1818-1893), there is a long-standing linguistic, philosophic, "folk psychology" (*die Völkerpsychologie*) or social realist tradition in German social thought. Not only have these scholars stridently criticized Kant and Hegel for their failure to attend to language as an essential enabling baseline element in all human thought and reasoning practices (i.e., for failing to acknowledge the intersubjectively accomplished nature of all human knowing and acting) but these scholars also challenged positivist conceptions of the human condition and the scientistic rejection of historical and philosophical materials from the past.

In addition to the social realists that Durkheim discusses in his 1887 paper, this would include J. G. Hamann (1730-1788), G. Chr. Lichtenberg (1742-1799), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), Wilhelm Humboldt (1767-1835), Otto Friedrich Gruppe (1804-1876), Conrad Hermann (1819-1897), Gustav Gerber (1820-1901), and Friedrich Max Muller (1823-1900). Herman Cloeren (1988) provides a very insightful review of the works of these scholars. As indicated in Prus (1996), scholars centrally involved in related scholarly (pragmatist-related) developments would include Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) and Georg Simmel (1858-1818).[10]

It should be noted as well that the social realism Durkheim discusses in his 1887 paper did ***not*** originate in Germany but, as Cloeren (1988) observes, more centrally reflects the contributions of some British (pragmatist-oriented) scholars. This includes Francis Bacon (1561-1626), John Locke (1632-1704), and David Hume (1711-1776). Still, as with the German social realists, we may acknowledge a more extended (albeit often notably indirect) indebtedness of both these British and German scholars to Aristotle (particularly his *Nicomachean Ethics*; also see Prus 2004; 2007a; 2008).

In his comparatively short but still intense, conceptually compacted 1887 statement, Durkheim not only emphasizes Wundt's contributions to the study of human group life but also acknowledges a set of somewhat parallel viewpoints articulated by some German economists, legalists, and historians that discuss the social order of community life in humanly engaged, developmentally sustained terms.

Pragmatist emphases pertaining to the nature of human group life and the relationship of the individual to society are prominent in Durkheim's later (1915 [1912]; 1961 [1902-1903]; 1977 [1904-1905]; 1983 [1913-1914]) works.[11] However, the conceptual-analytic materials that can be gleaned from Emile

[10] Following his 1887 statement, Emile Durkheim would become well-aware of the academic risks of pursuing ideas associated with German social thought in France. Still, German social realism would further recede into the background with World War I and the subsequent increased scholarly attentiveness to a materialist, structurally-oriented scientific sociology in the ensuing decades.

[11] Albeit considerably less evident, amidst the continuities of Durkheim's earlier exposure to French structuralism and positivist social thought, some noteworthy pragmatist motifs can be found in Durkheim's *Division of Labor*. Likewise, important features of *Rules* clearly reflect a pragmatist orientation to the study of human group life. By contrast, Durkheim's *Suicide*, which is often (mis)taken as Durkheim's "definitive methodological prototype," has very little to offer to the pragmatist study of human lived experience—including suicide as a socially engaged process embedded in the context of ongoing community life. While appealing to "the remedial social problems mentality" of his time and corresponding searches for "structuralist factors and quick-fix solutions" of our own time, it is not apparent that Durkheim was conceptually or methodologically enchanted with *Suicide*. Still, Emile Durkheim had made long-term commitments to this project and, despite its substantial conceptual and methodological failings, he envisioned *Suicide* as a publication of considerable importance for his career.

Durkheim's "The Scientific Study of Morality in Germany" constitute an "intellectual sociological treasure chest" in themselves.

Whereas readers may be struck by the extended, pronounced emphasis on the collective consciousness of the group that Durkheim discusses in his 1887 publication, this statement also represents a direct critique of Platonist, Cartesian, and Kantian rationalism. Moreover, Durkheim explicitly challenges the viability of utilitarianism and individualism as overarching rationalities for explaining the moral order of the community.

For the German social realists, the interaction that takes place in the community is central for enabling all that is humanly known and meaningfully engaged. Moreover, there is a sustained pragmatist emphasis on activity. The group achieves its viability as people do things and relate to others in linguistically-enabled, minded, and socially acknowledged purposive terms. Still, and no less consequentially, people's conceptions of knowing and acting (and the resources accumulated therein) not only are collectively developed, sustained, and transformed over time but these "cultural accomplishments" also are very much one with the viewpoints, activities, and interchanges that constitute ongoing community life.

Accordingly, Durkheim (1993 [1887]) stresses (a) an attentiveness to the historical-developmental flows of human group life for comprehending the culture (as in traditions, knowledge, morality, and day-to-day practices) of the community and (b) the relativity of morality across societies, as well as within particular communities over time. Emile Durkheim also acknowledges (c) the problematic nature of community life—viewing emergence as an indefinite, ongoing socially engaged process that transcends the interests and viewpoints of particular individuals. As well, (d) insofar as it is seen to epitomize the collective, reflective, enacted features of community—as a societal force or collective spirit that transcends the individuals within the community—morality is to be seen as a socially achieved process. It is for this reason that both religious and secular viewpoints and practices are to be given particular attention in developing a scholarly analysis of the moral ordering of community life.

Contending that (e) ongoing community life, rather than the physiological or psychological qualities of individuals, is the centering point of analysis for human knowing, activity, and interchange, Durkheim addresses (f) the importance of both meaningful, intentioned, and more collectively routinized activities and modes of association for the study of community life. Relatedly, he remains attentive to (g) the developmental, enacted interrelatedness and the associated resiliencies of the many humanly engaged theaters of operation that transcend more individualized, as well as more extended collective efforts to change aspects of community life.

Methodologically, Durkheim emphasizes (h) the importance of studying the developmental flows of community life, as well as (i) the necessity of attending to the instances and ways in which people engage and interact within the many organizational contexts of community life and (j) the importance of pursuing sustained comparative analysis (analytic induction rather than deductive logic) of developmental his-

torical and ethnological materials for (k) the purpose of discerning, identifying, and articulating the more fundamental (versus more transitory) viewpoints, practices, and processes of human group life.

"La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne"

[Note: The page references are to the English translation of "La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne"—"The Scientific Study of Morality in Germany" that appears in Robert Hall's (1993) *Ethics and the Sociology of Morals* [*E&SM*]. To maintain the overall flow and coherence of Durkheim's statement, as well as enable readers to refer to Durkheim's text (and Hall's translation) for greater detail, I will be presenting this synopsis in the order in which Durkheim developed his statement, dealing in turn with each author that he considers.]

Durkheim begins his 1887 "The Scientific Study of Morality in Germany" (*E&SM*:58) by observing that French approaches to ethics can be characterized as either (a) idealist (presuming pre-existing or invariant truths) or (b) utilitarian (denoting variants of self/unit-serving rationalist principles) in emphasis. However, Durkheim observes, some German scholars have taken a different approach. This latter (social realist) approach, Durkheim contends, is extremely important for it provides a framework for studying ethics in more distinctively scientific terms.

Part I: Economists and Sociologists

Opening his discussion by considering the relationship of ethics to economics, Durkheim (*E&SM*:58-62) says that economists typically have approached the linkages of ethics and economics in three ways. First, some view ethics as subsumed by, or as the emergent byproduct of, economic concerns with utility. Second, some see ethics and economics as existing as independent but essentially parallel developments, with all essential moral truths corresponding to economic truths. Third, there are those who seek correlations between particular economic conditions and specific moral viewpoints. Durkheim takes issue with each of these in turn. Thus, while contending that ethics and economics are distinct realms of activity in many respects, he stresses *the developmental, humanly engaged interdependence* of the two sets of endeavors.

In developing a fuller alternative to these first three views of economics and ethics, Durkheim (*E&SM*:62-68) draws on the German political economists Adolph Wagner (1835-1917) and Gustav von Schmoller (1838-1917). Both challenge the utilitarian position that society exists to serve the interests of the individuals within. Invoking expressions such as "social conscience," "the collective spirit," and the like [which Durkheim describes as a current analytic emphasis in Germany], these two political economists argue that society is much more than the sum of its parts and is to be understood as a genuine unity unto itself.

Relatedly, all aspects of the economy, including the private economy, are to be seen as within the context of the collectivity. The economy, thus, is a *social economy* and can only be understood with respect to the particular community in which it functions and takes its shape. In contrast to those adapting

notions of self-serving utilitarianism, Wagner and Schmoller contend that the realms of both economy and ethics incorporate elements of unselfishness and are mindful of differences between things "done for the good of the state" and "those pursued because of individual interests."

As well, since morality and economics are interfused in a great many realms of community life, it is necessary to comprehend some fundamental economic processes to understand community morality. Likewise, whereas economics represents only one arena in which matters of ethics may be invoked, economics is shaped by people's concerns with ethics, as well as the interests of particular individuals.

Then, after stating that the purpose of political economy is to explain the economic functioning of the (broader) social organism in which it is embedded, Durkheim (*E&SM*:66-67) says that economic phenomena, like all other matters of community life, are to be approached as *developmental social processes*.

Drawing directly on Schmoller, Durkheim explains that as people begin to do things more consistently, those practices "begin to impose themselves on the participants" as habits. As they reach this stage, routinized practices assume more restrictive, compulsory, or obligatory qualities and, thereby, provide the foundations for mores and, subsequently, law and morality. People's economic activities also become crystallized in this fashion. Thus, amidst the changes and adjustments that take place over time, economic practices also become moral phenomena as people begin to establish particular ways of "doing business" and envision these as more entirely appropriate.

In contrast to those who treat economics and morality as if they were two separate worlds, Durkheim not only insists on the importance of attending to ways that economic practices enter into certain aspects of the moral order (e.g., property, contracts) but he also encourages analysts to be mindful of the ways in which people's broader notions of morality become infused with their economic arrangements.

Elaborating further on Wagner's work, Durkheim (*E&SM*:68-70) says that notions of individual liberty, ownership, and the like have no value or meaning in themselves. It is only within the context of the community that matters of these sorts assume any consequence.

Likewise, Durkheim says, it is inappropriate to start with some abstract principle of morality and proceed to deduce applications from this. Instead, following Schmoller, Durkheim insists that in order to comprehend the forms or principles of morality, it is necessary to *observe people's actual practices* and develop inferences from these instances.[12] Moreover, Durkheim states, morality would have no relevance as a detached, abstract concept. Notions of morality are meaningful only when these are linked to life in more direct, actively engaged terms.

[12] Durkheim makes no reference to Aristotle here. However, Aristotle contends that concepts (also forms, abstractions, generals) are derived from a comparative analysis of the instances in which things take place. Plato is not entirely consistent in his attentiveness to forms (and concepts). Thus, whereas Plato is highly attentive to the humanly, community-enabled, constructed nature of knowing, acting, and interchange in extended sectors of his texts (especially *Republic* and *Laws*; also see Prus 2009a; 2011a; 2011b; 2013b; Prus and Camara 2010), he sometimes addresses forms and concepts as pre-existing matters. Aristotle clearly does not accept this latter position.

Viewing ethics as a "science of life," Durkheim (*E&SM*:70-73) stresses the point that it is humanity, *actual lived humanity*, as opposed to abstract principles, that is the subject matter of the study of ethics.

Then, addressing a related question of whether humans can effectively intervene in basic economic processes (which, Durkheim notes, are seen as immutable by the Manchester School), Durkheim takes the viewpoint that the economy has a broader social quality than the Manchester School recognizes. Still, Durkheim contends, these processes cannot simply be adjusted by people's intentions or by invoking particular instances of legislation as Wagner has suggested. Although economic processes do change, sometimes comparatively quickly, Durkheim says, social facts are complex, diffuse matters and cannot be adequately comprehended (and regulated) by human minds. It is this multiplistic set of processes and the lack of an overarching rationality that not only obscures scholarly analysis but that also frustrates policy interventions.

Durkheim (*E&SM*:73-76) then references the economist Albert Schaffle whose works shed more light on morality as a social process. Rather than viewing morality as a system of rules, Schaffle argues that morality represents a dynamic social function. Not only does morality take shape through a historically articulated collective process but the morality of the community also "adjusts" to the conditions of the collectivity.

Thus, in contrast to Wagner's assumption that morality can be intentionally adjusted through legislation, Schaffle views rules and policies more entirely as adjustive responses to collectively experienced circumstances. Likewise, because of the emergent nature of public sentiments, transformations in morality cannot be predicted with much accuracy.

Still, despite his skepticism about invoking changes from the outside (as in imposing legislation on morality as the academic socialists Wagner and Schmoller have suggested), Schaffle argues for changes that develop from self-reflective, deliberate activities taking place within the institutions that constitute society.

Although accepting Schaffle's views about the limited effects of legislation on morality and that legislation reflects acknowledgements of changes to generally existing practices, Durkheim says that he is skeptical of Schaffle's claims that change within occurs because of direct, reflective, purposive behavior. In particular, Durkheim is reluctant to acknowledge the family as the central source of this artistic (architectural) morality and Schaffle's associated tendency to envision the family in more psychological terms.

Durkheim concludes this section of his text by observing that philosophy has undergone a major transformation in Germany. Whereas psychology with its linkages to physiology has largely broken away from philosophy, so also does the study of morality in Germany (thusly transformed by the economists) seem on its way to becoming a field of study on its own.

Part II: The Jurists, Rudolph Jhering

Continuing with this highly compacted set of essays on morality as a humanly engaged process,

Durkheim (*E&SM*:78-88) next addresses the work of an Austrian legalist Georg Jellinek (1851-1911) and a German law professor Rudolf von Jhering (1818-1892). Both approach the study of law in more distinctive, purposive, processual terms. Although focusing more exclusively on Jhering, Durkheim is quick to point out that the scientific-enacted approach of Jellinek, Jhering, and some others working in Germany stands in stark contrast to French perspectives on the philosophy of law.

In developing this statement, Durkheim (*E&SM*:79-80) notes that Jhering invites inquiry into the nature of law from a variety of analytic viewpoints. This includes linguistic analysis, mythology, etymology, pedagogy, and an empirical historical mode of inquiry wherein law is examined dispassionately. Jhering's emphasis is on comprehending law in the same way that one would study other natural phenomena.

After observing that philosophers since the time of Plato have routinely reduced reality to abstracted, logically connected sets of ideas, Durkheim (*E&SM*:80) says that by doing so, they miss the essential motivational elements of life. To live, Durkheim insists, people do not merely think, they *act*. And, it is with a purpose in mind that people give action a direction. Action is to be understood by reference to its purpose. It is this emphasis on people pursuing ends or objectives, Durkheim points out, that characterizes Jhering's position.[13]

Still, Durkheim (*E&SM*:81-82) adds, because instances of human behavior are bound up in the historical flows and developmental culture of the human community, people often are unable to appreciate the relevance or meanings of their behaviors in these broader terms and, relatedly, readily fit into these flows. As a result, people do not always act mindfully of the broader, more established purposes that these behaviors imply. For this reason, Durkheim states, it is important to go beyond Jhering and study the more general social contexts in which people act. Thus, whereas people may act in accordance with particular aspects of the law, they need not be mindful of the purposes of those specific aspects of the law when these regulations were earlier established [Durkheim addresses this point in more detail later in discussing Wundt's *Ethics*].

Then, returning more directly to Jhering's work, Durkheim (*E&SM*:82) says that law is developed to insure the existence of society. Still, acknowledging the *relativity of community morality*, Durkheim stresses the notably different versions of the law that may be invoked in this and that society even as the lawmakers address fundamental features of social life.

The laws of particular communities need not cover all aspects of community life but, following Jhering, Durkheim (*E&SM*:83-84) stresses the relevance of the law for wide ranges of individual rights. Still, whereas individual rights vary across communities, community conceptions of individual rights also

[13] Those familiar with Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Poetics*, and *Rhetoric* will recognize that the purposive, interconnected, and adjustive qualities of human activity and interchange (denoting matters of intention, reflectivity, deliberation, planning, implementation, and adjustment) are central features of Aristotle's pragmatism. However, here, as in other places in his 1887 text, Durkheim remains more entirely focused on the German scholars who work with these notions rather than acknowledging their intellectual indebtedness to Aristotle's approach to the study of human knowing and acting.

bring with them increased levels of responsibility and obligation.

The "natural law" theorists (presumably referring to Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, and John Stuart Mill), Durkheim (*E&SM*:84-85) says, fail to comprehend the actual nature of the human community—that societies are *not* simply masses of individuals and social order *cannot* be reduced to matters of individual interests.

Having thusly dealt with "the purpose of the law," Durkheim (*E&SM*:85-86) next considers how the law is realized. The law, he says, is achieved by restraint. However, there are wide ranges of restraint. Relatedly, force and the impending sanctions are not sufficient in themselves for comprehending people's compliance with the law.

For society to be possible, Durkheim (*E&SM*:86-87) emphasizes, it also is necessary that people have an unselfish appreciation of the law as signified by the matters of "love for the law" and "a sense of duty." These elements, Durkheim adds, are central to Jhering's broader theory of morality.

Whereas morality serves the same basic purpose as the law, that of sustaining social order, morality differs from law. While it is authority of the state that provides the basis for the continuity and enforcement of law, morality is the product of the entire society. Thus, Durkheim (*E&SM*:86-87) stresses, no one, regardless of one's position in the community, is immune from moral constraint. Likewise, morality has a pervasive quality that permeates every feature of human group life. Consequently, although morality lacks the (focused, authoritative) force of law and does not address the essential features of community existence in the same way, morality extends far beyond the law in regulating community life.

After observing that Jhering has examined morality in extended analytic detail with respect to language, mores, and customs, Durkheim (*E&SM*:87-88) says that although Jhering (like jurists more generally) still gives too much attention to calculated self interest and external matters, he is to be commended not only for (a) his work on the scientific study of morality and (b) his attempts to integrate the philosophy of law with the positive (enacted, actual) law, but also (c) for integrating the study of custom into the broader field of ethics. Having established these baseline positions, Durkheim says that he will next deal with Wilhelm Wundt's work.

Part III: The Moral Philosophers: Wilhelm Wundt

[Whereas Emile Durkheim is to be commended for his astute, comprehensive, and highly succinct rendering of *the uniquely enabling sociological quality* of Wilhelm Wundt's *Ethics*, readers may easily underestimate Durkheim's appreciation of Wundt's analysis of community life. Still, while centrally grasping the pragmatist sociological potency of Wundt's work in ways others have completely missed, Durkheim's representations gloss over some of the more extended sets of insights and qualifications that Wundt (1914 [1886]) develops in *Ethics*. As a result, it is easy to lose sight of Wundt's more substantial contributions to sociology—even as Durkheim emphasizes the centrality of Wundt's analysis for the study of

morality. Whereas Durkheim rarely mentions Wilhelm Wundt, the German scholar to whom he is so indebted, in his subsequent pragmatist-oriented works (1915 [1912]; 1961 [1902-1903]; 1977 [1904-1905]; 1983 [1913-1914]), it is instructive to keep in mind that, following his studies in Germany, Durkheim had been criticized by French colleagues (of whom Simon Deploige seems particularly persistent) for being overly attentive to German social thought.]

After observing that that the authors he has discussed so far were moral philosophers in a more marginal sense, Durkheim (*E&SM*:89) says that it is Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) who has synthesized the works of the other German moral theorists into a more coherent, focused process-oriented study of ethics.

Defining Wundt's (observational, historical, comparative analytic) approach as distinctively empirical, Durkheim (*E&SM*:90-92) says that Wundt insists that reason alone is insufficient to comprehend ethics and that, as with other subject matters, *the study of ethics* must be grounded in observation. Thus, in contrast to considerations of ideals, motives, intentions, and consequences, Wundt emphasizes the necessity of focusing on practical action—the things people actually do. Relatedly, whereas the goal of ethics is discern the general principles which the instances represent, this is to be accomplished through an examination of the instances in which people act. In these respects, Durkheim explicitly points out, Wundt approaches ethics in a fairly conventional *scientific* manner.

Still, Wundt adds another highly consequential element to the study of ethics. To achieve a more adequate comprehension of ethics, Wundt says that it is necessary also to embark on a comparative examination of the different moral viewpoints that people have developed throughout recorded history. Thus, while people may have certain psychological capacities or dispositions, *it is necessary to move past invalid tendencies to reduce morality to psychological properties or individual dispositions*.

According to Wundt (*E&SM*:92) it is only by studying collective matters as instances of social psychology (*die Völkerpsychologie*) that one can hope to understand ethics. Because ethics is a social, historically achieved phenomenon, it is to be studied as a collective process. As well, individual consciousness (as in people's thoughts, concepts, and notions of individuality) is to be understood as emerging *within the interchanges of group life*—not as people with solitary-enabled realms of consciousness producing the concepts that inform and shape human group life.

The *study of ethics*, thus, becomes the history of community life—language, religion, customs, culture, activities and interchanges, restraint, freedoms and regulation, including people's experiences with the physical environment. Still, of these processes, Durkheim says, it is religion and customs that merit most sustained attention.

Durkheim (*E&SM*:92-95) begins his discussion of religion by noting that it is impossible to differentiate the roots and early developments of religion and morality, adding that the distinctions emerged only over time. Continuing to draw directly on Wundt, Durkheim says that early group life consisted of vague mixes of ideas and practices and that

it is because of these more obscure and fortuitous combinations of things that the study of religion in primitive societies is so problematic. Accordingly, it is only in using the more distinct notions of religion and morality that have emerged among more civilized societies that one may have a basis for delineating the roots of religious ideas in more primitive communities.[14]

Approaching things in this more comparative sense, Wundt says that all viewpoints and representations of things that reflect human ideals may be considered religious [sacred?] in essence. Stating that people have a need for reference points, Wundt says that morality, like religion, not only is expressed as ideals but also readily becomes personified (i.e., objectified and sanctified through particular people and other things). Thus, whereas primitive peoples may have revered ancestors in cult-like fashions, envisioned natural objects and physical forces as deities, and later developed other notions of divinity, human ideals have been epitomized, supported, and sanctified in human expressions of religion. However, Durkheim adds, for the separation of morality from religion something more was required, the development of custom.

Still following Wundt closely, Durkheim (*E&SM*:95-97) says that although some theorists have argued that custom emerges as the product of individual practices, it is mistaken to think that custom, like language and religion, is somehow the product of individual consciousness. Indeed, although custom and other collective matters presume human capacities for consciousness, *individual consciousness is the product of group consciousness*.

Thus, insofar as humans linguistically participate in "the consciousness of the community," they become *the recipients and beneficiaries* (of viewpoints, practices, stocks of knowledge, and technologies) of the more enduring community life-worlds in which they find themselves. Still, even though it is people who sustain the prevailing practices and viewpoints of their own times, as individuals they typically have little direct, especially longer-term, influence on the overall collective life of the community.

As instances of collectively achieved group life, particular customs are to be explained through earlier collective practices and interchange. Further, although the bases on which specific customs emerged may long have disappeared from memory, these practices persist as phenomena carried forward in the culture of community life. Likewise, in tracing customs back over time, one only finds other collective phenomena in the form of customs, beliefs, and religious practices.

Referencing Wundt again, Durkheim (*E&SM*:96-98) directly opposes those (probably referring to Hobbes and Rousseau) who contend that customs are the products of individual interests and that these only subsequently had been sanctified by religion.

[14] Interestingly, this is one place that Durkheim will later (see: Durkheim's [1915 <1912>] *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*) break away from Wilhelm Wundt. Thus, Durkheim will make the case for the importance of studying the fundamental features of primitive religions over the (seemingly more complex) major religions. While I have found so much of value in Wundt's work, I concur with Durkheim on this point—not to disregard more complex variants of some category of phenomena but to try to establish the most basic or foundational features of any particular realm of human interchange.

By contrast, Durkheim says, customs are *derived from religion* rather than from configurations of individual interests and that it is these (religious) ideals and the superior powers that religion represents that enable things to become established as customs. It is religion that binds people together. It is religion that generates an altruism or concern with the other that extends beyond the individual. As well, even when particular customs lose more direct connections with religion, they still maintain some of this altruistic base of support.

It is for this reason too, Durkheim adds, that law and morality remain largely undifferentiated among less civilized peoples. Likewise, whereas customs and morality are essentially synonymous among primitive peoples, more civilized societies judge customs from moral standpoints.

Durkheim (*E&SM*:98-102) next addresses morality in more focused terms. After affirming the point that customs had their origins in religious practices, Durkheim says that, in addition to people's religious practices, those who constituted early society were drawn together not by blood relationships but by commonalities of language, habits, and manners. Further, the first societies would have consisted of more ambiguous collectivities with concepts of families and other specialized divisions only emerging later on.

As well, Durkheim stresses, people's natural affinities with those who are similar to themselves are *not* the products of egoism (or the pursuit of people's own interests). Instead, it represents an autonomous tendency of great consequence for the social order of the community. Indeed, all altruistic tendencies, as well as the very foundations on which all matters of morality are founded are based on (a) people's capacities to experience *sympathetic affinities with others*, and (b) *the respect* that people assign to religious ideals and practices—and the associated sense of the subjugation of the self to something greater than oneself.

Then, after asserting that these tendencies towards altruism are not products of egoist or self-serving inclinations as some have contended, Durkheim still acknowledges the powerful self-serving tendencies that people develop with respect to themselves, as well as people's capacities for developing personal satisfactions from helping others.

Although these latter sets of egoistic tendencies may seem to cancel out more genuine altruistic tendencies, Durkheim insists that altruism is not a disguised form of egoism. It is inappropriate to try to explain things (altruism) as functions of their opposites (egoism). Something more is needed.

Also, as Durkheim reminds readers, the natural moral practices of the community do not reflect some longer-term calculations or reasoned objectives but emerge as part of a broader, more nebulous, adjustive process that assumes a reality well beyond people's intentions.

Commenting next on the matters of homogeneity and division with respect to people's notions of morality, Durkheim (*E&SM*:100-102) says that the first societies would have been characterized by a single morality. However, people's notions of morali-

ty would become increasingly *diversified* as various groups and categories of people become more distinct within. With an increase in the size of the community as well, morality also becomes more *depersonalized* (and presumably more autonomous).

In the process, Durkheim says, people's affinities with more particular sets of others become replaced with more general but still strong attachments to aspects of the broader community (e.g., art, customs, science) in which they are embedded—and thus experience through a mutuality of participation. It is here, Durkheim states, through participation in the *collective consciousness*, that people experience the ideals of the community in more impersonal but still compelling terms.[15]

Elaborating on the tendency towards abstraction of the ideals represented by the collective consciousness, Durkheim says that it is on this basis that people routinely transcend differences within their own communities. Further, because the more impersonalized abstractions of the collective consciousness lend themselves to applications that are unbounded by time and space, people also may begin to articulate moralities that encompass humanity in its entirety. Still, he comments, the civilizing process commonly entails other divisions and imbalances, which contradict these broader moral dispositions.

Mindful of these moral disjunctures and expressing some optimism for pursuing a more viable morality for all, Durkheim says he will next proceed to summarize Wundt's history of moral ideas. [It should be noted that whereas Wundt traces the development of ethics from the classical Greek era to his own time in extended detail, Durkheim concentrates primarily on the more major sets of definitions and principles that Wundt offers. As a result, much of the scholarly value of Wundt's *Ethics* is lost. Still, Durkheim's synopsis of Wundt's text is valuable, not only for its exceptional attentiveness to human group life but also for enabling readers to better comprehend central aspects of Durkheim's sociology.]

Following Wundt along, Durkheim (*E&SM*:102) says that *the formal elements of morality* are expressed by the contrary notions of approval and disapproval (i.e., good and evil), wherein moral approval is associated with things fostering long-term, especially sanctified notions of satisfaction. The material or *foundational qualities of morality* reside in basic human capacities for sympathy and respect. Whereas sympathy is derived from the affinities associated with people's participation in human affairs, respect is the product of religious beliefs.

In discussing "the general laws of moral evolution," Durkheim (*E&SM*:103-105) first addresses (Wundt's) *law of the three stages*, saying that moral life moves from (a) a comparatively vague, but generally homogeneous state to (b) a more extensively differentiated state, followed by (c) a pattern of synthesis and concentration.

Still, Durkheim centrally emphasizes Wundt's *law of heterogeneity of ends*. At the core of this principle are the ideas that (1) even when people act voluntarily

[15] Unless they have been exposed to other well-articulated moral orders, individuals would have little basis on which to contest or *even knowingly consider* contesting the realism of the collective consciousness from whence they have derived all notions of "what is" and "what is not."

with particular ends in mind, their actions may generate consequences beyond any that they intended and (2) when people attend to these other effects and find these relevant in some way, they may begin to engage in the same activities, but now with these other effects in mind—thereby generating other objectives, motives, or purposes for the same acts; and (3) this process can continue indefinitely and takes people into increasingly extended realms of activity, meaning, and purpose. Relatedly, (4) because of this evolutionary (adjustive) process, people may subsequently engage in particular activities for very different reasons than those prompting the same behaviors at earlier points in time. Their activities (also meanings and purposes) also assume an *emergent*, unpredictable quality that goes well beyond any intentional or purposive ends or objectives.

Further, because of this set of processes, Durkheim continues, it is to be recognized that *theory cannot be expected to match the emergent, unpredictable nature of humanly experienced reality*. Because people cannot know the outcomes of their activities in this broader sense, the best they can do is anticipate the future in more general terms.

As a result, as well, deliberate thought and planning can assume only a small part in this evolutionary process for it is only after things have taken place and been experienced that people may define what has happened and judge their value as matters to be pursued further. Still, employing Wundt's reasoning, Durkheim says that if morality is derived from religion, it is because people have defined the things that emerge in religious contexts as denoting better approximations of their moral ideals.

As well, whereas Darwin and Spencer have applied the concept of natural selection to (human) morality, Wundt is adamantly opposed to ideas of that sort. Indeed, Durkheim indicates, rather than view morality as the product of a struggle to survive, Wundt emphasizes the point that morality functions to minimize disruption and promote social relations. Likewise, Durkheim observes, Wundt considers any idea that moral ideas can be (biologically) inherited to be preposterous.

Then, moving more centrally into volume III of Wundt's *Ethics*, Durkheim (*E&SM*:106-108) provides a broader introduction to Wundt's ethical principles before embarking on more focused considerations of ethical goals, motives, and norms. In contrast to the many theorists who strive to reduce ethical principles to individualistic impulses, Wundt states that ethical matters revolve around two centering points—individualism and universalism.

Noting that Wundt provides an extended refutation of the positions that Rousseau and other "theorists of individualism" assume, Durkheim (still following Wundt) says that just because all notions of individualism are rooted in (and are to be comprehended with respect to) the group this does not mean that notions of individualism cease or lose their vitality. However, rather than individuals being the foundational base from which society is achieved Durkheim (with Wundt) stresses the point that only by slow degrees are people able to achieve a more extended separation of self from its group-based foundation.

Next, taking issue with universalists such as Hegel and Schopenhauer, Durkheim (with Wundt) says

that while people are so thoroughly indebted to society, it is essential to recognize that people also act back on (resist/challenge/reject aspects of) the very communities in which they are situated. Indeed, there have been some people whose capacities to formulate and express the ideas of their societies and times were so great that they have served as a "form of living conscience" for their communities. As well, whereas most people may do nothing to alter their communities in any significant manner and instead largely perpetuate existing practices, it is important to acknowledge the changes that less prominent people may introduce in smaller segments of the community.

Concluding this broader introduction, Durkheim says that it is important for scholars dealing with morality to be attentive to the interconnections of groups and the individuals who constitute these groups.

Then, turning more directly to "ethical goals," Durkheim (*E&SM*:108-111) begins to contrast Wundt's position with the Utilitarians and Rationalists who address ethics by arbitrarily prioritizing specific principles. Mindful of Wundt's position, Durkheim says it is essential to observe the things that specific communities (as collectivities) consider to be moral and attempt to ascertain the foundational emphases of these matters.

Following Wundt, Durkheim notes that the goals of people's actions can be individual (as in attending to oneself and one's more immediate associates), societal (community-oriented), or humanistic (in yet more generalized, encompassing terms). Still, there is nothing moral about doing things for oneself or even helping particular others in the community achieve their goals. Indeed, people's goals assume a moral essence only insofar as they are oriented towards others in more impersonal, generalized terms.

It is on this basis that societies, as essences unto themselves, became more worthy targets of moral activities. Observing that individuals, as individuals, are essentially inconsequential in the broader historical developments and futures of the human community, it is societies as more fundamental and enduring essences that merit love and devotion. It is human goals in this broader sense, particularly those directed towards humanity in more extended terms, that epitomize the ideals of moral action. Even so, Durkheim (following Wundt) observes these ideals will never be realized since people become aware of how these objectives might be better achieved only as they have moved in newly emergent directions and have become aware of the greater potential awaiting them through their earlier activities.

Having defined moral goals in terms of an unending pursuit of universalistic human ideals, Durkheim (*E&SM*:111-113) next summarizes Wundt's consideration of "ethical motives." Stating that every motive presupposes a feeling and some associated images, Wundt distinguishes three types of ethical motives. Whereas all motives are seen as products of the communities in which people know, value, and act, Wundt's distinctions hinge on *the amount and type of deliberation implied in different decisions to act*.

Thus, regardless of whether actions are directed towards oneself or others, Wundt uses the term "motives of perception" to refer to cases in which things

seem so clear and direct that people react more habitually or "without thinking." When things are more ambiguous or involve dilemmas of sorts and entail some reflection or deliberation (involving action pertaining to the self and/or the other), the term "motives of understanding" is applied. The third category of motives is yet more focused and revolves around the matter of pursuing activities in ways that are mindful of the broader ideals of humanity. Thus, although emphasizing the point that the broader spirit of humanity characterizes all moral motives, this latter "motive of reasoning" not only tends to be less common overall but assumes a nobler, reflective quality.

Observing that ethical goals are almost invariably envisioned in obligatory terms, Durkheim (*E&SM*:113-115) next engages "ethical norms." Although people often assign an imperative quality to ethical goals, Durkheim (following Wundt) says that it would be erroneous to suppose that there is some special element that automatically makes ethical goals seem universal and intractable. Indeed, not only have matters of ethics been subject to extended debate but the motives that imbue ethical goals with authority also have little to do with particular versions of ethical goals. The first of what Wundt terms "imperative motives" is that of fear of restraint, more specifically—material restraints. The second imperative motive reflects people's concerns with public opinion and its potential effects on them.

A third, somewhat nobler, imperative acknowledges people's concerns about doing something that has some longer-term effects. Thus, whereas evil acts are envisioned as more transitory, good activities are thought to have more enduring consequences. The fourth, less common and yet most noble motive is that which people assign to the contemplation of ethical goals as ends to be pursued for themselves.

In summarizing these notions from Wundt, Durkheim next outlines a taxonomy that suggests that ethical goals may be pursued through norms directed variously towards individuals, societies, and yet broader realms of humanity.

In writing a conclusion to his consideration of Wundt's *Ethics*, Durkheim (*E&SM*:115-122) provides yet further insight into Wundt's work and the analysis of human knowing and acting.

Thus, in the process of observing that Wundt has synthesized much of the thought of the German (realist) theorists that Durkheim has earlier referenced, Durkheim (*E&SM*:115-116) contrasts Wundt's approach to ethics with that of Immanuel Kant. Consequentially, whereas Kant's "moral imperative" is precise, invariant, presumed clear to all, and implies a mystical quality, Wundt is attentive to the variable, emergent, adjustive, and unevenly acknowledged nature of human morality. Moreover, Wundt also approaches morality as a complex phenomenon that can be comprehended scientifically.

Speaking more generally, Durkheim (*E&SM*:116-118) says that Wundt has advanced the analysis of ethics in two central ways. First, whereas most theorists have alleged that morality can be achieved as a philosophic process wherein one starts with a general principle and deductively arrives at a set of contingencies that promote social order, Wundt rejects this rationalist viewpoint and insists on developing a theory of mo-

rality that is built centrally on observation of actual human practices and arrives at conceptions of ethics though the use of induction or comparative analysis.

Subjecting reason to observation of actual historical cases, Wundt emphasizes the importance of considering the fuller array of ends that particular actions produce and *attending to morality as an emergent, adjustive, reflective process* rather than focusing directly on the intentions of moral viewpoints.

Thus, beyond (a) the intentioned, conscious aspects of morality, the things that people do (b) also take them into areas that go beyond their consciousness and (c) these activities unintendedly or unwittingly generate other sets of processes that subsequently may impact on the things people do. As a result, people not only cannot know the longer-term effects of their own behaviors but, even as they act, they also are apt to be only partially cognizant of the fuller range of concerns, circumstances, and contingencies affecting their activities.

The second way that Wundt has made progress in the field of ethics is by focusing on ethics as a field amenable to scientific inquiry. Thus, while most theorists have envisioned variations in the ethical practices of different communities as more unique matters of artistic expression, Wundt intends to examine the ways that things have developed in this and that context for the explicit purpose of comparative analysis.

As well, Durkheim notes, whereas all of the moral theorists he has discussed assume that the primary function of morality is to enable people to deal with one another more effectively and thus insure the survival of the group, Wundt observes this moderating effect takes place inadvertently and is best known *after the fact* (as opposed to representing a reason for invoking morality).

The primary function of morality, Wundt contends, is to make the individuals who constitute the community realize that they are *not* the whole or centering point of the society. Instead, they are only part of the whole and, as individuals, people are comparatively insignificant relative to the larger community.

It is the recognition of *the importance of the community-based other* that makes society possible. Morality, thus, reflects the efforts of people to locate themselves in something that is more substantial, more enduring than themselves.

Continuing, Durkheim (*E&SM*:118-120) says that although society reflects this quest for "something more enduring" to which people might attach themselves, one still must ask from whence morality derives its authority or obligatory quality.

In developing a response, Durkheim says that if one puts aside religious obligations associated with divinity and also the social discipline associated with the potency of the community, then nothing is left. If everything were left to individual interests and inclinations, it would be futile to ask about a sense of obligation. Since obligations presume some outside source of constraint, how can one even be obligated to oneself if there is nothing beyond oneself?

Pursuing this line of thought further, Durkheim says that people need to believe that the effects of their actions extend beyond the immediate present. Nothing,

he says, has an absolute value, including one's own happiness. If things seem important, thus, it is because we value the comparisons they represent with respect to other things. Without these comparison points, and the goals they represent, life would be meaningless.

It is because of this, Durkheim stresses, that individualism, because it detaches the individual from everything, is *so completely inadequate as a philosophic stance*. It is for this reason too, Durkheim says, that Wundt places such great emphasis on society relative to the individual—for *it is only within the community* that people can achieve greater senses of individualized relevance.

Then, commenting on Wundt's "excessive denigration of the individual," Durkheim acknowledges the pleasures that people may experience on their own [albeit still as socialized beings]. Nevertheless, Durkheim (*E&SM*:120-121) says, it is because the infinite is so nebulous and discouraging that people need to have some sense of direction or at least that they are going somewhere. Thus, while societies do change over time, there still is a sense of continuity. Indeed, Durkheim observes, new societies do not suddenly emerge out of nothingness but inevitably build on the residues of the societies they replace.

It is with this notion in mind (*E&SM*:121-122) that Wundt claims that there are more singular, enduring religious and moral ideals (oriented towards an overarching image of humanity) of which all communities represent tentative approximations.[16] Still, it is because of the more distinctive nature of religion and morality among civilized peoples that these more sharply delineated variants represent instructive departure points for subsequent observation and analysis of religion and morality as social essences.

Nevertheless, Durkheim notes, there are as many moralities as there are peoples and that the moralities of all peoples are to be recognized as viable relative to their own place and time. Likewise, each community sets its own goods or ideals to which it strives until changes occur and community moralities are readjusted as new ideals to be approximated. [Although Durkheim ends his portrayal of Wundt's *Ethics* on a rather vague note, his analysis of ethics and German "pragmatism" is far from complete.]

Part IV: Conclusion: A. H. Post

Durkheim (*E&SM*:123-127) begins his conclusion to the set of essays embedded in his (1993 [1887]) statement by referencing John Stuart Mill's (1806-1873) distinction between "intuitive ethics" and "inductive ethics." Those employing intuitive ethics assume an a priori truth as a starting point and then proceed to derive more specific applications from this fundamental principle. Those engaged in inductive ethics claim to derive their primary principle from experience. Noting that the former is based on some notion of "the good" or "obligation," Durkheim says that inductive ethics in Mill's terms revolves around conceptions of utility.

[16] As Durkheim later observes, Wundt is making a teleological assumption here—that there is a single, rational morality to which all humanity consciously and unconsciously strives. This does not invalidate the exceptionally potent sociological quality of Wundt's earlier analysis but draws attention to some of Wundt's more presumptive, more prescriptive, much less pluralist sociological directions encountered in Volume III. While Durkheim also tries to maintain a consistent pluralist, process-oriented scientific analysis, he clearly at times (especially in *Division of Labor* and *Suicide*) falls into the same trap.

Further, although the actual principles emphasized in the rationalist approaches of Kant and other intuitivists differ from those of Mill and the utilitarians, Durkheim says that both rely extensively on deductive methods. As well, since pure logic can make no claims whatsoever about content, both the rationalists and the utilitarians *invariably build on some notions of experience*. In these respects, the differences between the two are not as great as might first seem.

Still, the more central failing of both sets of approaches, Durkheim stresses, is that they are *not* scientific. First, it is not apparent that ethics can be reduced to a simple motivating concept or principle. Likewise, pure logic (reasoning on its own) cannot establish ethical principles. Relying on external inferences, both sets of claims failed to examine the actualities, diversities, and complexities of social life.

If one is to acquire viable knowledge of people's ethics, *it will be necessary to examine the particulars in highly sustained detail*. It is not adequate to build on observations of more superficial sorts and it is *entirely inappropriate to apply deductive logic to more complex phenomena*. Because of the sheer complexity of moral phenomena, deductive reasoning is entirely inappropriate. Reason simply cannot substitute for sustained observation.

Continuing, Durkheim (*E&SM*:127-128) says that it is precisely because of the failings of the prevailing approaches to ethics that the German school, with its *genuinely inductive method*, is so consequential.

Providing an alternative to the transcendental logic of the Kantians that ignores scientific observation, as well as vague Utilitarian references to experience, the German (realist) school approaches ethics not only as a distinct field on its own but also one that is to be *empirically investigated*.

Elaborating further, Durkheim says that ethics has its own subject matter and, like other fields of scientific inquiry, is to be built on observations, analysis, and progressive comparisons in the quest to inductively arrive at a general set of principles. Further, because of its subject matter, Durkheim adds, ethics is **not** to be viewed as a simple extension of psychology or sociology but is to be established as an independent discipline in the social sciences.

Referencing two other sources (a British historian Leslie Stephen [1832-1904] and a German economist and political scientist Lorenz von Stein [1815-1890]) who also have contributed to this emergent German tradition, Durkheim (*E&SM*:128-129) briefly, but directly engages "evolution" as a community-oriented concept.

Observing that all of those he has identified with the German school envision morality as developing in evolutionary terms, Durkheim says that it is essential to recognize that they are working with a very different conception of evolution than that associated with evolution as a biological process. It is necessary, he says, to be mindful of the limitations of the biological analogy and not presuppose, as the (Italian) criminologists have done, that matters of morality can be explained in biological terms.

Instead, Durkheim (*E&SM*:129-130) insists, morality is to be approached as an independent field of study, as those in the German school have done. Nevertheless, he states, their methodology requires sub-

stantial modification. Thus, despite the conceptual insights generated by the German school, their theory is still too general. Also, like the Kantians and Utilitarians, the German school is still preoccupied with the quest for an overarching moral principle.[17]

Stating that none of the prevailing sciences can be reduced to a single principle or problem, Durkheim says that it is necessary to approach the study of morality in more explicitly open, inquisitive, detailed terms. Indeed, he says, it is premature to seek out overarching principles when there is so much to be learned about morality as a phenomenon. Likewise, it is to be recognized that *morality is not a science* in itself, but instead is to be approached as the subject matter of scientific inquiry.

Although conceding that some of the German scholars he has referenced have embarked on more sustained studies of the sort he is encouraging, Durkheim (*E&SM*:131-132) references Albert Hermann Post (1839-1895), a Justice of the Courts of Bremen, as an exemplar of the agenda that he has in mind. *Adapting a comparative analytic approach to the detailed ethnological study* of transformations of law, Durkheim envisions Post's work as offering a more desirable methodology.

Saying that he is unable to summarize Post's work in the present statement, Durkheim (*E&SM*:132-133) distinguishes historical approaches more generally from those that are more appropriate for the study of morality. Thus, he observes that most historians, in tracking the more particular developments within a single context, not only lack the resources necessary to develop adequate analytic comparisons but typically become so engrossed in fitting the details of their situations together that they forego interest in moving beyond their more immediate frames of reference.

As a result, it will be the task of the moral theorist to develop analytic comparisons by building on these materials. Noting that this will be a demanding role to pursue in more comprehensive terms, Durkheim says that these scholars still may be able to develop a more limited set of comparisons at any time. Indeed, this seems necessary given the more idiographic, self-serving approaches adapted by most historians.

Durkheim (*E&SM*:134-135) concludes his statement by stating that the "science of morality" is only in a rudimentary state and will require patience, as well as perseverance for its fuller development.

After noting that some people are apt to find it disconcerting to realize that matters of morality have an emergent, often obscure quality that defies rationalism (presumably of both Kantian and Utilitarian sorts) and related applications of deductive logic, Durkheim says that the moralities that particular peoples have developed are to be appreciated for achieving a wisdom that surpasses that of the greatest genius.

Then, stating that we are a long way from knowing enough to define and regulate human morality (and that it is childish to suppose otherwise), Durkheim says that it is by drawing on the lessons of history that we may arrive at more viable, more informed conceptions of human morality. Indeed, morality is to be understood within the parameters of human history.

[17] It is here that Durkheim most directly parts company with Wilhelm Wundt who, later in Volume III of *Ethics*, foregoes some of his more purely scholarly standpoints and becomes more intent on establishing an overarching moral order.

In Perspective

Although generally unknown in academic circles—notably including sociology, Emile Durkheim's (1993 [1887]) "La Science Positive de la Morale en Allemagne" represents an essential cornerstone for more adequately comprehending Durkheim's sociological productions, as well as for more fully appreciating his emphasis on sociology as a distinctively consequential realm of scholarship.

Durkheim seems likely to have had only a comparatively short time to learn about, absorb, and develop the materials he presents in this 1887 statement. Nevertheless, his (1885-1886) encounter with German pragmatism, and especially Wilhelm Wundt's *Ethics*, would have a profound impact on Durkheim's subsequent scholarship.

This influence is much less evident in Durkheim's best-known works (1947 [1893]; 1951 [1897]; 1958 [1895]), wherein he adapts more pronounced rationalist and structuralist emphases. Thus, the continuities of Durkheim's thought with that of Wilhelm Wundt and the other German scholars that Durkheim acknowledges in "the scientific study of morality" would be only partially sustained as Durkheim pursued aspects of his earlier career as a French scholar. Relatedly, there is much in *The Division of Labor in Society* (1947 [1893]), *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1958 [1895]), and especially *Suicide* (1951 [1897]) that would appear to support the claim that Durkheim learned about sociology from Auguste Comte, Charles Renouvier, and some other French academics. Still, it is evident that his learning about sociology does not stop there. Indeed, Durkheim's 1887 statement has a very distinctive pragmatist emphasis and is of great consequence for comprehending the overall flow and directions of Durkheim's subsequent sociological scholarship.

On returning to France after his study leave in Germany, Durkheim appears to have encountered considerable criticism for his interest in German social realism. In addition to French rebuffs associated with long-standing Franco-German tensions and hostilities, Durkheim would have been accused by some as placing undue emphasis on history, religion, and inductive reasoning in the midst of the French emphasis on rationalism, scientism, quantification, and deductive reasoning. While achieving success as a French academic, Durkheim most likely was troubled by aspects of his early texts (1947 [1893]; 1951 [1897]; 1958 [1895])—even as he worked his way through these materials and endeavored to accommodate the paradigmatic structuralist/pragmatist discrepancies.

Still, as a young scholar intensely pursuing an academic career and dependent on his associates for confirmations thereof, Durkheim's challenge would be one of acceptably fitting his work into mainstream French social thought while sustaining essential intellectual continuities with the (pragmatist) sociological framework he outlined in 1887. By contrast, most of his later (1902-1914) materials exhibit a pronounced attentiveness to pragmatist social thought.

It is worth noting, as well, that in his 1902-1914 works Durkheim seldom acknowledges the existence of the 1893, 1895, 1897 texts for which he is still best known in sociology. Instead, consistent with his 1887 paper, Emile Durkheim (1902-1914) contends that the principal methodological resources of sociology are *history* and *ethnography*.

Relatedly, there is the more explicit emphasis on attending to the flows of community life, envisioning activity and interchange as meaningful, socially interconnected sets of processes to be best comprehended through sustained comparative analysis. Durkheim will emphasize the centrality of the group throughout his career, but in his later works (as with his 1887 paper), it is the community as consisting of developmentally interfused arenas of meaningfully engaged activity and interchange (*not* abstracted sets of factors or variables) that he defines as particularly consequential.

Even though references to Wilhelm Wundt and the other German social realist theorists Durkheim discusses in his 1887 statement are notably absent in his later works, it appears that Wilhelm Wundt has been Durkheim's (and hence also our own) long-term intellectual companion.

Albeit inadvertently, in developing his 1887 paper, Durkheim also helps establish the links between classical Greek thought and our own time (Prus 2004; 2007a; 2015; 2017). Durkheim seems largely inattentive to the Greek (predominantly Aristotelian) foundations of German social realist thought, even as he explicitly builds on Wundt's historically informed analysis of the study of morality (*Ethics*). Thus, whereas Wundt makes direct reference to Aristotle in developing *Ethics*, Durkheim has focused more exclusively on the processes by which morality takes shape and (relatedly) approaches the study of morality as denoting emergent sets of social processes that are essential for comprehending all realms of community life.[18]

[18] It may be observed that Durkheim makes explicit reference to the centrality of Aristotle's *Categories* for human knowing and acting (and survival) in developing *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*.

Nevertheless, Durkheim has absorbed much of the intellectual tradition that Wundt articulates in *Ethics*. Moreover, later, in tracing the developmental flow of education and scholarship from the classical Greek era to his own time, Durkheim's (1977 [1904-1905]) *The Evolution of Educational Thought* (also see Prus 2012) very much parallels the intellectual odyssey on which Wilhelm Wundt (in *Ethics*) had embarked in his study of the analysis of morality.

Likewise, despite the remarkably extensive analysis that Durkheim develops in his (1915 [1912]) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, those familiar with his 1887 paper will find much in Durkheim's 1912 text that resonates with Wundt's analysis of religion in *Ethics*. Indeed, even though Durkheim does not reference Wilhelm Wundt in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* and this rather massive text goes well beyond the materials that Durkheim discusses in his 1887 paper, the conceptual base of Durkheim's 1912 text seems centrally indebted to Wilhelm Wundt and the German social realist/pragmatist tradition. *The material presented in his 1887 statement, thus, represents the key for understanding Durkheim's longer-term contributions to pragmatist sociology as the study of human group life.*

Whereas one encounters some insights consistent with Durkheim's exposure to the social realists even in his more structuralist texts (*The Division of Labor in Society*, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, and *Suicide*), the intellectual tradition that Durkheim encountered in Germany served as a highly consequential conceptual and methodological base for the much more notably humanist or pragmatist position he develops in *Moral Education* (1961 [1902-1903]), *The Evolution of*

Educational Thought (1977 [1904-1905]), *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1915 [1912]), and *Pragmatism and Sociology* (1983 [1913-1914]). By examining Durkheim's (1993 [1887]) statement on German realism, we begin more fully to appreciate the foundations of his later (1902-1914) "sociological pragmatism" along with its implications both for reorienting the sociological venture more generally and extending pragmatist (and interactionist) scholarship more specifically.

This latter (1902-1914) set of materials indicates the remarkable potency of Durkheim's pragmatist scholarship and provides a valuable set of conceptual resources for the revitalization of sociology as *the study of human knowing and acting*. These texts also represent an important means of injecting greater realism into the philosophy of knowledge. Still, there is another side to the humanist/pragmatist sociology Durkheim addresses in his 1887 text.

Like Wilhelm Wundt, who prior to adapting a historical, pragmatist approach had experienced considerable success as an experimental psychologist, Emile Durkheim was unable to subsequently redirect the flows of sociological analysis as much as he (1887, 1902-1914) had intended. This appears to have reflected (a) the long-standing rationalist, structuralist emphases of the broader academic community, (b) the more mechanistic, ahistorical scientistic emphasis of most 17th-20th century social theorists, and (c) the ever-present quest for solutions to the "social problems of the day" and the associated academic positions and resources available to those who could more effectively *make claims* to facilitate scientifically informed solutions.

As indicated in his 1890s texts, Emile Durkheim also became caught up in this latter set of emphases—and the cross-pressures of maintaining pragmatist sensibilities regarding the centrality of human lived experience amidst the rationalist, structuralist, and social problems-oriented approaches of his day.

Like other traditions in community life, academic realities are resilient to change (as both Wundt and Durkheim emphasized in their later works). Still, it is through the efforts (more intense, as well as more partial at times) of a corpus of dedicated, community-oriented scholars such as Wilhelm Wundt and Emile Durkheim that we have been able to sustain a focus on the study of human knowing and acting amidst the traditions and allures of rationalist, structuralist thought and the pressures to imitate the physical sciences (through an emphasis on factors, variables, and quantitative inquiry) in the social sciences.[19]

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[19] Whereas Durkheim (1915 [1912]; 1961 [1902-1903]; 1983 [1913-1914]) is openly critical of rationalist and structuralist approaches because of their artificiality and simplicity relative to the actual, enacted humanly experienced nature of community life, readers are also referred to Blumer (1969), Prus (1996; 1999), Prus and Grills (2003), Grills and Prus (2008) for some sustained, notably parallel interactionist critiques of contemporary rationalist, structuralist thought and variable analysis.

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What Support? Foucault, Power, and the Construction of Rape

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Abstract This paper is concerned with the social and cultural constructions of male rape in voluntary agencies, England. Using sociological, cultural, and post-structural theoretical frameworks, mainly the works of Foucault, I demonstrate the ways in which male rape is constructed and reconstructed in such agencies. Social and power relations, social structures, and time and place shape their discourses, cultures, and constructions pertaining to male rape. This means that constructions of male rape are neither fixed, determined, nor unchanging at any time and place, but rather negotiated and fluid. I theorize the data—which was collected through semi-structured interviews and qualitative questionnaires—including male rape counselors, therapists, and voluntary agency caseworkers. The theoretical and conceptual underpinnings that frame and elucidate the data contribute to sociological understandings of male rape.

Keywords Voluntary Agencies; Surveillance; Subjectivity; Victim Blame; Stigma

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According to recent figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales in 2013, approximately 75,000 men are victims of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault a year, while 9,000 men are victims of rape or attempted rape each year (Ministry of Justice 2014a). It is significant to critically examine the ways in which practitioners in voluntary agencies[1] construct male rape[2] because they are the first port of call for when

[1] These voluntary agencies are specialized sexual violence agencies, such as Rape Crisis, Survivors UK, MESMAC, et cetera, that provide services and support for both male and female rape victims.

[2] That is, men being raped by either men or women, anally and/or orally. For the purposes of this paper, I focus on adult male rape victims and adult male victims of sexual assault.

male rape victims seek support, counseling, and treatment. By researching voluntary agencies' attitudes towards and responses to male victims of rape, the aims of this paper can be fulfilled. It is important to consider how cultural myths relating to male rape, which I argue emerge from social relations and social structures, arrange the type of service delivery they provide to male rape victims. To elucidate and make sense of the data presented herein, I draw on sociological, cultural, and post-structural theoretical frameworks, notably the works of Foucault. Sociological and cultural studies are the most suitable areas of study to provide knowledge and understanding of how male rape is culturally and socially constructed in voluntary agencies within England. I do not claim to represent the culturally constructed realties of all voluntary agency practitioners in England, but rather provide a snapshot of some practitioners' attitudes towards and responses to male rape that are shaped and reshaped by cultures, discourses, and social and power relations. Therefore, this paper provides some knowledge and understanding of how male rape myths, which are culturally and socially constructed, inform the practitioners' attitudes towards and responses to male rape victims in a local and regional context. The specific research question being drawn on is "how do conceptions of male rape shape voluntary agencies' attitudes towards and responses to male victims of rape and sexual violence in England?", drawing on post-cultural theory to elucidate the data. In this paper, I argue that practitioners in voluntary agencies socially and culturally construct male rape dissimilarly depending on social and cultural forces, contexts, and cultural myths.

In terms of structure, this paper will first set out prior literature associated with male rape and the voluntary sector to map what is already known about male rape and identify the gap that the current work addresses, as well as introduce key concepts and empirical evidence that will later be applied to the analysis of the data. I then introduce the theoretical frameworks that will be drawn on to elucidate and make sense of the data. The empirical study that this paper is based on is then discussed in order to theorize the data using Foucauldian concepts of power and discourse. Then, I present the findings and discussion in three sections. First, I consider the ways in which the practitioners understand male rape through discourse, surveillance, and subjectivity. I come to argue that some practitioners construct male victims' experience of rape as "abnormal," "unnatural," and "deviant," while others attempt to normalize their experience of rape in order to provide empathy. Second, I critically examine the interconnection between male rape discourse and stigma, arguing that some practitioners find it difficult to take male rape seriously because of the stigma associated with it. Third, constructions of victim blame and (dis)belief in voluntary agencies are critically examined, where I argue that some practitioners circulate victim blaming attitudes and responses against male rape victims. The paper ends with some concluding remarks about the social and cultural constructions of male rape in voluntary agencies.

Voluntary Agencies' Attitudes Towards & Responses to Male Rape

It is important to discuss some empirical studies on male sexual victimization, so we know what is

being constructed with regards to male rape and whether men's experiences of rape are similar and/or different in nature, circumstances, and outcomes. By doing so, the literature review will frame the qualitative analysis of male rape and the response of voluntary agencies using poststructuralist theory that will soon follow. It is also important to shed some light on the literature surrounding voluntary agencies for male rape victims to give an understanding of voluntary agencies' attitudes towards and responses to male rape. Voluntary agencies play an important role in producing, interpreting, and implementing policy, while having a vital duty to raise awareness, lobby for change, and deliver particular provisions. Voluntary agencies for male rape victims are, however, limited. The lack of empirical research and attention on male rape may make getting resources difficult. My research attempts to fill in these gaps by offering new empirical data on voluntary agencies that provide support for male rape victims.

The voluntary sector has an important role to play in supporting the statutory services, such as SARCs, in the response to and recovery of male rape victims. The value of involving the voluntary sector at every stage of the criminal justice process is to provide additional support to male rape victims. In the United Kingdom, the voluntary sector is large and diverse. The expertise and skills available from the voluntary sector vary from place to place. Research has shown that advance planning enables voluntary sector activity to be more integrated and effective (Cohen 2014), to liaise with SARCs where victims can go to in order to report their crime if they do not want to go directly to the police to report. The UK Government has identified the need to "increase access to support and health services for victims of sexual violence and abuse" (Home Office 2007:2) over the last few decades and recently re-stated the need to "improve our response to sexual violence overall and how we support the provision of services to victims of sexual violence to ensure they have access to adequate support" (HM Government 2011:15). Therefore, the current situation for male rape victims is that the voluntary sector is prepared and dedicated to dealing with them. Male victims of rape, it appears, are seen as a priority for the voluntary sector. The voluntary sector does provide additional care and support to male victims of rape (Cohen 2014). However, there are some social issues that make it difficult for the voluntary sector to engage with male rape victims.

For example, for many male rape victims, notions of masculinity that stress that men ought to be self reliant and independent lead many male rape victims isolated and alone, since expectations of masculinity make it difficult for men to reveal their sexual victimization, because doing so would admit defeat, powerlessness, and emasculation (Javaid 2017a). This highlights the importance of the need of voluntary agencies to be aware of the many issues associated with male rape, such as men's reluctance to engage with the voluntary sector due to the pressure to embody and perpetuate hegemonic masculinity. It is a form of masculinity that legitimates unequal gender relations between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities. O'Brien and colleagues (2015) argue that voluntary services often perpetuate the belief that "men cannot get raped," even years after the

victim's rape, when they eventually seek treatment. They found that men had reported fears about being disbelieved, founded on past experiences of rejection and disbelief when they revealed their rape to service providers. Turchik and Edwards (2012) demonstrate that male rape myths, which are false representations and misunderstandings of male rape, work to sustain and justify rape against men. The myths develop and manifest in various ways, such as through institutions like police forces, the military, law, medicine, prison, and the media, fuelling negative attitudes and responses to male rape victims at the individual, institutional, and societal levels (Abdullah-Khan 2008; Rumney,2009; Turchik and Edwards 2012).

There is an absence of a specific type of intervention specifically for male rape victims. For example, Vearnals and Campbell (2001) argue that voluntary agencies deliver intervention that is frequently based on either literature surrounding childhood sexual abuse or female rape, or clinical experience. Therefore, therapeutic intervention is not designed to address male rape victims' idiosyncratic issues and concerns, so it is found to be insensitive to the victims' unique experiences (Washington 1999). Older research stresses the risk of employing intervention that has either female or children victims in mind for male rape victims because such intervention tends to emphasize to victims that they were powerless within the violent incident (Sepler 1990). However, it seems that there are a number of problems here. Is it really the case that support provision for women emphasizes powerlessness? This is contrary to the emphasis of feminist organizations on empowering victims and feminist work on resistance. Indeed, feminist research and practice have largely advocated for the use of the term "survivor" rather than "victim," whereby the survivor is constructed as having survived their rape or sexual assault. Connell (2005) discusses that males are socialized to be powerful and independent, arguing that both powerlessness and helplessness are not an option for males because they prevent men from embodying hegemonic masculinity. For men, failing to achieve this social ideal of masculinity and the gender expectations of men means that they may get classified as not "real men." Voluntary agencies adapting such intervention that expresses powerlessness and helplessness may be harmful to male rape victims. In order to understand male rape victims' victimization, Carpenter (2009) suggests that voluntary agencies should deal with them with a use of a masculinity framework. This means that the agencies should be sensitive and understanding to men's masculinities through encouraging strength and independence when handling men as victims of rape. In the meantime,

> [M]en are victimized at multiple levels: first they are victimized by their attackers, they are then subjected to rejection and stigmatization from friends and family and potentially humiliated at the hands of the law. These factors serve to reinforce the internalization of self-blame and denial of the need for help that inhibits recovery from the assault…The psychological consequences of male rape impact in the immediate & long-term and can be emotional, behavioral, and somatic. There have been few studies looking at the impact of male rape in comparison to female rape, but it is reasonable to assume that some features are common to both. [Carpenter 2009:n.p.]

It seems that hegemonic masculinity creates multiple barriers to men recognizing and naming their experiences of rape and seeking support, hence is it really helpful to reinforce hegemonic values of self-sufficiency, independence, and self-reliance in men's interventions? Arguably, there is a need for men to have safe spaces in which they can acknowledge their fears, feelings of vulnerability, and distress, as well as to find positive and empowering coping strategies. It is clear that male rape causes immense short- and long-term psychological pain. For those victims who do try to get help, however, they may not be able to get it. For example, Carpenter (2009) argues that service providers for male rape victims receive a lack of attention and, therefore, become limited. As a result, male rape victims are unlikely to report due to a scarcity of services accessible for them, facilitating rather than addressing the stigmatization of male rape. Because of the lack of attention on male rape, the issue of male sexual victimization is not drawing attention and so making it difficult to acquire resources (Carpenter 2009). Thus, when male rape victims do eventually build up the courage to seek support, they are often unaware of what service provisions are available specifically for male rape victims, which in turn increases their reluctance to look for services for male victims of rape. Additionally, it appears that there is a considerable lack of finance and resources put into providing services for men as victims of rape, while voluntary services specifically for female rape victims do not serve men. Neglecting men in this way implies that men do not want or need voluntary services to manage the after effects of their rape and implies that "male rape is not a serious issue" in the voluntary sector. King (1995) suggests that all types of voluntary agencies are needed in order to provide male rape victims with counseling support, as most will benefit from it. However, most female rape victims do not approach a statutory/voluntary agency, so the uptake is most likely even lower for male victims. Arguably, data on this issue in England are lacking as the Crime Survey for England and Wales does not provide thorough analysis of male sexual victimization data.

Research has found that males who suffered penetration throughout their attack were more unlikely than other types of victims to look for assistance from voluntary agencies, suggesting that such males were potentially suffering from confusion and shame pertaining to their sexual identification (Monk-Turner and Light 2010). When the victims seek help, as Donnelly and Kenyon (1996)[3] argue, they are met with professionals, working in voluntary agencies, who possess male rape myths: if they were raped, it was because they "wanted to be"; and "men cannot be raped by other men," leaving the authors to conclude that many professionals in voluntary services do not consider male rape as a problem for men. More recent research supports this, in which Apperley (2015) argues that most healthcare service providers, who offer support, only believe that sexual abuse is only applicable to girls and women. In Donnelly and Kenyon's study, the authors explored mental health and medical professionals' responses and attitudes to male rape victims. They also found that gaps in service provision,

[3] This evidence is very dated, so caution needs to be taken when considering such arguments as attitudes and responses may have changed in England to date; the current study examines whether or not they actually have.

dearth of responsiveness, and gender expectations of men contribute to the scarcity of help for male rape victims. Although this research was conducted over a decade ago, a dearth of research has explored whether these findings are still relevant today. My research attempts to explore if such findings are still relevant in England.

Voluntary agencies should attempt to address secondary victimization, which refers to attitudes and conducts of institutions/service providers that are insensitive and victim blaming, traumatizing rape victims, because research claims that such agencies tend to perpetrate it. For example, Abdullah-Khan (2008) and Washington (1999) suggest that male rape victims experience secondary victimization by informal and formal counseling services, and the medical profession. Washington's research, though, is based on interviews with six male victims of sexual assault from adulthood and childhood. Her results cannot be generalized to all male victims who undergo counseling services. Her results highlight that, as a small number of such victims were suffering from voluntary agencies' attitudes and responses, the fact that some victims were suffering warrants attention to see whether these issues are still present in England. This is particularly the case especially when Walker and colleagues (2005) found a link between male rape victims' reluctance to seek psychological help from voluntary agencies and attempted suicide. Likewise, the victims show high levels of health issues and psychological disturbances, even years after the rape. Further, the researchers found that the victims display anxiety, somatic symptoms, sleeplessness, depression, and social dysfunction, while lacking confidence pertaining to their social lives, appearance, and general competence; hence, the victims' reluctance to seek psychological help from voluntary agencies. The male rape victims who do seek help from such agencies will often present other reasons for attending, for example, medical advice, in order to conceal the rape itself (Walker et al. 2005). Because of the hidden nature of male rape, studies such as Walker and colleagues' have to use small sample groups, which means their results cannot be generalized.

In spite of criticisms, some attention is being directed towards male rape victims. The impact of the legislative construction on policy includes male rape whereby the Stern Review (2010) incorporates male rape victims, stressing the need to incorporate the male in service provision, policy, and research. It is important to note that state and voluntary agencies did not consider the Stern Review findings. For example, in official government responses to Stern (2010) and the following voluntary sector reports, the initial commentary pertaining to male rape was excluded, so the voluntary sector in the provision of services (as the government directs and funds) for the male is small (Cohen 2014). An important conclusion drawn from the Stern Review (2010:8) is that "the policies are not the problem. The failures are in the implementation." The review goes on to say that, "Whilst treatment of victims has improved considerably, we heard of areas where victims' organizations struggle to have their concerns heard" (Stern 2010:8). This may suggest a number of viewpoints, such as voluntary agencies may be expressing genuine concerns, but policy- or lawmakers are refusing to adequately and whole-heartedly acknowledge them. Mean-

while, Cohen (2014) carried out content analysis on the Stern Review (2010) and found that it implicitly perpetuates male rape myths, such as "men cannot be raped by other men," orienting rape as an issue of men against women, while conceptualizing male rape as an anomaly. The relevance of this critical discussion is that, collectively, these problems ingrained in the review may impact the way voluntary agencies respond to, and deal with, male rape victims, while influencing voluntary agency practitioners' attitudes towards male rape.

Similarly, the Interim Government Response to the Stern Review (Home Office 2010) largely neglects male rape, for example, in relation to risk management, protecting societies, and attrition. The focus is only on females as victims; males as offenders, which consequently ignores male rape victims by not considering them as a priority:

> Government priorities in this important area are to: provide end-to-end support for all victims through the criminal justice system, from report to court; bring more offenders to justice by improving reporting and conviction rates; and rehabilitate offenders and manage the risk they present to *women and girls*. [Home Office 2010:21 (emphasis added]

It appears that this passage completely neglects male rape victims. As a consequence, voluntary agencies that serve male rape victims may have a suspicion about male rape victims being excluded in state funding or government agendas. The voluntary agencies, then, may well disregard such victims or see them as unimportant in comparison to female rape victims, considering there is funding in place for female rape whilst it is also prevalent in government agendas. If men are not seen as victims, arguably, they will not get the treatment needed and this may have an incidental affect on the victim and their family and society. Cohen (2014) argues that, by voluntary agencies, particularly rape crisis centers, neglecting male rape victims, limited data on male rape is being produced while inhibiting data collection. Consequently, this may possibly encourage voluntary agencies to see male rape as a low priority crime type and of little importance. The empirical part of this paper will explore whether voluntary agencies have a lack of understanding and awareness of male rape.

This section has critically discussed that voluntary agencies are possibly neglecting or excluding male rape victims, which may contribute to the "invisibility" of the male victim. In other words, male rape victims have a lack of recognition and service provisions that are available. There is also a lack of empirical literature to direct voluntary agencies on effective interventions for male rape victims. Although my research attempts to fill this gap, voluntary agencies may need training and support regarding male rape victims. There currently seems to be no change in voluntary agencies to improve their services for male rape victims (Cohen 2014). Despite this, the Government has committed £500,000 in the year 2014 to provide services, such as counseling and advice, to help male rape victims who previously have not been able to receive such support and to encourage them to come forward (Ministry of Justice 2014b). This fund will also support historic victims who were under 13 at the time of the attack.

Foucault, Queer Theory, and Post-Structuralism

In the current paper, I draw on concepts from Foucault, queer theories, and post-structural theories informed by cultural studies and sociology. Post-structural and Foucauldian understandings of the body inform the analysis since the bodies of male rape victims are carefully analyzed through social and power relations and through social interactions between voluntary agencies and male rape victims. According to Foucault (1991), the body is an entity that is invested in meanings; the body is not neutral. The analysis, then, will focus on how the bodies of male rape victims challenge social and gender norms. Foucault (1977) illustrates that the soul is the prison of the body to suggest that, while bodies are fluid, symbolic, and material, they are under constant control and surveillance. Through social practices, social institutions, and social contexts, the body is vulnerable to power since power is omnipresent; however, despite power being everywhere, it can be contested and challenged (Foucault 1980). Power, for Foucault (1982), is relational in that it can control, shape, and reshape the body. The body, then, is always in a process of becoming, it is socially and culturally constructed, and the meanings "marked" on the body can change through social interactions. As the body is a mere "docile" subject, it is:

> …directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs. This political investment of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination. [Foucault 1977:55]

Interactions between voluntary agencies and male rape victims are shaped by power. Through culture and social relations, voluntary agencies construct male rape in certain ways. Discourse, a body of knowledge and ways of thinking about constructed knowledge, can also construct male rape in particular ways. For example, voluntary agency practitioners' discourses inscribe or mark the bodies of male rape victims in a corporeal fashion; male rape victims' bodies, then, become culturally "made" (Foucault 1982) comprehensible as certain types of subjects. Queer theories inform my analysis to better comprehend the ways in which gender and sexual norms shape voluntary agencies' interactions with male rape victims. I draw on heteronormativity, the normalization of heterosexuality, and the exclusion of other sexualities (Jackson 2005). Stevi Jackson's work helped to make sense of the bodies of male rape victims as non-conforming and as non-heteronormative, failing to embody heteronormative notions of gender and/or sexuality. As a result, some voluntary agency practitioners construct male rape victims as "deviant" and/or "abnormal" since their sexual victimization challenges expectations of heterosexual masculine practices and the institutionalization of heterosexuality.

Goffman, Stigma, and Rape: The Shame of Sexual Victimization

The work of Erving Goffman (1959) is relevant in this paper to argue that male rape is embedded in

stigma, operating to shame others, such as practitioners, who come close to the stigmatized entity; in this case, male rape victims. Goffman calls this "stigma by association." Stigma is a social process: Goffman (1963) argues that stigma is defined in and enacted through social interaction. It is, or the anticipation of stigma, present in most people (Goffman 1959). Goffman (1959:243) wrote, "there is no interaction in which participants do not take an appreciable chance of being slightly embarrassed or a slight chance of being deeply humiliated." In other words, the anticipation of stigma or stigma itself is insidious, lurking in the background of all social interactions, including the ones that male rape victims find themselves in post rape. When socially interacting with practitioners, the victims may be extending their stigma, both metaphorically and symbolically, onto practitioners. We are all susceptible to running into stigma in every social encounter. Weiss (2010) argues that, because men are expected to be powerful, strong, and invulnerable, the act of male rape demonstrates vulnerability and weakness to others, which in turn contributes to men's risk of stigma and, subsequently, to their reluctance to disclose unwanted sexual experiences to others. The notion that only women are or can be victims of rape can also contribute to men's risk of encountering stigma. Others, such as practitioners, can induce feelings of stigma in male rape victims for "publicly admitting that they were not interested in sex, were unable to control situations, and were not able to take care of matters themselves—all statements that run counter to hegemonic constructs of masculinity" (Weiss 2010:293). Stigmatized individuals do not have full social acceptance and are constantly striving to adjust their social identities in order to prevent stigma from manifesting (Goffman 1963). Male rape victims prevent stigma by, though not limited to, remaining silent or by not defining "themselves as victims because masculinity impedes them from becoming victims of rape" (Javaid 2015:286). There is a strong link between constructs of masculinity and notions of stigma. Further research ought to consider these interconnections.

Further, when a negative label is attached to a person, such as a rape victim, the very label itself has the power to produce their "spoiled identity" (Goffman 1963). In a social and interactional process, the social stigma arises from a labeling process, which derives from societal responses that can create actual discriminatory experiences (Becker 1963). Becker (1963:9) argues that, "The deviant is one to whom that label has been successfully applied; deviant behavior is behavior people so label." Deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an "offender." Thus, in the context of rape, it can be concluded that male rape victims *become* stigmatized through labels and discourses. As a result of stigmatizing labels, filled with negative connotations such as "dirt," "tainted," or "polluted," some male rape victims are blamed for their assault (Abdullah-Khan 2008). Through social and power relations, Rumney (2009) argues that male rape victims are marginal because of their identification, emasculation, and stigmatization. Labels that induce stigma are powerful, and they can often "mark" a rape victim for life. Labels and stigma, however, operate in a social process; so they are neither unchanging nor fixed. They do not always "stick" to a person as such, but they can contribute

to developing their "master status." Whether ascribed or achieved, the master status overshadows all other social positions of the status set in most or all situations. Often shaping an individual's entire life, a master status has exceptional importance for social identity.

The Study

The current study, which is theoretically and conceptually informed, is concerned with exploring voluntary agency practitioners' responses to, and interactions with, male rape victims. Data for this study were collected as part of a larger project that set out to evaluate a series of state and voluntary interventions aimed at male rape victims (see: Javaid 2017a). In this paper, I focus only on the voluntary interventions. The larger study employed qualitative interviewing, each interview lasting around 1 hour, with a sample of 25 police officers, male rape counselors, therapists, and voluntary agency caseworkers who live in England, and it also gathered 45 qualitative questionnaires with individuals of the same occupation. The main focus of this paper, however, is on the voluntary agency practitioners' constructions of male rape. The participants were asked for their stance of their agency and for their individual perspective. A University Research Ethics Review Board granted ethical approval for this research, which adapted a qualitative approach. There was a commitment to seek to comprehend the views of those being researched in England. The focus on England is because there is a notable gap in relation to research investigating, or even including, voluntary agencies' treatment of male rape victims, despite the growing research and policy interest in addressing and preventing sexual violence against women in England. Data have been collected from victims/survivors separately (see: Javaid 2017b).

I employed purposive and snowball sampling methods because they were the most appropriate sampling methods to select state and voluntary agencies that specifically deal with male rape cases, and that then accordingly gave information required to locate other state and voluntary agencies that have had experience of dealing with male rape cases or are dealing with such cases. This means that I selected specific people working in state and voluntary agencies because I believed they would provide me with the most appropriate information, since they work very closely with male rape victims on a one-to-one basis. It is impossible to formulate a random sample of state and voluntary agencies that deal with male rape because the population is not only difficult to reach but also there are not many agencies that specifically deal with male rape in England.

I approached the state and voluntary agencies myself through email, describing my research and the benefits of participating to help increase my sample size. I approached 13 police forces and 10 voluntary agencies in Britain. Ultimately, five police forces and four voluntary service provisions participated in the research. In respect of how many police forces and voluntary agencies declined to take part in this study, eight police forces and six voluntary agencies refused. For the interviews, 15 police officers and 10 practitioners from voluntary agencies took part. For the questionnaires, 38 police officers and 7 practitioners from voluntary agencies filled out, completed, and returned them.

The research participants are diverse in regards to amount of experience handling male rape cases, educational level, ethnic background, and training of rape cases. The type of participants include the following: specialist police officers working in CID (4); police detectives (4); police constables (34); detective sergeants (9); police response officers (2); male rape counselors (7); male rape therapists (3); and voluntary agency caseworkers (7). Due to the lack of male rape counselors, therapists, and caseworkers who specifically deal with male rape victims across England, this made it difficult to get an equal representation across various stakeholder groups. The gender of the participants comprises of 33 males and 37 females. The sample is predominately White and most of the participants are under 40 years of age and are mostly from highly educated and middle-class backgrounds. The respondents provide services for many male rape victims, although they often serve more female rape victims due to the higher number of female rape victims who come forward. On average, the respondents have had around 7 years of experience of working with male rape victims and male victims of sexual assault. Most of their clients are middle-class men. Some of my participants had no training on male rape and sexual assault against men, but most had training on female rape and sexual assault against women.

The qualitative findings were transcribed and reviewed by the researcher, drawing on thematic analysis. Thematic analysis requires the researcher to recognize themes or patterns appearing out of qualitative data. There was a concern to recognize differences and commonalities in the views and experiences of the participants. The researcher followed thematic analysis with thematic coding where codes/labels were placed onto segments of the data that looked important. Each transcript was read and reread by the researcher while noting down some initial codes and labels on the transcripts before transcripts were imported into the data analysis software NVivo 10 for final coding. A stage of coding involved the analysis of sentences and words for common themes, concepts, and patterns across the data set. Analyzing the data focused around organizing the dissimilar concepts, conceptions, and themes that developed from the data, not just on putting masses of data into order. Thematic analysis was adapted because it helped to understand the participants' lived experiences of handling male rape cases in a detailed way, which this type of qualitative analytical approach accommodates. Therefore, verbatim transcripts were read, usually line by line, and key phrases and words were highlighted within the procedure of "open coding," whereby the researcher drew out key concepts, conceptions, and themes using real examples from the text. Verbatim quotes are used to illustrate the points made. Braun and Clarke (2006) express that thematic analysis provides a flexible, useful, and an accessible way in which to analyze qualitative data, so it can possibly give a detailed and rich account of data.

(Mis)Understanding Male Rape Victims in the Voluntary Sector

Over half of the voluntary agency practitioners in my sample suggested that either themselves or other practitioners lack understanding with regards to male rape. As examples, consider the following passages of text:

> [W]e don't really know the facts about male rape, so we would be a bit naive…I do know that [male rape victims] who have had sort of counseling with people who haven't had any training working with trauma and things, the survivor often feels that the counselor didn't really "get them." [Male Rape Counselor 1, Male]

> Voluntary agency practitioners don't want to understand anything, do they? With anything that they feel uncomfortable with, they don't want to talk about rape; anything that is sort of out of the public's main focus. When you have got things on male rape, they don't want to hear that, but they will because it is part of the job…It is just one of those issues that [they] overlook. To them, [male rape] just doesn't exist. They don't want to talk about it. [Male Rape Counselor 3, Female]

> [T]he way voluntary agency practitioners respond in the UK to the possibility of men being raped is different to other places. For many of them, it's difficult to understand that a man can be raped…it's a lot to do with ignorance. Also, for men, there is an underlying fear of rape. So it's almost like, "That couldn't happen to me, I'm so macho," but also the mechanics of rape… the stuff around penetration is quite hard for men. It's quite hard for a lot of men to understand how a man is raped, a lot of men are very threatened. [Male Rape Therapist 2, Male]

These passages of text reflect a heteronormative understanding of male rape, suggesting that most practitioners lack understanding of the "facts" associated with male rape. For instance, some counselors do not connect with the victims; without empathy, then, the practitioners can circulate the discursive idea that "male rape does not really exist." By not constructing discourse of male rape, as some practitioners "don't want to talk about it" (MRC3, Female), they can regulate and control the bodies of male rape victims (e.g., by silencing them, by overlooking them, and by "invisibilizing" them) through the rules governing sexuality which Foucault (1978:139) calls "anatomo-politics." Disciplining bodies of male rape victims in this way can also be seen as controlling the lives of male rape victims. Anatomo-politics of the bodies of male rape victims operate to silence and subjugate their bodies because "With anything that they [voluntary agency practitioners] feel uncomfortable with, they don't want to talk about rape" (MRC3, Female) and because "For many of them, it's difficult to understand that a man can be raped" (MRT2, Male). Foucault (1978:139) writes that:

> [P]ower over life evolved in two basic forms…One of these poles—the first to be formed, it seems—centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the *disciplines*: *an anatomo-politics of the human body*.

As some practitioners, mainly male practitioners, find it difficult to understand that a man's body can be raped, since mechanically men's body is seen as impenetrable, a form of knowledge is likely to be circulated. This form of knowledge, or version of reality of what is false or true about sexual violence,

relates to the idea that men cannot be raped and so creates and shapes some practitioners' cultures and responses towards male rape victims. Such responses are likely to be based on new forms of knowledge that help construct realities pertaining to male rape. Foucault (1978:141) had recognized that in "*institutions* of power…*techniques* of power present at every level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions…They also [act] as factors of segregation and social hierarchization…guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony." Male rape victims who seek help and support from voluntary agencies are susceptible to power and techniques of surveillance. This is because male rape victims are under constant surveillance not only by themselves but also by other men to ensure that they are constantly conducting themselves in a heterosexual and masculine fashion—otherwise they are deemed as deviant and an anomaly (Javaid 2015; 2017a). For Foucault (1977; 1991), the interrelation of internal self-surveillance and self-policing with external enforcing of surveillance and policing provides discourses with power. In relation to their cultural and discursive knowledge and understanding regarding sexual violence, some practitioners' discourses apply normalcy while controlling and disciplining deviancy. To reassert the dominant ideal of sexual violence victims, that is, female rape victims, some practitioners construct male rape victims' bodies as dysfunctional, contaminated, abnormal, or unnatural. I argue, therefore, that some practitioners construct male rape victims as embodying a deviant sexuality, and, by asking for help, they are seen as "not being able to cope" shaped by the practitioners' discourses such as "That couldn't happen to me, I'm so macho" (MRT2, Male).

Some practitioners can, therefore, either implicitly or explicitly, circulate discursive knowledge to male rape victims pertaining to worthlessness and failure; at the same time, disbelieving attitudes and responses can circulate against the victims. Their bodies become subjected to the practitioners' examination, surveillance, and control; and to the regime in voluntary agencies, such as making an appointment, attending the agency, and undergoing treatment/counseling/therapy. During this procedure, the bodies of male rape victims are under the strict control of the voluntary agency practitioners. It could be argued that voluntary agencies' needs take precedence over male rape victims' needs, with some practitioners circulating a depersonalized and rational approach, since "When you have got things on male rape, they don't want to hear that, but they will because it is part of the job" (MRC3, Female). It is fundamentally my argument that the practitioners' versions of reality and discourses are *relative*. Although most practitioners expressed male rape in ways that could be interpreted as "negative," there were other practitioners who constructed male rape in a more "positive" light, which means that practitioners construct and conceptualize male rape differently. Therefore, we can only understand male rape in the context of practitioners' culture for their unique and individualized culture contains its own discourses, languages, and peculiarities that shape their attitudes and responses towards male rape victims. For example:

> You have to understand [male rape victims'] particular story and then you have to situate yourself in the environment they find themselves. [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male]

> We are trained counselors and offer unconditional positive regard, empathy, and congruence to our clients. From the outset we explain what we can offer and listen to what [our] clients need. Normalizing the client's thoughts and feelings often helps to challenge stigma. [Male Rape Counselor 4, Female]

> [V]oluntary agencies might hold similar views as the police, but they might try not to. They might be a bit more empathetic, but society lacks the awareness and the depth of knowledge to be able to manage male rape situations effectively and this can reflect in the voluntary agencies. [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male]

From these passages of text, we can see the disparities between practitioners in terms of constructing male rape as either "positively" or "negatively," some of whom circulate discursive knowledge of male rape victims as either impenetrable or penetrable. In other words, some practitioners believe that men can be raped, while some believe that they cannot as such. For some, the impenetrable becomes constructed as deviant, while for others, the penetrable becomes constructed as normalized equating male rape victims to female victims. Weeks (2016) suggests that we cannot divorce ourselves from our own cultures, meaning that we can never really understand anything with any great certainty; but, through discourse and language, we construct, add meaning to, and try to make sense of "things." The three respondents strongly suggest that they attempt to offer empathy to male rape victims because for them, male rape is constructed as a salient issue that warrants attention and understanding. In line with Foucault's (1972) work on the archeology of knowledge, these respondents' forms of knowledge relating to male rape construct different responses to male rape victims, mainly of empathy and understanding. New forms of knowledge and discourse about male rape, that is, it is normalized, non-deviant, and non-abnormal, define modern life for some practitioners. Foucault (1972) articulates that, in order for people to know and understand a version of reality, acquiring a discourse is a necessity. While discourses are omnipresent, practitioners are constantly drawing on different discourses to make sense of male rape in voluntary agencies. The issue with this is that practitioners are likely to respond to male rape victims in an unpredictable, haphazard, and inconsistent fashion. The many discourses that practitioners draw upon maintain power over them, shaping what practitioners know and understand, what practitioners contemplate, and what practitioners discuss as "truths" (Foucault 1972). Discourses, therefore, create practitioners' identity and subjectivity through a relational and dynamic process, influencing the ways in which they respond to male (and female) victims of rape. It is clear that voluntary agency practitioners view and understand male rape through multiple lenses, which change over time and in contexts, and change according to social and cultural developments. It could be argued that the practitioners' discourse with regards to male rape is also shaped by legal, religious, political, and social knowledges that construct comprehensions of male rape while cultivating actions and thoughts regarding male rape. The concept of the "gaze," developed by Foucault (1977), refers to the ways in which individuals are objectified and constituted. Founded on certain powerful disciplinary discourses, the "gaze" demonstrates the act of exam-

ining and exercising surveillance (Foucault 1977). Foucault explained that surveillance worked to (ab) normalize certain practices according to a particular societal ideal. For some voluntary agency practitioners, through their "gaze" of male rape victims, they come to construct male rape as "normal." This "gaze" concept and the conception of discourse run alongside each other to construct male rape in particular ways. Some practitioners come to normalize male rape by offering "unconditional positive regard, empathy, and congruence to [their] clients… [and they] listen to what [their] clients need. Normalizing the client's thoughts and feelings" (MRC4, Female). Then, through discursive practices, voluntary agency practitioners respond to and deal with male rape victims in a way that is accepting of them as victims. The discursive knowledge of male rape as "normal" by some practitioners can alter through space and time for discourses are neither fixed nor stable. While discourses can "restrain" us, they can also "free" us (Foucault 1972).

Although some practitioners are more accepting of male rape than others, some work has shown that voluntary agency practitioners generally support and perpetuate male rape myths (Donnelly and Kenyon 1996; Kassing and Prieto 2003; Lowe and Balfour 2015; Javaid 2016a; 2016b; 2017c), contradicting some of my findings. These studies found that voluntary agency practitioners, on the whole, maintain stereotypes that shape and construct the ways in which they think about, discuss, and respond to male rape; as such, they are less accepting of male rape victims in voluntary agencies. While I also found that some voluntary agency practitioners could be hostile towards male rape victims, constructing male rape as "abnormal" and "deviant," it is unwise to generalize the findings to all practitioners.

Responding to Shame: Cultural Ideologies of Honor, Stigma, and Respect

In this study, at least a third of voluntary agency practitioners stipulate that male rape victims are reluctant to engage with them to seek help because of stigma, which means that they are unable to offer their support and services to the victims. For instance:

> [B]ecause of the underreporting, and because of males not seeking help, it means that we cannot adequately provide services for them. [Male Rape Counselor 3, Female]

> Men can be difficult to engage with anything to do with their health; we tried a "Male Drop In for Men" and found it was difficult to get them to attend. Men at times do not make their health a priority and are not sure what therapy is. They find it difficult to know how counseling will help; it feels a bit wooly to them. They prefer to have a "Haynes Manual" guide of what it will be like. [Male Rape Therapist 1, Female]

While the respondents in the sample declared that many male rape victims do not come forward for help and support, it is unclear what the practitioners are doing to tackle the under-reporting and to draw in the victims. By not creating and constructing discourse relating to male rape, the victims of this crime are likely to be silenced. These victims become the "unspoken," the "unknown," transforming them into objects of taboo since truth claims about male rape as the "invisible" can be seen as discourses and

taken-for-granted truth claims that "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1972:49). These discourses that some practitioners circulate "means that [they] cannot adequately provide services for them" (MRC3, Female). Another explanation why some practitioners are reluctant to create discourses about male rape, to speak about the unspoken, pertains to stigma. Most practitioners in my sample stated that stigma is heavily embedded in male rape discourse, making it difficult to construct it as a problem and to take it seriously. The term stigma refers to an attribute that is deeply discrediting (Goffman 1963). Goffman (1963:3) points out that, "An attribute that stigmatizes one type of possessor can confirm the usualness of another," meaning that raped victims are positioned in "other" categories to denote their abnormality; in turn, this produces normality for others who are not raped and not vulnerable. Men who are not raped are constructed as "real men," in contrast to those who are raped who are often constructed as stigmatized, tainted, and impure. Consider the following passages of text, as examples:

> There are both similarities and differences between male/female rape. Both genders experience powerlessness and feelings of shame, believe it is in some way their own fault and self blame. Added dynamics for males are usually greater taboo/stigma (although stigma affects both genders) and public [and some practitioners'] attitudes/perceptions that "men cannot be raped" or "why is it a problem, just enjoy it." [Male Rape Counselor 4, Female]

> [S]ome people actually don't want to say the word[s]; don't want to be as graphic…because they find it embarrassing [and] because that is something that is not spoken about…[the] more that we speak about [it], [the] more open and more graphic we can be…we should be saying as it is, "Hey, look, this can happen to you." [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female]

Male rape seems to contain a higher level of stigma than female rape, serving to normalize the acceptance of female rape while abnormalizing male rape. Drawing on the sociological perspective of labeling theory (Becker 1963), it becomes clear that male rape becomes stigmatized through the labels and discourses of male rape as deviant, taboo, and fuelled by male rape myths, such as "'men cannot be raped' or 'why is it a problem, just enjoy it'" (MRC4, Female). As a result, some male rape victims are blamed for their assault (Abdullah-Khan 2008). The stigma embedded in male rape, arguably, arises from social control since the act of male rape challenges gender, social, moral, and sexual norms. To reaffirm and reinforce such norms, male rape is stigmatized, ignored, relegated, and it "is something that is not spoken about" (VAC5, Female) so as to maintain the status quo of heterosexuality and hegemonic masculinity. VAC5 (Female) suggests that, when we construct discourses about male rape, the more we speak about it, societies will have less grounds to deny its existence, potentially encouraging male rape victims to engage with the voluntary sector. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, Kenneth Plummer (1975) argues that identity becomes stigmatized according to the interactional and social responses to it. Cultural codes or "scripts" constructs people's responses to the stigmatized entity, and regulation manifests itself through the stigma (Plummer 1975). Therefore, practitioners attach dif-

ferent meanings to male rape, some of which induce them to stigmatize male rape, while others are less likely to stigmatize it. Those who stigmatize male rape are likely to regulate it by not speaking about it, discouraging a discourse that raises awareness of it, so it cannot come to the attention of voluntary agency practitioners. Other practitioners were keen to develop discourse relating to male rape in order to challenge the stigma attached to male rape. For example:

> [M]ale rape is such a difficult thing for a man to get to the phone and talk about…these sort of things. I mean, I had [a] case where the guy's sister rang in, he was being a victim of rape, but it took him two or three weeks later to actually pick up the phone to someone and to talk to someone and, then, when he was on the phone, it was probably 45 minutes before he actually got the words out. This particular incident was a gang rape, and he actually rang up saying that he felt like he had something physically wrong with him…It seems shame, fear, anxiety, you know, and he had all of those things, he couldn't even get [the] words out to me. Took him so long, he [kept] saying, "Oh my God" and "I don't know how to say this," and this went on for a good forty minutes, and that all he kept saying was, "Oh my God"…he just didn't want to use the words, he didn't want to say those words, he felt so shameful, so fearful, and it took a lot of, you know, time, really. I just kept saying to him, "It's OK, I'm not going anywhere"…It's hard, but [it's] not about me. It's about them and when you are on that phone, you're just focusing on them, and you can't, you want to say "bastards," you know, basically, but you can't, you just have to concentrate on that person that they are getting support and making sure that they are supported emotionally and practically. [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female]

In interaction between the victim and this particular practitioner, the latter is constructing and making sense of the victim's stigma through a social and interactional process. By attempting to challenge the discourse of stigma, she reassures the victim that she is "not going anywhere" and puts the victim before herself since it "is not about me. It's about them and when you are on that phone, you're just focusing on them." This interactional process normalizes the male victim's experience of rape through the acceptance of the victim's victimization and story, which suggests that, while stigma can be present at certain times, it can also be non-present at other times. This is because, as Plummer (1975) notes, stigma is fluid, fragile, and always negotiated through social and interactional relations. One is not born stigmatized, then, but rather becomes it dependent upon social structures, social practices, and social and power relations. Male rape victims are likely to be heavily stigmatized for not embodying patterns of sexual and gender relations and for undermining notions of compulsive heterosexuality, hetero(masculinity), and heteronormativity (Javaid 2017a). Although hegemony functions to assert, reproduce, and maintain unequal power and gender relations (Javaid 2018), in this particular extract, there are no clear patterns of hegemonic masculinities since unequal gender relations are not being legitimated. This is not to argue that, at other times, places, and contexts, hegemony cannot be present given it is situational (Javaid 2018). Not only are male rape victims often stigmatized through a dialectical relationship with other people, but also homosexuality,

which is often attached to male rape (Javaid 2015), is also deeply stigmatized. For example:

> I supported a gay man who was raped and that was [a] difficult story, because he wasn't an open gay person, he did used to go to gay clubs, and had come back with somebody and he got basically raped. But, you know, that was one of the reasons why he didn't want to go to court because his family finding out. He was of Asian [Islamic] culture, so obviously that makes the difference as well, what kind of culture and beliefs people have…He basically said, "You know, I don't want to bring shame on my family, I never wanted my family to know that I was gay," but I obviously couldn't guarantee him that that wasn't coming out in court. [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female]

VAC5 (Female) suggests that particular forms of culture and religious ideology, such as Asian and Islamic cultures, make it difficult for male rape victims to engage with the voluntary sector and the criminal justice system. Male victims of rape, who come from particular religious or cultural backgrounds, remain silent in order to prevent their stigma or expected stigma from metaphorically and symbolically transposing itself onto their family members. This makes it difficult for some practitioners to support these types of victims, who are constructed as the "other" since, as Jeffrey Weeks (2016:107) notes, "[Islam] firmly emphasizes the ideal of monogamous, heterosexual relationships ordained by the Koran." Kenneth Plummer (2015:114) states that, "For Muslim cultures, religion defines gender and sexuality."[4] Any person who divorces from engaging with religious ideology and cultural expectations may be deemed as not quite human and potentially treated as perverse by the wider society, making it difficult for some practitioners to deal with such victims. As such male rape victims challenge the ideal of heterosexual monogamy and the expectation of the heterosexual nuclear family, they may be stigmatized not only by the same members of their culture and religion in which they belong but also by their family members, since homosexual practices are frequently forbidden in such cultures and religions. For these types of victims, as with any other victim, they each embody many strands of identities at the same time: racial, ethnic, sexual, gendered, and other, each of which is in constant flux (Butler 1990). The stigma of homosexuality in religious and minority ethnic families is so powerful that it serves to exclude the homosexual in order to preserve heterosexuality (Jackson 2005). In agreement, Plummer (2015:114) writes that, "Today, Muslim cultures in general treat homosexuality with little tolerance," which creates a stubborn barrier for such male rape victims to seek out help, support, and treatment from the voluntary sector, potentially making it difficult for some practitioners to reach out to such victims.

In sum, this section focused on stigma and how it makes it difficult for some practitioners to serve male rape victims. While male rape may be culturally "made" as "deviant," a taboo, and as stigmatized in some voluntary agencies, some practitioners strongly challenge the discourse of stigma when dealing with male rape victims in order to put the victims' needs first. However, in particular religions and cultures, homosexuality and male rape

[4] This also applies to other religions, such as Christianity.

are deeply stigmatized to the extent that the victims of male rape become stigmatized, making it difficult for the practitioners to engage with them. As a result, due to the stigma embedded in male rape discourse, some practitioners are likely to circulate victim blaming attitudes and responses.

Constructions of Victim Blame and (Dis)Belief in Voluntary Agencies

Over half of the voluntary agency practitioners in the sample reflected on the issue of some practitioners disbelieving male rape victims, either implicitly or explicitly, in voluntary agencies. Some practitioners in the following quotes also expressed victim-blaming attitudes themselves:

> [W]e know that [male rape victims] don't report or talk about it. They are too ashamed to come forward or they don't think they'll be believed…a lot of people won't come forward because they feel that they have had consensual sex or that is how it will be viewed, and their word against their offender's. And actually, if there's just two of you, then how do you prove that? [Male Rape Counselor 1, Male]

> [A] guy that I worked with, his dad and his dad's friends had raped him…that's what he had claimed and he had gone right through the legal system at the time, and nobody would believe him because of who his dad was…because of his experiences, I didn't know whether I should believe him or not…and I was like, well, "I don't know what to believe about you and what not"…a lot of people come from more deprived backgrounds, not as intelligent or whatever, [and] will be sexually abused…they allow themselves to be abused…in the first male rape case that I dealt with, I used to question, "Is he telling the truth, is he not, is he making it up, is he exaggerating," but that was part of his persona…There is always an element of doubt. [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male]

> [V]ictims think they won't be taken seriously…There is strong evidence of re-victimization. [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 7, Male]

The reason as to why some male victims of rape are reluctant to engage with voluntary agency practitioners, according to the practitioners, is that they think that the practitioners will disbelieve and re-victimize them. They suggest that victims will see their claim of rape as something that will be constructed and viewed as consensual sex, hence disbelieving the victims' claim of rape. Against some male rape victims, VAC3 (Male) suggests that he is unlikely to believe them because of their family background and circumstances that shape his construction of a valid and legitimate rape victim. When dealing with male rape victims in voluntary agencies, some practitioners may maintain views such as, "they allow themselves to be abused" and "There is always an element of doubt" (VAC3, Male). It is appropriate, thus, to argue that some victims may very well think that they "won't be taken seriously" (VAC7, Male), since some practitioners may disbelieve male rape victims through secondary victimization, where the victims are made to feel more of an offender rather than a victim. The victims are "put on trial." Voluntary agency practitioners will be drawing on their cultures, discourses, and historical and social constructions of rape to make sense of the narratives of male rape

victims, which will help them determine whether a male rape victim is "telling the truth." Male rape victims' narratives or "storytelling" of their sexual experience (Plummer 1995) will also help the practitioners to construct the victims' credibility, validity, and "ideal" or "non-ideal" victim status.

The sociologist, Nils Christie (1986), developed the notion of the "ideal victim." His original formulation of the concept was based around the "little old lady," who was referred to as, while out committing acceptable deeds, an innocent and youthful female attacked by a stranger who was unknown. He devised this notion to suggest that this typology is what society classifies as an "ideal" victim given the circumstance and context. In reference to sexual violence, Turchik and Edwards (2012) suggest that societies often classify a "real" (or "ideal") rape victim as being a female rape victim who is attacked by an unknown stranger ("stranger rape"). This common-sense thinking and persistent stereotype in societies ignore the fact that men can also be "legitimate" victims of rape, but my data, as well as other work (Abdullah-Khan 2008; Rumney 2009; Clark 2014; Cohen 2014), suggest that they are unlikely to be constructed as the "ideal" victim. Drawing on Christie's work, it can be argued that male rape victims are not easily and readily given the victim label and status, some may never achieve such a label and status, because they do not fit Christie's typology. Therefore, some members of society, such as voluntary agency practitioners, will not construct male rape victims as "ideal" and "legitimate" rape victims. In turn, disbelieving attitudes and responses are likely to unfold and reflect in the type of treatment that male victims of rape receive. Disbelieving attitudes and responses can manifest into secondary victimization, where the victims are made to relive their rape experience, to be "put on trial," and suffer the feelings and pains they endured during their rape; they experience what I call "secondary rape" by the responses of some voluntary agency practitioners. Male rape victims' experience of rape needs to be readily and easily acknowledged by practitioners in order to be constructed as "ideal" victims and to acquire the victim label and status. This is negotiated through social and power relations between the practitioners and the victims. This social process, then, is not fixed, determined, nor static, but rather dynamic, fluid, and changeable. Social factors will help construct practitioners' acknowledgement of male rape victims as "ideal" and "legitimate" rape victims.

For example, the media and the different forms of technology that portray images of sexual violence and victims of rape are likely to shape how practitioners think about and respond to male rape victims (Cohen 2014). They can help shape whether or not practitioners provide male rape victims with a victim status (Pitfield 2013) or with a victim identity (Rock 2002). One could argue that a "culture of victimhood" or a "hierarchy of victimization" regarding rape victims emerges that positions male rape victims most commonly at the bottom tier. Christie's work is useful to understand the ways in which constructions of "victimhood," "illegitimacy," "undeserving," and "non-innocence" manifest in service delivery in respect of male rape victims. His work, in turn, helps to make sense of the disbelieving attitudes and responses that can unfold in practice. However, his typology gives no room for social change, so it could

be argued that his theoretical argument is socially deterministic on some level. Moreover, his original formulation did not have an empirical foundation. Nonetheless, his work has allowed one to argue that some practitioners will deem male rape victims' status and label as a "real" and "ideal" victim as "illegitimate"; it is difficult, then, for these victims to be taken seriously by some practitioners at the local, regional, and global levels. Through social interactions, some practitioners will construct these victims as illegitimate, undeserving, and as the non-innocent, hence the development of disbelieving attitudes and responses. However, for a third of practitioners in my sample, male rape victims are positioned at the top of the tier on the "hierarchy of victimization" by the acknowledgment of male rape victims and by believing them. For example:

> [R]ape victims can claim for criminal injuries compensation as well, but if they don't report it to the police, they miss out on that, so, I know that financial benefit are nowhere, you know, compensating for what happened to them, but sometime it is *acknowledgment*. They acknowledge them and, of course, you know, *we believe you that this happened to you*. [Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female (emphasis from author)]

It is important to stipulate that the "hierarchy of victimization" to which I refer is not a static hierarchy, but, instead, open to continual change. It is historically, culturally, and socially constructed, changing over time. To put it simply, it means different "things" for different voluntary agency practitioners at different times. Therefore, male rape victims can lose their victim status and label. Recognizing and accepting male rape victims as "real" and "ideal" victims is an intricate process that is always negotiated, shaped, and reshaped through social and power relations, and through a variety of processes and interactions. On balance, for some practitioners, it is readily easy to grant male rape victims with a victim status and label; for others, it is more difficult and, sometimes, they may never grant victim status and label to the victims, fuelling victim-blaming attitudes and responses. This is because, I argue, some practitioners will construct male rape victims as the "other," the stigmatized, and the abhorrent. For some practitioners, the victims embody characteristics associated with "folk devils" (Cohen 2002) for they are constructed as "deviant" and as "outsiders," who are blamed for their rape. They are symbolized as the "other" who threaten the status quo, bringing about a "moral panic" (Cohen 2002). This moral panic is likely to provoke some practitioners to react distastefully to male rape victims through the rejection, condemnation, and disapproval of their rape. Social disapproval and condemnation are aspects of this "moral panic" that work to conceal the act of male rape by either providing poor treatment or disbelieving the victims. While some of my findings agree with Stanley Cohen's work, especially with some practitioners suggesting that male rape victims embody "folk devils" producing a "moral panic," not all of the practitioners constructed male rape victims in this way. Thus, the responses and reactions to male rape will be inconsistent and dissimilar, which suggests that the victims could receive unpredictable and variable treatment in voluntary agencies. However, because some practitioners will construct the victims as personifying "folk devils," hence "moral panic," "some very serious, significant and horrible events [such as, male rape]…can be denied, ignored, or played down" (Cohen 2002:26).

The act of male rape, then, will be "denied, ignored, or played down" by some practitioners through disbelieving attitudes and responses that are never fixed, but rather contextual, situational, and negotiated through social relations and interactions with male rape victims. It could be argued that the embodiment of "folk devils" can be contested since it is based on power, but power can be challenged (Foucault 1978). Therefore, male rape victims can contest the characteristics associated with "folk devils" and "moral panic" by claiming for criminal injuries compensation and reporting to the police (see: Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female, above). By doing so, the victims are acknowledging their sexual victimization and rendering others to acknowledge it with them. Arguably, this could prevent the embodiment of "folk devils" and, thus, make it difficult for the moral panic to take place or lessen its severity.

Conclusion

The aims of this research have been to critically examine voluntary agencies' attitudes towards and responses to male rape victims in England. Moreover, how constructions of male rape shape the ways in which voluntary agencies think about and respond to male rape victims were also important to consider in this project. It was, furthermore, significant to critically explore the social and cultural constructions of male rape myths since they can influence and shape how police officers, male rape therapists, counselors, and voluntary agency caseworkers deal with male rape victims in practice.

In this research, I have argued that cultures, discursive ideas, and knowledges create and shape how voluntary agencies understand male rape and deal with male rape victims. Their discourses, constructions, and cultures are negotiated through social relations and interactions with male rape victims. This means that their perceptions and views of male rape are never fixed, but always in constant negotiation with, for instance, other workers and with interactions with male (and female) rape victims to make sense of male rape. It is through discourse about sexual violence that voluntary agencies come to learn about and understand male rape, which in turn influences and shapes the ways in which they think about and respond to male rape victims in practice. To give some level of understanding of male sexual victimization, the responses to it, and the discourses that surround male rape, the project drew on sociological, cultural, and post-structural theories and conceptions.

For example, my data show that some voluntary agency practitioners construct male rape victims as "queer," so the bodies of male rape victims are "marked" as unmasculine and as non-heterosexual. This, in turn, shapes and reshapes discourse relating to male rape, conceptualizing it as non-heteronormative challenging heteronormativity (Jackson 2005). Furthermore, Foucault's work on power and knowledge, the conception of discourse, and the "subject" and the body were heavily drawn upon to shed some light on the ways in which male rape is understood and responded to in voluntary agencies. Voluntary agencies, in a certain historical moment, draw on discourses to create knowledge about male rape. This leads them to carry out social practices (i.e., responses to male rape victims) that entail meaning with regards to male rape and sexual violence more broadly.

Discourses influence and shape how they deal with male (and female) victims of rape since all social practices have a discursive element attached to them. The existence of discourse/language about male rape guides their conducts/practices when serving male rape victims. Through discourse, therefore, voluntary agencies construct and reconstruct the topic of male rape because it creates and conceptualizes knowledge of male rape, which in turn shapes and reshapes male rape counselors, therapists, and voluntary agency caseworkers' practices and responses towards male victims of rape. Their discourse produces the different ways in which male rape is thought about, discussed, and responded to, influencing how their notions of male rape are pragmatically carried out in practice to circulate power and control over others' conduct, notably the conduct of male (and female) rape victims.

An idea relating to sexuality that is present across some of the respondents is the myth that "male rape is solely a homosexual problem," potentially excluding heterosexual and bisexual male rape victims. Treating male rape solely as a gay problem is problematic because a segment of the population that has suffered rape may be ignored, overlooked, disbelieved, or refused help. Drawing on hegemonic masculinity, some practitioners frown upon and question male vulnerability, as they expect men to be able to ward off potential threats of rape or, if threatened, should be able to physically and violently protect their bodies. This view, as a consequence, could increase male rape victims' trauma that results in a "crisis of masculinity" whilst drawing in victim-blaming attitudes and responses. My data support such arguments, contributing to knowledge and attempting to fill a gap in the literature on victimology, sociology, social policy, and unacknowledged rape by providing an improved understanding of the intricate issues of male rape with the help of research from gender and sexuality, and of sociological, cultural, and post-structural studies. It is time we pay attention to the sociology of male rape because, as I have shown, it offers insights that other disciplines overlook: that our "reality" may not be the same.

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The Trials and Tribulations of Zimbabwean Precarious Women Workers in Johannesburg: A Cry for Help?

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Abstract There is a growing literature on the conditions of Zimbabwean women working as migrant workers in South Africa, specifically in cities like Johannesburg. Based on in-depth interviews and documentary analysis, this empirical research paper contributes to scholarship examining the conditions of migrant women workers from Zimbabwe employed as precarious workers in Johannesburg by zooming in on specific causes of migration to Johannesburg, the journey undertaken by the migrant women to Johannesburg, challenges of documentation, use of networks to survive in Johannesburg, employment of the women in precarious work, and challenges in the workplace. Rape and sexual violence are threats that face the women interviewed during migration to Johannesburg and even when in Johannesburg. The police who are supposed to uphold and protect the law are often found to be perpetrators involved in various forms of violence against women. In the workplace, the women earn starvation wages and work under poor working conditions. Human rights organizations and trade unions are unable to reach the many migrant women because of the sheer volume of violations against workers' rights and human rights.

Keywords Migrant Women Workers; Xenophobia; Trade Unions; Feminization; Johannesburg; Zimbabwe

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There is a growing literature on the working conditions of Zimbabwean migrant women workers in South Africa and other countries. In the context of declining industries which used to employ men who provided financial support to their families, one of the issues revealed by studies on Zimbabwean women workers is that *they* are now the breadwinners, employed in what can be regarded as precarious work or work that is characterized by low wages and poor working conditions. Gender

relations have been transformed, with women becoming heads of households (Chireshe 2010; Dzingirai et al. 2015; Batisai 2016).

In clarifying the meaning of "precarious work" in the context of the developing world, Kalleberg (2009:15) argues, "In transitional and less developed countries (including many countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America), precarious work is often the norm and is linked more to the informal than the formal economy and to whether jobs pay above poverty wages." This paper shows that precarious work is carried out by Zimbabwean migrant women who tend to be employed largely in what can be regarded as the "informal sector" as discussed by Kalleberg (2009), which is characterized by lack of legal protection, poor working conditions, and low wages. In this article, precariousness of the workers is not only confined to the workplace but is also found to be a condition of their existence and survival, affecting them even outside of the workplace.

The constant difficulties and visible and invisible struggles that are waged by the women interviewed for this study can be conceptualized as being part of "precarity"—a living condition and human life defined by "instability, vulnerability, insecurity, uncertainty and unpredictability" (Ettlinger 2007:320; Waite 2009:426; Masenya, de Wet, Coetzee 2017:194).

Unemployment and poverty have propelled a section of the poor and women in particular to leave their homes to work in other countries where they have far fewer or no rights and no social protection in the form of housing, social grants, and other forms of state support, further deepening insecurity among these precarious workers. For Standing (2011), "precarity" is not just defined by job insecurity, poor working conditions, and low wages, but also by a lack of social and economic protection (especially for migrant workers) that would normally be provided by a welfare state which ordinarily includes social grants, education, and other social services. Standing (2011:103) locates migrant workers at the lowest level of "precarity," as, unlike citizens who are also precarious workers, migrant workers tend to have minimum or no legal and social protection. Migrant workers living and working in South Africa who were interviewed for purposes of this research can be viewed as what Standing (2011:105) calls "the permanent denizens" or people with no citizenship or no rights, despite the fact that they are supposed to have some minimum protection from labor law and the bill of rights in South Africa (Hlatshwayo 2016).

Consistent with the work of Masenya and colleagues (2017), which views the "precarity" as defined by anxiety and insecurity, travelling from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg is risky for the women as they face threats of arrests by authorities as migrants crossing the border with no legal documentation. Another possibility is that as they travel through the bushes, they can get attacked by criminals looking for money and other possessions. In addition to that, and what exacerbates precariousness, is that, unlike men, these women are likely to be sexually attacked by men on their way to Johannesburg or whilst in Johannesburg.

Guided by concepts of "precarity" and "precarious work," this empirical paper based on in-depth in-

terviews and documentary evidence contributes to the scholarship on the conditions of Zimbabwean migrant women employed as precarious workers in Johannesburg, the biggest economic hub in South Africa. It specifically focuses on the working lives of precarious migrant women workers from Zimbabwe who undertake long and unsafe journeys from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg before finally gaining employment as precarious workers earning low wages and working long hours. The article reveals that women undertake long journeys that are characterized by threats of rape and other forms of sexual violence, and face further problems specific to migrant women, including having no proper washing facilities (which makes contending with menstruation a particular burden). On arrival and living in South Africa, women have to contend with xenophobia, documentation, harassment by the police, and poor working conditions.

The women interviewed strongly feel that state institutions that are supposed to help improve their living and working conditions are toothless, as they are not able to hold employers accountable. In addition, the migrant women workers are also unable to approach state institutions as they fear being deported, since they are undocumented migrants. The migrant workers are crying out for help and want to be part of some collective solution to their problems and challenges. The paper shows that some human rights organizations and trade unions do seek to help and support migrant workers, and migrant women workers from Zimbabwe in particular. However, limited resources and the widespread nature of violations of migrant women workers' rights mean that, in many cases, trade unions have not been able to organize them. On the other hand, the article acknowledges the establishment of organizations of migrant workers, advice offices, and task teams that seek to do so.

The paper frames the discussion on Zimbabwean migrant women workers by reviewing the literature on Zimbabwean women, migration, and precarious work in South Africa. One of the main points raised by the literature review is that the economic challenges facing Zimbabwe compelled women to leave in search of work in places like Johannesburg. Another issue that emerges is that these women should be conceptualized as workers working and living within the South African borders as they have established their lives in South Africa. Based on the interviews, this paper will also suggest possibilities of collaborations between migrant women and various human rights NGOs seeking to work to advance the rights and interests of migrant workers building their lives in South Africa.

The main argument of the findings section is that leaving Zimbabwe to live and work in Johannesburg is riddled with difficulties which take the form of threats like sexual violence, attacks by criminal elements, xenophobia, and despotic workplaces. That women are looking for work so that they can support their families in Zimbabwe is the drive that makes them endure all this, in spite of all the trials and tribulations. Being undocumented migrant workers means that the women are also victimized by the police in the form of rape and sexual harassment. Towards the end of the article, there is a critical discussion on human rights organizations and trade unions that are meant to help deal with difficulties faced by the migrant women workers.

Literature Review

According to Nechama of *Africa Check* (2016), an organization which verifies statistics in the African context,

> The 2011 census reported that more than 75% of foreign-born (international) migrants living in South Africa came from the African continent. African migrants from SADC [South African Development Community] countries contributed the vast majority of this, making up 68% of total international migrants.

In 2016, the South African state agency handling statistics reported that most migrants were from Zimbabwe—one of South Africa's neighbors. It has to be noted that it is difficult to have reliable statistics because undocumented migrants are very unlikely to participate in surveys when they fear victimization in the form of deportation. Undocumented migrants could be between 1 to 2 million people of which large portions are most likely to be Zimbabweans. In line with the focus of this research on migrant women workers in Johannesburg, migrants tend to go to Johannesburg as it is the economic epicenter of South Africa with possible jobs and economic opportunities for migrants. Nechama (2016) writes,

> The population of foreign-born migrants in Gauteng is slightly higher than the population of foreign born migrants *in all other provinces combined*. The 2011 census calculated that 9.5% of the population in Gauteng was foreign born, while the 2016 survey puts this at a much lower 6%.

Zimbabwean migration to South Africa and to Gauteng and Johannesburg in particular seems to be driven largely by the economic decline and the inability of its political leadership to deal with the economic crisis in a manner that advances social and economic justice. According to Kuljian (2011:166),

> In 2008 unemployment in Zimbabwe went up over 90 per cent, and the country was hit with rampant inflation, food insecurity, political violence, a cholera epidemic, and a near collapse of the education and health systems. The crisis hit its peak in that year after failed elections. These conditions in Zimbabwe have forced nearly one quarter of the population into a diaspora, much of which has travelled to South Africa.

Crush, Chikanda, and Tawodzera (2015:363) make an important point regarding Zimbabwean migration to South Africa, and this has implications for conceptualizing women migrants not just as temporary residents of South Africa, but as part of the South African workforce that is here to stay: "Zimbabwean migrants no longer see South Africa as a place of temporary economic opportunity for survival, but rather as a place to stay and build a future for themselves and their families.

Historically migration tended to be dominated by males who left rural areas in search of jobs in towns and cities in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Over the past decades, migrant patterns have changed due to changes in the structures of the economy. Men were the face of migration, because industries in the form of mines and factories tended to attract men who became migrant workers. The decline of these industries has led to men becoming unemployed and going back to rural and other residential areas. According to Pophiwa (2014:1), "African women are

leaving their countries of birth to create new lives elsewhere. Economic opportunities are primarily available in childcare, domestic and sex work."

Migration of women, and women from Zimbabwe in particular, has radically transformed gender roles, with women becoming breadwinners and heads of households. Pophiwa (2014:1) elaborates:

> Economic pressures on the one hand, and demand factors, on the other, changed the migration opportunities of women and men, and in the process, also changed age-old norms about the spaces allowed to women and men. In Africa, for example, the traditional pattern of migration within and from the continent was "male-dominated, long distance and long term," leaving women behind to assume family responsibilities and agricultural work. Shrinking job opportunities for men, however, has recently prompted increasing female migration both within and beyond national borders.

In confirming the increase of female migrants of Zimbabwean origins, McDuff (2015:3) argues, "However, in the last two decades, Zimbabwean women have been taking on a breadwinner role and leaving extended family and even their children behind as they travel outside of Zimbabwe in search of income sufficient for family survival, often staying away for long periods of time."

To respond to declining industries and unemployment amongst males, women had to leave their homes and start occupying low-paying jobs such as domestic work, cleaning, waitressing, and the service sector. This process which also affected Zimbabwean women is often regarded as the "feminization of work." The second process is called the "feminization of migration" and entails women leaving their country of origin in search of jobs in places like Johannesburg, bringing gender dynamics into sharper focus as women tend to be subjected to sexual harassment and rape as they migrate to South Africa (Sibanda 2011; Batisai 2016). On the question of feminization of migration in the context of Zimbabwe, McDuff (2015:2) had this to say,

> The increasing feminization of Zimbabwean migration is part of an overall increase in migration from Zimbabwe since 1990—primarily to destinations in South Africa and the UK, though Zimbabweans now live in countries throughout the world. There are currently three to four million Zimbabwean cross-border migrants, or about 25 percent of Zimbabwe's total population of twelve million. Most Zimbabweans leaving the country in the last two decades have been forced to do so because of economic and political instability, and it is women who have experienced the most dramatic changes in patterns of migration.

With the increasing feminization of both work and migration among Zimbabwean migrant workers, there is a growing literature which focuses on the conditions of these women as precarious workers or as workers with no benefits, earning low wages, working under very poor working conditions, and having no job security in South Africa. They work as informal traders, sex workers, cleaners, domestic workers, waitresses, cashiers, and shop assistants, and as a result they contribute through their labor to the South Africa economy (Mutopo 2010; Smit and Rugunanan 2014; Hlatshwayo 2016; Batisai 2016).

While these jobs occupied by women from Zimbabwe are characterized by low wages, poor working conditions, and insecurity, they help sustain the women and their families back in Zimbabwe. Scholarship on Zimbabwean women working in South Africa has shown that women migrants leave Zimbabwe and undertake a risky journey to South Africa. Bolt (2016:1) elaborates,

> Many new arrivals do indeed live a fugitive existence. The Limpopo River presents risks: from drowning or crocodile attacks when it is in flood, to abuse, assault, or rape by *magumaguma*—gangs that operate along the border—or by South African soldiers. Some arrivals on the farms lack basic resources for immediate survival, robbed of money, mobile phones, and even South African contact numbers. On the farms themselves, aggressive border policing leaves recruits vulnerable to deportation raids.

Leaving Zimbabwe in search of precarious work in South Africa exposes women to violence, and literature in this regard reveals the various coping mechanism adopted by them. Bribery, travelling in groups, and evading/running from soldiers and police are some of the strategies used by those who do not use legal and formal routes when coming to South Africa. On arrival in Johannesburg, these women rely on Zimbabwean networks of families and friends for accommodation and finding precarious employment (Hlatshwayo 2016).

Based on interviews, this paper discusses the reasons for the journey, the journey itself, and the significance of networks and the precarious conditions of work the women are subjected to in Johannesburg. However, the article seeks also to identify issues from their testimonies that can form part of collective and organizational responses to their conditions. One of the weaknesses of the literature on Zimbabwean workers employed as precarious workers is that it does not move beyond stating the conditions under which they work (Smit and Rugunanan 2014; Batisai 2016). On the other hand, this paper summarizes the key elements defining the precarious nature of existence of the women, but also shows possibilities of finding organizational and collective solutions to some of the challenges faced by the women interviewed by using a documentary approach to list organizations that handle concerns raised by the interviewees.

The paper recognizes the significance of individual responses to conditions of precariousness, and, in fact, individual resilience lays the foundation for collective responses to common individual problems. It was a realization of the need to move beyond individual responses to conditions of migrants in France which led to the formation of the Sans-Papiers (people without papers) which continues to champion migrants in France. McNevin (2006:135) argues,

> On 18 March 1996, 324 irregular migrants occupied a church in Paris, calling themselves the Sans-Papiers (literally "without papers"). Some of the Sans-Papiers were asylum seekers and some were long-term working residents of France whose status had been made irregular as a result of legislative changes. This initial action prompted collectives of Sans-Papiers to organize across the country and was followed by further church occupations, hunger strikes, demonstrations, and petitions.

Research Methodology

The research adopted two data collection methods, namely, in-depth interviews and documentary approaches. Thirty-five women who are migrant women from Zimbabwe working in Johannesburg were interviewed between December 2016 and January 2017. The women are single-parents, some living with their children in Johannesburg and many of them having left their children in Zimbabwe. All the women interviewed have matriculation as a qualification, and some even have a university entry qualification. The age of the women ranges from twenty to forty-five years.

According to Guion and colleagues (2001:1),

> In-depth interviews are most appropriate for situations in which you want to ask open-ended questions that elicit depth of information from relatively few people (as opposed to surveys, which tend to be more quantitative and are conducted with larger numbers of people).

The basic aim of the research was to let Zimbabwean migrant women working in Johannesburg speak about their precarious conditions of existence which really began in Zimbabwe where economic opportunities were extremely scarce. The questions posed by the interviewer were open-ended, enabling the women to tell their stories freely and from their own perspective. For example, typical questions would be: Why did you decide to come to South Africa? How would you describe your working and living conditions? The narratives start with the journey from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg and end by revealing that the women have never had organizational contact with trade unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or associations that seek to advance their rights and interests within South African borders.

Identity as a researcher matters as it can enhance or undermine the aims of a research project. Being a South African male may have made it uncomfortable for the women to speak about sexual violence and xenophobia. In the context where migrants have been victimized and even murdered by South Africans, women migrants from Zimbabwe may have not been keen on talking about discrimination based on their nationality to a South African, let alone to a male. I also did not want to intrude into very tight networks of Zimbabwean women. Williams and Heikes (1993) advise that gender dynamics can enhance or undermine the quality of an in-depth interview. Based on these concerns, I decided to hire a Zimbabwean migrant woman who has worked with me on a number of research projects on migrants and xenophobia. My research assistant was able to solicit high quality information which included the challenges posed by menstruation during a journey to South Africa, something which would never have been mentioned to a South African male interviewer! The women were able to speak openly about xenophobia and other forms of discrimination in the workplace. As part of good ethical behavior, interviewees were informed about my role; the fact that the research questions and project was managed by me. In addition, it was agreed that their names would not be used in the research report as that might expose them to victimization by their employers and the state authorities.

I therefore used pseudonyms to identify women in this research report.

The second aspect of data collection is linked to the first one in the sense that interviewees were asked if they belonged to any organization or collective that sought to change their conditions for the better. The interviewees were keen on knowing more about any organizations or collectives that could help ameliorate their precarious conditions of existence and work. Documentary research using the Internet to identify trade unions, advice offices, and organizations of immigrants that dealt with issues and concerns raised by migrants was conducted (see: McCulloch 2004 on documentary research). However, this part of the paper is not just about listing organizations, but it also mentions the experiences of these organizations in interacting with some migrant workers.

A thematic approach as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to analyze data from the in-depth interviews and documents. The first step was to familiarize myself with the data by reading documents and transcripts of interviews several times, enabling me to identify emerging key issues and patterns—the reasons for leaving Zimbabwe, for example.

The second step is articulated by Braun and Clarke (2006:18), "Phase 2 begins when you have read and familiarized yourself with the data, and have generated an initial list of ideas about what is in the data and what is interesting about them. This phase then involves the production of initial codes from the data." Identifying codes here was about looking for words and phrases that had a direct relationship with the aims of the study. For example, the intention was to understand the conditions of Zimbabwean women who emigrated to Johannesburg in search of work, codes like "I came to Johannesburg, because I needed a job" and "my wages [are] very low." As part of the next step, these codes were then grouped into themes which informed the writing of the paper. For example, codes were grouped into themes like "reasons for leaving Zimbabwe" and "conditions of work." The last step entailed reviewing and fine-tuning themes. To illustrate, initially wages and working conditions were two separate themes, but as I was going through the themes, I realized that the two were directly connected: workers talking about long hours of work would also link that to the low wages they were earning.

Findings and Discussion

Looking for Work in Johannesburg

Zanele Mhlongo is a 33-year-old woman who lives in a working-class area called Cosmo City in Johannesburg and works in a fast food shop called "Chesa Nyama" (a barbeque fast food shop). She went to school until matriculation and has three children who are based in Zimbabwe. When asked why she left Zimbabwe, Mhlongo responded, "I arrived in South Africa in 2014. Jobs are scarce in Zimbabwe…I came to Johannesburg because I have relatives in the area" (Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg).

Pretty Ndovu, a 22-year-old woman who works as a domestic worker in Johannesburg, relayed her

reasons for coming to Johannesburg, "What made me come to South Africa is because jobs are scarce back at home. The father of my child and I are estranged and I'm looking after the child's needs by myself hence I had to get a job" (Ndovu, interview, 22 January 2017, Johannesburg). Like Mhlongo, Ndovu came to Johannesburg because she had to look for a job to support her children.

Yolanda Quphe is a 31-year-old woman who has worked in restaurants and lives in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. She came to South Africa when she was 19 years old, meaning that she has been in Johannesburg for more than ten years. She completed her post-matriculation qualification in Zimbabwe, making it possible for her to be admitted to any university. She came to South Africa because her mother was already based in Johannesburg. Quphe said, "My mother was already in South Africa. So, I wanted to be with my mother. I wanted to build my life and start working here" (Quphe, interview, 14 December 2016, Johannesburg). The testimony of Quphe confirms some migrants from Zimbabwe are second-generation migrants who came to South Africa with the intention of settling down, proving that migrants should be conceptualized as workers within South Africa borders rather than as visitors who are likely to go back to Zimbabwe in the near future.

The findings are in line with Lehulere's argument (2008) that Zimbabwean and other African migrants come to South Africa in search of jobs, and that largely has to do with South Africa being a dominant economy in the southern African region. As wealth and economic activities are concentrated in major cities like Johannesburg, people are more likely to gravitate here in search of jobs. The collapse of the Zimbabwean economy which began in the 1990s, accompanied by austerity measures and the decline of industries in Zimbabwe, compelled Zimbabwean women to move to South Africa. In line with the feminizations of work and migration, these women look for jobs so that they can have an income which can support their children and families in Zimbabwe, proving that the women interviewed have become breadwinners or even heads of households.

A Difficult Journey

In general, migration from Zimbabwe is not easy because most migrants use "illegal" means to access South Africa, and the journey is riddled with many difficulties. Some of the challenges include going through border fencing, navigating terrain dominated by thugs, crossing the crocodile infested river, and escaping the South African border authorities, police, and soldiers. All these risks are extremely high for women, as they contend with a patriarchal mindset which expresses itself in rape and sexual harassment. As it will be revealed in a testimony mentioned in this research paper, the long journey also has health implications such as challenges of dealing with menstruation.

Quphe's journey to Johannesburg was difficult. She narrated her story about the journey by saying,

> It was hard for me to come because at that time I didn't have a passport. I didn't have anything…I didn't even have a birth certificate because my mother and my fa-

> ther had differences. So it was difficult for me. I came to Johannesburg with *abomalayitsha* [smugglers]…It was difficult because it took us three days [to travel to Johannesburg]. We had to run away; we were running away from soldiers; we had to sleep in the bush, but I'm grateful that I arrived safely, and nothing happened to me. I was not harmed. [Quphe, interview, 14 December 2016, Johannesburg]

The feminization of migration has created new gender roles for men and women. Women have become the center and the core of migration, with men playing a supportive and a facilitating role. In the case narrated by Quphe, men as transporters of women are involved in what the cross-border authorities regard as "illegal" activities of smuggling women into South Africa (Dastile 2013). In the context of feminization of labor and migrant work—a trend characterized by employment of women as precarious workers—it can be argued that men are accepting and operating within this new reality of feminization of work and migration. In other words, men are coming to terms with the fact that they are no longer the epicenter of migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

Pretty Mayo, a 26-year-old woman who worked as a shop assistant in Johannesburg, had this to say about challenges facing women when travelling from Zimbabwe to South Africa:

> There was no food. There were five males and six females. Having males in our group must have helped us. Crossing the Limpopo River was not easy. Besides the water, the river has crocodiles. Traveling through bushes for women is tough. Another difficulty, especially for women, is menstruation. You have no space for washing yourself and there is no privacy for women. Some women get raped. [Mayo, interview, 11 December 2016]

Mayo's testimony raises some crucial issues related to the role played by men in the context of migration by women: men's new roles include that of being "helpers" in the migration process of women. Men in the group provided women with security against possible robbery by thugs and sexual attacks by police and those involved in criminal activities along the way. In the past, women would stay behind at home, looking after families whilst men travel to Johannesburg to look for work. However, under the current conditions women, are migrating to Johannesburg to look for work and are receiving protection from men also going to Johannesburg in search of jobs or who are smugglers.

Dealing with menstruation is, according to Mayo's narrative, seldom mentioned when discussing problems faced by women when migrating to South Africa. Lack of washing facilities and privacy would undermine the dignity of migrant women, and this issue can only be dealt with by an approach that promotes the broader rights of migrant women. Traveling to South Africa is scary for women and can be very traumatic. The long-term effects of these experiences will need to be investigated. Thandi Maqubela, a 35-year-old who came to Johannesburg in 2007 and works as a domestic worker, said,

> My journey was not easy because at the time getting a passport was difficult. As a result of that I did not travel on a passport at the time. I only got my passport in 2010 which I applied for from here [South Af-

> rica]…I was assisted by smugglers…It was a very long journey. I don't even want to get into it. It was a long walk in the bush. It wasn't easy, but we made it in the end. I did not come across anything particularly bad. Being a woman and walking in bush traumatized me, but I was not hurt. [Maqubela, interview, 17 January 2017, Johannesburg]

Bribing authorities is another tactic used by migrants to get to South Africa. Sibongi Xulu, who is in her 40s and works as a cook and a waitress in a restaurant in Johannesburg, recalled:

> I did not use an official route to get to South Africa. It was not easy for me to get a passport in Zimbabwe. It took me about three weeks to get to South Africa. I came to South Africa to look for my freedom and a job, because there are no jobs in Zimbabwe. I had to work for my two children in Zimbabwe. I had to bribe the police in South Africa and [that] is how I came to Johannesburg. I was also helped by smugglers who also did negotiations on my behalf. [Xulu, interview, 28 January 2018, Johannesburg]

Some journeys were relatively pleasant. Mhlongo's journey to Johannesburg to look for work seems to have been without incident. Mhlongo elaborates: "It was a nice journey because I traveled on a passport. There is nothing bad I could have encountered. I traveled smoothly" (Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg).

The findings are consistent with the research conducted by Lefko-Everett (2010) which, among other things, mentions the use of smugglers to get to South Africa, encounters with thugs, use of bribes at the border posts to get into South Africa, and the long journey which may take up to a week. However, Lefko-Everett (2010) did not mention health issues among the key challenges facing women during the journey, which is one of the discoveries of this research.

The Significance of Networks

As part of challenging the notion of Zimbabwean women as "naive" victims with no social agency, Kihato (2007) mentions that women rely on various forms of network to travel from Zimbabwe to South Africa (and Johannesburg in particular). Networks include fellow Zimbabweans who are also traveling to South Africa, relatives who have already established themselves in South Africa, and churches.

Mhlongo's relatives, especially her sister, served as part of her crucial network by providing her with accommodation in Johannesburg. Mhlongo said,

> I have a sister here in Johannesburg. She is one who accommodated me on arrival in Johannesburg...I had people who could give me food. I could get everything I needed because I stayed with family. [Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg]

For Zimbabwean migrant female workers, networks are a crucial tool for navigating the terrain from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg. Mhlongo indicated that she lives in a working-class area with Zimbabweans only, and this gives her a sense of security and helps build bonds of solidarity and mutual assistance as they all understand the predicaments of being a migrant in South Africa. Mhlongo explained,

> Living in the same house as Zimbabweans is very helpful as we understand each other's problem and we are able to chip in to assist a fellow Zimbabwean. It's like we are a family—even when I need…something I could easily ask others to help me. For example, if I do not have money for transport, I can easily ask from others around…For me, it felt like I was still at home because even when I went out in the streets, I was always with people I knew, people from home, so I never had any problems in the streets. [Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg]

The church's role goes beyond being a place of worship and prayer. It acts as a site of networks for solidarity and support. Some migrants find jobs via networks in the church. Problems at work are also discussed at church and workers get advice and counseling from fellow church members.

Ndovu spoke about the role of the church, "We give one another advice about challenges we face at work. Others hear about work opportunities from other church members" (Ndovu, interview, 22 January 2017, Johannesburg).

Documentation

Quphe spoke about how being young helped her to avoid being harassed by the police as she had no proper documentation legally allowing her to be in Johannesburg. Quphe relayed, "At that time I was young. Yes. There were problems because the police were arresting people [undocumented migrants], but at that age that time I was unlikely to be stopped because the police mistook me for a student" (Quphe, interview, 14 December 2016, Johannesburg).

Documentation was one of the sources of anxiety among women migrants interviewed. Mhlongo elaborated, "I do not have proper papers. I normally use my passport, but I do not have a [work] permit. This means I cannot move and find another job because I do not have proper documentation. I have not had time to go and sort out my documentation, because I am scared to ask my employer to grant me time off to solve this problem" (Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg).

In 2010, about 200,000 Zimbabweans applied and received a special dispensation permit visa enabling them to work and stay in South Africa for six years. These visas are called "Zimbabwe exemption permits." Only those who received visas in 2010 were eligible to receive new visas in 2017. This dispensation only covered those with valid Zimbabwean passports, letters confirming employment were sometimes needed, proof of having a business in those cases where one was applying for business rights, and an admission letter for those who wanted to study in South Africa. The new visa cost R1,090 (US$90,80). Visas issued in 2018 would expire in 2021 (Child 2017). While the special dispensation has helped to ameliorate the pressure on 200,000 Zimbabweans who are covered by it, the overwhelming majority of Zimbabweans who are not part of the process remain excluded for the foreseeable future. This includes those who were unable to take time off to renew their permits, those who do not have passports, and those who could not afford to pay processing fees. Those who are not part of the system are most likely to be harassed by the police, and some face real threats of deportation.

Rape and Impunity

Sexual harassment and rape accompany challenges of documentation. Xulu recounted her ordeal:

> It was on the 14th December 2016. Police who are based at Jeppe Police Station arrested me. We filled up a van and we were taken to Jeppe Police Station [in Johannesburg]. When we got to the station, the police would ask the girls to go to a room one at a time. I thought maybe they were soliciting…bribes. When my turn came, I was shocked by being called into the toilet. He said he wanted to help me urinate. I thought maybe he wanted me to urinate in the toilet as in the true sense of the word. It only occurred to me later that he wanted to rape me. I refused and said if it was money that he wanted, then I would contact people to bring it to him. He told me that I was crazy. What he wanted was to sleep with me there and then. He told me he wanted me to bend and hold on to the toilet seat. I completely refused and he got mad and wasted no time in taking a copy of my fingerprints down and entering my name in a thick book of people to be deported. I was the only one arrested and taken to the cells. The rest of the girls were let go. I was the only one who stayed behind. I presume they may have been raped.

Rape does not only occur during the journey from Zimbabwe to South Africa but right inside a police station—a place that is supposed to be a safe space. Xulu was deported because she refused to be violated, but she returned again to Johannesburg. The rape incident as reported by Xulu raises many questions about the position and conditions of women. Some of the risks involve HIV infections amongst women raped by the police, as they are not able to negotiate sex and condom use.

This confirms some of the concerns raised by Munyewende (2008) who also discovered that migrant women are exposed to risks such as rape which leads to increased risks of contracting HIV. In 2008, the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA), an NGO advocating for the rights of migrants living in South Africa, also argued that the police who are supposed to defend and advance the rights of all who are living in South Africa, regardless of their nationality as per the country's constitution and the bill of rights, were part of those who violated the most basic rights of migrant women. Zimbabwean women were not only raped by gangs who smuggle them into South Africa but also by the police who are supposed to protect them. The case narrated by Xulu and CoRMSA show that extortion of bribes and rape could be a widespread behavior and the police act with impunity.

Working Conditions and Wages

The lowering of labor standards or what others call the "race to the bottom" does not only affect migrant workers and women migrants from Zimbabwe. South African workers who belong to trade unions have often complained about the weaknesses of the unions and their inability to defend and advance their rights as workers. Workers who are regarded as South African citizens are also victims of poor working conditions and low wages. However, the situation is worse for migrant workers, especially women, as they are likely to be deported or further

victimized as soon as they start demanding better working conditions and wage increases. In some instances, they do join strikes and participate in collective action, but management tends to use their not having documents as a threat to deport them (Hlatshwayo 2016).

Given a generalized lack of active unionization, migrant workers tend not to benefit from legal protection provided for in South Africa by laws governing industrial relations. Mhlongo spoke about her ordeal and said, "Yes I work at a Chesa Nyama [a barbeque fast food restaurant]. I start work at 8 in the morning and knock off at 9pm. There is transport. We use taxis" (Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg).

Mhlongo mentioned further workplace challenges:

> We work long hours and we don't have time to rest. We don't even have time to eat. We only take turns when it comes to time to eat. As soon as you are finished, you get back to work and another person sits down to eat, that's how it goes. [Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg]

According to her testimony, Mhlongo's leaving work at night poses serious risks for her as South Africa and Johannesburg have very high incidents of violence against women, and rape in particular (Phipps et al. 2018). Working for more than 12 hours per day is also a violation of South African laws and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997 which stipulates that ordinarily a worker may work for nine hours a day if he/she works for five days in a week; or 8 hours a day if he/she works more than five days a week (Department of Labour 1997 [section 9 b and c]).

Maqubela commented, "I worked as a domestic worker. There were no off days. I only had one Sunday per fortnight off" (Maqubela, interview, 17 January 2017, Johannesburg). Quphe also testified that she worked for very long hours, posing safety challenges, especially for women workers. When asked if she had ever discussed long working hours with her employer, Mhlongo replied, "No, we have never discussed it because that's what the employer wants us to do. At times one is scared to talk about such things, because the employer would feel that you are being smart" (Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg).

Fear of confronting employers about poor working conditions and long hours of work is common among migrants, especially among those with no documentation like Mhlongo. Employers tend to blackmail migrant workers as soon as they start challenging their authority. For example, migrants are told that if they continue demanding their rights, police and state authorities are going to be called to arrest and deport them back to Zimbabwe. This tactic is used by employers to silence migrant workers in the workplace (Hlatshwayo 2016).

Long work shifts do not automatically translate into higher wages. In fact, all women migrants interviewed for these studies earn low wages and work long hours. Tee Maye is a 30-year-old woman who arrived in South Africa in 2014 with a matric certificate obtained in Zimbabwe. Among many other precarious jobs she had in Johannesburg, she worked

as shop assistant in one of the clothing shops owned by an Ethiopian migrant. Maye is a single parent whose child is being looked after by her mother in Zimbabwe. Long working hours and very low wages were Maye's major concerns. She elaborated,

> I worked in a shop owned by an Ethiopian guy. It was tough. I was earning R200 per week and my rent was R600 per month. This meant I was only left with R200. I would start working at 7 in the morning and finish at 6 or 7 at night. There were no lunch or tea breaks. I packed clothes and served customers. [Maye, interview, 5 December 2016, Johannesburg]

In responding to the recently proposed labor law amendments in South Africa, the Casual Workers Advice Office [CWAO]—an NGO which supports precarious workers within South African borders—argues that the South Africa labor market is characterized by low wages and this is despite the fact that, as shown in the above-stated testimonies by Zimbabwean workers, employees work hard and for long hours. CWAO further contends that the proposed minimum wage of R20 (US$ 1,6) per hour assumes that workers will work for 40 hours per week, but the reality is that many precarious workers work far fewer hours per week. Workers will not earn the very low R3,500 (US$291,7) per month initially proposed, said CWAO.

South Africa is regarded as one of the most unequal societies in the world. One of the indicators of inequality is the wage gap between lowest paid workers and executive directors of companies. According to Labour Research Service, an NGO which supports trade unions, it would have taken 40 years for an average worker to earn what an average executive director of a big company in South Africa earned in a year. That was in the 1990s during the dawn of the country's democracy. In 2013, some twenty years later, it would take close to 100 years for such a worker to earn what an executive director earns in a year. The study also revealed that profits of top companies declined by an average of 55% between 2012 and 2013, but the average executive director's pay increased by 14%. Many of the Zimbabwean workers, and women in particular, are employed as precarious workers by some of these big companies in the retail, wholesale, and hospitality sectors (Dasnois 2014).

Makoro (2016) conducted a study on undocumented domestic workers, and discovered that they worked long hours and earned low wages. They could not approach the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration (CCMA) and the Department of Labour—the two state bodies that are supposed to help resolve labor relations disputes—because they were considered to be "illegal migrants," which would lead to their being deported. As part of the proposed labor law changes, government and representatives of labor are proposing a R20 (US$1,6) minimum wage and the scrapping of sectoral determination which sought to protect vulnerable and less organized workers employed as domestic workers, security guards, cleaners, and other workers.

According to CWAO, the minimum wage with no stipulated minimum monthly income may result in employers reducing hours of work to continue paying low wages. For example, workers may be asked to work for 20 hours per week and the income would be lower. The problem would be further compounded

by that fact that the Department of Labour has generally not been able to enforce the existing rights as per sectoral determinations which protect domestic workers, for instance. The impunity among employers is implicitly promoted by the fact that there is an acute shortage of labor inspectors who are supposed to make sure that employers adhere to stipulations of labor law and sectoral determination.

Indebtedness

Maqubela also spoke about indebtedness amongst women migrants from Zimbabwe, caused by the low pay they receive and the ever-increasing cost of living. Maqubela relayed,

> There was transport, but because we earned so little, we had to borrow from people to pay for transport to work. At the end of the month one took all their pay to service the debt leaving us with only enough for rent forcing us to borrow again. All that one worked for basically was to service the transport debt. [Maqubela, interview, 17 January 2017, Johannesburg]

Writing about indebtedness among Dalit migrant workers in the south of India, Picherit (2018) argues that debt bondage to unscrupulous moneylenders (who also use various forms of violence to intimidate migrants to pay back loans) saps the very will to carry on. The indebtedness and low wages earned by migrants enable them to barely survive, and this reduces the purpose of work to survival and servicing of debts with very limited prospects of living a decent life.

The indebtedness, the need to continuously borrow money from "loan sharks," informal lenders who charge astronomically high interest, and the forever rising cost of living in Johannesburg undermine the primary mission of these women, and that is to support their families in Zimbabwe. Ndovu was asked if she sends remittances to Zimbabwe regularly. She reluctantly replied,

> Yes. People do send money to Zimbabwe to support families and their children. Yes. I also send money home…I only send when I have something to spare. I send to my aunt because she is the only one left, since my child is here now. Yes. Whatever I can spare just to help her out. [Ndovu, interview, 22 January 2017, Johannesburg]

It also appears as if living with a child or children in Johannesburg is one of the tactics adopted by some migrant women interviewed as it enables them to share whatever food and money they have with their children.

Discrimination in the Workplace

Literature confirming the prevalence of xenophobia and its impact on migrants within South Africa is extensive and it tends to focus on xenophobia in places of residence where migrants from other African countries interact with South Africans on a daily basis (Harris 2002; Hassim et al. 2008; Amisi et al. 2011; Moyo, Nshimbi, and Gumbo 2018). Xenophobia in the workplace has not been explored extensively and that may be explained by the fact that labor scholars rarely examine the conditions of migrant workers from other African countries (Hlatshwayo 2016). Many migrants, especially those from Zimbabwe, have a job in the context of generalized

unemployment. This can be a source of xenophobic sentiments as expressed by some (usually unemployed) South African workers towards migrants.

Rudy Sibandi arrived in Johannesburg in 2011, a 26-year-old with school matriculation as a qualification. Sibandi worked as a general worker cleaning and packaging vegetables for one of the biggest supermarket chain stores in South Africa. She talked about how some South Africans view them as Zimbabwean migrants. Sibandi said,

> *Ya* [Yes]. In Krugersdorp [a town near Johannesburg] there were those Tswanas [a group of people who speak an African language called Tswana] who used call us names like *Matebele* [a derogatory name referring to people from Zimbabwe who speak an African language called Nbebele]. Blah. Blah. They would say we are stealing their jobs. [Sibandi, interview, 4 January 2017, Johannesburg]

Discrimination is one of the problems faced by many migrants in the workplace. However, in Mhlongo's case, the fact that most employees are Zimbabweans provides some comfort in as far as discrimination and xenophobia in the workplace are concerned. Mhlongo explained, "Where I work, we are all Zimbabweans, so we are all the same" (Mhlongo, interview, 6 December 2016, Johannesburg). There is no singling out of individuals for harassment.

Trade Unions and Other Avenues for Dealing with Workers' Problems

All workers that were interviewed for this research were not aware of the fact that they could approach the Department of Labour, trade unions, NGOs, human rights organizations of migrants from Zimbabwe, and other human rights formations working in South Africa. The workers can see that they have been unfairly treated by their employers as they work very long hours, have no overtime pay, earn low wages, and are often treated badly by their employers, and, in many cases, are dismissed fraudulently.

When asked if she was part of a union, Maqubela said, "I knew nothing about them [the unions]. I left the job after being accused of stealing the flower pot. They took advantage of the fact that I did not know my rights as a worker. I was in the job for a year. I left with no benefits" (Maqubela, interview, 17 January 2017, Johannesburg).

Senzani Ngcube, a 29-year-old, is married and has a two-year-old daughter. She came to Johannesburg in 2000 and started working as a telemarketing consultant with a post-matriculation qualification. When asked about channels that migrants from Zimbabwe can use to deal with their problems in the workplace, Ngcube responded,

> Foreigners do want to approach the CCMA and the Department of Labour, but the problem is that most of them have no documentation and are considered as being "illegal." Approaching these institutions may lead to them being deported. I am also not aware of human rights organizations that can help migrants. [Ngcube, interview, 1 December 2016, Johannesburg]

Further confirming lack of unionization among migrant workers and workers in general, Quphe said,

"My workplace has no unions. We do discuss our problems, but we have no understanding of how to deal with all these issues" (Quphe, interview, 14 December 2016, Johannesburg). Almost all workers interviewed realized the limitations of individual responses like job-hopping, ignoring their problems in the workplace, and just carrying on with work as usual. The need to collectively approach government, trade unions, or human rights organizations to help them deal with their problems as female migrant workers had also become apparent to them.

The low level of organization among workers in general and migrant workers in particular has led to declining labor standards. In other words, the weaknesses of the South African trade unions also mean that even South African workers are unable to defend and advance their rights and interests. The situation is worse for migrant workers and female migrant workers who have no citizenship and continually face threats of deportation. Tackling xenophobia among South African workers and using concrete struggles like wages and working conditions can help build solidarity between South African workers and migrant workers from other African countries (Lehulere 2008).

The findings in this regard confirm concerns raised by the Migrant Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA), an organization of migrant workers in South Africa, who in a seminar organized by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the biggest trade union federation in South Africa, argued that migrant workers were not joining unions largely because they were scared. The perception is that unions only protect South African workers. This does not mean that they do not want to be part of trade unions or other organizations that can defend their rights as workers. Xenophobia and other problems like opening bank accounts were noted as issues that needed resolution by the state, unions, and civil society. MWASA also noted that many migrant workers do not want to participate in amnesty processing which seeks to document them because they fear that if their applications are rejected, they may face deportation. MWASA argued that some unions have been trying to help migrant women workers from Zimbabwe. For example, the South African Commercial, Catering, and Allied Workers' Union (SACCAWU), which organizes workers in the retail, catering, hospitality, and commercial sectors, tried to help with documentation, but it did not have skilled personnel to handle complicated legal processes. The Food and Allied Workers' Union (FAWU), a food union, has a specific campaign which seeks to organize Zimbabwean and Mozambican migrant workers employed as farm workers in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces (Ncube 2014).

According to Hlatshwayo (2016), South African trade unions have tended to adopt national chauvinism or a stance which views migrant workers from other countries as a source of a low wage labor regime in South Africa as opposed to seeing migrant workers as victims of oppression that have to be organized to build solidarity within South African borders. Pedrina (2015) advises that innovative approaches to organizing migrants adopted by UNIA, the biggest union in Switzerland, may have to be explored by other unions in the context of increased migration. UNIA has pre-migration programs and

links with other unions in Poland. The union also employs Polish organizers who are based in Switzerland, breaking the language barrier between the union and migrant workers. Fliers and other forms of communication for migrant workers are in Polish, making it possible for migrant workers to understand their rights and channels for accessing their workers' rights. This strategy has helped the union to adjust to the changing nature of the labor market and has caused the union to grow and be relevant to all workers within Swiss borders regardless of their nationality (Pedrina 2015).

One of the obstacles that stands on the way of trade union federations like COSATU, its organizers, and staff members is that despite legal cases showing that the labor laws trump migration laws, people continue to believe that organizing undocumented migrants amounts to breaking the laws of South Africa. A bigger challenge is that unlike UNIA, which views migrants as part of the oppressed and workers requiring organizing, in general COSATU and its unions still view migrant workers from other African countries as people who are stealing the jobs of South Africans (Lehulere 2008; Fine 2014; Hlatshwayo 2016). Perhaps a much more fundamental limitation in the union's failure to organize migrants has to do with the fact that there is no understanding and appreciation among the leaders of trade unions and shop stewards that migrant work and migrant workers from other African countries have become one of the permanent features of the South African economy. In other words, migrant workers from other African countries are part of the South African workforce, and this is not going to change in the foreseeable future. Like the United States of America in the Americas, South Africa is an economic center which attracts migrant workers from neighboring countries. Despite some recent political changes in Zimbabwe, migrants from Zimbabwe have established themselves in South Africa, in some cases together with their children, as shown in this research (Crush et al. 2015; Hlatshwayo 2016).

According to Fine (2014), a 2012 survey of COSATU showed that advocating for the rights of migrants was only done by the federation's international department; the union did not have specific strategies and plans for organizing migrant workers. There were some isolated cases involving the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) which has always had a history of organizing migrant workers largely because mining and construction tend to have high proportions of migrant workers from other African countries.

In 2013, COSATU and its partners established a Vulnerable Workers Task Team which seeks to organize precarious workers, including migrant workers from other countries. The task team meets monthly and has trade union representatives from economic sectors such as contract cleaning, paper printing and woodworking, catering, and domestic work (Fine 2014). The South African Domestic Services and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU), which organizes domestic workers including those from other African countries, and MWASA, an organization referred to earlier that supports migrant workers, are also part of the task team (COSATU 2016).

It is too early to assess the impact of the task team as organizational initiatives require time and space.

However, one of the criticisms leveled against the task team is that it has not developed a specific strategy for organizing migrant workers and women migrants in particular (Fine 2014). It has to be noted that SADSAWU has adopted a strategy which seeks to invite all domestic workers, regardless of their country of origin, to join the union. As part of a global campaign to recruit migrant workers, the union's stated intentions include designing a plan for recruiting migrant workers from other African countries like Zimbabwe and educating workers about the conditions in South Africa before they leave countries like Zimbabwe.

Migrant workers from other African countries have formed their own small organizations to challenge the violations of workers' rights of migrants. The Migrant Workers' Union of South Africa (MWUSA), for example, works closely with local trade unions like FAWU and the Solidarity Center, an organization seeking to build solidarity in South Africa, to advance the rights of workers, leading to some legal gains and the advancement of the rights of farm workers. In many cases, these workers work for long hours and earn wages that are way below what is legally stipulated by the sectoral determination of government. These types of collaborations led by organizations of migrant workers are succeeding because they are founded on principles of defending the rights of the most vulnerable sections of workers—namely, migrant workers and women migrant workers in particular (Connel 2016).

Founded in 2011, the Casual Workers' Advice Office (CWAO) advises and supports precarious workers and migrant workers from other African countries mainly in the Gauteng province. The advice office's work is underpinned by an understanding that precarious work has high proportions of women earning low wages and working long hours. The CWAO also employs women organizers, who are most likely to have a deeper understanding of challenges facing women workers. To advance the rights of precarious workers, the CWAO works with other advice offices and human rights organizations like Lawyers for Human Rights. In addition, the advice office uses avenues like the CCMA and the Department of Labour to help vulnerable workers access their rights (CWAO 2017).

In 2013, the CWAO organized precarious workers and migrant workers who were working for a supermarket which was part of a national chain store. About 30 migrant workers in that store, located in the eastern part of Johannesburg, were not getting payslips; there were no deductions for the unemployment insurance fund, and workers were not getting benefits like sick leave and annual leave as stipulated by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA). Initially, there was very strong solidarity between migrant and South African workers. In fact, migrant workers gained confidence and saw themselves as workers rather than as workers from Zimbabwe or other African countries. But, as soon as there was a suggestion that the Department of Labour could be approached to deal with the dispute, workers from Zimbabwe and Mozambique stopped participating in the strike. In assessing the situation, workers were convinced that being identified as undocumented migrant workers by the Department of Labour posed a serious threat of deportation to them. One of the lessons from the strike is that documentation remains

a critical issue that has to be resolved by collectives of migrant workers, NGOs, trade unions, and the South Africa state (Hlatshwayo 2016).

Conclusion

Thomas-Brown and Campos (2016:115) argue, "Globalization has rendered geo-political borders fluid and penetrable. International migration for the purposes of economic opportunity and talent transfer is not new and has been cited as a major propellant for global expansionism ranging from imperialism to neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism." Consistent with the work of the abovementioned authors who examined the conditions of Filipino workers who are economic migrants in the United States of America, this research paper zoomed in on the working lives of women migrants from Zimbabwe who also migrated for economic reasons.

Based largely on in-depth interviews, and, to some extent, documentary evidence, the paper highlighted the trials and tribulations of Zimbabwean migrant workers who came to South Africa to work under precarious conditions. From their departure up to finding employment as precarious workers in Johannesburg, the lives of these women are characterized by various forms of harassment, poor working conditions, low wages, and xenophobic assaults meted out by some South Africans and the police. Traveling from Zimbabwe to South Africa is extremely dangerous for undocumented migrants, but for women it is worse as they face sexual harassment, rape, and various forms of physical attacks that women generally face. Menstruation and not having access to water and washing facilities make women bear a bigger brunt in as far as migration is concerned. On the other hand, the women interviewed showed some resilience in the sense that they used various networks to help them travel from Zimbabwe and survive in Johannesburg. Getting a job is usually accompanied by further difficulties such as low wages and poor working conditions. When asked whether they have been able to solve their problems institutionally or organizationally, it was found that the women did not belong to trade unions or formal organizations of migrant workers. It was also discovered that the women migrant workers *do* want to be part of organizational or collective responses to their issues and challenges. Based on documentary sources, this research discovered a number of human rights organizations and organizations of migrants that seek to support migrants and migrant workers. The biggest challenge is that the reach of the human rights organizations is very small, and that is partly shown by the fact that all the workers that were interviewed for the study were not aware of the various organizational initiatives. Perhaps another research project can examine strategies and tactics that could be employed to increase linkages between Zimbabwean migrant women workers and other migrants living within the South African borders.

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Constructing Masculinity in Women's Retailers: An Analysis of the Effect of Gendered Market Segmentation on Consumer Behavior

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Abstract While gender-based differences in consumer behavior have been previously investigated within the context of gender-neutral or unisex retailers, men's behavior in women's retailers remains largely unexplored. Furthermore, most studies frame the retail environment as a passive platform through which essential gender differences yield setting-specific bifurcated behavior, and do not address the role the commercial establishment and men's shopping habits play in gender identity formation and maintenance. To address this gap, we analyzed men's behavior in women's retailers using interactionist and social constructionist theories of sex/gender. Data were collected through non-participatory observation at a series of large, enclosed shopping malls in South-Western Ontario, Canada and analyzed thematically. We found that men tend to actively avoid women's retailers or commercial spaces that connote femininity, while those who enter said spaces display passivity, aloofness, or reticence. We suggest the dominant cultural milieu that constitute hegemonic masculinity—a disaffiliation with femininity, an accentuation of heterosexuality, and a prioritization of homosocial engagement—inform the dialectical relationship between individual and institutional gender practice that manifests through consumption.

Keywords Retail; Masculinity; Consumer Behavior; Gender; Market Segmentation

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Gender-Based Differences in Consumer Behavior—Contributions from the Marketing Literature

Marketing researchers have long been interested in consumer behavior as an area of inquiry. Reflecting the stereotype that shopping is an activity predominantly reserved for women, the majority of the consumer behavior literature has focused on women's shopping habits (Kimmel and Tissier-Desbordes 1999). As Gupta and Gentry (2015) remark, however, dominant constructions of masculinity as they relate to consumption and identity are in a state of flux, and men are increasingly participating in what have traditionally been viewed as feminine activities, such as shopping. The masculinization of consumption thesis has been used to describe the growth of consumerism among men since the late 1980's, which it argues is associated with the transition to postmodernism, second-wave feminism, and post/neo-Fordism (Galilee 2002). While there is debate regarding the assertion that men have universally become active—as opposed to reluctant and apprehensive—consumers, most theorists corroborate the expansion of male consumer markets and market activity. Dholakia, Petersen, and Hikmet (1995) observe that approximately 15% of heterosexual married men claim primary responsibility for grocery shopping, while 56% purchase their own clothing. Similarly, from 2011-2012, the masculine luxury sector grew at an annual rate of 14% compared to the feminine luxury sector, which grew by only 8% (Bain and Company 2012).

More recent empirical research examining male consumerism has uncovered significant gender-based differences in consumer behavior. For example, men are less likely than women to report using a shopping list when grocery shopping (Thomas and Garland 2004). During Christmas shopping, women tend to start shopping earlier, spend more hours shopping and less money per recipient, and give more gifts than men (Fischer and Arnold 1990). Men also tend to be more competitive when shopping in fast fashion environments and are less likely to display in-store hoarding or hiding behaviors—keeping an item for oneself while shopping, undecided as to whether they will actually buy it (Gupta and Gentry 2015). Hermann (1998) found that men are significantly more likely than women to bargain at garage sales.

Researchers have also shown increasing interest in men's shopping habits in particular, and have discovered a range of unique attitudes and decision-making processes. For example, despite being as brand-conscious as women, men are known to uniquely display brand promiscuity, a priority for finding low prices, and a tendency to prematurely make purchases and/or be confused about which shops to visit (Bakewell and Mitchell 2006). Galilee (2002) found that men tend to be comparatively more cautious when clothes shopping; they also judge products' value in terms of quality, individuality, value for money, practicality, and conformity.

Shifting our focus to the psychosocial and cultural implications of gender-based variance in consumer behavior, we note limited research alludes to the fact that consumer behavior is intimately tied to identity construction. Tuncay and Otnes (2008), for example, suggest men maintain the boundaries of

heterosexual masculinity by consulting women and gay men, to whom they attribute superior expertise, over other heterosexual men in feminine-coded retailers (i.e., cosmetic and fashion outlets). Few studies acknowledge the commercial establishment as a site for the production of gender-based differences. Instead, most observe gender-based differences with minimal theoretical inquiry in terms of how consumer behavior constitutes or maintains gender identity. By integrating theories of sex/gender and masculinity we can achieve a deeper level of analysis that goes beyond the comparatively superficial observation that men and women shop differently.

Developing a Theoretical Framework for Sex/Gender and Consumption—Social Constructionism, Hegemonic Masculinity, and Gender Performativity

Making explicit our theoretical framework that explains the role consumption plays in gender identity formation and maintenance is essential because the myriad theoretical and philosophical accounts of gender are often grounded in incommensurable epistemological assumptions. Our working definitions for gender and various masculinities are borrowed from Connell's (1995) seminal work. Prior to introducing them proper, we shall briefly detail the historical shift from essentialist to constructionist frameworks, along with their shortcomings, to better contextualize the current model.

The *natural-masculinity* thesis is the traditional essentialist approach to gender that dominated gender theory up until the latter half of the 20th century. According to this biological-reductionist model, gendered social behaviors manifest as a result of physiology, neuroanatomy, evolutionary psychology, and biochemistry. Employing the metaphor of "body-as-machine," it was thought that men and women are "hardwired" to behave differently. Cross-cultural and historical analyses provide little empirical support for this model—in fact, differences in psychological characteristics often vary to a greater extent within, rather than across, sex/genders (Connell 1995).

Feminist and symbolic interactionist theorists began to challenge this view in the 1960's by arguing that gender is, in fact, a social product. This new way of conceptualizing sex/gender was galvanized by Garfinkel's (1967) path-breaking case study of Agnes, who was assigned male at birth, but identified as a woman and displayed "feminine" secondary sex characteristics. Garfinkel's inquiry into the daily challenges Agnes faced in "passing" as a woman led him to conclude womanhood itself is an accomplishment achieved by navigating social contexts. In *Gender Display*, Goffman (1976) framed gendered behavior as a series of scripted dramatizations that, rather than indexing essential gendered characteristics, are designed to serve context-specific ends. A gendered display, in his terms, is optional and often functional. He notes, "what, if anything, characterizes persons as sex-class members is their competence and willingness to sustain an appropriate schedule of displays; only the content of the displays distinguishes the classes" (Goffman 1976:76). West and Zimmerman (1987) argue that, if anything, Goffman downplays the pervasiveness of gendered displays in everyday interaction. The process of "doing gender," they suggest, involves

engaging in behaviors that are assessed in gendered terms. Since society is organized so fundamentally around essential binary sex divisions, people are held accountable to upholding this conception through their behavior. One is therefore always "doing gender," and the social character of gender is inextricably associated with sex in its construction as "essential."

Connell (1995) expresses concern that while social constructionism's claim that gender exists independent of biology is useful for cultural analyses, a pure socially deterministic model of gender has a disembodying effect—it ignores the fact that physical bodies do indeed pose limits on the possibilities of being. In response, she offers an alternative model for gendered embodiment dubbed *body-reflexive practices*. According to this theory, social processes render the body mutable and shape its cultural intelligibility, but its materiality (e.g., menstruation, ejaculation, childbirth) cannot be completely transcended. By extension, practices that construct the body in a gendered manner are "onto-formative," which is to say that social processes enacted *through* the body create a range of possibilities of being. As a compromise between biological essentialism and social constructionism, subjectivity that is constructed through bodily practices inevitability has a bodily dimension, but is not necessarily bodily *determined*.

Masculinity, then, can be defined as a series of onto-formative and body-reflexive practices and their reciprocal effect on gendered identities and socio-cultural structures. Gender, more broadly speaking, refers to a particular rubric by which social practices are ordered. Gender, and by extension masculinity, is inherently relational. These relations take the form of power (i.e., the dominance of certain groups over others), production (i.e., gender divisions of labor and accumulation) and cathexis (how emotional and sexual desires are permitted to manifest). Importantly, there are multiple forms of masculinity across time and space that interact with and constitute one another by virtue of hierarchical power relations. These are not fixed character types, but patterns of practice that mutate across varying historical, geographical, and cultural contexts. These include:

- *Hegemonic masculinity*: a configuration of gender practices that not only supports the domination of women by men but the domination of certain groups of men by other groups of men.

- *Subordinate masculinity*: a configuration of gender practices that is not only culturally stigmatized but materially oppressed (i.e., gay, bisexual, and queer men).

- *Complicit masculinity*: a configuration of gender practices and their actors that may contribute to masculine hegemony, but themselves do not wholly embody hegemonic masculinity.

- *Marginalized masculinities*: a series of gender practices and their actors that cut across other social structures, such as race and class, which thereby renders them dominant or subordinate.

Finally, since masculinities are a configuration of gender practices within a gendered system of

social relations, and because they are mutable across time and space, they are often the site of contestation and reconfiguration. Crisis tendencies refer not to the disruption of a static and universal model of masculinity, but to those rather frequent cases where gender practices are renegotiated and transformed (Connell 1995). Gherardi (1994), who promoted a similar symbolic interactionist approach to gender, suggested that the dominant gender order is maintained by two strategies: ceremonial work, which maintains and celebrates the dominant gender order, and remedial work, which restores gender order when under threat.

Butler's (1990) theory of gender performativity may serve as a logical extension of Connell's (1995) body-reflexive practices model of gender. Like Connell, Butler claims that gender is socially constructed through a series of bodily practices. Critically, these bodily practices are misinterpreted as being the products of a stable, internal gendered self, when in reality gender is constituted only by its signification. In other words, the ontology of sex/gender is contingent upon a series of repetitive and imitative acts that reify hegemonic configurations of gender practice. Butler (1990:185) explains:

> In other words, acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this *on the surface* of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity as the cause. Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality. [emphasis original]

Butler (1990) suggests gender subsumes cultural assumptions of sex—rather than being the social or cultural manifestation of sex, gender naturalizes sex characteristics. There is much pressure to produce an authentic practice, since what is at stake is the cultural survival of both gender *and* sex. Those whose gender practices fail to conform to hegemonic standards are punished through both cultural stigmatization (marginalization, isolation) and material oppression (harassment, employment discrimination, income and wealth inequality, abuse by the criminal justice system, etc.). The tacit agreement to reproduce hegemonic gender practices results both from their false sense of credibility and punitive consequences for transgression.

Since gender practice is socially situated, hegemonic masculinity is constituted by a particular social milieu in contemporary Western societies. Configurations of gender practice are widely variable, but Kimmel (1997) provides some common themes that pertain to how hegemonic masculinities are embodied and reinforced. The following three dimensions are relevant to the current study:

- *Masculinity as the Flight from the Feminine*: rather than defining itself in positive terms as an affirmation of the masculine, masculinity derives its meaning from a disavowal of femininity. Stemming from this is the routine practice of sexism—the discrimination against, objectification, and devaluing of women.

- *Masculinity as a Homosocial Enactment*: men predominantly look to other men for evaluation and approval of their masculine performance. Hence, men will demonstrably behave differently when in the company of other men compared to women.

- *Masculinity as Homophobia*: masculinity is inextricably associated with heterosexuality in their construction. Consequently, men stereotype, ostracize, and victimize gay, bisexual, queer, and gender-nonconforming men in order to stave off suspicions of oneself being gay, and therefore less masculine.

Compensatory Consumption as Accumulative Gender Practice

Central to Connell (1995) and Kimmel's (1997) models is the idea that masculinities are historically shifting. McNeill and Douglas (2011) suggest there has been a breakdown in the production-consumption gendered dichotomy, where men's identity was previously understood to be derived from their work and women's from their consumption. Shifts in power, gender roles, and social norms over the past few decades have accompanied a change in the dominant image of masculinity that relies increasingly on appearance rather than occupation. As Kimmel (1996) notes, men's gender identity was further threatened by major socio-economic shifts occurring over the past century. Modern industrial and bureaucratic shifts in production and wage labor promoted gender-role conflict within men—as they increasingly occupied white collar positions, men experienced an incompatibility between their identities constructed through their work and the traditional, idealized practices of hegemonic masculinity.

Consumption plays a conspicuous role in gender identity construction. As previously mentioned, Connell (1995) classifies production relations—which encompass both labor and accumulation—as a means by which hegemonic and alternative masculinities interact. In order to reduce the incongruity between one's current and idealized gendered self-concept, men partake in what has been described as compensatory consumption, whereby they symbolically reaffirm their masculinity through a patterned consumption of commodities (Ehrenreich 1983). Men use mass culture and commodities as discursive tools in the construction of a gendered self that adheres as closely as possible to the ideal. It follows from this logic that the retail environment would elicit a unique range of behaviors based on sex/gender and other aspects of one's identity and positionality.

Several studies have demonstrated that men display a unique range of behaviors in gender-neutral retailers (e.g., grocery stores, unisex clothing stores), while others have investigated "gender-neutral" / "gender-ambiguous" retailers that may carry a feminine connotation (e.g., jewelers, home décor, cosmetics retailers), but it remains unclear what behavior men display in retail spaces that are explicitly marketed as being appropriate for women (e.g., women's lingerie/clothing/swimwear retailers, women's shoe stores, women's accessories). Further, many studies in this space are grounded in essentialist notions of sex/gender—by investigating gender-based differ-

ences in consumer behavior without positing its role in gender identity construction, they suggest, implicitly or otherwise, that the observed differences are a result of innate, "natural" differences between sexes/genders. To illustrate, evolutionary psychologists contend the differences observed between men and women in modern shopping behaviors are attributable to sexually dimorphic foraging strategies that developed from hunter-gatherer societies (Kruger and Byker 2009). The current study is founded on the premise that gender-based differences in consumer behavior reflect gender practices—that is, they do not merely correlate with or reflect essential sex/gender characteristics but are implicated in their construction. To that end, the purpose of the current study is to examine men's behavior in women's retailers and to posit its significance as it relates to gender identity formation and maintenance. In line with the study purpose, our research question was twofold:

1. What patterns exist in men's behavior within women's retailers?

2. How does men's behavior in these spaces contribute to gender identity formation and maintenance?

Methods

The exploratory nature of the current study lent itself most closely to a qualitative methodology. Data were collected through non-participatory observation, which is characterized by minimal visibility and communication with the population under study (Kawulich 2005). The justification for this study design over alternatives, such as participatory observation or interviews, is provided hereinafter with our description of gender practice.

Observations were conducted at a series of enclosed shopping malls in south-western Ontario, Canada between October 2016 and August 2017. Two of the three municipalities have populations exceeding 500,000 and are locally known for being culturally and ethnically diverse. Two of the three malls visited are considered the second and seventh largest enclosed shopping malls in Canada, respectively, with the largest containing 1,800,000 square feet of retail space and 360 stores. Data were collected on weekday afternoons, weekday evenings, and weekends to account for any changes in behavior that may result from store crowding. Data were collected across five sessions, each lasting approximately 3-5 hours. In total, we conducted 20 hours of observations. Our time was distributed relatively evenly across all retailers (see: Appendix A), with the exception of a few retailers where we spent slightly less time due to a lack of customers. Each retailer was only visited once. In line with the aim of the study, we focused on observing men of all ages and racial-ethnic backgrounds that were inside or in close proximity to women's retailers. Following this, we collected data from retailers specializing in products that carry a feminine connotation (e.g., Lush, Bath and Body Works, Michael Hill) and retailers with gender-segregated departments (e.g., H&M, The Bay). Women's retailers were operationalized as such based on whether they appeared under groupings such as "women's" and "women's apparel" in mall directories. Because observations were conducted at a distance where most conversations were inaudible,

observation was mostly focused on body language. Consistent with Merriam's (1988) observational inventory, we recorded observations pertaining to the physical environment, participant characteristics, and activities and interactions (including frequency and duration, informal and/or unplanned activities and non-verbal communication). Minor data were collected from women for the purpose of comparative analysis. For example, to understand whether the time men spent gazing at window displays as they passed by stores was relatively low, we also observed how long women gazed at the same displays.

Data collection ceased after reaching saturation. Saturation, according to Charmaz (2014), is the point at which collecting additional data ceases to lead to new categories, themes, connections between categories/themes, or other insights upon analysis. To ensure we did not reproduce the common error of conflating reaching saturation with witnessing repetition of observations, we undertook an iterative, constant comparative approach for data collection and analysis. Instead of conducting each phase of research in isolated sequence, data collection and analysis were conducted in parallel to find emerging themes and patterns. The final round of data collection resulted in no noteworthy additions or changes to our themes or exemplars, so we took this to mean saturation was reached.

Before moving forward, we feel it necessary to also detail how we conceptualize human behavior in sociological terms. Bourdieu's (1990) theory of practice is essential to Connell's (1995) definitions of gender and masculinity. Gendered practice in the Bourdieusian sense distinguishes itself from other forms of human behavior based on a number of features. First, gendered practice is contextually-situated, both locally and within broader society; that is, it is both produced by and reinforces gendered social structures through its repetition. This situatedness also implies an element of temporality—practice is done with the intention of manipulating future outcomes. It is inherently anticipatory. Consequently, it also has a temporal directionality. The outcomes of one's practice can never be reversed or effaced, but only corrected or placed on an alternate trajectory with subsequent practice. Finally, gender practice is to a certain extent automated, or unreflexive. It is instilled over the life course, starting at an early age, by a constellation of social institutions, including families, schools, workplaces, and broader socio-political structures. Practice is therefore spontaneous, but far from arbitrary (Martin 2003). Bourdieu (1990:81-82) explains:

> Practice unfolds in time and it has all the correlative properties, such as irreversibility, that synchronization destroys. Its temporal structure, that is, its rhythm, its tempo, and above all its directionality, is constitutive of meaning…In short, because it is entirely immersed in the current of time, practice is inseparable from temporality, not only because it is played out in time but also because it plays strategically with time…A player who is involved and caught up in the game adjusts not to what he sees, but to what he foresees, sees in advance in the directly perceived present; he passes the ball not to the spot where his team-mate is, but to the spot he will reach…a moment later, anticipating the anticipations of the others…He decides in terms of objective probabilities, that is, in response to an overall, instantaneous assessment of

> the whole set of his opponents and the whole set of his team-mates, seen not as they are but in their impending positions. And he does so "on the spot," "in the twinkling of an eye," "in the heat of the moment," that is, in conditions which exclude distance, perspective, detachment, and reflexion.

To disambiguate our terminology, we view consumer behaviors in the retail environment that have a gendered character are implicated in the larger structural gendered order, and therefore constitute a form of gender practice. Viewing consumer behavior as gender practice also has specific implications for data collection strategies. Martin (2003) argues that since gender practices that correctly reproduce specific forms of masculinities and femininities are indexing tacit knowledge and skills that have been developed over time, they are likely taken for granted and difficult to articulate. Thus, it is easier to observe or experience gender practice than it is to narratively describe it. For this reason, and in addition to the fact that our goal was to observe men's gender practices "in the field" rather than how they rationalized these practices, we opted for purely non-participatory observation.

Theory was used both inductively and deductively at different points in the current project. Throughout data collection and concurrent thematic analysis, we made the explicit choice of avoiding extant theory so as not to prematurely influence our expectations and foreclose potential areas of exploration. As mentioned previously, we simply used Merriam's (1988) observational inventory to record any observations that may relate to the research question, rather than referring to theory to provide sensitizing concepts that narrow the range of observation. Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, we first developed themes inductively through stepwise coding of field notes, then following data collection referred to existing theories of sex/gender and consumer behavior to articulate our findings in a deductive manner. Since we are focused on understanding the role consumer behavior plays in constructing gender identity, we felt it more appropriate to integrate, rather than ignore, the wealth of pre-existing literature that addresses both the social construction of sex/gender and consumption. According to Joffe and Yardley (2004), one of the most salient risks when using theory deductively in qualitative research is the increased potential to downplay observations that contradict hypotheses or pre-existing theories. Bearing this in mind, data collection and analysis incorporated a directed search for contradictory evidence or men that otherwise behave as "exceptions to the rule." For instance, after noting men tend to trail behind the women they accompany in women's retailers, we intentionally searched for men who either walk side-by-side or in front of women, and noted the varying contexts in which they do so.

While reflexivity towards the researchers' role in study design, data collection, and analysis is standard practice in qualitative research, we believe consideration of our own identities and social positioning is of particular importance in this study due to the subjectivity involved in interpreting behavioral observations and inferring the gender of persons and spaces. The first author, who was primarily responsible for the study design, data collection, and analysis, identifies as a cisgender man, while the second and third authors, who assisted in the

study design, analysis, and manuscript preparation, both identify as cisgender women. Because the current study is strictly observational, we were unable to collect self-reported data on participants' gender (the methodological limitations of which are discussed later). We therefore relied on the diversity of the research team's experiences to derive a working definition for men as a descriptive category. Reaching a consensus was predictably difficult, considering Smiler and Epstein (2010) conclude in their review of measures of gender, including Beere's (1990) review of over 1400 different measures, that there are substantial disagreements about measurement. We decided to rely on the first author's initial "gut response" when encountering individuals, as this replicates the process the majority of the general public use when assigning a gender to others. In this sense, while there are theoretical concerns with reproducing this practice in research, it demonstrates greater generalizability by not relying on esoteric measures of gender that are more stringently applied in research conditions.

We consulted the internal university research ethics board who advised that no evaluation was necessary because all observations were conducted in a public space with no expectation of privacy. All participants' identities were anonymized and no audio/visual recordings were taken.

Results

Avoidance of Spaces Coded as Feminine

One of the most readily apparent and consistent observations in women's retailers is the absence of men. Women vastly outnumbered men in all observed cases; the discrepancy was so pronounced that in some instances stores would go upwards of 45 minutes without seeing a single male customer. In these cases, we focused our attention outside the stores to see how men act as they come into proximity of women's stores. With few exceptions, most men passing by women's retailers maintained their speed as they passed, rarely looking into the entrances of stores or at the window displays. Those that did look into stores maintained their gaze for approximately 1-2 seconds before reorienting their gaze straight ahead. Many were covert in their glances, shifting their eyes without moving their head. Others stared at the stores from a distance, but averted their gaze as they came in closer proximity, within 30 feet or so. These observations were similar regardless of whether men were alone, accompanied by women, or with other men. Women, on the other hand, generally looked into stores for longer periods of time, and were more likely to stop and look at window displays.

Men accompanying women that were interested in entering stores often waited outside while women browsed. In these instances, there was rarely any observed extensive conversation, suggesting this is routine practice. An interesting exception to this observation was a man in his late 40s who refused to enter Cleo, a women's clothing store, with his partner as the woman forcibly grabbed his arm and asked him to accompany her. With her attempt at persuading him unsuccessful, she entered the store alone. This observation suggested that men may periodically purposefully avoid women's retailers. Men occupied benches situated outside women's retailers much

more frequently than women; we inferred most were waiting for their partners or guardians as they shopped because they resumed walking through the mall once a woman rejoined them. These findings are consistent with the latter half of the "whine and wait" stereotype of perceived male shopping behavior, which Otnes and McGrath (2001) characterize as complaining or remaining stationary while shopping. While they observed little vocal complaining, passive waiting, and following was prevalent.

Similar avoidant behavior was seen with respect to women's departments in gender-segregated unisex retailers. Like women's retailers, men were not seen shopping in the women's department of stores such as The Bay, H&M, or Forever 21. Men may have passed through the women's department in order to reach either the exit, checkout, or men's department, but they walked noticeably faster through the women's department than they did through the men's department. If possible, men also circumvented the women's department to reach their destination: in order to reach the exit, one man in his 30s navigated the periphery of the fragrance department in The Bay instead of taking the shortest route through the center. Interestingly, it seemed that men were also apprehensive to use a changing room if it was located in the women's department of unisex clothing retailers—unlike in H&M, which had a change room situated in the men's department, during the 20 minutes of observation, there was not a single man lined up to use the unisex changing rooms located in Forever 21's women's department. We are hesitant to interpret this as simply being the result of a situationally unrepresentative sample of Forever 21 shoppers, which under other circumstances a sizeable proportion is constituted by men, for several reasons. First, these data were collected on a weekday evening outside work hours. The store was consequently rather congested, certainly more so than would be expected earlier in the day. At points, the changing room line exceeded ten women, and numerous men were seen browsing the store in the time spent there. Also, men comprised the majority of those waiting in line at H&M several times. This led us to conclude that the disparity is likely not attributable to either men not shopping in adequate numbers in Forever 21 or men being unlikely to use changing rooms in unisex clothing retailers in general.

Curious to see whether the disparity in men's inclination to use changing rooms is influenced by other environmental elements besides the departmental placement of the changing room, we noticed that the men's department in Forever 21 was significantly smaller than that in H&M. Additionally, the store was designed with more stereotypically feminine visual flourishes, such as pink walls, Victorian light fixtures, and sequined decorative elements. The men's and women's departments in Forever 21 were also confined to separate floors, while the H&M in this particular mall organized the two departments on opposite sides of the same floor. While a semiotic analysis of the role marketing plays in the production of gendered symbols is outside the scope of this paper, we infer that any one of these elements alone does not determine men's practice of avoidance, but rather a constellation of these symbols are used in a form of institutional gender practice, where the retail environment itself communicates a gendered configuration that is either congruent or discordant with men's individual gender practice.

An interaction between two boys (age 6-8 years) outside Claire's—a retailer specializing in accessories for girls and young women—provides a succinct illustrative example of the organizing cultural logic of hegemonic masculinity manifest through avoidant gender practice. As their mother and two sisters entered the store, one of the boys attempted to follow until the other remarked, "Are you a girl? Get out of there!" The boy then swiftly returned to the other, and the two waited outside until the rest of the family finished shopping. The avoidance of women's retailers by men and boys can be understood as a form of gender practice consistent with hegemonic configurations of masculinity (Connell 1995). The particular cultural rubric to which this practice adheres is a distancing from femininity, as stipulated by Kimmel (1997). As we see in this scenario, by entering a feminine space and transgressing hegemonic gender practice, the young boy is castigated by his brother in an effort to preserve the dominant gender order (Butler 1990). In effect, capitalist market technologies institute a form of gender practice that interacts with individual gender practice to yield a particular range of gendered subjectivities articulated through consumption. Within this particular context, a hegemonic gender practice is embodied through a rejection of femininity—the male shopper "does" masculinity by staying away from women's stores.

A noteworthy exception to this trend was seen outside La Senza—a women's lingerie retailer—where passersby stared at the large visual ads for significantly longer periods of time, sometimes up to 10 seconds. Men were also comparatively more conspicuous in their gazes, frequently turning their heads and periodically stopping to reorient their entire bodies in the direction of the ads. This phenomenon can be seen as a violation of the hegemonic script of flight from the feminine. In fact, based on this dimension alone, one would expect this practice to be met with punitive action from observers. What we see, however, is in fact a cultural sanctioning of this behavior—two men stationed themselves outside the store for no readily apparent reason other than to rest. Neither were waiting for a woman to emerge from the store, as they eventually continued walking unaccompanied. The two gazed at the displays for minutes at a time, sharing laughter and conversational body language. Within our observations, we did not witness similar behavior outside other women's retailers. We suggest the critical difference in this scenario that exempts men from punishment for engaging with feminine visual symbols lies in the ad material itself, which prominently features sexualized young women in lingerie. Based on Kimmel's (1997) additional dimension of hegemonic masculinity as homophobia, this practice can be seen as favorable because it instrumentalizes women in displays of heterosexuality.

Passivity within Spaces Coded as Feminine

With very few exceptions, all men seen in women's retailers were accompanied by at least one woman. The most frequently observed configuration was one man and one woman—groups containing more than one man were particularly rare. We speculate the reason for this is that being accompanied by a woman in these spaces signifies that men are not there to shop for themselves, but to aid women. The absence of more than a single man per group can

be explained by Kimmel's (1997) remaining principle for hegemonic masculinity: masculine gender practice is predominantly homosocial in nature. Should men be required to enter women's retailers for various reasons, it is in their interest to minimize the number of men who may bear witness to this practice. A group of men in a women's retailer is a fraught scenario with ambiguous implications for gender practice. Do the men police one another if they are in a mutually subordinate gender configuration? Do they renegotiate these scripts through remedial work, as described by Gherardi (1994)? We watched this quagmire unfurl in Ardene—a women's clothing retailer—where three men ranging in age from early teens to mid-50s accompanied two women. While together, the men appeared comfortable enough; they conversed with each other and the women as they perused the merchandise, even offering their opinion on certain pieces. At a certain point, however, the women separated from the men, prompting them to remain stationary and in close proximity to one another. Still standing, they reoriented their bodies inward towards one another and resumed their conversation. With the women gone, the reduction in eye-wandering and engagement with the merchandise could telegraph only a fleeting, utilitarian interest in women's products, and that under typical circumstances, the curiosity towards feminine products is superseded by an interest in engaging with other men.

It appears that men relinquish authority or primary decision-making power to women upon entering women's retailers. They frequently followed behind women while shopping, but switched to walking side-by-side or in front upon exiting the store. Further, men remained firmly attached to the women they accompany, rarely separating more than 5-10 feet. Women also did the majority of the talking when speaking to sales associates, who were almost always women. The men, meanwhile, shifted from gazing intently at the sales associate to surveying their surroundings in silence. It may seem counterintuitive that men abandon the gender practices that would in other instances reaffirm a hegemonic masculine identity (e.g., domination, independence, self-determinism [Connell 1995]), but Tuncay and Otnes' (2008) explanation for a similar observation may explain the motivation underlying this behavioral change: when heterosexual men shop for grooming and fashion products—thereby positioning themselves as "identity-vulnerable consumers" due to their interest in products that connote femininity—they seek advice from women and gay men over other heterosexual men. This is done, they argue, to elicit empathy and insight from those they perceive to be experts in purchasing these products in addition to maintaining the boundaries of normative masculine gender practice. By surrendering any pretense of expertise, men make the implicit claim, "I do not belong in this space. This is not who I am." As avoidant practice indicates, merely being present in women's retailers defies hegemonic masculinity. This presents a crisis tendency (Connell 1995) to which men respond by going "off-script," or displaying emergent gender practice, in order to restore the gender order. An exception to this was seen in jeweler's, such as Michael Hill and Pandora, where men stood side-by-side with women at the counters and were equally as engaged with the sales associates. This may be a result of the widespread cultural assumption that products that are a greater

financial investment, such as engagement rings, require shared rather than unilateral decision-making in heterosexual partnerships.

Generally speaking, men's demeanor in women's retailers can be described as passive, aloof, and indignant. As they followed women around the store, men frequently crossed their arms or placed their hands in their pants pockets. Others used their phones for extended periods of time, periodically glancing up and surveying the environment. Some, particularly the young boys, looked at the floor or ceiling. Most appeared unapproachable and lacked enthusiasm, warmth, or candor, even as they spoke to the women they accompanied. Some appeared rather impatient, acting dismissive or even antagonistic towards their partners in an effort to shorten the duration of their visit. For example, one man in his late 20s appeared particularly frustrated while he waited for his partner outside the changing room at Ardene. As she emerged to gauge his opinion on a top, he responded with a series of head motions indicating it was time to go. Men reinforced an air of nonchalance with their unwillingness to touch or engage with any merchandise unless a woman actively encouraged them to do so. To illustrate, a teenage boy was the only individual in a group comprised of himself and three girls around his age to not use any testers or smell any products in Lush, a cosmetics retailer specializing in hygiene and skincare products. The behaviors observed here extend the theory underpinning men's avoidance of women's retailers: if outright avoidance of the store is not feasible, men may still express a symbolic disavowal of femininity—and in the process avoid any further threats to the credibility of their masculine performance—by displaying reluctance, indifference, or aversion.

Discussion

Increasing participation by men in retail markets has prompted consideration of men's consumption habits. We conclude from our observations that men display behavioral patterns in brick-and-mortar retail stores that, despite being variable to a certain extent, generally differ from women. These behaviors include the avoidance of entire retailers or departments that are coded or explicitly marketed towards women, along with displays of passivity, reluctance, or frustration among those who find themselves in those spaces. We understand the observed behaviors to be a form of gender practice in the context of symbolic interactionism and social constructionist accounts of sex/gender. If gender practice is crucial to consolidating, internalizing, and naturalizing a masculine identity or sense of group membership, then the retail environment offers a context-specific rubric for consumption-based or accumulative gender practices.

The pronounced demarcation in men's gender practice between men's, women's, and unisex retailers indicates that the retail marketplace remains intensely gender-segregated. Because hegemonic masculinity is defined in part by the rejection of femininity, men remain resistant to engaging with feminine retail spaces and products. These findings contradict claims of a contemporary egalitarian market that transcends the boundaries of sex/gender. Though it may be true that men are displaying increased interest in fashion and grooming, we caution against interpreting this as evidence of the dissolution of hegemonic gender systems.

Connell (1995) may argue this merely represents a routine crisis tendency to which we respond by renegotiating boundaries in contemporary gender practice. This could take the form of defining "acceptable" and "unacceptable" hygiene products. The striking paucity of men in Bath and Body Works could serve as evidence of their products belonging to the latter category, for instance. The "masculinization of the luxury market" (Bain and Company 2012) to which researchers refer, therefore, may indicate a shift in how retail products and spaces are gendered, rather than a willingness by men to transgress current gendered boundaries. In other words, while it may be considered increasingly socially acceptable for men to be interested in fashion and grooming, it is only such insofar as these activities come to be associated with masculinity.

In order for men to identify spaces and products as "acceptable" or "unacceptable" in the first place, however, those spaces and products must themselves yield an intelligible gender practice. We outlined some of these institutional gender practices, such as staffing only women, using stereotypically "feminine" décor, and compartmentalizing men's and women's departments. In essence, the gender practices of capitalist institutions are dialectically related to individual gender practices. We contend the retail environment is not a passive platform through which essential gender differences yield setting-specific bifurcated behavior. Instead, persons and capitalist institutions reciprocally reinforce the dominant cis-hetero-patriarchal system of sex/gender and its construction as binary, mutually exclusive, complementary, and essential.

Our work builds on the previous marketing literature by using theories of sex/gender to suggest the retail market *produces* gender-based differences in behavior as much as it reflects them. It also further extends a large body of research investigating the role marketing plays in constructing binary systems of sex/gender and hegemonic masculinities by arguing the retail environment itself provides a space through which gendered norms may be further perpetuated by consumer behavior; namely, that gender practice is effected through relations of production and consumption. Finally, the current study contributes to research investigating the intersection of gender and capitalism by looking "downstream" at the effects of gendered market segmentation on gender socialization. Our findings lend empirical support to the notion that gender norms are to a certain extent self-perpetuating. While power is certainly exercised downward by marketers and other capitalist technologies, as disciplinary models of power stipulate (Foucault 1977; Spade 2015), norms of "good behavior" for men in retail environments are also policed by other men. Foucault (1977) argued that with sufficient internalization of these norms, coercion is replaced by self-regulation, which explains the consistency we observed in men's behavior in the absence of any explicit imposition of power from person-to-person. In Connell's (1995) terms, the average male consumer exhibits a gender practice that most closely aligns with complicit masculinities—they may not be "hegemonic" in the sense that they are directly implicated in the subordination of other gender configurations, but they do little to challenge these normative practices, and often reproduce them. According to Butler (1990), repetition of gender practice is essential to its legitimation.

Acknowledging the multiplicity in masculine configurations of gender practice, particularly as they are in-

flected by other subjectivities, we searched for any differences in consumer behavior between men based on race/ethnicity and age. While we found no significant differences based on race/ethnicity, we did find that older men appeared to be more engaged when accompanying women. They touched products more frequently, separated from women more often, and displayed a calmer, more inquisitive demeanor overall. Younger men, in contrast, generally appeared more disgruntled, uncomfortable, and impatient. For example, an older man in his 60s entered Bikini Bay with a woman around the same age. While the woman tried on swimsuits in the changing room, he casually perused several aisles of women's swimwear. He spent a significant amount of time looking at a few pieces, touching the fabric, and checking the price tags. The pair spent about 20 minutes in the store, which is considerably longer than the average visit duration. Spector-Mersel (2006) suggests the temporal dimension of hegemonic masculinity has been neglected by gender theorists, and little consideration has been given to how the interaction between men and hegemonic masculinity changes across the lifespan. In addition to varying laterally based on race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, and culture, the dominant form of masculinity may also vary longitudinally with respect to stages of the life course. One of the distinctive features of the masculine scripts unique to aging men, she argues, is that they are incomplete: while the models for ideal masculinity are clearly defined in young adulthood and middle-age, they become ambiguous later in life. This may be a result of the fact that aging is seen as paradoxical to a form of masculinity defined by youth and physicality. Consequently, men experience an "ungendering" later in life that forces them to either pursue identities consistent with a youthful masculinity that denies the realities of the aging process, or accept the incoherence of these masculine scripts (Spector-Mersel 2006). In the latter case, this may lead to recognition of alternative cultural realities and a diversification of gender practice not seen in younger men.

There are some notable limitations to the current study, the most salient being the inability to collect self-report data on participants' sex/gender as a consequence of relying entirely on non-participatory observation as a mode of data collection. As previously mentioned, this was done to witness gender practice as it occurred without relying on narrative description, which is a less appropriate method for understanding behaviors that are generally unreflexive. As a tradeoff, however, we were required to identify participants' sex/gender based on our own perception independent of how they actually identify. We acknowledge the contention surrounding this practice, especially with regard to how it legitimizes the cissexist practice of equating external gender presentation with personal identification. In West and Zimmerman's (1987) terms, this would constitute an "if-can" test of sexual categorization in everyday interaction, which stipulates that we categorize persons as men if the category feels appropriate and in the absence of contradictory evidence. The absence of self-report data also prevents us from analyzing differences in consumer behavior based on "invisible" or "partly visible" identities, such as sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or ability. We opine these strengths and limitations of non-participatory observation must be considered in future observational research investigating gendered behavior.

In addition to addressing the aforementioned methodological quandaries, future research would

benefit from a deeper investigation of the ways other power structures intersect with gender and masculinity to influence consumer behavior. In their study investigating whether men actually adhere to perceptions of stereotypical male behavior in retail spaces, Otnes and McGrath (2001) demonstrate that men behave in a diverse manner that reflects the heterogeneity of subjectivities encompassed under the umbrella category of men, and suggest that men's willingness to engage in shopping behavior is determined by the extent to which they are able to transcend traditional gender roles. Similarly, Holt and Thompson (2004) contend that the process of appropriating commodities for the purpose of personal identity construction is distinctly individualized, making it highly variable. Consistent with this line of thinking, it would be worth investigating to a greater extent how men's behavior in women's retailers varies based on sexual orientation, class/socio-economic status, age, et cetera.

Conclusion

While many studies have investigated sex/gender-based differences in consumer behavior, few, if any, have examined men's behavior in women's retailers to understand its role in the social construction of sex/gender. Using a symbolic interactionist approach that frames gender as being constituted by its signification (i.e., practice), we viewed men's avoidant and passive behavior in women's retailers to be part and parcel of a social milieu associated with hegemonic masculinity that involves a disaffiliation with femininity, an accentuation of heterosexuality, and a prioritization of homosocial engagement. Despite the fact that men are increasingly involved in the purchase of fashion products, cosmetics, and other luxury goods—items traditionally associated with femininity—they maintain a clear boundary at the ideological level between acceptable and unacceptable masculine behavior in retail spaces. The retail marketplace, therefore, is as involved in actively producing and reinforcing gender-based differences as it is in devising marketing strategies that capitalize on them.

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Appendix A: Retailers Visited with Retailer Type and Store Description.

RETAILER NAME	RETAILER TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Claire's	Women's	Jewelry and accessories
La Senza	Women's	Lingerie and intimate apparel
Bikini Bay	Women's	Swimsuits and accessories
Ardene	Women's	Clothing, footwear, and accessories
Cleo	Women's	Clothing and accessories
Aerie	Women's	Casual wear, shoes, accessories, loungewear
Charming Charlie	Women's	Accessories, jewelry, clothing
Stepping Out	Women's	Shoes and handbags
Laura	Women's	Clothing
Michael Hill	Gender neutral with feminine connotation	Jewelry, watches, charms
Pandora	Gender neutral with feminine connotation	Jewelry
Lush	Gender neutral with feminine connotation	Cosmetics, hygiene, spa products
Bath and Body Works	Gender neutral with feminine connotation	Cosmetics, hygiene, candles, home fragrances
Sephora	Gender neutral with feminine connotation	Make-up, fragrances, hygiene
Forever 21	Unisex with gender-segregated departments	Clothing, shoes, accessories. Some have menswear, but not all.
H&M	Unisex with gender-segregated departments	Clothing, swimwear, shoes, accessories
The Bay	Unisex with gender-segregated departments	Department store carrying clothing, handbags, fragrances, jewelry, toys, home décor, etc.
Sears	Unisex with gender-segregated departments	Department store carrying clothing, home décor, furniture, appliances, etc.

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"I Mean, Define Meaningful!": Accounts of Meaningfulness among Restaurant Employees

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Abstract Drawing on ethnographic data collected over a five-year period, this study addresses the complex topic of what constitutes meaningful lives. This research examines restaurant employees' accounts of meaningfulness in and outside their workplaces. The meaning they ascribe to their jobs and activities external to work reveals five categories of meaningfulness: *Helping*, *Mentoring*, *Expanding*, *Belonging*, and *Supplementation*. Regardless of popular opinion, which marks restaurant work as meaningless, the data show how and why restaurant employees construct meaningfulness from the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of their jobs. Additionally, this investigation sheds light on how social constructions of meaning have the potential to contribute to *and* diminish one's sense of meaningfulness. This study provides a more comprehensive and inclusionary perspective of the related concepts of meaning, meaningfulness, and meaningful work. Specifically, meaningfulness exists in quotidian and extraordinary experiences, and the workers engage in, understand, and appreciate both.

Keywords Restaurant Employees; Meaningfulness; Work and Occupations; Quotidian and Extraordinary Experiences; Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards

A table of customers asked me, "Do you do anything else other than work here?" And I explained I had a master's, and I am looking for a government job. And then they exclaimed, "You should work for Google! Our daughter used to work for Google! Our daughter used to work for Google, and it's so good!" And they wouldn't stop talking about it. Apparently, people want to give me advice to get out of the restaurant industry. But, who's to say that working at Google would make my life any more meaningful? I mean, why is a guy in finance, or a banker, or a nurse more meaningful? [Pause] Well, maybe a nurse is more meaningful. I mean, define meaningful! [Tia, 24, server, bartender]

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As Tia intimated, meaning, as a concept, is subjective and escapes precise definition. Similarly, Csikszentmihalyi (1990:215) wrote: "*Meaning* is

a concept difficult to define, since any definition runs the risk of being circular. How do we talk about the meaning of meaning itself?" Nevertheless, we know that people search for meaning throughout their lives, even if it is an unconscious search and they are uncertain for what they are searching (Frankl 1959). We also know that work heavily influences perceptions of meaningfulness as people spend more of their waking time working than engaged in any other activity, and according to Baumeister (1991:116), "no account of life's meaning would be complete without a careful consideration of the meaning of work." Research shows that perceptions of work meaningfulness play an important role in positive employee well-being (Arnold et al. 2007), and meaningful work can contribute to satisfying people's life purposes (Chalofsky 2003).

Exploring meaningfulness in restaurants is timely and relevant because restaurant work affects many people's lives (socially and economically), and the amount of organizational costs largely depends on whether or not the work feels meaningful. Fifty percent of all U.S. adults have a history of working in the restaurant industry, over 33 percent of all U.S. adults garnered their first job in a restaurant, and currently, restaurants employ approximately 14.7 million people or 10 percent of the U.S. workforce (National Restaurant Association 2017). These numbers not only reveal the far reach of the restaurant industry, but also that most workers leave it at some point. Furthermore, aside from the very limited "elite" or "high-status" chef jobs (Harris and Giuffre 2015; Leschziner 2015), the majority of restaurant jobs are deemed meaningless with mundane and repetitive tasks, which have more harmful effects (e.g., worker alienation) than positive ones (Greenberger and Steinberg 1986; Tannock 2001; DiPietro and Pizam 2008). Ramifications of perceived job meaninglessness are work dissatisfaction, employee turnover, and significant costs relating to recruitment and training (Mobley 1982; Phillips and Phillips 2002). Notably, research indicates that restaurants exhibit retention-related issues and high turnover rates (Ghiselli, La Lopa, and Bai 2001; Dermody, Young, and Lee Taylor 2004; Wildes 2008).

Occupational studies generally emphasize the pejorative qualities of restaurant work. The deficient wages, benefits, stability, control, challenge, and intrinsic rewards in restaurant jobs have landed them in the category of "bad jobs," and are therefore not treated as providing interesting or meaningful work experiences (Kalleberg 2011). Consequently, many people do not deem restaurant jobs "real" (Ginsberg 2001; Owings 2002; Shigihara 2015). Restaurant employment seems to stymie the workers' well-being rather than bolster it, and research points to numerous negative circumstances that workers encounter: sexual harassment (LaPointe 1992; Harris and Giuffre 2010), emotional strain (Paules 1991; Gatta 2002), heteronormative gender practices (Hall 1993; Tibbals 2007), and problematic work conditions (Siegel 1993; Jayaraman 2013).

Although many employees confront unfavorable situations while working in restaurants, spotlighting the negative does not tell the whole story, and concentrating on restaurant employment as meaningless obscures the meaningful aspects of the work. Hardly any empirical studies have attended to what actually constitutes meaningful work

(Chalofsky 2003). Most among these are limited by the use of quantitative methods and measures (e.g., Steger, Dik, and Duffy 2012). Moreover, very little research (e.g., Fine 1996; Erickson 2009) has investigated what restaurant employees regard as meaningful in their work. The purpose of this article is to examine restaurant employees' accounts of meaningfulness in and outside of work that is considered meaningless, bad, problematic, and unreal. Doing so provides a more comprehensive and inclusionary conceptual understanding of meaning, meaningfulness, and meaningful work. Going forward, I review the relevant literature on meaning, discuss the methods and participants, and present how restaurant employees assign meaningfulness to experiences and rewards from work and non-work domains. I conclude with a discussion on research implications for the study of meaning and occupations more broadly.

Meaning, Meaningfulness, and Meaning-Making

Scholars distinguish between the study of "meaning" in the branch of linguistics known as semantics, which examines how words come to signify or indicate ideas (Saussure 1959), and its use in a moral or ethical context, in the sense of life's significance or purpose (Metz 2013). Although the two uses are interconnected, this study focuses on the latter notion where *meaning in life* or *meaningfulness* is "the sense made of, and significance felt regarding, the nature of one's being and existence" (Steger et al. 2006:81). This loose definition involves conditions or qualities in which one takes pride or finds satisfaction. It does not necessarily have to do with happiness; what makes a life meaningful may not make one happy, and may require sacrificing one's self-interest. Nor does meaningfulness undoubtedly imply moral goodness. In this research, meaning and meaningfulness refer not to an objective reality, but to how people subjectively construct the significance, value, worth, or purpose of their lives.

People's perceived meaningfulness or lack thereof develops from the assumptions about what is regarded as meaningful. Common to people's articulations of meaning is the construct of purpose. According to Klinger (1977), meaning and purpose relate to people's "function," "aim," and what they were "created for," and contributors of meaning broadly include relationships, religion, education, leisure-time, happiness, jobs, responsibility, success, helping others, goals, and feeling loved, wanted, and useful. More recently, purpose has been defined as "a stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at once meaningful to the self and of consequence to the world beyond the self" (Damon, Menon, and Bronk 2003:121).

Developing the term, Csikszentmihalyi (1990) identified three ways in which *meaning* is understood: it indicates the purpose or significance of something, it refers to people's intentions, and it orders information or contextualizes words, events, and phenomena. Baumeister (1991) concluded that in order to acquire meaning, people must attain purpose, value, efficacy, and self-worth, where *purpose* relates to people anticipating future fulfillment, *value* helps people decide what is right or wrong, *efficacy* is when people feel they can make a difference and have control over their circumstances, and *self-worth*

pertains to self-esteem based on feelings of belonging and worthiness. Consequently, Baumeister contended that people who have not succeeded in attaining all four are likely to feel a lack of meaning.

Other scholars have discussed *sense-making* to develop the concept of meaning. Mezirow (1991) conceptualized meaning as making sense of or giving coherence to experiences and explained that people learn to make sense of their experiences through formal and informal norms transmitted through socialization. Although scholars define sense-making in different ways, it involves people constructing and comprehending the unknown with their frames of reference or particular points of views (Weick 1995; see also Goffman 1974). Sense-making is a process that fosters people's assumptions through their experiences that they later draw on to explain or make meaning out of subsequent events (Louis 1980). Generally, the construction of meaning in life has been exclusionary. Just because people do not have purpose, value, efficacy, self-worth, and significance in a conventional sense does not mean they will have meaningless lives. Nor can we automatically equate a lack of sense-making with meaninglessness.

The discipline of psychology dominates the research on meaningfulness. Psychologists primarily examine individual-level factors that influence people's ability to have and make meaning. Studies on meaning have largely emerged through the branch of the field known as "positive psychology," which is concerned with well-being and satisfaction (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000). One of the first to investigate meaning, Viktor Frankl (1959), explored his personal experiences surviving a concentration camp. His reflections led to the term "logotherapy" or healing through meaning. Meaning-making, in turn, refers to "a search for meaning in the experience, an attempt to regain mastery over the event in particular and over one's life more generally, and an effort to restore self-esteem—to feel good about oneself again despite the personal setback" (Taylor 1983:1161).

Most meaning-making studies focus on stressful life events. Scholars have analyzed the "utility" of suffering and indicated that it constitutes an integral part of meaning-making because people respond to misfortune by imputing meaning to it (Baumeister 1991). Often, people make sense of trauma by appointing a positive denotation to it. For example, women with breast cancer searched for meaning in their suffering; they acquired meaning by revising their attitudes about cancer, reordering their priorities, regaining a sense of control over their bodies, "mastering" the cancer, and maintaining positive attitudes (Taylor 1983). Other studies on trauma have noted similar paths to meaningful lives. Researchers have described meaning-making after the loss of a loved one (Davis and Nolen-Hoeksema 2001). Scholars have also explored meaning-making among survivors of sexual abuse (Wright, Crawford, and Sebastian 2007), survivors of the Holocaust (Armour 2010), and people living with medical conditions (Henrickson et al. 2013). In these cases, meaning-making entailed the extraordinary and a reconceptualization of the life event, where the people could "find meaning" in, "make sense" of, or "find benefit" out of the event or coping process. To illustrate, sexual abuse survivors used their experi-

ences to help others and spent time making sense of their abuse by "understanding" their perpetrators (Grossman, Sorsoli, and Kia-Keating 2006).

Much of the scholarship on meaning-making highlights how people reconcile suffering and the meaning people make after experiencing a traumatic or an extraordinary event. Researchers suggest that extreme circumstances *give* people meaning because these provoke sense-making and meaning-making. Currently, there is a paucity of research on meaning which arises more agentically and free from traumatic or extraordinary occurrences. Studies rarely examine meaning in quotidian acts, such as looking at the stars, going for a walk, talking on the phone, or the tasks people perform in the workplace—saying "Thank you" to a co-worker or having a conversation with a customer. It is, however, important to focus on ordinary everyday experiences out of which people construct meaning (Misztal 2016). From a sociological perspective on meaning, which considers the socio-cultural factors that influence how people ascribe meaning to aspects in their lives, the present study aims to expand the theoretical and empirical understanding of meaning in life by investigating different types of meaningfulness that people experience while in social contexts that are treated as having an absence of meaning.

Meaningful Work

Organizational scholars from a psychological perspective lead the inquiry about meaningful work. Describing meaningful work poses a considerable challenge because there is a lack of agreement on one definition and its essential components. Some of the earliest scholars to provide insight are Hackman and Oldham (1975:162), who operationalized *experienced meaningfulness of the work* as "the degree to which the employee experiences the job as one which is generally meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile." Kahn (1990) added to this definition by finding that employees experienced meaningfulness at work when they felt worthwhile, useful, and valuable, and when they made a difference, were not taken for granted, and were able to give and receive in return. Bowie (1998) then characterized meaningful work as that which is freely entered, allows worker autonomy, independence, sufficient wages, and develops employees' rational capacities, morals, and individual happiness. Other definitions of meaningful work include the ability to establish dignity at work (Hodson 2001), the amount of significance and purpose that employment holds for people (Pratt and Ashforth 2003), and "a positive work-related psychological state reflecting the extent to which employees think and feel they make a significant, important, and useful contribution to a worthwhile purpose in the execution of their work" (Albrecht 2015:212). Still, words like dignity, significant, important, valuable, worthwhile, useful, purpose, and contribution are perplexing. Therefore, it is necessary to examine what people actually describe as meaningful, which is an undertaking in this study.

Some scholarship identifies work meaningfulness by virtue of the relationship people have with their employment. Baumeister (1991) distinguished meaningfulness by categorizing three major roles of work, where a *job* is for the sake of a paycheck, a *calling* is done out of a sense of personal respon-

sibility, obligation, greater good of society, duty, or destiny, and a *career* is motivated by the desire for success, achievement, and recognition. Because of minimal benefits and satisfaction, he proposed that jobs may fail to offer efficacy and meaningfulness. Alternatively, he posited that a career is a powerful source of meaning and self-worth, a calling can provide people with value and fulfillment, and a combination of a career and calling will provide a major and thorough source of meaning. Empirical research suggests that employees with a sense of calling view their work as meaningful and important. For instance, even as poorly-paid employees in "dirty work," zookeepers with a sense of calling and moral duty found broad meaning and significance in their careers and felt their work was worth sacrificing pay, personal time, and comfort (Bunderson and Thompson 2009).

Despite the significance of Weber's (2003) study of the origins of the work ethic, limited sociological research specifically examines meaningful work. Relevant sociological studies include investigating the creation of meaning in the context of manual labor, with particular focus on the question of why employees work as "hard" as they do. Roy's (1959) highly cited study, "Banana Time," revealed that Chicago factory workers created games to break up repetitive tasks and make work meaningful. Twenty years later, while studying the same factory, Burawoy (1979) noted how the employees treated their work as "a game" with incentives to surpass its banality and ensure maximum productivity and earnings. Moreover, he discovered that when the workers participated in the shop-floor culture, which they called "making out," they could attribute meaning to work absent of meaning in the traditional sense. Willis's (1977) ethnography addressed the positive meaning that working-class "lads" ascribed to manual labor—especially its association with masculinity and resistance to authority.

Research has also investigated workers who create meaning in other "low-status" occupations. Heinsler and colleagues (1990) examined detectives and campus police and how they transformed their "mundane job" into "something meaningful." The officers strove to define themselves to others as "real police" and "crime fighters" instead of workers who merely jump-start cars, fill out paperwork, or do "boring jobs," "thankless work," and "nothing." Many officers "successfully" converted their "dirty work" into valued, satisfying, meaningful, and prestige-giving activities because they perceived their tasks in terms of important outcomes (e.g., collegiality, teamwork, and education). Wharton's (1996) study highlighted constructions of meaning among women in predominantly disappointing residential real estate jobs. These contingent workers constructed meaning by overlooking the employment's exploitative nature, acknowledging their limited career alternatives, and focusing on job rewards, such as flexible hours, autonomy and control, income, excitement and unpredictability, and pride from overcoming work challenges.

Among the few sociological studies that examine restaurants and meaning, Erickson (2009) observed that servers struggled to find meaning in restaurant work because it is stigmatized. On the one hand, social interactions and relationships with people at work had the potential to give their employment

meaning. On the other hand, they protected themselves from lower-status identities by detaching and refusing to see the work as meaningful. In kitchens, Fine (1996:213) noted that cooks were able to construct meaning through aesthetic metaphors (e.g., a dish is like a symphony), but meaning depended on a community of shared understandings and "cooks must continually construct and reconstruct culinary meaning for an unknowing or skeptical audience." Additionally, although "elite" or "high-status" chefs considered the social and innovative aspects of culinary work meaningful, they struggled for meaning, value, and prestige in their work (Harris and Giuffre 2015; Leschziner 2015).

Despite numerous definitions and constructions of meaningful work, it is a phenomenon not well understood. Rosso and colleagues (2010) contended that scholars tend to focus on singular psychological or social mechanism through which work becomes meaningful rather than developing a more comprehensive view. They argued that researchers have a number of opportunities to develop understandings of the social and cultural factors that influence perceptions of meaningfulness. Furthermore, they recommended that studies focus on the many sources from which employees draw meaning. Scholars also suggest that a single source is not enough to achieve a meaningful life. Emmons (1997) explained that people derive meaning from numerous sources, like jobs, travel, family, education, religion, love, and friends. Importantly, he maintained that many sources of meaning serve as a buffer against the meaninglessness from any one source in a person's life. The limited empirical research that addresses what constitutes meaningful work typically concentrates on how employees construct meaning despite the unsatisfying conditions of the labor itself and the lack of rewards from the work. This study investigates the satisfying conditions of restaurant labor and the meaningfulness that employees construct from the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of their work, as well as from sources in non-work domains.

Methods and Participants

This ethnographic study draws on five years (2009-2014) of systematic data collection including participant observation, field notes, memos, countless informal interactions and conversations, 52 semi-structured, in-depth interviews, and multiple follow-ups with half of the interviewees. Adopting a variety of methods leads to diverse and rich information, enables comparisons between personal accounts and observable behaviors, and helps grant thicker descriptions and broader insight than only one method would offer (Warren and Karner 2010). Because in-depth interviewing allows researchers to explore people's detailed experiences, behaviors, accounts, motives, and opinions from their perspectives (Rubin and Rubin 2012), interviews are the primary source of data in this article. In other words, a thorough grasp of perceived meaningfulness required a concentration on the employees' personal narratives of the concept.

Before formally examining restaurants and restaurant employees' experiences, I spent eight years working in various full-service restaurants as a server and bartender. My complete membership role (Adler and Adler 1987) aided avenues to field observations, key informants, and interview participants.

Using snowball sampling (Sudman and Kalton 1986), I identified participants, first interviewing close contacts and acquaintances, and then referrals. Broadening past research, I sampled a spectrum of employees from many full-service restaurants (independent and chain) instead of only one restaurant. Full-service establishments comprise restaurants with table service, a full bar, and a chain of command (i.e., owners, managers, and hourlies). To develop my conceptual categories and themes, I employed theoretical sampling in later stages of interviewing (Corbin and Strauss 2008). For instance, I sampled by age and employment position to assess whether workers' experiences varied by statuses.

I conducted 52 interviews with 24 male and 28 female bussers, hosts, runners, expeditors, servers, bartenders, cooks/chefs, and managers between the ages of 18 and 48 (M = 26.6) from California and Colorado. The participants worked between 2 and 25 years (M = 9) in several restaurants and gained experience in various job positions (often concurrently). While some held salaried positions, 86.5 percent held hourly-paid positions; importantly, most restaurant workers earn hourly wages, even in management (e.g., shift managers) and in the kitchen (e.g., line cooks). This study includes experiences from well over 70 full-service establishments. Among the interviewees, half reported White and half reported Black/African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, European, or bi-/multi- racial categories. While half indicated middle-class upbringings, half indicated lower-working-class, lower-working-middle-class, upper-middle-class, or upper-class upbringings. Participants disclosed annual incomes ranging between $2,400 and $53,000 ($M$ = $26,457.69). The vast majority of participants (N = 51) varied in their "highest level of education" from some college to a master's degree, whereas one had only a high school diploma.

Prior to the interviews, participants chose pseudonyms and interview locations for confidentiality. The interview guide was formed from participant observation and was adjusted as themes emerged inductively (e.g., "meaningful"), which is a methodological approach that permits follow-up questions, as well as category and concept testing in the field (Strauss 1987). Some broad interview topics consisted of personal histories, workplace structure, social networks, everyday activities, and goals. Each interview lasted between 90 minutes and 4 hours, was in person, and was audio-recorded. I listened to the interviews multiple times as I transcribed them verbatim, and I went through many phases of open and focused coding. As I moved from broad to narrow themes, I used memo writing to analyze and develop emergent ideas, and I assessed concepts and categories in the field by cross-checking them with key informants and interview participants (Charmaz and Belgrave 2012). The experiences documented in this article are not meant to be generalized to all U.S. restaurant employees, but rather to highlight an empirical case that expands the conceptual and theoretical basis for what constitutes meaningfulness in people's work and lives. Despite their different employment positions and durations, restaurants, and demographic backgrounds, the participants provided similar constructions of meaningfulness. Below, I draw on participants several times to provide rich and in-depth personal narratives and perceptions of meaningfulness.

Meaningfulness to Restaurant Workers

Experiences like Tia's, mentioned at the start of this article, were not uncommon among restaurant workers. Throughout my participant observation and the interviews, it was apparent that a commonly circulating assumption about restaurant work is that it does not provide meaningful experiences. Regardless of the belief that one must enter standard employment—perhaps a full-time job at Google, as some of Tia's customers suggested—to experience meaningful work, restaurant employees did not view restaurant work as meaningless or base their meaningfulness solely on where they worked. Additionally, they did not experience meaning only after a stressful life event or an extraordinary occurrence; in fact, meaning, for them, existed in quotidian and remarkable activities. The data demonstrated how meaningfulness is not something that simply *happens to* restaurant workers, it is something that they actively took part in and pursued. Thus, restaurant workers are not without agency in their pursuit for meaningful lives.

Meaningfulness in General

When participants broadly spoke about meaningfulness, four major themes emerged. First, they discussed the meaningfulness of family, friends, and social groups. Second, they highlighted how helping others and making a difference is meaningful. Third, they emphasized the meaningfulness of enjoying life, happiness, and feeling needed and loved. Finally, they stated that succeeding at any attempted endeavor was meaningful. In most cases, the participants described a combination of these themes when defining meaningfulness. Additionally, they often used the words "meaningful," "important," "enjoyment," and "happiness," or variations of these words, interchangeably. Before mentioning these themes, they typically prefaced their statements with broad, grand, idealistic, and/or altruistic terms that characterized meaningfulness to them. That is, they emphasized humanitarian efforts, such as "making an impact," "making a difference," "making a change," "helping others," "acts of kindness and respect," and other benevolent deeds that reflect prevailing definitions of meaningfulness (i.e., making significant, important, and purposeful contributions).

Tia, who has worked in restaurants for almost ten years, began contemplatively, "Meaningfulness is making an impact, something that will change someone else's life." After pausing to ruminate, she elaborated, "In terms of meaningfulness, my family is number one. They are the number one thing that is meaningful to me. And then, second, is friends. What's the point of being successful if you have no one to share it with?" At the time of the interview, Tia's life was incompatible with her perception of a meaningful life. She stated, "I don't necessarily feel like my life is meaningful now, but I do make an impact on my family, my niece and nephew especially. I don't really have any hobbies that I do all the time. I did run a 5k once because it donated all the money to autism, and it was for a good cause." She laughed while saying, "I sit on the couch and watch TV," and then rhetorically asked, "Does shopping count?" Laughing again, she blurted out, "I like eating." In spite of her perceived lack of meaningfulness in her life corresponding to her self-disclosed

absence of widespread impact she is making on society at large, Tia told me that she is content with everyday occurrences, such as watching television with her friends and family.

Longstanding employee, Maria (35, general manager), noted, "Meaningfulness is something that helps other people, like being a teacher and teaching or being a social worker and helping with social services." She revealed, "I volunteer weekly with refugees with English and job searches through a non-profit. I have also thought about volunteering at this bike shop that fixes and gives bikes to the homeless. That stuff is meaningful because it is helping people." Maria described finding meaning in vacations and hanging out with friends, and then said, "I also want to go on one of those long vacations to another country to volunteer and help people or something like that." Notably, she explained, "Before I was volunteering, I felt like I wasn't doing enough with my life in general," and then stated, "When I was younger [laughs], I envisioned my life having more meaning. And when you get older, you get stuck in a cycle of paying bills. And then, when you have enough to pay your bills, what's the point? And then you barely have enough to even pay for those things, from the restaurant, and have extra to do meaningful stuff." She added, "Honestly, I mean, I want to enjoy where I work, and I want to make more money." Self-reflexive about aging, Maria discussed her determination to secure more meaning in life, but was aware of and saddened by the fact that meaningful contributions often require money and resources.

Jesse (45, manager), an established worker of well over two decades, emphasized that family, friends, having fun, happiness, and enjoyment are all part of a meaningful life. Large elements of Jesse's meaningfulness were derived from music and motorcycles. He mentioned both when comparing his life to that of his brother:

> My brother who earns three times as much as I do, but, I mean, he puts his ass to the grindstone, maybe just a bit too hard for my liking, and, you know, he worries about me, but, I mean, he got married, has the job, had a kid, and those things are great, but the one thing that I have is motorcycles. And if you talk about getting my rocks off, going for a ride really gets me happy, that makes me happy because you lose your thoughts in the wind. There's nothing like losing your thoughts in the wind. I get on my bike, and I forget about every little thing...and, oh yeah, I'm such a musician. I still play music in a band. And that makes me happy too.

Jesse also found meaning in the values of "treating people with respect," "loyalty," and "the art of listening" to others. He continued to describe meaningfulness by juxtaposing people's values.

> I think that people's values [pause], everyone is just so driven to live in the rich neighborhoods, all the customers, they're striving to have the two-point-five children, the dog, and the Volvo, and if that's their gig, God bless 'em, you know? I missed out on my opportunities to marry young. I probably missed out on my opportunities to have kids. But, now I'm content, I just want to be content, and I'm happy with that role. It's tough coming across people that I see that are just putting their heads to the grindstone, I mean, I admire those people...it just scares me, it scares me how

> hard people work, and I'm hoping that they're happy, because, you know what, I haven't been happier.

If taken at face value, Jesse appeared as if he does not "work hard," and he spoke as if working hard cannot bring happiness or meaning. However, on several occasions, he revealed how "hard" he works in all of his endeavors and the associated happiness and meaning they provide. Other key elements to Jesse's story are his military background and overseas service during Desert Storm. He explained that after he returned to the United States from the Gulf War, all he needed was "to heal." He said, "I didn't need to make my brain think twenty-four-seven and worry about everything; instead of concentrating on a career, I concentrated mostly on happiness...I missed out on the kids, I missed out on that career path, so, yeah, I discovered restaurants, and that's where I was truly happy." Later, he told me,

> The most important thing is, I need to be happy at work. *I do*. If I'm not happy at work, I'm terrible, I'm not a good person, I'm just not fun to be around. You know what I mean? It's awful, and who wants to be that person? I don't. I want to be happy, I want to be nice, I don't want to be mediocre, I want to be happy and make your day.

Contrary to popular belief, Jesse suggested that laboring in restaurants does not make him mediocre, meaningless, *or* unhappy.

To Lilu (27, manager), meaningfulness and success go hand-in-hand. She stated, "Meaningfulness is when you gain success out of something, when you achieve something from an action and gain success." Furthermore, she said, "Meaningfulness in my life is doing well at my job, having all the necessities for my family—food, water, soda, and booze [laughs]—and making sure I can pay the bills." After more consideration, Lilu emphasized, "Meaningfulness is when others feel that I am a leader, mentor, and an overall great person, and a dependable person." Even though she did not report having any hobbies, her meaningful activities involved making other people "feel good" and "cared about" because doing so provided self-gratification. Lilu insisted, "if people feel cared about, that's what's meaningful. And when I feel cared about, that's meaningful. I have to feel loved or else my whole world will shatter. And also my family is number one." She then described ordinary activities like going shopping and watching television and movies with her family as meaningful.

When Val (39, server, shift manager) spoke about meaning, he stated in a slightly facetious tone, "We can all make the world a little better place by helping each other one day at a time." But then, more seriously, he asked me if I had ever watched the Monty Python movie, "The Meaning of Life." He proceeded to describe the restaurant scene where a patron exploded and the waiter declared, "If you want to know what I think the meaning of life is, when I was just a boy, my mother put me on her knee and said, Gaston, my son, the world can be such an angry place, go into the world and try to make people happy, make people laugh, try to make peace with everyone. That's why I became a waiter." In earnest, Val said, "I believe in this philosophy." Throughout the interview, he expressed that meaning involves living the "golden rule" of "do unto others as you

would have them do unto you." Commonly, participants highlighted meaningfulness in "little acts of kindness."

Albeit subjectively, the participants frequently used the phrase "making a difference" to describe meaningfulness. For example, Portia (37, server, bartender, shift manager) stated, "Making a difference is what I would say is meaningful. Well, that, and helping people, and, like, feeling needed, yeah, feeling necessary, not like a lump of nothing [laughs] with nothing to show for." In sum, the participants constructed meaningfulness in general through one's relationships, contributions, self-gratification, and achievements.

Meaningfulness in and around Restaurant Work

> Meaning [pause] okay, wait, okay, like so I do hair, right? That seems so little in comparison to everything that's going on in the world, like war [laughs]. And I wait tables, well, that's little too. But, who the fuck's to say that isn't meaningful, like, okay, I make people smile, I listen to them, I, like, am their therapist for free, wait, hmmm, okay, now that I think about it, I should be getting paid as much as a therapist [laughs]. Anyways, okay, I would say what is meaningful is helping people, and, like, *I do* that, *I do that every day*. [Aster, 30, server, bartender]

The ways in which the participants generally conceptualized meaningfulness permeated how they constructed the meaningfulness of restaurant employment. They described the meaningfulness of the extrinsic rewards (e.g., income) and the intrinsic rewards (e.g., positive feelings) from restaurant work. Further, meaning surfaced through quotidian occurrences, like short conversations at work, and through exceptional practices, such as volunteer efforts of the restaurants. What the participants constructed as meaningful were not always tied to the restaurant in and of itself, and they made distinctions between meaningfulness of particular workplace practices and meaningfulness that the work provided them elsewhere. Though meaning had a direct relationship to the work, much of it manifested from the tangential characteristics associated with the work. The participants were cognizant of the negative perceptions of restaurant jobs and revealed ambivalence about the meaningfulness of their employment. Their awareness of social constructions of meaning in some ways contributed to and in other ways diminished their sense of meaningfulness. The data presented five major categories of meaningfulness in and around restaurant work: *Helping*, *Mentoring*, *Expanding*, *Belonging*, and *Supplementation*. These categories are not mutually exclusive, and participants talked about experiencing them individually and simultaneously.

Helping

When the participants told me about the meaningfulness of workplace practices, they described acts of giving back to the community, helping others, and providing people jobs. For example,

> What else is meaningful is our restaurant also gives back to the community. Because we are a corporation and make money, they think we should give back, like donating and feeding the homeless, serving at a homeless shelter kitchen. But, they set these give-

> backs on our days off without pay, and we do not get replacement days off. So I like to give back, but the corporation is still a corporation in the ways that they do things, you know what I mean? [Lilu]

One can hear her ambivalence about the meaningfulness of restaurant "give-backs" because of the way they transpire. In other words, Lilu believed that helping others is meaningful, but the give-back meaningfulness is diluted by the corporation's exploitation of its employees.

The restaurant resembled a space where employees helped others at distance and in an abstract form. Val illuminated this phenomenon when he said that restaurant workers "experience humanity on some of the most prime levels. I mean, you can have the family out celebrating a wedding tomorrow, you can have a family come in after a funeral for a grandchild, you can have people who just eat, I mean, shit, everybody eats, not everybody can afford to eat out, but everybody eats." He added, "We have an opportunity to make memorable moments very special for complete strangers, and I think that's important. You know, somewhere in the world is the picture that you took of all those people together at those tables you served, even though the people may be separated by miles. Someone, somewhere, is saying, 'Oh yeah, we had that waiter take that picture for us.' So you've influenced the positive, the positive life, and that's meaningful." Val also acknowledged food service as a "hard industry" and explained that the hard work made him grateful. "It makes me appreciate what I have more," he said. "You know, you see families come out with the wheelchair, and the oxygen tank, and you know the daughter with the multiple sclerosis, or my co-worker's daughter has MS, so it just reminds me." He paused, and added, "It's an old saying, but by the grace of God, my feet work, my hands work, my eyes work." He knocked on the wood table and said, "I'm in good shape, and it's something to be thankful for. That, and the cash." Here, we see meaningfulness in the everyday and remarkable, as well as in the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of restaurant work.

For Seymour (25, server, bartender, shift manager), meaningfulness is a byproduct of restaurant culture. He explained that the restaurant is a place where people help their co-workers and have the means to help their family members. He told me, "We are all pretty tight knit, we all look out for each other when we need it. If somebody needed some money or something, or somebody needed to be picked up from jail, we'd go pick 'em up, just like looking out for each other." Furthermore, Seymour explained that restaurant work enabled him to help his mother pay bills when she lost her job. Storie (23, sous-chef) maintained that restaurants are meaningful because they afford "a lot of jobs and money for more people than anybody would know," such as purveyors, cleaners, and electricians. Maria had a similar assessment when saying:

> What is meaningful about restaurant work is providing work and jobs to people. A lot of people cannot find work, and we can give jobs to those people who maybe don't have an education or the skills for other jobs. Often people do not speak enough English, and we have hired a few refugees. Also, it is meaningful to provide a place for people to enjoy, like, working and a fun environment.

In like manner, Jesse explained the meaningfulness of helping his friend obtain a restaurant management position after he was downsized from an electronics store.

Tia provided details on meaningfulness as helping others by comparing different types of jobs and the tasks that accompany each. She first stated, "Meaningfulness is not like stocking clothes at a department store. It doesn't impact the workers or someone else's life in a good way." She then indicated, "Meaningful work is something that will help others make their lives better, like working at a job to help stop human trafficking. That is what I thought I would be doing when I was in school. And now, it is a government job that I think *will be eventually* meaningful." Tia also expressed equivocation about the meaningfulness of restaurant employment, but she explained that it allows her to pursue occupational and life goals that are helpful and meaningful.

Other participants talked about how employees will not "get rich" working in the restaurant industry, but it helps secure a living to support a family.

> For the kitchen staff, I know for a fact, you know, there's a few, a couple salary guys, that can afford to have their own apartment, they are all married, and they all have at least two kids, and I don't know if their wives work, but I know they have an apartment, and they have a car, and their kids go to school, and they're not starving, and they don't have crappy cars...I make 32K a year, and I don't think it's great, but it's not horrible, I mean, there are families that live off 32K a year. [Oliver, 24, kitchen expeditor]

Overall, the participants conceptualized meaningfulness in and around restaurant work in terms of the value and significance of giving to, helping, and providing for others.

Mentoring

The participants discussed the meaning of mentoring, guiding, and leading others. In a follow-up conversation with Jimmy (43, executive chef), he exemplified the theme of mentorship:

> I don't know that I'd say that restaurant work is meaningful, like, I change the world or shit like that, but I make awesome food [laughs], and people need to eat to, like, live [laughs]. But, shit, that's a hard question. But, yeah, I guess, like, my life is more meaningful now that I am executive chef 'cause I make more money and I get to mentor the newbies and kick them around for a while to get them into shape [laughs], so I guess I'm like a teacher, so that is like meaning, that helps.

I heard ambivalence about the meaningfulness of restaurant work in Jimmy's account and laughter, as if he is not allowed to be proud of his job until he can negotiate intrinsic and extrinsic rewards from the employment.

Lilu also displayed equivocation about meaningfulness in her work, but felt that mentorship helps personal feelings of meaning. "My job? Meaningful? *I guess so*," she said slowly. "Well, 'cause you need it to pay bills, but I do like mentoring the hourly workers and the new managers. That gives me meaning. We are a team at work. That's meaning-

ful." Additionally, Maria mentioned, "The restaurant is not necessarily meaningful because I feel like the restaurant is entertainment, like fun and entertainment, but not meaningful, at least in the way that I think is meaningful. But, what could be meaningful at the restaurant to me, as a manager, is shaping the employees when they first come to the restaurant to work, like when they are young, like teaching them about how to work, and hard work." Maria wavered between whether the restaurant had meaningfulness or not, but she enjoyed mentoring employees:

> I like and enjoy working at the restaurant, and I like helping the workers grow up. Ultimately, though, serving lunch and dinner is not meaningful, but you can be good at it or shitty at it. It's a job that sustains life, but it's not torture. For the most part, it's enjoyable. I'm not *just* going to work there 'cause I have some kid to take care of, I mean, I have me to take care of [laughs], but ultimately, I could choose somewhere else to work, like at any other job, secretary, nurse, I don't know, like any lower level job, well, a nurse is meaningful, but then you have to deal with gross stuff. Nurses can make a lot of money though, at least from what I've heard.

Maria conveyed that she is not compelled to remain working in restaurants because of limited occupational options or out of necessity (e.g., to support a child). She intimated that her job offered agency, autonomy, and enjoyment.

Participants also highlighted the other end of the spectrum where they were the pupils or apprentices, thus illuminating the meaningfulness of receiving guidance. Storie showed her appreciation when recalling how the executive chef hired her: "Nobody would hire me, nobody would hire a girl that didn't have much experience in a restaurant, so he gave me a chance. He is very protective over me. I always say he is like my dad, and it is very much, you know, a father-daughter relationship." Storie also described the importance of the mentorship of the other cooks and chefs. She told me that culinary school did not teach her "shit" compared to what the back-of-the-house did. For instance, she declared, "These men taught me how to do it faster, how to do it better, make it easier, like it's amazing, I'm like why didn't they teach me how to French a lamb rack like this in school? Honestly, I mean, this takes me two minutes. The other way takes me twenty."

Expanding

When participants described meaningfulness, they discussed how restaurant work expanded their growth, horizons, self-sufficiency, responsibility to thwart abusing their power, and respect of others. Nicole (29, server, bartender) found restaurant work meaningful because it gave her confidence to overcome shyness:

> I think serving was good for me. You know, at seventeen, when I first started, the idea of going up to a table and talking to strangers was intimidating, and then a couple years down the road, it was no big deal at all. Now, going to talk to restaurant owners isn't so scary, you know? And so I think that naturally my personality isn't social and outgoing, but I like being that way as opposed to being shy, and so I think that my job has shaped me into being that way. I think that came second 'cause I wasn't born that way.

She exemplified the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards of restaurant work, "[its] just a really good place to enhance your understanding of people, in general. You just meet, like, so many people, you become friends with people, it helps pay for your bills, and it's always something you can fall back on."

Likewise, Lucie (23), who worked as a busser, hostess, food runner, bar back, and server, noted, "Restaurants are a huge part of enhancing life and people, and, I mean, it's been such a huge part of my life, and also just the people you meet. I mean, the restaurant industry brings so many different kinds of people together, so I definitely think it enhances your life in many ways." She then stated, "Like, seriously, probably all my best friends I have I once worked with in a restaurant, or met through restaurants, or, you know, that culture for sure." Adding to this theme, Abigail (27, manager) mentioned, "You meet a whole bunch of different cultures, you know, lifestyles, so, I mean, I wouldn't trade it, not right now, not at the age I'm at." Furthermore, Seymour said, "I think the restaurant has definitely opened my eyes to seeing even a broader spectrum of different kinds of people that are out there, whether it be racially, or age, or gender, or differences, just behavioral." He explained, "There are just so many different personalities out there. It's just mind boggling, you know, so I don't know, that is definitely something that has come to my attention since I have worked in the restaurant industry."

The data showed how restaurants can motivate workers in meaningful ways by encouraging them to expand their educations. Cindy (33, server, shift manager) stated, "I graduated high school. I took a class here and there. I never really did well in school. I didn't get serious about my education until I was about twenty-four, when I was working in the restaurant industry, and I think that was probably what motivated me to get serious about getting a degree, because I don't want to work at a restaurant forever."

Following up with Jesse, he explained that work is a means to financial stability so he can expand meaningful experiences with family and friends.

> All I care about is that I have, you know, I can pay my bills, and, seriously, work is just to pay bills. It really is just that. And, yes, and there is also some social connection. But, what it is, work allows for you and I to enjoy this telephone conversation, you know what I mean? I don't like people who are married to their work, you know, but if they're happy, God bless them. You know what I mean? That's their gig. But, work just provides me money so I'm able to go spend time with family and friends. That's the most meaningful thing.

Jesse then reasoned that the restaurant aids in his pursuit for meaningfulness by saying, "I look at it as me almost using the restaurant to better my life."

Another element of meaningfulness that emerged from the interviews was expanding the responsibility to avoid abusing one's power. For example, Jesse told me he did not become a police officer after his military duty because he feared unbridled power. He said,

> I didn't become a cop 'cause, I mean, I could ruin your day. I could throw you in jail. I could impound your car. I could write tickets. My word is God. You know

> what I mean? I'm just like, there's no way. I didn't want to have that much power, and still now, even as a manager, the bad sides of me are not good. You know what I mean? So, I think it's just best for me to chill and relax and enjoy life.

Moreover, Seymour told me he liked his non-authoritative positions in the restaurant as a server, bartender, and part-time shift-manager because he did not want to be tempted to "misuse power." He said, "I just don't like being in charge and having to tell people what to do. It's not really my thing. I mean, I can do it, but, like, most of the people I work with are my friends also. We're all kind of at the same level. It'd just be awkward, like, if I had to boss them around, or, like, something like that."

Meaningfulness also included treating others with respect. Icarus (22, server, lead trainer) explained that restaurant workers learn "they aren't important, or that they're not skilled or valued in society." He elaborated by saying, "It's just a cycle of treating people like shit, which sucks, and I wish we all could just get that empathy for each other and realize that we are all human beings and that we all have value, you know, no matter what we all do, we all mean something. Who's to say a CEO of a company is more important than a dishwasher at a restaurant?" Throughout the interview, Icarus told me that working in restaurants meaningfully expanded his empathy, respect for others, and awareness of the "value" of all people.

Belonging

Belonging represented a salient part of meaning to the restaurant workers. It, in part, explained why they remained employed for such long periods. The construct of belonging included making friends, maintaining friendships with co-workers and customers, and feelings of "fitting in." When interviewing Portia, she first described her ambivalence about the meaningfulness of restaurant work, and then provided insight about the meaningfulness of belonging: "It isn't that restaurant work isn't meaningful," she said. "It's that other people think it isn't. That hurts me because even though I don't wanna do it forever, and I have hope for better, just because I work in a restaurant doesn't mean I'm worthless." She then added, "Restaurant work has some meaning. Maybe not like the meaning everyone thinks is meaningful, but you serve people. You help out people. It gives you the ability to do other stuff too, like pay your bills, help your family. It's hard to say what is meaningful. It's anything that makes you feel good about yourself, and makes you happy, even if it isn't all the time." Gradually, Portia began to describe the importance of belonging. "My friends at the restaurant are important," she said, "and talking to the customers and learning new things from them, from their daily lives to like what they do for a living. Maybe, it's just that we all just need to feel like we belong, and fit in. That's meaningful to me." Her account of restaurant employment reflected the meaning and importance of the quotidian and actually incorporated several categories of meaningfulness—*belonging*, *helping*, and *expanding*.

Cindy also mentioned friends in the restaurant as meaningful and described the theme of *expanding* as well. During the interview, Cindy worked as a restaurant server and shift manager and as a sales representative during the day. She noted,

> I have worked in the industry for a long time. It's definitely been my point of networking for friends. It is where I have met a lot of my friends. It basically gave me the skills to even advance into the sales position I am in now, and it just fits my personality. Basically, it molded me into what I am. So in the future, it will continue to be a big part of my life, and, hopefully, it will be to go into restaurants to sell food and wines.

All of the participants recounted enjoying their restaurant friends, and the vast majority of them directly described friends as a meaningful part of restaurant employment. Cliff (23, server, bartender, shift manager) said, "I like it. I think working in a restaurant is more satisfying, more exciting. You meet more people. You make more money. You make more friends." He then explained, "I mean, you make friends with the workers *and* customers. I have had a couple of regulars follow me from restaurant to restaurant, but mainly I am friends with people I work with. You just meet a lot of friends. I have kept in touch with most of them over the years."

For Tia, friends are the reason she has stayed so long. To her, the restaurant is not simply a workplace; it is a space full of "meaningful relationships."

> I definitely enjoy working there, I have friends there, I get along with management, that's why I have stayed there as long as I have, because it's not just a workplace, because I have meaningful relationships with people. When I first started there, I was just thinking, like, oh, okay, I'm gonna stay here for like six months, and then I'll be out, like I just don't want to do this forever. And then after a while I started building friendships...and the harder you work, you're recognized for that, and then you get better sections and shifts and stuff, so I think that's why I get along with management so well because I know that they appreciate me, and like you get their acknowledgement for it...and that I have relationships with them outside of work. You know, they are more than just a manager. They are friends.

As Tia alluded, friendships within the workplace exist well beyond the restaurant space. We see this when Val elucidated numerous co-worker bonds and presented the theme of *helping*:

> I will go to their house, they will come to my house, we'll go to dinner, we'll meet for a drink, but, um, or we will have email communication, in the age of Facebook, and all that. As a matter of fact, I still keep in contact with old co-workers. And it's weird, once you go through the hell of a restaurant, I mean, if you go through hell on a bad night, I mean, you bond like brothers, right? Band of sisters. So, yeah, I still talk to people I worked with, you know, 15 years ago. We don't talk often, we talk a couple times a year, you know, but some people I work with, I would pee on if they were on fire, 'cause I have to help people at all times.

The participants also discussed meaningful connections with customers. Nadia (20, host, cocktail waitress, server) said, "I think the main thing that I got out of it was the relationships that I formed with people." She conveyed her most significant memory by discussing a powerful bond she formed with a father and his two-year-old daughter who ate

at the restaurant every week. Nadia explained that every Wednesday night she was determined to have a conversation with the little girl who never spoke, and "finally, just one day, she said something back to me. So then, week after week, she'd start talking more, and then like a year later, it was to the point where his daughter would come running in to give me a hug, and he told me, 'I really want to thank you. You've really helped her a lot. She would not talk to anybody.' And that is what I'm most happy about working there, is the people." Ultimately, personal relationships in and around restaurant work provided the employees a powerful sense of meaningfulness.

Supplementation

In a final category of meaningfulness that emerged, the workers recounted the activities in which they participated outside of restaurants to supplement their meaningfulness. They frequently mentioned volunteering or interning at charitable organizations and participating in various hobbies. To them, such activities granted additional meaning in their lives.

Maria told me, "I think because most people do not consider restaurant work meaningful—a lot of the employees, and the outside world—many workers, in general, often supplement meaningfulness with volunteer work, you know, to find more meaning in life." As mentioned earlier, Maria volunteered with refugees to help them learn English and find job placements. She later revealed that her restaurant sponsors volunteer activities for the workers, and she said the employees also have their own volunteer efforts. Specifically, Maria explained that "some have internships or volunteer at non-profits. Other people supplement meaningfulness with school, getting an education, or working toward something else."

Describing her feelings before and after completing her master's degree, Tia assessed how she supplemented meaningfulness while working in restaurants. She also speculated about what other restaurant workers engage in for meaningfulness beyond restaurants:

> Before, when I was in school, school made my life more meaningful, my internship made it more meaningful, because I always knew, I thought, I would have a job, a career later. And, I think a lot of people are like that because they are in school or doing something else. But, at the same time, I think a lot of people are completely fine with restaurant work without needing anything else that is meaningful. But then, others have day jobs for meaning and work in restaurant for more money.

Furthermore, Tia believed restaurant work served a meaningful purpose—it financed her education and helped in the pursuit of an entry-level government position.

Chloe (24, cocktail waitress, server, bartender, shift manager) talked about meaningfulness as working towards a "collective good." She did so by volunteering at animal shelters, and for two years, volunteering at a non-profit for victims of rape and sexual assault.

> I feel so passionate about it. I love being connected with survivors, and watching them go through that growth cycle from the trauma to the healing, and be-

> ing at that point of contact, and feeling like I made a difference to somebody. Whether or not the world sees that I'm making a difference in people's lives, I know that I changed that person's life... Some things are more important, and these are the things that are important to me, I'm really excited now that I've been so involved, I really feel like I know what I'm doing.

Chloe's account reflected normative constructions of meaning. In other words, the experience of trauma—albeit in others' lives—enhanced her meaningfulness. Later in the interview, Chloe mentioned several hobbies, such as dance, music, burlesque, physical fitness, and working out that gave her meaning beyond the workplace and her volunteer efforts.

Participants also talked about adding meaning to their lives by volunteering or interning at non-profit organizations. For instance, Lucie explained that she volunteered at a women's clinic and even noted that there is something "so inspirational about it." Edna (22, host, server) mentioned that she volunteered with an organization that served the needs of homeless children and their mothers. Likewise, Griffin (41, server, bartender) volunteered at a men's homeless shelter, preparing meals and cleaning the quarters.

The hobbies outside of restaurants that the participants considered meaningful consisted of many outdoor activities, such as rafting, hiking, skiing, snowboarding, camping, exercising, and various sports. Discussing meaning supplementation, Wayne (19, busser, expeditor, line cook) said, "I lead a pretty active lifestyle. I play hockey, I ski, I play basketball, I swim a lot, so, yeah, I have a lot of hobbies." Workers also found meaningfulness in everyday activities beyond restaurants: "I spend time on the Internet, chill with my friends, play sports, [do] school work, talk to friends, go outside, go to the beach [pause] I like reading, so I seldom get bored" (Jose, 25, server, line cook). Although the participants found several aspects of their work meaningful, they desired additional meaningfulness in their lives. As a result, they supplemented their meaningfulness with remarkable and commonplace activities outside of restaurants.

Conclusion

With people's inclination to search for meaning in life (Frankl 1959) and the growing number of self-help books (McGee 2005; Millman 2011) that propose to aid in this search, it is apparent that a sense of meaningfulness is important to people. Nonetheless, when returning to the conceptual issue Csikszentmihalyi (1990) posed decades ago—talking about the meaning of meaning itself—there is a noticeable difficulty to define, measure, or even discuss how to achieve meaning in life. On the one hand, scholars commonly describe meaning in relation to the traditional concepts of purpose, significance, importance, and contribution (Albrecht 2015). On the other hand, these concepts are confounding. Moreover, research tells us that employment has the potential to provide people meaningful experiences (Chalofsky 2003), and the perception of work meaningfulness may improve people's well-being (Arnold et al. 2007). But, these conclusions lead to the question that I addressed in this article: *Where does meaningfulness arise for people who hold jobs that are regarded as having an absence of meaningful experiences?*

Similar to "happiness" (Wilkins 2008), some researchers have started to recognize meaningfulness as a social construct, which is continually negotiated on an individual and group level (Svensson 2014). However, many scholars treat it as a condition that can be objectively measured (Steger et al. 2012), which belies the fluid quality of meaningfulness. A broader approach is required to understand how individuals, employment contexts, and socio-cultural components shape people's perceptions of meaningfulness. To this end, the present research provided a qualitative case study from a sociological perspective that concentrated on self-reported sources of meaningfulness and what people "do" to gain meaning in life. The data shed light on five major categories of meaningfulness in and around restaurant employment: *Helping*, *Mentoring*, *Expanding*, *Belonging*, and *Supplementation*.

By examining restaurant employees' accounts of meaningfulness in and outside their workplaces, I attended to the complex and subjective topic of what constitutes meaningful work and lives. This study addressed how and why employees constructed meaningfulness while engaged in work that is often considered meaningless (DiPietro and Pizam 2008), bad (Kalleberg 2011), problematic (Jayaraman 2013), and unreal (Taylor 2009). Importantly, the research analyses contributed to developing the empirical, conceptual, and theoretical basis of meaningfulness in people's lives. Subsequently, this article presented a more comprehensive and inclusionary framework for understanding meaning, meaningfulness, and meaningful work. It also helped to clarify past philosophical descriptions of meaningfulness, such as a significance felt regarding one's being and existence (Steger et al. 2006).

Expanding past research about meaning made in work absent of meaning in a traditional sense (Roy 1959; Willis 1977; Burawoy 1979; Heinsler et al. 1990; Wharton 1996), the restaurant employees conversely found ways to derive meaning from the mundane *and* remarkable occurrences at work. They saw both the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards of restaurant work and thus experienced the meaningfulness of jobs that are not necessarily by conventional definition a calling, a moral duty, or a combination of a career and a calling (Baumeister 1991). They understood their employment as meaningful because they viewed it as that which helps the self, co-workers, customers, and others; allows mentorship, leadership, and guidance; expands one's growth, horizons, self-sufficiency, and responsibilities; and permits feelings of belonging and acceptance. Each of these sources contributes to explaining what meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile employment (Hackman and Oldham 1975) actually looks like for people. As empirical research has indicated that restaurant employees have a difficult time perceiving or accepting their work as meaningful (Erickson 2009), the participants in this study had some ambivalence about the meaningfulness of their jobs. However, they did not rely solely on their work to acquire meaningfulness; they readily enumerated the ways in which meaningfulness was supplemented from other sources, such as through volunteer efforts, hobbies, or social events. Ultimately, what this shows us is that people seek to achieve meaning and personal fulfillment in their lives, whether through traditionally conceived pathways or not, in or outside the workplace, or by virtue of altruistic or hedonistic actions.

Apart from employment, meaningfulness has been predominantly conceptualized as that which lies beyond the quotidian and as an experience that *happens* to people after traumatic events (Davis and Nolen-Hoeksema 2001) or extraordinary circumstances (Taylor 1983). Alternatively, this study accentuated how meaningfulness exists in everyday situations *and* exceptional pursuits in and around workplaces. As a result, this research expanded our knowledge on how people construct meaning from ordinary or banal experiences (see: Misztal 2016). It additionally highlighted that people agentically and actively pursue meaningful lives. Furthermore, it indicated that simply because people do not disclose holding the established criteria of meaning (e.g., significant contribution) does not mean that they will have meaningless lives. For example, as cooks have found meaning in the aesthetics of their dishes (Fine 1996), the participants in this study found meaning, value, and satisfaction in serving people or providing them with a memorable experience on an abstract level. By and large, they were content with the meaning of their restaurant employment and emphasized the meaningfulness of the "little things" in and separate from their work (e.g., food and social gatherings).

The accounts of meaningfulness in this article bolster our understanding of how social and cultural constructs of meaning inform and collide with people's conceptions of meaningful work. For example, spending time talking to a customer, hiring refugees at restaurants, or volunteering with co-workers to feed the homeless bridges people's search for meaning in both life and work. This perspective of meaningfulness may supply resources for and pathways to positive well-being, employee retention, and a reduction in turnover rates and organizational costs. Specifically, this research shows that employees recognize meaningfulness in and appreciate work that grants them the ability to help, mentor, and lead others; to acquire experiences and skills; to develop self-sufficiency, rational capacities, and morals (see also Bowie 1998); and to belong and feel accepted. Workplaces in general have the potential to provide the aforementioned meaningful experiences—even ones that are treated as having an absence of meaning. Past conceptualizations of meaningfulness, however, denote a lack of meaning for the vast majority of workers who labor in manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail trade, leisure and hospitality, and other service-sector jobs. The conclusions in this study are applicable to many jobs that are designated bad, meaningless, lower-status, contingent, and as having mundane, repetitive work tasks. Scholarship and occupations would benefit from future examinations of how meaningfulness arises for employees who hold such jobs. Finally, the research analyses are relevant for investigations of any groups of people with uncertainties about the meaningfulness of their employment (e.g., in medical, educational, and technological fields) or their lives more generally.

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Uncloaking the Researcher: Boundaries in Qualitative Research

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Abstract Qualitative researchers are expected to engage in reflexivity, whereby they consider the impact of their own social locations and biases on the research process. Part of this practice involves the consideration of boundaries between the researcher and the participant, including the extent to which the researcher may be considered an insider or an outsider with respect to the area of study. This article explores the three different processes by which boundaries are made and deconstructed, and the ethical complexities of this boundary making/(un)making process. This paper examines the strengths and limitations of three specific scenarios: 1) when the researcher is fully cloaked and hiding their positionalities; 2) when there is strategic undressing to reveal some positionalities; 3) when there is no cloak, and all positionalities are shared or revealed. This paper argues that it is insufficient to be reflexive about boundaries through acknowledgement, and instead advocates reflexivity that directly examines the processes by which social locations are shared and hidden during the research process.

Keywords Reflexivity; Qualitative Research; Social Locations; Positionalities; Ethics; Insider/Outsider

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For qualitative researchers, reflexivity is a process that is not only encouraged, but is often expected. In working with the social world, it is inevitable that the researcher will leave their footprint behind—thus altering the landscape, and perhaps unintentionally, manipulating the outcomes. As such, qualitative researchers have taken to deconstructing how their own positionalities or social locations, and how their own biases or preferences are impacting how they do research, where they do research, and with whom they do research (e.g., Fin-

lay 2002; Mauthner and Doucet 2003; Dowling 2006; Sultana 2007; Riach 2009). Reflexivity, therefore, is "the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of a researcher's positionality, as well as active acknowledgment and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome" (Berger 2015:220).

Being reflexive about the methodology and the process of being *and* becoming transparent about the methodologies can also strengthen the credibility of the research (Cutcliffe 2003; Day 2012; Bridges-Rhoads, Van Cleave, and Hughes 2016). Being reflexive also helps to ensure that the relationship between the researcher and participant is ethical, in which the researcher's social locations and worldview and how they affect the findings are monitored (e.g., Josselson 2007; Berger 2015). However, while reflexivity serves many functions, it is not without its limitations.

Although reflexivity may allow the researcher to take greater account of how they are influencing the research, and therefore be more cognizant about how they share the stories of others, some scholars have critiqued the self-indulgent nature of this process, and have argued that it offers nothing newly valuable to the research itself. As Michael Lynch (2000:47) claimed, "in a world without gods or absolutes, attempting to *be* reflexive takes one no closer to a central source of illumination than attempting to *be* objective." Daphne Patai (1994:64) called it "the new methodological self-absorption"—a form of navel gazing that ultimately does not lead to better research, but instead perhaps only allows the researcher to play a more central role in their own research.

However, a primary function of the process of reflexivity is not simply to examine one's own self—which perhaps *can* become self-indulgent—but instead, to consider the power differentials between the participant and the researcher, and how power is being perpetuated and challenged during the research process. For example, how does the researcher utilize their position of authority? How does the participant articulate their narratives in spaces in which there may seem to be a power imbalance? How can the researcher help the participant reclaim their agency in this space? Which positionalities of the participant are interacting with which positionalities of the researcher?

While these questions are important, they have become so *customary* among qualitative researchers that there is now fear that their meaning may have become lost, and instead their purpose has shifted to once again be about the researcher, rather than the data. Wanda Pillow (2003) argues that reflexivity done in these ways is meant to help absolve the researcher of any feelings of guilt because they have "confessed" to these acts. Reflexivity "can in this way perform a modernist seduction—promising release from your tension, voyeurism, and ethnocentrism—release you from your discomfort with the problematics of representation through transcendent clarity" (Pillow 2003:187).

Pillow (2003) agrees that this form of reflexivity may confirm Patai's (1994) suspicion that this process is about the researcher and does not lead to better research. Therefore, she calls for "reflexivities of discomfort." This form of reflexivity is one that would be "interrupting comfortable reflexivity,"

in which researchers are "rendering the knowing of their selves or their subjects as uncomfortable and uncontainable" (Pillow 2003:188). It is a practice that would push the researcher even further out of their comfort zones to examine questions of power and positionalities from new and, very often, messy perspectives. Scrutinizing the ways in which we participate in the research process, and how these forms of researcher participation impact the nature of the work, as well as the outcomes of the work, are also reflexive (Cataldi 2014). Silvia Cataldi calls for the use of a "dialogical participation model," in which the researcher-participant relationship is co-constructed, which requires the researcher to be able to engage openly and actively with the participant in the implementation of the research project.

While Cataldi's proposal for a dialogical participation model is particularly relevant to those who are committed to public sociology, it can still be beneficial to any qualitative researcher who is working with human subjects—and needs to think of how research cannot be done in a vacuum, removed from the influence of others—and one's own self. As with Pillow's (2003) call for "reflexivities of discomfort," it becomes imperative for the researcher to ask the "hard" questions, and to examine themselves without the safety net of "absolution"—guilt may not be assuaged, and instead, a new, uncomfortable responsibility of ethical and unethical practices may need to be considered. They must examine the boundaries that exist between themselves as researchers and their participants, and how their social locations and positionalities are used to maintain or breakdown these boundaries.

This paper examines how the boundaries that exist between researchers and participants are often constructed through levels of dress and undress between them. The process by which the researcher determines the extent to which they will cloak themselves (and their social locations) or reveal themselves (and their positionalities) to the participants has significant ethical implications, and the practice of considering these ethicalities is argued in this paper as being a form of "reflexivity of discomfort" that is not only encouraged, but is required. This form of reflexivity ensures that questions of ethics and power and transparency of skin are deconstructed further.

The Boundary between the Researcher and the Participant

The relationship that exists between the qualitative researcher and their participant is perhaps the most important to their work. Depending on the type of research they do, it is imperative that they cultivate a relationship with their participants in order for them to be able to gather the necessary data. While there has been much debate about the texture and form of the researcher-participant relationship, there is no doubt that the nature of this relationship has significant effects on the research and the outcome of this research.

The level of intimacy that is permissible between the researcher and the participant ranges depending on the school of thought. While there have historically been calls for objectivity among researchers, in which a distance is maintained between the researcher and the participant, and the researcher

locks up their values and biases to decrease their contamination of the field, this level of objectivity has long been questioned for its feasibility. As Sandra Harding (1993:71) argues, the practice of objectivity is challenging because "it permits scientists and science institutions to be unconcerned with the origins or consequences of their problematics and practices or with the social values and interests that these problematics and practices support." Furthermore, such rigid distancing between the researcher and the participant, in which the researcher reveals no aspect of themselves to their participants will place limits on the depth and breadth of data that can be collected. The argument here is that trust can only develop when the boundaries become more permeable, and it is only when there *is* trust that researchers can know the "real" story. The question that emerges when taking this argument is whether the researcher can reveal their personal stories or their identities without sacrificing the research project, and if in the act of sharing themselves they compromise the "truth" of the participant's story. Such concern about the loss of essential data may lead researchers to reinforce their boundaries with their participants. Therefore, whether the researcher believes in firm boundaries or permeable boundaries (and whether the field is hostile or open to permeable boundaries), there is still a general expectation that some kind of boundary is still in place between the researcher and the participant. If there are no boundaries, then the integrity of the data is questioned, and there is often concern about the true motives and agenda of the researcher (e.g., Drake 2010).

One major type of boundary that has been the source of much methodological consideration has been the relatively subjective demarcation between insiders and outsiders. "Insiders" were those who shared positionalities or social locations with their participants, and therefore were believed to hold insider knowledge to the experiences of those they studied. "Outsiders," on the other hand, were categorized as those who did not share the positionalities or social locations of interest with their participants, and therefore were unable to utilize their own lived experiences to understand and translate the experiences of their participants. While it can be very easy to see the insider/outsider perspective through a strict binary view of identity, in which one can be *either* an insider or an outsider, scholars have illustrated the importance of viewing the insider/outsider identity as a spectrum and not as a dichotomy (e.g., Hellawell 2006; Couture, Zaidi, and Maticka-Tyndale 2012; Obasi 2014).

The merits and ethical considerations of insider/outsider research have long been debated, revealing both their advantages and their disadvantages (e.g., Daly 1992; Bott 2010; Drake 2010; Nencel 2014; Berger 2015). To study a group to which one belongs has raised many questions about the interplay between empathy and exploration in such research (e.g., Gair 2012). Scholarship examining insider/outsider research has primarily focused on three questions. First, did the researcher share a social location with the participant? Second, did the insider/outsider status of the researcher impact the research process? And third, was the researcher aware of this impact?

The last question demands that the researcher practice reflexivity, and unpack their own experiences of the research process and further consider the

impact of their own social locations and positionalities. However, there is insufficient attention paid to the progression by which these social locations are revealed or hidden to the participant, and the ethical concerns that are entrenched within this decision-making process. This process is further complicated by the fact that the insider/outsider boundary is subsumed within the often ill-defined boundary between the researcher and the participant. To what extent does being an insider negate the boundary between researcher and participant? And conversely, to what extent might outsiders fortify this same boundary? And does one form of boundary-building maintain stricter ethical control than the other?

This paper will examine three scenarios of boundary-building and breaking between the researcher and the participant, and the ethical considerations of this boundary-(un)making process. The first scenario is that of the "fully cloaked researcher" who attempts to build such a strong boundary between the researcher and the participant that they also refuse to share their positionalities and social locations—even if these are shared with the participant, making them "insiders." In the second scenario, the researcher practices a form of "strategic undressing" in which they disclose some social locations and hide others, thus building a boundary that is not uniform in thickness. The third scenario is that of the "naked" researcher—one who shares all their social locations and positionalities at all times, and who may not have any boundaries separating them from their participants.

Drawing on my experiences interviewing the second-generation members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in Toronto, London, and Frankfurt, as well as the members of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka, I will illustrate the challenges in being able to make consistent and uniform decisions about my own boundaries with participants. These challenges were highlighted by the fact that I would be considered as a member of the diasporic population that I interviewed. My ability to speak both English and Tamil allowed me to do all interviews myself—including the ones in Sri Lanka and the ones in Frankfurt. In each setting, depending on the population that I was interviewing, and the language in which I was conducting the interview, and the location in which I was doing the interview, I found myself constantly needing to re-evaluate my strategies of interactions with my participants—and the extent to which I wanted to maintain or deconstruct the boundary that separated me as insider from outsider, or as researcher from participant.

However, these very decision-making processes led to discomfort about how "truthful" I was being with my participants about who I was, and who I was to *them*. In reflecting on the experience of conducting interviews "in the field," it became apparent that there were three different strategies that researchers can employ in constructing their boundaries with their participants. These strategies speak to different levels of dress and undress that the researcher may take in front of the participant, and with each strategy, there is a myriad of ethical concerns that need to be considered.

It is important to note that just as boundaries can be rigid or porous, so too are the distinctions between the above three scenarios. Researchers seldom find

themselves in positions where they are very clearly able to articulate the extent to which they are cloaked or uncloaked, as they are able to transition smoothly (and often unconsciously) through these different scenarios. However, for this paper, these scenarios are being intentionally separated to clearly address how each of these comes equipped with its own ethical challenges and the need for active reflexivity.

The Fully Cloaked Researcher

I believe that in some ways researchers are like superheroes. We do not possess super-human strength or the ability to fly, but we are expected to wear a cloak—something that turns Clark Kent into Superman. And we are often encouraged to wear this cloak, and perform the feats that only a qualitative researcher can, while ensuring that the focus is on the participant without drawing attention to our own identities.

While the field of qualitative methods has mostly embraced the importance of reflexivity and paying attention to our own identities and social locations when doing research—there is not a consensus in terms of whether we should be revealing this reflexive process to our participants. Instead, this process occurs in private—when we are told to take our cloak off and to consider the impact of the cloak, and the impact of Clarke Kent's glasses, and to consider how these multiple identities that make up who we are influence our work. But, in public, the cloak stays on. We are the researchers—the superheroes, if you will—and our special skills lie in our ability to elicit information from our participants. In this scenario, the flow of information goes in the direction of participant to researcher, and the boundary is thick in terms of the flow of information in the opposite direction, from the researcher to the participant. There are several reasons why this approach may be utilized.

Firstly, such an approach encourages the spotlight to be placed solely on the participant during the data collection period. When the researcher is wearing their cloak, they can present themselves as being professional and well put-together. They do not need to share the spotlight. Instead, they are perfectly content being in the background, allowing the participants to stand center-stage and to reveal their "truths." The researcher's cloak allows them to take a seat as an audience member when needed.

Secondly, this approach allows the researcher to be perceived as "strong" and capable. To be able to hold the weight of participants' stories, and to be able to navigate through the complexities of their narratives, the researcher must possess the strength that comes from the cloak—they are strong because they, themselves, are not vulnerable during the interview. Instead, the participants are encouraged to be vulnerable—they are told that they do not need to wear a disguise and can unload their experiences and opinions and directives onto the researcher. Without the cloak, the researcher may suddenly seem fallible to the participant, and participants may find themselves in the position of feeling like they need to take care of the researcher—thus, perhaps causing them to filter and alter their stories, so that they do not harm the uncloaked researcher.

Thirdly, wearing the cloak is believed not only to protect participants, but it also shields the researcher. The cloak is symbolic of their responsibilities as researchers, and in wearing it, they are constantly being reminded of their roles in the field, and their relationships to participants. Furthermore, in being able to take the cloak off when they leave the field—in being able to move from Superman to Clarke Kent—they are also able to maintain lives that are separate from research. As such, the cloak protects them from losing themselves to the research itself, and ensures that they can maintain some emotional distance from their participants as well.

There is certainly merit to these arguments. The cloak to the qualitative researcher is perhaps what a uniform is to a soldier—they are symbolic of something bigger than themselves, and a constant reminder of what their roles and responsibilities are. However, cloaked superheroes are rarely left unquestioned. The stronger the cloak, the more impenetrable it seems, and the more questions it may draw from participants: *Who are you behind the cloak? What will you do when you take the cloak off with the stories I told you? Can I trust you without your cloak? Show me what you look like when you're not a superhero, and let me decide whether I would still want to share my life, my narratives, and my thoughts with you.* These questions and demands of the researcher are heavily affected by the extent to which the participant is expected to reveal their own uncloaked selves. If they are participating in research where they are meant to be stripped of their cloaks to share difficult, traumatic, and intensely personal stories, their requests for an uncloaked research can become even more pronounced.

In my research, these kinds of questions were not uncommon. Participants would try to get behind the researcher's cloak by asking my opinions on the subject matter. In studying how second-generation members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora negotiated their political identities and loyalties, and being a member of this community myself, I would often be invited to share my own thoughts on the very questions I would pose to them. They wanted to know what my thoughts on the Tamil Tigers were, and how I felt about the end of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. They were curious about my views on the diaspora and identity and loyalty. They wanted to know what I had to say. At times these questions were asked at the forefront—like an audition to determine whether they could trust who I was behind the cloak—and at other times, the questions were asked at the end, perhaps to reassure themselves that they were not alone, or to discern how I may have heard or interpreted their views.

When faced with these questions, I would, at first, pull the cloak tighter around my body. Shielding my own views, and instead, allowing the superhero to speak. I would say that I was still forming my own thoughts, and that was part of the reason for this research project—I wanted to hear more from them in their own words. And while this cloaked answer was at times sufficient, it often was not. Participants would become suspicious. What was I hiding? Why was I afraid to answer? Who exactly was I behind the cloak?

The fully cloaked researcher is one who maintains such a thick and rigid boundary between themselves and the participant that they are committed

to hiding as many social locations as possible—even if they are shared with the participant. In this scenario, the focus is on boundary building and strengthening, rather than on boundary breaking. There are certainly ethical concerns to wearing the cloak and the *insistence* of wearing the cloak and maintaining boundaries. On the one hand, there have been arguments made for removing one's personal self from the field to protect the participant from having to "take care" of the researcher. On the other hand, when the participant is keen to know the person behind the cloak—when they have guessed that you are wearing your secret identity—is it ethical to deny their requests? Are we imposing psychological or emotional distress on the participant in denying the existence of something that they know *does* exist? Often in the moments when the participant demands an answer, or when we are faced with their skepticism, with their wariness, with their reservation, perhaps it is then that we decide the most ethical thing to do would be to loosen our grip on the cloak. And yet, this loosening of the cloak, where we find the disguise slipping, and where there is a strategic "undressing" is not necessarily done to maintain an ethical practice in our work, but rather so that we could ward off the suspicion in order to continue fostering trust with our participants—a trust that is not necessarily being built on mutual honesty.

Strategic "Undressing": Fostering Trust and Accord with Participants

The literature on qualitative research has articulated the debate with respect to insider/outsider research. This dichotomy is no longer seen as an accurate reflection of the various positionalities of the researcher and their relationship with the positionalities of the participant. Researchers are often both insiders and outsiders, experiencing a spectrum in which their roles shift based on the situation—and over time (e.g., Couture, Zaidi, and Maticka-Tyndale 2012). This shift from outsider to insider can also occur through a strategic "undressing" on the part of the researcher, where they demonstrate their similarities to help foster trust and accord with their participants.

Sometimes the strategic removal of the cloak is brief, and provides the participant with a momentary glimpse at what lies beneath for the researcher. It is a tantalizing promise that the researcher is a person who is like them, and that they can be trusted with these stories. Such a strategy would be in effect when a researcher proclaims after the participant shares their love for spicy Sri Lankan food that they *too* love spicy Sri Lankan food. Here, the researcher is demonstrating that while they are cloaked researchers, there is a person behind the cloak that is "just like them." And if the researcher is just like them with respect to their love for spicy food, then perhaps it is possible that they will be just like them with respect to other things—maybe views on gender or politics or religion.

The "undressing" of the researcher is strategic because the researcher chooses when to share what is behind the cloak, and how much they will reveal, further illustrating the disparity in power between the researcher and the participant. When faced with a wary or reticent participant, researchers must determine whether clinging to their cloak and

wrapping it around themselves to maintain distance from the participant would be the best strategy to create a safe space for discussion. Or whether sharing how they are insiders with the participant may be the better alternative. There is a conscious decision-making process that occurs here, where the researcher needs to rethink their original strategy in soliciting information from their participants. While they may have originally planned on being fully cloaked, and presenting their "superhero researcher" persona to their participants, this strategy is ineffective if the researcher is unable to gather the necessary data. At this juncture then, the researcher must determine whether clinging to the cloak is more important than the data—and the research. And perhaps, faced with these risks, strategic undressing becomes a necessity.

I found myself needing to make this decision on several occasions when doing interviews. At times, the participant would turn to me and ask me a question (which directly demands that I remove the cloak), or make a comment requiring affirmation or denial (which indirectly demands the removal of the cloak). One such example occurred during an interview conducted with a second-generation member of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in Frankfurt. Part way through the interview she made a comment about Tamils going to the temple. There was an underlying assumption that Tamils were Hindu, and while I sensed that she knew that there were Tamils who were *not*, I also gathered that she was trying to determine how I identified. In other situations like this, I would have been able to use the cloak to justify not answering the question as it would impact the data, but in this moment, I recognized the "test." If I did not tell her I was Hindu, she would not speak about the aspects of her ethnic identity that were heavily wrapped in religion—and considering that religion was integral for her, I did not want to lose out on these stories. Therefore, I allowed the cloak to slip, and I admitted that I had not visited the Hindu temple in Frankfurt yet, but I had plans to go to my favorite one in Toronto upon my return. Her reaction was immediate—she rewarded me for showing her what lay behind the cloak by expanding on her original response in significant ways.

Sometimes this strategy occurs accidentally. A momentary lapse when the cloak slips and the researcher finds themselves revealing more than they had planned. But, if this moment leads to the participant becoming less taciturn, and more forthcoming with their behaviors and stories, then the researcher may find themselves becoming more intentional about dropping the cloak in pivotal moments. The researcher's ability to be vulnerable with participants—whether strategically done or not—can help to reassure the participant that their own vulnerability will be safe-guarded during the research process. However, at other times, the glimpses of the researcher behind the cloak that the participant believes they see may not be beneficial to the researcher, as the participant sees something unsavory that may impact their ability to trust or be at ease during the research process. Cameron Whitley (2015:67) speaks to this experience when they point out the different ways they are perceived as a transgender man, and how this has affected their research:

> I have been labeled as a lesbian, gay man, straight female, and straight male. With each label, I have been granted access to some spaces and experiences, while ef-

fectively being excluded from others, causing my sense of place and space to simultaneously change with my outward presentation and perception of others.

Strategic undressing is the most challenging approach for researchers to use, as the ethics of this practice can become blurry. If the researcher is only allowing the cloak to slip at pivotal moments to reveal positionalities that might be considered critical to the research project, then is this not a form of manipulation? It can be perceived as a very dishonest strategy that is meant to elicit more honesty from the participant. The difficulty in using this approach for the researcher is that only they know whether the "skin" they are showing as they allow the cloak to slip is their "real" skin. Faced with the promise of gaining access to important data and crucial stories, researchers may find themselves in a situation in which they present themselves as "insiders" when they are not—or put forward a vulnerability that is not necessarily accurate.

For my own research, these moments of strategic undressing were common anytime my participants wanted to know about my political views. Questions about the Sri Lankan Tamil identity inevitably raise questions about the Tamil Tigers, secession, and terrorism. These topics are minefields and I needed to be careful not to sway my participants to share an opinion simply because of my views; but I also realized that in not sharing my perspectives, it may then be perceived as if I was protecting myself—without trying to protect them. One very powerful example of needing to slip off the cloak momentarily occurred while I was doing an interview in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The participant wanted to know whether I believed that Prabhakaran (the leader of the Tamil Tigers who was believed to have been killed by the Sri Lankan army) was truly dead.

I was already able to ascertain that my participant held strong views in support of the Tigers, and held out hope for a resurgence of the separatist movement. I knew that if I shrugged off the question, and used the cloak to shield me, this participant would not be pleased—and perhaps would become offended and end the interview prematurely. I also knew that if I told him the truth—that I believed that Prabhakaran had been killed—this may lead to my participant no longer being as candid with me, and altering his responses. As such, I replied that since they had not found a body, how could we declare him to be dead. It was a philosophical question, but I knew that in using these words in that moment I was practicing a form of strategic undressing, but where the skin I showed was one that had been covered up with cosmetics.

While strategic undressing places much agency on the researcher, asking them to consider the extent to which they feel comfortable in revealing their "skin" to the participant, it would be incorrect to state that the researcher has full agency in this process. At times, the participant may think that they have managed to see behind the cloak, indicating to the researcher that they "know" them beyond the researcher. And while it may be true that the participant has managed to see behind the cloak, which could be due to an accidental undressing on the part of the participant, what if what they see is not the truth? For example, participants often make conclusions about the researcher's class, ethnicity, religion, and marital status—and the conclusions they make

may enable them to feel comfortable in sharing their own stories. When the researcher is unaware of these conclusions, they can continue to feel as if they are still wearing the cloak. However, what if the participant reveals their conclusions and these conclusions are false? Does the researcher correct them? Or does the researcher allow the participant to believe they have seen an uncloaked researcher, when in fact they are seeing an *alternate* researcher?

This experience, once recognized, can be jarring. For example, the study of identity politics is contentious, particularly when participants are being asked about whether they practice boundary-making around ethnic groups, and how these boundaries are defined. Participants will voice opinions that can be perceived as being discriminatory against other groups for a host of reasons. And perhaps because I have been identified as being a part of the diasporic community, and as a scholar who is interested in studying these identity politics, they, at times, assume that they *know* my own attitudes regarding ethnic groups and boundaries. If they do not make their opinion clear to me, then perhaps I cannot be accused of deceiving my participants—but what happens when they do? I recall, for instance, a participant who would make some severe claims about the Sinhalese population, and would then follow it up with the phrase "you know." For some, this is simply a verbal filler—something that they add on to every comment they make as a way to add a pause—but, in this case, I became increasingly aware that the participant was assuming that I *did* know because I shared their perspective. Except I did not.

I remember the discomfort I felt in this moment. Do I correct them? Do I challenge them? Do I educate them on how these prejudiced views may be impacting group dynamics? Or do I say nothing, and hide behind the idea that because I did not say anything to *affirm* their perspective, it is not then my fault if they believe that they have seen something behind the cloak that does not actually exist. Except that in *not* saying anything, I was practicing an unethical form of "strategic undressing"—in which I do not correct them about the person that they thought they saw behind the cloak. This is a form of strategic undressing, but is the most dangerous of all—because the researcher is not removing their cloak to show something "authentic," but instead the researcher pretends to remove their cloak only to show the participant a disguise—something false and untrue. In this form of strategic undressing, the researcher cannot deny the lack of ethics in their behavior—even if they do not cause any harm to the participant.

Beyond the obvious ethical concerns of researchers appearing to strategically undress only to present a different cloaked disguise to the participant, there is also the risk of shattering the existing trust the participant has with the researcher. If the researcher indicates they are an insider, and the participant tests this positionality in some way—perhaps seeking similarities of experiences or validation—the researcher may very well fail the test, causing the participant to shut down, drawing into question the integrity and ethical practices of the researcher, and the project itself.

This second scenario of the state of researcher undress and cloaking is the most dynamic in terms of boundary making and boundary breaking. The researcher is both strengthening parts of the boundary

that separates them from the participant, where they hide their social locations and positionalities, while simultaneously weakening other parts of the boundary to reveal seemingly shared social locations. This dynamic boundary making and breaking process is the one that is fraught with the most ethical concerns, and requires extensive engagement in "reflexivities of discomfort" on the part of the researcher.

Strategic undressing is arguably the most difficult strategy for a researcher to use. They must be cognizant about when they are allowing the cloak to slip, and the impact of revealing their "skin." They also need to ensure that this process is honest, and is not being used as an instrument to gain the trust of the participant while simultaneously presenting a dishonest front (or, in this case, dishonest *skin*) to the participant. Strategic undressing requires the researcher to be reflexive through the entirety of the process. They must deconstruct when and why they are clinging to their cloak, and when and why they are allowing the cloak to slip. Perhaps it would be easier to simply keep the cloak on, and remain fully cloaked through the entire research process. Or, conversely, perhaps it would be easier to be "naked" in the field, leaving the cloak completely behind.

Being "Naked" in the Field

In many ways, researchers expect participants to be naked in the field. We hope that they are being honest and forthright, and that they are willing to be vulnerable, and to show us their scars and their blemishes. We want to see the stretch marks on their skin from those sudden, unexpected growth spurts. We want to see the scars left behind from the trauma, and the heartache. We want to see the tattoos that they have chosen to adorn their skin with, and we want to understand what they mean, and why.

As researchers, we reassure them that they can trust us without their own cloaks. We speak of confidentiality and consent, and we talk about all the ways in which their data will be kept secure. And in telling them this, we hope that it will help them feel comfortable taking off their cloaks of distrust, and instead, to sit there with us in their own skin. And yet, we know that participants do not ever reveal their complete selves to researchers. We know that they screen how they behave when they are being watched, and they articulate themselves differently when they are being heard. We hope that they are showing us their skin, and we can try different methodological tools to try to triangulate and confirm and validate our findings—but, ultimately, only the participant knows the degree to which they are "naked" at the time of the interview.

As such, perhaps it is unreasonable for anyone to expect the researcher to be naked in the field. But, the question is not so much one about reason, as much as it is one about ability. *Can* researchers be naked in the field? What would it mean to be so completely vulnerable in front of our participants? How would that impact the research process and the data? And, if researchers can prove that they are, in fact, uncloaked in the field, would it impact participants' behaviors and their own dress code?

The idea of stripping off our cloaks is akin to Superman being Clarke Kent. He may have that power still, but he is also now "just" Clarke. There is fragility here

and awkwardness, and room for judgment. There is no longer the cloak of protection to act as a symbol of strength. Instead, there is someone who stumbles over words, and who can be anxious. As researchers, this level of nakedness can be very difficult. We are used to being prepared, and trying to consider contingencies, and to put forth our most professional selves. Even when we "dress down" in the field, we do this with intentionality, often driven by our perspectives regarding what would allow for rich data collection.

Therefore, it is very difficult to imagine the naked researcher. How would the interview look if the researcher is completely uncloaked? Arguably, it would be significantly more intimate. The researcher would be willing to share all of themselves, and will not be strategically undressing to show their insider positionalities. Instead, the researcher would also be revealing their outsider positionalities, and the ways in which they are different from the participant—perhaps even the ways in which they are opposed to the participant.

The naked researcher would also find it difficult to follow a script. Without the cloak, they could not hide their reactions to the participant's words—and therefore would find it challenging to stay on script without coming across as false or insincere. In showing their willingness to be fluid and flexible, and in demonstrating that they are not hiding their thoughts and reactions from the participant, the uncloaked researcher may be able to entice the participant to also be vulnerable. The participant may realize that the words about confidentiality and trust are not to be taken lightly because they are not the only ones who are at risk—the researcher has put themselves equally at risk by taking off their cloak. There is now a situation in which mutual trust and faith is required, which may allow the participant to show more of their own skin.

Researchers who do prolonged ethnographies often are reminded about the dangers of "going native," a term that refers to researchers who have been so immersed in the field that they become the very subjects that they are studying (e.g., O'Reilly 2009). In becoming so engrossed in their research, and in wanting to gain candid responses from their participants, researchers may find themselves shedding their cloaks in their entirety, and adapting the behaviors or practices of their participants. While this form of research may have been popular historically, especially among researchers conducting ethnographies, it has long been critiqued. Nevertheless, the practice itself can be difficult to avoid, especially when the researcher feels the cloak might be getting in the way of establishing rapport and gaining valuable data.

As a methodological approach, it could be argued that the more "true" the researcher is to their authentic selves in the field and in their interactions with their participants, the more likely it would be that participants would mirror this behavior. This can be particularly beneficial when one is conducting an ethnography. When one considers in-depth ethnographies that unfold over an extensive period, it has been argued that the researcher is unable to sustain the practice of wearing the cloak anyway. They will inevitably let the cloak slip, slowly and intermittently at first, but gradually, the researcher will forget the cloak completely—especially as participants will have seen behind the cloak too often to reassert the protective barrier that the cloak is meant to provide.

There is warranted concern about the ethics of going naked in the field. Concern that in removing the cloak the researcher forgets that they are *researchers*. Without the cloak, the researchers may become the friends and advocates of those they study, and while this in and of itself is not a limitation, and can, in fact, be a benefit to the research—it can be crippling if the researcher forgets their reason for being in the field in the first place. And if they only remember intermittently, when they are forced to remember, then can any of the data they collect be used without worry? Perhaps then, the ethical concerns of going without the cloak far outweigh the ethical concerns that arise from the use of the cloak, which is why there has been a push for researchers to be more intentional of how their identities impact their research (e.g., Fuller 1999; Kanuha 2000).

Furthermore, being uncloaked may not necessarily allow for richer data collection—but, instead, in being uncloaked, the naked skin itself can become a barrier to trust. The participant may hold onto their own cloak more tightly after realizing that the stories written on the flesh of the researcher are not stories they want to hear, or ones they feel comfortable knowing. There is now an added weight to the participant to not judge or react or feel embarrassed. As such, the cloak they wear becomes even more important, and is wrapped even more firmly around their bodies—a protective barrier that would allow them to shield their skin from the gaze of the researcher.

The Ethics of Dressing and Undressing the Researcher

Reflexivity is meant to be a tool for researchers to consider their impact in the research process. However, as Patai (1994) has mentioned, among qualitative researchers this process has turned into a confessional during which researchers state the "sins" they have committed, and in the act of claiming these sins, they become absolved so that they can continue to use their data and to complete their studies and publish their findings. Patai (1994) argues that it is not enough to simply practice reflexivity so that we can be absolved—as this then becomes so convenient and painless that it may as well not be done. What is the point in simply acknowledging that we may have affected the field with our ages? Or our vocabulary? Or the shoes that we chose to wear that day? Instead, as Pillow (2003) has recommended, we need to practice a form of reflexivity that is uncomfortable, and that makes us question the very ethics of our positionalities as researchers. As I argue in this paper, considering how we dress and undress in the field and in front of our participants is one very important way that we can practice this uncomfortable, yet imperative, type of reflexivity.

The boundaries that separate researchers from participants in these roles, as well as in the form of insiders and outsiders must continue to be critically examined. However, it is not enough to acknowledge the existence of these boundaries or their heights and depths (and security measures). Instead, we must also begin to be more intentional about the processes by which we decide to construct and deconstruct these boundaries, and how we determine which social locations are shown, and which ones are hidden. In further engaging with the process of boundary making and unmaking, we can become more cognizant about the cloak we are wearing, and how we choose to wear (or discard) this cloak.

This paper does not strive to suggest that there is only one way to be cloaked or uncloaked in the field. Nor does it make claims about which practice is best. Instead, it proposes that researchers begin to be reflexive about how they are dressing and undressing in the field, and how their various social locations may be impacting their participants. They must consider the ethicality of their methodologies. Researchers cannot practice reflexivity to alleviate their own misgivings and concerns, but instead should be willing to engage in reflexivity to actively and continually ensure they are being ethical as researchers in the field with their participants. This means that it is no longer enough to simply list out all the different social locations and positionalities as identified by the researcher, and to consider how these identities may invite or antagonize participants. Instead, researchers should also begin to think of how these identities are cloaked and uncloaked throughout the research process, and the ways in which we intentionally—and sometimes forcibly—make decisions about the extent to which we pull off our superhero disguises to reveal the everyday person behind the cloak.

Whether one chooses to be Clarke Kent who has confessed to being Superman, and is therefore in the ultimate state of undress; or whether one chooses to be Superman without any acknowledgment of the person behind the cloak; or whether one decides to allow the cloak to slip to reveal some skin, we must be aware that each of these decisions comes with its own advantages and limitations. And there is none that is without its own ethical concerns. Therefore, our tasks as qualitative researchers who have been given the privilege of hearing the stories of our participants is to be reflexive—not just the comfortable and safe form of reflexivity that we are often encouraged to do—but also the type of reflexivity that is jarring, and startling, and allows us to practice ethics as an active and ongoing aspect of our research.

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The Return of the Surreal: Towards a Poetic and Playful Sociology

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Abstract This article argues that the time is ripe to reacquaint sociology and surrealism. Taking inspiration from surrealism's emphasis on making the ordinary strange through bizarre, lively and sometimes haunting methods might result in a more poetic and playful sociology. The article looks at how this might be applied in practice through drawing on a variety of examples of social research that share some of the tenets of surrealism, not least the latter's focus on social justice. This enables discussion of a number of methodological concerns stemming from feminist and post-structuralist thought, including the troubling of narrative coherency and the notion of "voice." Infusing sociology with "a surrealist spirit" requires opening up and moving away from rationality in ways that allow for the exploration of contradictions, irreverence, humor, and paradox.

Keywords Arts-Based Methods; Critical Social Science; Feminism; Humor; Poetics; Research Methodology; Surrealism

The surrealist movement began in the 1920s in Paris, quickly spreading throughout Europe and Latin America, unleashing a whirlwind of desire, hysteria, dreams, games, radical poetry, mystery, and chance encounters that rocked the good taste and rational outlook of the establishment. Refusing to take life at face value, not least because this would mean accepting social and political norms, the movement has produced a vast range of influential art, poetry, literature, and performance that has posed a challenge to the status quo. Known for its strange, dream-like juxtapositions, and visual non sequiturs, early surrealism was influenced by psychoanalysis. Rather than reduce Freud's work to an elitist form of therapy, though, Surrealists "put it in the service of poetry and revolution" (Rosemont 1998:45). Its central technique of free association liberated repressed desire and shone a light on the world of dreams and daydreams, and important-

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ly discredited "the positivist rationalizations that make the world safe for capitalism and war" (Rosemont 1998:45).

Although surrealism is often thought to have died along with its founder André Breton in 1966, it continues to exert influence over art and culture. Over the decades it has continued to develop spirited ways of challenging hegemonic norms. Surrealist groups can still be found working across Europe, for instance, the Surrealist Group of Stockholm and the Leeds Surrealist Group in the UK. In the U.S., the Chicago Surrealist group (founded in 1966) is still going strong. Surrealism has also had a lasting impact on alternative comedy, particularly in the UK, where its influence can be seen from the absurdist humor of Spike Milligan and *The Goon Show* to the ridiculously successful comedy troupe *Monty Python's Flying Circus* which continues to loom large in people's imaginations. Its opening titles and sketches are peppered with collage-like animations of hybrid animals or a giant foot descending from the heavens and squashing whatever it makes contact with. Cartoonist Barry Blitt based a recent New Yorker cover (July 04, 2016) on Monty Python's famous *Ministry of Funny Walks* sketch in the wake of the UK's EU referendum with a piece entitled *Silly Walk off a Cliff*, illustrating (as well as the potential disaster that is Brexit) the continued common parlance of the surrealist comedy. Surrealism became entwined with satire in the 1980s (Gadd 2015) and can be seen at work today in the work of a range of comedians including Noel Fielding who is also a surrealist painter and collagist.

With its poetic and playful approach to understanding the world, there is much scope for a surrealist sensibility to breathe life into sociology. This would be in keeping with Les Back and Nirmal Puwar's (2012) mission to reinvigorate sociology through a focus on research methods. They have produced a "manifesto for live methods" which promotes the idea that researchers "become exposed to openness and the liveliness" of the social world (Back and Puwar 2012:12) using the full range of senses and an air of experimentation. There is certainly a need to find ways to "account for the social world without assassinating the life contained within it" (Back 2012:21). And what if this life includes the emotional, the unseen, the unspeakable, the irrational, the half-forgotten, or the hidden-behind-layers-of-acceptable-behavior? There have been in the social sciences, in recent years, successful attempts to capture the "realm of complex, finely nuanced meaning that is embodied, tacit, intoned, gestured, improvised, co-experienced, covert" (Conquergood 2002:146). These have involved, among others, arts-based and performative methods (see: Foster 2016), creative approaches (see: Atkinson 2013), autoethnography (see: Kafar and Ellis 2014), visual methods (see: Chaplin 2005; Pink 2007), feminist approaches (see: Sprague 2016), and queer methodologies (see: Nash and Browne 2016). A surrealist approach to social research would be aligned with such approaches that seek lively and inventive ways to come closer to being able to access the unspoken and intangible, and in the process come face to face with issues that have implications for the wider social world.

The 1930s surrealist dancer Hélène Vanel, a passionate advocate of the poetic, championed its ability to "reveal the secret of the ties that attach us" to the "precious, intimate, and astonishing" things of the

world (LaCoss 2005:53). "True poets," Vanel argued, are those who "animate a world in re-creating it" (LaCoss 2005:53). For social scientists, a poetic approach need not literally mean writing research encounters as poems, although this can certainly be effective in terms of capturing emotions and enlivening findings (see: Bhattacharya 2008). It might instead involve a willingness to look more lyrically and more imaginatively at the world, an act which in itself can be construed as rebellious. Latimer and Skeggs (2011:393) argue that "the political can be understood partly in terms of attempts to close the imagination down; a closure that seeks to fix the ways in which we think and conduct ourselves and make permanent the endless divisions that rivet the world into place." An "open and critical" approach to social inquiry is required.

The act of keeping methodology "open, alive, loose" (Lather 2010:x), of acknowledging a variety of perspectives, requires an acceptance of difference and even the embracing of paradox (Foster 2016). The juxtapositions, ambiguities, and absurdities celebrated in surrealism can provide some inspiration here, not least when they come with a dose of humor. This might act as a form of resistance to power and inequality through its reliance on "a kind of 'double vision'—the ability to see the absurdity, irony, or double meanings in social situations and roles" (MacLure 2009:108). More playfulness would not go amiss in the academy either given that it is, as Watson (2015) observes, too often "terminally dull." Genuine amusement and spontaneous delight is hard to come by in a world that is prone to taking itself rather too seriously. And so we march onwards, "the great academic army of the not quite dead yet" (Watson 2015:418). Not only does this make for an unfulfilling existence, there is a danger that our legacy as sociologists will be to have turned "the diversity of modern experiences into lifeless relics" (Back 2012:21).

The article's title is a play on Hal Foster's (1996) *The Return of the Real*. The book explores the ways in which the art world has recently refocused attention on practices that are embodied, or grounded, in actual social sites and social issues. One of Foster's (1996) chapters is entitled "The Artist as Ethnographer" and considers the ways that artists have attempted to adopt this new role. Conversely, in this article, the concern is for sociology and its research methods to become less literal and to draw on a surrealist sensibility. However, far from shying away from the "real," this approach is intended to heighten it in poetic and playful ways. Discussion of some of the main tenets of surrealism is woven together with consideration of a variety of methodological conundrums that have been thrown up in feminist and post-structural debate. These include the importance of acknowledging emotions in knowledge production, the troubling of narrative coherency, and moving away from privileging voice as the most authentic mode of meaning. Examples are provided of research projects that arguably display a surrealist spirit; ranging from the large-scale Mass-Observation project to a personal communication between researcher and horse. These are linked with a concern for promoting positive social change. This is in keeping with surrealist artist Toyen's description of surrealism as "a community of ethical views" (Rosemont 1998:81), which is a suitably loose definition for the purpose of this article.

Surrealism does not require locking up in the "dungeons of narrow definition" (Rosemont 1998:xxxii): "[T]he many cages in which journalists, critics, and its other enemies keep trying to confine it are in fact empty…[S]urrealism is elsewhere."

Sheer Daftness

Surrealism has never been about artists or writers or performers *escaping* into the imaginary (LaCoss 2005:37). Rather, it aims to develop a "radical awareness," a strategy that strives to "excavate the *realities* of everyday life" (LaCoss 2005:37 [my emphasis]). Daily life is understood as being produced by complex forces including unconscious ones (Shaw 1996:2), so it is important not to take it at face value. For surrealists, a passionate attention to the everyday involves taking a stand against the status quo with the aim of overcoming repressive systems (Rosemont 1998:xxxv). The critical study of the everyday has been established in sociology for decades, but it has recently experienced a resurgence in popularity. In a special issue of *Sociology* focusing on this theme, the editors noted how study of the quotidian is about more than the "straightforwardly mundane, ordinary, and routine" (Neal and Murji 2015:813). Rather, "everyday life is dynamic, surprising, and even enchanting; characterized by ambivalences, perils, puzzles, contradictions, accommodations, and transformative possibilities" (Neal and Murji 2015:813). A research methodology that adopts a surrealist spirit is best placed to capture such contradiction inherent in daily life and to challenge injustices, not least because it is through the everyday that the "endless 'quiet' reproduction" of social norms takes place. It is in the everyday that the "most trenchant ideological beliefs, the most hard-to-fight bigotries" lurk (Highmore 2005:6).

Clifford (1981) discusses how surrealism and ethnography developed in close proximity in the 1920s and 1930s. He draws comparisons and contradictions between the two schools of thought, asking "is not every ethnographer something of a surrealist, a reinventor and reshuffler of realities?" (Clifford 1981:564). However, surrealism and sociology's first real dalliance was in the 1930s, and it was the Mass-Observation project in the UK that brought them together. This was founded by the anthropologist Tom Harrison, the poet and sociologist Charles Madge, and the photographer and painter Humphrey Jenning. Madge and Jenning were heavily involved in the surrealist movement and Mass-Observation became a vehicle through which to pursue its aesthetic and political goals (Shaw 1996:2). An "unlikely and disquieting" project, Mass-Observation was also a remarkably democratic one (Highmore 2002:87). Members of the public were recruited with the purpose of collecting information on their own and others' everyday lives in ways that would "harness imaginative capacities" (Shaw 1996:2) and make the familiar strange.

In its original manifesto, Mass-Observation produced a list of topics for investigation (Harrison et al. 1937:155 as cited in Mengham 2001:28):

> Behavior at war memorials; Shouts and gestures of motorists; The aspidistra cult; Anthropology of football pools; Bathroom behavior; Beards, armpits, eyebrows; Anti-Semitism; Distribution, diffusion, and significance of the dirty joke; Funerals and

> undertakers; Female taboos about eating; The private lives of midwives.

The "sheer daftness" of the list is "in perfect accord with the more facile subversions of surrealist humor" (Mengham 2001:28) and thus it was perhaps surprising that Mass-Observation so quickly garnered respect in many quarters. Via the public's observations and descriptions, their diary-writing, drawings, and records of dreams and daydreams, there emerged a "popular poetry of everyday life" (Highmore 2002:111) which anticipated the later concerns of reflexive ethnography (Clifford 1988:143) including multivocality and poetic representations. The project's emphasis on feelings and emotions and their impact on everyday life was unheard of in more "scientific" research (Shaw 1996:2), and it foreshadows the concerns of feminist methodologists. These avant-garde tenets contributed to the production of data imbued with liveliness. Reviewers of MO's first book, *May the Twelfth* (1937), touched on the "authenticity" of the project: "One really seems to hear the people speaking, and to look into their lives—like passing backyards in a train" (Hubble 2012:215).

However, it was not long before the artistic leanings of the project were abandoned and "the Surrealist connection and visionary quality was lost" in favor of a more "scientific" approach (Shaw 1996:6). The entire Mass-Observation project came to an end in the early 1950s, but was reprised in 1991 (as the Mass Observation Project) and it continues to enlist participants to take part in writing (based on their own lives rather than observing others) on a range of such idiosyncratic themes that it appears to be quite in the spirit of the early days of the original project. Directives are issued on a quarterly basis: in Winter 2013, for example, participants were asked a series of provocative questions on the bizarrely juxtaposed topics "Serial Killers; the Countryside; What makes you happy?" (Mass Observation 2016).

This project is particularly interesting in a world where people are increasingly observing, recording, and broadcasting their own lives through social media networks. The mass of data available on people's everyday lives has obvious implications for social research. Some of these are exciting, not least the fact that "ordinary" people have a platform on which to transmit their thoughts and experiences. However, available formats for doing this are often formulaic and diminished. Zadie Smith (2010) describes Facebook as "the wild west of the Internet tamed to fit the suburban fantasies of a suburban soul." She cites the work of Jaron Lanier, virtual reality pioneer and master programmer. He has concerns over the ways that people "reduce themselves" in order that a computer's description of them seems more accurate: "'Information systems need to have information in order to run, but information *underrepresents reality*" (Smith's italics). Moreover, given that it can seem as though the aim of social media users is to be liked by increasing numbers of "friends," "whatever is unusual about a person gets flattened out" (Smith 2010).

Given this context, Mass-Observation's quirky approach to generating large swathes of data on everyday life seems particularly refreshing. It *celebrates* the unusual rather than attempting to ashamedly cloak it. Rather than underrepresenting reality, its

surreal sensibility imbues it with the scope to produce a picture of heightened reality. Yet its large and unwieldy data sets have long been a source of consternation for academics. A letter in *The Spectator* in the early days of Mass-Observation described its scientific merit as "about as valuable as a chimpanzee's tea party at the zoo"; sociologist Mark Abrams described its methods as "inchoate and uncontrolled" (Pollen 2013:215). However, it is precisely because its data do not lend themselves to being flattened out or their liveliness suppressed, that Mass-Observation draws attention to the "standard stories" of sociology (Hurdley 2014). These involve a very particular framework and one which is not necessarily attuned to the energies of life. The quest for narrative coherence begins to look ill-advised given that its products are "synthetic"—"the fool's gold of scholarly literariness" (Hurdley 2014). Thus, it is its "inconsistent, indefinite, and plural" nature that makes Mass-Observation an ideal way to "consider disordering as an organizing research process" (Hurdley 2014).

Poetry Made by All

The chaotic, apparently irrational, juxtapositions that surrealist methods rely on, and which add relish to the Mass-Observation undertakings, proved a fascination to Michel Foucault. It was surrealism, for instance, and its focus on thinking outside of conventions, that provided a way in to his challenging the limited vision of religion (Carrette 2000:61). Surrealism's undermining of rationality also led to some of Foucault's ideas on language and representation. His essay *This is Not a Pipe* (Foucault 2008 [1968]) is based on the surreal paintings of René Magritte and demonstrates Foucault's love of visual non sequiturs (which he calls *heterotopias*). It is in the preface to *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]) where Foucault introduces the idea of *heterotopias*, these troubling and incongruous textual spaces which contrast alarmingly with the comfort of *utopias*. He explains that this thinking came about after reading a passage of Jorge Luis Borges' writing and the laughter that shattered as he devoured the extract from a certain Chinese encyclopedia on the taxonomy of animals. The animals were divided into the following categories: "(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies" (Foucault 2002 [1966]:xviii). Foucault quickly realized that his burst of hilarity was in part due to the fact that the "wonderment" and "exotic charm" of this system of thought highlights the very limitations of our own system. He also describes his laughter as coming with a certain sense of uneasiness as he puzzles over the impossibility of "finding residence" for these creatures; a space where they could all co-exist. Where could they exist but in language? Yet they even cause trouble here:

> *Heterotopias* are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this *and* that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy syntax in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to, but also

> opposite one another) to "hang together." This is why utopias permit fable and discourse: They run with the very grain of language and are part of the very fundamental dimension of the *fabula*; heterotopias… desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of language at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences. [Foucault 2002 [1966]:xix]

Surrealism's goal of challenging comfortable and naturalized impressions of reality thus remains vital. One of the best loved methods of attempting to meet this goal is collage; this evokes the confusion of heterotopias in that it is simultaneously "a literal presence and a semiotic reality, a mythical construct and fictional fragments, an anatomical frame and isolated limbs" (Adamowicz 1998:185). Contemporary surrealist artist, Ivanir de Oliviera, embraces the way that the "physical limitations" of scraps or fragments "are transcended in the very act of creating new revelations that call into question the hegemony of the habitual" (Rosemont 1998:446). This, again in the vein of heterotopias, can have a "disorienting effect" on both producer and viewer (Adamowicz 1998:4).

Surrealist artist, Eileen Agar, a protagonist of this method, describes how her very life is a collage, "with time cutting and arranging the materials and laying them down, overlapping and contrasting, sometimes with the fresh shock of a surrealist painting" (Young Mallin 2001:213). Certainly everyday life is full of chance encounters and random detritus which often come together in surprisingly meaningful ways. And with much of our everyday life lived online these days, a Google search itself, "on any subject, might be said to yield a kind of blueprint for a collage" (Douglas 2011:7); a present-day equivalent of "a shoebox of newspaper clippings, postcards, old snapshots, ticket stubs, matchbooks, and art reproductions." Collage is a technique that inherently uses metaphor; image fragments are chosen and placed to give a "sense" of something rather than a literal expression of an idea (Butler-Kisber 2008). The process of collage can be seen as a democratic one in that it does not necessarily require formal artistic training. Its accessibility and playful aspect offers a way towards achieving Comte de Lautréamont's vision of a "poetry made by all" (Rosemont 1998:47).

Collage is an approach particularly favored by women surrealists, and historically it has been women surrealists who have used their art as a way of expressing personal traumas and nightmares; their work "became a means of gaining self-awareness, exploring their inner thoughts and feelings, dealing with their experiences, and locating or constructing their true identities" (Rosemont 1998:47). Humphreys (2006:378) draws comparisons between the collage art of Max Ernst (one of the best known and most prolific of the original surrealists) and that of Valentine Penrose. She argues that Penrose's collage-poem, *Dons des féminines*, whilst heavily influenced by the earlier work of Ernst—notably his celebrated pictorial novel *Une semaine de bonté*—is at the same time "an implicit critique" of male surrealists' representations of women. In this series of collages, which are presented alongside her poems, Penrose juxtaposes female figures (often sourced from Victorian fashion magazines) with animals or hybrid creatures in wide open landscapes. This is an "unreal hallucinatory world" (Chadwick 1985:227) and

one where there is "no hegemonic order" (Humphreys 2006:385).

Collage translates particularly well into a social research method (see: Butler-Kisber 2008), not least because of its ability to address wide scale social issues through a medium that is often '"intensely personal," materials that are "equally intimate" and that might "attempt to map some previously unarticulated interior truth" (Douglas 2011:7). Moshoula Capous-Desyllas (2015) employs collage as a method of reflexively working through her emotional experiences of conducting a challenging and affecting research project with sex workers in Portland, USA. The research involved participatory photography, with the women taking photographs of their "lived experiences, needs, and aspirations," and Capous-Desyllas simultaneously produced a series of collages as a means of "(re)imagining, (re)presenting, and critically reflecting" on this process (Capous-Desyllas 2015:193-195), an important strategy in feminist research (see: Daley 2010). Capous-Desyllas describes the collage making as "highly intuitive" and, with very much a surrealist flavor, notes how unexpected associations between various images allowed her to make "connections that may otherwise have remained unconscious" (Capous-Desyllas 2015:195). One collage in particular, *Chaotic liberation*, with its vibrant and peculiar mix of female figures and animals, visually echoes some of the work in Penrose's *Dons des féminines* series as it likewise works through ideas about representations of women and issues of injustice.

Capous-Desyllas recalls how, although the project had brought much joy and laughter, she had at times been frightened, angry, and upset, particularly by the stories told to her of violent abuse, racism, and oppression. With her "feminist social work researcher" head on (she also describes herself as an artist and activist), Capous-Desyllas is able to make important, but perhaps predictable, connections between these stories and stereotyping, intersectionality, and structural oppression perpetuated by the prison system. The collage, however, transcends this discussion in a haunting way. The inclusion of an image of a black man and a porcelain female head reportedly enabled Capous-Desyllas to "process her discomfort" associated with stories she was told. She does not share any of the details of these stories with the reader, but the sinister overtones of the collage still manage to evoke a sense of these withheld horrors.

The emotional charge of the work is not insignificant. Emotions have usually been considered "potentially or actually subversive of knowledge" and reason rather than emotion "has been regarded as the indispensable faculty for acquiring knowledge" (Jaggar 1989:151). One of the most important contributions of feminist and anti-racist methodology is in its contestation of the opposition between rational thought and emotion. Not only has emotion been "projected onto the bodies of others," who are then pathologized as a result (Ahmed 2004:170), such a projection also "works to conceal the emotional and embodied aspects of thought and reason."

Because of their independence from rational and linguistic systems, arts-based methods are able to evoke an emotional or affective response. However, in the case of collage, this requires active input

from the reader (Adamowicz 1998:21). He or she is required to fill in spaces, identify sources or intertexts, or inhabit the gaps (Adamowicz 1998:21). Yet it can be tempting for the researcher to fill in the gaps. For instance, Capous-Desyllas' collage incorporates strangely juxtaposed animal imagery, recalling the surrealist use of birds and beasts as emblems of transcendence, expanding knowledge beyond the everyday realm. When Capous-Desyllas explains the symbolism of each of her animals at some length, the power of the work is diminished. It would require a brave decision to forgo "the coherent comfort of narrative" (St. Pierre 2009:226), to leave the gaps alone, and to trust the reader to thoughtfully fill them or inhabit them.

Letting Go of the Literal

Letting go of conventional narrative structure is particularly difficult given that we tend to privilege voice as "the carrier of the truest meaning" (St. Pierre 2009:222). This has to be problematic, argues St. Pierre (2009:221), especially for "those who are wary of the supposed conscious, stable, unified, rational, coherent, knowing, autonomous… individual." This question of voice, and the extent to which social research can "give voice" to marginalized groups or "let voices speak for themselves" (Mazzei and Jackson 2009), is one which concerns feminist, postcolonial, and postmodern scholars (Bhattacharya 2008). Research that leans on the arts is not necessarily free from the issues surrounding voice in qualitative research; in fact, it is likely to reproduce the same knowledge as more conventional research, but "with a different literary twist" (Mazzei and Jackson 2009:2). Taking inspiration from surrealism might help to avoid reliance on what Mazzei and Jackson term the "too easy" notions of voice.

Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* takes the form of a series of eighteen dialogues between the explorer Marco Polo and Kublai Khan whereby Polo describes a series of surreal cities he claims to have visited. Their methods of communication are perhaps more surreal than the cities themselves. Initially, the men are without a shared language and Polo can only express himself through gestures, "leaps, cries of wonder and of horror, animal barkings or hootings, or with objects he took from his knapsacks—ostrich plumes, pea-shooters, quartzes—which he arranged in front of him like chessmen" (Calvino 1997:21). Kublai was forced to interpret these "improvised pantomimes." Gradually, Polo not only learns the Tartar language, but also its idioms and dialects—so that he is able to communicate "the most precise and detailed" accounts. Yet the Great Khan found that each piece of information recalled "that first gesture or object with which Marco had designated the place" (Calvino 1997:22) and he gradually begins to lose interest in Marco Polo's words. So too do words begin to fail Marco Polo, until "little by little, he went back to relying on gestures, grimaces, glances" (Calvino 1997:39).

Research that adapts a surrealist spirit not only thrives on "messy spaces," it also plays with language in ways that make it ideally situated to toy with notions of voice. Polo's and the Khan's fantastic communications are not wildly divergent from MacLure's (2009:97-98) goal of '"voice research" which attends to:

> laughter, mimicry, mockery, silence, stuttering, tears, slyness, shyness, shouts, jokes, lies, irreverence, partiality, inconsistency, self-doubt, masks, false starts, false "fronts" and faulty memories—not as impediments or lapses to be corrected, mastered, read "through," or written off, but as perplexing resources for the achievement of a dissembling, "authentic" voice.

The account of the creative storytelling project *Time Slips* takes as its starting point a challenge to the oft rolled out aim to "hear the voices" of the marginalized. Basting (2001:78) queries *how* the voices of the disabled—not least those with cognitive impairments or severe physical impairments—can be heard:

> In what forms can and do their voices have meaning? Might certain forms of narrative and modes of performance actually support ideals of independence and selfhood that fuel fears of disability in the first place? What can the stories of the disabled tell us about the very meaning of the "self?"

Time Slips involved 18 weeks of storytelling workshops in the USA with people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (ADRD); all participants required some form of 24-hour care. In the second phase of the project, many of the resultant stories were worked in to a play, a website, and art installation so that the work might reach a wide and varied audience. *Time Slips* aimed to acknowledge the *complexity* of participants' worlds and to do so by encouraging their creative expression. One aspect of this complexity is the relational nature of their selfhood given that they rely on people "to translate the world" for them. Whilst everyone's selfhood is constructed through relationships with other people and institutions, this is an extreme example. It calls into question the forms of storytelling that might represent their lives. Certainly, traditional autobiography is not ideal given that it would necessarily "mask the intensity" of caregiving relationships. Memoir is problematic, not least because people with ADRD not only forget details, they also forget concepts: "One does not just forget where one put the keys. One cannot comprehend the *meaning* of a key." They also lose the ability to comprehend chronological time systems. Interestingly, surrealists have oft been preoccupied with depicting the passage of time; Dali's iconic painting, *The Persistence of Memory*, which depicts melting pocket watches is one example. The concept of time is emblematic of our attempts to structure our existence; when this breaks down, our purpose, our very being, is challenged. The *Time Slips* project was not concerned with memory but rather designed to create new stories about participants' present selves complete with missing words, repeated sounds, and hazy memories (Basting 2001). Although one storyteller's language was limited to the sounds "Bababababa," this was able to be incorporated into nearly all the stories.

Each week, the group's facilitator would encourage the group to choose an image from a selection, on which the story would be based. The story would be constructed by participants' answers to a series of questions posed by the facilitator. A "certain theatrical flair" was required to interpret "a random list of sensical and nonsensical answers" (Basting 2001:81). This process also involved having to let go of the literal and forsake linear narrative. Basting (2001: 89) admits that it was overwhelmingly difficult to resist the urge to tidy the stories up, to "craft them…to

draw out and polish the rich metaphors and symbols that lay like geodes in the riverbed of the tales." It is this resistance, however, that lends the project its fascination. Language remains free "to carry emotional, rather than literal, meaning" (Basting 2001:83).

> *That's a Big Body...*
> *(In response to an image of an elephant and a little girl)*
> We are deep in the heart of Austin, Texas.
> Grandfather the elephant lives at the zoo and does tricks in the circus.
> But he's not allowed to sing there.
> One day, while walking down the street, he meets Amy, a 10-year-old girl.
> Now, most people would run away when they meet an elephant on the
> street, but Amy has no fear.
> They become friends.
> One day, Grandfather takes his car and drives from the zoo to the church,
> where Amy is at a wedding.
> He waits for her outside, because he's too big for the church.
> If he went in, he'd break it down.
> While Grandfather waits, he hears "Abide with Me" coming from the
> church. *(Group sings "Abide with Me.")*
> He likes it because he's not allowed to sing at the circus.
> Amy comes out to meet him and feeds Grandfather corn and hay and grass, because grass is good.
> Grandfather has floppy ears.
> He's a very good person, he's comfortable and happy.
> Amy falls asleep on Grandfather, and he waits for her to wake, then gets
> back in his car and drives back to the zoo.
>
> [Basting 2001:84]

A Horse Is a Horse

Basting's (2001) article in which she discusses *Time Slips* is entitled "God is a Talking Horse," a line from one of the stories produced by people with ADRD entitled "A horse is a horse of course of course." "God" is short for Godfreya, a music-loving horse that enjoys a deep relationship with its cowboy owner. Anna Banks' (2016) research involves an actual communication between human and horse and, given that they share no common spoken language, this also disrupts "too easy" notions of voice. Banks is a horse masseuse and provides an account of this practice which involves her playing two roles: bodyworker and ethnographer. The physical aim is to reduce tension in the horse's muscles and tissues; the ethnographic aim is to "record and communicate" information about the horse.

The practice involves Banks collecting data, firstly through a conversation with its owner, but then through direct communication with the horse. This requires her own body to enter a particular state of being, "open and fully sensing." The bodywork begins with an initial sequence of rhythmic muscle pulsing; should the horse relax at this point, this embodied transmission is understood as an invitation to work more deeply at unknotting any tension. Banks includes fieldnotes on her work with a broodmare, Sage, and describes how she visually inspects the horse, uses her sense of smell to rule out particular issues, and listens to the mare's gut. She then uses the more metaphysical technique of reiki before beginning the massage. During the massage, Sage's foal joins in, nuzzling at the very same muscle that Banks is massaging, on the opposite side of

the mare's body. Banks records how the foal "perfectly mirrors" her touch:

> I experienced a wonderful sense of connection with them—mare and foal. After her massage, Sage, her foal and I paused for a moment in community before they and the other mares and foals returned to the herd and their regular life's activities, and I returned to mine. [Banks 2016:71]

There are no claims made to "give voice" to the mare and foal, yet the account of these animals very much brings them to life. The work has a surrealist sensibility not only because of the way it disrupts conventional understandings about communication but also because of the ecological concerns that the Surrealist movement displayed: "the adjective *wild* has always been a term of the highest prestige" (Rosemont 1998:li). Nature, wildlife, and wilderness are integral themes, particularly in the work of surrealist women whose work is often replete with animal imagery and set in wilderness landscapes (as is the case in Penrose's collages discussed above). Leonora Carrington's paintings and writings employ a veritable "vocabulary" of animals and birds, and are regularly punctuated by the white horse (Chadwick 1985:75). Paintings include *Self-Portrait (Inn of the Dawn Horse)* and *The Horses of Lord Candlestick* which respectively include references to her childhood hobby horse and family horses. In her play *Penelope* (written in 1946 and first performed in 1957 in Mexico), the protagonist rebels against her authoritarian father who has banned her from indulging in imaginative play with her hobby horse Tartar (named for the Ancient Greek mythological underworld) with whom she is in love. She escapes this patriarchal domain by turning into a white horse and flying off into another realm (Chadwick 1985:78).

Forerunners of deep ecology and ecofeminism (Rosemont 1998:li), the work of these (predominantly women) surrealists called for a "redefinition of the relations between humankind and the animal, solidarity with endangered species, [and] a nonexploitative regard for the planet we live on" (Rosemont 1998:li). So too Banks draws attention to the schism that exists between many humans and the wider community of nature (animals, trees, plants, soils, and waters); her research aims to offer a glimpse into the complex communities that exist in the more than human world. One outcome of "reinvigorating our senses" and "re-attuning ourselves" to this wider community is that it opens the possibility of attending to the nuances of the lived experiences of the world around us.

Haraway (1988:593) describes how, in the vein of ecofeminism, and in a critical sense, the "world encountered in knowledge projects is an active entity." This is in opposition to the ("bourgeois" and "masculinist") majority who view it as a resource to be mined.

> Acknowledging the agency of the world in knowledge makes room for some unsettling possibilities, including a sense of the world's independent sense of humor. Such a sense of humor is not comfortable for [those] committed to the world as resource…Feminist objectivity makes room for surprise and ironies at the heart of all knowledge production; we are not in charge of the world. We just live here and try to strike

> up non-innocent conversations by means of our prosthetic devices. [Haraway 1988:593]

The role of irony in knowledge production is an idea that Watson (2015) plays with. It is incongruity—that device loved by surrealists—that might be understood as "a method for constructing an ironic opposition." Because irony involves paradox and contradiction, seeing things from opposing viewpoints, it "constitutes the art of social science" (Watson 2015:415). It also challenges power relations (although the extent to which it might bring about a change of outlook is debatable):

> Irony undermines the pretence of control or power over the meaning of civic discourse and social parlance, thereby disengaging the speaker as a civic participant and freeing her or him from the proclivity to conform to social practice and the hegemony of social ritual. [Watson 2015:415]

Imbuing social research with a surreal sensibility is a way to attempt to see beyond hegemonic norms, even the prevailing (and environmentally catastrophic) notion that the natural world is somehow separate from human life. The truth is that we are profoundly entwined and listening carefully to the world and its creatures—with a sense of humor and a willingness to accept paradox—might well teach us more than we think possible.

Conclusion

Surrealism's aim is to "arrive at an ever more precise and at the same time more passionate apprehension of the tangible world" (Breton as cited in Nadeau 1973:37). Fabulous visions and hallucinatory worlds draw attention to the very realities of our own society and the taken-for-granted injustices embedded within it. This is not far apart from the aims of a critical sociology that seeks to uncloak the cruelties and contradictions inherent in the neoliberal world. This article has focused on the ways that surrealism might influence the process of knowledge production in the context of arts-based and critical inquiry. "For Surrealism," notes Sheringham (2006:67), "the possible is contained in the actual; what might be is always already present within what is. The problem is to find a way of grasping it." For sociology too, particularly in light of post-structural critiques of knowledge production, there is a challenge to grasp that which is hidden or non-literal and often remains stubbornly out of reach.

The article has drawn on a number of projects imbued with a "surrealist sensibility" in order to begin to consider how surrealist notions might actually be applied in the research process. This discussion of parallels between social research methods and surrealist methods is by no means exhaustive. There are myriad other possibilities. For instance, the emphasis in sociology on walking as method (see: Moles 2008) has resonance with the surrealist method of dérive. It is Baudelaire's Flâneur that provides inspiration for walking methods; the surrealist version emphasizes the links between the external world and the internal psyche (see: Debord 1958). I am planning to explore this method in an arts-based research project that I am currently devising. It will take place at a local farm that adopts a Community Supported Agriculture model. I will be exploring the experiences of the farm's volunteers and considering the ecological,

health, and spiritual benefits of this sort of farming practice. Walking around the beautiful and productive fields should inspire reflection and conversation on the links people make between the external landscape and their internal ones. I am also planning to devise a series of surrealist games in this research to engage participants from the local community and to lend a playful and imaginative element to the project. Sarah Metcalf (2011) of the Leeds Surrealist Group has experimented with various techniques which might also be of use for encouraging a moving away from coherent narrative. Brotchie and Gooding's (1995) *Surrealist Games* is also replete with creative and humorous ideas.

I am also currently working on a series of collages that explore an ongoing research project. This involves an evaluation of a quirky educational project that a local arts organization has carried out at a school in Liverpool, UK. The collages that I am working on, as I analyze and write up the data I have collected, are enabling me to reflect on issues that are pertinent to the research (for instance, tensions between "child-led" and "adult-led" education practices) and will in time be written into the report of findings. They are also allowing me to explore my own feelings about some of the challenges involved in carrying out evaluative research as an academic. These are not appropriate for discussion in the evaluation report, but might be discussed in future academic writing. Given that this writing will not happen for some time, if at all, it is useful to have captured my immediate thoughts on this issue through strangely juxtaposed images that speak to me of some of the emotions and confusion that I experienced at the time about my academic career.

Drawing inspiration from surrealism in social research requires imagination, a "letting go of the literal rather than documenting it" (Rasberry 2002:116). It is imagination that is required to come to such a "startling defamiliarization with the ordinary" (Greene 2000:4). Imagination makes the real more real; more alive. Here there is resonance with a "live" sociology, which, as Back argues (2012:36), is "not just a methodological matter of bringing sociology to life but a way to live and sustain the life of things." Immersing ourselves in a surrealist sensibility becomes a way of life, one that is more in tune with the planet and acknowledges its aliveness. Freeing the imagination "is the heart of the process by which everyday life becomes the realization of poetry itself" (Rosemont 1998:xxxv).

The imagination can assist in highlighting the absurdity of the everyday, and enable acknowledgement of, if not resistance to, some of its brutality. Latimer and Skeggs (2011:393) argue that the imagination is rooted in socio-political and cultural contexts. In fact, it is "one of the key sites in which all political and cultural agendas are played out." Their "sociological imagination" is a new interpretation of C. Wright Mills' classic work which has long influenced sociology in terms of recognizing the relationship between personal experience and wider society. Latimer and Skeggs (2011) draw on the strengths of this contribution, but also stress the importance of not privileging any one perspective. Rather than focusing on *the* sociological imagination, they call for an opening up of possibilities, which, in turn, requires an "ethical commitment." They equate Foucault's concept of curiosity with the imagination:

> Curiosity is a vice that has been stigmatized in turn by Christianity, by philosophy, and even by a certain conception of science…I like the word however. To me it suggests something altogether different: it evokes "concern"; it evokes the care one takes for what exists and could exist; an acute sense of the real which, however, never becomes fixed; a readiness to find our surroundings strange and singular; a certain relentlessness in ridding ourselves of our familiarities and looking at things otherwise; a passion for seizing what is happening now and what is passing away; a lack of respect for traditional hierarchies of the important and the essential. [Foucault 1996 [1980]:305 as cited in Latimer and Skeggs 2011:399]

Curiosity (and especially the French, curiosité), in a linguistic accident, means not only a desire to know something, but also an oddity or novelty. The way that these concepts come together by chance and are encapsulated in one word would appeal to a surrealist sensibility. Both primary and secondary meanings very much contribute to the spirit of social inquiry inspired by surrealism. Surrealism's fervent creativity and glorious tumult of ideas for challenging the status quo and producing heightened versions of reality might provide inspiration for sociologists to look at life with a sense of curiosity. This in turn might result in the production of playful and poetic curiosities that provide insight into the world and help to keep sociology's spark alive.

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