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**Expanding Social Interactionist  
Horizons: Bridging  
Disciplines and Approaches**

by

Andrew Blasko  
and Vessela Misheva

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## Introduction to the Special Issue

### *Expanding Social Interactionist Horizons: Bridging Disciplines and Approaches*

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/1733-8077.15.2.01>

**Andrew Blasko** is a Professor of Philosophy with a specialization in European Values and Culture whose present institutional affiliation is the Institute of Population and Human Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. He defended his doctoral dissertation at Sofia University under the direction of Asen Davidov on the question of how Sartre's conception of the progressive-regressive method, particularly as it is employed in the second volume of *Critique de la raison dialectique*, casts light on historical development as a process of totalization that does not have a totalizer. His publications have discussed a range of theoretical and empirical questions arising from the ongoing social and cultural changes that have taken place in Central and Eastern Europe during the last three decades. He has also recently co-edited *Jane Addams and the Spirit of Social Entrepreneurship* (2018). Blasko currently serves as a member of the board of the European Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction and is Secretary-Treasurer of Research Committee 36 on Alienation theory and Research at the International Sociological Association.

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This volume of selected articles is intended to present topics and questions that were discussed at the *VIIth Annual Conference of the European Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (EUSSSI)*, which was held in Topola, Bulgaria, July 04-08 2016. The EUSSSI is a rather young scholarly society that will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2020. It emerged from a conference organized by the University of Pisa in 2010 where, for the first time, efforts to create a permanent transatlantic interaction between American and European scholars working in the symbolic interactionist tradition met with success. Since then, the EUSSSI and the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI) have enjoyed close cooperation, including the support of our American colleagues of our efforts to consolidate the European scholarly community promoting symbolic interactionism.

This conference was organized jointly by the EUSSSI and the Institute for Population and Human Studies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, which hosted the meeting. The venue was chosen with the idea in mind of continuing the existing tradition in Bulgaria of holding large international scholarly events on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. Such spaces at a distance from working places have been proven to create good conditions for extending discussions beyond the lecture halls to all other times of day. This serves to strengthen both collegial and friendly relationships and networks in ways that facilitate future cooperation.

The Topola Conference sought to build upon a series of similar events previously organized in other European countries, beginning with the first confer-

ence in Pisa (2010), followed by meetings in Kassel (2011), Rotterdam (2012), Uppsala (2013), Aalborg (2014), and Salford (2015). Conferences were then held in Lodz (2017) and in Lancaster (2018). Much as in previous years, the VIIth EUSSSI Conference brought together over 70 prominent scholars in the fields of social psychology, sociology, symbolic interactionism, social work, and qualitative methods. This truly international event was attended by scholars representing Bulgaria, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Norway, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Israel, the United States, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Hong Kong, Canada, and Austria. The participants included senior scholars and recognized authorities who, during the course of their careers, have left their personal mark on the development of their disciplines, as well as younger scholars beginning to make names for themselves within their own communities who are now venturing into larger arenas. The conference brought together a number of varied traditions with distinct perspectives into a common discussion, the results of which could be seen not only in presenting, articulating, and sharing different views in a uniquely fruitful way, but also in expanding the knowledge horizons of the fields of common interest.

The texts of presentations at the conference were further elaborated for the purpose of this publication, and the various professional contacts and interactions that emerged from the exchanges at the conference have been particularly useful in this regard. They also have led to research, writing, and teaching projects that have been presented at subsequent scholarly events. As with the previous conferences, one purpose of the Topola Conference was

to involve scholars of differing generations, backgrounds, cultures, and national identities in face-to-face interaction, thus applying the principles of symbolic interaction to discussions of the theoretical and applied issues of symbolic interactionism itself. The EUSSSI conferences over the last eight years have proven to be particularly valuable for the participants, not least because of that particular feeling at the end of each conference that a new community is being born during the week that we are together each time we meet. This certainly was also the case in Topola, where old friendship continued to grow and deepen and new friendships emerged in a way that promised to influence what we read, think, say, and write. EUSSSI conferences and activities have also been held in Lithuania (2018) and are now being planned for Iceland (2019) and Pisa (2020), in addition to other meetings held on a yearly basis in Europe and participation in the activities of the home organization and main partner of the EUSSSI in North America, the SSSI.

We hope that the collection of papers presented here provides a faithful representation of the variety of approaches accommodated within an extended conception of symbolic interactionism, which possesses the potential to intersect and integrate a variety of distinct research fields and viewpoints. This collection may be regarded as a good illustration of how most such views serve to complement each other and highlight the central role of symbolic interactionism in the social sciences and humanities as a theoretical and methodological paradigm capable of promoting and reinforcing integration between, as well as within, diverse disciplinary fields.

The Topola EUSSSI conference was also significant in another way. Previous conferences had been held in Southern, Northern, Western, and Central Europe, and the activities of the EUSSSI as a scholarly association had not been extended to Eastern Europe, where no formal collegial relations had yet been established. Bulgaria thus became the first country in the region to host the activities and share in the work of the scholarly communities associated with both the SSSI and the EUSSSI. The number of scholars from East European countries who have since joined the network is regarded as evidence of the success of this undertaking.

This type of yearly conferences for social scientists in constant motion, who move from one end of Europe to the other, crossing geographical, political, cultural, economic, and disciplinary borders, should of course be regarded as serving more than one strategic goal. These goals are not limited to the further development and strengthening of the symbolic interactionist tradition and the revitalization of the various disciplines involved. Symbolic interactionism is useful not only for research, but also as a social practice with the potential to resolve conflicts and heighten the quality of everyday life through interaction in a modern society in which all social relationships, even love, depend on discourse. The international scholarly communities committed to symbolic interactionism can make valuable contributions not only to expanding its boundaries as a research and disciplinary field, but also to the process of the economic and political integration of the continent. The European Union has grown over the last two decades in both geographical size and population to an extent that had perhaps not been fore-



seen when the still ongoing process of European realignment was initiated. The general impression is that the consequent integration has been more or less successful, but there nevertheless are regions of Europe, including some of the oldest nations and states on the continent, that have not yet come to be regarded as full partners in the current project of European unification.

We hope that the EUSSSI conferences may establish a pattern of engaging scholarly communities in

larger interactions concerning the most acute problems of our time, lending credibility and supplying a rationale to diverse national efforts. It is hoped that the contributions to this volume that we are presenting to you will give you a sense of what was accomplished at the Topola Conference—a step towards greater diversity in unity, not only across disciplines and research orientations within the framework of symbolic interactionism, but also across differing nations, histories, languages, and traditions.

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## The Meso-World: Tiny Publics and Political Action

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**Abstract** In recent decades, sociologists have too often ignored the group level—the meso-level of analysis—in their emphasis on either the individual or the institution. This unfortunate absence misses much of what is central to a sociological analysis of community based on “action.” I draw upon Erving Goffman’s (1983) concept of the interaction order as I argue that a rigorous political sociology requires a focus on group cultures and tiny publics. Group dynamics, idiocultures, and interaction routines are central in creating social order. This approach to civic life draws from the pragmatism of John Dewey, as well as the broad tradition of symbolic interactionist theorists. Ultimately, I argue that a commitment to local action constitutes a commitment to a more extended social system.

**Keywords** Meso-Level of Analysis; Interaction Order; Tiny Publics; Political Order

To love the little platoon we belong to in  
society is the first principle...of public  
affections. It is the first link in the series by  
which we proceed towards a love to our  
country, and to mankind.

*Reflections on the French Revolution* (1790)

Edmund Burke

### Small Groups and the Political Order

How can we explain a revolution, a democratic transition, or a conspiracy by shadowy elites? If we examine the genesis of the First World War, the French Revolution, the Civil Rights movement, or the stable governance of a Midwestern farming town in the United States, we find a set of tiny publics (Fine 2012), either working together or engaged in conflict, that create the conditions necessary for political action. Dramatic changes and long-term continuities happen because groups of individuals commit to these political projects. Stated otherwise, citizens develop a “civic imagination” in which they confront issues while viewing themselves as holding joint membership (Baiochi et al. 2014). They belong together and

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share a common fate, and actors define themselves as constituting a “we,” whether that operates locally or on a more expansive level. We imagine communities to which we aspire and which we value—and such collectivity covers much ground. As Georg Simmel (1971:24) remarks,

Sociation ranges all the way from the momentary getting together for a walk to the founding of a family, from relations maintained “until further notice” to membership in a state, from the temporary aggregation of hotel guests to the intimate bond of a medieval guild.

Many analyses of the structure of political engagement take one of two forms: either they investigate how institutional structures set the conditions for politics, erasing the role of the individual, or they examine how individual attitudes and beliefs shape political decisions. But, while ongoing social relationships are often marginalized and the links among local communities ignored in both of these approaches, we suffer if we ignore intermediate organizations (Ehrenberg 1999:x) and their shared perspectives. Moreover, despite the value of recognizing that institutions exist that are more local than the state, the interaction among citizens in building a local culture is still downplayed.

However, a shared politics exists because sociable groups base their ongoing interaction on pre-political behavior (Feigenbaum 1959) that can, under appropriate circumstances, generate political action. These local cultures—what I label the meso-level of analysis—are crucial. I follow Anthony Giddens

(1984) in arguing that structures exist insofar as they are enacted, and, as Lichterman and Eliasoph (2014:810) suggest, productive civic action consists of participants coordinating to improve their common circumstances. This requires interpersonal flexibility, negotiation, and the belief that society benefits from this shared project. Such a model is consistent with the American Political Science Association’s late 1990s “Civic Education Project for the Next Century,” which focuses on

the civic work of ordinary people who, located in diverse, plural communities, work on behalf of their communities and seek eagerly for common goods, both heroic and mundane. [Ehrenberg 1999:x]

The claimed intent of this project is to discover the locally-based middle-ground I will discuss below.

Lichterman and Eliasoph (2014:815) have emphasized the existence of phenomenological scenes that depend upon the continuing presence of participants who define themselves as mutually engaged in civic projects. They also include such components as intra-group relations, speech norms, and a social cartography that define the group in the light of a network of other groups. This position proposes the existence of a group culture that depends upon ongoing commitments and shared beliefs—what Goffman (1983) terms an interaction order—which, when recognized, permits situated interpretations, performances, and styles of civic life, leading to a recognition of the similarity of groups. Local actors rely on their belief in a shared interaction order, that is, a distinctive order that comes to characterize places and the groups in those

places.<sup>1</sup> Group relations are in continual dialogue with symbolic forms and shared beliefs.

My goal in the present discussion is straightforward, namely, to ask how groups—tiny publics—shape a political order. In what way does local culture shape affiliation and participation within a political system? Tiny publics affect civil society, civic behavior, and governmental action, and while this is a broad spectrum, the “political” in its various forms depends upon a meso-level and local analysis. Civic life is not a distinct domain of action or sector of political behavior, but is integral to any interaction order (Lichterman and Eliasoph 2014:838, 852). Politics, communities, and institutions build upon the activity of their tiny publics on the basis of individual coordination and an awareness that action is important for them and their community. People see the world in much the same way as their close associates, whether or not they hope for the same future. Social actors, in fact, often acknowledge the ties that bind them, believe in shared participation, create group symbols, select a preferred style of interaction, and create solidarity by complaining about constraining forces (Feigenbaum 1959:30). Even ostensibly apolitical groups, such as leisure clubs, fit their commitments into political culture, no matter whether such commitments remain unrecognized (Kjølsrød 2013:1207). From their local perspectives and specialized interests, social groups of many kinds develop what sociologists Robert Merton and Elinor Barber (2004) refer to as

“sociocognitive microenvironments.” We do not live with millions, but with a few, and they influence how we see the world. I thus examine group influence throughout political engagement—from communal actions to government decision-making to terrorist attacks—and my concern is how the meso-level of analysis intersects with political action.

Groups, once central to the analysis of social order, had been marginalized both by those who examined the rational choice of individuals, embracing a micro-economic model, and by those who hoped to erase the individual by examining the power of more expansive institutional, state-based, and global systems. These two approaches have merged, but they ignored the places, communities, and social relations that motivate action. For a social system to thrive, individuals must see themselves as belonging together, these group members must routinely engage, and they must create systems of meaning and establish rules of order. This happens when people come together in common cause or in dispute.

A robust meso-sociological analysis must examine the intersection of three core concepts: *culture*, *interaction*, and *structure*. This triad, when considered together, constitutes the *interaction order*, the concept Erving Goffman (1983) outlined to explain how social systems are a precipitate of ordered, but interpersonal negotiation. This perspective recognizes the reality of structure as generated through interaction, and it provides social psychologists and ethnographers with theoretical constructs that permit them to address the core issues of the discipline. Culture was once the domain of anthropologists,

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<sup>1</sup> Duck (2015:17) suggests that this commitment to interactional practices may be particularly common in impoverished neighborhoods where, for instance, rules about proper drug transactions may protect those who are not in that scene.

and sociologists did not examine how societies depended upon symbols and meanings that were inherent in these symbols. Interaction stood outside the mainstream of sociology, promoted by oppositional communities including symbolic interactionists, ethnomethodologists, and sociolinguists. Structure was the acknowledged, honored mainstream of the discipline, utilized by both functionalists and critical theorists, but, given that it stood apart from the control and choices of agents, it was distant from the core of social psychology.

However, scholars must combine these three conceptual domains in order to create an integrated sociology, using the lens of small group culture. Interactionists can rely on the group-oriented approach to social psychology that Muzafer Sherif (Sherif et al. 1961) pioneered in his Robbers' Cave experiment, examining how the local cultures of preadolescent campers permitted groups to overcome rivalries through focusing on superordinate goals. As influential as Sherif was, the ethnographic research conducted by Erving Goffman (1961) in his observations of mental patients at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, DC, acquired iconic status as it demonstrated that even the tightly controlled social systems of those defined as socially dysfunctional could produce routinized and recognized cultural practices that permitted resistance to authorities. While the meso-level of analysis—the realm of ongoing, historicized, and self-reflective group interaction—is thus essential for understanding social order, culture, understood as a form of shared, local, and collective action, is at the heart of how social order is possible. Theorizing the culture of local communities and idiocultures (the micro-cultural

systems of small groups) provides the grounding of a sociology that is as attuned to the street corner as it is to global trade patterns (Fine 2012).

If a meso-level approach has general utility, it should explain how groups provide a lens for understanding political involvement and governmental control. In this regard, John Dewey (1954:42) wrote in *The Public and Its Problems* that

The intimate and familiar propinquity group is not a social unity within an inclusive whole. It is, for almost all purposes, society itself.

In Dewey's (1954:218-219) pragmatism, sociologists find that local relations constitute society as properly organized with information interpreted socially, which constitutes a justification for Dewey's belief that in democracy the ear is more powerful than the eye. Personal communication trumps what an individual can perceive. As Dewey (1954:219) remarks, "Vision is a spectator; hearing is a participator." The pragmatic philosopher Elizabeth Anderson (2014) emphasizes that the practices of social groups may be crucial for explaining alterations in moral standards. Few individuals comply with moral demands out of pure conscience, absent the support of influential others.

This awareness of group influence in public life, while often eclipsed by a focus on the individual, the institution, society, or the global, appears to be growing in contemporary social science. We find increased attention to neighborhood effects (Sampson 2012; Vargas 2016), networks of allegiance (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Brashears

2006), community organizations (Eliasoph 2012), and places of affiliation (Goldfarb 2006). Meso-level scholars can draw upon several extensive bodies of research, often viewed as outside interactionist theory, to address how political process and community organization depends upon an interaction order, cemented within ongoing relations. This requires comparative analysis, as well as in-depth case studies, for, as George Homans (1946:294) points out, hierarchies among groups (in his case, small warships) are created through the fact that participants can compare leadership styles and the competencies of followers.

These meso-level traditions have a long lineage, connected to accounts of clans, participatory democracy, township governance, and friendships as the bulwark of political systems. The importance of friendship in the construction of the state recalls both Aristotle in his *Politics* and Ferdinand Tönnies (2001:43), who in *Community and Society* describes the clan as the “the family before the family and... village before the village.” While these points are important, it is equally vital to understand their limits, which Jane Mansbridge makes explicit in her exploration of “adversary democracy.” Mansbridge (1980:34) states that

When citizens have a common interest, face-to-face contact – which allows debate, empathy, listening, learning, changing opinions, and a burst of solidarity when a decision is reached – can bring real joy. But in the face of conflict, emotions turn sour. Even in representative systems, an aversion to conflict leads citizens to avoid discussing politics; in face-to-face assemblies, similar aversions have more profound

effects...Fear of conflict leads those with influence in a meeting to suppress important issues rather than letting them surface and cause disruption. It leads them also to avoid the appearance of conflict by pressing for unanimity.

Groups are most effective when they, like the archetypal Quaker meeting, can constitute themselves as a potent consensual system, covering over disagreements. But, whether in agreement or in dispute, groups affect politics. Mansbridge (1980:34) notes in this regard that

Face-to-face meetings of all citizens are in any case impossible on a nationwide level, although meetings of smaller groups can still have a significant influence on national policy. All parliamentary systems, for instance, end up with face-to-face meetings of elected representatives.

In partisan systems, external factors, as well as the structural features of party affiliation provide support for a system that continues in the face of ongoing opposition.

In examining group action—consensual and occasionally conflictual—we must reject a political sociology that erases micro-cultures and endeavor to build one which recognizes that elites, conformers, the marginal, and the resistant all depend on the meanings, social relations, and structural possibilities provided by local communities. Thriving societies depend on a web of social relations, as both Richard Sennett (1977:31) and Alexis de Tocqueville have observed. This also directly applies to the metaphor beloved of sociologists, that of “action.”



The interpretation of forms of *collective* and *coordinated* action is essential for any model of social organization and, ultimately, for the possibility of civil society.

## A Sociology of Action

The analysis of face-to-face interaction begins with a twined phenomenology. Alfred Schütz (1967), the distinguished phenomenologist of the social, regards face-to-face interaction as beginning with an “other orientation” (p. 163) or a “thou-orientation” (p. 173) that creates the possibility for what Schütz refers to as “we-relationships,” which he maintains are at the heart of sociality. Schütz quotes Max Weber’s *Economy and Society* as he addresses the meso-level construction of civil society in order to support his claim that when we talk about extensive collective entities, we are truly imaging actions that occur through face-to-face interaction. Weber (1978:14) writes that

For sociological purposes...there is no such thing as a collective personality which “acts.” When reference is made in a sociological context to a state, a nation, a corporation, a family, or an army corps, or to similar collectivities, what is meant is, on the contrary, *only* a certain kind of development of actual or possible social actions of individual persons.

Schütz (1967:199) extends Weber’s claims, adding that

every “action” of the state can be reduced to the actions of its functionaries, whom we can apprehend by means of personal ideal types and toward whom we

can assume a They-orientation...From the sociological point of view, therefore, the term “state” is merely an abbreviation for a highly complex network of interdependent personal ideal types. When we speak of any collectivity as “acting,” we take this complex structural arrangement for granted...we forget that, whereas the conscious experiences of typical individuals are quite conceivable, the conscious experiences of a collective are not.

This presents a challenging model that insists on a sociology of the mind, ignoring a sociology of joint action. We clearly must take seriously the concern about speaking of “artificial” entities acting, based on the combination of acts at different times and by different groups, erasing the agentic negotiations among participants. Nevertheless, it is apparent that under circumstances in which the parties are present (as in families or teams), we can recognize that the loci and causes of collective action are located in communal agreement. We must thus extend the analysis of shared projects beyond minds to include the specific, grounded cultures that groups create. This takes us from micro-level analysis to meso- or group-level analysis—from minded-sociology to a sociology of action.

Swidler (1986) emphasizes that culture is a tool, albeit a tool that is not merely generic, but rather used in *local* communities, which shapes civic life (Fine and Harrington 2004) and is tied to the recognition of shared pasts and prospective futures. The presence of what is variously known as group cultures, micro-cultures, or idiocultures reveals how interactions and institutions are mutually dependent through common recognition and intersubjective

experience. It is by means of the ongoing experiences of working together that organizational arrangements are treated as definitive. Such a perspective, based in sociological social psychology, suggests that the locus of culture need not be limited to extended populations, but can be analyzed through social worlds and communication networks. Culture is a form of practice, linked to local understandings, everyday interactions, and ongoing social relations.

This perspective demands an action-oriented approach to culture that examines performance, transaction, and coordination as they occur in situ, shaping the world in which action occurs. The study of culture should emphasize the analysis of groups—from primary groups (such as families), to interacting small groups (clubs, work teams, cliques), to networked segments that are bound together through on-going interaction, spatial co-presence, or shared interests.

Consistent with the meso-level analysis of group culture is what Erving Goffman termed the “interaction order.” Given that he composed his American Sociological Association presidential address while terminally ill, Goffman’s text leaves analytic gaps and is largely devoid of empirical cases. Still, Goffman (1983:4) claims that

At the very center of interaction life is the cognitive relation we have with those present before us, without which relationship our activity, behavioral and verbal, could not be meaningfully organized.

By recognizing and participating in an interaction order, group members treat their association as stable,

ongoing, and influential. Furthermore, this stability is not generated within the immediate encounter, but depends on *memory* as embedded in ongoing social relations, incorporating agreements developing from experience. From this perspective, Anne Rawls (1987) addresses the “interaction order *sui generis*,” suggesting that “imperatives that are not structurally defined” are organizing principles that build upon local commitments, a claim central to a meso-analysis. The salient point is that culture is both cause and effect of interaction and affiliation. Culture is not merely cognitive, but is revealed in action.

Goffman’s “interaction order” provides a basis for examining social systems comparatively and historically. The immediate encounter does not generate the communal relation, which instead depends on our social *memory*. In other words, interaction depends upon the mental recognition of how the past affects the present, and this perspective, central to examinations of collective memory, links collective cognitions with the building of communities (Olick and Robbins 1998). For the social psychologist, imagined communities (Anderson 1991) are everywhere, not only at the level of the state and nation. Civil societies are not appendages of the state, although they are responsive to systems of control. We can imagine ourselves tethered to worlds that are large and small, more or less powerful, and our commitments can take many forms. This connection can be cognitive (through cultural logics), emotional (through the strength of cohesion), and/or behavioral (through shared expectations).

Goffman (1983) argued that we build society through a tacit agreement to create orderliness because of

our use of successful past interaction as a model for the present. As a result, the establishment of comforting interactional routines generates trust (Miztal 2001). Those who focus on interaction regimes possess analytic tools with which to address social organizations from the dyad to the globe and from the bedroom to the state, a point that is consistent with Collins' (1981) description of how microstructures permit the development of macrostructural understandings.

Rawls' (1987) "imperatives that are not structurally defined" are the organizing principles that derive from local commitments. Goffman's concern in his essay, as in much of his writing, is to examine occasional encounters in which the parties are not in extended, meaningful contact. He emphasizes fleeting encounters, such as those between clerks and customers, while pointing to the centrality of what he terms "deeper" relations that depend on biographic awareness and idiocultures. As a general conceptual framework,

Idioculture consists of a system of knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and customs shared by members of an interacting group to which members can refer and that serve as the basis of further interaction. Members recognize that they share experiences, and these experiences can be referred to with the expectation that they will be understood by other members, thus being used to construct a social reality for the participants. [Fine 1987:125]

Central to this definition is that culture is linked to interaction and affiliation, and that the historical and self-referential quality of the cultural elements

is crucial. From this perspective, behavior reveals culture, whatever culture's other cognitive and affective bases may be.

In extending the construct of the interaction order with its cultural traditions to established social relations, I combine Goffman's recognition about how interaction creates practices and routines with the recognition, too often missing within micro-analytic studies of interpersonal relations, that meanings are often situated within (relatively) stable group cultures. Families, clubs, teams, and cliques provide examples of such cultures. Shared awareness produces continuing social relations. Collective memories are essential if individuals are to believe that they are a shared public that has common interest or linked fate (Dawson 1995). Eviatar Zerubavel (1997) reminds us in this regard that thinking is neither individual, nor universal, but rather communal. Anselm Strauss (1978) and David Maines (1977) properly point to negotiation as a tool for building ongoing and flexible, but durable relations in organizations, as well as in families. Negotiations, as they shape the future, take place within a context of joint pasts, and the future as an interaction order depends upon a knowable past (Fine 2007; Tavory and Eliasoph 2013). Its construction is a form of *future work*.

A meso-level analysis that recognizes the interaction order and the power of group cultures provides a bulwark of civil society. The shared actions and discourses of groups permit the establishment of a civic imagination, shaped by social location, personal and political experience, and local group cultures (Baiocchi et al. 2014:69). If sociology is to address public engagement, understanding how civil

systems are built or undercut by shared action is crucial. It should be no surprise that a primary goal of mid-century sociologists was to develop a “general theory of action” (Parsons and Shils 1951). But, even if this project did not discuss action as a social achievement, it made the point that sociology, for all its belief in structures and social facts, depends upon individuals coordinating their actions within the context of their social relations.

As sociologists, we begin with Thomas Hobbes, who, perhaps to his surprise, is said to have provided our discipline’s core challenge. Hobbes proposed that without limits on rival personal interests, the security necessary for routine tasks would be absent. Although Hobbes never refers in *Leviathan* to “social order,” his problem has become ours. Hobbes (1651:62) writes that

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of Warre, where every man is Enemy to every man... wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength, and their own invention shall furnish them withall. In such condition, there is...no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.

In such dire circumstances, how can orchards be fruitful, libraries filled, villages peaceable, and people die in their beds? Hobbes’ solution to a world of uncoordinated interests is a world of control, with authority being given to the Leviathan, an “artificial” or corporate person. Society is organized either from above, or from within. Hobbes dismisses the latter alternative, posing a world of solitary self-in-

terest against a world of central power and surveillance. He thus presents a choice without a middle. Both individuals and institutions lack self-governing social stability. However, democracy exists and self-determination is possible precisely because of this middle—a world of tiny publics teeming with acts and responses.

This meso-middle is the hinge (Fine 2014), the linkage of external structures and personal interests. Order can be built horizontally, not only vertically, and even vertical control depends upon the existence of groups at each level of authority. Oppression relies upon interactional routines as much as democracy does. In contrast to Hobbesian red-in-tooth-and-claw individualism, localism and social relations contribute to security and routine. The first place to search for a haven from behavioral and epistemic turmoil resides within the small communities in which one participates (Hallett 2010). With this goal, Tim Hallett correctly points out that any institutional theory must be “inhabited”—it must take into consideration the participants in the creation of the institution. Institutions cannot exist without inhabitants (Hallett and Ventresca 2006).

Ultimately, as Jonathan Turner (2012) argues, the intersection of micro-, meso-, and macro- creates an integrated sociology, our disciplinary mission. The centrality of culture is simultaneously social psychology and political sociology. In speaking of the development of a civil society, we must reach beyond a narrowly defined political analysis, acknowledging that individuals are committed to their emplacement in community. They do this through the recognition of the salience of social relations and

through the emotional linkages that flow from these relations.

Affiliation need not stop at the boundary of interaction, but can extend to other groups with similar character. We often consider ourselves members of a set of groups, in effect creating a social category from an array of micro-cultures. When this broader affiliation is established, actions (voting, contributing, or demonstrating), tied to interaction, generate deeper and more consequential commitments. While such connections initially benefit a tiny public, they are subsequently tied to a desire to shape a “good society” (Bellah et al. 1991). However, good societies depend upon good groups—groups that are virtuous and groups that are effective. This social imaginary is based in a belief that the strong ties of family and friendship can be extended, creating voluntary communities. In being linked to group cultures, people believe that they belong to scenes and treasure the amenities that those scenes provide (Silver, Clark, and Yanez 2010), which is true even if the community has internal splits or disputed boundaries. Conflict is as evident as consensus, and dispute may be an expected part of a group culture (Weeks 2004), rather than providing a basis for exit, as long as participants feel that there are resources or norms that are worth disputing with each other.

Studies of civil society often ignore group interaction in favor of individual preferences or structural pressures. The political theorist Michael Walzer (1992:107) recognizes that

Civil society itself is sustained by groups much smaller than the *demos* or the working class or the mass

of consumers or the nation. All these are necessarily pluralized as they are incorporated. They become part of the fabric of family, friends, comrades, and colleagues, where people are connected to one another and made responsible for one another.

Walzer argues that civil society connects to a set of relationship networks, asserting that the good life is possible only in a civil society that depends on our being sociable or communal, freely associating and communicating. Perhaps most significantly, he acknowledges that civil society is a setting of settings, emphasizing that there is a multiplicity of sites of engagement.

We lose the recognition of how political systems operate in practice when we erase social relations. Society requires a mesh of groups, a world of cross-cutting dialogues (Cohen and Arato 1992:252; Back and Polisar 1983). Social media, with their strands of “friends,” reveal the importance of affiliative ties even if these ties never involve face-to-face interaction, once considered to be the very basis of social psychology.

The approach that privileges affiliation as a result of ongoing interaction also privileges the power of associations, but caution is warranted in embracing association. Associations can be extensive and bureaucratic, incorporating thousands of “participants” whose engagement can be very thin. Kathleen Blee (2012) observes in her insightful ethnographic census of the range of social movement activism in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, how social movement organizations and social movement groups may be segmented by size and by the forms



of democratic deliberation. These forms permit various types of social relations to cohere and encourage differing types of affiliation between members and leaders. Even the largest organizations are, of course, controlled by decision-making groups, even if these groups are at some distance from the rank-and-file supporters or dues-paying members of the organization. Large groups have leadership circles, and they often have subsidiary groups (committees) that feed input into the decision-making process. When such an extensive association holds a mass meeting, rally, or demonstration, it is organized by groups and attended by groups. Neither a single person, nor a mob is capable of establishing the kind of organization that produces events that actually depend on colleagues and acquaintances.

In praising the illuminating insight of the meso-level of action, treating it as a hinge that connects persons and institutions, I hope that this argument provides an opening to the importance of interaction orders, treating the construction of communal structures as based on the power of groups. This connects local cultures to spaces in which people come together to act collaboratively. In this, I acknowledge the power of equality and the presence of inequality. Groups may treat their members as equals, such as when all are treated as citizens with equivalent civic rights in a state or society that extends beyond the focused domains in which communities of individuals operate. It is also the case, however, that neither individuals nor groups have equal access to resources, which advantages some groups in attaining their goals, while disadvantaging others. These differences are firmly engraved in the analysis of conflict and control. One of the chal-

lenges of a meso-level analysis is to determine how tiny publics can gain authority to make a case for themselves and the rights of their members. At the broadest level, I see this argument as a contribution to democratic theory, a contribution that examines not how civil societies *might* operate, but rather how they *do* operate as interactional regimes that depend upon social relations. To this end, I draw inspiration from the cultural tradition of group dynamics, the tradition of political analysis, and the philosophical tradition of social critique.

The examination of small group dynamics and idiosyncrasies can open the black box of political engagement, but too often political theorists have marginalized the level of the group in favor of the individual, the organization, the institution, and the state. Focusing on the meso-level brings us closer to seeing how individuals affiliate with political systems through the presence of tiny publics. While this should not be pushed too far insofar as the power of media representations and institutional communications are real, both are built upon groups and shape the experience of other groups. As John Dewey (1954) maintains, discursive and action-oriented groups have the power to shape the creation of local publics.

Democratic society operates *by groups* mobilizing themselves as the sources of commitment, and *through groups*, whose targeted commitment to particular civic projects demonstrates a generalized commitment to the existence of the political process. To be sure, the characteristics, motivations, and goals of these tiny publics are highly variable, and each must be considered in light of those in-



stitutions and publics that surround them. Some bridging publics strive to incorporate pluralistic perspectives, while in other cases, the boundaries are more tightly controlled and the character of the group is more homogeneous.

## A Meso-World

By ignoring the interaction order, sociology has neglected the link between individual actions and how these actions generate affiliations within civil society, providing political structures with tensile strength, even, or perhaps especially, in the case of what might otherwise be considered apathy or uncertainty. The public sphere is a realm of local action, and without this recognition, the linkage between individual and state is uncertain. While scholars have the right to analyze the creation of communities of affiliation from a macro-perspective and thus ignore the granular conditions of civic participation, for citizens themselves that linkage operates up close. Civic affiliation becomes real through families, classrooms, clubs, social movements, union locals, and political campaigns. The presence of like-minded others creates the collective representations on which institutions depend. Belonging to a political system is not merely an idea, but depends on action, and political theory in this respect is tethered to social psychology. Citizenship develops from the reality of the interaction order.

Civil society, as the label suggests, implies a reading of the idea of civility that in turn builds upon the existence of micro-communities in which this civility is modeled. But, civility means something distinct from politeness or passivity. Contentious politics,

when operating within bounds, can also be a form of civility. Even in the case of terrorism, where the acts that characterize the terrorist group may stand outside civil society, the discourse involved often contributes to ongoing and consequential moral debates, as in the case of the radical abolitionist movement.

The idea of the citizen in a legitimate political system, whether supportive of the status quo or in revolt, depends upon the idea that one is not alone. Patriotism is not an individual feeling, but assumes the presence of others who are similarly inclined and share that feeling in sites of collective activity. It is a group emotion that is often linked to times and places of collective commemoration. These can be private locations, such as Thanksgiving celebrations, or occasions in which groups of families and friends share a space and a beer, such as at Independence Day fireworks. Because one experiences common emotions and a belief in a linked fate, one is not alone, belonging to a group with similar memories and futures.

However, simply believing that one citizen is like others is insufficient. The creation of sets of relations, constituting social capital, reflects the existence of a community of others with whom one is in common cause and with whom one can work, building what one cannot create alone (Sennett 2012). One needs places in which selves can meet, recognize their common stakes, and devise shared action. The provisioning of places of action is essential. Combining spaces and persons reveals one's commitment through the performance of civil selves, which then becomes solidified through the sharing of histories.

Finally, tiny publics cause or become the target of control, either through their shared beliefs, or because those groups that run institutional systems have access to resources that permit them to enforce preferred rules and regulations. These processes are as evident in Cairo's Tahrir Square in 2011 as in the early feminist Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. To be sure, the moral order, characteristics of actors, spatial opportunities, and technologies of control differ, but the group as the core of social action remains central.

## Conclusion

While I have presented the general conditions of a theory of tiny publics, we should not assume that all groups provide equally effective conditions for organizing and generating public engagement. We must consequently examine variability in the forms and uses of group culture. Some societies operate with robust and lasting groups, whereas elsewhere, perhaps because of distinct styles of interaction, levels of surveillance, or forms of social control, local participation may be truncated. Examining the effects of variation and how it arises is an important direction for research and theorizing. If we treat the

properties of tiny publics as variables, we can compare networks of tiny publics of nations and regions, creating a comparative meso-politics. This potentially provides a more sophisticated understanding of how the cultures, resources, and demographics of tiny publics shape the social order and the choices of individuals.

Ultimately, individuals become part of political systems not through the system as such, but because others—those with whom they recognize that they have similar interests and affiliations—surround them. Meso-structures, providing a space for interaction, reduce the need for a single over-arching power center.

Those who believe in the power of groups to create an interaction order must make this case persuasively. Too often the meso-level of analysis has been marginalized or erased. Affiliations among persons create affiliation with society. Allegiance is constituted in the local worlds in which citizens participate, and it then extends to allegiance to a world that is more expansive, but perceived as similar in kind. A commitment to local action becomes a commitment to an extended world.

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## **Identities and Everyday Interethnic Relationships**

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**Abstract** This article examines the nature of group identity in order to gain insight into the character and quality of intergroup contacts, particularly the conditions for positive contacts between members of different ethnic groups. An important conception underlying the discussion is that identity is not a stable construct or fixed essence, but rather is discursive in nature and turns upon how individuals and collectivities distinguish themselves in their relations with other individuals and collectivities. Both resemblance and difference are thus essential principles of social identity, while ethnic identity is distinct from culture and may be analyzed as a form of social organization. This heightens the importance of the degree of permeability of group boundaries, and of one's relation with their own ethnic group, in minimizing prejudice and fostering interethnic relations. Analysis of field interviews with members of Bulgarian and Bulgarian Turkish ethnic groups provided the basis for the theoretical discussion concerning intergroup contacts. The interviews also serve to illustrate the inverse relationship between intergroup contacts and prejudices, as well as the fact that insofar as intergroup ethnic conflicts and perceived differences occur between narrative constructs, they can be transformed and resolved through openness towards differences and dialogue.

**Keywords** Group Identity; Intergroup Contacts; Ethnic Groups; Interethnic Relations; Group Boundaries; Bulgarian and Bulgarian Turkish Ethnic Groups

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## Social Identity and Intergroup Relations

### Identity and Difference

Although different social groups clearly have their own particular identities, questions have nevertheless been raised concerning what we in fact may assume about the nature of group identity. Jenkins (2008), for example, points to Brubaker's argument that ethnic groups are not "real" in a certain accepted sense. Brubaker (2004:12) thus claims that

Shifting attention from groups to groupness, and treating groupness as variable and contingent rather than fixed and given, allows us to take account of—and potentially to account for—phases of extraordinary cohesion and moments of intensely felt collective solidarity, without implicitly treating high levels of groupness as constant, enduring, or definitionally present.

In the same vein, Jenkins rejects the hypothesis that identity is a static construct. He instead argues that it consists of a changing process of identification, proposing that we utilize the following definition of identity for what he terms "sociological purposes."

"Identity" denotes the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their relations with other individuals and collectivities. [Jenkins 2008:18]

That is to say that relations based upon similarity and difference are established between both groups and individuals, with resemblance and distinction being essential principles of identification

in the social world. Jenkins addresses conceptions that have been well-established by the work of Benhabib, Hall, and others concerning the core of identity and the issue of distinction and distance, and he clearly states that difference fuels identity and that knowing "who is who" is a question of distinction.

Jenkins notes that among the numerous studies that have been published in the field of group identity research, two of the most influential perspectives are those presented in Barth's social anthropology and Tajfel's social psychology. He adds, however, that the interplay between resemblance, similarity, and difference has not received sufficient scholarly attention (Jenkins 2008).

### Ethnicity and Culture

Barth argues in his "Introduction" to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, one of the most cited works in the field, that ethnicity or ethnic identity is distinct from culture and may be analyzed as a form of social organization. He claims that

It is important to recognize that although ethnic categories take cultural differences into account, we can assume no simple one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences. [Barth 1969:14]

Vermeulen and Govers maintain in this regard that the relation between ethnicity and culture can be interpreted in three ways—ethnicity refers to the notion of culture and to the usage of culture, but it is also an element of culture. They also state that

Ethnic identities are products of classification, ascription and self-ascription, and bound up with ideologies of descent. [Vermeulen and Govers 2000:9]

Vermeulen and Govers thus adopt Barth's definition of ethnicity as a type of social organization, viewing it as closely connected to culture in all three dimensions noted. And insofar as it comprises an element of culture, it involves a reciprocal level of awareness of group difference. Although Barth's work has been approached in many different, and perhaps conflicting, ways, Vermeulen and Govers (2000:9) accept the importance of his contributions and acknowledge that knowledge in the field could not progress without them.

### **Group Boundaries**

The paradigm of social identity, whereby interethnic relations are examined in terms of an "us versus them" dichotomy (Tajfel 1981; Tajfel and Turner 1986), has often been employed as an explanatory model for intergroup relations, and it exerts a direct influence on problems associated with the development of intergroup communication. Researchers have particularly directed their attention in this regard to the permeability of group boundaries and the level or intensity of intergroup contacts (Ehala, Giles, and Harwood 2016). Numerous studies have confirmed that levels of conflict rise when group boundaries are marked by a low degree of permeability and contacts between groups are weak. Ehala and colleagues (2016), for example, who maintain that a capacity for collective action is basic to the formation of intergroup attitudes and communication, examine the development of representations of so-

cial identity at two levels. These are 1) the micro-level, where individual perceptions and convictions are located, and 2) the macro-level, which comprises shared representations about collective identities and intergroup contexts. They also observe that an emotional attachment to collective identity exerts an influence upon intergroup behavior at the individual level. A low level of permeability regarding group boundaries, which is associated with such indicators as religion and ethnicity, constitutes a factor that generates intergroup mistrust, discrimination, and ethnocentrism (Ehala et al. 2016).

### **Interaction**

Intergroup relations, apart from their collective kernel, are realized in everyday life at the level of interrelations between individuals and smaller groups that usually live in proximity to each other. In accordance with the paradigm of symbolic interactionism, interaction with others is regarded as the primary field in which people construct their notions of themselves and of social life in general. "The self" is also "the other" within a given social situation insofar as it comprises the other from the other's perspective. The most important constructs for researchers in this tradition are "signs"—an umbrella term that covers the meanings that people put into their regular interaction, which are linked to both everyday life and the wider social context of communication.

Symbols are a question of consensus. Different people and different groups may well share the same signs and infer similar content because, as Hewitt (1976:27-28 as cited in Redmond 2015) observes,

“a community of symbols users adopt the convention of using given symbols consistently.” Symbols are bound to language, words, gestures, and to both verbal and nonverbal indications, and their meaning “thickens” when they are used by representatives of different social groups. Communication between groups, rather than within a given group, involves a much larger number of symbols and meanings that stem from the everyday social life of and *in* one’s own social group or groups—national, ethnic, professional, and so forth.

Mead (1934:6-7) argues that the behavior of an individual can be understood only in terms of the behavior of the entire social group of which one is a member insofar as one’s individual acts are involved in social acts that extend beyond the individual and implicate other members of the group. Self-reflection, which is an important element of the attitude one forms about oneself, emerges through the perception of others in that it is a process of “becoming another for one’s own self,” for in self-reflection one stands apart from, or outside of, oneself (Gillespie 2006:2). The way in which Mead presents the self as “another” within the social situation such that the self is “the other” from the other’s perspective is particularly significant for this conception. Self-reflection is attained after the self has adopted the other’s perspective and thus become other to itself (Gillespie 2006:3; see: Zografova 2016).

### The In-Group Identity Model

Social representations are constructs that are linked to social identity (Markova 2007) and, as certain re-

searchers argue, to intergroup representations and attitudes as well. For instance, Dovidio, Gaertner, Saguy (2007) maintain that when social representations dominate individual identities, people tend to exhibit distrust towards the external group rather than towards each other at the individual level (Insko et al. 2001).

The common in-group identity model has undergone significant development since Gaertner and colleagues introduced it in 1993 (Gaertner et al. 1993), with three extensions appearing in the literature. The first of these places a greater emphasis on two forms of recategorization:

- (a) within a single, superordinate identity in which original group boundaries are not emphasized, and
- b) a dual identity in which original group memberships are salient but recognized within the context of a common in-group identity. [Dovidio et al. 2007:319]

The second involves the recognition that “majority (high-power) and minority (low-power) groups have different preferences for different forms of recategorization.” The third extension takes into consideration the “potential strategic and functional effects of dual identity and single, superordinate group forms of recategorization for minority and majority groups” (Dovidio et al. 2007:320). A parallel acceptance of the superordinate group that integrates subgroup identities may be achieved through recategorization and the minimization of prejudices towards other groups, along with a redirection of positive feelings towards the common group: This offers a collective identity while preserving one’s own identity (Dovidio et al. 2007).

Even though the positive effects of double identity emerge within the framework of the superordinate identity, they nevertheless depend upon the specific context. Although double identity may be associated with having positive attitudes toward other groups, Dovidio and colleagues (2007) note on the basis of their work with diverse groups that it can also lead to negative attitudes when it is perceived as a cultural ideal and dominant cultural orientations are associated with assimilation. In addition, changes in the ways that groups are categorized—both one's own group and those of others—can lead to the minimization of prejudices and discrimination (Dovidio et al. 2007).

Dovidio and colleagues (2010) also analyze alternative forms of recategorization as double identity. They utilize the common in-group identity model to demonstrate how prejudices can obstruct prosocial behavior towards other groups such that minorities decline in numbers when their group members recategorize themselves with the superordinate identity. They argue that the goal of the process of recategorization

is to reduce bias by systematically altering the perception of intergroup boundaries, redefining who is conceived of as an in-group member. [Dovidio et al. 2010:193]

They also endeavor to reconstruct the perspectives of both majority and minority groups in respect to intergroup relations. While a superordinate identity may emerge in which the boundaries between groups are not highlighted, it is also possible that double identity involves visible boundaries that are

evident only within the common in-group identity. Moreover, the majority and minorities may differ in their preferences concerning forms of recategorization, which produce differing effects (Dovidio et al. 2010).

An examination of social identity in connection with intergroup relations and with the higher group levels of identity is deeply rooted in Tajfel's views of these issues. Tajfel (1981:255) defines social identity as

that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value or emotional significance attributed to that membership.

There is a deep bond with the groups or community to which one belongs or is affiliated with in the process of defining this type of identity. If we extend the notion of double identity, then the emotional significance ascribed to membership in both broader and smaller groups should be sufficiently distinct, and also occupy a sufficiently important place within one's identity structure, for it to be associated with an individual's actions within those groups. We should note, however, that it is quite difficult to demonstrate that two different groups possess the same level of importance in this regard.

National identity is dominant in a multicultural society such as Bulgaria, although other ethnic identities also have their relatively distinct identities and ways of life. Studies have produced controversial results in regard to the influence of multiculturalism upon social processes and relations. For instance, Robert Putnam argues in a paper widely known for

its critical stance regarding multiculturalism that the cohabitation of multiple communities and the co-existence of diverse ethnic groups within a nation or a multicultural society are associated with a reduction in social cohesion. Putnam (2007) also highlights the importance of properly evaluating the notion of multiculturalism, including how it is applied as politics, with Canada being presented as a good example of how multiculturalism, can be successfully implemented.

### The Intergroup Contact Hypothesis

Gordon Allport's intergroup contact hypothesis has become broadly accepted in discussions concerning the character of intergroup contacts and their significance for intergroup relations. This hypothesis specifies four conditions that are necessary for optimal intergroup contact: 1) equal status within the situation, 2) common goals, 3) intergroup cooperation, and 4) authority support (Allport 1954; see also Pettigrew 1998). But, as is the case with other paradigms, the utilization of Allport's principles displays a certain ambiguity. For example, Pettigrew and Tropp conducted a detailed meta-analysis of the results of 713 case studies in the sphere of contact theory by checking analytical and statistical verification, as well as the variables that were included. The results reveal a paradox insofar as 94% of the cases demonstrate an inverse relationship between intergroup contacts and prejudices, but only 19% in fact fulfill Allport's requirements (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006). Pettigrew and Tropp also list a number of other factors that have been revealed through previous studies, such as mediators, moderators, and context in respect to a given situation, that lead

to a reduction of prejudice in intergroup contacts. They view future research as involving the construction of complex multi-level models that include individual, structural, and normative "antecedents of contact" (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006).

Thomas Pettigrew's theory (1997; 1998) of deprovincialization proposes that intergroup contacts not only broaden the representations of other groups, they also promote a reevaluation of and distancing from one's own group. Friendships between representatives of different ethnic groups thereby lead both to a decrease in covert and direct prejudices, and to an increase in positive attitudes towards other ethnic minorities or immigrants. Maykel Verkuyten, who investigated the connection between out-group contact and in-group distance in a series of three studies in the Netherlands, demonstrates that contacts between representatives of the majority and those of other ethnic groups or communities both result in a greater understanding and appreciation of the culture and way of life of the other, and also foster greater self-reflection in terms of a self-evaluation of one's own group that typically does not occur. This leads to a decrease in fear and anxiety and a reinforcement of empathy while promoting a change of perspective and an increase in knowledge. Multicultural recognition had also been examined in respect to its role in mediating between intergroup contacts and in-group distance (Verkuyten, Thijs, and Bekhuis 2010). Generally speaking, these three studies confirm that the possibility for increased inter-ethnic contacts is connected with a greater acceptance of multiculturalism. The latter, in turn, is associated with fewer positive feelings towards one's own



group, which is to say that multiculturalism plays a mediating role between contacts and in-group identification (Verkuyten et al. 2010).

Pettigrew maintains that Allport's theory requires further elaboration insofar as it conflates essential components with facilitating processes, which necessitates further knowledge concerning how effects are generalized beyond a given situation. Pettigrew (1998) notes the existence of three types of generalization in this regard: 1) situational, or the extent to which effects are transferred to other situations; 2) the extent to which attitudes towards individuals are transmitted to the external group; and 3) whether attitudes are generalized towards other external groups.

Pettigrew's intergroup contact theory constitutes a conceptualization of intergroup contact at a meso-level, that is, an approach to individual and situational influences marked by a cross-analysis of micro- and macro-societal levels. Preliminary attitudes, along with differences in values and experiences, may exert an impact upon further connections with other groups, thereby modifying them (Pettigrew 1998). Another important aspect of the effects produced through such connections stems from the normative social structure, particularly in respect to inequality, or an inequitable distribution of power, which leads to poorly developed or even impaired, relations. Broader social milieus, particularly the normative context when it is marked by discriminative attitudes and practices, prevent intergroup contacts from developing in a productive direction (Pettigrew 1998). Pettigrew's analysis of data from a number of different studies, including

the biennial European Social Survey, indicates that greater attention should be paid to already existing prejudices insofar as individuals with such attitudes tend to avoid intergroup contacts.

It is important to note that Pettigrew identifies additional conditions for realizing intergroup contacts in terms of Allport's hypothesis, including the *reason why* and the *way* in which they take place. He also views establishing such contacts as a process, which contrasts with Allport's view that the problem is *when* the connection takes place. Generalization is not addressed in other respects since the issue here concerns transferring the effects of intergroup contacts either to the group as a whole, or to other situations and other groups.

Pettigrew proposes four future directions for the further development of intergroup contact theory. These are 1) specification of the processes of intergroup contact in order to determine the many mediators and moderators involved; 2) greater focus upon negative contact, such as prejudice, distrust, and conflict; 3) placing intergroup contact within a longitudinal, multilevel social context rather than addressing it solely as a situational phenomenon; and 4) more direct applications of contact theory to social policy in which intergroup contact is viewed in respect to particular institutional settings (Pettigrew 2008).

The realization of an optimal contact with representatives of another group leads to a new assessment of both the in-group and the out-group, whereby in-group norms and values are no longer the sole ground for constructing one's attitudes towards the



world. The process of deprovincialization that thereby takes place results in the formation of a changed view concerning both the members of one's own group and members of external groups. This opens up new possibilities for representatives of the majority to observe the various cultural practices of the "outside," understand their value, and see that the practices of one's own group are not the only means for perceiving the world.

Intergroup contact also has the power to reduce intergroup anxiety and both individual and collective intergroup threat. This lessened threat in turn leads to greater intergroup contact in the future. All these effects—greater trust, forgiveness and future intergroup contact, and less anxiety and threat—are components of deprovincialization. [Pettigrew 2012:326]

The generalization of the effects of intergroup contacts and friendships to other situations and groups is a particularly important problem that provokes many additional questions. It is one of the issues that Pettigrew (1998) develops in connection with the actualization of the contact hypothesis.

Research concerning the influence of prejudice and the ethnic conception of nation, as well as the influence of national identity upon support for the multicultural rights of minorities, reaffirms both the negative impact of the ethnic national concept and the positive impact of national identification (Visintin et al. 2016). Regional ethnic diversity in Bulgaria is an important social feature—support for multiculturalism is increased in areas where several ethnic groups coexist in a common social space (Visintin et al. 2016).

Regardless of the often common historical fate of groups living in proximity to each other, actual intergroup relations are frequently complicated, conflicting, or even hostile in given socio-political contexts. A constructivist approach can be useful in this regard for casting light upon the deeper mechanisms at work within unbalanced intergroup relations, regardless of the intergroup contacts that do take place. For example, Kenneth Gergen develops the idea that relational social phenomena "surround" the self, as well as interpersonal and intergroup relations, arguing that individuals become antagonists not only because their world constructions vary, but also because they all come with their own stories about precisely what and how much they deserve. Conflicts thus occur between narrative constructs, but they can also be transformed and resolved through dialogue (Gergen 2009:196).

## Interviews with Representatives of Two Ethnic Groups

This study has analyzed data produced in field interviews conducted in face-to-face conversations with 20 individuals of Bulgarian origin and 10 of Turkish origin in two Bulgarian districts with differing ethnic population ratios.<sup>1</sup> The two locations are Kardzhali, where the population (2011 census) consists of 30.2% Bulgarians, 66.2% Turks, and 1.0% Roma, and Stara Zagora, where the corresponding

<sup>1</sup> The interviews were conducted during 2014 as part of the 2013-2016 project "The Dynamics of Interethnic Attitudes in Bulgaria: A Social-Psychological Perspective," which was jointly funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science within the framework of the Bulgarian-Swiss Research Program.

census figures are 86.2% Bulgarians, 4.9% Turks, and 7.8% Roma.

Excerpts from these interviews will be provided below in order to indicate the results of our study. The general topics covered were the following:

- Collective supergroup and subgroup identities and the representations of “others”
- Everyday life and relationships
- Historical collective memory concerning important periods, conditions, and events for Bulgarians, Bulgarian Turks, and Roma
- Respondents’ views concerning how ethnic relations could be developed

The entirety of the data in question was coded in respect to common contents. This made it possible to grasp the general picture, as well as trends in interethnic relations, along with the most significant symbols and signs related to the respondents’ everyday lives and holiday customs.

When Bulgarians were asked about the first thing that would come to mind when thinking of their Turkish compatriots, they made the following responses:

- Bulgarian Turks do not speak Bulgarian
- they’re hardworking
- they have generally positive characteristics
- they’re not bad people, but they nevertheless invaded and conquered Bulgarian territory
- I don’t like all of the shouting and noise from the minarets
- they’re people like us, but they have more rights than we, Bulgarians, do

- they’re gypsies, and I don’t like them
- they’re good people, but politicians set us against them
- they’re more religious than we are—they preserve their traditions
- there are both good and bad people among them

Questions about the contexts of possible communication (“Tell me about your contacts with Bulgarian Turks. Where do you meet Bulgarian Turks? On what occasions?”) received the following answers:

- we’re neighbors
- we have professional contacts
- we’re friends or acquaintances
- we went to school together
- I have a generally good impression of them
- we live side by side, we help each other
- we met during military service
- we were roommates
- we see each other everywhere

Bulgarian Turks were also questioned about their spontaneous associations concerning their ethnic Bulgarian compatriots (“What would be the first thing that comes to mind when you think about Bulgarians?”). The answers were coded with the following statements:

- they’re respectable
- it depends on the person
- they work in administration
- they’re neighbors
- they symbolize negativity in some way (dishonest and deceitful politicians)
- they’re poorly adapted to Turkish culture (a different way of life)

Relationships based upon profession, neighborhood, and friendship are maintained in a mutual fashion. Almost all of our Bulgarian respondents have connections with Turks, and everyday interpersonal relations constitute a basis for the dissemination of collectively shared representations. Bulgarian respondents point to the positive qualities of Bulgarian Turks in their representations, such as being hardworking, “people like us,” and intelligent. They often remark that they like Turkish traditions and celebrate their holidays together. They also express approval of how Bulgarian Turks preserve their own customs (see: Bakalova and Zografova 2014). Some of them also remarked, however, that quite negative attitudes towards Bulgarian Turks were being spread among representatives of Bulgarian ethnic groups.

It must be noted that the centuries-long coexistence of different ethnic groups is an important element of the local socio-political context in Bulgaria. Apart from Bulgaria being an ethnic nation-based society, with a sense of national identity being dominant, various regions within the country have developed in a multicultural manner. As one might expect, areas of mixed population are locations for more intensive contacts between representatives of diverse groups and communities, at both interpersonal and intergroup levels. A similar result emerges from an analysis of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) 2003 data, which demonstrate that support for multicultural rights is strong precisely where there is greater ethnic diversity (see: Visintin et al. 2016). When different ethnic groups share inherited common spaces and communities, a favorable context is formed for

keeping one’s own culture while sharing a common life with other groups (Berry 2013).

A study with more than 3800 respondents from France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and West Germany investigated attitudes towards the main minority groups, including whether people have friends with national, racial, cultural, religious, and social class backgrounds that are different than their own. Researchers found that the Europeans questioned had lower levels of prejudice and higher degrees of empathy and support for other groups when they indeed had such relations within their own circles (Pettigrew 1998). Our own interviews reveal how the respondents’ interactions demarcate lines of identification that both indicate differences and also display proximity between different communities. For example, our respondents were asked about how they evaluated the traditions, culture, and collective characteristics of the “other” group, and they remarked that there was explicit mutual recognition of and support for religious holidays, such as Bairam, Easter, and Christmas, as well as wedding traditions and various other customs and celebration practices.

But, our research also raised difficult questions, quite often avoided at both public and interpersonal levels, which for decades have been problematic issues for the majority of society. These include the so-called “rebirth process,” in which Bulgarian Turks were stripped of their identity documents and property by the communist regime, as well as the consequences of five centuries of Ottoman rule (late 1300s to late 1800s). Investigating such issues, along with stereotypical representations and symbolically

linked associations regarding everyday relations and celebrations, can foster the emergence of clear ideas concerning attitudes towards “others,” cohabitation, and concrete interpersonal relationships.

### **Interview Examples and Excerpts: Ethnic Identity, Common National Identity, Representations of Others, Everyday Relations**

*Respondent Y. (male 28, Stara Zagora)* associates his ethno-national identity with Bulgaria and lists a number of its essential characteristics: place of birth and residence, life experiences, studying and working in the country. However, this respondent also remarks that “what’s happening in our country doesn’t make me feel very Bulgarian.” When asked to describe the principal cultural characteristics of Bulgarians, he summarizes what he views as their positive traits, such as “peace-loving,” but also speaks of “well-intentioned hypocrisy” when describing the relations between the different social groups with which he is affiliated. The respondent notes that there are similarities between the celebration practices of these groups and those of “Roma, more commonly known as ‘gypsies.’” Y. likes the traditions of Bulgarian Turks, as well as their practices of raising children.

When asked about his first-hand experiences communicating with Bulgarian Turks, Y. replied that

I don’t have such contacts, but have an adequate impression through my acquaintances. [Turks] are people who help Bulgarians a lot in certain situations. But, unfortunately, they have that rooted

Turkish mentality, their way of thinking that ethnic Bulgarians don’t like very much. I’ve seen this. It’s good that tolerance between these ethnic groups is being promoted and there isn’t dissension and conflict.

*Respondent K. (male 59, Stara Zagora)* links his national and ethnic identity with his birthplace, adding that what makes him feel Bulgarian are his “wonderful family, children, and grandchildren.” K. states that customs, arts, and folklore are important elements of Bulgarian culture and traditions. He views his Turkish friends as “literate and respectful of the constitution and rules in Bulgaria,” and appears to have no concealed hostility towards their ethnic community. K. ascribes reservations and negative overtones to the attitudes of his own ethnic group towards Turks, whom he regards as hardworking and friendly. He notes that both groups celebrate their various holidays together.

*Respondent N. (female 66, Stara Zagora)* reveals how ambivalence in emotional relations and representations is typically stimulated by the normative context, and her interview displays a rich spectrum of biased feelings and attitudes. The respondent identifies herself as a Bulgarian by highlighting the mutual understanding she has with others in her community and her bond to everyday life. N. maintains that local traditions and culture are represented by milestone historical events, such as Liberation Day (March 3rd) and Unification Day (September 6th), and by local customs, such as Martenitsa. Although N. regularly communicates with Turks among her acquaintances and in her professional circle, she nevertheless has negative feelings

about their presence in the country. She states that she does not like people speaking Turkish. And although she has no first-hand experience of unacceptable behavior by Turks towards Bulgarians, she retells stories (or ideas of possible stories) that she has heard. This inner conflict is resolved, as is the case with other respondents, by blaming a third party, usually “politicians” in general. Political circles are thus held to be responsible for exacerbating intergroup tensions, while otherwise “people live well.” N. states that “I don’t have a negative personal opinion” about Turks.

I should note that the normative context has a significant influence on the attitudes one has towards others. For instance, it may reflect accumulated fear and negative expectations, which may of course be reinforced by personal experiences and stories of unpleasant experiences on the part of one’s acquaintances. Nonetheless, years of experiencing positive relations in daily contacts create a completely different setting, as is evident from the comments of the following respondent.

*Respondent K. (female 63, Kardzhali)* identifies herself as a Bulgarian through her family story, origin, and kinship. K. has worked as a teacher, and expresses her warm feelings and strongly positive attitude towards the Turkish ethnic group.

I’m very positively oriented towards Bulgarian Turks because, in the first place, I’ve worked in a village that is entirely Turkish. I’ve worked with Turkish kids. Most of my colleagues were Turks, and I had wonderful relations with them—they are friendly and very hospitable. They love to help, es-

pecially when someone is in need. If someone is in a bad situation, they are the most responsive.

This individual has a completely positive attitude and representation of the other on the basis of contacts in daily life, which makes it possible for her to have a broad vision of how interethnic connections can develop as interpersonal and mutually tolerant relations. She states that both ethnic groups have very similar lifestyles, and that their traditions have merged. K. relates that they celebrate the Turkish holiday of Sheker Bairam together and “dye [Easter] eggs with the Turkish kids. They enjoy it very much and have fun.”

*Respondent G. (female 39, Kardzhali)* views her identity through such basic issues as territory and culture, and states that she is proud of her country’s history. She enjoys celebrating holidays regardless of their religious origin since they bring relatives and friends together without any consideration of their ethnic backgrounds. This respondent describes her attitude towards the Turks with whom she works and communicates as positive, but observes that the general attitude of Bulgarians towards the Turkish ethnic group contains negative overtones. She also maintains, however, that they are caused by the impact of the media, which “distort the truth of our relationships.” G. replied that she would accept a relative of hers living with a Turk when asked about social distances.

*Respondent S. (female 33, Kardzhali)* expresses the opinion that traditions and religion unite Turks. She also states that, regardless of the differences between them, “both Bulgarians and Turks get



up in the morning, have their coffee, and go out,” the only important detail being that Turks go to the mosque on Friday. This respondent reduces the similarities and differences between these two ethnic groups to the level of everyday life. In contrast, **Respondent G.** identifies characteristics that supposedly distinguish Bulgarians and Turks apart from their mundane activities, stating that Bulgarians have higher self-esteem while Turks “have complexes.” She explains her views concerning Turkish attitudes towards Bulgarians with the observation that when there is a lack of communication, Turks tend to think of Bulgarians as “bad” and prefer not to approach them. She also maintains that Bulgarians at times tend to underestimate Turks. In mixed areas, however, Turks learn to speak Bulgarian quite quickly and Bulgarians get along well with them. This conclusion resides on the respondent’s daily experience and communication, and it highlights the direct interconnection between an increased number of social contacts and an improvement in the quality of relationships with representatives of other ethnic groups. We may regard this as a quite concise explanation in ordinary language of the essence of Allport’s hypothesis that social contacts are crucial in certain conditions for reducing prejudice.

**Respondent Z. (female 71, Kardzhali-Momchilgrad)** exemplifies how two identities, one tied to the community and the other related to the broader context, can be combined and amalgamated. This respondent possesses a double affiliation, and she points to

the ethnicity with which our mind has been impregnated, we have a memory...we are Turks after all...

Bulgarian Turks, because if you live in Bulgaria, you speak more Bulgarian...We have to conform to the principles of the state.

Z. speaks both Turkish and Bulgarian, enjoys both cultural practices, and has a sister who is married to a Bulgarian.

**Respondent S. (female 54, Kardzhali)**, another representative of the Turkish community, generalized her ideas about the two ethnic groups by referring to their celebrations and traditions, which she claims are united by the common feature of being “more a time for relaxation than celebration.” She remarks that young people do not keep their traditions because, regrettably, they leave the country. Language is one of the cultural components that have to be preserved and passed on to future generations. This respondent’s opinions about Bulgarians are somewhat controversial in that she thinks they are better educated than Turks, but also more nationalistic.

Her answer to the question about how she views Turks’ opinions about Bulgarians illustrates with a single example the barriers and difficulties, but also possibilities, concerning interethnic communication:

Our Turks, ordinary people, I don’t think they make a distinction. Politicians deliberately do that, and some Turks and Bulgarians are influenced by them. There was this five-year-old who used to come over while I was working in a school and we always spoke in Bulgarian. One time I let slip a word in Turkish and he asked me “Are you Turkish? I hate Turks.”



The respondent adds that there are people like this in the Bulgarian community, and it is a question of how they are educated. In general, she thinks that the Bulgarian (younger) generation shouldn't be influenced in this way, but rather have a broader, European view.

The expression "I let slip" that the respondent uses reveals the social inhibition that marks the interactions Turks have with Bulgarians, even seeking to avoid expressing their identity through language. Once again, however, she tends to assign the primary responsibility for the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups to those in charge of society.

## Views on the Development of Ethnic Relations

Representatives of the two groups studied were asked to describe how they imagine the development of intergroup relations and what could be done to improve and enrich them.

*Respondent I. (male 58, Kardzhali)* pointed to the connection between the standard of living and the level to which ethnic groups' representatives communicate.

Ethnic relations can be improved only if the standard of living is raised. If people have better living conditions, they wouldn't get involved in these kinds of problems and won't be deceived by those politicians who created the problems on purpose in order to get more votes. Their aim is more voters and more seats in Parliament.

*Respondent Z.* also regards the development of ethnic relations as directly dependent upon the standard of living. Better living conditions would prevent people from being manipulated by politicians "who are only looking for more votes so that they can get into Parliament." The view that there is a direct link between, on the one hand, improving and developing interethnic relations and, on the other, raising the standard of living is shared by other respondents as well.

Another element common to interviews with respondents from both the Bulgarian and Turkish groups is the link between the development of ethnic relations and the restoration of social justice and equality. This view is often expressed as a hostile attitude towards Roma insofar as representatives of both these groups share stereotypical ideas about the Roma way of life, including the persistent belief that they enjoy greater access to social assistance.

Our respondents' answers to the question "What else could those in charge of the government do to reduce inequality?" were coded as follows:

- Set quotas for integrated early education
- Provide job opportunities
- Provide training and re-qualification so that everyone can find a job
- Stop social assistance
- Provide equal social assistance to everyone
- Stop special protection for Roma
- Politicians should have united positions and work together

The answers of the Bulgarian respondents may be summarized as follows:

- Provide job opportunities
- Stop social assistance for those who quit or refuse work
- Set quotas for (communities) living together
- Re-establish manufacturing
- Politicians should work for the good of everyone in the country

Another question concerned measures that could be undertaken in order to foster everyday communication between ethnic communities in Bulgaria. The answers given by our Bulgarian respondents were coded as follows:

- Communication cannot be fostered forcibly
- We should act with understanding and do good
- Education should be improved
- Everyone should be equal
- Communities should work together
- There should be common cultural practices
- Economic conditions need to be improved

Bulgarian Turkish respondents answered the same question as follows:

- Quotas should be implemented for both living and studying together
- There are no obstacles to community interaction
- Better language proficiency is needed
- Politically neutral media are necessary
- People have to work with facts, not stereotypes or prejudices
- There must be sincerity/consistency of words and actions
- We have to be tolerant of the other's opinions

- Living standards must be improved so that people are not manipulated by politicians
- Roma must have jobs
- It depends on us, as individuals

## Conclusion

The analysis of the stories collected in the interviews with Bulgarians and Bulgarian Turks revealed ambivalences in attitudes and opinions concerning representatives of the other group. At the same time, however, both groups indicated the existence of mutually maintained interrelations based upon friendship, working together, and living in the same neighborhoods.

Almost all of the Bulgarians who were interviewed have had or currently maintain contacts with representatives of the Turkish ethnic group, which to a large degree was expected because of the historical nature of the multicultural cities, towns, and regions where they reside. Individuals with different ethnic backgrounds support and appreciate the traditions of the other, celebrate holidays and events together, and share everyday joys and problems. However, one interesting outcome of the analysis is that although most Bulgarian respondents have a generally positive opinion about their Turkish co-citizens—or positive acculturation orientations (see: Bakalova and Zografova 2014)—they nevertheless confirm the existence of negative attitudes within their ethnic group towards Bulgarian Turks. This reflects a general awareness within their social context of controversial narratives that contain both negative and positive shades of meaning.

Relations of this type between communities demonstrate a degree of tolerance. But, one could not say that this would constitute tolerance as Verkuyten (2010) defines it, namely, an evaluation and acceptance of difference and a generalized positive attitude towards foreign groups, not only with an absence of prejudice, but also with an acceptance of what one would not approve of or is in fact prejudiced against.

It is noteworthy that our Bulgarian Turkish respondents expressed a positive attitude towards their Bulgarian co-citizens and their cultural practices, and they typically assumed that other representatives of their ethnic group shared a similar opinion. For instance, one respondent remarked that

I live in a seven-story building where I'm the only one who is Turkish. Most of my friends are Bulgarians. For 50 years I have lived and gone to school mostly with Bulgarians. In my opinion, there is no difference between Turks and Bulgarians. I was born here, in Bulgaria, and here is where I will stay. I feel good here. It's up to everyone to make their own decisions, it doesn't matter whether it's abroad or in Bulgaria.

This statement appears to prove Brubaker's thesis that ethnicity does not involve a substantial group or entity, but rather comprises a process of identification involving "individuals' point of view, a worldview." This entails "taking as a basic analytical category not the 'group' as an entity, but groupness as a contextually fluctuating conceptual variable" (Brubaker 2004:38).

Our study, which is presented here only in part through excerpts from selected interviews, reveals

that the national identity of Bulgarians is a positive factor that plays an affirmative role in the building of support for cultural preservation and the integration of minorities (see: Zografova 2016). It is also true that a common national identity may decrease the social distance minorities experience in respect to the majority and strengthen their orientation towards integration (Dovidio et al. 2007).

A large percentage of our interviews of both Bulgarians and Bulgarian Turks display a tendency towards deprovincialization, such as when Bulgarian Turks indicate an acceptance and interiorization of the common national identity. There are also tendencies towards generalization (Pettigrew 2008) that are visible primarily when in respect to positive contacts between individuals from different ethnic groups. These can then become transferred to the group as a whole, thereby serving as a mechanism for constructing perceptions and ideas.

Our research, however, has not revealed a transfer of positive ideas and attitudes towards Roma. On the contrary, even when positive overtones are evident in direct contacts between Bulgarians and Turks, negative attitudes, prejudices, and a lack of acceptance towards Roma remain.

In their meta-analyses of hundreds of studies, Pettigrew and Tropp have presented the various conditions and contexts within which intergroup contacts do in fact reduce prejudices. For example, their study of a sample of 696 individuals indicates that intergroup contact is indeed associated with lower levels of prejudice in 94% of the cases (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006). Another important finding is that

there is a synergy between the factors underlying Allport's original hypothesis. The effects produced by separate factors may be controversial upon occasion, such as when institutional support for intergroup contacts does not produce highly positive results since the contacts take place under competitive conditions. But, insofar as Pettigrew and Tropp's work also reveals that very few of the cases studied reflected the original combination of conditions identified in Allport's hypothesis, they argue for the existence of a new trend in contemporary intergroup studies that involves the inclusion of anxiety and threat as mediating variables. When these are

reduced in intergroup contacts, then possibilities to limit prejudice emerge (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006).

Further studies in the field are needed to broaden and, at the same time, specify conditions that are sensitive to the social context. An analysis of the influence that intergroup contacts have upon the positive development of the mutual representations and everyday experiences of different social groups is also needed. It is also necessary to take into consideration the fact that different mechanisms operate on individual and group ethnic levels which cannot be transferred from one level to another.

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## The Everyday Life Intersection of Translational Science and Music<sup>1, 2</sup>

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**Abstract** The purpose of this paper is to discuss the theoretical relationship between translational science and music. The relationship between science and music has been of great interest to philosophers, historians, and musicologists for centuries. From a sociological perspective, we argue that science and music are closely linked at the level of everyday life in contemporary biomedical science. Translational science is a scientific movement that aims to facilitate the efficient application of bio-medical research to the design and delivery of clinical services, and a qualitative approach inspired by symbolic interactionism provides the opportunity to examine the place of the scientist in this movement. The concept of the *existential self* provides a useful platform for this examination insofar as the reflexive nature of the existential self is the way the person's experience of individuality is affected by and in turn affects organizational change. An ongoing qualitative study of an NIH-funded program in translational science has found that music can serve to help scientists maintain a *balanced self* in light of new expectations placed upon them and their work. We identify six ways in which scientists can use music to enhance their sense of self and their work.

**Keywords** Translational Science and Music; Sense of Self; Symbolic Interaction

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The world of science has been undergoing tremendous change in the past few years. Particularly in the biomedical realm, such new approaches as proteomic techniques, the use of nanoparticles in research, and biomarker discovery platforms are just a few of many promising advancements scientists have developed to combat disease. Perhaps the greatest advancement at the paradigmatic level has been the widespread movement towards the concept of *translational science* (Wuchty, Jones, and Uzzi 2007). Translational science research is a scientific movement that aims to facilitate the efficient application of bio-medical research to the design and delivery of clinical services, that is, to improving the “bench-to-bedside” process (Wooten et al. 2014). A major organizational strategy for operationalizing translational science is the *team science* concept. Team science is an organizational strategy by which a number of researchers, staff, and administrators work together to attain specific scientific goals (Kotarba et al. 2014). Research teams are expected to be both interdisciplinary and horizontal in leadership, with explicit attention paid to mentorship and community involvement. As the structure of research evolves, one would expect to see everyday values, procedures, assumptions, and practices also evolve. The United States federal government, through the

<sup>1</sup> This paper is based upon a keynote address presented at the VII Annual Conference of the European Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction, Topola, Bulgaria (July 2016). Please direct all questions and comments to the author: Joseph A. Kotarba, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX, 78666, U.S.

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National Institutes of Health, has provided generous support for the implementation of team-based, translational science.

The rational and financial side of translational science requires accountability. All of the 64 Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) funded by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have established quantitative evaluation programs utilizing a wide range of metrics. However, one feature of the translational science movement, namely, the organizational cultural change associated with the movement, calls for a qualitative, interpretive, and symbolic interactionist regimen. As the structure of research evolves, one would expect to see the everyday values, procedures, assumptions, and practices also evolve.

A qualitative approach inspired by interactionism also provides the opportunity to examine the place of the scientist in the movement. The interactionist concept of the *self* provides a useful platform for this examination, especially in terms of the variant concept of the *existential self*. The reflexive nature of the existential self is the way in which a person’s experience of individuality is affected by, and in turn affects, organizational change. I will focus on the experience of music specifically as an example of a bridge—and occasional buffer—between the self and the organization. I will therefore address the following questions:

- How can the interactionist/existential concept of the self help us understand organizational culture and cultural change?

- What is the reflexive relationship between the scientific/rational features of the (scientist's) self and the aesthetic/humanistic features of the (scientist's) self?

## Methods

This report is part of a larger study of the introduction and progression of an NIH-funded Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) to the Institute for Translational Sciences at the University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston (UTMB). I have been serving as leader of the qualitative, basic, and evaluation research team for the CTSA (Kotarba 2014a). The data for the present report are derived from numerous individual and group interviews, as well as many hours of observing science at UTMB over the course of nine years. The logic of the grounded theory approach to qualitative research directed this research towards discovery and data-generated conceptualization (Charmaz 2014). The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at UTMB reviewed this research.

Although I have been operating largely as a seemingly autonomous ethnographer, my research is not entirely of my own making. The evaluation component of the CTSA designs its work as a team, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods in, for example, our reports to the external review board and the internal operations committee. The expected dominance of biomedical paradigms in the larger project requires qualitative researchers to learn the various languages of these paradigms in order to maintain ethnographic and interpersonal competency. Our analyses at the organizational level

involve understanding, if not occasionally competing with, organizational science, organizational psychology, business, and other contrasting ways of framing research questions and analytical models.

As the leader of the qualitative evaluation research team, I was initially responsible for designing an interactionist-inspired protocol for understanding organizational change related to the introduction of translational science into the traditional medical center setting. Our work complemented the quantitative evaluation research team well. Success for that team consists of deliverables, such as patents, grants, and publications, along with compliance with the CTSA goals as measured through organizational psychology. Our qualitative team measures success in terms of members' meanings for success; members' perceived ability to competently "fit in" the changing organization; and members' perceived ability to master change. Perhaps most importantly, the qualitative team does not operate under the assumption that there is any significant difference between applied qualitative and basic qualitative research. This approach has allowed us to serve both the practical, organizational need of the CTSA for evaluation, as well as the scholarly needs of academic sociology/symbolic interaction in respect to gaining a theoretical understanding of the structure and process of science.

## Translational Science at UTMB

Translational science research (TSR) is a scientific movement that aims to facilitate the efficient application of bio-medical research to the design and delivery of clinical services (improving the "bench-

to-bedside” process). The Institute for Translational Sciences (ITS) at UTMB received its CTSA from the NIH in 2009, and it now consists of fifteen interdisciplinary teams:

- Addictions and Impulse Control Disorders
- Aging, Muscle and Sarcopenia
- Burns, Injury and Response
- Epidemiology
- Hepatocellular Carcinoma Biomarker Development
- Maternal Fetal Medicine
- Novel Therapeutics for Clostridial Difficile Infection
- Obesity and Its Metabolic Complications
- Pediatric Respiratory Infections—Bronchiolitis
- Pediatric Respiratory Infections—Otitis Media
- Phenotypes of Severe Asthma
- Reproductive Women’s Health
- Development of Novel Therapies for Advanced Colorectal Cancer
- Novel Point-of-Care Diagnostic Tests for Parasitic Diseases
- Patient Centered Decision Support in Cancer

Team science is a major focus at UTMB. The qualitative research team approaches the study and evaluation of the Multidisciplinary Translational Teams (MTTs) and overall program leadership through a fairly integrated symbolic interactionist approach to organizational research (Kotarba et al. 2014).

## Organizational Analysis or Organizational Ethnography?

A brief discussion of the two competing schools of thought on the symbolic interactionist study of

organizations is in order (McGinty 2014). The first is *social organizational analysis*, which focuses on organizations as structural entities separate from or somewhat elevated over individual activity (Maines 2001). Researchers here view organizations as instrumental forms of secondary groups marked by discernable rules and values. The second is *organizational ethnography*, which focuses on culture, meaning, and the interpretation of work that exists and takes place in complex groups perceived as organizations in everyday life (Fine 1996). Patrick McGinty (2014) argues that interactionists have largely ignored organizational analysis in the past, leaving that work to structuralist sociologists.

Robert Dingwall and Phil Strong (1985:316) offered a general statement in this regard:

Organizations, then, should be depicted as the products of their members’ actions in circumstances that are not entirely of their own making, although allowing scope for manipulation and maneuver.

This is a fairly reasonable approach for our qualitative research team to take. The world of biomedical research is immensely powerful, ruggedly structured, and unforgivingly bureaucratic. Nevertheless, the essence of this world is the scientist, who is much more than merely the engineer for the locomotive. The relationship between the scientist and the system is a fascinating and necessary feature of our understanding of translational science. We will later conceptualize this relationship through the vision of existential social thought as the *scientist/self-confronting organized science/society* (Kotarba 2014b). But, first, we will summarize the core of

our research at UTMB: cultural change since the advent of the CTSA and translational science (Kotarba 2018). In any event, Dingwall and Strong's advice allows us to study scientists interactionally as members of formal organizations, that is, as scientists in medical centers and as individuals with particular biographies, talents, and cultural tastes. We will argue that studying the place scientists hold within a complex organization like UTMB in a holistic manner (structurally and interactionally) will provide insights that are fruitful for evaluating the translational science project.

## The Three Stages of Cultural Change

We organized the process of cultural change in the CTSA in terms of stages—to date, there have been three analytical stages. We have attached dates to the stages not to claim to be definitive, but rather to give the reader a sense of change over time. I will briefly discuss each stage in terms of the cultural items used by several key members in order to monitor change as observed in everyday life at UTMB.

### Stage One: Cultural Invasion

Many scientists perceived the implementation of the CTSA project beginning in 2009 as *cultural invasion*. This period lasted until approximately 2012. The traditional meaning of certain significant symbols, such as “my lab” and “mentoring,” became problematic. New ideas on the meaning and conduct of science were introduced largely from centralized settings like the NIH as opposed to the scientists' particular specialty areas. While some re-

spondents perceived this as positive and progressive, others regarded it as strange and invasive.

### Stage Two: Cultural Accommodation

Internal responses to change followed the normal scientific paradigm, from approximately 2012 to 2014. The business model was increasingly taken-for-granted as terms like “enterprise,” “continuous improvement,” and “talent” entered everyday conversation. Scientists integrated the translational model into their ongoing work without giving up their fundamental sense of science or self. The perception of TS as a radical shift in research procedures fairly quickly disappeared.

### Stage Three: Cultural Expansion

The organizational and cultural platforms for conducting science expanded regionally, nationally, and cross-disciplinarily beginning in approximately 2014. The number of problem area networks and regional data and patient sharing groups continues to expand. The introduction of strategies for continuous improvement and strategic planning added a layer of rationality to the increasingly important concept of accountability in doing and evaluating science. Practical strategies for integrating “continuous change” have been implemented, but their degree of success remains to be seen.

## Changes in Key Features of Everyday Life in the CTSA

The scientists' understanding and use of specific cultural features of the CTSA provides us with an

insider/subjectivist understanding of translational science. We will briefly discuss five such features: team; expertise; mentoring; the self-identity of the scientist; and routine and tradition vs. experiment and innovation.

### The Team

The *team* concept has been central to the NIH's CTSA program in general and the CTSA project at UTMB since its inception. In both cases, the designing of teams sought to integrate ideas from industry, as well as academia (Calhoun et al. 2013). In the first stage, many scientists felt that they were already working in teams, although organizational experts would classify these as research groups. A major difference in this regard is the move towards horizontal leadership in contrast to traditional vertical leadership. Migrating one's work to a true team configuration placed stress upon the self-identity of certain scientists, some of whom felt that the CTSA leadership was a bit insensitive. Seasoned researchers with lengthy track records of scientific and career accomplishments suddenly found themselves to be regular members of seemingly homogeneous teams in which their expertise was not fully exploited. As one scientist put it, it is really difficult for many scientists at UTMB to park their egos at the door when arriving at a team meeting.

In stage two, the meaning of the word *team* changed positively as the CTSA matured. We commonly heard the following terms used to define the CTSA teams in stage one: *bureaucracy*; *imposed system*; *multiple SWAT squads*; *group research*; *what we have always*

*done*; *Obama-ism*; and *how scientists have always done their work*. These terms imply either the rejection of change, or the lack of any need to change. In stage two, we observed more frequently such positive terms as: *family* (large size is good; some delegation of responsibility; multi-directional activities; and open visibility); *network*; *holism* (rather than linearism); *simply good, basic science*; and *bridge* (between basic and applied science). Nevertheless, the team model was still not fully accepted, and the enforced management style and leadership were still very vertical.

In stage three, scientists increasingly viewed teams as a normal format/structure for interaction and increasingly horizontal leadership. It is noteworthy that social, behavioral, evaluation, and administrative science types began analyzing translational science by generating new terms or titles for teams, complementing the traditional measurement of teams with the conceptualization of teams. For example, Centallas and colleagues (2013) referred to translational teams as *research calibration*, and Kotarba and colleagues (2014) referred to certain styles of translational teams as *extraterritorial teams*. Nevertheless, team science remains a somewhat distressing work-in-progress as the traditional structure of biomedical research—the NIH, problematic federal funding, and the academic tenure system—constrain the level of local control required for full implementation of the team concept.

### Expertise

Some scientists, especially project managers, have been frustrated over the dramatically new and ex-



tensive organizational and professional work and skills suddenly expected of them. They have felt themselves to be inundated with paperwork and organizational logic that has little to do with their mastery of scientific work and logic. One implication of this dilemma is the resentment some scientists have over the imposition of rationalist values in team formation in contrast to more traditional personalistic values. As one director put it, the most effective criterion he uses to decide whether to work with someone is the ability to talk face-to-face over a beer. It remains to be seen how the recent introduction of the business concept of *talent* will affect departmental and team staffing. Nevertheless, new terms from the world of business have gained some currency among the scientists in stage three, such as *entrepreneurialism* and *risk acceptance*.

### **Mentoring**

The CTSA model places great emphasis upon the value of mentoring in biomedical science. Scientists have traditionally viewed mentoring as a voluntary activity among senior researchers. In general, the local culture generally held that certain scientists were skilled at mentoring and were, or at least should be, the ones committed to and engaging in this practice. In terms of junior faculty, as well as postdoctoral and graduate students, a common concern in stage one was gaining access to CTSA funding. Students noted that they could take advantage of CTSA resources only if their mentors were themselves involved in CTSA work. Consequently, the pressure to assemble mentoring relationships was largely fired by financial, not scientific concerns. During stages two and three,

however, this distress has been mitigated by the formation at UTMB of a highly successful Academy of Research Mentors. Still, students prefer somewhat contradictory features in their mentors. They want their mentors to teach them good scientific and career skills, but are anxious to strike out on their own, with the highest goal, of course, being “building one’s lab.”

### **The Self-Identity of the Scientist**

The movement to translational science can seriously impact the scientist’s self-identity, and this impact can be positive or negative. A positive impact is the awareness that one is now at the cutting edge of scientific design and strategy. A negative impact can be the awareness that one is now expected to surrender some of the independent comfort zone of isolating oneself, and perhaps a post-doc or two, in one’s lab.

Scientists at UTMB generally see themselves—no, fancy themselves—as intellectuals. They maintain this traditional and perhaps somewhat dated self-identity in spite of the massive changes taking place in the organizational and cultural contexts of modern bio-medical research. It seems that the contemporary researcher spends an increasing amount of time and attention on budgets, personnel issues, hiring, legal issues such as patents and permissions, and government relations. The scientists generally refuse to see themselves as all these things, and reject others’ definitions of them as such, but prefer to self-define as thoughtful, well-read, politically-astute, rational yet idealistic, warm, and humanistic.



## Routine and Tradition vs. Experiment and Innovation

This dilemma exists in the minds of both prospective CTSA participants and those already committed to the program. Scientists view the CTSA as an effort to change both the means and the end of biomedical research. One scientist noted that the scientific method in which he was trained, and which he has pursued for several decades, has served him well in terms of discoveries, publications, prestige, and grants:

Good science has to take place at its own pace. Adding this translational component simply makes the discovery and application process take longer...You see, to the layperson, scientists seem to apply for the same grant over and over again. We're not reinventing the wheel; we're sanding it and polishing it.

For him and other scientists, especially basic science researchers, the objective of translation should require only a partial revision of the scientific method at UT. This revision would most likely occur at the end of the research process, when scientific discovery is turned over to engineers, patent attorneys, and corporations, such as pharmaceutical and medical technology companies. These traditional scientists still philosophically perceive science as a linear process to be tinkered with when and where necessary. The scientists who have seriously bought into translational science, however, agree with the NIH argument that the entire research process needs to change in order to achieve positive results. Input from engineers, patent attorneys, and corporations should

emerge at any point in the research process, when relevant.

By stage three, however, many scientists have adopted a useful strategy to manage and maintain a healthy self-identity, given the rapid organizational change taking place around them. This strategy involves arranging the new, as well as traditional expectations that have been placed upon them in a functional order. For example, we have heard several scientists say that they are no longer threatened by the expectation that they learn and adopt certain features of business culture. Instead of viewing business as a threat to their sense of self, they have come to regard it as a limited project and material to be learned, but material that they can easily master—much like a hobby.

## The Fourth Stage?

How the fourth stage of cultural change emerges depends on such factors as funding and programmatic directives from NIH; the conflict between research and clinical demands for resources in the health sciences center; and the emergence of junior investigators schooled on the principles of TS. The local culture is very likely to continue evolving in a scholarly direction with the expansion of the Academy of Research Mentors and an expansion of the recent program to improve communications with the media and the various local communities. This latter endeavor will place emphasis upon developing a more robust public identity that is very likely to include “showcasing” the scientists as other than simply scientists.

## Science and Music

A common feature of our interviews with scientists at UTMB has been to interject the following questions into the conversation: What kinds of music do you like? What do you listen to? When do you listen to music? These somewhat off-the-wall questions have served two functions. First, they can rejuvenate an aging and perhaps boring interview by drawing the respondents' attention to something perhaps more interesting than discussions of work. Second, these issues help us focus on the self-identity of the scientist directly. They involve experiences in leisure, family life, friendships, community, spirituality, and the *vocation* of being a scientist—in general, the self-identity of the scientist. The specific research question in this regard is: How can self-experience provide a forum for a dialogue between the scientists' sense of who they are and the organizational world of science out there that seemingly wants them to be something different?

This problem was perhaps best illustrated by physical chemist and novelist C. P. Snow (1959), who argued that there is a growing chasm between science and the arts. He called for closer ties between science and the arts in general at the paradigmatic level, proposing that practitioners of science and the arts build bridges among themselves in order to further the progress of both knowledge and society. The present project, being based on social psychology and social science, locates the problem at the level of everyday life. Hypothetically, we argue that music specifically and the arts more generally can and do serve as a bridge between science and the humanities. In the terms of social science, this

bridge can be located in everyday life at the level of the self and interaction.

The relationship between music and science has been of great interest to philosophers, historians, musicologists, and now social scientists for millennia. As Peter Pesic (2015) notes, liberal education in ancient Greece consisted of four components, namely, music, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy—the quadrivium. More recently, science has posited music as a charming accompaniment to thought, but less powerful than rational science. A strong voice to the contrary was Albert Einstein. When asked by a friend, *Do you believe that absolutely everything can be expressed scientifically?* Einstein replied, *Yes, it would be possible, but it would make no sense. It would be description without meaning—as if you described a Beethoven symphony as a variation in wave pressure.*

The historical and philosophical literature still tends to rely upon “Big Scientist” analyses and opinions concerning this relationship, whether they be Steven Weinberg, Stephen Hawking, or Jane Goodall. We argue that the common, university trained, highly specialized, and professional scientist is clearly much more the typical case today. The question then becomes: What place does music have in the everyday life and work of the modern scientist?

Our research has found not only that scientists should integrate the arts into their self-identity, they in fact do so. Music not only provides a charming accompaniment to thought, as Pesic put it so well, but also serves as a particular sort of buffer between the scientist's self and the outside world. The con-

cept of the *existential self* is a very useful framework for exploring the dynamics of this buffer. All paradigms in sociology posit essential relationships between the individual and society. In symbolic interaction, this relationship is conceptualized in terms of the self and society, the self being the person's sense of and experience of individuality (Blumer 1969). A variation of the symbolic interactionist model of the self is the existential model, which posits a *confrontational* relationship between the self and society (Kotarba 1984). The existential self-concept regards the individual as an active agent in seeking meaning for problematic situations in everyday life (Melnikov and Kotarba 2016). Sources for meaning in our postmodern culture increase as the mass and electronic media continue to expand and access to the media becomes widely available in society. The new media create new meanings while also creating new frameworks for old meaning (Altheide 2016; see also Goffman 1974).

The point is that scientists already meld science and the arts into their self-identities. More specifically, a common strategy among translational scientists is to use music as a *buffer* against the stressors that the translational science movement both locally and in general places upon the security of their sense of self (Douglas 1970).

The following are six ways in which translational scientists use music to help achieve a sense of a *balanced self*:

**Music can reinforce the self-definition of intellectual.** The self-definition of intellectual, which can emerge from reading history or engaging in quali-

ty films, is very important to many scientists. High quality music, largely classical, fits into this picture well.

**Music can serve as an escape from the over-rationalized expectations of others.** One scientist working extensively with bio-informatics indicated how his "escape" from the NIH is the Grateful Dead. Playing the role of a "Dead Head" in the lab indicated to others that he was not just another lab nerd. The Dead have also helped him establish cognitive and affective distance between his self-identity and that of a business person chasing patent attorneys and preparing 30 second elevator talks.

**Music can facilitate a return to the community.** One scientist indicated that his current community involvement is to serve as a voluntary board member for the local community orchestra. He sees continuing and even expanding his involvement as a way of easing into retirement after a long and illustrious career as a scientist.

**Music provides another outlet for creativity.** A junior scientist was very proud of the DVD she assembled of her wedding music mix. She not only assembled the playlist, but received permission to record the actual songs on the list and contributed to the DVD cover as well. She was also proud of the fact that assembling the music reflected her skills at organizing and categorizing tissue samples for her study of inflammation.

**Music can facilitate a rhythm for exploration.** Several scientists noted that they listen to music through headphones while in the lab. Different lab

tasks require different styles of music. One scientist remarked that thoughtful tasks, such as writing or working on calculations, fit better with ambient music like Moby or Aes Dana, whereas feeding the mice allows for louder and fast paced rock music like the Who or Metallica.

### **Music can help establish a sense of being alone.**

Several scientists noted that they will listen to music through headphones to cut out noise while working. Interestingly, one scientist said that the level of noise in her lab has increased since translational science practices were introduced since the size of her team has expanded considerably. Any style of music would work in this respect.

## **Summary**

In tune with the ongoing discussion in the literature and the media on the relationship between the arts and music (e.g., Pestic 2015), our research points to a promising theoretical intersection at the level of everyday life in the self-identity experience of the contemporary translational scientist. We do not intend to generalize to all scientists, or even to all scientists at UTMB. We simply want to highlight a process of self-identity among scientists faced with growing expectations today to be different kinds of scientists or acquire such other kinds of identities as business person or community outreach worker. In

addition to music, other scientists may find refuge in art, literature, or architecture as well.

The goal among these scientists, whether consciously or not, is to achieve a *balanced self*. To the degree that their attachment to science is a vocation, they attempt to adjust themselves to new external expectations. To the degree that their attachment to science is a job, or even a profession, then they are more able to incorporate new external expectations into their work and their sense of self.

The approach we have taken in this study is not only compatible with programs or workshops in staff development, professional training, and self-development for junior and senior scientists, it is also supportive. In today's very complex world of biomedical research, one must be in a position to manage the numerous shifting expectations that are placed on the self, as well as on one's time and thought—managing a mutable self, as Louis Zurcher (1977) put it so elegantly. Music can approach the unknown—as does science—but with an aesthetic instead of a reason.

I have one last thought on the sociological/interactionist study of culture. To search for and find music in science is not a reach. William James (1996) wrote about culture as “Much-at-Onceness.” Culture is not only in a toolbox or somewhere in the clouds. It is in fact everywhere, and in abundance.

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## The Rising Salience of the Absent: An Interactionist Analysis

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**Abstract** The paper uses examples from rural studies to demonstrate the relevance of symbolic interactionism for unlocking the complexity of contemporary society. It does so by making a case for a non-prescriptive theory-method dialectic. Case examples are drawn upon in support of the argumentation, including early interactionism and ethnographic work in the United Kingdom, and, in the second half of the paper, rural sociology and fieldwork. The main argument presented is that the traditional remit of interactionism should be extended to recognize how absence is increasingly influential. It concludes that interactionism is in tune with other new trajectories in the social sciences that take into consideration co-presence proximity both on and off-line.

**Keywords** Rural; Interactionism; Ethnography; Absence; Definition of the Situation; New Social Media

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Social life...is not particularly amenable to deep systematic analysis...Indeed I have heard it said that we should be glad to trade what we've so far produced for a few really good conceptual distinctions and a cold beer. But there's nothing in the world that we should trade for what we do have: the bent to sustain in regard to all elements of social life a spirit of unfettered, unsponsored inquiry and the wisdom not to look elsewhere but ourselves and our discipline for that mandate. [Goffman 1983:17]

[B]ecause theory is so obviously difficult, the theorist takes on an aura that sets her apart from others...puffing out their theoretical feathers. [Craib 1992:4-5]



The intention of this paper shares the theme of this special issue and the ambitions of its editors—to showcase the relevance of symbolic interactionism (SI) for the analysis of contemporary social life. It shares this positive disposition and argues this is best achieved by a strong theory-method dialectic while keeping an eye on new directions in sociology. Particularly and distinctively, the discussion makes the case that *absence* is increasingly important and demonstrates this through a series of empirical examples and theoretical ideas. These are drawn from a number of projects conducted by the author that have cumulatively drawn together ideas within the interactionist community and from rural studies. Although the latter is not a field with a strong history or association with interactionism, the inherent capacity, adaptability, and strength of SI bodes well for interactionist futures.

The paper is structured as follows. First, an opening discussion foregrounds the kind of approach to theory and method adopted throughout. This advocates a strong theory-method dialectical relationship and is informed by British symbolic interactionism, the emergence of the ethnographic research approach in the UK, and a case study from the sociology of education. The second main section then seeks to reveal how SI can be augmented by new theoretical developments outside its traditional focus of attention, specifically, 1) rural studies and 2) “Big Data.” These offer a new synthesis or mandate that involves the interconnection of place, absence, and both physical and online spheres. The conclusion argues that SI is a natural collaborator in this undertaking insofar as it is capable of both adaptation and fruitful synthesis. Moreover, it opens up

and exposes new sites for analysis, where meaning and the power to impose definitions are mobile and therefore demand our serious attention.

## British Interactionism and the Theory-Method Dialectic in Ethnography

The relationship between theory and ethnography has something of a complicated history within British sociology. Discussions of their synergies have ebbed and flowed over the years, and at times—as Craib suggested above—not all have been made welcome. Hence, reflections on theory-method connections have not always seemed relevant or fruitful. The overarching argument here is that there is scope for a stronger dialogue because of the benefits such a relationship can yield.

Atkinson and Housley (2003) captured the fashions and fickleness of interactionism’s permeation of sociology in the United Kingdom. Concerning the emergence of ethnographic work in Britain, Burgess (1984) described how anthropology “came home” to study more local cultural contexts. What is notable for the United Kingdom context is that, in contrast to the United States, there has not been the same centrifugal force of a department or key text (such as the Green Book/bible). Since SI in the United Kingdom has always possessed less critical mass, it is not associated with key scholars located in departments.<sup>1</sup> A better informed history of United Kingdom SI and associated fieldwork traditions is presented by tracing the literature, rather than the people (Dingwall 2001). In addition, ethnography’s

<sup>1</sup> Early Chicago sociology would be one example and modern McMaster another.

development is interwoven with the emergence of interactionism (Atkinson 2015). What is clear is that the United Kingdom developed an interest in both SI and ethnography, but how they folded into one another has sometimes become blurred and now even forgotten (Atkinson 2015). Whilst Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) note that ethnography is now the dominant research paradigm in some sub-disciplines of sociology, the same cannot be said for interactionism.

A brief review of several sites of interactionist focus in the United Kingdom and one case example of a strong theory-method dialectic will now be outlined. This offers a way to both understand and advocate such a relationship while also providing a foundation for the second, more speculative half of this paper.

SI is often positioned on British curricula as part of the emerging canon of sociology—slipped in with microsociology in the contents of the standard sociology “cookbook” text as a reaction to structural determinism (cf. Giddens and Sutton 2009). *Empirical* interest in the micro sphere is more multi-faceted, one example being that at some institutions it emerges both from the social policy legacy of the Webb’s and from Malinowski’s anthropology in the case of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Within the past forty years, a specialist and sustained engagement with qualitative methods developed across a small, but significant number of institutions and scholars. These included, and not exclusively, the Open University, Cardiff Social Sciences, Warwick field studies, and Manchester social

anthropology.<sup>2</sup> A series of accompanying pivotal texts established the legitimacy of the ethnographic research approach (Burgess 1982; 1984; Hammersley 1989; 1992; Atkinson 1990; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Delamont 2016). From a situation in which there was a lack of literature on ethnography, it exploded.

The emphasis within this specialist and methodologically-sophisticated body of work lay upon the ethnographic imagination and reflexivity. Its success can be judged by the mainstream acceptance of such terms today. In the broadest of senses, it acknowledged the messy, non-linear, and constructed character of fieldwork (Pole and Hillyard 2016); see also the biographies of Hammersley (2012), Atkinson (2012), and Delamont (2012). The more theoretically-minded work of those engaging with the microsphere had strong capture in several sub-disciplines, such as medical sociology and the “new” sociology of education of the early 1970s. One particular case of theory-method dialogue that drew attention within the secondary literature was the sociology of education’s differentiation-polarization theory (DPT), and lessons from DPT inform the way in which theory-method relations are advocated here.

This body of work around DPT stemmed from a research project at Manchester University in the 1960s that investigated the then tripartite compulsory school system in the United Kingdom. This tiered

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<sup>2</sup> Also notable are TeamEthno with John Hughes at Lancaster; Wes Sharrock and ethnomethodology at Manchester; conversation analysts at York; and interactionists in medical sociology at Edinburgh.

pupils according to ability, with a third type for pupils with technical aptitudes. [In reality, the former two types dominated.] A series of school ethnographies emerged that addressed the top tier boys grammar (Lacey 1971); a second tier secondary modern (Hargreaves 1967); a girls grammar (Lambart 1970); and the later, inclusive comprehensive schooling system (Ball 1981). The legitimacy of selective grammar schooling continues, but it is DPT as an exercise in the capacity of ethnography to cumulate theory (dialectically) that is our concern here.

DPT stands out as a rare example of a sustained attempt to cumulatively develop theory through a series of ethnographic works. It is hard to find a more analyzed example. There is also a secondary literature in addition to the original monographs/theses that emerged from the individual schools. It is consistently found that to separate (differentiate) pupils exacerbates (further polarizes) their differences. The secondary literature immediately exposed the internecine character of the methodological debates,<sup>3</sup> namely, the question of cumulation becomes very nuanced, very quickly—case-specific even (see: Hillyard 2010; 2011). In DPT's case, this involved questioning whether it was theory cumulation; whether the original studies were “ethnographies”; whether theory cumulation was an original intention; and so forth. Hence, any interpretation or subsequent attempt to advance this work (to appeal to one speaker at the 34th *Quals* conference in Canada in 2017) is to perhaps conclude that there are as many versions (of SI) as there are interactionists.

<sup>3</sup> As one colleague later advised, never write a methods textbook. Both he and I have subsequently done so, albeit separately.

A number of lessons arise from DPT that inform the stance adopted here. First among these was a move away from a more technicist reading in favor of gaining insight from the periphery lessons from the fieldwork experience more broadly. In my own work, a close comparative reading of the original monographs sat alongside the firsthand experience of putting principles into “messy” practice. This involved avoiding the taint of being assumed to be a teacher (as past studies, including Burgess 1983, had done), and instead, after Epstein (1998), adopting the “least adult” role possible. This relationship with the pupils was ultimately best captured as that of a mascot rather than that of a peer (Hillyard 2001; 2003).

Adaptations in the field sat alongside a close reading of the monographs, which allowed their distinctions and individual character to come to the fore. The secondary methodological literature on DPT was of value, but it ran the risk of detracting from this original work. For instance, Ball (1981), as the later study, had been able to call upon a wider array of interactionist literature that had crossed the Atlantic. Lacey (1971) had set the school within its locale and beyond the school gates, and found that the grammar school provided an important way for middle-class families to access higher education. Collectively, these nuances foreshadow this paper's emphasis upon place and disposition towards methodological eclecticism (away from technicism). The secondary literature around seminal studies—such as Burgess' (1983) monograph—can exceed the original study itself, but, as Atkinson (2012) argued concerning the life and work of Goffman, the biography of the man should not detract from the ideas.

A final characteristic that informed the theory-method dialectic advocated here was the *zeitgeist* of the late 1990s and its more eclectic disposition. The sociology of education was influenced by post-modernism (Stronach and MacLure 1997), and it offered a very different dynamic to an analysis of DPT. When placed alongside Goffman's conceptual richness and methodological eclecticism, which were also gaining recognition at that moment (Drew and Wootton 1988; Burns 1992), they were the flip side of the coin, offering a non-conventional dialogue between theoretical ideas and ethnographic work (Stronach and Smears 2010). DPT is something of a litmus test case for emerging British interactionist and ethnographic dispositions in that it illustrates a strong theory-method dialectic that accommodated innovations. One particular legacy is pursued in the second half of the paper—Lacey's particular concern to look beyond the school gates and upon place.

## The Performance of Rural Space

This section uses rural studies as a platform to explore new dimensions of theory-method dialogue, with an initial point being that the rural sociology literature in the United Kingdom was stagnant by the noughties and declined at its own hand (see: Bell and Newby 1971; Newby 2008). A number of colleagues have observed two ironies facing interactionally-minded ethnographers working in rural sociology. These were, first, the irony of doing sociology in places that lack people and, second, the irony of the decline in community studies when it had earlier been so instrumental in the establishment of ethnography. Perhaps my own first encounter with rural sociology stands in support of this, given that it was

somewhat circuitous. Following funded research of the social and cultural impact of the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic in the United Kingdom, an analysis of rural studies showed either the absence of an interactionist stance, or a fundamental misunderstanding of it (Hillyard 2007; Newby 2008). Human geography, rather than sociology, dominated, and qualitative analytical methods lacked penetration into rural domains following the decline in community studies (Hillyard 2007; Hillyard and Burrige 2012).

Crow's (2016) measured overview placed the community studies genre into its historical moment. While the *absence* of theoretical interest caught the headlines, Crow and Mah (2012) showed that a broad array of theoretical ideas featured in many studies, although a number had also neglected them. Although certain studies lacked the grounding in the ideas that underpin the emergence of ethnography that some advocated (Atkinson 2015), there were nevertheless early pockets of interactionist-informed work. Simply stated, while the sociology of education became a home for ethnographic work, the later did not find the same grip in rural studies. The obvious exception here, particularly given the lack of rural sociology generally in the United Kingdom, is Newby's (1977) Goffman-influenced early work—the deferential dialectic is capable of being read as pure Goffman (Hillyard 2007). Interestingly, there is the same emphasis upon the definition of the situation in Newby's monograph as in Burgess' (1983), with the social structure of the rural context merely transposing a comprehensive schooling system into the occupational community of rural England in the 1970s. The legacy of early rural sociology was empirical. It is this that offered

the jolt of surprise when the past contrasted with the present:

When I then went to [study] Gosforth [in the 1950s], I regarded myself as going to a foreign country, and when I got off the bus in Gosforth...there was a woman coming down the road, on a white horse, and she stopped outside the shop—Barnes’s shop—and Mr. Barnes came out and actually touched his forehead, and said, “Good Morning, Miss Keene”...I discovered that Miss Keene was actually the Rector’s daughter, and the Rector’s daughter clearly belonged to a different social class from Mr. Barnes. And I thought, “Here is the English class system in action!” [Laughs]. [Williams 2008:97-98]

Contemporary rural studies face the same challenge as Williams and Newby did decades earlier—to look beyond the white noise of normality. Studying less densely populated places is theoretically viable, as Goffman’s fieldwork in Shetland had demonstrated (Goffman 1959<sup>4</sup>) in spite of the difficulties he encountered—Goffman later described his time in the remoteness of Shetland as “the worst year of my life.” Crow and Mah (2012) pointed out how community studies re-orientated to explore new issues—from de-industrialization, to gentrification in both rural and urban domains. A theory-method dialectic delivers criticality by using general trends and primary fieldwork together to see beyond a “nostalgic picture [that] relies on myth rather than fact” (Rojek 2007:11).

I will now illustrate this point using a village ethnography. The discussion is a combination of prompts/jolts from the fieldwork findings alongside the

<sup>4</sup> I am grateful to Greg Smith for clarifying the nuanced differences between the thesis and the book.

growing theoretical recognition of the importance of interactions outside rural spaces. The argument is made that the lessons from theory and method in dialectic can—and should—be incorporated into interactionist thought.

### On Absence: Interactionism and New Rural Studies

Wolcott’s (2003) monograph described how, during his fieldwork, he became known as “the man in the principal’s office.” Such a role proved impossible in a rural ethnography of a Norfolk village in the South East of England. The primary research question had been to discover whether the school was—as policy and community rhetoric often has it—at the heart of the rural community within a context in which other rural amenities are closing.

Figure 1. Matt cartoon, with permission of the *Daily Telegraph*.





Our core findings have been reported elsewhere (Bagley and Hillyard 2011; Hillyard and Bagley 2014; Hillyard 2015). An immediate and unexpected finding was a lack of head teachers—three different head teacher appointments were made across the year of fieldwork. Rather than Williams’ immediate encounters with significant village social actors or spending time in the principal’s office, this rural Norfolk village made finding the head a challenge. This absence, which provided a metaphor for capturing wider change, was expressed well by one acting head:

There doesn’t seem to be a hub of the village. The church doesn’t seem to feature. I don’t know if it does, but if it doesn’t have any links with the school, then a community school would still have news from the church...and regular visits from the vicar, even if he has got 27 other churches. But, there are no real strong community links. [interview, acting head teacher]

In human geography, Thrift’s (2005; 2012) analysis of capitalism and space stressed the constancy of change—indeed, that this is integral to capitalism’s survival. The very absence of a head and a hub for this Norfolk village meant that *stasis* acquired the same importance that Thrift (2012) and others associate with the dynamism of the global city. The history of this village, which had expanded rapidly post-war, unlocked this present-day stasis. Briefly stated, it had been an agrarian village since Norman times with a stable population of around 200. It then tripled within fifty years in modernity, but the former heart of the village was empty. It had only a school remaining at the center, with a store and public house on the outskirts near the main road.

Table 1. Past and present formations of the Norfolk case study village.

<i>Industry</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Location and Sustainability</i>
PAST: Farming	Farming, some tourism (1950s+)	Norwich (1 hour by road), small market town nearby
TRANSITION: Remaining infrastructure encouraged building	Landowner sold post-war, allowing and attracting a transient small industry	Near an A-road, attracting development
NOW: “Economy” (budget) tourism/residential	Rapid expansion and variety of populations. ZONED	FUTURE: further expansion planned would ensure future viability of the school. Tourism peripheral compared to county

Source: Self-elaboration.

The combination of changing amenities and rapid expansion folded into one another. The new build environment meant that the physical core of the original, old agrarian village—the intersection of three roads, where the bakers, dairy, and blacksmith were located—declined in importance as these closed down and commuting possibilities opened up. The picturesque properties located at this old center—the Methodist Chapel, the former school teacher’s house, and flintknapped farmworker cottages—became second home properties. The new builds were further out towards the main A-road. The land sale both enabled the rapid expansion and removed

the influence of a dominant landowner/Lord of the Manor. The fieldwork thus found that new villagers outnumbered the old; the oldest parts of the village were the least populated due to second home ownership; and the village was zoned residentially towards the periphery.

More people living in this expanded village, ironically enough, did not make for more interactions or enhanced daily rounds. The lack of central amenities—that stasis or absence—meant people shopped outside the village in the supermarket at the nearby market town. This was where the village's daily round of interactions now took place:

I always say, if I walk, I might see someone I know, you see, and you got to talk to 'em, whereas in a car you just leave 'em, you know [laughs]. The wife say, you always talk to 'em she say, because she in Morrisons [supermarket], you see, well that's like a social occasion. We always go Thursday morning and then I usually see some people I know...That is a social occasion going shopping now. I told someone that was the highlight of my week and they called me a liar! [Laughs] [male villager, born and raised in the village, married, three children]

Newcomers encountering and clashing with established village mores is a significant theme in the rural literature. Thelwell's cartoons, which feature in Newby (1980), capture well the cultural dissonances that were generated. One example is the shock of the newcomer housewife discovering the village store does not stock stuffed olives. Urban studies suggest that newcomers were attracted to the *place* rather than to the people—termed elective belonging.

Yet in this village ethnography, a kind of non-elective belonging occurred over time. The place and the village imprinted upon social identities, regardless of background and original disposition:

**SH:** What are your own plans—to stay?

**R:** Yes, to the bitter end...Well, once you find a place you like, you don't really want...And we put so much in. I mean, we've doubled the size of this house. Not intentionally, but really to accommodate my parents. Which is now part of us, so. You like to see the trees grow up and the plants grow, don't you?

The new villagers, by staying so long, became the village. This was not a result of elective belonging or an initial desire to be there:

This was the only business in East Anglia that was within our—or Suffolk—that was within our price range. And the reason it was within our price range was because it was so run down. I mean, the property was just disgusting. Just running with cockroaches—horrible! [female villager, resident 6 years, business owner, married, two children]

Once you get to know the villages, there are some other villages around here that we would probably have preferred to have lived in. But, the unfortunate thing, you can't always get what you want. With property and that. I mean, some have got established village halls and those that have done that, the community is established. [male villager, resident 8 years, married, retired into the village]

This was an *inverted* “mortification of self” (after Goffman). However, when used alongside SI and

Thomas' definition of the situation, this process shows what the village was becoming. That is to say, through time and the normalization of their values, newcomers shape what is desired and valued—even authentic—in rural spaces. The past becomes an advert—evocative of a time and resonance now non-existent. One example is the atmosphere of the rural tavern:

A pint of Abbot [beer] and a packet of Burts chips [crisps] bartender said Ivan as he assumed his usual position. One huge hand enveloped his pint, another gently fingering a glowing Panatella [cigar]. He took a long swig and a deep draw. Life was good. [country pub website, Norfolk]

This ethnographic finding on rural change resonates with contemporary rural studies that have analyzed when expectations meet caricatures. For example, Edensor (2006) discusses how rural landscapes are staged and invite a certain reading of those spaces, which may be enacted by means of trig points to capture the best view. To use the example of the City of Durham, maps indicate the best picturesque views of the city's river and its castle. The council has even placed footprint markers on some bridges—echoing the stage prompts of a scripted performance.

These theoretical considerations and empirical findings are highly compatible, and both SI and Thomas' definition of the situation recognize that such spaces become real as a consequence (Thomas and Thomas 1927). This retains an interactionist emphasis upon definitional work onto space, which is to say that if spaces are defined in a partic-

ular light, that is how they come to be performed. What this rural ethnography traced and saw was that, increasingly, expectations about rural life were reached in locales *outside* the village, such as by the newcomers whom the Norfolk villagers called "the London Clique." When these new villagers enacted their version of the rural—with the passage of time and because they were the majority—this imprinted on both newcomers and village alike.

This Thomas-inspired interactionist reading has much stronger implications than the rural studies literature upon in and outward migration and who stays (Halfacree and Rivera 2012). The relativism of Thomas' theorem, even when taken somewhat out of its original context, holds that the *accuracy* of the definition is not important (see a key footnote in Murphy et al. 1998 for a full explication) *because the consequences are the same*—whether definitions are right or wrong.

The argument does not appear radical on immediate glance when applied to rural spaces because rural areas are already subject to profound change, regardless of the social actors' resident in or visiting those locales. However, when dovetailed with further developments in ethnography—namely, the advent of "Big Data"—it becomes a potential game changer in that the three issues converge and create a perfect storm. Alone, they are less remarkable. These are, in summary, the strongly temporal—and even unwitting—character of rural identity and space formation; the impact of Big Data and online identity formation; and, finally, SI and Thomas' understanding.

## From Co-Location to Co-Presence

The advent of Big Data has generally been much heralded, but several commentators have been more measured in their assessments (Uprichard 2013; Hand 2014). This has generated a dilemma for ethnographers seeking to incorporate the “data shadow” or data body of social actors now inevitably enmeshed in digital worlds. Should equal weighting be granted to both online domains and traditional situations of co-presence? Or do interactionist models, such as dramaturgy, hold in both physical and virtual domains? The seminal works in gender studies by West and Zimmerman (1987) and Butler (1990) have read gender identity as a performance and further incorporated Foucault. As West (1984) has also demonstrated elsewhere, gender is an accomplishment on the part of both audience *and* actor, and in this sense it is compatible with interactions made in online spheres. For example, forums such as Facebook and Twitter are audience-driven.<sup>5</sup> Beaulieu (2010) captured the relevant distinctions by re-framing *co-presence* to refer to the online world and *co-location* to describe physical immediacy. In the sense of following the field or finding the field, this conceptual move is necessary for ethnography to remain relevant to the everyday lives it seeks to understand and study (Pole and Hillyard 2016). It also invites us to think about the implications concerning how these spheres overlap and how they are mediated by different circumstances and situations.

Beaulieu’s (2010) argument when applied to rural contexts reveals its profound implications, as allud-

<sup>5</sup> In terms of their business model, the actor’s data shadow is more valued than the actor’s own posts.

ed to above. In rural domains, so much definitional work now takes place externally by means of co-presence that it has infiltrated the very performance of rural spaces themselves. A cartoon is useful again here. The English title *Country Life* is a well-established rural weekly magazine. Its regular cartoon strip one week showed a gentleman looking at cattle out of the window of a newly-purchased rural mansion and quipping to his guest, “I haven’t the foggiest what breed they are, Deirdre’s decorator chose them” (A. Tempest, *Tottering-by-Gently* series). The cartoon shows that the accuracy, legitimacy, and appropriateness of the rural landscape are highly mobile. No particular *accuracy* is required—merely that they look the part and meet expectations.

This has implications for activities that take place in rural spaces, but which have become subject to that very mobility of meaning. It also mirrors the interactionist disposition to explore how definitions are reached, enacted, and credited—that is, how activities have increasingly become contested by those external to or non-participating through co-location. In the case of elite sporting shooting, criticism is so highly concentrated it becomes a caricature:

Driven grouse shooting responsible for: global warming, flooding, rickets, scurvy, Chelsea FC’s poor performance and the outbreak of WWII [@Gethin-Jones123 13 Jan 2016 Twitter]

The impact upon rural areas of debates held externally to those spaces has been recognized by means of what rural MP Simon Hart (2017:7) has called “synthetic social media.” However, he misses that such co-presence debates can be very real in their

consequences—because they espouse a particular definition of rural spaces. “Big Data,” new social media, and our unavoidable engagement with them hold very real implications for contemporary rural spaces. For example, Dowling (2017) showed how we are already culturally routinized into an online world, stepping in and out of it so casually and drawing upon a myriad of online resources for our interactions with the physical environment—be it maps, reviews, or contact details (to use Dowling’s examples). This present situation has become so normalized it is extraordinarily difficult to remember the past. Village ethnography, for example, charted how services finally reached the village, from indoor toilets to broadband (source: school logs). The impact of Big Data is that it has highlighted the *absence* of those who are shaping rural definitions through online media. Its impact is further compounded when we understand how rural spaces themselves are emptying. Contrast this with Newby’s class-based deferential dialectic fifty years ago—all about face-to-face interaction—and the scale of this shift in the balance of power for rural areas becomes clearer.

The consequences of this line of logic are summarized below.

### **Ivan’s Abbott: The Implications of an SI Reading of Co-Presence for Rural Spaces**

The implications of this shift merit careful explication. In the past, co-location had been the dominant register—Newby (1977) had identified how ideological dominance flowed through the occupational community. Here, landowners obtained the deference of their workforce through close interaction with them

in both the workplace and the village community. The landowners’ very physical visibility and interactions formed their means of controlling the definition of what constituted the smooth running of the farm.

This has been re-thought in the age of “synthetic social media”—definitions about rurality can now be reached away from those spaces (Beaulieu’s co-presence) rather than having to be grounded by face-to-face physical co-location. Moreover, these definitions or rural imaginaries are then actualized when visiting or entering those spaces. The implication is that the deferential dialectic relationship is spun round—namely, views constituted by co-presence are then actualized in co-location. Ideologies or views can be established through an online/co-presence dialectic, not necessarily close interactional contact. The rural village was a case in point—newcomers (to use their term) “tipped” the village and became the dominant voice in number and representation on the Parish Council and school governors.

This detracts from the ontological importance of co-location, but does not necessarily undermine SI principles. There is a further sting in the tail. If taken to the extreme, definitions of the situation do not even need to be expressed *in* a rural space, but can be broadcast online *and still be consequential* as the Thomas theorem holds. Elite country sports again provide an appropriate example.

An online petition was submitted to the Welsh government against the legal use of firearms, but of the approximately 13,000 signatories, only 24 people were from the country under judicial review. The pro-shooting lobby went ballistic.



Many parliaments and assemblies have reacted to on-line campaigns by creating opportunities for people to register official petitions which will be considered by elected representatives if they reach a certain threshold. A recent petition against shooting on public land in Wales has exposed exactly how false, and frankly fraudulent, many electronic petitions are. A group called Animal Aid claimed to have collected a petition of 12,700 “signatures” which it handed in to the Welsh Assembly Government. The BBC and newspapers dutifully reported that number, but when a similar petition was submitted as an official Welsh Assembly electronic petition, subject to proper public scrutiny, it received just 119 signatures with only 24 of those coming from Wales.

It is crucially important that politicians, in particular, understand that much of the campaigning that happens in the digital sphere is manufactured dissent. The mass email campaigns, the targeted social media activity and, of course, the dodgy petitions do not represent a real reflection of public attitudes and opinions. The reduction of a “12,700 signature” petition to 24 Welsh voters is absolute evidence of that. [Bonner 2018]

But, Bonner and MP Simon Hart both missed the implications of the new ontological importance of co-presences. As Thomas holds, if people define a given situation as real, it becomes real in its consequences. The definitions of the 13,000 do not need to be right; it does not matter if they are “dodgy.” Their definitions will become real if they are enacted and performed by the signatories. The implications of this for rurality are that traditional interactionist prompts and markers of status through wealth and ownership are diminished.

Elite sporting shooting has been a self-regulating activity, and its use of space has generated physical resonances, not least in Scotland, where its implications for the economy loom large. This “rarified rural interest” (Cox 2016:12) across the three country sports of hunting (deer), shooting (grouse), and fishing (salmon) has held master status in rural Scotland. Participants spend approximately £50,000 per visit, and sat alongside a vast concentration of wealth—432 people (0.008%) of the population own half of Scotland (Hunter et al. 2013)—this dominant definition of the situation had been unchallenged.<sup>6</sup>

By contrast, other rural resonances *have* changed the “authentic rural.” The more picturesque villages at the other end of Britain in the county of Norfolk, such as Burnham Market, have been re-branded “Chelsea-on-Sea” due to the high levels of second home ownership. Here, authenticity and value have been generated not from the flora and fauna of grouse and heather, but from the resonances of patronage after the Norman Conquest. Norman ruins and the villages established around such settlements have imprinted on the landscape and the built environment, and now far exceed the agrarian value of the prime farming land found there.

These two rural examples—McNab country sports<sup>7</sup> and Norfolk picturesque villages—show the mobility of rural values and indicate that influences are shifting. Economic wealth like agriculture is beginning to decline in the interactional resonances

<sup>6</sup> The Scottish parliament is currently exploring licensing for shooting, as well as individuals. This would be a significant policy shift from self-autonomy and regulation.

<sup>7</sup> Grouse, deer, and salmon on the same day.

it generates. In the case of grouse shooting in Scotland, we can see this is in policy moves to impose shooting licensing. In respect to agrarian interests, the cultural consumption already outweighs the crop-yield value.

The desirability of certain forms of rural interaction has thus shifted and, as Rojek (2007) remarks, meaning is highly movable and yet often left unremarked and unnoticed.

[T]raditional British values are slippery abstractions...Often it is only when these ideals are infringed or violated that they become a cause célèbre; most of the time they are not experienced as the historical achievement of resistance and struggle but rather as the unremarkable, “given” grain of everyday life. [Rojek 2007:11]

An SI use of theory and method begins to expose these fine grain processes that Rojek notes. Ultimately, Ivan’s Abbott (in the quintessential rural pub advert above), far from being obsolete, could be well on the way to being the new rural.

## Conclusion: Back to Theoretical Feathers and Our Mandate

This paper has argued that place has been and should become a staple of interactionist concern. This is more than a consideration of the staging of a situation, but rather the suggestion that spaces themselves have a kind of imprinting role. Space has the capacity to unwittingly imprint upon a social actor’s identity an inverted mortification of self that was found in the rural ethnography discussed here.

The discussion has operated on two levels. It first argued that theory and method in early decades had a fruitful dialectic. It then used rural sociology as a vehicle to see how this dialectic might progress SI ideas. This explored the significance of absence (of both community spirit and people) in rural spaces and how SI can respond to this challenge. The rural case examples discussed here suggest that, as spaces hollow out, digital worlds emerge as increasingly important for what rural spaces become. Furthermore, after Thomas, the subsequent enactment of those values determines what those spaces in fact become. In sum, digital worlds begin to foreshadow the definitional work that—in times past—would have taken place by means of co-location. Space is retained as important in both domains because that is where definitional work is done.

This argument—that co-presence and co-location are equally important—is attuned both to SI interest in definitional work and to new analyses of global capitalism that have increasingly come to stress the micro sphere and the mobility of desire for commodities beyond the purely economic. Thrift (2012) termed this an “expressive infrastructure,” but his emphasis lay upon the pace at which capitalism looks to generate new markets and desires. Here, place, those *absent*, and *stasis* are regarded as increasingly important.

The mandate now is for ethnographers and interactionists to examine how definitions regarding appropriate use emerge and proliferate through co-presence and co-location. It is only by examining the micro-level that the nuances of the fine-

grained subtleties of the interactional work taking place there are exposed. Such a move is well attuned to SI interests and the broader direction of travel found among leading, theoretically-minded social scientists. Kate Hayles in the United States has examined algorithms, as well as our very capacity to be conscious of data exposure and of where smart technologies are steering us. Celia Lury in the United Kingdom is likewise exploring how we encounter our own data shadow—which is inevitably a past snapshot of ourselves—when we are online. French geographer Mustafa Dikeç (2015) has explored space as a means to generate selfhood and democracy. While the intellectual lineages of these analytic directions are not interactional, there is convergence and—like Thrift’s theoretical ideas—they can provide a jolt of surprise to see things otherwise.

Fieldwork has remained an important foil for theory. The examples from rural studies grounded the discussion by showing how place and people both limit and enable the interactions possible. It was only through a dialectical relationship between theoretical ideas and data that this understanding was reached, although it is non-prescriptive in character. As Goffman reminded us at the opening of the paper, it is the analysis of this very power dynamic inside the subtleties of definitional work that is our mandate.

One last example by demonstration is provided by the image in Figure 2 below, which was taken early-on during the village ethnography. It shows an empty phone box that can no longer make calls using money—“coins are not accepted here.”

Figure 2. A K6 phone box in the Norfolk case study village: Mobiles eclipse coin-operated call boxes.



This does not mean that interactions have been rendered redundant, but rather that they have become very different to what they were in 1924, when Sir Giles Gilbert Scott first designed the phone box. This article has outlined, after the ambitions of the editors, a non-prescriptive theory-method dialectic of a future SI imaginary. This dialectic utilized SI to address the changes in place, time, and absence that have taken place. The conceptual distinctions made here merit further exploration beyond rural sociology, for, as certain rural campaigners have already recognized, some co-presence media are more equal than co-locational ones.

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## **The Story of the Nearest Relative: Shifts in Footing in Dramaturgical Replayings**

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**Abstract** This discussion assesses the utility of Goffman’s thinking about conversational interaction for illuminating features of a research interview between one of the two authors (LM) and a fellow social work professional. We use this case to explore aspects of Goffman’s contribution to the sociological understanding of spoken interaction. While many of his ideas offer rich sources of guidance for interactionist and qualitative researchers, the value of Goffman’s (1974) concept of “dramaturgical replaying” has been overlooked. We trace the leading themes of Goffman’s thinking about conversational interaction and show how they can provide an analysis of the story of the “Nearest Relative” that is attentive to its live, improvised enactment. Goffman’s approach to storytelling is shown to be distinct from but complementary to conversation analytic approaches to storytelling.

**Keywords** Conversational Interaction; Goffman; Dramaturgical Replaying; Footing

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In this article, we assess the utility of Goffman thinking about conversational interaction in order to illuminate features of a research interview between one of the two authors (LM) and a fellow social work professional. We use this case to explore aspects of Goffman's contribution to the sociological understanding of spoken interaction—ideas that are often overlooked by interactionist and qualitative researchers who otherwise have found Goffman's ideas a rich source of guidance for their inquiries. In particular, we explore the value of Goffman's (1974) often overlooked notion of dramaturgical replaying. While conversational interaction only became a sustained focus of Goffman's published work over the last decade or so of his life, culminating in the essays collected in *Forms of Talk* (Goffman 1981a), there remain some remarkable continuities with earlier writings alongside the significant innovations in his thinking found in that last book. Our article thus commences with a schematic outline that traces the sources of his late thinking and its leading themes.

### Situating Storytelling in Goffman's Sociology

Leading themes in Goffman's later thinking about conversational interaction can be traced from the preoccupations of his early writings. The book that shot Goffman to fame—*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (*PSEL*)—marks his first statement of the dramaturgical perspective that would become irrevocably linked to his name. Yet dramaturgy only captured part of his intellectual production. When pressed in an interview in 1980 whether “dramaturgy” was an appropriate label for his sociology, Goff-

man declared that “I can't take [it] all that seriously” (Verhoeven 1993:320). In disowning “dramaturgy” as an accurate overall characterization of his sociology in the manner first promoted by Gouldner (1970), Goffman was also distancing himself from labeling the entirety of any writer's thought under a simple slogan. Even if Goffman disliked dramaturgy as an overall characterization of his sociology, it nonetheless was an idea that resurfaced in his late writings—an idea that he qualified and refined to give coherence to thinking about conversational interaction (Goffman 1974; 1981a; 1983).

The aim of the sociology of the interaction order—a project that Goffman (1953) initiated in his Chicago dissertation—was to uncover the socially organized features of the communicative conduct of co-present persons. In the two dozen articles and eleven books that followed, Goffman articulated and illustrated the concepts needed to empirically investigate the leading features of the interaction order. Dramaturgy was one of at least three prominent themes—alongside calculation (Ytreberg 2010) and ritual (Collins 1988)—that Goffman used to develop the sociology of interaction order. Dramaturgy, calculation, and ritual provide key themes that are explored in a variety of ways throughout Goffman's writings.

Very broadly, two dramaturgies can be identified in Goffman's writings (Smith 2013). The earlier version found in *PSEL* is an application of the life-as-theater metaphor that was well-known even in Shakespeare's day. For Goffman, however, the theatrical model is not applied to social life *in toto* but is restricted only to the conduct of co-present

persons in the interaction order. The later version of dramaturgy corresponds much more closely to contemporary concerns with performativity. In fact, Goffman in his later writings (Goffman 1974; 1979; 1981a) seems to have originated the concept of performativity that is now more commonly associated with Judith Butler (Smith 2010). It is the utility of some of Goffman's later performative notions that the empirical part of this article explores. In the performative conception, the earlier metaphorical frame of *PSEL* gives way to a view of drama as literal—as capturing some of the essential features of conversational interaction.

What appears to motivate this shift is Goffman's repeated attempts to refine the concepts needed to investigate the interaction order in all its empirical specificity. One impulse driving that analysis was to develop sociological concepts and frameworks that are sensitive to the liveness of interaction in its human and experiential particularity. Goffman's illustrative materials are one indicator of that impulse. Goffman worked hard to find unusual examples, often from less than obvious sources, to illustrate the concepts contained in his books and articles. And the way Goffman achieves a sensitivity to the liveness of interaction is, somewhat paradoxically, through the development of the dramaturgical model. It is not uncommon for concepts and models to be seen as restrictive and distorting devices that misrepresent our views of reality. Goffman (1981b) took a different stance. He viewed concepts and models as *productive* devices that offer up insight, illuminating what would otherwise appear obscure or hidden outside of our awareness.

After *PSEL* (1959), Goffman's first step in the development of his dramaturgical model was the essay "Role Distance" (Goffman 1961). This essay outlines the limitations of conventional, mainly functionalist, role theory, with its simple understanding of performance and unidimensional view of the life as drama metaphor.

Role theory seemed to suggest that awaiting any role played by an individual was a particular self. By conforming to the demands of the role, the individual acquired a particular "me"—"in the language of Kenneth Burke, doing is being" (Goffman 1961:88). Goffman considered this an unrealistic simplification that failed to address the range of attitudes evident in people's actual conduct. For instance, roles might be played diffidently or shamefully. In some situations people "play at" their roles rather than "play" them; they may "break role" or "go out of role"; they may find ways to "style" the role in line with their wishes. Role distance was the concept Goffman devised to cover "this 'effectively' expressed pointed separateness between the individual and his putative role" (Goffman 1961:108).

Examples of role distance range from the different ways in which merry-go-round riders of varying ages show their detachment or disaffection from the rider role to the sexual banter of surgeons and nurses during surgical operations. For Goffman, breaking free from role expectations was not an expression of individuality, but rather an occasion to mobilize other identities than those accompanying the official role. Here Goffman (1961:144) conceptualizes the person not as a role-player, but as a more complex entity, namely, a "holding company" for



“a simultaneous multiplicity of selves” engaged in “a dance of identification.” Inspection of formal role expectations missed grasping the lively human phenomena captured by the role distance concept. What Goffman brought into focus was the relationship between the interactants and their symbolic acts, or, as Goffman (1981a) would later write, the “alignment” that the self would take to its own sayings and doings. This view of the person as a multiple role player carrying many identifications, and not merely a person playing the expectations of a role, presages the directions taken by the more performative notion of dramaturgy that Goffman explored in the 1970s.

If there are two dramaturgies in Goffman—one earlier and metaphorical (*PSEL*) and a later, more literal dramaturgy evident in his last three books (*Frame Analysis*, *Gender Advertisements*, *Forms of Talk*) that is more in line with Kenneth Burke and anticipates Judith Butler—then role distance served as the bridging concept linking the two. However, role distance appears to have been a concept that Goffman largely abandoned by the time others took notice of it. As ever, Goffman’s sociological project assumed a strongly forward-looking character as he searched for more adequate formulations. One resource for those conceptual developments was provided by his discussions of participation in his doctoral dissertation (Goffman 1953:136-148, 217-241). The dramaturgy of *PSEL* seemed to have been forgotten by Goffman’s writings of the 1960s as his interests in applying game models came to the fore, but a re-vamped dramaturgy was to re-emerge in the 1970s, particularly in *Frame Analysis*, Goffman’s major makeover and deepening of his sociological framework.

First, the chapter “The Theatrical Frame” made it clear that the dramaturgy of *PSEL* was simply a metaphor. Notably, Goffman (1974:138-144) identified the “transcription practices” that would render actual face-to-face interaction into a piece of staged theatrical activity. More intriguingly still, Goffman (1974:246) assays in Chapter 13, “The Frame Analysis of Talk,” “what really goes on in ordinary interaction and what the commonsense ‘working world’ of practical realities is.” He opens with a general claim that much talk is not about goal directed activities—making offers, declining invitations, giving orders. He then remarks that

what the individual spends most of his spoken moments doing is providing evidence for the fairness or unfairness of his current situation and other grounds for sympathy, approval, exoneration, understanding or amusement. And what his listeners are primarily obliged to do is to show some kind of audience appreciation. They are to be stirred not to take action, but to exhibit signs that they have been stirred. [Goffman 1974:503]

Much ordinary talk is thus given over to telling stories about the happenings that make up the individual’s daily life. Goffman’s key point is that such storytelling is not about the individual reporting an event, but rather about the individual *replaying* an experience and the listener “vicariously re-experiencing what took place” (Goffman 1974:504).

Goffman emphasized the dramaturgical nature of talk, contending that “we spend most of our time not engaged in giving information, but in giving shows” (Goffman 1974:508). For example, in reproducing a scene, a speaker may voice, or *animate*, others—or indeed, themselves—in their talk. If there is

a deep parallel between the stage and conversation, then it centers upon the individual's efforts in telling a story to recreate the information state or horizon they had at the time the experience happened. This is where dramatic techniques enter ordinary conversational interaction. Events are not reported. Rather, experiences are dramaturgically replayed.

The dramaturgical replaying of a story is also facilitated through the storyteller's capacities to shift "footing" during the story's telling. For Goffman (1981a:128),

a change in footing implies a change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and to the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance.

Goffman's earlier formulation of selves engaged in a "dance of identification" gives way to the notion of a "speaker" dissected sociologically into three "participant statuses"—"animator," "author," and "principal." The animator is "the sounding box" who produces the words; the author, the agent who originates the words, written or spoken; the principal is he or

she who believes and is responsible for the words (1981a:144-45, 226). These ideas can be put to work to shed light on the case of the Nearest Relative.

## Analysis of a Single Case

Here we use Goffman's work to analyze shifts in footing in dramaturgical replays in a story of the nearest relative. The extract is taken from an interview that one of the authors (LM) undertook with a mental health social worker whom we have called Nell. The interview was part of a wider ESRC-funded doctoral study (Morriss 2015) and approved by the University of Salford's Research Ethics Panel (REP11/067). Nell works as an Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) in a Community Mental Health team. Part of the role of an AMHP is to assess people for compulsory admission under the Mental Health Act 1983 as amended by the 2007 Mental Health Act. Most social work AMHPs are employed by the Local Authority, but seconded to Mental Health Trusts, and LM's question is concerned with whether Nell has retained any links with her Local Authority employer.

### Extract 1. The story of the Nearest Relative.

1. **Nell:** I mean if there was a legal point like nearest relative, that's always a minefield, umm you
2. can ring legal and they've always made it perfectly clear "If you're in doubt, ring us. We'd rather give
3. you legal advice at the beginning and help you out than some relative taking action against you
4. because you didn't," as they see it, umm "Give them their rights, you know, after the event" [laughs].
5. **Lisa:** Yeah, yeah.
6. **Nell:** And I've had to displace [pause] twice.
7. **Lisa:** Right.
8. **Nell:** A relative which is not [pause] well people go through their whole social work career

9. without having to displace somebody so.

10. **Lisa:** Yeah I've done it only once.

11. **Nell:** [laughs].

12. **Lisa:** It's not nice actually.

13. **Nell:** Nooo. But that was that was definitely an eye opener because [pause] the patient that I  
14. was setting the assessment up for had a mother and I contacted the mother or tried to contact the  
15. mother to get her um consent because it's a section three. He was well known. Turned out that she  
16. was in hospital herself on a section [laughs]. And I automatically thought that that would, you know.

17. **Lisa:** Precluded her.

18. **Nell:** Precluded her from having nearest relative rights. And I don't know I just I just thought  
19. "Ooo that's a bit odd." And I rang a colleague and I said "Guess what? The mother the nearest  
20. relative is in hospital as well and she's on a section! Surely she hasn't got the rights of a nearest  
21. relative? " And he said to me "Er excuse me, she does." I'm like "Oh my god," And she was in some  
22. hospital far away somewhere. It was a nightmare. I had to contact legal because she was saying "No,"  
23. on the phone she said "No" quite clearly "You're not sectioning my son." I'm like "But he needs help  
24. and you're in hospital, you're getting your help, you're getting looked after. He's out in the  
25. community and, you know, he's not doing well at all" and they lived together as well, you know  
26. "He's just not coping. He's not well. He's not taking his medication." "No, you're not sectioning my  
27. son." [pause] So had to go to court to displace her but I had to keep running backwards and forwards,  
28. it was [name of area], to serve her the papers and it was all day, for days afterwards when I wasn't  
29. even supposed to be on [laughs] following this thing through. It was a bloody nightmare.

30. **Lisa:** Yeah.

31. **Nell:** And then when we eventually got her displaced and I went up there third time to give her  
32. the papers, she said "Oh I've changed my mind" [laughs].

33. **Lisa:** Oh no [laughs].

34. **Nell:** She said "I don't object anymore."

35. [both laugh]

36. **Nell:** And she said "Oh well you've been so nice about it" she said "Oh", you know "And I'm  
37. not I'm here and I can't help him I can't do anything for him, so if you think he needs to be in  
38. hospital." Bloody papers I've just been through hell and back!

39. [both laugh]

40. **Nell:** It was quite funny [pause] quite funny. So the minute she saw me she said "Oh d'you  
41. know what? I've changed my mind."

42. **Lisa:** So it was actually the seeing of you, she thought you were alright actually.

43. **Nell:** Well I'd come back the third time [laughs] I wasn't letting go.

44. [both laugh]

Goffman (1974:504) shows how a question that could be answered with a simple “yes” or “no” can also be answered by “an invitation to sit through a narrative, to follow along empathetically as a tale unfolds.” Nell introduces the character of a “Nearest Relative” (NR). As Nell intimates, this is a legal term used in the Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA), and clear criteria are set out in s.26 to ascertain the NR of the person who is being assessed under the Act. The NR holds certain legal powers, such as the right to order that the person be discharged from compulsory admission under s.2 and s.3 of the MHA. What is fundamental here is that by using this term without any accompanying explanation or definition, Nell assumes that the interviewer (LM) shares this knowledge.

Goffman examines this feature of talk in “Felicity’s Condition” (1983), in his discussion of the importance of “social presuppositions” and the taken-for-granted in conversation. Each participant in an interaction will draw upon what s/he presupposes is shared by the other(s), selecting

just those topics that allow him to employ allusive phrases that only the recipient would immediately understand. Thus, his talk will not so much depend on common understanding as seek it out and then celebrate it. Indeed, this gives to ordinary verbal contacts a greater degree of exclusivity and mutual dovetailing than one might otherwise expect. [Goffman 1983:18]

Nell thus presupposes here that LM understands her allusion to a “nearest relative” as she knows from the Participant Information Sheet and the

pre-interview talk that LM is also a mental health social worker. Goffman (1983:48) showed the importance of “acquaintanceship and close ties, of the generation and intentional construction of joint biography.” The “cryptic allusion” (Goffman 1983:49) to the nearest relative demonstrates the significance of this point. Nell’s association of “nearest relative” with “minefield” [line 1] foreshadows the story to come.

Goffman (1974:550) contended that there are deep-seated similarities between the frame structure of the theater and of informal talk. Speakers can openly voice another person, often not even present, and notionally use that person’s own words (Goffman 1981a). Nell begins by voicing or *animating* the generic “legal,” embedding or *keying* another speaker in her talk [lines 3-4]. Goffman described how a speaker

acts out—typically in a mannered voice—someone not himself, someone who may or may not be present. He puts words and gestures in another’s mouth...projecting an image of someone not oneself while preventing viewers from forgetting even for a moment that an alien animator is at work. [Goffman 1974:535]

Nell changes her footing with the shift to animating what someone else has said. Nell is here “reporting” entirely fictional talk made by the collective “legal” rather than by any one named individual. Buttny (1997:449) discussed how voicing a “prototypical” group member allows the reporting speaker to epitomize the group through their characteristic utterances. Goffman (1981a:128) explained that a

change in footing implies a change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance.

In lines 3-5, “legal” are portrayed by Nell’s telling as advising caution and recommending prudence by establishing the legal situation in advance.

Within the animated talk, out-of-frame information is interwoven [“as they see it, umm”—line 4] carried by a “self-kibitzing editorial voice” (Goffman 1983:14). Nell holds the floor with the connective “and” and introduces the story of the NR: “I’ve had to displace [pause] twice” [line 6]. The word “displace” is also a legal term used in the MHA which means that an AMHP can apply to the court for an NR to be displaced on certain grounds set out in s.29(3). The pause after using the term “displace” may be explained in terms of Nell checking LM’s familiarity with this legal term, allowing the opportunity to ask for clarification. Goffman (1983:51) described this as the central obligation of interaction, namely, “to render our behavior understandably relevant to what the other can come to perceive is going on.” Nell’s acknowledgement that this is an unusual activity for an AMHP [“well people go through their whole social work career without having to displace somebody so”] may also explain her pause as even an experienced mental health social worker may not have an understanding of the process of displacement. Here, LM’s silence followed by “Right” [line 7] can be taken as indicating that she does share this knowledge and that she knows it is rare [“Yeah”—line 10]. Indeed, in her social work career, LM has also had to displace an NR [line 12].

It is notable that Nell then provides a story preface [“But that was definitely an eye opener” —line 13]. Sacks (1992, vol. 2:10-11) showed how a speaker regularly informs a hearer about what a story involves in order that the hearer is able to gauge when the story is over. So, Nell’s preface informs LM that she is going to tell an “eye-opening” story and thus LM is able to recognize the talk that follows as such. Nell’s pause can be seen as checking whether she has the floor by allowing LM an opportunity to close the storytelling.

Having set the scene, Nell locates her story back to the information state—the *horizon*—she had at the time of the episode (Goffman 1974:508). The temporal, dramatic development of the reported event thus proceeds from this starting point (Goffman 1974:504). Once again, Nell presupposes that LM understands that she is referring to compulsory admission to hospital under s.3 of the MHA, where there is a legal requirement that the NR must not object [“contact the mother to get her um consent because it’s a section three”—lines 14-15]. In *Frame Analysis* (1974), Goffman discussed the importance of *suspense*: the listener(s) must not know the outcome of the tale or otherwise it would fall flat. Goffman (1981a:178) called this the “first and only” illusion. Indeed, suspense “is to the audience of replavings what being lodged in unforetellable unfoldings is for participants in real life” (Goffman 1974:506). However, what is even more intriguing is that it is not only the listener(s) that must be held in suspense, but also the characters in the story must be depicted as ignorant of the outcome. So here Nell is “surprised” to find that the NR is also in hospital on a section of the MHA.



The narrative continues to unfold in an “intrinsically theatrical” dramatization as Nell replays the scene, enabling LM to vicariously re-experience the events as they unfold (Goffman 1974:504). Nell again shifts footing to reproduce a scene where she is in a conversation with a colleague. She demarcates the respective talk with connectives, making it clear who is “speaking” [“I just thought”; “I said”; “he said to me”; “I’m like”]. Nell also provides another assessment of the situation: “It was a nightmare” [line 22]. Holt (2000) explains that storytellers want their hearers to agree with their interpretation or assessment of the story and may thus explicitly provide their own assessment within their tellings.

Nell briefly moves into the narrator role to set the scene [“And she was in some hospital far away somewhere”], and then shifts footing to replay her telephone conversation with the NR. It is notable here that once the “voices” or “registers” of herself and the NR have been established, Nell does not need to continue to employ connectives to delineate who is “speaking” [“He’s just not coping.” “He’s not taking his medication.” “No you’re not sectioning my son”—lines 26-27]. The prosodic features of the talk distinguish just who is speaking. For Goffman (1974:535), this increases the theatricality of the replaying, where “something closer to stage acting than to reporting is occurring.”

The theatricality of the story continues with the replaying of the hectic and convoluted process Nell engaged in as a result of the displacement process. Goffman (1974:504) explained that it is not that narrators exaggerate, but rather that they

may have “to engage in something that is a dramatization—the use of such arts as [s]he possesses to reproduce a scene, to replay it.” Nell thus relates how she ran “backwards and forwards” [line 27], and that the process took “all day, for days afterwards” [line 28], even when she was no longer actually on AMHP duty [lines 28-29]. Moreover, this description of the lengths she went to contributes to the dramatic denouement that once Nell had finally acquired the court papers, the NR changed her mind.

Once again, Nell shifts footing to animate the conversation she had with the NR. Here Nell uses laugh tokens and prosodic features in animating the NR to display that this is a funny rather than a painful ending to what has been weeks of work. Indeed, Nell explicitly formulates (Garfinkel and Sacks 1970:171) the story as humorous [“It was quite funny (pause) quite funny”—line 40]. Holt (2000:451) demonstrates how reported speech can be used to “implicitly convey the teller’s assessment of the humorous nature of the reported utterance,” later stressing the importance of the sequential—participants negotiate and collaborate in producing non-seriousness over a series of turns (Holt 2013). As such, humor is interactive (Fine and de Soucey 2005). Indeed, our shared laughter over several turns displays affiliation by supporting and endorsing Nell’s stance (Stivers 2008). Cormack, Cosgrave, and Feltmate (2017) demonstrate that humor is central to Goffman’s work, as is his recognition that humor is a mundane element in everyday talk. Indeed, Goffman (1974:502) notes that “unseriousness and kidding will seem so standard a feature that special brackets will have to be

introduced should [s]he want to say something in a relatively serious way." Coda to the story is co-narrated [lines 42-44], again showing affiliation (Morriss 2015).

## Discussion

Nell has replayed a story with several characters, none of whom are identified by name, but are depicted as categories of persons: legal, a patient, a mother, and a colleague. Nell has also voiced herself as she appeared at the time of the scene, that is, as originally unaware of the law and incredulous ["Oh my god"—line 21]. For Goffman, a replaying such as the one by Nell is not merely a straightforward reporting of a past happening. Instead, a replaying involves the speaker enabling a listener to empathetically insert themselves into the story so that they vicariously re-experience the events (Goffman 1974:504). Goffman (1974:508) concluded that

All in all, then, I am suggesting that often what talkers undertake to do is not to provide information to a recipient but to present dramas to an audience. Indeed, it seems that we spend most of our time not engaged in giving information but in giving shows.

Goffman acknowledges, however, that the difference between real life and the theater is that speakers need to convince listeners that their replaying was not invented and did actually occur (cf. Wooffitt 1992).

Goffman's work has been seen as foundational in the investigation of reported speech in interac-

tion and as providing a framework for research (Clift and Holt 2007). For Goodwin (2007), Goffman's (1981a) "Footing" provides a powerful and influential model for analysis of reported talk alongside an important framework for the study of participation. He argues that "participation seems absolutely central to the dialogic organization of human language" (Goodwin 2007:17), but concludes that Goffman's model has limitations in relation to hearers in an interaction. Goodwin (2007:24) demonstrates in his analysis that hearers co-participate in that a hearer may become a speaker and vice versa, engage in "detailed analysis of the unfolding structure of that talk," and "use the analysis to make projections relevant to their own participation in it." He thus proposes that we move from static typologies to analyzing participation in talk as it unfolds over the course of the interaction in order to display the routine mutual reflexivity—the mutual monitoring of what each party is doing and its implications for the action that is developing—that is essential to participation. This is what we have attempted to do in our analysis of the story of the NR by highlighting some of the techniques through which the "liveness" of the interview talk is carried out.

Goffman's "writerly playfulness" (Cormack et al. 2017:389) is reflected in the playfulness of the talk between LM and Nell. While we do not have space to present the whole interaction in the Jeffersonian transcription system, a short extract underlines the complexities of "doing non-seriousness" (Holt 2013) in the replaying of a professionally very serious matter. [A key to the Jeffersonian transcription symbols is provided as an Appendix.]

Nell: (0.4) ↑↑it ↑↑was ↑↑a ↑↑bloody ↑↑nightma::re  
 Lisa: yeah  
 Nell: and the::n when we eventually got her displaced and I went up  
 there ↑thi::rd time >to give her the<pape:rs (0.4) she said  
 (0.4) ↑o:::h I've ↓changed ↓my ↓mi::nd  
 Lisa: oh £no::£ [huh  
 Nell: [(?) £she sai:(h)d£ (.) £I do(h)n't o(h)bje(h)ct  
 a(h)nymo::(h)re£ [↑huh ↑huh ↑huh  
 Lisa: [huh huhhuh  
 Nell: .hhh £↑and ↑she ↑said ↑↑o::h£  
 Lisa: .hhhh  
 Nell: well ↑you've ↑been ↑↑so ↑↑nice about it she said ↓o:::h >you  
 know< and I no- I'm ↑he::re and I can't help him I can't do  
 anything for him so .hhh if you think that he needs to be in  
 hospital  
 Lisa: huh  
 Nell: £↑↑bloody ↑↑papers [↑I've ↑just ↑been ↑through hell and=  
 Lisa: [huh huhhuhhuhhuh  
 Nell: =back [huh huhhuh ha ha  
 Lisa: [ha haha .hhhhh:::h huh [a:::h  
 Nell: [.hh it was quite funny: (0.8)  
 °quite funny° (0.4) so the ↑minute she saw me she said (0.4)  
 ↑oh ↑d'you↑know what I I've changed my mi::nd,  
 Lisa: so it was actually the seeing of you she thou:ght oh you were  
 alright [↑actually  
 Nell: [well I'd come back the £thi::rd [ti::me=  
 Lisa: [hu:::h  
 Nell: =[(>look at that<)  
 Lisa: [ha ha  
 Nell: I wasn't letting go:: [↑huh ↑huh ↑huh  
 Lisa: [ha ha .hhh

This fine-grained transcription makes visible the delicate and intricate nature of humor and laughter. The use of “smile voice” [depicted by the £ symbol], the laughter particles within words [shown by (h)], the marked changes in pitch [delineated by the arrow signs ↑↓], and the elongation of sounds [marked by ::] are as integral to accomplishing non-seriousness as the actual episodes of voiced laughter. We argue that Goffman’s approach to storytelling allows for a sociological imagination in which the “capacity for astonishment is made lively again” (Mills 1959:7). As Goffman (1983:51) concludes,

we find ourselves with one central obligation: to render our behavior understandably relevant to what the other can come to perceive is going on...This confines what we say and do, but it also allows us to bring to bear all of the world to which the other can catch allusions.

The successful dramaturgical replaying of the story of the Nearest Relative requires Nell and Lisa, as teller and recipient, to display and acknowledge that each has caught the other’s allusions over the course of the story’s telling.

## Conclusion

While the notion of footing has been extensively applied by language and social interaction researchers, Goffman's suggestions about dramaturgical replavings have attracted only passing interest. One of our purposes has been to indicate the relevance and potential of the replaying concept for understanding how a story is told as an interactional phenomenon. The analysis of narrative and storytelling has become an increasingly crowded field (Polletta et al. 2011). Most closely adjacent to Goffman's ideas are those developed in conversation analysis (CA). Storytelling has long been a topic of interest to CA from Sacks' lectures of the late 1960s on. One distinctive aspect of CA's approach is the emphasis on the how the story is told *in situ* (Mandelbaum 2012), with the help of others in the role of "story consociates" (Lerner 1992) who co-produce the story. CA's emphasis on the interactional is a complement to the more phenomenological emphasis of Goffman, who concentrates on the teller's shifting stances as the story is told.

*Forms of Talk* often seems driven by a determination to demonstrate how talk is generally responsive to frames and social situations so that actual interactional considerations are evident in CA's concern with talk's sequential organization, can appear secondary. Goffman (1981a:1) mentions a leaning towards the "speaker's side" of talk, a bias perhaps evident in his choice of non-dialogic topics (radio talk, lecturing, response cries), where the talk that occurs is not, like conversation, constrained by another party's responsive talk. The demands of sociality and situatedness are seen to be evident even in apparently solitary activity (an analytic strategy reminiscent of Durkheim's

account of suicide). The general argument underlying Goffman's analyses is that expectations of sociality are so deeply embedded that, even when on our own, we display them. This is the basis of Goffman's late performative conception of self—quite some distance from the "harried fabricator of impressions" of *PSEL*. In varying ways, the criticisms of the footing concept all lead back to Goffman's preoccupation with the "speaker's side" of talk. Levinson (1988) suggests that Goffman's typology of speaker production roles— animator, author, and principal—is simply not elaborate enough to capture the range of possibilities that occur in many kinds of interaction. Dynel (2011) makes a similar argument regarding reception (listener) roles. Perhaps the most telling of all is Goodwin's (2007) claim that further development of the footing concept is most profitably pursued through analysis that focuses on how footing is produced in and through interactional practices rather than typologies of speaker and hearer roles.

In this article, we have attempted to show how aspects of Goffman's thinking about conversation can be used to shed light on the liveness of ordinary interaction. If this motif is to be emphasized, it is because Goffman is sometimes depicted as an analyst overly preoccupied with the construction of sociological classifications. To be sure, conceptual development and innovation was a hallmark of his approach to sociological analysis. It has been estimated that around 1,000 concepts can be found in his work (extending Birrell's 1978 estimate to Goffman's writings through to 1983). However, Goffman signally rejected the view of his enterprise as simply classificatory. He agreed that his conceptual frameworks were formal and abstract in order to

be applicable to interaction wherever it was found, but claimed they offered more than “merely a static classification.” His work instead sought to bear upon “dynamic issues created by the motivation to sustain a definition of the situation that has been projected before others” (Goffman 1959:239). Goffman’s actual analytic practice, as Goodwin’s criticism of his footing concept shows, sometimes fell short of this claim.

Goffman was suspicious of abstract analytic schemas. In a rare literary and philosophical allusion towards the end of “Role Distance,” Goffman (1961:143)

extolled the “lovingly empirical view” of Henry James in contrast to the “abstract view of human action” offered by his older brother, the philosopher and psychologist William James. At the same time, Goffman wanted to “combat the touching tendency to keep a part of the world safe from sociology” (Goffman 1961:152). We hope our analysis has shown how Goffman’s concepts of dramaturgical replaying and footing extend the scope of interactional analysis in a lovingly empirical manner to deliver a sociological understanding that is responsive both to its socially organized basis and to its improvised, live enactment.

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## Appendix: Key to Jeffersonian Transcription Symbols.

[ ] Overlapping speech: two brackets mark the beginning and end of overlap, one bracket marks the start.

↑↓ Marked pitch changes.

**Underlining** Emphasis on the underlined portion of talk.

°quiet° "Degree" signs mark quieter speech.

(0.4) Pause length in seconds and tenths of a second.

(.) A short pause, too short to measure.

lo::ng Colons represent elongation of the prior sound.

Hhh Out-breaths.

.hhh In-breaths.

bu- A cut-off/unfinished word.

>to give her the< Speeded up talk.

£definitely£ 'Smile' voice.

heh ha Voiced laughter.

No wa(h)y Laughter within speech.



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## **Imagined Engagements: Interpreting the Musical Relationship with the Canadian North**

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**Abstract** In this article, we extend Benedict Anderson’s notion of imagined communities to examine the idea of an “imagined engagement” between or among people and groups that have not met. These imagined engagements include a blurring of temporal lines, as one group “interacts” with another’s past, present, or future. Imagined engagements are a form of failed interaction, and, as such, have their place in Goffman’s interaction order. We argue that musical language can comprise a meeting point of these engagements. We then demonstrate how two composers—one historic and one contemporary—have used the musical cultures of an Othered people, with a focus on Indigenous America, in an attempt to create a sense of community and common ties between the West and these Others—a sense of community in which the Othered have no part.

**Keywords** Imagined Engagement; Music; Musical Language; Interaction Order; Inuit

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Martin Stokes (1994:4) identifies the ability to “preform” our knowledge of other places as a property of music. In this sense, the borrowed Inuit music that is present in southern Canadian concert halls preforms our knowledge of the Canadian North while offering a glimpse into the ongoing Euro-Canadian treatment of its most present Other, the Indigenous populations of Canada. This paper examines the mechanisms through which such cultural appropriation takes place and proposes the presence of an *imagined engagement*. An imagined engagement, in this case, exists among or between people and groups that have not met, and it includes a blurring of lines between past, present, and future. Imagined engagements are constructed by their agents or doers as two-sided interactions, but, in their actuality, they reveal a one-sided approach that undercuts or simply omits the experience or contribution of the other side.

In the present discussion, we present a case for imagined engagements through music, for, in music, we can identify a meeting point for these interactions of the mind. More specifically, we investigate composed Canadian music that draws upon Inuit culture in order to present a sense of what it means to be Canadian.

Recent Canadian headlines have brought issues of cultural appropriation into public discourse. Hal Niedzviecki, an editor for *Write*, the magazine of the Writers’ Union of Canada, states in a May 2017 opinion piece that

I don’t believe in cultural appropriation. In my opinion, anyone, anywhere, should be encouraged to

imagine other peoples, other cultures, other identities. I’d go so far as to say that there should even be an award for doing so—the Appropriation Prize for best book by an author who writes about people who aren’t even remotely like her or him. [Renzetti 2017]

This statement made public a trend that exists in Canadian creative arts, namely, that it is still somehow considered acceptable (at times even desirable?) to engage in appropriation—a creative activity historically linked to colonial hegemonic display and ignorance by conquerors that is viewed in academic circles as one of the negative effects of cultural imperialism. The concept of imagined engagement serves to provide an interaction-level mechanism for explaining how works of cultural appropriation continue to be developed by arts creators as they “engage with the sounds of exotic foreign societies in order to find some authentic sense of self” (Kotarba et al. 2013:186).

## Imagined

The concept of imagined engagement resides upon ideas expressed in Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*. Anderson (2006:6) writes that the nation

is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.

Imagined engagement is concerned with the final line in this statement, that is, with how the mind of one participant communes with another (or an



Other) member. While Anderson examines the nation as a macro-level imagined community, here we seek to examine the levels of interaction in which members engage that cause them to feel a relationship with a group they will never in fact know.

Anderson (2006:7) further states that the nation is

imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.

We propose that, in contrast to this horizontal comradeship, imagined engagement implies a vertical, hegemonic relationship between individuals at the center and at the margins of a given community. Canada's nationalism faces challenges distinct from many European examples insofar as

no one any longer knows how to situate the nation's origins, which some now identify with the settlement of the "first Canadians" some 10,000 years ago. [Bouchard 2008:272]

This statement highlights the nation as a narrative—a narrative that changes over time and speaks to different parts of the nation differently. Bhabha (1990:1) explains that

Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye. Such an image of the nation—or narration—might seem impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical, but it is from those traditions of political thought and literary language that

the nation emerges as a powerful historical idea in the west.

Canada's national narrative is then being rewritten today. It is no longer "rooted in the splendors of the British past" (Bouchard 2008:273), but rather identifies Indigenous peoples as integral to the founding narratives of the country.

In respect to Bhabha's comment above, it is in the "mind's eye" that we enter into imagined engagements. In this article, we question composers who engage in their mind's eye with Indigenous Canada through music, which then acts as an "imagined link to a shared cultural identity" (Lukic and Brint 2001:14).

## Engagements

Van den Scott (2016) investigates active and passive engagements within the context of mundane technologies in the non-Western context of an Inuit hamlet. She argues that we engage with technology through "two modes of use," passive engagements and active engagements. In the former, "technology itself brings consequences to bear on society." Active engagements, in contrast, "are human guided," and they result in "adjustments, either in form, function, or meaning" (van den Scott 2016:33), to the technology. It is through engagements with the material residue (Mukerji 1994)—housing technologies in van den Scott's case study—that cultures come into indirect interaction. Technologies in the North, however, embody the resilient colonial power dynamics between mainstream Western hegemonic culture and Inuit culture. Through interactions with

the material residue of the colonizers, these power relations continue to be a part of the everyday landscape of Inuit.

Like housing technologies, music is another form of material, cultural residue. Within music, we see composers from mainstream Canada imagining an engagement with the North through the creation of music that sounds, to the composers, like a representation of the North. In respect to cultural borrowing and questions of appropriation, it is a simple step for Others to be treated as objects who are subjected to active engagement through the imagination and mind's eye of composers. This leads to changes in the form, function, *and* meaning of the borrowed Other.

### From Imagined Interactions to Imagined Engagements

We have chosen the term imagined engagement to indicate an interaction-level concept against the background of the notion of active engagements. In addition, it expands on the idea of an imagined interaction, which, although rooted in psychology, has already gained a foothold in symbolic interactionist literature.

In the 1980s, the social psychologist James Honeycutt introduced the term imagined interaction in order to highlight the imaginary conversations that individuals have with “significant others” for a variety of purposes. Honeycutt (2010:129) defined an imagined interaction as

a process of social cognition whereby people imagine and indirectly experience themselves in antici-

pated and/or past communicative encounters with others.

Honeycutt (2010:129) located imagined interactions in “the theoretical foundation of symbolic interactionists and phenomenologists,” adding that imagined interactions have “characteristics similar to those of real conversations.”

Crisp and Turner (2009:231) argue that imagined interaction provides “a simple, flexible, and effective means of promoting more positive perceptions of outgroups”. In their study, however, the outgroups are primarily peers, and the “positively toned imagined contact leads to a greater projection of positive traits to the target outgroup” (Crisp and Turner 2009:234). While McCann and Honeycutt (2006:275) call for cross-cultural studies of imagined interactions in order to facilitate examining features of imagined interactions in non-Western settings, they make no mention of interactions across and between cultures—such as in the Canadian-Inuit dynamic.

Imagined engagements are interactions constructed by the agent as two-sided (or multi-sided), between or among people and groups that have not met, that undercut or plainly omit the experience or contribution of the other side. This can include a blurring of temporal lines between the past, present, and future. In the cases we will examine here, these imagined engagements result in instances of cultural appropriation—but this is not the only possible result of imagined engagements. The “other” party, who possesses less power in the interaction, can also have an imagined engagement with different results. In Nunavut, for example, there has been

a trend to set western musical genres to Inuktitut lyrics in an attempt to reach an imagined southern audience (van den Scott 2015).

It should be noted that imagined engagements have their place within Goffman's (1983) interaction order. Goffman is primarily concerned with interactions that occur when both parties achieve what he terms "response presence." This means that those involved in the interaction are close enough to react to each other and transmit some component of that reaction back into the interaction. Scholars, including Goffman, have largely applied this concept to face-to-face interactions, even while plagued with a bevy of researchers crying out "what about the Internet?" However, Goffman (1983:2) included communication over distance, such as telephone communication, when he originally introduced the concept, describing phone and mail communications as "reduced versions of the primordial real thing." One can thus be more or less present when maintaining a response-presence.

In the case of imagined engagements, the actor—the composer in the cases we are examining—imagines that a member or members of a group that reside at some significant social distance away has somehow entered into the agent's response presence. This is not the case, however, since there is no actual engagement with the Other. We can imagine this sort of failed interaction in a more intimate setting. For example, one might call out to a friend in a crowded room, and that friend might turn and acknowledge someone behind you—yet you imagine that you have connected with your friend at a distance. You go happily on your way,

unaware that your friend is unaware that you were ever there in the first place.

Goffman (1963) allows for various types of failed interactions, and he notes that they can lead to spoiled identity. He emphasizes that any interaction involves risk and vulnerability on either psychological or physical levels (Goffman 1983), and at times we can fail in carrying out our performance or interaction along expected and routinized lines. We might also make mistakes, such as by committing a gaffe or tripping. Some failed interactions are predictable as failures due to the structural expectations that constitute their social context. "Looping," for example, involves the psychological mortification of actors when their actions are interpreted through a particular stigma and interpreted in a negative light (Goffman 1961). Goffman also delineates various measures that actors use when caught up in failed interactions, such as face-saving (Goffman 1961) and civil inattention (Goffman 1972).

We regard imagined engagements as a particular form of failed interaction. They indicate that there has been a failure to successfully engage with the other party at all, even though the actor still has the feeling of having participated in an interaction, of having their "doings" socially situated (Goffman 1983).

Furthermore, we construct ourselves during social interactions, regardless of how reduced the response presence is. In the main, this feeling of having accomplished an interaction, regardless of whether or not this was the case, stems from the element of constructing oneself through interaction. The con-

struction of the self is indeed an interactive, interpretive, and moral act that engages the narratives and stories we tell—and tell ourselves (Holstein and Gubrium 2000). This element of interaction has been routinely highlighted by symbolic interactionists. Rowe (1999) has examined interactions that occur when members with a high degree of social distance come into each other's response presence, while Burri (2008) highlights the ways in which we make distinctions through interactions. Adler and Adler's (1989) work relies on the concept of master status as they examine how athletes construct a "gloried self" through interaction (Hughes 1945). This seminal work demonstrates how actors can valorize parts of their identity through interactions. Actors also define themselves in relation to others in terms of sameness or difference (Burri 2008). It is through interactions that actors establish who they are, with whom they do or do not belong, and how they see themselves in the social world (Cooley 1902).

Those conducting imagined engagements do not actually interact with members of the groups whom they imagine to be within their response presence. They nevertheless construct and define themselves through a partial, incomplete, and even impotent experience of an interaction—an imagined engagement. The social performance (discussed below) that Michael Colgrass conducts by means of a musical composition claims the North as part of the Canadian identity, and he imagines that he is engaging with the Indigenous Inuit population resident there. At the same time, however, the performance exoticizes Indigenous populations. Imagined engagements thus have a particular and somewhat odd place within the interaction order as failed in-

teractions that are rarely perceived as failed—they are missed connections that are rarely perceived as missed, and one-sided experiences that are rarely perceived as one-sided. Such failed interactions succeed only in allowing the doer to feel as though she or he has done something with someone, as if they had reached out and found an interactive connection with which to construct and perform their own sense of self.

In the cases we will examine more closely, the doer accomplishes a performance of self through a stated connection to and a representation of the North. However, such performances are tied to narratives of colonialism and appropriation. The composers we will discuss engage in a narrative about their social world (Holstein and Gubrium 2000) that reifies narratives of Canada as a nation which includes, and is even anchored in, the North. Canadian composers express their vision of the North as a process of understanding their nation and of understanding themselves, one of the three disambiguations of "identity" that Brubaker and Cooper (2000) have identified. Their music attempts to construct and present Canada in particular ways that they believe Northern residents will hear and connect with.

These imagined engagements also intersect with commodification insofar as the music such composers offer comes attached to financial incentives. For example, one of the pieces we will address is commissioned, and it was bought, sold, and created with the intention of contributing to a music industry. As the body has become commodified in certain kinds of constructions and expressions of the self in respect to tattooing (Orend and Gagné 2009), so,

too, have these musical expressions of personal and national constructions of self.

In short, we add imagined engagements to Goffman's (1983:7) list of interaction entities, which already includes "ambulatory units, contacts, conversational encounters, formal meetings, platform performances, and social occasions." The doers imagine that they engage with a group or with representatives of a group that lies at the extreme edge of their response presence. In actuality, however, this comprises a type of routine failed interaction in which the doer is unaware of the failure of the interaction.

Studies of imagined interactions conducted from a psychological perspective ask individuals to imagine meeting someone they in fact have not met (McCann and Honeycutt 2006; Crisp and Turner 2009; Honeycutt 2010). But, what is the result of such interactions for outgroup members, particularly across cultural boundaries? Do members of an outgroup benefit from the practice? How are members of another or an Othered group represented or imagined? Do they feel as though there has been an actual engagement with the other group? Musical composition provides the opportunity to address these questions in that composers place their imagined Other on a concert stage for the consumption of an audience. While the framework of the imagined engagement may be new, using music to project an imagined idea of another group or culture is not.

We will draw on two musical compositions—one from the early eighteenth century and the other

from the late twentieth century—to examine the idea of imagined engagement in musical settings.

## The Musical Setting of Imagined Engagements

### Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Les Indes galantes* (1735/1736)

Nicholas Till repeats a suggestion that the early modern era be "rebranded as 'Early Colonial'" in an effort to underscore the importance of colonialism during that period, with opera playing a key role (Karantonis and Robinson 2011:16).

Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera-ballet *Les Indes galantes*, composed in 1735 and expanded in 1736, provides one example which, like the more contemporary composition we will discuss later, draws on Indigenous America for inspiration. We should note that it was not the first such case. Rameau's work consists of a prologue and four acts, with a libretto by Louis Fuzelier. Each of the four *entrées* (or acts) is a love story set in a different exotic land—the first on an island in the Indian Ocean (*Le turc généreux*), the second in Incan Peru (*Les incas de Pérou*), the third in Persia (*Les fleurs*), and the fourth in Native North America (*Les sauvages*). *Les sauvages* presents the story of Adario, an (imagined) Indigenous man who loves Zima, daughter of the chief. Two Europeans, the Spaniard Don Alvar and the Frenchman Damon, also vie for her attention. Zima chooses Adario, however, and the act (and the opera-ballet) ends with a peace ceremony joining the Indigenous and European populations in the New World.



The inspiration for this opera-ballet is believed to have been a 1725 visit to Paris by delegates of the Louisiana colony in New France (Kaufmann 2005). Agapit Chicagou, a chief of the Mitchigamea tribe from today's Illinois, met with Louis XV and pledged allegiance to the French crown. Dances performed at the *Théâtre Italien* as part of this visit underlie the final act of *Les Indes galantes* and also led to a pair of harpsichord pieces of the same name. While Rameau might have had first-hand experience of these Mitchigamea dancers, the story certainly follows an imagined engagement with them. Anthony and Savage (n.d.) describe the entire opera-ballet as being "supported by references to discussions with 'many esteemed travelers' and with 'the most skilful naturalists.'"

Although Rameau was influenced by this visit, his music for the airs and recitatives is distinctly of the French Baroque tradition and makes no attempt at borrowing or imitating Indigenous American styles. Generalized exotic music does appear in the dances—particularly in the section representing North American Indigenous populations. Pisani (2005:39) notes that "the most recognizable features of otherness occur in the ballet sequences that close the work."

A 2004 production of the work at the Opéra National de Paris and Les Arts Florissants demonstrates the lasting influence of this type of imagined engagement. The fourth act of this production heightened its comic nature, with the title being clarified on-stage by actors carrying a sign reading "*Les Sauvages d'Amérique*." Overall, this production presents the Indigenous American population as

very much historical and representative of the almost-mythical "noble savage" trope. The costume designer presents Adario in a red leather jumpsuit with long red fringe under his arms, feathers in his hair, and war paint on his face. Damon and Don Alvar carry the flags of their countries, pointing them menacingly at the savage Adario before ogling a line of Indigenous women clothed in simple grey tunics and headbands. Zima wears a fitted white dress with a large feather headdress. It is Zima and Adario who are clearly the center of attention. In the background, the company wears an assortment of dresses, from sun masks to bison head masks, in a pastiche of all things associated with the imagined Native America.

The success and controversy of such an approach can be seen in the YouTube comments on the rondeau, "Forêts paisibles," a late scene in this act that features dancing bison masks. User Rikard Nyberg writes that

I stumbled upon this clip 4 days ago, and have been listening to it more than 20 times each day since then. I LOVE the joyous energy of their performance, and the music is absolutely fantastic as well. One of the internet's golden nuggets for sure. [Ambasciatrice 2006]

Rozni Yusof remarks

How quaint! This is surely the strangest bit of Ballet/Opera I have ever seen. It starts with a bunch of Pokemons dancing to Rameau's music. Then some Indians come in and do the Chicken Dance. Then the Indian Prince and Princess start walking like Egyptians. [Ambasciatrice 2006]



Yusof both describes the camp of this act and presents a rather accurate image of what to expect of the choreography.

Although an argument can be made that this production recreates something of the early eighteenth century approach to Native Americans by Europeans, we also see it celebrated as an accomplishment in the twenty-first century in audience reactions on YouTube.

### Michael Colgrass—*Arctic Dreams* (1991)

Western composers continue to turn their creative imagination to Indigenous America two-and-a-half centuries after Rameau. For a recent example of music emanating from an imagined interaction, we turn to Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Michael Colgrass and his 1991 work for wind ensemble, *Arctic Dreams*.

The University of Illinois Symphonic and Concert Bands commissioned Michael Colgrass' *Arctic Dreams* for their 100th anniversary in 1991. In composing the seven-movement suite, Colgrass drew upon his three-week visit in 1989 to Pangnirtung, Nunavut (on Baffin Island) (Colgrass 2012). Upon meeting Inuit there, Colgrass (1991, Program Notes) remarked that he was "fascinated by their way of life, their humor, and their sense of mystery and wonder at the awesome nature around them." The titles that Colgrass chose for his movements reflect commonly shared elements of Inuit and Arctic life and culture: I. Inuit Landscape, II. Throat Singing with Laughter, III. Whispering Voices, IV. Polar Night, V. Spring Light, VI. The Hunt, and VII. Drum Dancer.

Colgrass explains some of his inspiration for the work in a trailer for a forthcoming documentary about his career. His son, Neal, is producing the documentary and has uploaded the trailer, which focuses on *Arctic Dreams*, to multiple video streaming websites, including Vimeo and YouTube (Colgrass 2012). The interview that appears in this excerpt from the documentary highlights Colgrass' limited understanding of the world about which he was composing. Not only do his own words reveal his interactions with Inuit as one-sided, he further asks his audience to create an imagined interaction insofar as he leaves incomplete statements or says "you know." This allows the audience to fill in the blanks from their own imagined knowledge of Inuit and life in the Canadian Arctic.

The beginning of the documentary reflects the opening of *Arctic Dreams*. The music opens with a sustained trombone call, marked in the musical score as being "like a voice calling over endless space" (Colgrass 1991:1). Colgrass (2012 [0:09-1:05]) further explains this through the following story in the documentary:

The first thing I did was I want to take a walk. This was April, by the way, so the spring thaw is about to start. I was all padded up and I said, "I want to go out and take a walk," everyone was, "Whoa, whoa, you don't just go out and take a walk around here. Where you gonna go? How long you gonna be?" 'Cause, you see, in the Arctic, suddenly a storm can come up and you can have a whiteout.

[music plays]

Everything is white. The wind is blowing. And, you see no ground. You see no anything on the sides. So,

he says, “There can be a whiteout and you can be 10 feet from the front door of your house and lost and freeze to death.” So, I walked—I didn’t go too far—and the first thing that I wanted to do; I wanted to yell. Because where else in the world can you yell as loud as you want to and no one is gonna be disturbed by it—you know, they’re not gonna call the police or something. So I went, “Hey!” [yells].

In this excerpt, Colgrass first states that he ignored the advice of those from the town by walking alone and did what *he* wanted to do—to yell. He says “no one is gonna be disturbed by it,” but what he truly says is that no one *of consequence* will be disturbed by his actions. In our experience of living in and visiting an Inuit community for over a decade, we would suggest that residents would be quite worried about a visitor’s yelling at nothing on the tundra, but that they would likely not interfere.

There is also an intersectionality present in Colgrass’ interview that serves as an axis of privilege as he uses his position as a Euro-Canadian male to explain Inuit culture from his own perspective. He feels entitled to describe the culture, despite the incomplete nature of his narrative, and his remarks are supplemented by statements illustrating his lack of any depth of understanding. In his interview, Colgrass indeed appears to think about Inuit as if they were children.

In discussing Inuit throat singing, for instance, Colgrass (2012 [1:24-1:47]) states that

The Inuit have a great sense of humor. They love to play. They’re always kidding around or fooling

around. So, I wrote a movement. It was called “Throat Singing with Laughter,” because they love the throat singing, like this with the [trails off mimicking throat singing]...and when they do this face to face, they do it in rhythms; “hee-haw-haw hee-hee-haw-haw.” I go “hee” and you go “haw-haw.”

In addition to this very rudimentary explanation of throat singing, Colgrass’ insistence on referring to throat singing as “kidding around or fooling around” suggests that it reflects a childlike state. He also notes in the score that “[t]hroat-singing is an amateur folk practice performable by all” (Colgrass 1991:14). Colgrass even seeks to compose throat singing into his work, inviting members of the performing ensemble to take one of the microphones that are positioned around the stage and mimic the practice by repeating the syllables “he-ha-ha-who who-ha-ha-he...” He provides instructions to “exhale and inhale catching sound in throat [sic] so we can hear the syllables. The effect is somewhat like loud panting with the pitches unspecified” (Colgrass 1991:15). In doing so, Colgrass treats throat singing as a commodity, moving it from its Arctic context into the music hall for the consumption of concert goers.

Ethnomusicologist Andy Necessian (2002:13) writes that “[a]ppropriation of musics is everywhere. It is inseparable from globalization and very much a consequence of postmodernity.” He also asks a series of questions about appropriation, including

Is there an “original context?” Can we speak of the “decontextualization” of a music? Are we not, in doing so, privileging one context more than another or

others without always challenging the grounds of this privileging? [Nercessian 2002:13]

In the case of Inuit throat singing, we feel it fair to suggest that, yes, there is an original context, and that the privileging of this context is necessary due to the history of colonialism leading to systematical-ly racist treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Removing throat singing from its context—indeed, from the very throats of Inuit—and placing it into the mouths of wind ensemble musicians in Illinois (or Toronto, or...), particularly doing so with a very limited understanding of the cultural context of throat singing, acts as a demonstration of the power imbalance present when discussing cultural appropriation.

In Nunavut, throat singing is practiced almost exclusively by women, in contrast to its being “performable by all,” as Colgrass claims. While the folk practice element clearly has some truth to it, the idea of throat singing as simply “kidding and fooling around” stands in contrast to the attitudes towards throat singing that we experienced during our field-work. For example, Margaret Uyauperk Aniksak, an Inuit elder who passed away in the early 2000s, describes the meaning of throat singing through a connection to history. She explains how

The words contained in the throat singing tradition are words that were used by our remote ancestors. People have forgotten the meaning behind the words and that, I assume, adds to why people don't have any knowledge of their meaning...They came from the mouths of the ancients. [Bennett and Rowley 2004:108]

“Cara,”<sup>1</sup> an Inuit woman who throat sings regularly in her community and abroad, also ties throat singing to Inuit history. She says “it’s always taught the same way. For all we know, it could be the same song they used 2000 years ago” (interview with the author, May 2012). She also describes learning throat singing from her elders, recalling a teacher saying “Don’t smile! No, you’re doing it the wrong way!” (interview with the author, May 2012). We observed similar interventions by elders during a community drum dance in 2010, when younger performers would laugh too much during or between throat songs. While there was no specific verbal reprimand, a quick call of ‘ah!’ and a light physical touch would remind the youth of proper ritual around this activity (field notes, July 2010).

Such views of throat singing, its history, and associated learning practices stand in stark contrast to Colgrass’ description of “kidding around and fooling around.” They also reveal just how one-sided Colgrass’ interaction with Inuit was—while it was enough to inspire his composition, it was not sufficient for him to aptly or accurately describe the culture he represents through *Arctic Dreams*. He thus took from Inuit, but provided no accurate or meaningful representation.

Colgrass further reveals his shallow understanding of Inuit beliefs in describing the *aurora borealis*, or northern lights, another frequently romanticized feature of the Arctic landscape. As in his previous

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<sup>1</sup> Cara is a pseudonym for a participant in a larger ethnographic study. In this case, she illustrates the difference between Colgrass’ learning from an Inuit community and an Inuit perspective on the same practice.

descriptions, Colgrass leaves room for the audience to fill in the blanks through such statements as “you know” and the repeated use of the word “something,” which replaces meaningful description. He states in the documentary that

And then they believe that their ancestors become stars at night. And when they have the *aurora borealis*—you know, the northern lights—that’s the ancestors, I don’t know, doing something; having a celebration or something like this. And that inspired a whole movement. [Colgrass 2012 (2:04-2:20)]

Colgrass recalls the portrayal of northern lights in the third movement, of which the full title is “The Whispering Voices of the Spirits Who Ride with the Lights in the Sky.” He describes this section as hearing the “mysterious mutterings that make a gradual transformation into ‘gossamer curtains of light that seem to undulate across the Arctic skies’” (Colgrass 1991:iv).

Again, Colgrass’ account of the northern lights lacks subtlety and accuracy when compared to descriptions of the meaning of the northern lights from Inuit sources. Bennett and Rowley (2004), in their *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut*, interviewed elders and collected recorded statements from historical sources to create a written account of some of the oral histories of Inuit life and culture. Their single account of *aqsarniit*, or *aqsaarniit* (the northern lights), suggests much more depth than Colgrass even attempts to provide.

Although the story found in *Uqalurait* is consistent with Colgrass in that there are “dwellers of

*aqsaarniit*,” including a deceased relative of the storyteller, Suzanne Niniattian Aqatsiaq (Bennett and Rowley 2004:169), Bennett and Rowley introduce many more details. For instance, shamanistic ritual allows for visiting with relatives who have passed away, who, it seems, play football with a walrus skull. In addition, “the *aqsaarniit* are in the area below heaven,” and those who reside there died not from illness or sickness, but, in this account, through blood loss (Bennett and Rowley 2004:170). There is also an aural element to the aurora that is evident as Bennett and Rowley (2004:170) relate Aqatsiaq’s story:

When we would play outdoors we would whistle at the northern lights to make them come closer. They would make a swishing sound. I don’t know what that may be. Perhaps they were once alive amongst the living.

George Kappianaq, from Iglulik, shares another view of the northern lights in Laugrand and Oosten’s study of Inuit Shamanism. Kappianaq relates that

At that time they [*aqsarniit*] were so close that although I was an adult, I was afraid of them...What elders say about being cautious so your head isn’t decapitated is very true. They say this because it happened in the past. There would be incidents of people who had their heads lopped off when they were whistling at them to get them to come closer. The *aqsarniit* rushed by the person who was standing there and knocked their head off. They say that they play kickball using a walrus head for their *aqsaq*, their kickball. [Laugrand and Oosten 2010:24]

For Colgrass, then, the vague idea of the northern lights as ancestors celebrating is enough to light his imaginative fire. As in throat singing and his first impression of the Arctic landscape, Colgrass demonstrates a one-sided engagement with Inuit life and culture. He then attempts to share his “knowledge,” gained through his imagined engagement, with a broader listening audience.

## Conclusion

Colgrass composed *Arctic Dreams* in 1991, and although appropriation discourse has changed in Canada since that time, his work nevertheless remains relevant today. It continues to be performed by wind ensembles, including at the University of Toronto in 2016, shining a light on the role of the North in Canadian nationalism. The concept of imagined engagement thus has implications when we think about nationalism in the twenty-first century. Benedict Anderson (2006:205) writes that there is a “need for a narrative of ‘identity’” in modern nations due to a forgotten experience of the continuity of secular, serial time. Music, an art form intimately tied to the passing of time, provides a rich avenue for the discussion and representation of national identity. Colgrass embarks on such a discussion in *Arctic Dreams*, where he presents an iconic aspect of Canadian identity—“the true north, strong and free”—while demonstrating his imagined engagement with the people and culture of that part of the nation.

Nercessian (2002:23-24) remarks that

Postmodernism is a way of thinking, of envisaging the world in which transcendental truths do not ex-

ist, only meanings, and these meanings are culturally circumscribed and constructed.

Colgrass interprets the North through his cultural lens—a lens informed by generations of colonial behavior, also evident in Rameau’s opera-ballet—as he directs it towards Canada’s northern regions and Indigenous populations. In doing so, he presents a truth in *Arctic Dreams* that is not an obdurate reality, but one that instead results from his imagined engagement with the entirety of the region and its people.

Colgrass attempts to establish a relationship between his Toronto-based life and the life experiences in the far reaches of his nation. Pryke (2009:45) states that “National identities correspond to collective histories and thus bestow meaning to human lives.” Colgrass’ interpretation thereby contributes to a collective history of Canada as a whole—symbols, myths, values, and traditions play an important role in the formation and persistence of the modern nation (Pryke 2009). His imagined engagement with the North in *Arctic Dreams* is one of many attempts by Canadian composers—among other artists—to bring Inuit culture into the center of Canadian identity. One only need to visit any gift shop in the country to find representations of Inuit culture available for purchase and consumption as iconography of Canada, most notably the *Inukshuk*—stone cairns roughly formed in the shape of people that are used by Inuit as landmarks and guideposts.

One area for further thought and research regarding the concept of imagined engagement, particularly as it relates to the sociology of music, involves



a consideration of music scenes. Virtual music scenes, in contrast to co-present local and translocal music scenes, are created in a day, place fans in control of the scene, and are mediated, for example, through fanzines or the Internet (Bennett and Peterson 2004:10-11). The virtual scene as a site of imagined engagements could provide an avenue for

a consideration of Inuit musicians creating songs for a perceived southern audience that may or may not exist. We offer the concept of imagined engagement as a way to further examine, within the interaction order, attempts at interaction that fail to reach the second party, but are nonetheless perceived by the first party as having been successful.

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## **Between Individual and Collective Actions: The Introduction of Innovations in the Social World of Climbing**

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**Abstract** This article, which is based upon the findings of a seven-year research project concerning the social world of climbing, discusses climbing as an organized social practice that possesses a strong historical dimension and collective character. It examines the relation between individual participants and that social world as a whole, and it accepts that an individual's personal life may be inscribed in the development and formation of that world in two ways. These are 1) a given social world imposes the behavioral patterns, normative rules, institutional schemes of actions, and careers upon participants that characterize their identities and actions; and 2) the actions of an individual participant trigger significant change in that world. I am particularly interested in those unique situations in which when a participant induces a change that affects a given social world (or a sub-world) as a whole, and discuss two examples of this relation, namely, the history of designing and creating climbing equipment, and setting new standards of climbing performance. Briefly stated, innovative solutions are born in conjunction with particular climbing actions that are either promoted or hindered depending on whether or not the vision of the primary activity associated with those solutions was accepted by the majority of participants. The dynamics and transformations of the social world in question thus rely upon the activities of exceptional individuals who, as pioneers, innovators, and visionaries, attain mastery in performing the primary activity of that world and set new standards of performance for others. A new mode of acting—in order to be collectively adopted—must be accepted as both valuable and morally justified by all participants.

**Keywords** Social Worlds; Climbing; Mountaineering; Innovations; Individual; Collective Actions; Technology; Performance

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This article<sup>1</sup> is based upon the results of a seven-year research project on the social world of climbing. From March 2007 to December 2014 I explored and endeavored to describe this particular social world in an effort to identify the processes, actions, and interactions that take place there and support its existence (Kacperczyk 2012; 2013; 2016). I also sought to generalize my reconstruction of the complex processes through which this world takes shape and is maintained so that my findings would also cast light on any social world in general.

Tamotsu Shibutani (1955:566) argues that each social world

is a unity of order, a universe of regularized mutual response...an area in which there is some structure which permits reasonable anticipation of the behavior of others, hence, an area in which one may act with a sense of security and confidence. Each social world, then, is a culture area, the boundaries of which are set neither by territory nor by formal group membership, but by the limits of effective communication.

Consequently, the social world of climbing does not comprise group or community membership in the strict sense, but is rather a dynamically changing formation of people engaged in mountaineering and climbing activities. This social entity with fluid limits consists of climbers and mountaineers who are

equipped with suitable competences and skills, having the technology and special equipment needed to carry out this activity and share the resources that enable them to achieve their goals. They thus create a common ideology concerning how to act, and even if they do not agree on every point, even if they differ locally and technologically within the area of their activity, they nonetheless feel a unique commitment to maintain this activity, devoting their time and energy to that end, sometimes at the expense of other areas of their life. [Kacperczyk 2016:696]<sup>2</sup>

The range and scope of my investigation refer to this loosely outlined social unit and its various internal segments. The process of entering and exploring this extraordinary milieu that was previously unknown to me involved undertaking a number of diverse research activities that included interviewing, conducting participant observations, engaging climbers and others in conversation, visiting climbing gyms, and going to rock areas in Poland. The data gathered in this investigation primarily refers to predominantly Polish climbers and mountaineers with whom I had direct contact during the study.

A large portion of my research is more generally associated with the essence of climbing and, as a result, displays universal characteristics shared with comparable geophysical contexts. Since climbing exceeds territorial boundaries, being undertaken within international groups and in remote or isolated locations, the documents and other materials examined in this project are not restricted to the Polish climbing community, but are also relevant

<sup>1</sup> This article is an extended version of the author's presentation at the VIIth Conference of the European Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (EUSSSI), *Integrating Interactionist Traditions: Building Theoretical, Methodological, and Disciplinary Bridges in the Study of Everyday Life*, which was held July 04-08, 2016, in Topola, Bulgaria.

<sup>2</sup> All translations in the text are by the author unless otherwise indicated.



to actions undertaken outside of Poland and by individuals other than Poles (Kacperczyk 2016:696). I spent over 800 hours in the field, produced over 300 documents (field notes and observation reports), conducted hundreds of informal discussions and 30 in-depth interviews, and made 23 audio recordings of public lectures about climbing and mountaineering, all of which served as a basis for further coding and analysis.

My approach combined elements of ethnography, autoethnography, biographical method, discourse analysis, and netnography. All of these research strategies were encompassed by and subjected to the methodological procedures of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), including its main guidelines of theoretical sampling and the constant employment of the comparative method.

An important element of the data sources used in the research process, particularly the analysis presented in this article, consisted of extant textual and visual materials. These comprise biographies, memoirs and recollections of pioneers and innovators in climbing, autobiographies of famous mountaineers, published interviews, articles, historical discussions, climbing manuals, guides, and expedition reports, as well as pictures, lithographs, photographs, and documentary films.

## Climbing as Primary Activity

The objects of my analysis were actions and processes in the social world of climbing, which was broadly defined as a space of social practices and interactions woven around the *primary activity* of

climbing. This primary activity itself is complex and takes place in a variety of forms that divide the social world in question into more or less distinct segments, such as mountaineering, rock climbing, bouldering, ice climbing, big-wall climbing, and dry-tooling. Climbing is accompanied in each of these sub-worlds by numerous additional activities that influence and condition the primary activity.

These additional activities may be taken into consideration on both individual and collective levels. For instance, collective actions are undertaken by individuals or groups on behalf of the community and in the common interest of climbers. Prominent examples are passing on know-how and training beginners; developing climbing technology; fighting for the preservation of free access for climbers to mountains and rock areas; the self-organizing of the climbing community (creating institutions, associations, and mountain clubs); and the collective maintenance of discursive space, which includes writing about climbing, creating visual representations of the space of climbing, filming climbing actions, oral stories, public lectures and presentations, conversations, and theorizing about climbing. Climbing is supported on the level of individual actions by training and physical conditioning; traveling; fundraising; acquiring climbing equipment; documenting one's own actions; presenting one's own climbing activities to others; and so forth.

Although none of these actions constitute climbing itself, they remain crucial for the reproduction of the culture, ideologies, and modes of action of mountaineering. Both individual and collective auxiliary activities are necessary preconditions for climbing

that make it possible to maintain and reproduce this social world as a whole. However, climbing itself remains the central and the most obvious activity within this world (Strauss 1978:120).

Every act of climbing involves using one's body in order to make progress in scrambling on a rock or mountain. We can distinguish three essential aspects of climbing when we view it as individual activity: 1) the ascent is performed through the movements of one's own body; 2) protection practices, such as belaying techniques and various forms of self-protection, are employed to make the ascent safe; and 3) sudden and undesired descents—falls—which may occur during ascending. Climbing means gaining altitude and accumulating kinetic energy that is released at the moment of the fall. This triad of ascending, protecting, and (potentially or actually) falling concerns anyone who climbs (Kacperczyk 2016:122).

In addition to being an individual act of ascending, climbing is also a broad socio-cultural phenomenon that encompasses the organized activity maintained in rock areas and mountains by people who explore a given site, create more effective methods for such exploration, accumulate practical knowledge about climbing, and spread their own vision of the activity of climbing. It is an organized social practice that has a strong historical dimension and collective character. In this sense, we may speak about a social world that is formed by people who have a common commitment to engage in this activity, "sharing resources of many kinds to achieve their goals, and building shared ideologies about how to go about their business" (Clarke 1991:131).

The terms first used to describe this social world were *alpinism*, *andinismo*, *himalaism*, *pireneismo*, and *taternictwo*, each directly referring to the collective activities that took place in a particular mountain range. *Alpinism* initially meant human activity undertaken in the Alps; *andinismo* designated climbing in the Andes; *himalaism*, climbing in the Himalayas; *pireneismo*, climbing in the Pyrenees; and *taternictwo*, climbing in the Tatras (Kacperczyk 2016:135). The terms *alpinism* and *mountaineering*, which are used interchangeably today, possess the broadest meaning of climbing undertaken in mountains regardless of the location. They thus embrace all types of mountain activities (Kacperczyk 2016:135).

The culture of climbing was constructed in particular locations that became the basis for exploration and organizational activity. As a result, these particular spaces became a source of identity for individual participants who felt a passion for climbing and—at the same time—a fondness for the particular locations in which the action of climbing takes place.

### **The Relation between Unique Participant and Social World**

In an ontological sense, a given social world does not exist without participants. When these participants act and communicate in respect to a given primary activity, they became parts of the social world in question and help maintain its existence. However, the relation between individual participants and a social world as a whole is shown to be more complicated when we take it into consideration from a long-term perspective.

I assume that individual's personal life can be inscribed in the development of a given social world in two ways: 1) the social world imposes the behavioral patterns, normative rules, institutional schemes of actions, and careers that mark the identity and actions of the participants, and 2) the actions of individual participants trigger significant changes in that world. In the latter case, the biography of an individual becomes interwoven with the collective history of the social world and affects its entire development. Insofar as the latter is of particular interest in the present discussion, I will examine instances of how designing new climbing equipment and setting new standards of climbing performance can be useful in casting light on this issue.

## Designing Climbing Equipment

The history of designing climbing equipment is closely connected with the development of the world of climbing as a whole. The paramount points of interest in this regard have primarily been associated with the appearance and refinement of new tools for safety in climbing. The main technological innovations in this regard include 1) climbing ropes, 2) pitons, 3) nuts (chockstones, hexes, camalots), 4) carabiners, 5) ice axes, 6) crampons, 7) climbing shoes with super-friction rubber soles, 8) outdoor clothing made from synthetic materials, 9) improved tourist and camping equipment, and 10) artificial climbing walls for competition and training (Pagel 2000:121; Kacperczyk 2016:363). The development of mountain rescue techniques and equipment has also been an important area of innovation.

The development of safety equipment was a crucial issue, not least because surviving—or avoiding—a fall made it possible for a climber to try an ascent again and thus potentially improve their skills. Any improvement introduced into any dimension of the triad comprising the act of climbing (ascending, protecting, falling) strengthens and supports the other dimensions as well. Consequently, the use of tools to improve safety and either avoid or minimize the danger of falls meant that climbers could work on techniques for ascending and improve their physical skills,<sup>3</sup> leading to a further specialization of climbing techniques that made it possible to attain more ambitious and difficult goals. In turn, more difficult challenges led to a greater need for refinement in climbing equipment, placing an emphasis upon advanced development.

I will now briefly address the development and use of crampons in order to illustrate the process of how new climbing tools were introduced.

Crampons—metal plates with spikes fastened to boots to facilitate walking on ice and steep terrain—were the first artificial means in history to be used

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<sup>3</sup> A somewhat analogous process took place in the social world of the martial arts when the traditional rules of Ju-Jitsu were replaced with the rules of Judo, a development initiated by Jigorō Kanō (1860-1938) in the late 1800s. Ju-Jitsu was not initially designed solely for defense, but instead had the aim of reducing the possibility of counter attack to a minimum by effectively destroying the enemy. Every technique was allowed for attaining this goal. Kanō came to view these rules as archaic and out of touch with the times, and consequently developed new techniques for Ju-Jitsu that would replace those that were dangerous for life and physical well-being, which came to be defined as “prohibited techniques.” As a result, participants were able to improve their movement techniques not only because they could survive the competition, but also because avoiding significant injuries meant they could train more frequently, more efficiently, and improve their skills.

in the mountains, but they also might very well have been the last tool that was universally accepted by mountaineers.<sup>4</sup> The idea of using them first appears in ancient times. For example, the oldest four-teeth models discovered in Hallstadt, Bad Reichenhall, and Carinthia date to around 500 years before Christ (Roszkowska 2007:135), while the earliest written evidence of using tools of this kind is found in Strabo's (64 or 63 BC-c. AD 24) *Geography*, in his description of the Caucasus Mountains. Strabo states that

The summits of the mountains are impassable in winter, but the people ascend them in summer by fastening to their feet broad shoes made of raw ox-hide, like drums, and furnished with spikes, on account of the snow and the ice. They descend with their loads by sliding down seated upon skins, as is the custom in Atropatian Media and on Mount Masius in Armenia; there, however, the people also fasten wooden discs furnished with spikes to the soles of their shoes. Such, then, are the heights of the Caucasus. [Strabo 1924, vol. XI:241]

Tertullian (160-c. 240) remarked that boots with spikes were invented by spies in order to safely move on difficult terrain, and that they were in fact called "spy shoes" (*cālīgae, elevatae, or seculatoriae*).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The Grivel's company's webpage summarizes the history of crampons as follows: "The use of crampons has always been the source of controversy. They were probably the first tool, or the first artificial means, used to cope with the difficulties of mountain terrain and simultaneously they were also the last tool to be universally accepted and used." See: *The History of the Grivel Company*.

<sup>5</sup> An early visual exemplification of this idea can be found on the Arch of Constantine the Great that was constructed in Rome at the beginning of the fourth century A.D. See: *The History of the Grivel Company*.

In all cases, however, their usefulness was the reason for their currency in that they facilitated the everyday lives of those living in mountainous areas. They came to be used not as aids in "mountaineering," but rather in activities "performed in the mountains."

Crampons were widely used in sixteenth-century Europe by woodsmen, huntsmen, and crystal hunters, who equipped themselves with four spikes fixed under their shoes as forefoot tools that provided some traction when crossing glaciers or ice. Such crampons served the very pragmatic purpose of operating effectively in mountainous terrain, when walking on glaciers or scrambling were a part of other operations and could not yet be treated as mountaineering.

The essence of mountaineering is to overcome difficulties and conquer summits, and its official beginning is considered to be August 08, 1786, when Jacques Balmat and Michel-Gabriel Paccard completed the first ascent of Mont Blanc. This is regarded as the first time in history when the primary objective of activities in the mountains was to reach the summit, and it required resolving technical challenges, defeating the difficulties of the terrain, dealing with the fear of spending a night on a glacier, and, above all, finding a path that led to the top (Ardito 2010:24). This key event thus displayed the essence of alpinism. Although the majority of mountain expeditions in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had other aims as well, particularly scientific exploration in the fields of topography, cartography, botany, zoology, glaciology, geology, and meteorology, the conquerors of Mont Blanc viewed

mountain activity as worthy of being undertaken simply for its own sake.

During the European Renaissance, mountains became a location where artists, poets, writers, and scientists would wander and hike. It was at this time that the Swiss theologian and classicist Josiah Simmler (1530-1576) wrote the first book devoted entirely to the Alps, *Vallesiae et Alpium descriptio* (1574), in which he provided extensive descriptions of the alpine natural environment, including such phenomena as glaciers and avalanches. Simmler also recommended the use of glasses to protect one's eyes from the glaciers and the snow, and he made the first contributions to the literature concerning the alpenstock,<sup>6</sup> crampons, and snow shoes as important tools for mountaineering (Hajdukiewicz 1998:36).

Useful crampon designs emerged in the nineteenth century, with more complete versions appearing in the second half of the century that covered the entire sole of the shoe and had some form of articulation.<sup>7</sup> Mountaineers, however, continued to prefer shoes equipped with spikes. The technique of attaching hobnails to boots and shoes had become very sophisticated at that time, and climbers could choose from a wide selection produced by Tricouni. As a result, climbers still rarely used crampons (Rozkowska 2007:135).

We should note that people engaged in mountain activities expressed a variety of opinions about

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<sup>6</sup> The alpenstock, a precursor of the ice axe, resembled a long wooden stick, typically being a perch made of hazel or a bamboo rod with an iron spike at one end. It was used on glaciers and snowfields for support and balancing.

<sup>7</sup> See: *The History of the Grivel Company*.

crampons. For example, highlanders living in the Tyrol adopted them enthusiastically, while English mountaineers completely refused to use them. The English "purist" C. D. Cunningham wrote six pages about ice axes in *The Pioneers of the Alps* (1888), but provided only one short comment about crampons.

Crampons, which I presume a mountaineering purist would look upon as "artificial aids," are never used in the Alps and are only seen in the Tyrol. [Cunningham and Abney 1888:47]

Edward Whymper in his *Scrambles Amongst the Alps* also declared that crampons were artificial aids that were not dependable on dangerous slopes.

I do not believe that the use of the rope, in the ordinary way, affords the least *real* security upon ice-slopes. Nor do I think that any benefit is derived from the employment of crampons...I only feel comfortable with them on my feet in places where they are not of the slightest use, that is, in situations where there is no possibility of slipping...All such adventitious aids are useless if you do not have a good step in the ice to stand upon, and if you have got that, nothing more is wanted except a few nails in the boots. [Whymper 1871:351]

Clinton Thomas Dent (1892:73) remarks in the same vein that

Crampons, or climbing irons, do not find much favor with English mountaineers, and have been spoken of contemptuously on many occasions. They are sometimes branded as artificial aids, a vague term, but implying great disrespect.



This open rejection of crampons stood in evident contradiction to their common use in the Tyrol, which may confirm the supposition that the reason for these differing views resided upon differing understandings of mountaineering as an activity. Using crampons was an obvious and pragmatic part of everyday life for those who lived in the mountains, while those who climbed the summits as a form of leisure-time challenge, as did the English, regarded crampons as something that not only made climbing too easy, but perhaps even changed the essence of the activity. Mountain guides working in the Alps, who comprised a third group, also expressed misgivings concerning the usefulness of the tool. Fiorio and Ratti cited Mereur in this regard, who observed that

seeing the extensive use that the Tyrol make of these tools, it is difficult to understand why they are unknown here. The fact is that the guides have an instinctive repugnance for these tools. [Fiorio and Ratti 1889 as cited in *The History of the Grivel Company*]

At that time the boots used for mountaineering were typically hobnailed in order to ensure a good grip in steep terrain, but they also offered something more than safety—hobnails were very useful for guides when they were cutting steps for their clients. Emil Zsigmondy, an Austrian physician who was an excellent alpinist, remarked that using crampons might completely change the image of alpine guides and the character of their work insofar as there would no longer be a need to cut steps in ice—which was an important and very impressive part of what they did. Briefly stated, crampons could render cutting steps pointless.

[T]he guides at Zermatt should not use crampons, because as it would no longer be necessary to cut steps in the great walls of ice, it would diminish the reputation that the mountains have for thousands of travelers who are always astonished by the hundreds of steps that need to be cut. [Zsigmondy 1885 as cited in *The History of the Grivel Company*]

Contemporary observers thus confirmed that crampons were a source of controversy, and that the interests of the mountain guides were the main reason for their rejection. To gain admiration in the eyes of their customers, and to impress or even shock them with the enormity of the work they did with ice, the guides used Tricouni nails and chose the ice axe as their only tool. But, this was not simply an issue of how guides sought to present themselves to their clients insofar as cutting steps and fighting the ice were an integral part of the idea of mountain activity at the time. Furthermore, the quality of the steps cut testified to the mastery of the guide and served as what might be regarded as his signature. The main vision of mountain climbing cultivated at that time centered upon the great amount of work done to cut steps in snow and ice, whereby the ice axe was viewed as the main symbol of mountaineering. The rejection of crampons symbolized a different way of acting that the guides did not regard as “true mountaineering.”

The interests of the guides clearly constituted an important element of this conflict, particularly in light of the fact that alpinism was conducted mainly with the assistance of local mountain guides until the end of the nineteenth century. It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that “guided



mountaineering” became obsolete and unassisted activity in the mountains began to be promoted (Kiełkowsky 2003:40).<sup>8</sup> The sports version of mountaineering, in which the climber independently accomplishes the ascent to the summit, first became dominant in the Alps.

Views concerning crampons were changed through the actions of an important forerunner of modern developments, Oscar Eckenstein (1859-1921), an English engineer and mountaineer known for his work and research concerning climbing equipment. The ten-point crampons he designed, “whose only drawback was their weight, about 3 lb. a pair” (Blakeney and Dangar 1960:75), were described as having

the merit of being the only claw at the present time in which both the metal is rightly wrought and the points are shaped and placed under the foot with any scientific regard for their use. [Young 1920:288]

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<sup>8</sup> Unguided climbing, which was promoted by particular mountaineers, gradually developed during the second half of the nineteenth century. Its keenest proponent was Stephan Steinberger (1833-1905), who conquered over 400 peaks, many of them solo or in winter, during the ten-year period of his mountaineering activity (1847-1857) (Kiełkowsky 2013:734). In 1870, Arthur Gilbert Gridlestone published *The High Alps without Guides*, in which he “endeavored to point out the advantages of mountaineering as a means of recreation, and the possibility of indulging in it to a very great extent without the cost or the annoyances of professional assistance” (Gridlestone 1870:v). In 1896, the Austrian parliament debated a ban on climbing without a guide and concluded that it was too dangerous—and thereby supported the interests of the guides. The material situation of mountaineers also played a role in the development of unguided climbing, with the social cross-section of the environment being changed. While climbers had formerly comprised primarily wealthy representatives of high society with the free time and means necessary to practice climbing, they came to consist of students and the working intelligentsia during the twentieth century (Kiełkowsky 2003:22).

Eckenstein himself was noted to have remarked that

thanks to the use of his crampons he did not cut more than twenty steps in all over a period of twenty-five years, apart from one unfortunate day when he inadvertently took someone else’s crampons instead of his own. [Young 1920:288]

Eckenstein published two articles detailing the results of his own research concerning the manufacture of crampons, their systematic employment, and the remarkable feats one could perform with them.<sup>9</sup> The *Manuel d’Alpinisme* maintained, however, that his innovation did not

lie in the technical perfection of the crampons, but rather in the spirit of courage and innovation with which he defined their use...his major contribution has been of a moral nature. [Club Alpin Français/GHM 1934]<sup>10</sup>

This contribution ultimately consisted of the faith that mountaineers would accept his inventions. Eckenstein was an engineer who knew the latest methods of production and was able to calculate and prepare professional models, while also being an active and experienced mountaineer who was aware of the practical usefulness of crampons in mountainous terrain. He was thus unique in that blacksmiths had typically dealt with the production of climbing equipment, constructing them in accordance with their own ideas and conceptions even

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<sup>9</sup> The articles were published on July 20, 1908, and June 5, 1909, in the *Ostereich Alpenzeitung*.

<sup>10</sup> See: *The History of The Grivel Company*.

though they were hardly familiar with mountain crafts (see: Roszkowska 2007:138).

Eckenstein faced strong resistance to crampons from the mountaineering community, and he had to devise unusual means to promote their use. For instance, Eckenstein arranged a walking competition for guides from Courmayer, which was held on the Brenva glacier on June 30, 1912, with the idea of displaying the advantages of crampons. The guides were induced to participate using crampons, and they were ultimately convinced of their value. The *Manuel d'Alpinisme* remarked that "Nobody dared to use crampons before Eckenstein, but afterwards everyone trusted them" (Club Alpin Français/GHM 1934). Ten-point crampons thus came to be accepted by the climbing community and helped greatly in many mountain successes.<sup>11</sup>

This was not the end of the story, however. In 1929, Laurent Grivel invented 12-point crampons by adding two front points that made possible a new type of movement on ice walls—the front points meant that the climber could set his body frontally to the wall. This new technique was fundamentally different from that associated with 10-point crampons in which the crampons spikes were directed downwards, forcing the climber to place his feet sideways to the wall and bend his ankles into an unnatural position. The introduction of 12-point crampons thus initiated the battle between "front-on" and

"side-on" techniques. The second volume of *Manuel d'Alpinisme* describes how

the smith Grivel from Courmayeur produces crampons with 12 points—they are...very useful in helping to overcome those short passages of difficult ice that one finds on glaciers without cutting steps or twisting ankles; or to surmount steep slopes of hard snow, particularly in terminal crevasses. This type of crampon can be especially useful for those who have ankles with limited mobility. However, the front points do not seem to be useful without committing imprudence on sheet ice...Although mountaineers who have good ankles and do not suffer from continual pressure will gain no advantage from this type of crampon, they will be very useful for the others. [Club Alpin Français/GHM 1934, Tome II]

An opposing example of how an individual can hinder the evolution and spread of new climbing techniques is provided by Armand Charlet (1900-1975). Charlet was a very talented French mountaineer who authored many successful climbs and innovations in mountaineering, but he stubbornly refused to use crampons with front teeth (Jouty and Odier 2007:118). It is believed that he owed his legendary speed and freedom of movement on ice to the extraordinary flexibility of his ankles (Jouty and Odier 2007:118-119), which enabled him to maximize the efficiency of the side on technique. However, Charlet's renown as a consummate ice climber, along with the prestige of the *École Nationale de Ski et d'Alpinisme* (ENSA), delayed the adoption of 12-point crampons in French alpinism for years (Jouty and Odier 2007:510) because of the influence his conservative attitude had upon ENSA students.

<sup>11</sup> Toni Schmid (1909-1932) related how much he appreciated using ten-point crampons in the first ascent of the North Face of the Matterhorn in 1931. Although they caused ankle aches, he and his brother Franz decided that their advantages outweighed the strength and time needed to cut steps during climbing (Roszkowska 2007:139).

Crampons thus became a *boundary object* and a point of contention, resulting in a clash of ideas about how to climb—with the older 10-point crampons or the new 12-point ones. This became a battle between the *French technique* of moving on steep ice walls and the *front-pointing technique*. It was also the beginning of the gradual evolution of the world of ice climbing, which developed into a new autonomous segment of climbing. But, the rejection of 12-point crampons by traditionalists marked the limits of the “old world” of climbing, and it could not stop new innovations that strengthened the separation process and accumulated the potential necessary for further changes. In the end, the gradual acceptance and trust in crampons was decided by the great ascents made with their use.

For instance, the value of 12-point crampons was clearly demonstrated by the ascent of the North Face of the Eiger on July 21-24, 1938. In a four-member team consisting of Heinrich Harrer, Fritz Kasparek, Anderl Heckmair, and Wiggerl Vörg, the first two climbers had only one pair of 10-point crampons between them while the others were both equipped with modern 12-point crampons. This led to significant differences in the methods used within the team and their effectiveness. Harrer (1998:94-95) in *The White Spider* relates:

It was only now that we realized to the full what a mistake we had made in leaving my crampons behind. Fritz countered the error by a tremendous output of energy, as he built a positive ladder of steps. It was amazing to see how expert with his ice axe was this best of all Vienna’s rock climbers. For hours on end he swung it rhythmically to cut step upon step, resting

only when he stopped to safeguard me up them. And the steps were so good that my claw nails gave me excellent holds in them...Speed is the essence of modern climbing; steady, slow progress that of the classic past. We were naturally taking longer because we were using the technique of the past...Just before the rocks separating the Second from the Third Ice Field, I looked back, down our endless ladder of steps. Up it I saw the New Era coming at express speed; there were two men running—and I mean running, not climbing—up it...These two were the best of all the “Eiger Candidates”—Heckmair and Vörg—wearing their twelve-pointer crampons. I felt quite outmoded in my old claws.

The international debate on 12-point crampons finally came to an end under the pressure of facts and the indisputable efficiency of the new equipment. Crampons, whose introduction modified how mountaineers acted, were thus completely accepted as a normal part of a climber’s equipment. Today’s crampons are specialized devices used in various situations and for various tasks, dedicated to specific disciplines within climbing and mountain tourism.

Innovative solutions that were born in conjunction with particular climbing activities were promoted or hindered depending on whether the vision of the activity associated with them was accepted by the majority of participants in the social world of climbing. But, while the development of climbing technology is a collective process in the sense that all participants have to accept a given invention and begin using it, this process remains very individualistic at its roots.

The vast majority of innovations were either created by climbers themselves, or directly inspired by them. Devising new tools was initiated from the bottom up by individual participants in the social world of climbing who were driven by their personal ambition to conquer a particular climbing route. Invention was thus an element of their tactics, and it primarily grew from their desire to complete a given project and increase their own chances for more effective action in the mountains. Important innovations in climbing have always been born within the context of action, with the aim of either doing something new that no one has even done before, or doing something in a new way. This is made possible by a climber's own unique skills—often at the intersection of two social worlds, such as blacksmithing and climbing. Moreover, the creative inventiveness of the greatest innovators is typically generalized and displayed in numerous aspects of mountaineering. Great creators usually do not stop at a single invention or a one-time innovation, but rather introduce modifications in a number of different spheres of climbing.<sup>12</sup>

The brothers Jeff, Greg, and Mike Lowe, who have developed many innovative climbing projects and invented new equipment, have been active climbers who are recognized in the history of climbing for their groundbreaking achievements. Jeff Lowe (1950-2018)—a pioneer in alpine style and the father

<sup>12</sup> Bill Forrest, for example, created a range of innovations in climbing equipment, including thigh belts for climbing harnesses, ice climbing tools with exchangeable blades, copperheads, daisy chains, sturdy haul bag sacks, absorbers (shock-absorbing quick draws), and snow boots. These innovations were a consequence of regular climbing activities, as well as observations, corrections, improvements, and new patents. The same also applies to such great innovators as Yvon Chouinard and the Lowe brothers.

of modern ice climbing and mixed climbing—was not only honored with numerous prizes and awards, but also exerted significant influence upon mountaineering through his publications. Such climbers compensate for a given lack of proper equipment with their own inventiveness and entrepreneurship, quickly transforming their home workshops into successful companies producing climbing and outdoor equipment. We should note, however, that their climbing ambitions are the driving force behind their inventiveness, and that these ambitions remain primary to their later business success in mountaineering-related activities. The individual motivation for climbing leads to the development of the entire world of climbing because of the ways in which it feeds and enriches climbing with new ways of acting and new means for carrying out tasks that once were impossible to imagine.

Collective entities have also participated in the process of developing climbing technology. These include companies that produce equipment or supply semi-finished products, owners of patent rights, media about climbing that contain equipment reviews and advertising, as well as the International Federation of Mountaineering Associations (UIAA), which sets standards for products and requires manufacturers to pass specific safety tests for their equipment.<sup>13</sup> Specific marketing strategies are adopted by climbers who have become owners of companies that produce climbing equipment. This reveals a characteristic feature of climbing discourse in that the presentation of equipment often refers to an idea of climbing, the atmosphere of the expedition,

<sup>13</sup> The first UIAA standards for mountaineering equipment appeared in 1964.

and authentic mountain activities, not such typical elements of the advertising message as the appearance of the object, its price, and an advertising slogan. For example, advertisements of products from The North Face or Choudinard Equipment at times do not even include the objects that are advertised. They may instead present a picture of a strikingly beautiful mountain associated with an actual climbing achievement that serves to give authenticity to the products offered (Drożdż 2010:37).<sup>14</sup>

The creation and introduction of new equipment by climbing pioneers and innovators has thus been encapsulated within numerous additional activities that make it possible for new gear to enter the market, become used by climbers, and gain the acceptance of the climbing community. There is no divergence between the needs of active climbers and the conceptual limitations of manufacturers when climbers themselves can introduce innovations into their activities and thereby create new tools or technical solutions.

Innovations, beyond their purely material aspect, are immersed in a discursive space that justifies

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<sup>14</sup> An early advertisement of Chouinard Equipment from 1968 consists of a photograph of the southeast wall of the Lotus Flower Tower in the Mackenzie Mountains accompanied by a quote from Emilio Comici: "I wish someday to make a route, and from the summit let fall a drop of water, and this is where my route will have gone." An additional element that strengthened their advertising message was the fact that the "co-founder of Chouinard Equipment, Tom Frost, was a co-author of...the first ascent on the wall portrayed in the advertisement, which took place 10 months before the latter was broadcast (August 1967)" (Drożdż 2010:37). Piotr Drożdż (2010:37) writes that the unique philosophy shaping the image of Chouinard Equipment consists of appealing to the impressive visual elements of the mountain world to indicate the authenticity of their own involvement in mountain activities.

their appearance and use. Richard G. Mitchell (1983:29) discussing "resistance to change" in climbing community claims that: "The reception given by the climbing community to improvements in these basic tools is more important than the improvements themselves." An important element in introducing any innovation is to ensure that it does not violate the primary activity, but rather elevates the style of action, rendering it more "clean."<sup>15</sup> In short, introducing innovations in climbing technology is a collective process insofar as their acceptance or rejection is ultimately determined by the entire climbing collective.

## Setting New Standards for Climbing Performance

The biography of an individual may become intertwined with the history of a given social world as a whole in certain conditions and within a specific context such that it affects the further development of collective action. This may be restated as

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<sup>15</sup> "Clean" climbing is understood as the highest determinant of climbing style and ethics. Greater value and better style are attributed to more demanding ascents and to those completed with the minimum amount of resources and technological facilities (see also: Mitchell Jr. 1983:31-32). Style is also regarded as the class of the ascent. It encompasses the boldness and difficulty of the plan; the personal courage needed to overcome the technical challenges and risks; the efficiency of the team (or single climber); one's resistance to the hardships of the mountain environment; a minimal use of specialized equipment and tools; and a team consisting of the minimum number of people, ideally a single climber (Sonelski and Sas-Nowosielski 2002:35-36). Clean climbing in alpine style thus means being self-sufficient, with no outside support during the ascent and descent. Today, clean climbing also involves having no environmental impact and not damaging rocks and mountains. While the definition of style has changed over time depending on the prevailing ideology and the technology available to climbers in a given historical period, how the ascent was completed has always been important, with the ideal being that it was performed in a "clean style."



an instance of a single participant influencing and changing the social world to the degree that she or he becomes the precursor of a new way of acting. Studying the biographies of exceptional participants, leaders, visionaries, innovators, and inventors may thus shed light on how moments of fundamental change in social action are rooted in the actions of unique participants.

One such figure in the world of climbing is the American John Gill (born 1937). His biography is a prototypical example of the strong link between, on the one hand, a participant's career development and personal biography and, on the other hand, establishing a new direction of development for an entire social world. We must also view him as a person standing at the intersection of the two worlds of climbing and gymnastics if we wish to understand the phenomenon he represents. Gill himself actively participated in both of these worlds and became a link between them. It was through his personal biography and actions that this connection was established and these two worlds met and interpenetrated.

In the 1950s, John Gill formulated the conceptual and practical foundations of the discipline of bouldering, defined as "short climbing with great difficulty being carried out close to the ground without using a rope" (Sonelski 1986:44). Most of his innovations comprised the introduction of performative elements characteristic of sports gymnastics into climbing. Gill maintained that a climber should use elements of both gymnastics and acrobatics when solving a boulder problem. He was also the first climber to use chalk (magnesium carbonate), which had long been a standard element

of gymnastics that heightened both safety and efficiency, but had never been previously employed in climbing. A chalk bag is now regarded as standard equipment in both climbing and bouldering, although the roots of this practice in sports gymnastics and weightlifting have been forgotten. Another element Gill adopted from the world of gymnastics was intensive training, which he regarded as indispensable for both bouldering and climbing. Gill also created the first independent rating system for bouldering, the B system, so that the achievements of those who practice bouldering could be objectively evaluated.<sup>16</sup>

However, Gill's most significant change involved his introduction of so-called "dynamic techniques" (Godfrey and Chelton 1977:161-163), which has had a major impact upon modern thinking about climbing. The use of dynamic movements that were derived from gymnastics constituted a great breakthrough in climbing insofar as all previous alpinist

<sup>16</sup> The historical B system consists of three categories. B1, or the lowest level of difficulty, is defined as the highest level of difficulty currently encountered in traditional roped climbing. The next level is B2, which designates the "bouldering level" of difficulty. The B3 level designates a route that has been ascended only once, although others have tried to do so. When a B3 route is ascended a second time, it is reclassified as B2, or possibly B1 (Gill 1969; see also Gill *A Golden Age of American Bouldering*). The disadvantage of this system is that a number of routes of differing technical difficulty may receive the same classification, which entails the need for regular updating, particularly as B3 routes are successfully ascended and levels of technical difficulty are raised. This makes it impossible to indicate record (competitive) achievements during a given period of time, although it is useful for evaluating the achievements of climbers from different generations (Drożdż 2010:30). Gill himself has climbed bouldering routes of extreme difficulty in the United States that have not yet been climbed again and thus still have a B3 classification. Although B1, B2, and B3 indicate different levels of technical difficulty over time, the scale nevertheless reflects the number of climbers who have made a given ascent at a particular time. While Gill's B system is rarely used today, the idea behind it is that bouldering must be evaluated according to different criteria than regular climbing.

textbooks had repeated the rule that three points of contact are absolutely necessary during climbing at all times (Dobrowolski, Warteresiewicz 1971:88). This strictly forbade any types of jumps or throwing to holds.

[J]umping for an out-of-reach hold was regarded as irresponsible, as well as ugly. By the middle twentieth century, textbooks and training courses beat a catechism into new climbers: do not “jump,” “leap,” or “throw” for holds; maintain three points of contact at all times. But, the contrast of “dynamic” and “static” had entered climbing terminology in a different context, as a description for ropework: the same beginners who were taught never to “throw” for holds also learned a “dynamic belay” that did not generate the dangerous forces of a “static belay.” [Klein 2010]<sup>17</sup>

Although jumping to out-of-reach holds was clearly regarded as irresponsible and inappropriate in the mid-1950s, Gill argued that “a bouldering problem should have some kind of dynamic component.”<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, he emphasized in his “The Art of Bouldering” (1969) that what counts is not only the ascent itself, but also how it was done. He drew attention to the puzzle inherent in each bouldering problem

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<sup>17</sup> Gill’s determination to follow his own path and create an independent approach to climbing in opposition to the accepted rules is all the more surprising in light of the fact that the meanings and evaluations ascribed to specific movements generated respect for the climber who followed the rules and disapproval for those who broke them. Klein (2010) observes that “Simply saying ‘dynamic movement’ rather than ‘jumping’ or ‘throwing’ for holds, helped to make dynamics sound respectable, especially as ‘dynamic’ was a keyword for a mid-century America in love with engineering. The simple act of swinging or springing for distant holds was a bold, and in some corners, disreputable innovation, but Gill made dynamics part of an entirely new vocabulary of moves.”

<sup>18</sup> See: *John Gill Interview*.

that the climber had to cope with as an intellectual challenge (Godfrey and Chelton 1977:161-163), and further argued that a bouldering problem may be regarded as fully resolved only when completed with a graceful and elegant style (Gill 1969:355). Gill maintained that the essence of bouldering is determined by the three elements of difficulty, style, and technique, with style in particular, understood as the aesthetics of movement, comprising the basic principle (Sonelski 1986:43).

Gill’s approach gave bouldering an element of performance in that it became a type of artistic action that cannot be reduced to mechanical or kinetic movement on rock. It is instead closely related to a climber’s spirit and personal development, and reflects a certain philosophy of climbing, as well as ideas concerning the essence of action. Gill, known as “Boulder Dad,” created the foundation of modern bouldering as a type of activity that combines the features of professional sport gymnastics and art, thereby giving it a completely new dimension. He created not only a separate climbing discipline, but also introduced irreversible changes into climbing practices in general, such as the use of chalk, dynamic movement, a demand for aesthetics, and regular training, as well as an emphasis on grading systems. By providing climbers with a new vocabulary that identified specific elements and features of bouldering, Gill implemented a completely new understanding of climbing activity and legitimized forms of movement that were previously forbidden. This process cannot be grasped and understood without reference to the biography of the unique participant who drove it, which Gill clearly was.

It is obviously never the case that a single individual creates a new social world or sub-world from scratch, for the actions involved are always embedded within a social context and certain necessary conditions must be met. This was clearly the case with Gill. First of all, he had to have access to two different worlds of activity in which he participated with equal devotion and from which he drew heavily, combining them, in effect, through his own actions. The patterns of the respective primary activities had already existed for many years.<sup>19</sup> And Gill was certainly not the first boulder in the world—his illustrious predecessors included Oscar Eckenstein (1859-1921) and Pierre Alain (1904-2000), not to mention many other outstanding climbers. But, he was probably the first climber to have made bouldering a primary activity—something that can be developed as an essential practice, with the status of a recognized and fully legitimate discipline in which one could specialize. That is why Gill is called “the father of modern bouldering” and recognized as someone whose innovations “mark the beginning of modern climbing in America” (Beckwith 2005:8).

Nor was Gill alone. His career was initially guided in 1956 by his friend Yvon Chouinard (born 1938), who

<sup>19</sup> Documented practices of climbing boulders and rocks, which were undertaken by British, German, French, Italian, Australian, and American climbers, date to 1874. This early climbing of boulders, often with the help of a rope hanging from above, was treated as something to do on a rainy day or as training before “real climbing,” which meant conquering mountains. Gill remarks that the French Bleusard group has preserved the remarkable consistency of this action insofar as generation after generation of Parisian climbers making the short journey to Fontainebleau to practice for the Alps “continued in a more or less uninterrupted fashion until present times. This temporal continuity appears to be unmatched anywhere else, although the most important advances in difficulty at Fontainebleau occurred after 1970” (Gill *Origins of Bouldering*).

introduced him to the term “bouldering,” which he referred to as “instant suffering,” and taught him how to climb boulders. Gill later found a group of faithful disciples in the 1960s—Rich Borgman, Greg Lowe, Jim Holloway, and Pat Ament—with whom he climbed (Ament 1977). His activities were thus accepted, socially reinforced, and supported by a group of enthusiasts, who then propagated their new way of climbing.

The story of a social world is clearly a story about its participants, and the history of the world as a dynamic whole consists of the story of individual actors. At times their personal careers illustrate the central axis of development of a given social world or sub-world, and then the study of their biographies becomes an element of the reconstruction of certain collective processes. However, this does not mean that only outstanding individuals who model well-established ways of acting and introduce innovative changes into the ways in which things are done are of interest for this type of research. For instance, participants can have different types of status in a given world and display different levels of involvement. Equally important in these processes are so-called “average” participants who, through their daily efforts, maintain the existing forms of the primary activity. It is precisely their accumulated actions that support the continuation of the social world.

## Discussion

Both the adoption of crampons in mountaineering and the introduction of a new philosophy of performance in bouldering comprise examples that

support a broader discussion concerning the relationship between individuals and the collective in which they participate. This discussion may also provide further insights into the ontological features of the social world as such.

The Polish sociologist Stefan Czarnowski draws attention to the fact that a new tool or apparatus—even if it obviously saves effort, multiplies possibilities for exchange, or leads to increased profits—is not always accepted by a given community. Although the principle of greatest efficiency would appear to be decisive, the adoption of new tools may ultimately be opposed in social reality, with inventions of great practical importance that save working time or improve effectiveness very often being met with resistance or even rejected (Czarnowski 1956:122).<sup>20</sup> Czarnowski (1956:129) observes that this may be the case simply “because they are new and, as a novelty, arouse suspicion.” Moreover, a reluctance to innovate may stem less from the conservatism of the users of old technology than from the mere fact that

the long-term execution of certain movements at work produces automatism, and the greater such automatism, the more nervous and mental effort is needed to begin other movements, even if they are simpler and easier—more rational. The worker must simultaneously unlearn and learn again, so that the effort he undertakes is really much greater than when using the old tool. [Czarnowski 1956:129]

The rejection of Eckenstein’s 10-point and Grivel’s 12-point crampons by contemporary mountaineers might well have reflected not merely some blind rejection of the innovation itself, but rather the problem of overcoming the automatism of other members of the social world of climbing. Another relevant reason might very well have been the desire to maintain a specific image of an “authentic mountaineer,” who would only act in a certain way and use specific tools in order to be regarded as a true member of the climbing community.

In respect to the relation between individual and collective processes, we may say that an inventor is someone who changes the culture in which he lives by following an “inner urge of some sort which leads him to try to produce new things without reference to their social implications” (Linton 1936:310). Linton (1936:309) states that an inventor does not seek prestige or reward, but rather recognizes acute needs that the current culture is unable to satisfy. He further argues that

the successful invention is simply the one which is accepted by society and incorporated into culture. This matter of acceptance seems to be controlled much more by the factor of the society’s directed in-

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<sup>20</sup> The full acceptance of an innovation comprises a new tool being adopted along with the way in which it is properly used (Czarnowski 1956:123). But, even very effective tools may not be adopted for a number of reasons. First, the use of new tool may interfere with the organization and internal division of labor of the given social group. Second, it may cause changes in working time, such as by altering its circadian rhythm or preventing the effective performance of other tasks. Third, its use may make it necessary to abandon persistent automatism that have been developed over a long period of time (Czarnowski 1956:129). Fourth, a new tool threatens the status of important members of a given group when it breaks down existing work arrangements, which then threatens the existence of that group in its current form. Czarnowski (1956:130) also notes that various moral, aesthetic, and religious reasons may generate strong resistance to the adoption of a new tool. Linton (1936:342) discusses how a new cultural element may be incompatible with existing ones, noting that the acceptance of novelty “entails certain changes in the total culture configuration.”



terests than by any factors of practical utility. [Linton 1936:320-321]

In this sense, the needs of Eckenstein and other innovators somehow aligned with the development of the accepted aims of the climbing collectivity such that the vision of ideal activity developed in accordance with the evolution of the goals that particular climbers set for themselves. The object of conquest at the end of the eighteenth century was simply a mountain, and successfully attaining the goal meant to stand on its summit, regardless of the means used. This spontaneous way of acting in the mountains was characteristic of the early period of alpinism, when the ultimate problem was to discover a path to the top. It became evident over time, however, that there could be more than one way in which to reach the summit, which led to the emergence of the concept of climbing route. More thought-out forms of activity eventually began to crystallize, although the sense of accomplishment in mountaineering continued to be associated with using “every possible route leading to the top” (Korczak 2009).

While the level of difficulty overcome by climbers gradually increased, the idea of “struggling with difficulties” was regarded as the essence of climbing, and this view remains valid today. As Albert F. Mummery (1895:325-326) emphasized,

if we consider for a moment the essence of the sport of mountaineering, it is obvious that it consists, and consists exclusively, in pitting the climber’s skill against the difficulties opposed by the mountain...But, if it be admitted that the skill of the climber has not in-

creased relatively to the difficulties grappled with, it would appear to necessarily follow that climbing is neither more nor less dangerous than formerly. It is true that extraordinary progress has been made in the art of rock climbing, and that, consequently, any given rock climb is much easier now than thirty years since, but the essence of the sport lies, not in ascending a peak, but in struggling with and overcoming difficulties.

The image of the object of conquest has changed over time, and mountaineers have developed more sophisticated means to overcome difficulties. But, we need to keep in mind that it is individuals who have resolved climbing problems, completed routes, and reached the summits—and their very actions have changed the limits of the possible.

As climbing evolved, the level of difficulties reached the point at which mountaineers could no longer succeed because the physical and psychological barriers meant that every fall was tantamount to death—techniques could not be perfected with only one possible attempt to do so. The psychological barriers were overcome through the use of pitons and the adoption of the first safety systems, and then, at the beginning of the twentieth century, monumental rock walls came to be regarded as the primary climbing problem to resolve. Although free climbing had already crystallized in the United Kingdom and Saxon Switzerland, routes for the use of pitons were becoming increasingly used in the Alps. During the 1930s, the idea of a climbing route first became reduced to a “logical solution of a wall formation, such as a pillar or a line of cracks,” before coming to be understood as the “free part of the



wall" (Korczak 2009). Any fragment of a rock wall could then become a place for establishing a new climbing route by marking the line whose aesthetics depended on the current technical possibilities and the skills of climbers.

Linton provides numerous examples in support of his claim concerning mountaineers that the appraisal of the wider collective is not a likely motivation for the actions of an innovator.<sup>21</sup> This also applies to the creators of crampons, ice axes, carabiners, and pitons, most of whom wanted to strengthen their own activities and created new tools so that they could attain their very personal climbing goals. There are many examples of climbers who made innovative equipment especially for a particular route, such as pitons of special shapes for safety on a specific rock formation—it was clearly the climbing ambitions of inventors that contributed to the intensive development of climbing equipment. The biographies of climbers reveal their need to set new and more difficult challenges for themselves, looking for a niche in which they would be unsurpassed.

However, it was also the atmosphere of the climbing community, not least the vision of the primary activity that was "upheld by actors' tacit monitoring of social coalitions" (Collins 1981:984), that fostered climbers' ambitions and drove them to reach for ever more difficult goals in the name of "authentic mountaineering." But, the fact that all the great

innovators were world-class climbers, who made spectacular ascents with new equipment they created for themselves and for their own particular climbing projects, does not exclude the possibility that they operated as agents of the social world and spoke on its behalf since they had internalized its principles to the degree that they were capable of exceeding them.

In addition, the idea of climbing style as a relative value emerged from the vision of an ideal activity in order to indicate how unique participants could combine their own philosophy of climbing with the novel way in which they performed their actions. If a particular participant also influenced others and thus had a substantial social impact, then a new space for communication was opened up and conditions were created for establishing a new sub-world of climbing. A new collectivity of people acting in a given way thus appeared.

The results of innovation could then influence the entire collective, and the inventions of particular climbers would rapidly spread—changing the face of the climbing world and influencing its way of action. The motivations of individual climbers were thus translated into the development of the world of climbing as a whole since they led to new ways of acting and created the means necessary for carrying out tasks that had previously been impossible to imagine. When a new invention proved to be useful and effective, it was willingly imitated by others and widely copied.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Linton (1936:315-316) states that "It seems safe to assume that in making the invention his [the inventor—A. K.] intentions were purely individualistic and primarily economic. One is permitted to doubt whether it ever occurred to him that he was meeting an unsolved problem of the society in which he found himself."

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<sup>22</sup> Everett M. Rogers describes the process in which the use of a new tool or the adoption of a new mode of action begins with a few innovators, then gains the recognition of "early adopters,"

The question of new ideas and inventions can easily be conflated with the phenomenon of diffusion, which is based upon contact between two or more worlds (cultures). Linton (1936:324) discusses the “ability of all societies to borrow elements from other cultures and to incorporate them into their own,” further stating that “there can be no doubt that diffusion has occurred wherever two societies and cultures have been brought into contact” (Linton 1936:327). We nevertheless must ask how such “contact” occurs. What does it mean to borrow an element from another culture, and how does it happen?

While processes of diffusion and adaptation primarily concern the collective level of social life, processes of innovation and development link together the activities of a particular individual with the collectivity in which she or he participates. My primary intention in the present discussion has not been to historically reconstruct in a detailed and comprehensive manner how innovations emerged in climbing, but rather to cast light not only upon the relationship between the individual and the collectivity at the moment when the definition of action changes, but also upon the role that innovation plays in this process.

Linton (1936:345) discussed the diffusion process as requiring both a donor and a receiver of a giv-

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is later accepted by the broad masses of a given society, and finally reaches even “laggards” who are reluctant to accept anything novel. He views an individual who is “less innovative than the average member of a social system” as being in the “late majority,” although he may be a member of some other adopter category as well. He identifies five such adopter categories: 1) innovators, 2) early adopters, 3) early majority, 4) late majority, and 5) lag-gards. Rogers (1983:22) regards *innovativeness* as “the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than the other members of a system.”

en innovation. In contrast to this view, the innovations in climbing that I investigated above did not emerge from a donor and a recipient who met and exchanged ideas—they were instead created by unique individuals who drew upon the different cultures or social worlds in which they participated. Since such individuals were simultaneously members of two (or more) worlds, they re-worked the differences between those worlds through their own actions and created some new quality, thereby participating in the continual permutation of action (Strauss 1993). Modern social life may be described as a mosaic of various social worlds and sub-worlds and, as a result, individuals who reside there can gain an insider’s access to the different types of knowledge associated with a variety of domains of activity. They may be able to generate a new quality by combining that knowledge, as did John Gill and Oscar Eckenstein, and then implementing that new quality through their own way of acting, thereby marking off the boundaries of a new world or sub-world.

The examples I have presented from the world of climbing illustrate that contact between different cultures takes place not on the macro-level of collectivities, but rather through the lived experience of particular individuals who inhabit different worlds. In Ralph Linton’s (1936:336) words,

It goes without saying that contacts between cultures can only be established through the medium of individuals.

These individuals serve as ambassadors of the worlds in which they participate, combining crucial

elements of the activities that occur in those worlds with their own actions. It becomes clear from this perspective that the ability to incorporate elements from one culture into another is an attribute of particular individuals and characterizes their actions, not cultures or social worlds in general. This arises from their unique location and from their commitment to the primary activities of different worlds.

An innovation is then the creation of a person who combines elements of different cultures into a new style of performance. It is either promoted or rejected depending on whether the vision of the activity with which it is associated is accepted by the majority of participants in the social world in question. That is to say that the dynamics and transformations of a given social world reside upon the activities of exceptional individuals—pioneers, innovators, and visionaries—who attained mastery of the primary activity and set new standards of performance for others. However, a new mode of acting must be accepted as valuable and morally justified by other participants in that social world before it can be collectively adopted.

## Conclusion

The tension between an individual and the collectivity, including the process of translating individual activities into a supra-individual collective phenomenon, is of great theoretical interest. The analytical framework presented in this article in order to describe the world of climbing comprises an effort to transcend this particular social world such that the insights provided by the present discussion can be applied to other substantive areas as well (Glaser and Strauss 1967:242; Konecki 2000:28; Kacperczyk 2016:689).

First of all, this analysis indicates that the *primary activity* is to a great extent both shaped and sustained by accompanying *auxiliary activities*, such as the creation and implementation of new technology, that not only change the way of acting, but may also render possible the maintenance and reproduction continuance of a given social world.

Second, the analysis suggests that the dynamics and transformations of a given social world are anchored in the activities of exceptional individuals. They reside upon the activities of pioneers, innovators, and visionaries who achieve mastery in performing the primary activity, provide others with new standards of performance, and often significantly modify the development of technology. The biographies of famous innovators have been closely intertwined with development of the social world of climbing as a whole.

Third, the generation of new ways of acting is connected with the encounter and intersection of several social worlds. A necessary component of such “encounters” resides upon the fact that an innovator who provides the impulse for a new course of action has been a participant in several worlds. The creation of innovative ways of acting is associated with an intersection of social worlds that is completed by and through the activities of a unique participant.

Fourth, a new definition and mode of acting must be accepted as valuable and morally justifiable by the mass of other participants if it is to be adopted.

Fifth, “average” individuals attached to traditional ways of acting, who in their mass uphold the vision and cultural reproduction of the primary activity,

ensure the persistence and continuation of a given social world (Kacperczyk 2016:689).

Finding answers to such questions as How are changes made? How are innovations introduced into the primary activity? and How does a change take place at the level of the collectivity? requires that we combine analyses conducted at both the micro- and macro-levels in order to reveal the range and scope of the changes that the world has undergone (Collins 1981:987; Fine 1991:161). Gary Alan Fine (1991:162) maintains in this regard that

we seek to recognize that macro and micro approaches are and must be informed by each other in developing seamless knowledge of the world.

Micro-to-macro translation is possible—an individual participant who exerts an influence upon others may also have an impact upon the entire collective by causing others to begin acting in a new way. The converse is also possible, however, in the sense that the aims and goals of a unique member of a given collectivity remain structured by the internalized norms and values of the world on behalf of which she or he acts.

Investigating examples of innovation in the social world of climbing can assist us in acquiring further insight into the ontological relation between an individual and a collectivity. Friedrich Ratzel (1921:412-413) asserts that the basic assumption of anthropogeography is that the ethnographic object accompanies its owner, and that the proliferation of ethnographic objects only takes place through man, above all within him as the germ of an idea in his mind.

He further argues that any innovation in the form of an invention is always associated with a particular human being. Linton (1936:306-307) also maintains that an individual is the creator of any innovation, stating clearly that

Every new application of knowledge calls for an exercise of those rational functions which...are the exclusive possession of individuals. Societies, as such, are incapable of thought and therefore of invention. At most the conditions of social life may make it possible for a certain limited group of individuals to work on a problem together, stimulating each other's minds by an exchange of ideas and contributing various elements to the final invention. It is never the entire society which joins in such activities, and a thorough analysis of the results can usually break them down into ascribable individual contributions. In short, there can be no inventions without inventors...Granted that individuals are the only agents in invention, it becomes important to ascertain what stimulates them to invent.

The ultimate unit of social action and the actual agent of change is thus the individual who acts in the world. Randall Collins (1981:987) shares this view in claiming that all we can ever attend to, as either social researchers or living human beings, are micro situations and micro events.

[I]t is impossible for anyone ever to be in any empirical situation other than this sort. All macro-evidence, then, is aggregated from such micro-experiences... Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a "state," an "economy," a "culture," a "social class." There are only collections of individual people acting in particular kinds of micro situations—collections which are

characterized thus by a kind of shorthand. [Collins 1981:987-988]

The “social world” is not an entity in the ontological sense of having an independent existence, for it is rather a conceptual “superstructure” erected by researchers and participants alike in order to obtain a better understanding of social reality. The “impact” of the social world observed by the researcher does not result from a type of action characteristic of the subject. It rather follows from an accumulation of the consistent, similar, and focused actions of individual participants who co-create the constructs of their worlds and communicate them to each other intersubjectively, thereby sharing, maintaining, and acting in accordance with them. This recalls William I. Thomas’ (1928:572) view that if participants in a given social world view it as “real,” it will be real for them in its consequences. In Collins’ (1981:989) words,

Individuals within micro situations make macro references to other situations, as well as to abstract or reified social entities; the effects of micro situations upon individuals are often cumulative, resulting from repetition of micro-experiences; outside analysts cannot establish micro principles without comparing across micro situations.

The “social world” therefore remains within the realm of the imagination, constituting a social construction of particular cognitive subjects who exist in a tangible way. The social world is an illusion in the sense of being a concept that we apply to reality in order to organize our observations. Regardless of whether we understand the world in Alfred Schütz’s (1962) terms as consisting of the experiences of a sin-

gle participant, or as a world that is reconstructed by a social researcher, as Anselm Strauss (1978; 1993) or Howard Becker (1974; 1986) would maintain, there are only facts consisting of the actions of individuals, their combined joint actions, and their collective actions. The social world as a “collectivity” or “ontological entity” does not exist in the sense of being an agent and active subject. It is rather a way of capturing reality that is created by an observer—a perceptual matrix of a cognitive subject who organizes vast amounts of data in the effort to gain a better understanding of them.

The link that connects these two concepts—the world experienced by the participant and the world described by the social analyst—is the person of the researcher, who explores the limits of his/her own world as he/she seeks to capture other people’s worlds. However, the researcher always does so in a way that is colored by his or her own point of view, relying on his or her own constructs of the world of others. The story of the social world is consequently the story provided by the researcher.

Researchers themselves never leave their own micro situations; what they do is compile summaries by a series of coding and translating procedures until a text is produced which is taken as representing a macro reality, standing above all the micro situations that produced it (Garfinkel 1967; Cicourel 1975). This is true whether the researcher is relying on conversations with informants or on closed-item questionnaires, or even on direct personal observation. In each case there are a series of tacit summaries between the actual life experiences and the way in which they are finally reported. [Collins 1981:988]



What we actually do when we investigate social worlds is to study the participants, their actions, and the effects they produce. We thereby gain access to the macro phenomena that shape how these participants share their perspectives insofar as their actions are structured in accordance with discourses that differentiate ways of performing, as well as images about how to act properly. The reality of discourses is anchored in acts of communication and the resulting messages, which we can gather and analyze. All of these elements—individuals, their actions, their stories, their behavior, and their interactions—are available to us sensually

and can be reflected in the research process. However, no observer has access to a “social world” as such.

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## **Self-Enhancement and Helping Behavior: Motivations of Volunteers in Registration and Reception Centers for Refugees in Bulgaria**

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**Abstract** Helping behavior can be triggered by complex motivators, a number of them self-related. Investigation of this issue can foster a better understanding of such current social phenomena as volunteerism within the context of intensive migration in Europe. The research presented here focuses on individuals who applied for volunteer positions in the Registration and Reception Centers for Refugees in Bulgaria. Document analysis was conducted concerning 128 applications for participation in an ongoing volunteer project during the period 2013-2016. The explicit motivations of candidates indicate that groups of motives related to self-enhancement are among the key triggers for volunteers. These include a desire to foster social change and the effort to develop a positive self-image, both of which are associated with the role of volunteer.

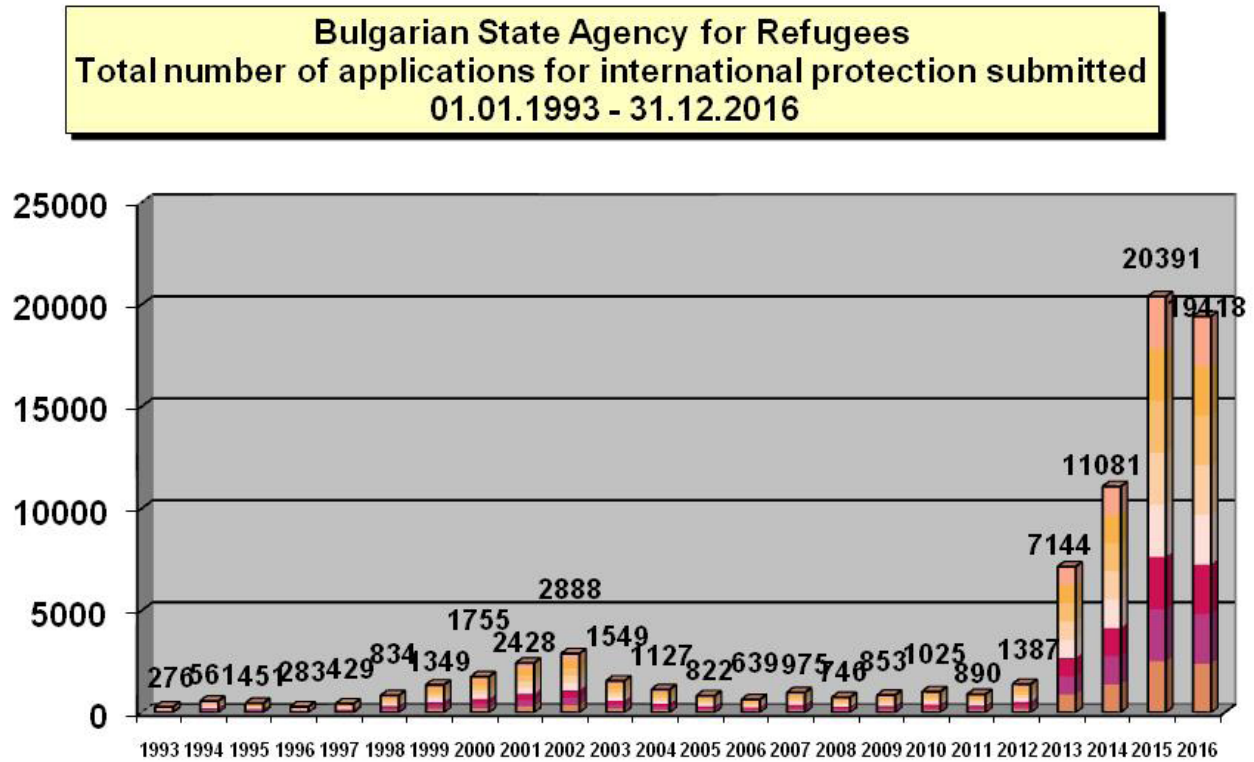
**Keywords** Volunteerism; Helping Behavior; Self-Enhancement; Refugees in Bulgaria; Document Analysis

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The topic of helping behavior directed towards asylum seekers and refugees is becoming more important in Europe. The fact that the so-called Balkan route has emerged as one of the main migrant roads on the continent affects almost all countries in the region, including Bulgaria. For example, statistics from the Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees reveal a significant increase in recent years in applications for asylum (see: graphic 1), with the highest total numbers recorded for the period 01.01.2015-31.12.2016. In 2016, the main reported countries of origin were Afghanistan (8,827), Iraq (5,348), Syria (2,639), Pakistan (1,790), and Iran (451).

Graphic 1.



Source: Self-elaboration.

This process comprises an unfamiliar situation for the Balkan countries in general and Bulgaria in particular—the country is now accepting groups of potential immigrants and refugees that are substantially different in both numbers and characteristics from those observed previously. At the same time, public attention concerning this issue has been intensified by the extensive media coverage it has received both locally and internationally. The new situation that has thus developed has challenged Bulgarians to define a coherent position concerning newcomers. Surveys reveal both ambivalence and rapid changes in social attitudes towards asylum seekers, with reactions varying from violence to various forms of proactive helping behavior.

Studies in Bulgaria concerning attitudes towards immigrants and refugees reveal an interesting picture of how the general topic of volunteerism and helping behavior is perceived within the new context that has emerged. For example, a national representative study entitled *Attitudes towards Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Bulgaria*, which was conducted in November 2013 for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Regional Representation for Central Europe, concludes that

Volunteering is a major factor that influences people's attitudes toward refugees and their integration in particular. Nevertheless, the majority of people (77%) have not taken part in any voluntary work in the last 12 months. [Alpha Research 2013:17]



The national representative opinion poll from February 2016 clearly demonstrates the ambivalence of attitudes towards refugees in Bulgaria. Published results drew the conclusion that

Bulgarian society is charged with a number of fears with respect to the refugees but for the vast majority of the Bulgarian population (with the exception of 5%) these fears have not transformed into hatred against foreigners and are free from the ideological burden of xenophobia. The majority of the population believes that refugees represent a threat to the national security of Bulgaria by virtue of difficulties with integration, fear of foreign religion, ethnicity, and culture, but above all due to the concern that our state is in dire straits economically. [Kyuchukov 2016]

An earlier report that explored such attitudes utilizing focus groups states that

Refugee integration is perceived mostly as a one-side process—either the responsibility of the government or of refugees themselves. Very few participants see their personal role in this process. [Alpha Research 2012:23]

Some respondents in this 2013 survey recalled examples of helping behavior directed towards refugees, but these involved individual acts that were more accidental than intentional, with personal involvement limited to opportunities to donate food and clothing. The study also found that

People are not very keen on helping in refugee integration. The most the majority would do would be giving away clothes/food. Further engagements seem

unrealistic for most of the respondents in the discussions. Ways to attract and persuade people to participate in volunteering activities should be sought. But, first people need to be acquainted with the way refugees and asylum-seekers live in order to surmount their distrust to them. [Alpha Research 2012:23]

However, surveys of social attitudes can only partially explain the behavior towards asylum seekers and refugees that we observe in society. Certain reports also appear to be focused more on analyzing various forms of fear, aggression, and discrimination rather than seeking to present a detailed picture of the motives underlying helping behavior. But, they do provide a good perspective on how volunteerism in general is perceived in Bulgaria, particularly in regard to the integration of immigrants and refugees (Alpha Research 2012; 2013; Hristova et al. 2016; Kyuchukov 2016).

The aim of this article is to examine motivations associated with the self that drives individuals to demonstrate proactive helping behavior towards asylum seekers. In order to avoid questions connected with the psychological gaps between attitudes, intentions, and behavior, the present analysis addresses only those individuals who actually demonstrated proactive behavior by applying for a volunteer position in the Registration and Reception Centers for Refugees in Bulgaria. Within this context, the question under consideration is how people who are not professionally obligated or encouraged by the official authorities relate the idea of “self” to their helping behavior. The main goal in this respect is to explore motives for volunteerism and helping behavior towards people or groups who are perceived as very different in their

culture, social norms, and habits from the self of the volunteer.

More specifically, I focus on actions that are aimed at delivering social, educational, or emotional support to newcomers rather than physical comfort, such as the provision of clothing, food, money, and so forth. Such demonstrations of support and helping behavior encounter many challenges, including language barriers along with cultural and religious differences. The cultural contexts of the current asylum seekers' countries of origin differ significantly from that of the local Bulgarian population in all these parameters.

## Defining Volunteerism

There are differing views concerning the range of behavior, including motives, that are associated with the concept of volunteerism. In the present discussion I adopt Penner's (2002:448) brief definition of the issue, namely, "Volunteerism can be defined as long-term, planned, prosocial behaviors that benefit strangers and occur within an organizational setting." Since my interest here is directed towards self-enhancement motives, it is important that I draw a distinction between *spontaneous helping behavior* and volunteering, the latter understood as a

rather different kind of helping, a kind that is prototypic of planned helping...Thus, volunteers (a) often actively seek out opportunities to help others; (b) may deliberate for considerable amounts of time about whether to volunteer, the extent of their involvement, and the degree to which particular activities fit with their own personal needs; and (c) may make a com-

mitment to an ongoing helping relationship that may extend over a considerable period of time and that may entail considerable personal costs of time, energy, and opportunity. [Clary et al. 1998:1517]

## *Motives for Volunteerism*

Studies have shown that multiple and complex motivators frequently underlie volunteer behavior. For example, Prouteau and Wolff (2008: 321) state that

In many cases volunteers give several reasons for giving time. Only one fifth of the involvements of all volunteers are motivated by only one goal...Indeed, 20% of the involvements in both samples are motivated by at least five reasons. Among all volunteers, the desire to be helpful to society and to others is the most frequent motivation reported. It concerns about two thirds of volunteer involvements. The second most important reason is the relational one, which fosters the involvement in six cases out of ten.

Researchers who use more in-depth methods, such as the analysis of autobiographical interviews presented in Melkmanet and colleagues (2015), have found that although the motivation for volunteerism often centers upon the question of helping, it is very complex and may contain a number of different elements connected with the self, such as "gaining a sense of normality." Volunteerism can thus be regarded as a multidimensional construct that consists of distinct components.

Wang (2004) applies five-factor dimensionality in his discussion of sports volunteerism. This comprises 1) altruistic value, 2) personal development, 3)

community concern, 4) ego enhancement, and 5) social adjustment. This classification may be viewed in a certain sense as a version of Clary's (Clary et al. 1998) classic framework, which continues to be used in more recent studies (see: Finkelstien 2009; see also Guiddi et al. 2015). Clary and colleagues (1998) base their Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) on the idea of complex motivational foundations, and they identify six motivational functions served by volunteerism, one being enhancement. Briefly stated, these are:

- Values—through volunteerism individuals express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others;
- Understanding—volunteerism as a learning experience;
- Social—volunteerism as building relationships with others;
- Career—volunteerism as a source of career-related benefits;
- Protective—volunteerism as an ego-protective mechanism, serving to reduce guilt, shame, and so forth;
- Enhancement—volunteerism as a motivational process that centers on a person's growth and development and involves positive strivings of the ego, in contrast to a protective function aimed at eliminating negative elements surrounding the ego.

Clary argues on the basis of his research concerning subjective mood and helping that people use helping as a means to maintain or enhance a positive affect. In addition, certain respondents in studies of volunteerism report that they volunteer either for

reasons of personal development, or to obtain satisfaction related to personal growth and self-esteem (Clary et al. 1998:1518).

### **Self-Enhancement and Volunteerism**

Self-enhancement is a term often used in relation to specific psychological biases or even personal traits (e.g., White and Plous 1995). I use the term in the present analysis in a more general sense to indicate a tendency to cultivate and maintain positive feelings, ideas, and expectations that are connected to the self or decrease the negativity of one's self-concept. Sedikides and Strube (1995:1330) argue that

To date, three major self-evaluation motives have dominated work in this area: self-enhancement, self-verification, and self-assessment. The self-enhancement motive refers to people's desire to enhance the positivity or decrease the negativity of the self-concept. The self-verification motive refers to people's desire to confirm and maintain the self-concept, be it positive or negative. The self-assessment motive refers to people's desire to reduce uncertainty about the self-concept regardless of whether the uncertainty reduction process is likely to result in favorable or unfavorable implications for the self.

A rather different but also very interesting line of research investigates the so-called other-oriented and self-oriented motives in volunteerism (e.g., Briggs, Peterson, and Gregory 2010; Stukas et al. 2016). I do not employ this classification in the present discussion insofar as the debate in social psychology about whether helping is primarily altruistic or egoistic remains open. In my view, classifying social mo-

tivation as other-oriented rather than self-oriented can be problematic, particularly in cases where volunteer work has both evident and serious social and political implications.

## Current Research and Applied Methodology

My research is based on an ongoing volunteer program in Bulgaria, the Refugee Project, which has been designed and implemented by two non-government organizations. The aim of the project is to facilitate the social inclusion and integration of asylum seekers and refugees—both children and adults—through daily, individualized educational assistance and extracurricular activities in the Registration and Reception Centers in Sofia. Volunteers spend a number of hours in the centers every week in direct face-to-face contact with asylum seekers, conducting regular lessons in the Bulgarian and English languages, as well as in arts and sports. Workshops and events are also held, such as excursions and visits to museums. Volunteers face a complex environment in this project because of the differing cultures, educational levels, and language competences of the asylum seekers.

The present study focuses on those who applied to volunteer in the program, with an emphasis on how they perceived the role of the volunteer and whether their explicit motivations contained elements related to self-enhancement. A total of 128 online applications for volunteer positions were examined, which included applications submitted during the recruitment campaigns in January and June 2016, as well as those in 2013, 2014, and 2015. The explic-

it motivations of candidates were analyzed on the basis of their actual statements in their application forms. Names and identification markers were removed, and the author signed the mandatory declarations with the Project Coordinators concerning how data would be analyzed and stored. The author's own personal documents were not included among those that were analyzed. All documents and data records for the study were analyzed in accordance with the Bulgarian legislation concerning the protection of personal data.

In addition to the document analysis, the author spent three months in 2015 within the Project team. Participation in and observation of the application procedure, field work, and the training of volunteers in one of the Reception Centers for Refugees in Sofia helped in gaining a more detailed knowledge and understanding of the volunteer community.

The recruitment procedure in the Refugee Project included the completion of an online application form and the submission of a CV. All recruitment campaigns were announced in both English and Bulgarian, and the majority of the applicants (84) filed their documents in English. All statements from the applications discussed below are presented precisely as they were written in English by the candidates, the only exceptions being those noted as translated from Bulgarian.

Volunteerism as defined here is a particular type of helping behavior—it is an interaction with others that is a product of deliberate planning and personal choice. This poses the following questions:

- How is this behavior related to the idea of the self?
- What is the content of the self-related motives and expectations reflected in the subjective representations of volunteering?

The following indicators were coded and analyzed, respectively:

- Content related to personal history and/or past, current, and future self-identity; content related to the role of the volunteer; content connected with self-other interaction in the course of volunteer work.
- Content related to positive ideas and attributes associated with the self; content connected with positive emotions and/or expectations of positive emotions.

## Characteristics of the Applicants

The applications indicated that the majority of candidates were female. They ranged in age from 16 to 60, but most were between 25 and 35 years of age. All the candidates were highly educated—university students or graduates—with the exception of three individuals, two of whom were still in high school (under age 18) and another who indicated no age. The majority were employed, reflecting a variety of professions and educational profiles. Most applicants stated that they had been engaged previously in volunteer positions/activities and had experience in multicultural surroundings, but nearly half had no previous experience with asylum seekers and refugees. The data also revealed that not all applicants actually came from Bulgar-

ia, particularly in the 2016 campaigns, when there were many foreign candidates. This was evident both from such indicators as native language—it was not Bulgarian in almost half of the cases—and also from statements concerning motivation and experience.

## Motivations for Volunteerism

The application forms for the Project include a section dedicated to the applicant's motivations. These were explored by two questions in the 2013 and 2014 campaigns—"Why did you choose this position?" and "What would you like to contribute to the project?"—which were reformulated for the 2015 and 2016 campaigns as "Why are you interested in this position?" The applicants could describe their motivations in a freely written statement of up to approximately 2,000 words in length in line with the parameters of the online application form used in the recruitment campaigns.

The applicants' actual statements were analyzed to investigate how they perceived the role of volunteer and also explore whether there were elements related to self-enhancement in their motivational spectrum.

## Self-Image and Personal History

The basic elements of the applicants' motivations, in their own words, included content devoted to personal history or self-image—103 of the applications contained such statements. The relationship between cause or position and self was established through several different strategies:



1. The relationship was built upon characteristics/behavior that the candidates regarded as stable identifiers (existing for a “long time,” even “always”) of who they were. For example, a 32-year-old<sup>1</sup> Bulgarian candidate described his motivation as follows:

As a Journalist I have always had strong interest in topics related to human rights and treatment of vulnerable society groups. I use every opportunity to engage more with all kinds of anti-discrimination initiatives – mostly in sports (because I am a sports writer), but also in society in general.

Other candidates used a similar strategy, attributing their motivation to personality-based explanations:

I am always looking for a way to improve things, provide for others, and make things happen. Being involved in social causes is part of my culture. [age 32, resource development and communications coordinator, native language Bulgarian]

2. Motivation was explained in other cases as a natural stage in personal development. A 48-year-old Montessori teacher (native language French) thus wrote that

I am reaching a point in my life where I would like to do something meaningful for others. I love teaching and I think I can share something of what I have learnt with others.

A 26-year-old freelance editor and writer (native language Bulgarian) remarked in a similar vein that

And although refugee-related issues have largely defined my professional and academic experiences in the last two years, I feel that it is high time for me to become involved on a more personal level. I can dedicate myself to the cause, as I have completed my education and am currently working independently, on a flexible schedule. I also feel equipped with the necessary skills, experience, and motivation to quickly learn from your practice.

A 38-year-old freelancer (native language Greek) writes of his general personal transformation that

I want to stop being passive with everything that is happening and start acting. I now have the time to do it as I really made a turn in my career and life in order to be more able to make my “wants” come true. I would like to put my efforts into something that is really having a meaning and will help people.

3. The relationship could also be built upon a desired self-image (intended or future state of the self). This strategy was evident in many cases from elements of the written statements and was part of a more complex motivation.

When I think about what I want to make of myself, I always imagine a person who is useful, who helps those less fortunate. [age 21, university student, native language Bulgarian]

I have always imagined myself working with kids and my ultimate ambition is to establish my own private kindergarten. [age 23, university student, native language Bulgarian]

<sup>1</sup> The age of candidates indicates their age at the time of application.

A 25-year-old unemployed Bulgarian candidate stated that

I have always dreamed of being engaged with humanitarian work and for me helping others is the main purpose of life. Being a translator, my job is not only to make people understand the words, but the cultural meaning behind them as well – I have always considered myself a translator of cultures. What better way to make a difference in the world than teaching people skills that they need to make their life better in a foreign place and take this foreign place closer to their hearts? Being a teacher, especially to children, is something I would prefer doing until the rest of my life to make the world a better place.

The idea of taking a volunteer position was described in this instance as part of the candidate's personal history, and it was based on a desired self-image in both the present and the future.

4. The relationship could also be built upon or reinforced by past experiences associated with the candidate's personal history:

I choose this position because I want to be in need for people which have difficulties. This topic is close to me. My mother was a migrant many years, so I know what the man in this position needs. And what is more humanity than that to be helpful for someone else? [age 28, student, native language Bulgarian]

In the spring of 2013 I participated in a leadership conference in Jordan, and the organizers had planned a visit to a refugee camp on the border with Syria. The humanitarian crisis in Jordan at that

time resembled the current one in Bulgaria, but on a much more dramatic scale. We finally didn't visit the camp because the situation was out of control, and it wasn't unusual for there to be firefights along the border. When I returned to Bulgaria, my mind was already set on the idea of going back to Jordan or Lebanon to help in the refugee camps. But then the war grew to monstrous proportions and I couldn't do what I wanted to.<sup>2</sup> [age 24, marketing assistant, native language Bulgarian]

The problems of refugees have troubled me for quite a long time. My interest was intensified after my work in the refugee camp near Hebron, where I led a short training program for the doctors in the hospital serving the camp. After I returned to Bulgaria – having in mind the difficult situation in the country with the reception and integration of refugees – I wanted to put my efforts into something that would be useful in this regard. A foundation for access to rights gave me this opportunity. But given my experience and my desire to contribute something more, I think that this [volunteer] position is the perfect option.<sup>3</sup> [age 28, NGO intern, native language Bulgarian]

### **The Role of the Volunteer as an Element of Self-Identity**

In nearly half of the cases, applicants included how they viewed the role of volunteer in their motivation. Such descriptions incorporated ideas about the mission, values, and activities of a volunteer, as well as their expected consequences.

<sup>2</sup> Original text in Bulgarian.

<sup>3</sup> Original text in Bulgarian.

Often the major characteristic of the role is described as contributing to the betterment of society. Of particular importance in this respect appears to be the fact that being a volunteer is regarded as providing an opportunity to set a personal example, whereby internalizing the role makes it possible for the self to become an agent of social change.

Well, in Bulgaria people are very biased towards the refugees. They view them as some kind of savages who came here only to bring harm. I live near a refugee center, and I see that most of these people are normal folks who came here to protect themselves and their families, and I see that they want to settle themselves either here or somewhere else, and just live normal happy lives. They aren't as what they are described to be. It's difficult for them to adapt here because of the language barrier, culture shock and the hostility they feel. By participating in this project I want to help out with what I can, and also show the people around me that they shouldn't fear the refugees. If the people around the volunteers change their view on them, they will change other people's view and this way, step by step, the whole situation for these people will take a turn for the better. [age 19, student, native language Bulgarian]

Last but not least, I believe that through my volunteer work I will be able to give a good example to others and help fight stereotypes in the Bulgarian society. [age 26, unemployed, native language Bulgarian]

I chose to apply for this project because freedom and the right to happiness, security, and a good life are values that I never questioned. I want to be part of the fight to preserve them and to help people whose

home country is not Bulgaria to feel more comfortable here, to understand our language, to relax. Furthermore, I do not like the image of the refugees that is being created among Europeans. I think that this image is distorted and I want to contribute to its rejection.

Last but not least, I feel genuinely curious and interested in the cultures that refugees bear. I would like to know the games they play and words that they use to describe the world because learning is always a two-way process.<sup>4</sup> [age 22, student, native language Bulgarian]

On the other hand, it seems to me that this refugee wave has the potential to become one of the decisive factors in the future development of Europe. What we do today will have serious consequences tomorrow. In a sense, the history of the continent and our country is being written at the moment and I would like to take a direct part in it, namely, helping migrants to gain an orientation and fit in here.<sup>5</sup> [age 28, student, native language Bulgarian]

In some cases, applicants make a clear distinction between having a positive attitude or intention to help and the real act of helping. They also view volunteering as proactive helping behavior.

When I visited your website and found out about the opportunity to participate in this project I didn't hesitate a second. I want to help these children, I am not indifferent to their fate. We tend to spend hours every day speaking how we should help, change something

<sup>4</sup> Original text in Bulgarian.

<sup>5</sup> Original text in Bulgarian.

in the system – this is a great way to become this change, to show these people that they are not alone, that many others feel involved in what is occurring and would like show support and become something like a pillar, something they could rely on. I deem it a cause worth fighting for. [age 22, legal assistant, native language Bulgarian]

I would like very much to contribute a little to a better world, and so far have not been doing much. I would like to change that. I believe age and being now a mother of a toddler, added to current situation with refugees is forcing me to take action. [age 38, graphic designer, native language Portuguese]

Many candidates report that they were deliberately seeking a position that would allow them to fulfill their aspirations to help. In a significantly smaller number of cases, people came upon information about the project by chance and recognized that being a volunteer would provide an opportunity to turn their own thoughts and ideas into actions.

## The Self and Others: Expected Interactions

One of the leading attractions of volunteer positions is that they allow for interaction with other people. The motivational statements of 96 applicants explicitly relate to some sort of social interaction, and they place a special value on interaction from two perspectives:

- Expectations for interaction with representatives of different cultures
- Expectations of interaction with children, particularly refugee children

While in the first case the outcome is regarded as “enriching” for the volunteer, in the second, people find value mainly in the positive emotions they expect to gain in the process itself and in the fact that work with children is viewed as something “meaningful.” The following two statements comprise pertinent examples.

I am interested in this position because I am inspired to work with children, to meet new people and to have the opportunity to learn about new cultures and traditions. I will be happy to support children in their everyday activities, to be part of their development and to look at their smiling faces during the whole process. I believe that every child has his/her own individuality and resources which can be activated and used, so to speak, the child to be a partner during the educational activities. This is very important because empowering children to contribute in the process of learning and to voice their opinions can help them to be active citizens who have their own points of view and participate not only at school activities but also in their personal lives. [age 26, economist, native language Bulgarian]

Being/working with people from different cultures is always refreshing and enriching. [age 30, student, native language Bulgarian]

Although the application forms contained no specific questions exploring the applicants’ expectations about the origin and status of the people they anticipated meeting at the Reception Centers, their actual texts and the wording of their motivation statements provide an opportunity to identify certain tendencies in that direction. Two issues stand out in this regard:

- First, applicants described how they expected to interact with refugees, particularly child refugees. The phrase “asylum seeker” was used only in isolated cases. This can be explained in part by the fact that the name of the project contains the word “refugee,” which is also used extensively by the public and in social media. Use of the term “migrant” was also relatively rare. There are only ten cases in total, with six appearing in the 2016 recruiting campaigns, in which applicants mention “refugees, foreigners, and migrants” or “refugees and migrants.”
- Second, almost all of the cases in which a country of origin was mentioned indicated that applicants expected to interact with people from Syria. The only two exceptions mentioned “people from Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan” and “Syrians and Iranians.” Three applicants, all from the 2016 campaigns, stated that they expected to contact “people from the Middle East.”

An example of these two tendencies is provided by a statement from a 22-year-old Bulgarian student:

Syria’s civil war has been one of the most complex humanitarian emergencies in recent memory and many of the refugees are particularly vulnerable – namely children. I chose this position because it is a chance to get involved somehow and perhaps help children who have gone through civil war feel like children once again. I would like to help with whatever I can to make this difficult time, for children and young people who have lived through such horrible violence, more bearable. Providing the best possible support to young refugees is not only a worthy cause but something every country must do as a response to the Syr-

ian conflict and I would like to volunteer my time in order to help my country achieve this.

### Content Related to Positive Ideas and Attributes Connected to the Self

The majority of motivations contain ideas and attributes related to the current self-image—or the self-image expected on the basis of undertaking volunteer activities—that the applicants consider to be positive. Such examples were coded in 116 of the cases.

As noted above, being “helpful” was considered to be particularly valuable:

I’ve always found meaning in helping other people and contributing to society...I want to help the vulnerable group of refugees, especially children, by doing something good for them – help them with their homework and teach them English and Bulgarian, as well as make them feel a little bit more at home and more confident about the future. [age 23, digital marketing executive, native language Bulgarian]

Variations of this motivation can be also found in such semantically close formulations as “contribute,” “assist,” and “support,” and in the associated behavior regarded as essential to the role of the volunteer.

Another commonly mentioned motive is related to the idea of being “useful”:

I want to be useful to somebody and I think this will bring me satisfaction. [age 37, cultural events coordinator, native language Bulgarian]



I'm looking for opportunities to be useful. I know I can help. [age 34, psychologist, native language Bulgarian]

I have free time and need to feel helpful and useful for people. [age 37, artist, native language Bulgarian]

The current research provides no indication of potential sources of explanation for this motive, such as the lack of a given role-identity. However, it appears that the role of volunteer could be linked to various existential ideas of giving meaning to the self.

A large group of ideas and attributes connected with enhancing one's self-image are presented through descriptions of skills and characteristics that applicants expect will be displayed or acquired in the process of volunteering. These include becoming a "leader," "mentor," or "source of happiness," demonstrating "solidarity and compassion," and so forth.

### Positive Emotions and/or Expectations of Positive Emotions

Another component of the analysis was to monitor whether the applicants' texts contain any descriptions or expectations of emotions they associated with the experience of being a volunteer in a Reception Center. Such statements were presented in 51 cases, and almost all were unambiguously positive. Only three applications contained remarks that the work would probably be challenging and difficult.

The emotions expected were described as "joy," "having fun," "feeling good," "happiness," and

"pleasure." Applicants in many cases also spoke about satisfaction and delight. For example,

[I]t gives me satisfaction to help. I believe that this time will be well-spent. [age 20, student, native language Bulgarian]

Helping others brings me happiness. [age 27, logistics specialist, native language Turkish]

I have experience working with refugees and really enjoy it as I learn a lot from them. [age 38, Arabic desk manager, native language Bulgarian]

Searching for positive emotions as a component of motivation for volunteerism recalls the ego-enhancing function as Clary and his colleagues discuss it (see: Clary et al. 1998). In respect to self-image, it is likely more correct to view this element as accompanying the larger and more complex self-enhancing representations of being a volunteer.

### Conclusion

Researchers have approached the role of volunteer in connection with self-identity from various angles, and they have also investigated the impact of demographic factors, religion, parental behavior, and social environment (e.g., Penner 2002; Voicu and Voicu 2009; Nacheva 2016). Henderson, Huang, and Chang (2012) have also examined the general attraction of prosocial activities in respect to a number of different examples. In the present study, I find that the role of volunteer is often regarded as presenting an opportunity to contribute to social change by means of one's personal ex-

ample, and the analysis I present here accords in many ways with McAllum's (see: 2014) approach. Employing such approaches in future research in the field can facilitate gaining a better understanding of how volunteering is used to construct a "preferred self" or "ideal self."

The subjective representations of volunteering that are embedded in the applicants' personal histories reflect several important strategies:

- The relationship is built upon certain characteristics/behavior that the applicant regards as stable identifiers of the self.
- The experience is explained as a natural stage in personal development.
- The relationship is built upon a desired self-image, that is, an intended future state of the self.
- The relationship is built upon or reinforced by actual events and facts, namely, past experiences derived from personal history.

Although a variety of positive ideas and attributes linked with self-image were found in the applicants' texts, being "helpful" and "useful" appear as key motivators for choosing the role of the volunteer. This role itself is often connected with expectations for positive emotions and experiences.

Participating in social interactions is one of the key drives for the applicants involved in the study, and analysis indicates that volunteerism is triggered in a sense by expectations of interaction with specific groups (Syrians, war refugees, children). As noted in the introduction above, the current situation in the Registration and Reception Centers for Refu-

gees in Bulgaria can only partly meet such expectations because the majority of people in the Centers are not necessarily representatives of these groups. Consequently, it is important to continue research concerning social attitudes towards refugees and immigrants (see Hristova et al. 2016) so that adequate psychological explanations can be formulated for the various emotions, cognitions, and behavior concerning the newcomers.

Another important issue concerns how media and public institutions present the image of refugees and immigrants in Bulgaria, with language and its relation to tolerance/intolerance comprising a subject that requires continuous monitoring (see: Dobrev 2009; Encheva 2014). It is evident from my analysis that these representations were important for volunteers—some individuals explicitly wrote that they did not agree with them, while others admitted that they wanted to check their validity through personal experience.

The analysis we have presented shows that the motivational structure for volunteering is complex and multidimensional, and that the leading group of self-related motives is associated with self-enhancement. There is also evidence of self-verification motives in the sense that Sedikides and Strube (1995:1330) use the term, but the major accent remains on enhancement.

Insofar as my analysis was based upon documents that were not specifically designed for research goals, certain points need to be addressed in future studies. For example, I cannot guarantee that the motivations noted by the applicants cover the

full spectrum of motivators for volunteers. There are also a variety of factors that can influence this process, including hidden motives, difficulties with identifying or expressing motives properly, and situational factors, such as the structure of the application form in my case. Further research may shed light on these questions.

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## **Cannabis, Moral Entrepreneurship, and Stigma: Conflicting Narratives on the 26 May 2016 Toronto Police Raid on Cannabis Shops**

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**Abstract** On May 26, 2016, the police raided 43 cannabis dispensaries in Toronto, Canada, making 90 arrests. This article aims to describe the narrative of the responsible state agencies concerning the police raid and compare it to the narrative of those who opposed it, such as activists, as well as consumers and sellers of cannabis. While such concepts as moral entrepreneur, moral panic, and moral crusade have traditionally been used to study those in power, I will employ them to explore both the state narrative and ways in which counterclaims-makers resisted it. In order to do so, I will further develop the concept of moral entrepreneurship and its characteristics by relating it to studies of moral panics and social problems. This article will be guided by the following question: How did each party socially construct its cannabis narrative, and in what way can we use the concept of moral entrepreneurship to describe and analyze these narratives as social constructions? I have investigated the media coverage of the raid and ethnographically studied shops in Toronto in order to study the narratives. My findings show that both parties used a *factual neutral style*, as well as a *dramatizing style*. The later includes such typical crusading strategies as constructing victims and villains and presenting the image of a dystopian social world. In order to explain the use of these strategies, we will relate them to the shifting wider social and historical context and to the symbolic connotation of cannabis shops in Toronto in particular and in Canada as a whole.

**Keywords** Cannabis; Moral Entrepreneurship; Stigma; Narratives

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On May 26, 2016, the Toronto Police raided 43 cannabis dispensaries, resulting in approximately 90 arrests. People were charged with drug trafficking, earning proceeds from crime, and the violation of municipal bylaws, including zoning regulations and selling edibles without the proper business license. In this article, I will describe the anti-cannabis narrative of the responsible state agencies and compare it to the pro-cannabis narrative of consumers and sellers of cannabis and activists. Although such concepts as moral entrepreneur (Becker 1963), moral crusade (Gusfield 1963), and moral panic (Cohen 1972) have traditionally been used to study those in power, I will focus here on the counterclaims-makers and explore how they resisted stigmatization by the police and the city of Toronto. The following two questions will guide this discussion: How did the two parties socially construct their pro- and anti-cannabis narratives, and in what way can we use the concept of moral entrepreneurship to describe, analyze, and explain the social construction of both narratives? In order to address these issues, I will, first, further develop the concept of moral entrepreneurship, which I utilized in a previous article that addressed police control of coffee shops in Rotterdam (Müller 2015). I will then explore the characteristics of moral entrepreneurship by relating it to studies concerning the social construction of moral narratives, such as moral panics and social problems.

I have analyzed the Canadian media in the weeks before and after the raid and visited around 30 cannabis shops in April 2016 and July/August 2017 in order to study both narratives. In 2016, I conducted ethnographic research in Toronto, Vancouver, Nanaimo (Vancouver Island), and Seattle, studying the social

worlds of cannabis shops. I continued this ethnographic research in Toronto and Montreal during 2017.

I am interested in this particular topic as a result of my general interest in the social construction of cannabis policies in the Netherlands and other countries. More specifically, I am interested in the liminal period of cannabis policy development that took place in the Netherlands in the 1970s and 1980s. A liminal period is, by definition, a transgressive period of transition between two states that can provide a clear insight into the social construction of norms and values (Van Gennep 1966). The Dutch government did not anticipate the commercial drive within the cannabis industry in the 1980s, and it consequently became confronted with the existence of 1500 cannabis shops, known in the Netherlands as coffee shops, in the 1990s (Van de Bunt and Müller 2017). A similar situation presented itself in Toronto, as I will explain below.

In this article, I will show how the state sought to stigmatize cannabis shops, and how activists and others fought this effort. My study shows that both sides constructed a narrative with a specific moral meaning, claiming a righteous position in the debate concerning the police raid. Before I examine this in detail, however, I will first discuss 1) the wider social context of the police raid, 2) the concept of moral entrepreneurship, and 3) the methods I have used.

## The Social and Historical Context of the Police Raid

Beginning in 2015, there was a marked expansion in Canada in the number of illegal cannabis

shops, which were known as medical marijuana dispensaries. The number of such shops in Toronto grew from around 40 to around 80 in the first months of 2016 alone, many of which opened in the main public areas of the city and used familiar cannabis symbols, such as the cannabis leaf, to attract customers. A well-known former hippie area, Kensington Market, which still has a countercultural feel to it, housed at one venture between 5 and 10 cannabis shops with such names as THC, Canna Wide, Canna Med, Canna Clinic, and Cannoisseurs. Some had a clinical and almost medical appearance, while others displayed a clear reference to the counterculture, such as by having Rasta posters on their walls. A minority had an up market boutique feel to them and appeared to aim at middle class consumers. It seemed that Toronto was following the example of Vancouver, where close to 200 shops had already begun selling cannabis.

We have to look at the changing political and social context in Canada in order to understand the increase in the number of cannabis shops in Toronto. On October 19, 2015, Justin Trudeau won the national elections with his promise to legalize the recreational use of cannabis and became the prime minister of Canada. Many decided to open cannabis shops in Toronto, which were locally known as dispensaries, in anticipation of this legalization. This term came to be used because its medical connotation aligned with the existing legal market in the medical use of cannabis. Agents of public control nevertheless disputed the supposed medical dimension of the business they conducted.

The legalization of the recreational use of cannabis in Canada has been part of a recent wider development in North and South America that has led to legalization in Uruguay, the District of Columbia, and ten states in the United States as of early 2019. While the transformation in the United States is related to citizen action, a top-down approach is evident in Canada and Uruguay. In these countries, the leading political parties decided that legalizing cannabis would be the best way to deal with such issues as restricting youth access to cannabis, minimizing drug crime, and avoiding the costs of controlling cannabis. In the words of the Liberal Party campaign program of Justin Trudeau,

We will legalize, regulate, and restrict access to marijuana. Canada's current system of marijuana prohibition does not work. It does not prevent young people from using marijuana. Arresting and prosecuting these offenses is expensive for our criminal justice system. It traps too many Canadians in the criminal justice system for minor, non-violent offenses. The proceeds from the illegal drug trade support organized crime and greater threats to public safety, like human trafficking and hard drugs. [Liberal party of Canada 2015]

Although the medical use of marijuana had been legal in Canada for well over a decade at that time, and while the Trudeau government stated it wanted to legalize its recreational use as well, selling medical marijuana via storefronts remained illegal.<sup>1</sup> The only legal way to buy marijuana for medical use was through companies that had explicitly been

<sup>1</sup> The recreational use of marijuana was legalized in Canada in October 2018. I am here referring to the pre-legalization period.

granted permission to do so by the Canadian state. Licensed producers would then distribute cannabis by mail to those customers who possessed a Health Canada permit to buy cannabis for medical reasons. One exception to these regulations was that those possessing the necessary permit from Health Canada could grow cannabis for their own personal use.

In brief, selling cannabis in a shop for any purpose was illegal, and the existence of cannabis shops was therefore also illegal and regarded as a form of drug trafficking. As a result, police raids began taking place in 2015. For instance, the police raided three cannabis shops (out of ten) in Nanaimo in December 2015, arresting 16 employees. The net result of this intervention was counterproductive, since the three shops reopened the next day, charges were dismissed, and almost all shops began selling cannabis to any person over 18 who showed legal documentation. Customers previously had to show evidence of a medical need for cannabis and become a member of the dispensary.<sup>2</sup>

There were nonetheless certain local differences in Canada. For instance, the communities of Vancouver and Victoria (Vancouver Island) had a more lenient attitude towards the use and selling of cannabis for “medical” use in comparison with many other cities in Canada, including Toronto. The city of Vancouver prioritized their resources for other more serious purposes, similarly to the situation in the Netherlands in the 1970s. Vancouver thus chose to accept the presence of cannabis shops, but introduced a new system of regulation in order to control

their increase in numbers. Most other major cities adopted a stricter approach, which indicated that the prohibition narrative and the notion that cannabis was a dangerous drug remained dominant. This was consistent with the long history of the criminalization and stigmatization of the selling and use of cannabis by the various Canadian states (Boyd and Carter 2014). For instance, the government’s point person on legalization was the former Toronto Chief of Police, Bill Blair, who declared that “marijuana is not a benign substance” (McArthur 2016) and acted as a “crusader” against cannabis shops.

Many shops in Toronto began selling cannabis regardless of its legal status, but more than forty shops were notified by the city in May 2016 that they were breaking the law and would have to stop their sales. All but one shop continued to do so, however. After my first exploration of the relevant media documents, I realized that this material could be relevant for an exploration of moral entrepreneurship, not only from a state perspective, but also from the pro-cannabis perspective of those fighting the stigma of selling cannabis.

I will examine the literature on moral entrepreneurship before addressing this issue. Of particular interest is how we can enrich this concept by relating it to the literature on the social construction of social problems and moral panics, after which I will proceed to the methodological section of this article.

## Moral Entrepreneurship

I utilized and further developed the concept of moral entrepreneurship in a 2015 publication concerning

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<sup>2</sup> This information is based on my own observations and interviews.

police officers who control coffee shops in Rotterdam (Müller 2015). This provided the basis for an investigation of the social construction of moral narratives that are developed in order to either justify or attack policies and interventions concerning transgressive behavior. Becker focuses marginally on what I term moral entrepreneurship in his work on labeling, describing rule creators and rule enforcers as two categories of moral entrepreneurs who define, or socially construct, behavior as criminal. A typical example of rule creators is the political or religious activist who acts as a “crusading reformer” (Becker 1963:147), while a characteristic example of rule enforcers is the police officer, who tends to be more practical and is focused on getting the job done (Becker 1963:156,159). Most studies of moral narratives have emphasized the first of these, the crusading and stigmatizing moral entrepreneur, and do not address other forms of moral entrepreneurship that have a more neutral style and/or focus on the normalization of transgressive behavior, not on stigmatization.

My Rotterdam study expanded the concept of moral entrepreneur by focusing on the associated narratives and activities. It also sought to explain moral entrepreneurship by relating it to the wider social context of 50 years of the semi-legalization of cannabis in the Netherlands.

Rotterdam police officers do not act as moral crusaders, but rather adopt a pragmatic approach, which is in line with Becker’s concept of the rule enforcer. However, the moral entrepreneurship of the Rotterdam police officers also contains layers of morality that influence their rule enforcing. For instance, the way in which they define the character and inten-

tions of coffee shop managers is decisive in how they act towards them. They are lenient towards those who transgress, but nevertheless show they are doing their best to stick to the rules. This is not a black and white situation for police officers—one of bad versus good, villains versus victims—which is instead typical for the narratives of moral crusaders.

The police officers interviewed did not have to justify their actions by using a morally charged narrative. This is explained by two factors. First, the routine (non-liminal) character of the monitoring, which developed over a period of thirty years, has created a predictable situation and a *modus operandi* known to all parties. Second, there has been a more strict regulation of cannabis in recent years in the Netherlands. The effect of this process is that the relation of police officers to cannabis sellers is not questioned and, as a result, they do not need moralistic narratives to support their interventions and defend their position.

In researching moral entrepreneurship in the Rotterdam police force, I realized that Becker’s work and my extension of the concept of moral entrepreneurship displayed a strong overlap with a range of studies on moral panic and the construction of social problems. I was surprised to discover, however, that the theoretical and conceptual interlinkage between these different fields has not yet been brought to light.

I wish to further develop the concept of moral entrepreneurship in the present discussion by relating it to a) the police raids on cannabis shops in Toronto and b) studies of moral panic and the social construction of social problems. The publications

I have taken into consideration more closely include Agar and Reisinger (2000); Armstrong (2007); Baldwin and colleagues (2012); Best (1987; 2013); Denham (2008); Goode (1990; 2008); Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994; 2009); Hartman and Golub (1999); Holstein and Gubrium (2008); Jenkins (1994); Loseke (1987; 2011); Lowney (2008); Omori (2013); Spector and Kitsuse (1977); Weidner (2009); and Young (2009).

An analysis and comparison of these studies shows that they share a strong focus on strategies that are used by moral crusaders. The following issues are of particular interest in this regard:

1. There is a reference to social reality, including a definition of the contested social phenomenon, pertinent examples, and the *facts and figures* related to the phenomenon.
2. The narrative has a *moral and emotional* tone, which in general is marked by the use of *strong adjectives and hyperbole* to indicate what is good and bad behavior. This rhetorical description of social reality emphasizes particular aspects of the problem through the *exaggeration or denial* of certain relevant themes.
3. This rhetorical approach quite often utilizes *atrocious tales* (Best 1987) and *horror stories* (Johnson 1995) as examples of behavior. Most often these comprise “outliers” or atypical examples that are employed to gain media attention and convince the public.
4. The presentation of supposed “facts and figures” is used to list a substantial number of victims that tends to grow and is hard to verify. Cohen (1972) refers to this as the *amplification process*, while Best (1990) terms it *domain expansion*.
5. Moral entrepreneurship is also related to the construction of (blameless) *victims* and (senseless) *villains*. This tends to emphasize cultural boundaries and creates distinctions between *us and them*, the *morally good* and the *immoral*, as well as the (law-abiding) *established* and the (law-breaking) *outsiders*.
6. There is a reference to the disruption of order or a *dystopian world*. The behavior in question is presented as threatening to society, and it will grow out of control if nothing is done.
7. There are (implicit) norms and values in the narrative that frame the contested social phenomenon. Best uses *warrant* to conceptualize this aspect of moral entrepreneurship, which defines the phenomenon as problematic and, consequently, difficult to contest upon the basis of views supposedly held by the public.
8. Suggestions are presented for *actions and interventions* that are primarily related to agencies of social control.
9. Moral entrepreneurs claim to speak for the *general public*, but this tends to be more an assumption than a proven fact.
10. Moral entrepreneurs react (implicitly) to the wider social and historical context comprised of *social and cultural transformations* that break with established norms, rules, and laws.



Joseph Gusfield and Stanley Cohen have focused on the wider symbolic meaning of moral crusades and morals panics. In *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement*, Gusfield (1963) focuses specifically on the intersection of immigration and the social construction of law, relating the temperance movement to the effort to maintain cultural and political dominance in reaction to the mass immigration that took place in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century. He argues that the temperance movement defined the presence of the new immigrants as a threat to American society and sought to preserve the cultural dominance of Protestant rural communities. In a similar vein, Cohen (1972) associates the construction of “moral panics” and “folk devils” with swift societal changes in *Moral Panics and Folk Devils. The Creation of the Mods and the Rockers*. He argues that the public brawls on bank holidays between mods and rockers, along with the resulting moral panic in other segments of society, were related to dramatic social transformations, particularly the rise of a youth culture characterized by an emphasis on consumerism and public hedonism that was in contrast to the post-war discipline of rebuilding British society.

When Becker, Gusfield, and Cohen wrote their classical studies, those in power were able to control the public debate, especially the media, and could construct narratives supporting the criminal justice system. Those regarded as “deviants” were thereby marginalized, and had only minimal access to the media to express their claims during the public debate.

Society’s approach to cannabis has changed dramatically in subsequent years, and we see this re-

flected in how (social) media now report on cannabis. Those in favor of legalizing cannabis are no longer members of a hidden underground, and they claim space in the public debate, on the Internet, on television, and in newspapers. Those in favor of legalizing cannabis are out in the open and construct a moral narrative to defend their position against the stigmatizing accounts of the state. As a result of this long-term process, the recreational use of cannabis has been destigmatized and legalized in a number of states in the United States, with the media playing a crucial role in this transformation (Weitzer 2014). The pro-cannabis narrative has been successful in gaining political power and becoming a collective narrative accessible through both traditional and new media. This change has made it possible to study not only the state narrative, but also the pro-cannabis narrative and investigate the moral entrepreneurship of those involved. Before doing so, however, I will explain the methods that I have used.

## Method

This article is part of a larger research project investigating the recent global changes in cannabis policies and the subsequent reactions of the cannabis industry. For this purpose, I have been tracking the academic and public debate on policy transformations in recent years in the United States and Canada using two methods, namely, document analysis and ethnographic fieldwork. In addition, my utilization of a number of different search engines, including LexisNexis, Google, and Google Scholar, has revealed a wide range of publications, including newspaper articles, government publications, and

academic studies, concerning police raids, media coverage of those raids, and policy development.

My ethnographic fieldwork has involved visits to Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Nanaimo, and Seattle, and in each city I have observed cannabis stores and interviewed cannabis workers and key informants, such as activists and academics. The main focus to date has been on Toronto, where I have observed a total of over 30 cannabis shops during the two periods of April 2016 and July/August 2017. I also interviewed 35 persons involved in the cannabis industry. Three interviews had a formal character and lasted an hour or more, while the others had a more informal character and lasted between 5 minutes and half an hour.

I will here focus on the media analysis and refer to my ethnographic data where relevant. I have employed Qualitative Document Analysis, also known as Ethnographic Document Analysis (Altheide et al. 2008:127), to analyze the documents I have selected from my searches. Qualitative Document Analysis is an interactive and emergent method in which the researcher engages in conversation with the sampled documents and develops his concepts and questions while comparing and reflecting upon the documents utilized.

I initially searched with the code “police raid dispensary Toronto,” and was primarily interested in discovering whether any of the cannabis shops I had visited were closed. But, as I went through the documents that had been collected, I realized that two competing narratives had been constructed in the media, which gave me the opportunity to com-

pare the differing accounts in relation to the raid. Studying the media made it clear that the moral entrepreneurship of the state and the stigmatization it sought to enforce were countered by a pro-cannabis narrative that also possessed a strong moral connotation.

A methodological issue in media analysis is whether researchers can access the narratives of different parties through media outlets, such as newspapers and television news. Ideally, one should interview the moral entrepreneurs themselves or participate in the teams that construct their narratives. Because I was not able to do this in any extensive way, the next best solution was to conduct a qualitative media-analysis in which I focused on categorizing the dominant themes within the narratives, the strategies employed to convey these themes, and the styles (*factual neutral* versus *dramatizing*) of the narratives.

Another related issue is that media coverage is less a reflection of reality than a construction or representation of social reality. For instance, certain topics are rarely covered, and when they are, some elements are omitted while others are emphasized. This, of course, is a key feature of the social construction of social problems (Altheide and Schneider 2013). In the present case, rich data concerning both narratives were accessible through mainstream and fringe media.

During my research, I investigated the claims made by the various persons in the public debate concerning the police raid, focusing on direct quotes and/or video footage of the claims of the different parties.

This provided a clear insight into their narratives. In order to obtain access to a diverse range of media outlets, I studied not only the mainstream media in Canada and in Toronto, such as *The Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, and CBC news, but such other media as *Vice* and sites run by cannabis activists and stakeholders in the industry, including *Bankr* and *Dope*.

An important difference in the construction of the two narratives is that the police and the city have a formal organization that communicates the state narrative. For example, a day after the May 26th raid, the police and the city held a press conference in order to explain why they raided the cannabis shops. Various actors, such as Chief of Police, Mark Saunders, were present and gave their interpretations of the raid. This press conference, which was streamed live by the Toronto Police and is now available on YouTube (Toronto Police Service 2016), has become one of the main media sources for descriptions of the state narrative. I have analyzed the video that was made and also researched other media sources, such as the television channels and newspapers that reported on the state narrative.

In contrast to the state narrative, the pro-cannabis narrative was constructed by a more diverse category of persons, from well-known activists—public figures who have been involved as moral entrepreneurs for decades—to employees, owners, and clients of cannabis shops who were making their first appearances in the media. Sources for studying their narrative consisted, for instance, of videos of the press conference, the protest outside the press conference, media coverage that included inter-

views with “pot activists,” and impromptu street interviews with employees and clients on the day of the raid.

In the following pages, I will describe the themes, strategies, and styles of each narrative. I will begin with the state narrative before turning to the pro-cannabis narrative.

## Anti-Cannabis Narrative

[P]eople who don't care about the law, who don't care about regulations, don't care about kids, they don't care about communities, don't care about the health of Canadians. [McArthur 2016]

The press conference held a day after the police raid was crucial for the social construction of the state narrative, not least because it mimicked a press conference held after a regular drugs raid, with the police displaying a very large sample of the products they had confiscated.

The first speaker was Mark Sraga, Director of Investigation Services, Municipal Licensing and Standards. He reported in a *factual neutral style* that, as a result of the increased numbers of “so-called marijuana dispensaries,” municipal standards officers investigated 78 locations, after which they sent letters informing the dispensaries that they were in violation of the municipal bylaws. He ended his presentation by stating that the city would continue “with our enforcement actions utilizing all tools available” (Toronto Police Service 2016). His talk contained no explicit emotional or moral expressions about the violations except for the brief

negative description of cannabis shops—“so-called marijuana dispensaries.” This served to *delegitimize* their health-care status and implied that, in reality, they were not dispensaries at all. In short, the overall tone of his statement was bureaucratic and formal, and it contained no explicit moral or emotional meaning.

The second speaker, Chief of Police Mark Saunders, made a direct reference to “public safety” as he framed cannabis shops in a negative way.

This project has been ongoing for a number of weeks in response to significant community concerns and complaints about public safety issues regarding the drastic increase of these storefronts. [Toronto Police Service 2016]

When we look at Saunders’ use of *facts and figures*, however, we see that there is a lack of detailed information. There is no exact description concerning either the numbers of complaints, or the increase in storefronts, even though they were qualified respectively as “significant” and “drastic” in the effort to indicate that the situation was problematic and needed to be addressed. Also unclear were the specific types of concerns and complaints reported by the community, as well as the categories of citizens that reported complaints. Saunders also referred to public safety later in his talk, relating it to health.

And I also want to make clear that these locations have a broader impact on the surrounding locations. There is no quality control whatsoever on these products and many, as you can see, they are marketed in a way that disguises the unknown and unregulated

amount of THC in the products. And almost half of the locations are within 300 meters of schools. The Toronto Police Service has always and will continue to keep neighborhoods as safe as possible. [Toronto Police Service 2016]

This statement comprises a specific form of *amplification*, not in numbers, but in the geography of the contested problem. The public safety and health threat of cannabis was thus related not only to the cannabis shops, but also to the “surrounding locations.” Again, however, no specific details were given.

The *delegitimization* strategy evident in this quotation emphasized a supposed lack of control over the products sold in the cannabis shops, including disguising their substance. Saunders thereby attacked the core legitimization of the sellers of marijuana for medical use, namely, that they are responsible citizens trying to help people in need of medication. The police narrative also related the uncontrolled nature of the substance to the presence of children, implying that children might consume cannabis and become intoxicated. By including children—the stereotypical *blameless victim*—the frame of cannabis shops as a threat to community safety was extended. The *warrant* in this citation is that children should be kept away from drugs because otherwise their health is at risk.

An analysis of the press conference appears to indicate that violating the laws and regulations concerning drug trafficking and the sale of cannabis for medical use was in itself not a strong argument in support of intervention. As a consequence, the narrative was moralized by including the claim of

threats to safety, health, children, and the neighborhood in order to stigmatize the cannabis shops as a threat to society.

Although the overall tone of the Chief of Police's statement appeared to be factual and neutral, he nevertheless stigmatized cannabis shops by associating them with endangering children and jeopardizing the safety of the neighborhood. He thereby also *delegitimized*, *degraded*, and *redefined* the status of cannabis sellers from people with a strong focus on well-being to those who endanger public health.

The next speaker was Acting Inspector Steve Watts of the Toronto Police drug squad, who continued in the same *factual neutral style*. He also began his remarks with the theme of public safety.

[T]here is significant community complaints that generated this project. These complaints were substantive in nature, petitions in excess of 50, 60, 70 people. Just to give you an idea of the kind of complaints that were coming forward in relation to these unlawful storefront dispensaries. [Toronto Police Service 2016]

Here we can see an example of how *facts and figures* were amplified and used to indicate how serious the problem was. Once again, however, the precise number of complaints was not given—it is in fact unclear how many people voiced complaints. Nor did the speaker provide any idea of the types of complaints that were coming forward. Just like Chief of Police Saunders, Watts presented no detailed information and provided no examples of someone feeling unsafe because of the presence of dispensaries.

At the same time, he *criminalized* the cannabis shops by calling them “unlawful.”

Watts employed the same strategy at the end of his brief statement as Saunders had. In justifying the raid, he *implied* there was a relation between the cannabis shops, safety, and children's well-being, thereby *stigmatizing* the shops as dangerous.

There is no... proper measuring, there is no proper quantitative analysis...So that's when we run into health and safety implications for the people that are utilizing these products. There is no standardization amongst these products that are being either consumed by adults and/or children. [Toronto Police Service 2016]

Just as in Saunders' statement, the link between cannabis shops and children is made *implicitly*—children are possible victims. It is mentioned almost in between the lines, again with little emotional emphasis and *no supporting evidence*.

The state narrative as discussed to this point is remarkable from the perspective of moral entrepreneurship because it does not have the unmistakably explicit emotional and moral tone of the crusader. Under the guise of a *factual neutral style*, *strategies of implicit accusations* are used to *delegitimize* the status of the cannabis shops. There is no overt positioning of a victim versus a villain, let alone atrocity or horror stories, in the state narrative. However, there is a clear indication in the state narrative of a societal threat in relation to two dominant themes, namely, public safety and health. In addition, the *amplifying* and *mystifying* representation of “figures and facts”



accords with the usual strategies of moral crusaders. What is conceptually new is that the moral entrepreneurship of the speakers lies between that of an enforcer (the *factual neutral style*) and that of a crusader, utilizing strategies of implicit accusation. This serves to *delegitimize, degrade, and redefine* the status of the cannabis sellers from being persons strongly focused on well-being to persons who endanger safety and public health.

The Chief of Police was interviewed on the same day by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), and here his narrative style in fact utilized certain elements typical of the moral style of the crusader. For instance, Saunders used the *dystopia strategy* when he predicted a situation in which a child became a victim of consuming cannabis.

Let's face it, I'd be sitting here having a completely different interview with you right now if some child had eaten three or four of these jujubes.<sup>3</sup> It would be, "Why did you not do anything after these hundreds of complaints came across to us, making it known that these places were, in fact, dealing in marijuana?" [CBC News 2016a]

There is a specific warrant underlying this claim that was also present in the well-known missing children problem (Best 1987), namely, that one child is already a sufficiently large number to justify intervention, since every child is important. Another strategy used to support his claim was the amplification of numbers, with the number of complaints now described as in the "hundreds" while a total of

<sup>3</sup> *Jujubes* are cannabis infused sweets.

"50, 60, 70" was noted in the press conference. Also used was the *criminalization strategy*, whereby selling cannabis was described as "dealing in marijuana."

Another important aspect of moral entrepreneurship is the creation of *the other*, which involves constructing a constellation of *us (good) against them (bad)*. This is evident in another statement Saunders made during the interview.

They are distributing for monetary gain, let's make no mistake about it. If they're very concerned about the well-being of people, then I would expect that they would look at the regulatory processes, have a standardization of how it's being manufactured and distributed, identify what the quantity of THC is in the product and also be able to validate through quality control that is, in fact, correct. [CBC News 2016a]

The *delegitimizing* strategy of the narrative thus had a different emotional and moral tone during the interview than in the press conference, centering on children as blameless *victims* versus immoral *villains* who sell unhealthy products for profit. This explicit construction of the cannabis sellers as *the other* described them as not caring for the well-being of their clients, whose health could be jeopardized by their actions. Their only interest would then be financial gain at the expense of their clients, similar to the *warrant* of how dealers exploit junkies.

The media coverage of the May 26, 2016, police raid contains a structural reference to the opinions of the Mayor of Toronto, John Tory, who was not present at the press conference. He in fact voiced most of his comments concerning the cannabis shops prior

to the raid, and his claims appeared to have paved the way for the police actions. While the Chief of Police utilized two main styles in his statements—the *factual neutral style* during the press conference and the *dramatization style* during the interview—the Mayor’s dominant style was *dramatization*, with the theme of disorder playing a crucial role. He remarked, for example, that

We can’t just have the Wild West. [CBC News 2016b]

Furthermore, the focus in his anti-cannabis narrative was not only on chaos and disintegration, but also on a *dystopian* future in which there would be no social control over the selling and use of cannabis:

If nothing is done...then I will be consulting our colleagues and officials about what we can do because this thing is verging on being out of control in some neighborhoods. [CBC News 2016c]

A central issue in Tory’s *dystopian* narrative about cannabis shops was the accelerating pace at which the number of shops was increasing:

The speed with which these storefronts are proliferating, and the concentration of dispensaries in some areas of our city, is alarming. [Janus 2016]

This was coupled with a theme Saunders raised, namely, the quality of life in some neighborhoods.

I don’t think it’s sustainable for neighborhoods, and for life in neighborhoods that we want to be peaceful, quiet, and law-abiding, to have 20, 21, 31 medical marijuana dispensaries. [CBC News 2016c]

Here we see a *facts and figures strategy* similar to what we observed during the press conference, with no clear numbers given.

The core themes in Saunders’ narrative, that is, safety and health, also played a crucial role in Tory’s narrative, not least when he implied that children were possible victims of cannabis shops.

You have to do these things in an orderly way that respects public safety and health and access to minors. [CBC News 2016c]

In addition to these references to the concerns of citizens, he also included businesses in the effort to justify his claims, although he specified no numbers.

Over the past few months, residents and businesses in different parts of Toronto have raised concerns about the rising number of marijuana dispensaries opening in their neighborhoods. [Janus 2016]

Tory stated that the city and the police should cooperate to employ

whatever enforcement mechanisms are currently available...to address the health and safety concerns of neighbors and businesses in the communities where these marijuana dispensaries are currently operating unlawfully. [Janus 2016]

Like Chief of Police Saunders, Mayor Tory also *criminalized* cannabis shops, defining them as “operating unlawfully” and suggesting that the health of their clients was at risk because the cannabis prod-

ucts being sold were “completely unregulated.” He also used *delegitimization* strategies by claiming that there was no growing need for marijuana among the public.

Most people are sensible enough, including me, to know that this is not happening directly in response to a burgeoning need of marijuana. [CBC 2016b]

Tory continued his *delegitimization* narrative when he questioned whether there were medical grounds for the increased numbers of cannabis shops, stating that the latter was not “a reflection of an increased demand for genuine medical marijuana prescriptions” (CBC News 2016c).

Not only were the two main themes of safety and health of the anti-cannabis narratives of the Chief of Police and the Mayor quite similar, these two dominant claims-makers also referred to the relation between cannabis shops and children. In addition, both utilized *delegitimization* and *criminalization strategies* to *stigmatize* cannabis shops, with the Mayor also employing a *dramatization strategy* in order to emphasize the threat of a dystopian future (“Wild West,” verging out of control, no respect for the law). This strategy is also reflected in the name of the police intervention, Project Claudia. Constable Wendy Drummond stated this name was chosen to resemble how weather services name hurricanes, likening the growth of cannabis dispensaries to a storm that was out of control (Bastien and Grey 2016).

The final spokesperson for the state perspective whom I will mention is Bill Blair, the former Toronto Chief of Police and the government’s point

person concerning legalization, who played a role in the days before the raid. All of the claims presented in the anti-cannabis narrative that we have discussed come together in the following statement by Blair, but his tone is more aggressive, castigating, and moralistic than that of the other spokespersons because of his *rhetorical use of repetition* (“don’t care”).

The current licensed producers are competing with people who don’t care about the law, who don’t care about regulations, don’t care about kids, they don’t care about communities, don’t care about health of Canadians. They’re pretty reckless about it. And so they’re selling anything to make a fast buck before we get the regulations put in place. [McArthur 2016]

Blair thus uses the common strategies of a crusader in his narrative. He creates a clear division between *us* and *them*, *victims* and *villains*, and *stigmatizes* the cannabis sellers as recklessly interested only in their own financial gain at the expense of children and communities.

## Pro-Cannabis Narrative

[It’s an] immoral, unconstitutional, and a ridiculous use of taxpayers’ dollars to arrest people for selling medicine. [Krishnan 2016]

Those who constructed the pro-cannabis narrative used a range of strategies to attack the claims of the police and the city, and they specifically focused on health and public safety, the two dominant themes in the state narrative. A crucial strategy employed in countering the claims of the state involved rede-

fining cannabis shops in a positive way—the shops did not endanger safety and health—thereby reversing the question of health in favor of the shops. The activists emphasized the health benefits of the cannabis shops, and during the press conference they rejected and *delegitimized* claims that there were victims by asking, “Where are the victims? Show us the victims!” (Toronto Police Service 2016). They stated that the cannabis shops provided medical care instead of creating a health risk, a point expressed in the following quote from an activist present at the press conference.

You have 54 complaints and tens of thousands of people feeling better. Where’s the balance? [Toronto Police Service 2016]

This remark played a role analogous to the way in which both the Mayor and Chief of Police of Toronto presented *facts and figures*. The stated number of complaints was contrasted with a large number of people—*tens of thousands*—who benefited from the cannabis shops that was difficult to verify.

The pro-cannabis narrative centered around the core identity of the cannabis movement in Canada: that cannabis is a medicinal product, and that those involved in the cannabis retail business are helping people. Well-known activist Marc Emery made a comment about the supposed danger presented by the cannabis shops that was typical for a public spokesperson of pro-cannabis narrative when he stated that

It’s unfathomable because marijuana is a very safe substance. [Jeffords 2016a]

This was also one of the core themes of the street protest that was heard in speeches and seen on placards—“dispensaries save lives.” For example, an employee of a cannabis shop stated that

To be stigmatized as not caring about the community, our patients, and kids is a complete joke, he said, adding those who work and run dispensaries don’t want to be perceived as criminals. We do everything we can to respect our neighbors. We help out our communities instead of hurting them. [Lavoie 2016]

A subtheme of this claim is that those who were involved in selling medical marijuana had been leading figures in the drive to legalize medical marijuana—they had fought for patients to have access to marijuana for medical use. Attorney Kirk Tousaw, for instance, “lauded the dispensaries for ‘pioneering access’ to medical marijuana for the ill” (Jeffords 2016b). An element of this subtheme is that the system which consisted of licensed producers selling by mail did not work for many clients, and that dispensaries were a solution to this problem. One of the stated advantages of the dispensaries was that one could both see and smell what they were buying, and also have immediate access to the product. One patient remarked in this respect that

There’s all sorts of things that can happen by mail. If I don’t have it, my neuralgia cycles back in. It’s very painful. I’m off work. [Sharp 2016]

The health claim, which has a long history in the process of legalizing medical marijuana, is associated with the right of citizens to have access to med-

ical care. This also played an important role in the pro-cannabis narrative concerning the police.

Tell me where else in the world do you need the help of a paralegal just to access your medicine? [Sharp 2016]

The *warrant* here is quite clear, namely, people should have access to the medicine that they need.

The counter-narrative also reversed the other core theme of the state narrative concerning safety by stating in opposition to police statements that cannabis shops actually created safe environments. In this vein, one customer described the dispensary she used as “clean, friendly, and knowledgeable” (Krishnan 2016), while a pro-cannabis spokesperson pointed to dispensaries as comprising a role model for the future legalization of the recreational use of cannabis.

We’re demonstrating what legalization should look like...Peaceful, open, honest transactions between consenting adults. No force, no coercion. Simple supply and demand. And until the government can prove demonstrable harm from these businesses, we deserve to stay open, especially considering that dangerous, deadly drugs are sold in bars and restaurants every single day. [Sharp 2016]

An important strategy in the pro-cannabis narrative was to redefine the police raid in a negative way and *delegitimize* its claims. For example, activists claimed that the police action in fact created an unsafe situation, with one activist present at the conference stating that “You’re sending people to the black market” (Toronto Police Service 2016). Another claim used to cast the police raid in a negative light was

that the public money spent on the raid was wasted tax revenue.

Taxpayers are footing the bill for enforcement and possible legal challenges through the court. Instead of allocating resources to shut down dispensaries, the City should think outside the box and focus on creating a revenue stream through the eventual sale of marijuana. [Toronto Taxpayers Coalition 2016]

Another theme in redefining the police raid in a negative way had a legal character, namely, the raid was useless because those charged will not be convicted. A pro-cannabis public spokesperson thus claimed

Mark my words, none of these charges will result in a conviction. Everyone will walk. [Krishnan 2016]

This view was also combined with the previous financial claim, with one lawyer arguing

Let’s stop that. It’s a waste of money...Now that the judges have the signal that it will be legal, they will throw those charges out of court. [Dunn 2017]

An additional strategy in redefining the role of the police involved the construction of a new category of victims, with patients under medical care now being described as victims. For example, a doctor who specializes in the treatment of chronic pain and prescribes medical marijuana for that purpose observed that

A crackdown only further stigmatizes medical marijuana...And it prevents pain patients from accessing their medicine in a timely fashion. [Jeffords 2016b]



A common voice in the pro-cannabis narrative was in fact that of patients who would suffer without their medicine. One patient thus stated that

Most of the shops I use are shut down. Without my oil, which I finish tonight, I'm not going to be able to walk in a few days. Cannabis is the only thing that helps. [Lavoie 2016]

Although the style in most of the above statements was similar to the *factual neutral style* used in the police press conference, the *dramatization style* was also utilized in constructing the pro-cannabis narrative. A number of public spokespersons who had been activists in the drive to legalize cannabis were very skilful in employing such crusading strategies as the *construction of the villain*. Activist Jodie Emery thus claimed that

The Toronto dispensary raids and arrests, which are supported by the Justin Trudeau Liberal government, are part of the biggest marijuana crackdown in Canadian history, worse than anything seen under the Harper government. [Krishnan 2016]

This example of dramatization, used to create a highly moral narrative by means of *hyperbole* ("biggest marijuana crackdown"), is also found in the following remark by Marc Emery.

[T]hey are going to remember the people like [Mayor] John Tory who brought this oppression to the kind of horrible peak that we're seeing today. John Tory is finished. Let me guarantee you that. [Jeffords 2016a]

One long-time pro-cannabis activist frequently employed the rhetorical strategy of *dramatization*, and

not least in the construction of the villain. He was one of several pro-cannabis spokespersons who used such *morally strong adjectives* as "absolutely disproportionate," "criminal," and "disgusting" to redefine the police raid. An example of *hyperbole* in this regard is illustrative.

The idea that they should continue to be raided, continue to be arrested, continue to face the prospect of being caged in jail cells for helping sick, suffering citizens of this city and this country...should disgust anyone. [Jeffords 2016b]

The elements of repetition ("continue to"), adopting a moral stance, and shaming play a central role in the phrasing of this claim, which also contains another typical element of the crusader style, namely, the creation of a *dystopian world* ("caged in jail cells for helping sick, suffering citizens").

Another key strategy was the use of *facts and figures* in defining the problem, as was the case in the state narrative as well. The number of victims/patients, which allegedly ran into the "tens of thousands," was frequently mentioned in the pro-cannabis narrative. Kirk Tousaw redefined the police raid through the use of *moralistic adjectives*, an *atrocious tale*, and *numbers* in relation to patients and tax money that are clearly difficult to verify.

It's unbelievable, really...If there's a problem with the proliferation of dispensaries in this city, the right response is to regulate them in a reasonable manner. The wrong response is to have some sort of crackdown where you're threatening landlords and you're scaring patients and you're taking away dignified ac-

cess for so many tens of thousands of Torontonians. [Faris 2016]

It's an absolute waste of taxpayers' resources and one that is only going to cost the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario and ultimately the federal government hundreds of thousands, if not millions, in legal fees. [Jeffords 2016b]

The element of referring to *the general public* in the style of the crusader was also used in the pro-cannabis narrative, as is the case in the following comment by Marc Emery.

Canadians love these dispensaries. They're supporting them, they're spending money at them. And marijuana is a harmless, benign substance that only does good things for people. It's completely counterproductive that the government would close these down. [Faris 2016]

The various elements of the crusading moral entrepreneur discourse that have been discussed above are brought together in the transcription of a statement made by a pro-cannabis spokesperson after the police press conference.

If this is legalization, Justin Trudeau and the Liberal government lied to the Canadian people. This is a new form of prohibition. This is worse than anything we saw under the Harper government. I think Canadians should immediately call Justin Trudeau, John Tory, and Bill Blair and ask why we see more people harmed under their so-called legalization than we ever saw under Stephen Harper's anti-marijuana policy. This is about protecting the profits of stock market businesses who have sent the police to arrest peaceful

people to protect their own financial interest. That is sick and disgusting and despicable. Shame on the Toronto Police Service, and shame on the Toronto city government for harming peaceful people, because if you have 50 (five zero) complaints, you have 50,000 sick people last night who are stressed and sick and these doctors say, no, I won't give you medical marijuana. The doctors in this country are not providing access and that is why dispensaries have become so popular, because people demand it. [There is] public support for peaceful transaction, there is no coercion, there is no force, these dispensaries do no harm, the only harm being done in association with the dispensaries is the harm of patients being made to suffer and the harm of peaceful citizens being given a criminal record. The police are the biggest gang with guns that went to shut down peaceful businesses. That needs to be questioned. Who called for this? It was not the general public. [Miller 2016]

Here we find the general *dramatizing emotional tone* of the crusader, as well as the moral hue provided by such words as "lying," "sick and disgusting and despicable," and "shame." Also displayed is the construction of *victims* and *villains*, with examples of the latter being Justin Trudeau, John Tory, Bill Blair, stock market businesses, doctors, and "the biggest gang with guns," the police. An *atrocity tale* is introduced along with the image of a *dystopian world* ("peaceful people" and "50,000 sick people last night who are stressed and sick"). A final element is that the spokesperson speaks for *the public*, who did not want the police raid.

A typical claim that could have been used, but which I did not find, was that the police raid attacked

a thriving profit-making industry and was thus responsible for the loss of jobs. The claims-makers in fact refrained from any mention of financial gain related to selling cannabis. To do so would obviously be undesirable in light of the anti-cannabis narrative that the sole reason for the existence of dispensaries was making a profit.

## Conclusion

In this article, I have described two conflicting narratives concerning the May 26, 2016, police raid on cannabis shops in Toronto. The concept of moral entrepreneurship, which I further developed in the introduction using the literature on the social construction of social problems and moral panics, has been employed in presenting and analyzing this case. Both parties created a moral account that justified their actions, that is, the police raid and the selling of cannabis in shops. Furthermore, both used similar styles, a *factual neutral style* and the *dramatization style*, as they implemented strategies to *legitimize* their own behavior and *delegitimize* the other.

The state's moral entrepreneur usage of a *factual neutral style*, with a minimal emotional and moral tone, was prominent during the press conference. The two dominant themes, public health and safety, were implied and addressed in an almost passing way. The *warrant* used during the press conference was that drugs and children do not go together. In contrast, the style used in constructing the state narrative outside the press conference was quite different. It resembled that of a "crusader," and it utilized *dramatization* strategies to represent social reality, including the moral and emotional usage of words, the notion of a *dys-*

*topian* social reality ("Wild West"), the construction of *villains* versus *victims*, and the *possible* atrocity of a child consuming cannabis edibles. The warrant in this regard was that saving one child was sufficient reason for the police to take action.

The pro-cannabis narrative also utilized the *dramatization style*, which is confrontational, emotional, and moralistic, and the *factual neutral style*. This narrative also focused on the two central themes of the state narrative, namely, public health and safety, but it redefined the cannabis shops in a positive way by stating that they contributed to health and public safety. Another strategy was to redefine the police raid in a negative manner by claiming that it in fact had endangered the health and safety of medical patients and wasted the tax money spent in the raid and in any subsequent court cases.

Pro-cannabis moral entrepreneurship thus also involved *speaking for the public*, the use of *emotional and moralistic adjectives in constructing victims and villains*, references to *atrocity tales*, and images of a *dystopian world*.

How can we explain the themes, styles, and strategies that both parties used? In order to find an answer, we have to look at the social context within which the various moral entrepreneurs were working. For example, the *factual neutral style* of the state authorities that marked the press conference was related to the role of the "enforcer" and, as such, was less moralistic and more focused on getting things done (Becker 1963; Müller 2015). In addition, the fact that the situation comprised a public press conference at which cannabis activists were also present exerted an influence upon the primary speakers, that is, the

Mayor, the Chief of Police, and the Director of Investigation Services of the office of Municipal Licensing and Standards. They strategically chose to tone down their statements in order to avoid conflict in a public setting in the presence of the media.

A crucial question to be answered concerns why the state actors used delegitimizing and criminalizing strategies at the press conference in order to *stigmatize* the cannabis shops. For instance, the police felt compelled to integrate some of the rhetoric that had been used by Mayor John Tory and Greg McArthur, even though they did not need to include any references to public safety or possible victims insofar as it was clear to everyone that the shops were in fact breaking the law. A second issue concerns the topic of safety and the *dramatization* style of a crusader, which is associated in the case of the state moral entrepreneurs with their political roles, not least with the fact that they were elected officials dependent on the vote of the public. Such figures are used to dealing with the media and, as many politicians do today, they present themselves as defenders of the public and their safety. This is consistent with a dominant trend in the western world, which Garland (2001) has described as the rise of a culture of control. At the same time, however, we have to look at the wider social and historic context if we wish to understand their reactions. I addressed this question in the introduction and will briefly return to it below.

The specific situation also played a crucial role in the case of Bill Blair, and we also need to look at the situation in which he acted to understand his stance. It then becomes clear that his moral crusade comprised a situational act of “preaching to the choir” insofar

as his audience represented the legal medical cannabis industry and licensed producers, who legally sold marijuana for medical use (McArthur 2016).

In respect to the pro-cannabis moral entrepreneurs, their crusading style was associated with the fact that they were activists. The *factual neutral style* was more appropriate to consumers and employees, who expressed their personal situational experiences and were less trained in vocalizing the activist perspective. Most of the public spokespersons had been involved for many years in the fight to legalize the medical and recreational uses of marijuana. Because of the expertise they had thus garnered, they knew a) how to play the media and b) how to counter the claims of the state authorities with the arguments about health and safety that activists had used for years in fighting the stigmatizing narrative of the state.

The police continued raiding cannabis shops after May 2016, but no longer on the same large scale, most likely because they sought to avoid creating massive media attention for the pro-cannabis activists. But, since the raids in fact continued, one might perhaps conclude that the pro-cannabis narrative had not been successful in creating its desired impact on the policy makers. The impact of the state narrative was also limited, however. The number of cannabis shops in Toronto bounced back to between 60 and 70 within a year, and this was still the case in spring 2018. Furthermore, not only were most charges related to the police raid dismissed, there was also a rise in the numbers of Internet cannabis shops and delivery services. My own observations indicated that many shops had become very lenient about selling cannabis—one only had to show their personal identification to make a purchase.

Some personnel actually stated to me that they sold cannabis for recreational use.

With the current knowledge of hindsight, we have to ask why the state continued to raid cannabis shops when the effect was minimal or even counter-productive. Why did the police raids in Toronto take place when Vancouver focused on a regulatory approach and the police raid in Nanaimo proved that the shops reopened and actually became more lenient in selling cannabis for recreational use? In addition, why did the state construct a moral narrative justifying police action when it was clear to anyone that the cannabis shops were breaking the law?

The moral connotations of the police raid become more clear when, following Gusfield (1963), Cohen (1972), and Müller (2015), we locate the state narrative within a wider social, historical, and symbolic context. In doing so, we can see the dramatic effect that the societal change normalizing cannabis had had upon the police and politicians, who for many years had embraced the prohibition policy of the Canadian Government. While it had been difficult for them to accept the planned transition to the le-

galization of such cannabis usage, the surge in the number of cannabis shops at the beginning of 2016 pushed authorities to the limit, with the anticipation of a further massive increase conjuring up images of the coming of the Wild West. Many members of the police force, especially those working in the drugs squad, viewed selling cannabis in shops as the equivalent of dealing illegal drugs. In this regard, the physical changes in the urban landscape associated with the sharply increased number of cannabis shops had a very public and therefore symbolic character which indicated that the city was changing and that cannabis had become normalized.

The effect of this process was that the position of police officers in relation to cannabis sellers was called into question and, as a result, they needed a moralistic narrative to support their intervention and defend their stance. In a symbolic sense, the aim of the police raid and the state's narrative was to reestablish their position and counter the cultural transformation that had occurred by reclaiming the city as an orderly and safe place in which breaking the law has consequences and the selling of cannabis in public is defined as not normal.

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## **Symbolic Interactionism and the Perceived Style of Parenting**

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**Abstract** This article utilizes a symbolic interactionist approach in an investigation of perceived parenting during early adulthood. The aim is to explore the family environment and family relationships in the light of how parenting is constructed through the interaction of parents with their children and with society. The findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with adult volunteer respondents concerning their recollections of their relations with their parents are summarized. This provides the basis for outlining subjective experiences of the social environment and perceived parenting styles from a retrospective point of view in respect to gender and age differentiation.

**Keywords** Perceived Parenting Styles; Family Environment; Retrospection; Child-Parent Interaction

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### **The Relationship between Parenting Style and Symbolic Interactionism**

The symbolic interactionist approach, which resides upon the symbolic meaning that people form and develop in the process of social interaction, constitutes a basic reference framework for the social sciences in general. It comprises an analytical approach that addresses the subjective meaning that individuals ascribe to objects, events, and behavior. This type of meaning takes precedence over others insofar as individuals typically act according to their beliefs rather than what should be done in a strictly objective sense, whereby society may justifiably be

perceived as structured through human interpretation. People interpret each other's behavior, and it is these interpretations that form the social bond.

The term symbolic interactionism is used to define a relatively distinct approach to the study of human life and human behavior (Blumer 1969). Through the prism of symbolic interactionism, reality is perceived both as social in character, and as constructed through interactions between people. In this respect, the individuality of human beings is a social product, but it is also focused and creative. That is to say that people act in accordance with the meaning that the actions in question have for them, which is formed through social interaction and subsequently moderated by personal interpretation.

Symbolic interactionism has been an important theoretical perspective in family studies since their early stage of development in the 1920s and 1930s (LaRossa and Reitzes 1993), and numerous inquiries have addressed its relationship with parenting style. For example, basic concepts of the theory of interactionism are evident in investigations that focus on family patterns of behavior, as well as personality adjustments and transformation (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918). This also holds true for analyses of processes of socialization, adjustment, identity formation, role creation, and the development of self-concept. Subsequent studies systematically applied a processual notion of symbolic interactionism such that the family came to be viewed as "a unity of inter-acting personalities" (Burgess 1926) that comprised a micro-universe of communication in which each particular personality affects every other, including the roles and selves of all involved.

Such research primarily employed conventional methods of measurement as it explored the dynamic interactions within the family as a whole, thus reflecting a more structural type of interactionism that emphasizes social structure rather than individual processes (Burgess and Cottrell 1939; Hess and Handel 1959). Other applications of an interactionist approach utilized qualitative methods to examine the dynamics of the family environment, particularly processes of interpersonal conflict, negotiation, and exploitation (Waller 1937; 1938). One basic presupposition in this regard was that the person least interested in or committed to a given relationship has the most power in that relationship, and often takes advantage of such power to exploit the other. The focus later shifted from conflict and the process of orientation towards a relatively structured perspective that emphasized family roles and a harmonious view of family life (Hill 1949; Waller and Hill 1951).

Many contemporary family studies that proceed from a symbolic interactionist perspective employ some type of role analysis. These discuss how the roles of husband and wife are defined during the various stages of family life; how conceptions of gender roles affect the definitions of spousal roles; how having children and the transition to parental roles change role constellations and interaction patterns; how both external events (parental employment, natural disasters, migration) and internal events (births, deaths, divorces) impact role definitions, performance, stress, and conflict; and how these role-specific variables affect the attitudes, dispositions, and self-conceptions of family members (Hutter 1985). In respect to the present discussion,



we may say that the symbolic interactionist perspective emphasizes the processes of role-making, role definition, role negotiation, and role identity within the family (Hochschild 1979).

Many family researchers who adapt a symbolic interactionist approach investigate the processes of socialization through which personalities and self-concepts are formed, the culture of one generation is passed to the next, and values and attitudes are transmitted from parents to children. The socialization of children is one of the few remaining—and most critical—functions of the family in modern societies. A symbolic interactionist perspective concerning child socialization encompasses a broad range of processes and outcomes involved in integrating the child into its family and society. Research has revealed that retrospective positive appraisals of one's parents, coupled with the use of inductive control and parental support of their own children, lead to positive outcomes regarding a child's self-conception in terms of socialization (Gecas and Schwalbe 1986; Peterson and Rollins 1987). We should note that the socialization process itself is highly reciprocal insofar as parents and children affect each other's self-concepts. High levels of reciprocity are in fact an important characteristic of socialization processes within the family, as well as a hallmark of symbolic interactionism.

A number of investigations since the early 1990s have focused on the key role of individual perceptions in determining behavioral outcomes within the context of parent-child interactions. Children typically begin to question the authority of their parents and critically evaluate their behavior during

early adolescence (Smetana 1995). Highlighting the importance of meaning for human behavior (LaRossa and Reitzes 1993) enables us to say that young adolescents assign a significance to their mother's and father's parenting that is based on their interactions with them, from which they proceed to interpret their parents' behavior. Although these interpretations do not necessarily accord with their actual behavior, they nevertheless shape the children's own behavior—studies in fact suggest that adolescent perceptions of parenting style may be more influential than the actual parenting style of their parents (Sheehan and Noller 2002; Spera 2006; Yahav 2006).

For example, a study that compared the effects of perceived parenting styles with that of actual parenting found that perceptions of parenting had a greater influence upon both the external (aggression or delinquency) and internal (depression or anxiety) behavior of adolescents than the actual style of parenting (Yahav 2006). A tenet of symbolic interactionism is that social interactions and cultural context exert a substantial influence upon individuals (LaRossa and Reitzes 1993), one conclusion being that parenting does not occur in isolation even as parents play critical roles in the adolescent behavior of their culture (Barnes et al. 2006). In addition, the influence of peer pressure and conformity is greater in early adolescence than in childhood (Brown, Lohr, and McClenahan 1986). Adolescent behavior and actions are consequently influenced by personal beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions, as well as by interactions with parents and peers.

In the light of previous studies (Sheehan and Noller 2002; Spera 2006; Yahav 2006), and in respect to the

importance of the theory of symbolic interactionism, we may conclude that how we interpret our parents' behavior is perhaps the most important factor that affects our own behavior. The way in which a child perceives the parenting styles of their mother and father, along with how they interpret the similarities and differences in the behavior of their parents, can be crucial to a child's development.

In turn, parenting is a process of child-raising that promotes, supports, and to a significant degree shapes a child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development (Davies 2000). Moreover, it is influenced by the unique characteristics of the parents, such as their personalities, beliefs, education, well-being, and other features, which determine the daily interactions between parent and child and the ways in which their relationship develops (Bronfenbrenner 1979). Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific actions that both individually and taken together influence what the child becomes, and most researchers who endeavor to describe this broad milieu rely upon Diana Baumrind's concept of *parenting style*. Baumrind, who operationalizes parental behavior within a bio-psycho-social framework, introduces this concept as a psychological construct in order to explain the conventional strategies that parents utilize in raising their children, taking into consideration the impact that individual and social factors, and their inherent interaction, have upon the dynamics of their development over time (Baumrind 1966; 1971). The aim of this concept is to capture normal variations in attempts by parents to control and socialize their children (Baumrind 1991) in respect to two important elements of parenting, namely, parental responsiveness and parental demandingness

(Maccoby and Martin 1983). *Parental responsiveness* (also referred to as parental warmth or supportiveness) refers to

the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands. [Baumrind 1991:62]

while *parental demandingness* (also referred to as behavioral control) refers to

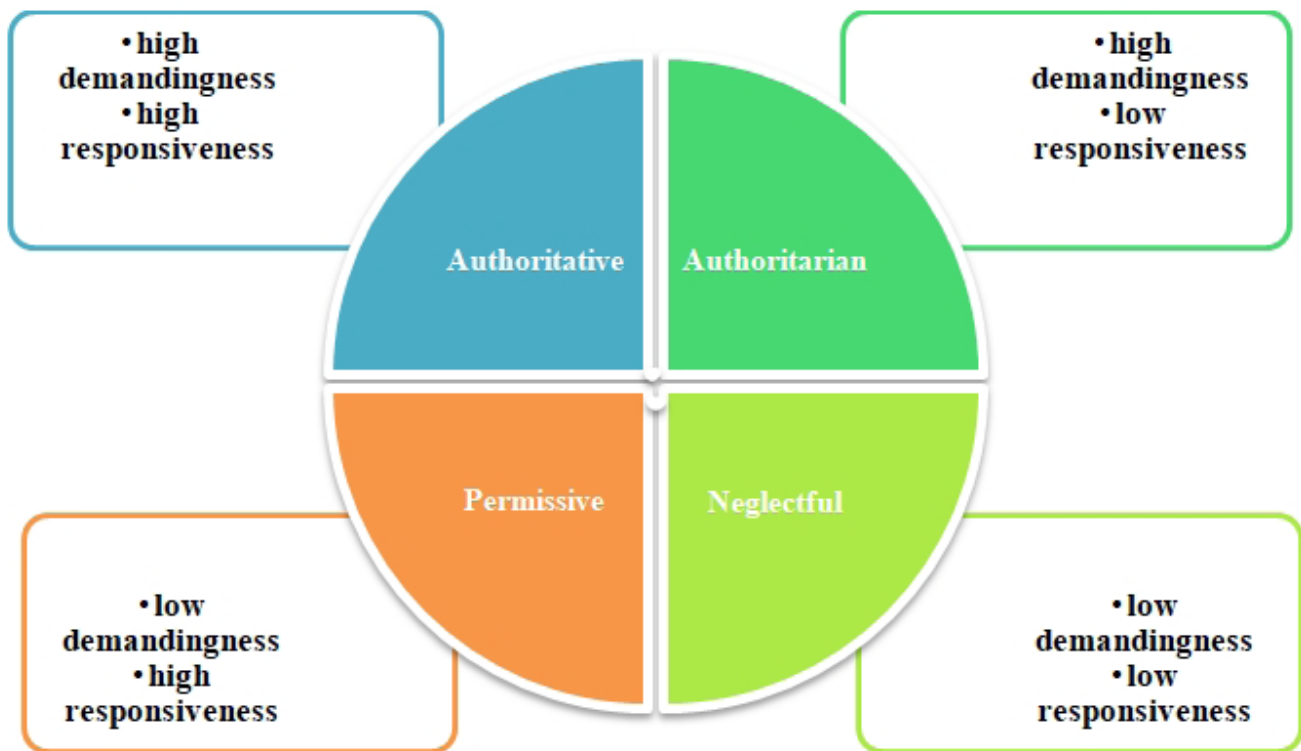
the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys. [Baumrind 1991:61-62]

Categorizing parents in respect to the degree to which they are demanding and responsive creates a typology of four parenting styles that describes acceptance and control on the part of the parents (see: Baumrind 1991; 1996; 2005).

- *Authoritarian* (high demandingness and low responsiveness)
- *Authoritative* (high demandingness and high responsiveness)
- *Permissive* (low demandingness and high responsiveness)
- *Neglectful* (low demandingness and low responsiveness)

Each of these parenting styles, which express different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices, and behavior (Baumrind 1991), reflects a distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. A four categorical model of parenting style.



Source: Baumrind (1991).

*Permissive parents* are non-traditional and lenient, do not require mature behavior on the part of their children, allow considerable self-regulation, and avoid confrontation. *Authoritarian parents* are highly demanding and expect their commands to be obeyed without explanation, but are not responsive, while *authoritative parents* are both demanding and responsive, monitoring their children's conduct and imparting clear standards for their behavior. They are thus assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. In contrast, *neglectful parents* are low in both responsiveness and demandingness. This style of parenting may encompass parents who are both rejecting-neglecting and neglectful, although most parents of this type fall within the normal range (Baumrind 1991:62).

Parenting style has also been found to predict child well-being in respect to social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behavior. Research based on parent interviews, child reports, and parent observations consistently finds that

- Children and adolescents whose parents are authoritative rate themselves, and are rated by objective measures, as more socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are non-authoritative (Baumrind 1991; Weiss and Schwarz 1996; Miller et al. 1993).
- Children and adolescents who are neglected by their parents perform most poorly in all domains.

In general, parental responsiveness predicts the future social competence and psychosocial functioning of the child, while parental demands are associated with instrumental competence and behavioral control. These findings indicate that

- Children and adolescents from authoritarian families tend to perform moderately well in school and not be involved in problem behavior, but they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression.
- Children and adolescents from permissive homes are more likely to be involved in problem behavior and perform less well in school, but they have higher self-esteem, better social skills, and lower levels of depression.

It is undeniable that primary parental activities are of the utmost importance for the development of the child. While this particularly includes the formation of habits consistent with a child's given age, child development also exerts a certain influence on parents' behavior, especially with the advance in age. It is thus important to note that the parent-child interaction is not static, but rather comprises a dynamic that is both bilateral and bidirectional.

## Research

There is a broad, rich, and varied range of contemporary studies in the field of parenting styles (Bornstein 2005), and the solid theoretical foundations of the paradigm of parental style lend support to a diverse spectrum of research areas in developmental psychology. The research interest of the present

discussion resides upon a study of how people in early adulthood perceive the parenting style of their parents. Their perceptions of parenting styles, along with the influence of the social environment, were investigated in a 2014 survey that utilized a symbolic interactionist approach. Baumrind's model of parenting styles was also employed, but not only because of its validity and popularity. The primary motivation for the decision to employ it was that it has been successfully applied in studies of childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, and later adulthood in order to evaluate both parenting styles of one's parents, and the parenting style later adopted by children when they become parents themselves.

Our respondents averaged 30 years in age, and our primary aim was to evaluate how they perceived their parents' style of parenting and investigate the differences between them in this regard. An issue of particular interest concerned mixed parenting styles. We assumed that if one's parents utilized different styles of parenting, then the young adult would perceive their general parenting style to be mixed. This would mean that it could not be clearly identified in respect to the four basic parenting styles discussed in the literature. We have also sought to identify the influence of the social environment, differences in the perceptions of parenting styles depending on the gender and age of the respondents, as well as the influence of the warmth and level of control warmth exhibited by parents from a retrospective point of view.

## Method

A two-part semi-structured interview was utilized in our analysis of the data for two primary reasons.

The first took into consideration the fact that the social environment determines the style and process of parenting to no small degree. This led to the inclusion of questions in the first part of the interview that were aimed at revealing the influence of such external factors as social context, life changes, social pressures, and so forth. The second consideration reflected the fact that half of the participants failed to identify a specific parenting style characteristic of when they were growing up. This suggested that the main determinants of a given style of parenting—demands placed upon children and responsiveness—are blurred over time. This assumption was explored in the second part of the interview by questions designed to reveal whether perceived warmth or perceived control was more important for the respondents when assessing the parenting style of their parents from a retrospective point of view.

35 respondents aged 18 to 45 participated in the interviews. The perceived parenting styles of their parents had previously been defined by completion of the questionnaire designed for this purpose. The gender of the respondents, whether they had children of their own, and whether they had a brother or sister were also reported. 21 of the participants were women and 14 men, 32 had their own children, and all 35 had a brother or sister. The interviews consisted of 30 questions and were approximately 50 minutes in length. The questions addressed four groups of topics: the influence of the social context, the influence of time, the perception of warmth in the parent-child relationship, and the perception of control in the parent-child relationship. 45 questions had initially been formulated, but these were

reduced in number after an expert assessment in order to avoid redundancy.

## Results

### Social Environment

In accordance with our theoretical perspective, we assumed that the extensive influence of the social environment is a significant factor in the formation and implementation of specific parenting practices. This was confirmed by our respondents' answers—the 32 who had children of their own stated that the demands placed upon them by the environment clearly influence the guidance they give their children.

I don't want to stop my daughter if there's something she likes and enjoys doing, but I would certainly never encourage a profession that was outdated.

If my son wouldn't be able to earn enough money with his future job, how could I encourage him? It would be best if what he likes is in demand today. I would hardly support him becoming an artist if that was what he wanted.

What you can't earn money and achieve something in life with is not a profession. It might be a hobby.

Only three participants gave the opposite answer. For example,

I would definitely encourage my child to develop their talents. There is nothing better than working at something that gives you pleasure.



I will encourage my daughter even more if there's something that makes her happy. I see nothing wrong with being yourself and developing in the direction that satisfies you.

Our respondents were unanimous regarding the values that they would like to instill in their children. All of them stated that they are guided largely by their own views and by what they themselves believe is right in raising their children, but do not ignore the accepted values, rules, and norms of society.

Of course I try to give my child good values, but we should not forget that we live in a society together with other people. If I want my child to fit in well in the future, I have to take this into consideration.

When we are in a public place, I can't help but tell him how to behave or what not to do. I try to be a good example. I think my child will learn better that way than if I'm grumbling every day about different things all day long.

In summary, the environment is a factor that strongly affects the formation of a specific parenting behavior in child-raising. This was the expected result.

## Gender

We examined our data to see whether there were any differences depending on the sex of the respondents, and we observed gender differences regarding perceptions of permissive and authoritative styles of parenting, with men being likely to perceive the general style of parenting in their family as having been more authoritative and permissive than

did women. This result was also largely confirmed by the interviews. Our respondents maintained that there was a certain degree of double standard in this regard, and that greater "freedom" was given to boys concerning, for example, when to be home in the evening. The replies of most men also indicated that their parents exercised less control over them in respect to their daily responsibilities than was the case with the women. For instance, most men stated that the time at which they had to be home was not strictly determined, and the smaller number who stated that they did have a curfew also remarked that no serious consequences were associated with them coming home late.

No, I didn't have a curfew. When I went out at night, my parents used to ask me where I was going and who else would be there, but they never told me to be home at 10. Of course, I didn't abuse their trust and the freedom they gave me.

Yes, you could say that I had to be in by a certain time. My parents told me not to be late and to be home on time. They even used to tell me a specific time when I was younger, but I rarely managed to be on time—I was almost always 20 or 30 minutes late. But, I don't remember quarreling seriously with my parents about it or being punished.

Similar differences also pertain to the various responsibilities that parents placed upon children at home and at school, with compliance being monitored to some extent. Most of the men said that their parents gave them routine tasks concerning their room or the family in some way, but that they were rarely punished if they did not do them.

My sister and I shared a room. My part of the room was always messier and my things were more scattered around. My mother used to tell me to put away my clothes or my school books, but I seldom did. Usually my sister could not stand being that messy and would straighten everything up. I don't remember being punished for that.

My mother worked a lot and almost every week gave me different things to do—clean my room, do the dishes, run the vacuum cleaner. I did some of them, but I also forgot about some of them really often. But, I don't remember being punished for it.

In respect to performance at school, the majority of the men stated that their parents insisted that they do well and get high marks. However, they reported being punished for low grades or bad behavior in only very few cases. Poor performance or behavior led most of the time only to a stern conversation with their parents.

My parents have always told me how important education is and that I have to study hard because it's for my own good. I mostly had high marks, but there were also times when the opposite happened. My mother would then simply say that everything was fine and that I should try to do better the next time.

I wasn't an excellent student in school, but my behavior was rather good. I had pretty low grades, but I don't remember being punished or restricted by my parents. They had a serious conversation with me, and that was all.

The women's responses display the opposite tendency—they generally believed that their parents

imposed greater control over them in terms of duties and responsibilities. For example, almost all of the women stated they had a curfew, and that they would not be permitted to go out for a day or two in most cases when they had been late.

Oh yeah, I had a curfew. I had to be at home at 10. I did that most of the time, but sometimes I was late. Then I knew that I would be punished by not being allowed to go out or not having spending money for a day or two.

My parents used to ask me a thousand questions at the door when I was about to go out—where are you going, with whom, why, how many people will be there, when will you get home? I had to mention a specific time for coming home and actually stick to it because I didn't want to be punished, which usually happened if I was late.

The women respondents also indicated that they were likely punished in some way, reprimanded, or restricted when they did not meet their obligations at home or school.

I had a younger brother and we shared a room. His toys were everywhere. Of course it was me who had to put everything away. Whenever the room was messy, I was reprimanded.

My mother always seriously involved me in cleaning the house when I was younger, and she often gave me different responsibilities after I grew up—to do the dishes or the dusting. I seldom remember being punished if I didn't do something, but almost every time my mother would criticize me or make remarks

like, “I think you didn’t remove everything from the shelf before you dusted” or “I think I see dust in that corner over there.”

I was an excellent student. I don’t know whether that was because of my parents, or simply because everything was easy for me. I remember that my mother was not very happy when I got a C. She used to say that it might have been a B or an A if I had worked harder.

My mother insisted that I do my homework immediately after school, and she often punished me when I got a low grade—no going out, no money, no computer. The good thing was that I rarely had bad grades.

The majority of those we interviewed thus confirmed our expectations regarding gender differences in how they perceived their parents. For example, respondents who had a brother or sister gave almost the same answers to the question “Do you think that your parents exerted more or less control over your sister/brother?” The clear tendency was for men to say that there had been more strict control over their sisters.

My sister was the oldest child, so it was normal that our parents controlled her more. I walked the beaten path.

Women in turn stated that they were subject to stricter control and more restrictions than were their brothers.

Oh yes, our parents definitely didn’t treat my brother in the same way. More demands were always placed

on me, and I was expected to follow them. My brother had more freedom when it came to expectations and restrictions.

This result is quite logical and expected, particularly given the norms of our society—it strongly supported our relevant assumptions and was fully confirmed by our respondents’ answers in the interviews. Briefly stated, people think that parents still regard girls as the weaker and gentler sex who should be controlled to a greater degree. We believe that this view is driven by an unconscious desire on the part of the parents to protect girls from problems rather than by a degree of disinterest or neglect.

### Age Group

The influence of age was also investigated. Our respondents were between 18 and 45, with an average age of 30, and we divided them into two groups in accordance with that mean value age when analyzing the results. We found that age influences perceptions of the permissiveness of both parents in child-raising and of the authoritative style of the father. Those under 30 perceived the styles of both their mother and father as more permissive than did people over 30, while those under 30 also perceived the father’s style of parenting as more authoritative. This result can be explained in part by the fact that one’s assessment of their parents changes with the accumulation of social experience over time insofar as standards and criteria are refracted by time, which serves to place a greater emphasis upon warmth rather than control in recollections of parental behavior. This was largely evident in the interview results.

We sought to identify the most important evaluative factor in our examination of the connection between age differences and recollected perceptions of parenting styles—either the extent of control or the degree of warmth—and determine whether we could assume that this would change in respect to how much time had passed. While our respondents' answers in this regard contained a certain lack of clarity, they nevertheless confirmed our assumptions to no small degree. For example, we found no visible differences in the responses of people aged 27-35, who expressed roughly similar views. However, significant differences were observed between the responses of those who were 25-26 and those aged 34-35, with the younger sub-group indicating that greater warmth in relations was rather important, regardless of the degree of control. A typical response was

I think my parents supported me very much, and if I was punished, I fully deserved it.

In contrast, those who were 34-35 felt that they were subjected to more control than was necessary, and they associated this with a lack of warmth and being neglected by their parents.

I don't think my parents were particularly democratic, but I guess this was because they didn't have enough time to pay more attention to me.

There was also a substantial difference between those who were 34-35 years of age and had children and those who did not, with the two sub-groups responding differently in respect to what they perceived to be the positive and negative aspects of

their parents' styles of parenting. They also stated that while they borrowed a significant number of elements of their parents' behavior, they sought to avoid those that were associated with unpleasant emotions in their childhood.

I don't think that my parents brought me up badly, and in general I have no complaints. Even if there were shortcomings, this is a lesson for me—I know what I should not let happen in relations with my child.

I try to avoid the things that were bad in relations with my parents. My father had the habit of not answering me when I asked him something. When my child now has a question to his father and he does not respond immediately, I always remind my husband to pay attention.

Such responses reveal that parenting can develop and change in respect to changed circumstances and a different temporal point of view. The results show that responsiveness and warmth in relationships with one's parents are important when evaluated retrospectively, and that people are more likely over time to remember the degree of warmth and responsiveness shown by their parents than their degree of strictness and control. We regard this as a significant insight because it reveals the importance of parental roles in child-raising—when children feel a sufficient level of support and stability, they have a greater number of opportunities to develop and build their identity. This result can also be very useful for parents in that a majority of concerns relate to the restrictions and limits they impose on their children. Data show that a sense of

security is much more important than other factors that characterize parenting.

## Conclusion

In summary, I would like to reiterate the importance of one's perception and interpretation of parenting style and behavior in raising children. In symbolic interactionist terms, the connection between a developing person and how they perceive the parenting style of their parents is crucial for his or her future development. This was revealed

in our research concerning perceived styles of parenting in early adulthood—what is essential is not the actual style of parenting employed, but rather the child's personal interpretation of parental behavior and practices. Furthermore, the most important issue in assessing a given style of parenting is the degree of warmth and responsiveness in parent-child relations, especially from a retrospective point of view. Also significant is influence of the social environment, which comprises a factor in the formation and implementation of specific parenting practices.

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## The Perception of Security Threats in Lithuania: A Human Security Perspective<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract** This article presents original research concerning subjective security and the perception of security threats in Lithuania. It is based on an analysis of data collected during qualitative interviews conducted in 2016 within the framework of a project titled *Subjective Security in Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors, and Individual Strategies*. The investigation resides upon individual-based human security theory, and it addresses the threats that individuals consider to be important, as well as the ways in which various perceptions of security form within society.

**Keywords** Subjective Security; Security Threats, Lithuania; Qualitative Interviews

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The social sciences long regarded security as primarily international security, and states were considered to be the primary actors in this regard. Certain new conceptions of security took shape after the end of the Cold War, however, with an important theoretical change being introduced by the *Human Development Report* that was published by the United Nations in 1994. This report declared that “human security is not a concern with weapons—it is a concern with human life and dignity,” arguing that “human security is people-centered” since people, not nation states, comprise the major referent of security (*Human Development Report* 1994:22-23).

<sup>1</sup> The research presented in this article is part of the project *Subjective Security in Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors, and Individual Strategies*, funded by the Research Council of Lithuania and based at the Institute of Sociology, Lithuanian Social Research Centre (Grant No. GER-004/2015).

This new approach to security placed individuals and the issues of daily life at the center of concern. It advocated a broad perception of security that does not focus solely on international military security insofar as it includes such other security issues as natural disasters, pandemics, famine, genocide, neighborhood safety, human rights, energy security, and cyber security.

Security is a basic need of human beings, and it comprises a key element of individual well-being. Abraham Maslow argues that physiological needs, such as the need for food, water, sleep, warmth, together with security needs, take precedence over other needs. Psychological needs, such as the need for love and belonging, esteem needs, such as the desire for prestige and a sense of accomplishment, and a need for self-fulfillment or self-actualization, can be satisfied only after basic physiological and security needs are satisfied (Maslow 1943). We may thus say that the provision of individual security

is a fundamental issue for the development of society.

Security is both objective and subjective, that is, it is both a reality and a feeling or perception. Objective security is understood as a state of being free from threats and danger, while subjective security is seen as a state of feeling secure and free from fear and anxiety. This distinction indicates that the images of security in people’s minds do not always correspond to objective reality, and that people may feel insecure in objectively secure situations and feel secure in objectively insecure environments. As Buzan (2009:50) states,

the referent threats (danger and doubt) are very vague, and the subjective feeling of safety or confidence has no necessary connections with actually being safe.

The following matrix displays the four variations of the interplay between objective and subjective security that are theoretically possible.

Figure 1. Variations of Interplay between Objective and Subjective Security.

		<b>Objective Security</b>	
		Secure	Insecure
<b>Subjective Security</b>	Secure	<b>S/S</b>	<b>S/I</b>
	Insecure	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/I</b>

Source: Self-elaboration.

The first option (S/S) is that an individual is both subjectively and objectively secure, such as an individual who is doing well economically and also feels secure in this regard. The second option (S/I) refers to a situation in which an individual is objectively insecure, but instead feels secure. A pertinent example would be an individual who lived next to the Krakatau volcano before it erupted, which seriously damaged or destroyed nearly 300 villages and towns. The third option (I/I) indicates that an individual is both subjectively and objectively insecure—he/she feels insecure and is in fact exposed to danger or risks. A relevant example would be an individual living in the lowlands near a river that experiences heavy flooding each spring—the individual feels insecure and is objectively insecure. The fourth option (I/S) defines an individual who feels insecure even though he/she is objectively secure. An example would be an individual who is afraid to go out at night even though the risk of criminal activity is very low and the area is objectively safe.

Subjective perceptions are based on the psychological belief that

we see things objectively. When we look at the world, we tend to assume that we are seeing all that is truly significant in it and that what we are seeing is, in fact, pretty much the way it is. [Benforado and Hanson 2012:457]

Subjective perceptions of reality do not form independently, however, instead being socially constructed and shaped by mass-media. Gamson and colleagues (1992:374) argue in this regard that

we walk around with media-generated images of the world, using them to construct meaning about political and social issues. The lens through which we receive these images is not neutral, but evinces the power and point of view of the political and economic elites who operate and focus it. And the special genius of this system is to make the whole process seem so normal and natural that the very art of social construction is invisible.

For this reason, research concerning how such “images of the world” are formed in the minds of people, and how they relate to the “objective world,” constitutes an important task for the social sciences. The present discussion comprises an attempt to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon by focusing on common S/I and I/S situations.

Although subjective security constitutes an important area in contemporary social research, it has received less scholarly attention than objective security. One reason for this is the predominance of state-based perceptions of security as a matter of international military arrangements, which has led to a neglect of individual-based security matters associated with everyday life. There is also a general tendency to devalue the importance of public attitudes towards security issues along with elite and media biases, including their persistent involvement with the art of social construction.

The majority of studies concerning subjective security focus on public perceptions of various risks, uncertainties, and threats. For example, much of the research conducted in the United States addresses subjective perceptions of the threat of nuclear war, terrorism, and concerns with energy and en-



vironmental security (Davis and Silver 2004; Jenkins-Smith 2006; Herron and Jenkins-Smith 2014). Attitudes towards security policies (Jenkins-Smith 2006), as well as the influence of perceptions of security on public policy (Huddy, Feldman, and Weber 2007), have also been investigated. Research in Israel has examined national security and military threats (Kimhi and Shamaï 2006a; 2006b; Asher 1995; 2003), while research carried out in Europe has explored attitudes towards national security and defence (Saar Poll OÜ 2014). Migration as a threat to national security has also been addressed (Lahav and Courtemanche 2012), although this approach has been criticized as unethical and politicized and is considered to be ambiguous (Huysmans 2002).

The present article adds to existing studies on subjective security by presenting results obtained in the research project *Subjective Security in Volatile Geopolitical Context: Traits, Factors, and Individual Strategies*. This research, which focuses on the public perceptions and evaluations of security threats in contemporary Lithuania from the human security perspective, was conducted between 2014-2017 by the author and her colleagues at the Institute of Sociology, Lithuanian Social Research Centre, with support from the Research Council of Lithuania. It aims to explore the threats considered to be important in Lithuanian society today, why this is the case, how such perceptions relate to objective security, and the ways in which various perceptions of security form in society.

### Methodological Remarks

30 semi-structured, qualitative, face-to-face interviews with people of differing demographic back-

grounds were conducted in 2016. The respondents' age, gender, ethnic origin, occupation, and place of residence (village, town, capital) were taken into consideration so that our sample would reflect the largest possible social and demographical heterogeneity. 15 men and 15 women ranging from 21 to 78 years of age were interviewed in order to ensure that our respondents had different experiences in life. For example, the fact that a 21-year-old could never have lived in the Soviet Union might well mean that, generational differences aside, she or he has different perceptions than a 60-year-old who lived 35 years under Soviet occupation and 25 years in an independent Lithuania. Ethnic origin was another important factor when selecting respondents. Ethnic Lithuanians comprised 87% of the population in 2016, with ethnic Poles being the largest minority (5.6%) and ethnic Russians the second largest (4.7%) (*Statistics Lithuania* 2016). 10 of the 30 interviews were with representatives of ethnic minorities in order to obtain a larger variety of opinions, which could then be compared with the opinions of those representing the titular nation. The occupation of the respondents varied from manual workers (loader, factory worker, manicurist, turner, driver, cashier, and so forth) to qualified and highly qualified persons (such as teacher, businessman, lawyer, scientist, engineer, journalist). 2 respondents were unemployed for lengthy periods of time and 4 were retired. 12 respondents lived in the capital city, Vilnius, although the majority of them had moved there as adults; 6 respondents lived in villages; and the rest resided in towns. Excerpts from interviews presented in the text indicate the gender, age, and occupation of the respective respondent.

Where appropriate, insights garnered from the quantitative stage of our research are used in order to enrich the analysis by casting light on general tendencies. The quantitative data comes from a national representative survey (N=1,009) conducted in February 2016 within the framework of the project.

## Security as an Ability to Control the Situation

The research findings indicate that perceptions of security depend greatly on individuals' belief that they are able to view events objectively, control the situation, and ensure their security by their own personal decisions.<sup>2</sup> In addition, people tend to perceive their security as something associated with the way of life they have chosen.

I always make sure to be careful...I have enough sense, I know where to cross the street, I know where it's safe to ride my bike. I also try to warn others if there's an opportunity to help...At my age, I try to think less about all the bad things out there so that I might live longer. I don't want them to eat away at me. [female 74, retired kindergarten teacher]<sup>3</sup>

You shouldn't...do things that could provoke not feeling safe, so if you live a normal life, you feel pretty safe. [male 77, retired teacher]

The data reveal that a majority of respondents acknowledge their personal responsibility for being secure, along with the conviction that it is possible

<sup>2</sup> There is no difference between "safety" and "security" in Lithuanian. The same word, *saugumas*, refers to both.

<sup>3</sup> All translations of interview material are by the author.

to ensure one's security by taking certain decisions, such as choosing to live in a district considered to be safe.

You take that into consideration when you choose where to live. Not somewhere near the main train station, where there's a high crime rate, but somewhere quieter. [female 32, journalist]

Walking at night, particularly in places considered to be dangerous, also poses a great risk. Respondents state that avoiding such situations will make one feel secure.

No one else will look after you except yourself, so you just have to be careful, perhaps avoid certain places. [female 21, student]

Once it gets dark I don't plan anything and don't go outside. [female 78, retired municipal clerk]

Choosing one's friends and circle of acquaintances carefully is another important factor that should be taken into consideration.

Friends, your surroundings, the people you talk to—after all, you choose whom to communicate with. You get a feeling for who might be out to do you harm [and you avoid them]. [female 32, journalist]

The ability to control the situation is perceived as an important component of security in certain other contexts as well. Some respondents regard a large personal space and being independent from others as a crucial element of individual security. Lithuanians traditionally value land and home ownership.

The feeling of security associated with owning a detached house surrounded by land is succinctly expressed by one of the respondents, who remarks that

When you have more space, you...are independent from your upstairs and downstairs neighbors...That's one of those elements of security that makes you have a greater personal space. [male 38, businessman]

Another respondent listed the following basic security needs:

[I'm] safe...We don't have a war going on, everything is fine...We work, we live, we have a roof over our heads...It's calm, calm and quiet, we have enough to eat. [male 33, long-distance driver]

A group of middle-class respondents with post-material values highlighted the importance of ecological food and a clean environment. For example,

You can't grow your own vegetables, you don't have time and it's just what you can get from the shops. So in that sense, security, well, what can I say...I have doubts about all those food products. Perhaps the quality does meet certain standards, but as to whether the food is good for our health, well, I doubt it...I think the question of food is also part of what makes us feel safe. [female 37, scientist]

The idea that it is not possible to control everything—such as the food you eat—makes some people feel less secure, although they understand that there are other things they can control and thus feel more secure. One example is automobiles. As one of the middle-class respondents remarked,

What else creates safety? It's even the very type of transport you choose to drive...it has to be safe...technically sound...That's also one of the factors that give you that sense of stability and well-being. [female 32, journalist]

An important factor in feeling secure or insecure is thus associated with a perceived ability to control the situation. People tend to feel secure in situations that they are able to control, and they feel insecure in situations that are beyond their abilities to do so. One respondents clearly states in this regard that

I in fact feel rather safe...I don't feel safe in those situations where I can't influence anything, where I can't change anything or do anything. [female 34, lawyer]

Stated otherwise, people feel stressed and insecure in situations where they are not sure what is happening and understand that reality cannot be controlled. A lack of information and awareness about particular situations or events also creates uncertainty and anxiety. As one of the respondents recalls,

Three days ago I was talking with my mother after she had been awakened at night...A terrible noise and lights, the house shook and she was so afraid. She jumped out of bed, went to the window, and saw...some kind of military aircraft fly by very low in the countryside...People were talking about it the next morning and everyone was afraid. I would say that people do feel very unsafe in such cases because...if some kind of training exercise is going on, then the community should be informed...The community should be told...When you know why it's happening, then you feel safe, but when you don't know, then you

start to feel uneasy...Information about the threat of war also provides a sort of impulse in that you're always ready, it might actually begin. So when that sort of exercise begins...and if you don't know, you wonder whether this is war or training. [female 32, journalist]

Being sure about the concerns of daily life is a key element in ensuring a feeling of security.

## The Hierarchy of Perceived Security Threats

Our findings reveal that people perceive their security situationally. They feel most secure in their usual daily environments (family, friends, neighborhood), and tend to think that the further a given situation is from their immediate neighborhood, the less secure it is. As a rule, the proximity of a given environment to an individual's everyday life determines the level of perceived security. Our quantitative survey data indicate that 9 out of 10 respondents feel secure in the immediate neighborhood (family, relatives, friends); 8 out of 10 feel secure in their city, town, or village; 6 out of 10 feel secure in their country; 5 out of 10 feel secure in the European Union; and only 3 out of 10 feel secure in the world.

The qualitative interviews reveal similar tendencies. People tend to believe that "one's own environment is certainly the most secure"—at home, in familiar places, with familiar people.

[I associate security] with my home. When I have a place to come back to, I immediately feel secure. And with people I know, people I know really well. I wouldn't say that I feel very insecure in unfamil-

iar places. But, places you know, streets you know, if you're talking about cities, then it really is much more enjoyable to walk along familiar streets than unfamiliar ones in the middle of the night. [female 21, student]

The village or city where one lives is considered to be quite a safe place in comparison to environments outside Lithuania. The least safe places are "far away," where "terrorist attacks happen" and "people are afraid to leave their houses because the migrants have brought chaos" (female 34, lawyer). In general, people tend to think that it is much more secure in Lithuania than elsewhere in Europe or in the world.

If you take what's going on around the world, then it doesn't seem to be very safe. But, so far there haven't been any acts of terror here. [male 53, factory worker]

Lithuania is safe, but on a global scale, then, yes, everyone is a little unsure about security...[T]ravelling abroad has become...[a little scary]. [female 37, scientist]

Lithuania has never been as safe as it is today in its entire history...This is a very safe place...There are more tourists coming to Lithuania because they don't feel so safe travelling to, for example, France, so they come here. [male 42, linguist]

Others nonetheless admit that no place is safe because terrorism can in fact happen anywhere.

All of Europe is no longer safe because, well, terrorism, I think it can happen anywhere. Anywhere. In that sense, well, I think Lithuania is no exception. I think those sorts of things can happen even here. [female 34, lawyer]

Something can happen anytime and anywhere, so you always have to look after yourself and always think about those things in advance...You won't feel completely safe anywhere, even going out to dinner you can't be sure that you'll really come home safely. [female 21, student]

When you look at the migrants and everything else, I can't say that I feel very calm. And when you think along those lines, then ultimately, there are not just fanatics, but psychopaths as well. [female 57, municipal clerk]

I don't understand the model itself, probably like the majority. How do they expect to filter out those five or one hundred extremists from among the several thousand? [male 38, businessman]

But, our respondents tend to believe that international terrorist attacks are hardly possible in Lithuania.

Whatever the case may be, we are still a kind of provincial backwater in Europe, and terrorist acts usually aim to be...to create the most resonance from a minimal amount of harm...They'll usually do them in Paris, or London, or Berlin...There would be too little resonance here and too little...well, at least that's what I think, that there would be too little media coverage. Just one time, and that's it. If there was a bombing there, like there was in Paris, the news reached the whole world. [male 26, lab assistant]

The interviews also reveal that people take into consideration very different issues when describing their security. The list of perceived threats is typically associated with recent everyday experiences,

as well as news accounts on social media and the mass media. As a rule, the interviewees first spoke about their own economic security and security in their immediate neighborhood, and addressed issues of international security only after they had discussed important matters in their daily lives, such as work-related issues, salaries, pensions, safety in the street, concern about their families, social services, and health.

Questions concerning economic security were raised in all of the interviews. A very large majority of those interviewed admitted that having a job and a stable income is crucial for being secure.

We can talk about whatever you like, but if you don't have any money, you'll never feel secure...If your pockets are empty and you need to think about what to eat or how to send your kids to school. [male 38, businessman]

When you have a roof over your head...you have a way of...providing for yourself and your family, you earn enough...you feel that's really a safe environment to live in. [male 42, linguist]

In terms of money first of all...we don't feel safe because you never know when you'll be short...[T]he material side is weak, we really do feel helpless. [female 53, baby-sitter]

A job guarantees stability in life, and older people are particularly concerned about their job prospects.

Losing your job is also terribly insecure. I feel terribly insecure because I already had one of those dismissal



slips last year—I felt really insecure. [female 57, municipal clerk]

I'm unemployed now. I'm at that age where not many places will take me. Besides my age, my health is no longer the best, so that...my concern now is finding work. Finding any kind of job, one that's not too complicated, not too hard, something. [male 60, unemployed]

Family and children were as important as having a job and an income. Parents emphasize that they are very concerned about their children's security.

Fear comes from the feeling that your kids are still young, and who would raise them if something happened to you? So that's why you want some kind of security...You feel more concerned not just over your own safety, but your children's as well. [female 37, scientist]

When speaking of security concerns about their children, people mainly have in mind the various safety issues connected with daily life that they are unable to control because their children are on their own, such as when they are crossing a busy street or taking a bus to after-school activities. But, they are also concerned about international security in the sense that they worry about what would happen to their children if they were left alone in the world because something had happened to the parents.

Educational opportunities are also one of the important concerns of daily life. For example, one respondent observes that rural inhabitants do not

have the same opportunities to develop their children's talents because not all rural schools provide after-school activities.

Reaching those after-school activities in the rural areas...is more difficult for children...Those clubs...if they're not at school...there aren't any buses and...it ends up that the kids suffer...parents can't...educate them...[A] different kind of feeling of insecurity arises—over that kid's future. [male 38, businessman]

Health is another important issue of daily life. Many people, especially the elderly, have pointed to insecurity in connection with their access to medical care as one of their most serious concerns.

The general clinic does not fill me with that kind of security. [female 57, municipal clerk]

There are expenses, many...expensive services, a lot of...medicine because I'm not in very good health, so I need quite a lot of pharmaceuticals...The main prescription drugs are subsidized, most of them, but if you want to take vitamins to be healthier, or any of those other supplements, you need to spend more money. [male 77, retired teacher]

The physical environment is again mentioned in respect to traffic safety.

I truly feel unsafe on the roads, even though I've been driving for many years. I'm not safe on the roads. Everywhere else, I think I feel safe. [female 37, scientist]

Anything could happen—a car could run into you. [male 45, gardener]

Physical security is also linked to the possibility of natural disasters, such as earthquakes and floods, although our research indicates that the latter are not regarded as being very important.

Well, all those tsunamis, all sorts of storms, [I'm] definitely not afraid of them. That's just...nature, and if they happen, then it must be fate. [female 25, manicurist]

Certain respondents did remark that natural disasters are a potential threat to their security.

There was an earthquake in the Kaliningrad District, and we felt it here...If [that's so], then our [16 story] building, well of course it might collapse. Perhaps that's one reason not to feel safe. [male 60, unemployed]

Sometimes you think, when you read all those portals, you find out how someone died from being bitten by a fly, then you think that danger could reach us even here. [male 36, engineer]

However, natural disasters seldom occur in Lithuania and people generally place no importance upon them as a threat to safety.

## Attitude Formation

Our research indicates that a general feeling of security in daily life depends upon numerous issues associated with personal experiences, the known experiences of relatives and close friends, and the level of importance given to criminal activity and other news accounts in the media.

One specific group of people consisting primarily of the younger generation perceives security in terms of their own personal experience. They tend to feel secure because nothing bad has happened to them and assume that this will remain the case.

I haven't been attacked by anyone...perhaps that's why I still go out at night, and...I really do feel safe. [female 25, manicurist]

I couldn't say that I'm afraid of anything in particular...I trust myself completely and believe that I'm safe. [male 34, car mechanic]

Financially and otherwise...I don't really think that anything bad could happen in the near future, whether it be economic, financial, or social unrest... There shouldn't be any of that ahead. [male 26, lab assistant]

Another group of people instead recall negative experiences in their lives or in the lives of people they know when they evaluate their general level of security. They tend to think that if a certain bad situation (theft, deception, robbery) happened once, then it might happen again. They assume that it is better to avoid places where they had negative experiences, take preventive measures, and be more careful in general.

I haven't been mugged many times, but one time has really stuck in my mind. It happened in the suburb near the station, when I was still a student. And back then losing 50 Litas meant losing what I needed to live in Vilnius for a week. It made such an impact on me, and then that safety instinct appeared. Ever

since then I'm really careful around places like that... and I look after my things. [female 32, journalist]

I wouldn't say that I feel very safe...The number of times we've had to call the police, well, unfortunately, they've practically been no help at all. That's because we had an unpleasant experience a long time ago when [thieves] broke into our apartment...Now we have cameras installed in the apartment. So if you're talking about our home, now we feel a little safer. [female 57, municipal clerk]

Perhaps the most unusual case consists of those people who have not been the victims of any personal or property crime, but nevertheless believe that life in general is dangerous because every day they hear news about crimes being committed against people just like them.

I read the newspapers, and sometimes...[people get mugged] even at 6 pm...A woman was mugged, her handbag was snatched, and she was punched. [female 78, retired municipal clerk]

We see what's going on in Germany. When you watch the television, the news, well, as they say, they're afraid of going out at night because there are [migrants] everywhere. Going wild, causing havoc. [female 34, lawyer]

In general, such people trust the mass media and do not clearly distinguish between their own experiences and those of others they see in the news. Some do admit, however, that they understand the role of the mass media in shaping reality and try to critically evaluate it.

The media induces...what's going on here. [male 60, unemployed]

You need to filter what you read on the Internet, you can't read everything and believe everything. So you simply choose what you do and do not want to believe. I think knowing does give you a sense of security and forces you to think. [female 21, student]

Depending on how it's presented, that's what you are led to believe. [female 57, municipal clerk]

An important issue often mentioned in the interviews was the dominance of negative news in mass media, which creates a general feeling of insecurity. One respondent observed in this regard that

When you turn on the TV...the main focus in our Lithuanian news is who killed whom—the crime update... And the most important thing, of course, is who blew up whom overseas, who killed whom, and so on. We won't get far with that sort of information. It means that people are immediately made to think negatively...We end up feeling even less safe. Even if it doesn't affect us directly, they still make us feel unsafe. They wear us down indirectly, but psychologically, because every time you turn on the TV, you wonder about what has happened today...But, to hear something about the theater, that someone staged a new production somewhere...that a project was done well somewhere, or something, we don't hear anything about that. Nothing at all. [male 38, businessman]

People thus view neither too much information, nor not enough as good for society. It is significant that they prefer to rely on primary sources of informa-

tion—people who witnessed something or people who know people who saw something—and try to make comparisons. An interesting example is provided by a respondent who recalls speaking with the cigarette smugglers who often crosses the Lithuanian-Russian border and relates how they told him that the Russian army is mobilized and in a state of constant readiness.

The border [with Kaliningrad District], where the majority of contraband passes, they're often there, and they see that stuff there, and they bring back that information. They say that now, after the crisis in Ukraine began, all the [Russian] soldiers are positioned in their units. Everyone's mobile phones have been taken away, from an ordinary soldier to the team leader. It's practically only the higher ranked and high-ranking commanders who can leave the district. So you get that kind of information, but our politicians are talking about completely different things. [male 38, businessman]

It thus appears to be the case that the information gained from primary sources, even though it is impossible to check its accuracy, is trusted more than what politicians say or what is presented as news in the media.

On the other hand, people feel lost in information flows. They admit that it is very difficult to understand what is going on in the world because one will never have all the needed information.

Whether it's the Russia-Ukraine crisis, or the Syrian crisis, the refugee crisis, however you look at it, at no point do we directly get all the information directly. We are only told enough to get a rough idea. We don't know the reasons for, nor the consequences of what might happen, what's really going on. [male 38, businessman]

## Conclusion

This article analyzed perceptions of security threats in Lithuanian society that individuals consider to be important. Objective and subjective security are not the same, and, in theory, there are four possible combinations of the interplay between objective and subjective security. These are feeling secure in objectively secure situations; feeling secure in objectively insecure situations; feeling insecure in objectively insecure situations; and feeling insecure in objectively secure situations.

Our analysis found that perceptions of security depend to a great degree on the belief of individuals that they are able to view events objectively, take control of the situation, and ensure their security by their own personal decisions. The data also indicate that people feel stressed and insecure in situations in which they are uncertain about what is happening and understand that they cannot control reality. In addition, people feel most secure in their usual daily environments (family, friends, neighborhood), and they tend to think that the further a given situation is from their immediate neighborhood, the less secure it is. But, even though individuals acknowledge that they are exposed to many dangers in their everyday lives, they generally tend to be optimistic about the future. Data from the quantitative survey reveal that 9 out of 10 people feel happy, and that 7 out of 10 look forward to the future and believe they could survive difficult times. As one of the respondents stated, "you can't be afraid of everything, and you've got to keep on living" (male 37, small business proprietor).

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## **An Essay on Self-Enslavement: The Pathology of Power and Control**

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**Abstract** This article discusses certain parallels between Du Bois' notion of double consciousness, Fanon's discussion of the neurotic inter-relationship between the colonial master and the native, and Marcuse's concept of one-dimensionality in order to draw an analogy between enslavement and the status of citizen in advanced Western-style societies today. The aim is to explore the exercise of power within these societies and cast light upon the manner in which the discourse of freedom both constitutes and masks submission to power. The argument is made that submission has come to be regarded as the fulfillment of human potential insofar as we have learned to look at ourselves through the eyes of those who exercise power over us, having lost the ability to imagine that the situation in which we live could, and should, be different than it is. The conception of symbolic interaction as it is now typically employed is drawn into question for the difficulties it faces in addressing unbalanced interaction in the power-submission relationship. The concept of nouveau colonialism is developed in order to capture how the relations that once obtained between a metropole and its overseas colonial possessions have in a sense been replicated between those who exercise power and those subject to power within one and the same community.

**Keywords** Double Consciousness; One Dimensionality; Nouveau Colonialism; Submission

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I am talking of millions of men who have been skillfully injected with fear, inferiority complexes, trepidation, servility, despair, abasement.  
Aimé Césaire, *Discours sur le Colonialisme* as quoted by Franz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (2008:1)

The Negro enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation.  
Franz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (2008:12)

## When Interaction Becomes One's Fate

The American sociologist, historian, and political and social activist W.E.B. Du Bois argued a century ago that being of African descent in the United States meant being deprived of what he termed “true self-consciousness” since Blacks typically perceived themselves—and as a group had done so for centuries—through the generalized contempt that White America held for them. Being both African and American thus raised contradictions concerning the general American social ideals that African-Americans shared to some extent with White Americans, at least after the abolition of slavery.

Du Bois (1903:3) described this state of “double consciousness” as

a world which yields [the African-American] no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever

feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two warring souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

This “double identity” forced individuals and groups to identify themselves as members of two opposed social worlds, namely, African, as well as American, which generated psychological, as well as social tension insofar as they were incommensurable in respect to their status in American society. That is to say that Blacks were forced to view themselves as both insiders and outsiders at one and the same time in that Americans of African descent resided in obviously disadvantaged social strata in comparison with their former White masters.

Double consciousness is an awareness of one's self that is compromised by, or in conflict with, how others perceive you. Perhaps the greatest danger posed by double consciousness—and of what may be described in ontological terms as inverted or reversed reciprocity—resides in the possibility—or even the probability—that conforming with how one is perceived by an alien and objectively hostile other in fact changes one's identity to that perception, altering one's entire existence in the process.

My contention is that Du Bois' notion of double consciousness helps us to understand the ways in which mechanisms of public manipulation and social control function in modern societies not only in respect to despised minorities, but also for the population at large. While the latter case does not involve obvious dual identity as such, my contention is that it nevertheless does turn upon how the way in which

the other regards us comes to dominate the ways in which we view ourselves.

## When Interaction Becomes a Disease

The work of Franz Fanon, as well as that of Du Bois serves to reveal what I term the “neo-slavery” and “nouveau colonialism”<sup>1</sup> that make possible the exercise of power in democratic society, which we misunderstand as our selfish freedom. Fanon, for his part, examines the pathology of colonialism in a fashion that fosters an understanding of how its mechanisms continue to function today in democratic society in the service of the exercise of power over ourselves rather than over the other in a foreign territory, who was regarded as culturally and/or racially inferior. Indeed, the exercise of power as such undercuts the basic Enlightenment principle—and one of the core doctrines of Liberalism—that each individual is capable of reason, rational behavior, and self-government. In this respect, it is useful to keep in mind that one of the primary consequences of modern European colonialism for the nations colonized was their identification as, at best, infantile proto-humans, if not savages, who did not share basic human traits with their European masters. I argue that one of the consequences of “nouveau colonialism” is that this type of identity is extended to a substantial degree to the population at large by the mechanisms through which power is exercised today.

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<sup>1</sup> The specific difference between neo-colonialism and what I refer to as “nouveau colonialism” is that the former refers to relations between the metropole and a former colonial possession, while the latter term is used to indicate analogous relations between those who exercise power and those subject to power within one and the same community. Neo-slavery denotes the hidden domination upon which today’s advanced societies both reside and depend.

The greatest difference between the world in which Fanon lived a half-century ago and ours is that all of us, White European masters, former slaves of African descent, and our former colonial subjects, are colonized today by an insidious power that comes to live within our very hearts and minds. The second greatest difference is that many of those who were previously colonized knew who their masters were, and sought to adopt their culture and language so that they could become “human beings,” too, while we believe that we already are free because our thoughts and feelings have already become those of our masters. Against this background, it may be argued that the globalization driven by advanced societies today goes hand in hand with a new contemporary type of colonialism that is directed against the populations of the advanced societies themselves, not those who reside in “undeveloped” countries and are supposedly racially inferior.

For example, Fanon bluntly states in respect to colonialism and ethnic discrimination that

The feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative to the European’s feeling of superiority. Let us have the courage to say it outright: It is the racist who creates his inferior...This conclusion brings us back to Sartre: “The Jew is one whom other men consider a Jew: that is the simple truth from which we must start...It is the anti-Semite who makes the Jew.” [Fanon 2008:69; see: Sartre 1960:69]

This may be understood in terms relevant to today’s advanced societies as follows: It is the one who exerts virtually irresistible power who *makes* the citizen who is convinced he/she is sovereign and free.

The citizen who is falsely convinced he/she is free could not exist without the master who is in fact free insofar as the master possesses the power to act as he/she pleases and utilize the other's submission in order to exercise power. Fanon (2008:168-169) thus reminds us that

Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose his existence on another man in order to be recognized by him. As long as he has not been effectively recognized by the other, that other will remain the theme of his actions.

The two poles of this interaction together thereby form a dialectical, inseparable whole, neither side of which is in truth free. As Hegel reveals, the master is at least as dependent upon the slave as the slave is dependent upon him/her. The master believes he/she is free, but he/she is in fact dependent on the creature he/she has created precisely because he/she has created a slave (Hegel 1977:111-19).

Sartre (2004:liv) quotes one of Fanon's relevant diagnoses of those who have been colonized to the effect that

The status of "native" is a neurosis introduced and maintained by the colonist in the colonized with their consent.

We might restate this for the world in which we live in today in the following terms:

*The status of "free" is a psychosis introduced and maintained by those in power in advanced societies in those upon whom they exercise their power with their un-knowing consent.*

It is no longer the African, Arab, or Indian who is constituted as sub-human by the colonial master in his/her drive to amass wealth while escaping economic crisis at home. It is rather we who have become sub-humans as power is exercised upon us "at home," so to speak. We consume what has been offered to us—not least of all values, ideas, worldview, and concepts—and thereby increase the power used to control us, all the while believing that we have fulfilled the essence of human potential in a world that can supposedly be improved only by being cleansed of those who challenge our way of life.

It is useful to note that although those who pose such a challenge may very well resemble us physically and be our neighbors, such as the economically and organizationally "inferior" members of the European Union to some extent, the very large majority are still identified by their supposed racial or cultural inferiority, if not both, and include many descendants of our former colonial subjects.

We may say in general terms that European colonialism involved a technique whereby European states endeavored to avoid domestic crisis by exporting their economic burdens onto weaker nations and peoples, seeking to resolve a deteriorating economic situation through territorial expansion. Large enterprises were driven to expand beyond their national borders in order to locate new markets and resources, including "inferior" human subjects whom they could dominate and eventually consume. These remarks strangely mirror the situation today in respect to the mechanisms of domination in advanced democratic societies. For example, analogous to the manner in



which modern industrial societies in Europe and North America were driven to expand their power and control over other nations in order to ensure stability and wealth at home, advanced societies today seek to deepen and expand the efficiency with which they manipulate and dominate their domestic populations, creating new mechanisms of surveillance with this goal in mind. The key word here is “efficiency,” for that implies, among other matters, a minimum of resistance on the part of those dominated. Not only should the latter be sufficiently compliant, they should welcome the exercise of power upon them if all is to take place as calmly as possible so that overt violence can be avoided. If the slave can be made to feel contented, and blood does not flow freely in the streets, so much the better.<sup>2</sup>

There is a need today by those who exercise power not merely to avoid domestic crises through territorial expansion, which had been the logic of colonialism typical of European powers, but also to squeeze as much value from the domestic populations as is feasible while leaving them to live as supposed “human beings” rather than as cattle or beasts of burden. Today it has become both possible and necessary for power to rest upon and take advantage of increasingly large numbers of people, both at home and abroad. Perhaps most importantly, the technology now exists to do so in a manner that does not rely upon open physical violence, but generates submission through a sense of self-satisfaction.

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<sup>2</sup> For further background on these and related issues, see, for example, Blaut 1989; Cohen 1944; Gandhi 1988; Guha and Spivak 1988; Kohn 2010; Kohn and O’Neill 2006; Mehta 1999.

The discourse of freedom in advanced societies has come to constitute the exercise of power. It creates the other of the one in power in such a way that the person subjugated willingly supports his/her submission because he/she feels himself/herself involved in a system that guarantees his/her independence. It is this conviction that ensures the possibility to exercise power by the one who possesses it. That is to say that the feeling of freedom in the one controlled is the form now taken by the exercise of power on the part of the one who controls power. It is no longer a sense of inferiority combined with a neurotic desire to learn the language and way of life of the alien master.

One could argue that the ideology of free individuals in advanced democratic societies is a result of the need to colonize the core instead of the periphery, as had formerly been the case, in order to consolidate power to an even higher degree. Perhaps it is generally more difficult today than it once was to export threats to domestic stability to nations that have been reduced to slavery through brute force and military conquest. That is not to say that the dominant nations—the infamous “international community”—are reluctant to use violence in pursuit of their aims whenever they deem it necessary to do so, such as has been the case recently with the effective destruction of much of the governmental and state structures in Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria by, in particular, France, Britain, and the United States—with all the consequences that has had upon the dreaded migration of the supposed inferior poor into the European Union.

My argument is that the mechanisms described by Du Bois and Fanon, among others, have much in

common with the mechanisms of control and manipulation that typify modern, so-called democratic market societies. That is to say that their studies of the effects of slavery and colonization upon the human psyche and human existence cast light upon, and are very pertinent to, the situation that exists today in modern societies. The work of both Du Bois and Fanon is distinguished by the fact that they analyzed social and historical processes that are readily recognizable as pathological in character because of the suffering they create. Those afflicted with the double consciousness subsequent to American slavery, or with the neurotic, even psychotic, behavior associated with European colonialism, were clearly subject to racial discrimination, perceived themselves to be second-class citizens—if citizens at all—in the eyes of the masters, and were hated by their racial “superiors,” perhaps “deservingly” so in their own eyes. The misery in such situations could be hidden neither from those who participated in it, nor from those who observed it.

In contrast, those living in today’s mass surveillance “democratic” societies also view themselves through the eyes of their masters—those who exercise power over them for their own advantage—but they do so in a manner that conceals the exercise of control and manipulation. Indeed, they view their lives in a manner that makes them appear to be essentially positive, and they might well regard any questioning of such a view as pathological. Those who feel themselves to be enjoying the fruits of democracy obviously regard themselves to be living lives that are fulfilled insofar as they are living the way “normal” and “happy” people in “free” societies are supposed to live. They are blind not only to the fact of being

manipulated, but even to the possibility that someone might endeavor to manipulate them such that they cannot view their lives for what they are. They have been educated, as it were, to allow themselves to be entrapped in types of interaction marked by a private search for pleasure that in fact augments the power that has already been exercised upon them—as is indeed intended to be the case. Being taught to remain focused on what they themselves seemingly decide to do on their own keeps their gaze closely focused away from the mechanisms that guide their lives within an all-encompassing framework of power exercised by others.

Du Bois and Fanon described a world in which the misery of the poor and the enslaved obviously begot the wealth and power of their masters. We instead live today in a world in which the power and wealth of the other resides upon and is protected by our feeling of independence as sovereign individuals and by our false conviction that we are the masters of our own fate.

Ziauddin Sardar writes in his 1986 foreword that appears in the 2008 edition of *Black Skin, White Masks* that Fanon’s text was

the first book to investigate the psychology of colonialism. It examines how colonialism is internalized by the colonized, how an inferiority complex is inculcated, and how, through the mechanism of racism, black people end up emulating their oppressors. [Sardar 2008:x]

If we look at his discussion more closely, however, we can discern, on a more general level that leaves

asides the specific features of European colonialism, the way in which those who wield power in advanced societies create the type of citizens they need in order to pursue their own aims and increase their power. The resulting creatures do what is expected of them for the sake of someone else's power and enjoyment while thinking that they are doing only what they themselves desire and have chosen to do.

Sardar (2008:xii) further observes that Fanon's struggle is concerned

as much with freedom from colonialism as with liberation from the suffocating embrace of Europe, and the pretensions of its civilization to be the universal destiny of all humanity.

One may argue that these same pretensions concerning the superiority of European-style civilization remain today with their full weight, but are now expressed with much more sophistication. They are no longer presented, at least openly, with the brutal ugliness of explicit claims to racial superiority and the universalism of power blatantly tied to racism, but now involve the dominance of an irresistible power masked behind the right to selfishness. This may be regarded as a grand narrative and dominant discourse that extends the notion of European superiority onto an even higher level. Stated otherwise, these same pretensions are now couched in terms of individual rights and economic prosperity.

Nevertheless, we are thereby degraded with such efficiency and efficacy into mere mechanisms for the satisfaction of those who exercise power over us

that we human mechanisms—clockwork people—are convinced that we are fulfilling our own selfish interests, even as we follow the wishes of another (Fanon 2008:12). We accept our servitude as normalcy, for why should anything be different? It is as if we have attained the end of history, which Francis Fukuyama trumpeted when Soviet-style society reached the end of its days. In contrast, Fanon's dissection of the open brutality of racism and colonial occupation serves to unveil the hidden brutality of the empty, self-deceived individuality that is created through a willing submission to the exercise of power in the name of supposed freedom.

Homi K. Bhabha, in his foreword to the 2008 edition of *Black Skin, White Masks*, refers to what he terms the "familiar alignment of colonial subjects—Black/White, Self/Other" (Bhabha 2008:xxiii). Today this has been transposed from our colonial domination of a racially defined other to the "domestic" subjugation of a self who is in fact the other, but instead regards himself/herself as sovereign. The "nouveau colonialist" era in which we are now living is thus populated not by subjects, but by objects who believe they are subjects. Sartre (2004:lx) asks in respect to Fanon's diagnosis, "What then has happened?" He then answers, "Quite simply this: we were the subjects of history, and now we are the objects." That is to say that, within the parameters of the present discussion, we have been colonized at home—by our fellow citizens, as it were—but we do not see their exercise of power, for it is hidden behind our apparent, but self-deceiving, choice of what has already been given to us for our purchase and consumption, in both a literal and figurative sense. We are thereby subjugated by mechanisms of power that we typi-

cally do not—and cannot—observe. Why are these mechanisms invisible? Because they are draped in the garb of a false freedom that serves the domination of another who dwells within our hearts and minds—whose deliberations, desires, and actions we accept as our own.

Bhabha (2008:xxx) states that colonialism was characterized by a “shifting boundary of otherness within identity.” How is this true for us today? The most important issue in this regard is that we have been created and educated to think that we, in our servitude, share the freedom of those who exercise power upon us and drive us to do their wishes, believing them to be our own. Our deformed being-for-self is thus a debased being-for-other. I am what I am not—that is, free and the master of my actions. All that appears to be my own exists in order to serve the power of another and increase his domination and satisfaction.

The resulting absolute depersonalization that was typical of colonized nations (Fanon 2008:xxiii) convinces us that we, in our selfish satisfaction, are what we are not, viewing ourselves through the eyes of the other exactly as he/she wishes that we see ourselves so that his/her exercise of power over us can proceed as efficiently as possible, with no opposition from us, his/her robot slaves. We have thus become robot subjects oblivious of how we are controlled, reveling in a false freedom that realizes the desires of our invisible masters, analogous to how our computers and telephones function when taken over by a malicious intruder. This is the alienation of the person for the sake of someone else’s freedom and satisfaction (Fanon 2008:xxiii). Our freedom is

but our servitude. There are still subjects amongst us—those who exercise power over us and through us—and we believe we are their equals, but what we believe to be our own personal mastery constitutes our subjugation.

Perhaps this false sense of freedom should be referred to as a form of psychosis, for, as Fanon (2008:125) observes, “Whenever there is a psychotic belief, there is a reproduction of self”—and the self today is reproduced through a type of unbalanced interaction that constitutes a state of submission that is understood as liberty and democracy.

Bhabha (2008:xxvii) notes that these collaborations of political and psychic violence within civic virtue—of alienation within identity—lead Fanon to describe the splitting of the colonial space of consciousness and society as marked by a “Manichean delirium.” I wish to suggest that the representative figure of such perversion is post-Enlightenment man in developed, post-colonial European-style society as he has been led to understand the fulfillment of human potential in terms of a selfish pursuit of private satisfaction that has debased the very notion of democracy and self-determination.

Fanon (2004:235) observes in the same vein that

Europe has taken over leadership of the world with fervor, cynicism, and violence. And look how the shadow of its monuments spreads and multiplies. Every movement Europe makes bursts the boundaries of space and thought. Europe has denied itself not only humility and modesty but also solicitude and tenderness.

Today we might say that Euro-America, or European-style society, has taken over the world, but it is doubtful that the fervor and cynicism that characterized colonialism have diminished to any substantial degree. Moreover, the force behind European civilization's movement forward today has become internalized in such a manner that its reliance upon overt physical violence, although unquestioned whenever deemed necessary, has been eclipsed by what may be termed the colonization of the subject such that the other has become dominant.

Sartre (2004:xliv) quotes Fanon to the effect that Europe has never stopped talking of man, but

massacres him at every one of its street corners, at every corner of the world. For centuries it has stifled virtually the whole of humanity in the name of a so-called "spiritual adventure."

He further claims that "The 'native' has but one choice: servitude or sovereignty" (Sartre 2004:xlvii). The situation today has moved beyond this point, however, for our sovereignty has become reduced to the servitude to power in the form of consumption. We have been reduced to little more than an ability to consume what has been presented to us so that someone else's dominance will grow. Not only have we ourselves willingly become the means whereby the other exercises power over us, we lack the conceptual means to identify the other amongst us insofar as we continue to seek the other amongst those whom we deem to be culturally and racially inferior to us, just as our fathers and grandfathers did when they were still the subjects of colonial history.

For example, we strive to refuse acceptance to so-called "economic" migrants into the European Union even though our diplomatic posturing and military actions have played a dominant role, both directly and indirectly, in driving them from their homes, whether that be in Syria, Afghanistan, or sub-Saharan Africa. We are driven to prevent those from other religious groups from finding a home in our countries, even though they have learned the languages of their former colonial masters, and we mock them with insults to their beliefs in the name of our supposed freedom and superiority.

But, there is no one for us to point to as the agent of our submission, for we have become our own submission—the other is us, not a former slave who is our racial "inferior."

All that Fanon writes about colonialism remains true for us today, for we are colonized by those in our midst who exercise power over us, and our reduction to what Marcuse (1964) terms one-dimensionality leads us to accept their thoughts and desires as our own. Fanon (2004:237) succinctly and clearly captures the essence of such one-dimensionality as a "stagnation where dialectics has gradually turned into a logic of the status quo." He also firmly declares

It is utopian to try to ascertain in what ways one kind of inhuman behavior differs from another kind of inhuman behavior...All sources of exploitation resemble one another; they are all applied against the same "object": man. [Fanon 2004:63]

What we have done to ourselves today in the name of building so-called democratic advanced societ-



ies is essentially no better than what we did to our slaves in the past. What we do may at first seem to be more attractive, less ugly, than what was done formerly, but both ideas and men remain corrupt and the smell of death still hangs in the air (Fanon 2004:175).

### Is Interaction Possible?

Before proceeding further, we must note that the present discussion raises a number of important—and potentially very troubling—issues for symbolic interactionism as such insofar as the “nouveau colonialism” we have been examining transforms taking the role of the other, which is typically addressed in such positive terms as sympathy or empathy, into a form of self-deception and submission. Stated otherwise, this comprises a state of affairs in which we not only do not recognize the symbolic meaning of our interactions with others in that we are deceived, and deceive ourselves, about their significance, but we have in fact forfeited our right as a primary agent who engages actively and knowingly in the creation and recognition of that symbolic value. We must also question whether it is possible to take the role of one whom we constitute as socially, culturally, or racially inferior. For example, taking the position of the other may, from a certain perspective, constitute empowerment. However, what would be the motivation to value and/or seek such empowerment for one who already possesses and wields power over the other? There is no need to cooperate with the other, and thereby foster mutual empowerment, for one who already enjoys all which that power makes possible at another’s expense.

Above all, our discussion reveals that it is not necessarily a good thing either to take the role of the other, or to grasp the perspective of the other in the given role he/she possesses at a particular point in time. For example, when the role of the other is to be your master—to exercise power over you—then taking his/her role has two basic modalities, neither of which can be evaluated as positive in character. Moreover, both can be regarded as alienating.

The first is to submit to the power of the other insofar as it is not possible within the existing structure of power to in fact acquire or share the other’s power by means of a mental exercise or act of observation, even if that be participatory observation in some sense. In this regard, our assuming the role of the other would constitute our acquiescing with his/her exercise of power over us. That is to say that it would involve the approval or even adoption of a sympathetic attitude towards having been made subject to the other’s power. Attempting to “get into” the role of the other in such circumstances would thus comprise an affirmation of the imbalance inherent in the relation and a recognition—if only non-reflective—that one justly has power over me. It would also constitute self-reference in the form of self-deception and, as such, alienation from self. But, it would constitute alienation from the other insofar as it would take the other for something he/she is not—my equal—and would not recognize the other for what he/she in fact is—my master.

This may be described as endeavoring to accept our master in a way that (falsely) makes us feel to be his/her equal. We thus seek to take the role of our master in the effort to be free—so that we can be like

him/her. This also comprises what may be termed a perverted form of sympathy and empathy insofar as it acknowledges that we are subject to the power of the other—and properly so.

The second modality is to endeavor to adopt the role of my master in respect to another and seek domination over one whom I constitute as having inferior status to me. This is tantamount to ascribing a positive value to unbalanced power relations as such, thereby letting the power (over me) that has been appropriated by another become mine in a certain sense as it flows through me to dominating another in my name as well. I thus participate in the power brought to bear upon me by becoming the lord, even if only on a secondary level, of one who is even more pitiful than me.

Taking the role of master over another, whom I have constituted as inferior to me, constitutes an affirmation of the structure of power in society as a whole in that we endeavor to participate in that structure by doing to another what has already been done to us. This comprises the acceptance and reproduction both of the particular state of affairs in which we find ourselves, and of the social order of power as a whole insofar as we seek to propagate it.

These difficulties raise a more general question concerning whose role we may in fact take—or whether it is in fact possible to take the role of another. For example, is it possible to take the role of one who is superior in status to us and utilize the structures of power in a manner that neither involves, nor depends on self-deception? Self-deception in this regard means that we in fact do not take the other's

role, but merely believe that we do so. Within an unbalanced power structure, it appears that believing we have taken the role of one who has a status superior to ours can be no more than wishful thinking. More importantly, such self-deception can be taken advantage of by one who has an interest in doing so insofar as it involves the powerlessness associated with both alienation from the other and alienation from self. Bluntly stated, if you do not know who and where you are, the other can, so to speak, lead you to wherever he/she wants you to be.

But, although we cannot exercise power over ourselves as the other does, we can nevertheless facilitate our submission to him/her by our acceptance of submission as the proper state of affairs. This point recalls Du Bois' notion of double consciousness, but without the self-hatred (of the slave) that follows upon the obvious hatred that the once and would be master has for the former and hopefully future slave. In the situation we are discussing, we tend rather to experience a sense of fulfillment in that we come to desire our submission, taking it as an affirmation of the state of affairs and the way things should be.

But, might it then be possible in some positive manner to take the role of one whom I identify or constitute as having a lesser status than me? Once again, this is obstructed by the unbalanced nature of the relationship. The constitution of one as inferior within a given structure renders it possible, at best, to sympathize, in some conversational sense of the term, with that person's status—if we are not inclined for some reason to accept social inequality. Sympathy and empathy in this sense are, generally

speaking, positive feelings, but they do not necessarily involve taking the other's role as such. Furthermore, one with an inferior status may very well not want our sympathy, or perhaps pity, for any of a variety of reasons, ranging from a sense of dignity or self-worth to a desire to take possession for himself/herself of our own seemingly superior role. This recalls Fanon's description of how one who is colonized neurotically—psychotically?—desires to become just like the colonial master so that he/she can be a human being, too.

In addition, taking the role of the other who is dominated as such would involve a bifurcation of the self that is self-contradictory and untenable, as if we would be submissive to ourselves, by virtue of the distinction between the agent as such and particular actions. Submission itself thus hinders any effort to take another's role by virtue of the passivity and inferiority that characterizes submissiveness. Sympathy for one in submission may motivate action on our part to alleviate the suffering which the other may undergo because of his/her status. However, this could be the case only if we ourselves had not become unable to act because of our own submissiveness or self-deception.

These issues require a more detailed discussion within a context intended specifically for that purpose.

## Is There a Way Out?

But, now we must ask whether it is at all within our means to rectify the pathology at the heart of Western-style society that Fanon has diagnosed. Is this at

all conceivable? Carolyn Cusick cites Sylvia Wynter to make the point that we are indebted to Fanon for having made it possible to

look for the explanation of our human behaviors not in the individual psyche of the ostensibly pure bio-on-togenetic subject, but rather in the process of socialization that institutes the individual as a human, and therefore, always sociogenic subject. [Wynter 1995:47 as cited in Cusick 2007:10]

She then proceeds to argue that

Fanon challenges us to establish a goal of creating a new humanity. Much work has gone into discussing what role notions of race will play in that new humanity; however...Fanon's sociogenic principle demands we look to the social world, the world of meaning and creativity, to find the freedom we so desire and deserve. [Cusick 2007:11]

Cusick (2007:11) finally adds that

Freedom is being actional, living in the social world as a creator and bestower of meaning. Unfreedom is the failure (often by force) to be actional; deciding ahead what, if anything, "race" will mean only limits our freedom.

Perhaps this second statement would initially appear to be meaningless today for most people living in advanced societies, particularly in respect to race. This would have at least seemed to be the case before the strong reaction that has emerged in recent years to the post-colonial situation in the Middle East and the subsequent military response,

including the extensive use of social media, by the so-called “international community.” Nevertheless, even in the “enlightened” states of North America and the European Union, the association of “unfreedom” with racial and ethnic identity can once again be clearly identified—and it is often connected not only with hatred, but also with unmasked hostility and violence against the one who is “unfree.” The recent issues in the United States concerning gun violence on the part of the police against the African-American minority have focused this matter in an alarmingly clear light.

Within the context of the present discussion, perhaps more revealing is the fact that the association of unfreedom and servility with inferiority complexes, which both Césaire and Fanon identified as characteristic of colonized peoples, has been broken in modern (by definition market-style) democratic societies. Those whom Marcuse (1941; 1964) identified as having been reduced to one-dimensionality in respect to their cognition, perception, desiring, and imagination in fact believe themselves to be living in the fulfillment of freedom. This combination of a submission to the exercise of power through the consumption of what can be bought and sold, strikingly given the absence of any sense of degradation or humiliation, serves to facilitate the exercise of power since any grasp of a need to oppose our masters is dissolved by the false conviction that there are no masters for us to fear—that nothing substantial needs to be changed in the way we live our lives.

Any possible resolution of the social deformity that is associated with the exercise of power, whether

or not it is openly violent, cannot be merely an intellectual matter, as if we were pure rational minds contemplating the Unmoved Mover, to use Aristotle’s terms. As Fanon (2008:17) appropriately observes,

I say that philosophy has never saved anyone. When someone else strives and strains to prove to me that black men are as intelligent as white men, I say that intelligence has never saved anyone; and that is true, for, if philosophy and intelligence are invoked to proclaim the equality of men, they have also been employed to justify the extermination of men.

This now applies to citizens in general in advanced societies, not only to the descendants of slaves and to those whose lands and lives were taken from them by alien, racially superior masters. Our reclaiming of human existence is not merely a matter of understanding, contemplation, and spiritual insight. We have to change the ways in which we see, think, and desire—so that we can then act and live in another way.

Fanon (2008:181) appears to be hopeful—if not determined—on this point, for he states that

It is through the effort to recapture the self and to scrutinize the self, it is through the lasting tension of their freedom that men will be able to create the ideal conditions of existence for a human world.

It is true that we feel ourselves to become more powerful, albeit in a false and self-deceiving sense, as we identify with the other who exercises power over us. Moreover, this false sense of identification

can become very strong and convincing because we are not separated by language, race, or culture from those who exercise power over us. My body appears to be the same as the other's—as the body of the master—but it in fact has been deformed by the power exerted upon it, and has my soul, and my physical unity with the world has been reduced from being actional, to use Cusick's term, to a form of inaction, whereby I permit the other to be active through me. We thus carry our imprisonment in both our bodies and our minds, as we seek a life of isolated satisfaction in doing what we have been told to do.

We must then struggle against ourselves if we wish to cease being the mechanisms for the exercise of someone else's power over us. Since power today is exercised in a manner that conceals its origin, there is

no one against whom to revolt unless we first revolt against ourselves.

In order to complete the liberation of the individual begun with the emergence of the modern world, we must recapture the essence of what we have in common and seek our fulfillment neither by ourselves, nor through the exercise of power over others, nor in the submission to the power of another, even if doing so seems pleasurable. The ways in which we think, feel, see, and desire must be changed. We must find how to no longer be satisfied with living as mere partial-men and partial-women for the sake of someone else's joy and well-being, but rather live together with others in a society of equals in which difference is respected. This is the challenge facing us today.

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## Jane Addams and the Lost Paradigm of Sociology

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**Abstract** The present work is the beginning of a discussion that again addresses the question of Jane Addams' sociological heritage. That latter is defined as a puzzle which may finally have a solution in that all of the pieces now appear to have been collected. The approach taken to recovering Addams' identity as a sociologist involves a historico-sociological exploration of the influences upon the formation of her sociological thought, with a focus on Auguste Comte, the Father of Sociology. The article argues that Addams emulated Comte's scientific mission and took upon herself the task of continuing his project by following another route to the goal. She is thus Comte's successor, and even rival, insofar as she sought to establish sociology as a science that may be placed in charge of producing knowledge about social life and has the social mission of finding solutions to social problems that politicians proved incapable of tackling. Addams emerges from the discussion as the creator of a sociological paradigm that was dismissed, dismantled, and then lost in the process of the scientific revolution that took place unnoticed after the end of World War I, when the normal period of the scientific development of sociology in America came to an end. The suppression during the 1920s of the type of sociology that Addams developed and adhered to has left sociology in a state of unresolved identity crisis and arrested scientific development.

**Keywords** Sociological Paradigm; Sociological Canon; Addams's Sociological Identity; Comte's Unfinished Project; Mechanism of Emulation; Symbolic Interactionism

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## The Puzzle

The voluminous literature on Jane Addams, which addresses her work and life from numerous professional and scholarly perspectives, might at first make us feel that it would be meaningless to attempt to say something new about her. Her many virtues, the many roles that she played, her professional networks and personal relationships, the meaning of every part of her voluminous legacy, including her Hull-House project, have been the subjects of thorough scholarly examination and analysis. In addition, her many biographies have contributed to creative interpretations of virtually all of the pertinent material available, even rare information, rendering every element of her private, public, and professional life, her relationships, her personality, her feelings, and even her dreams, well known.

I wish to argue, however, that although we may be tempted to think that we know everything about Addams—who she was, what she did, what she thought, what she felt and dreamt about—we still do not know Addams. We may indeed have all the fragments, but we do not have the whole that they collectively produced and of which they all were but parts. Reconstructing Addams' system of thought as a coherent whole, in which all thoughts are logically and meaningfully related to each other and revolve around some core idea that served as a motive force and provided the rationale for her actions, remains a scholarly task that is yet to be completed.

A sign erected in 1951 on the outskirts of Cedarville, Illinois—her birth place—identifies Addams as a humanitarian, feminist, social worker, reform-

er, educator, author, and publicist (Elshtain 2002:1). These apparently were the identities with which she was primarily remembered, and which remained with her when she became a sort of mythical figure in the popular mind. But, they do not include the identity of sociologist—the one that she used to refer to herself, and which should then have been the one that provides us with the key to understanding her professional endeavors.

That Addams firmly believed that sociology is the science to which she belonged and for which she worked was clearly attested to in what seems to be the most authoritative and reliable biographical source so far—her nephew James Weber Linn's *Jane Addams: A Biography* (1935). What gives this biography an exceptional advantage in respect to all subsequent interpretations is the fact that Addams personally commissioned it towards the end of her life and provided Linn with

all files of her own manuscripts, published and unpublished; all letters, records, and clippings which she had preserved, from her first valentine to her last round-the-world speech in Washington on May 1, 1935. [Linn 1935:vii]

Even more important in this regard is that Addams herself

read over and annotated the first draft of the first eight chapters of this book, talked over the next three, and agreed upon the proportion of the remainder. [Linn 1935:vii]

But, Linn remarked that he could only write down Addams' personal history on the basis of the rich

information he had since there was something that could not have been written by either him or Addams and could not be found in their works, namely, the vision that places her “in perspective,” a “conception of the view the world seems to have had of her importance to it” (Linn 1935:viii). It is noteworthy that he left this task to the sociologists of the future, who, being “completely acquainted” with “the history of the development of sociology and of American civilization,” would be in the best position to present the picture of how this history has been “illuminated by her life” and by her contribution in casting light “into its dark places” (Linn 1935:vii).

The broader picture first began to emerge when, half a century later, Deegan’s *Jane Addams and the Men from the Chicago School* voiced the claim that Addams “was the greatest woman sociologist of her day,” “integral to the development of the ‘Chicago School,’” and “a founder of American sociology” (Deegan 2005:4, 8, 325). The subsequent explosion of works concerning Addams’ scholarly merits led to a significant increase in the volume of sociological publications within what came to be known as Addams scholarship. However, efforts to reconcile her thought with modern mainstream sociology have to date not been fully convincing. Although Addams is now included in the introductory chapters of twenty-first century sociological textbooks, there appears to be no consensus concerning her precise contribution to sociology (Misheva 2018). It thus remains unclear whether she can be credited at all for playing some decisive role in the emergence of sociology that is comparable in any measure to the recognition she has received in social work, in spite

of the tension recorded between her and the main players in that field (Lubove 1965; Franklin 1986).

It is a puzzle, however, how Addams could have regarded herself as a professional sociologist who made important contributions to the discipline while subsequent generations of sociologists failed to associate her name with any knowledge product of sociological significance. Discovering the true nature of the “enlightenment function” that Addams consciously chose to carry out as a sociologist remains an enduring task. Insofar as a number of social sciences have been very helpful in retrieving various pieces of the puzzle, it may well be the case that the full set of pieces is finally in place, and that we are now in a position to begin the major *puzzle-solving work*. It is my conviction that this work should be properly carried out within sociology and will necessarily involve an examination of its roots.

### **On Addams’ Becoming a Sociologist**

Auguste Comte, the acknowledged founder of sociology, visualized “a system of positive philosophy,” “signaled the beginning of sociology,” and “made a convincing case for the discipline” in his *Course of Positive Philosophy* (Turner, Beeghly, and Powers 2007:25). Nevertheless, there are certain seemingly insurmountable obstacles to acknowledging Comte as the creator of the first sociological paradigm—the positivistic sociological worldview that served macrosociology so well and encouraged the development of its structuralist, functionalist, and systems approaches. These obstacles are associated with what appears to be the “personal tragedy” of a person with a “once great mind” who came to



be regarded as “rather insane” by the end of his life. The fact, so “embarrassing to sociology,” that Comte in his later years “went over the deep end” and became “a rather pathetic man, calling himself the High Priest of Humanity and preaching to a ragtag group of disciples,” was long absent from sociological textbooks (Turner et al. 2007:24-25). In particular, Comte’s second grand effort, *The Positive Polity*, which was written during that period of time, was regarded as both an expression of personal frustration and evidence of his madness. It has never been taken seriously, and only recently have we begun seeing occasional references to it in sociological publications. We should note, however, that texts of some of Comte’s expositors, such as Mary Pickering’s monumental work on his intellectual biography, continue to cast doubt on whether his notion of sociology as a science with an important social mission, or the meaning of his *Positive Polity*, have been properly understood (Pickering 1993; see also Gouhier 1933-1941; Baker 1989).

Particularly evident is the absence of any serious exploration of Comte’s influence upon subsequent generations of sociologists. At the turn of the twentieth century, for example, Comte was rarely mentioned as a possible source of inspiration for one to become a sociologist, although the inspiration for many of those who associated sociology with social reform may have come from reading his work. There is also a perspective from which removing Comte’s later work from the history of sociology, as well as ignoring him “as a theorist who contributed to our understanding of the social universe,” may not be justified (Turner et al 2007:39). In science, the success of one’s scholarly project and demonstrating

the validity of a concept are as important as the failure to do so. Indeed, analyzing failures in science is sometimes more significant for its progress than trying to build further upon the solid ground of confirmed successes.

I contend that Comte’s *Positive Polity* is one of the most interesting and valuable failures in the history of sociology, and the seeming taboo against analyzing it may have played a role in creating and deepening sociology’s identity crisis. Under the circumstances, it would not be surprising to find that the fact that Addams read Comte and was influenced by him was downplayed or deliberately not mentioned at all. Doing so would indeed have left her without any intellectual biography that might have prepared her to choose sociology as an intellectual occupation, accepting it as her life-long undertaking to contribute to its establishment and institutionalization.

Addams apparently read Comte, and she went on record as saying that she was especially impressed by his work during her second journey to Europe. Nonetheless, some of her expositors who note Comte’s influence on her do not do justice to her reading of his work. They instead claim that Comte was a source of her belief in the power of science “to undermine religious superstition and philosophical speculation by replacing them with careful observations and experimentation,” which would enable one to cure social ills and diseases and undermine the authority of tradition and gender stereotypes (Seigfried 2010:67-68). However, this provides a basis only for claiming that his unquestionably positive philosophy provided her with an educated and

modern scientific view, not for concluding that reading Comte committed her to sociology.

However, we may conclude from Addams' notes in *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (1910) that she was interested in Comte's unsuccessful effort as well, and perhaps even more so. She wrote about her interest in the "efforts of the trade-unions," as well as those of the Positivists, whom she regarded as a "manifestation of 'loyalty to humanity' and an attempt to aid in its progress." She also acknowledged being "enormously interested in the Positivists during these European years." Stebner has observed that Comte's "religion of humanity" was a source of inspiration during the maturation process of her idea of a "cathedral of humanity." But, although we cannot overlook the similarity of these two concepts, it does not mean that this is evidence of a reconstructing of her "religious formation and perspective" (Stebner 2010:207). Since sociologists have been reluctant to seriously engage with an analysis of the reasons for Comte's failure, it is perhaps only natural that some might seek to explain Addams' fascination with an "alternative" positivism in a way that would alienate her from science and bring her closer to religion. This would create further obstacles to retrieving her sociological identity.

My argument in this regard is that Addams was perhaps the only sociologist in her time who undertook a serious exploration of Comte's failure to establish sociology as a science of social life. Her being influenced by him would then comprise a case of emulation, which is well known in the world of science as a mechanism through which continuation in science is secured. Emulation was notably explored

by Charles Horton Cooley (1902), although his contributions in this regard have long remained unacknowledged, taken to be more a nostalgic response to the disappearance of the spirit of cooperation in science after the turn of the twentieth century than a discovery of the mechanisms that render science a cooperative enterprise. An application of emulation in its proper sense to the case of science indicates that the next generation of scholars acquire the "spark" for science by coming in touch with a living tradition. They evaluate its purpose as fascinating, aesthetically pleasing, and ethically attractive, and take it over, internalize it, and make it their own (Misheva 2019).

In this sense, my claim is that Addams was a sociologist not simply because this is how she described herself, but also because she received the "torch" or spark directly from the source and became committed to the goals that she found in Comte's work. A proper starting point for this statement, however, is an analysis of Comte's sociological project, including its own inspirations and background.

Comte's project may be approached in a sociological sense as a type of action that has its own motive, reason, and purpose. A view considered to be the most reliable interpretation of his intellectual life appears to me to be a plausible *motive* in this respect, namely, Comte, an atheist concerned with moral regeneration, was motivated by the desire to find a worldly substitute for Catholicism. Such a motive would certainly appeal to Addams in light of the evidence for her own atheism, which was accompanied by an appreciation of religious and moral values.

The specific *reason* for Comte's monumental work concerning positive philosophy is typically regarded to be his effort to establish science as the only truth producer, although not for its own sake. He instead does so for the *purpose* of establishing sociology as the science at the top of the hierarchy of sciences, all of which emerge according to an internal system's logic whereby metaphysics is replaced by positivism. This process is located at the center of his theory of knowledge.

A deeper exploration of Comte's own journey towards a full commitment to his grand sociological project leads back to Henri de Saint-Simon's influence on Comte. This reveals the evidence for emulation, whereby Comte borrowed the goal of his endeavor from Saint-Simon, but developed it in a different direction. Pickering established that Comte was not very interested in "the theoretical base of social reconstruction" through industrialism, and did not go further to ponder Saint-Simon's notion that industrialism would replace militarism. He instead took up Saint-Simon's mission "of founding the scientific system, that is, the positive philosophy, together with its keystone, the science of society" (Pickering 1993:213). In doing so—and just as Cooley's theory of emulation predicted—Comte brilliantly executed the project that Saint-Simon had outlined and thereby surpassed his teacher, as John Stuart Mill maintained (see: Pickering 1993:215). Saint-Simon was thus a predecessor and a rival of Comte.

Pickering (1993) also argues that the Saint-Simonians may have exerted a much greater, and largely unacknowledged, influence upon Comte than his

direct contact with Saint-Simon, under whose leadership he worked. This fact is important since it suggests that it may not be enough to simply borrow a role model by reading some author's texts. Participation in an interaction system with the followers of a given scientist may be of substantially greater importance for receiving the torch and becoming qualified for a mission of enlightenment.

On the basis of Pickering's analysis, the significance of the Saint-Simonians (the generation of the 1820s who were born between 1792 and 1803) can be measured merely by the fact that they were actively involved not only in further developing Saint-Simon's ideas and project, but also in criticizing Comte's early work and the direction in which he took his master's thought. A series of lectures beginning in 1828 that presented the Saint-Simonian doctrine at length contained, in addition to praise for the "God of love," "a doctrine of sympathy" as the root of progress. And instead of reason, it elevated women as "the model of this sympathetic power" and celebrated "humanity" as a "collective being" that was "equivalent to society at large" (Pickering 1993:221). Pickering (1993:221) notes that the Saint-Simonians particularly criticized Comte for undermining religion, regarding "positive" as an intelligible term, and, above all, for "not wanting to recognize the elements of irrationalism contained in the so-called positive sciences themselves." They also claimed that Comte misinterpreted Saint-Simon and underestimated "the role of artists" (such as poets and priests) "in the creation of a new society." The Saint-Simonians sought to raise up "imagination and sentiment" as "key to the creative process even in science" (Pickering 1993:222).

This brief overview of the ideas that influenced Comte provide a good background for the Saint-Simonians' criticism of his *Positive Polity*—Pickering (1993:222) notes that Comte himself purchased the book of lectures and was acquainted with its contents. It also provides a better idea of what Addams meant when she referred to the extraordinary impression that the "Positivists" made on her during her second trip to London. We can also recognize here certain important principles in Addams' own thought, as well as the background for her many ideas that relate her to symbolic interactionism, a sociological tradition of decisive importance for the emergence and development of the discipline. We also see the roots of important ideas that Addams later introduced into social practice at Hull-House. It appears to be significant that we can discern some of these same ideas in Cooley's and even Mead's work, even though they have not been directly influenced by Saint-Simon, but tracking down their source goes beyond the scope of the present article. We should note, however, that the important concept of "sympathy" found in Addams', Cooley's, and Mead's scholarly vocabularies, as well as the entire ethics of symbolic interaction, might well have entered symbolic interactionism by means of Addams and her London trips, when she became a participant in interactions very relevant to sociology that could not be found in academia, including universities, at that time.

Not being able to convincingly demonstrate Addams' identity as a sociologist appears to have much to do with the fact that the traditional explanations of the roots of symbolic interactionism presented in symbolic interactionist self-narratives lack an

important degree of accuracy. These narratives assert without any further clarification—and against interactionism's own principles—that the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment, particularly those of Adam Smith, came to North America not through face-to-face interactions, but merely through the reading of literature without the intervention of any human agency or live interaction. I would instead argue that a more thorough explanation of this unusual, distant, and in some sense quite unbelievable resemblance between some aspects of both Mead's and Cooley's works with those of Adam Smith might be more logically and legitimately explained if we shift our focus from Mead as a founding figure of symbolic interactionism to Addams insofar as it was her who became the living connection between the European traditions of sociological "positivism" and the American practice of social reform, in which science was applied with a focus on education and interaction. As is now clear, Mead's expositors never actually succeeded in finding in Mead's biography anything that could link him to the birthplace of an alternative sociology that we could term the European root of symbolic interactionism. The closest they get is to discuss Dilthey's influence on Mead, trying to retrieve from it the supposedly true philosophical basis of symbolic interactionism. However, in order to close the "circle of emulation" through a process of direct, face-to-face interaction, in which main ideas are transferred and the goals of particular role models are internalized, we should note that Saint-Simon himself was a very passionate admirer of Adam Smith, considering him to be the greatest living scholar of his time. Certain reasons for why Addams' contributions to sociology were ignored have begun to assume a more clear shape. They

are associated with the “Red Scare” that preceded the social changes of the 1920s, and with Addams’ thick dossier as a purportedly dangerous “socialist.” Under these unfavorable social conditions and circumstances of that period, it would certainly not have been smart for the young science of sociology to flag its origins and mark its genealogical relation to Saint-Simonism, which came to be known in history as “the most influential form of early socialism, as far as mainstream social and political thought is concerned” (Claeys 2005:87). It is noteworthy that this movement was founded by a nobleman who renounced his title, much like the way in which Addams renounced her middle-class social status and moved her home into the slums. It is also indicative that Saint-Simonism exerted an influence upon Addams’ favorite author during her college years, Thomas Carlyle, who himself was committed to “positive philosophy” as both a science and a “new religion” (Claeys 2005:87-188). It thus appears that politics, more than any other factor, was the driving force for the marginalization and then complete elimination of Addams’ thought from the historical annals of sociology. However, the traces of such drama, which shook individuals, institutions, social structures, and society as a whole, can never be completely erased and may come to the fore again at any time.

### **On the Question of the Lost Sociological Paradigm**

In Thomas Kuhn’s opinion, the acquisition of a paradigm was “a sign of maturity in the development of any given scientific field” (Kuhn 1970:11), as well as a mark of the beginning of “normal puzzle-solving

research” (Kuhn 1970:179). The presence of a paradigm is thus a necessary and sufficient condition for the identification and definition of the problems and puzzles that are to be solved and for the transformation of the scientific community into “an immensely efficient instrument” for that end (Kuhn 1970:166). However, Kuhn himself was not convinced that the concept of paradigm is applicable to the social sciences, for which the absence of theoretical consensus is normality. There is nevertheless a conviction in sociology that the acquisition of a paradigm would be desirable in this case as well since it would finally solve the problem of sociology’s identity crisis, including the associated lack of self-confidence and low scientific prestige. However, Kuhn (1970) did not undertake a historical exploration of American sociology, which could be characterized until the beginning of World War I as what he would term “normal or paradigm-based research.”

The possible existence of paradigms in sociology was a matter of heated debate in the second half of the twentieth century. Perhaps structural functionalism was the most prominent candidate to date for such a paradigm, but it never won the sympathies of a significant part of the scientific community and the loyalties of its members have always been divided. Conflict theory and action theory have also been viewed as candidates for sociological paradigms (Long 1990), although not quite rivals in the strict sense of the term, in view of the many shortcomings of structural functionalism as “increasingly crisis-ridden” and “hegemonic” (Bryant 1975:358). Although interpretivism and symbolic interactionism have been true rivals opposed to the others, neither has yet managed to win the dispute and unite the



discipline by offering an aesthetically and ethically pleasing worldview.

Certain sociologists have argued in the past for the need to disregard Kuhn's theory and discuss sociology as a science that is, and most likely will remain, "multi-paradigmatic" insofar as it is too complex to be subordinated to one single paradigm (Ritzer 1975; Eckberg and Hill, Jr. 1979). The acceptance of unrestrained pluralism in sociology may well be taken as a mark of normal development in sociology in particular and the social sciences in general in light of the "inexhaustible sources of conceptual variations" and the "ambiguous and multi-faceted character of social relations," which may additionally be interpreted in a number of ways (Bryant 1975:358). It has also been argued that Kuhn's notion of successive paradigmatic development is narrowly restricted to the natural sciences, and that it must be removed from these confines and further interpreted in relation to the sociology of knowledge, within the context of the socio-economic development reflected in Western philosophy, in order to be made useful (Harvey 1982:85).

These discussions perhaps seem a bit out of fashion today, although one may say that Kuhn's judgment about sociology as dominated by disagreement, conflict, and controversy that could be ended by the existence of a paradigm still counts. However, the concern that sociology might never be able to become a "real" science persists (Turner and Turner 1990).

I wish to argue, however, that revisiting the history of classical sociology and retrieving the forgotten sociologists may make it possible to address this

question anew. It may well be the case that such explorations may be instrumental in uncovering a lost paradigm in the turmoil of a century initially inspired by great social optimism, the idea of progress, and a belief in the power of enlightenment and social reform, but which ended with a succession of hot and cold world wars, revolutions, and both economic and social crises, none of which sociology was able to predict or help resolve.

My position is that the more thorough exploration of Jane Addams's intellectual heritage will reveal that she was a "founder" of sociology in a very particular way. She was, in my opinion, the creator of a scientific paradigm that may be defined as "micro-sociological." That is not to say that she was the author of a sociological paradigm that would organize efforts to cure the ills of society, but rather received inspiration for this task from direct contact with the living Comtean sociological tradition. She thoroughly explored Comte's successful, as well as unsuccessful works, and emulated his goal in the same way that Comte emulated Saint-Simon's project and Saint-Simon emulated Adam Smith's. She climbed upon Comte's shoulders to see into the future and dream of a better world. Addams' famous biographical record entitled "The Snare of Preparation" (Addams 2002a) is, in my interpretation, nothing less than the announcement of an already mature decision to begin acting on her determination to go further than Comte, to take a different route to the goal, and perhaps accomplish what her predecessor, and perhaps "rival," did not succeed to do.

Addams' early scholarly works reveal a conscious purpose that was well thought through during the

years after her graduation from college and her travels to Europe. She had the bold ambition to materialize her idea for the need of a new science capable of employing the power of the human imagination in the resolution of social problems. This idea was already crystallized in her graduation essay “Cassandra” (Addams 2002b), which is thus a valuable element of her intellectual heritage as a product of already trained scholarly mind, however young. This essay is, I believe, an outline of a program for action that was further articulated in two subsequent texts in which Addams described in greater detail her subjective motive (Addams 2002c), as well as the objective reason or necessity (Addams 2002d) for her program to be realized for the good of those young women who could apply their youthful energy in a meaningful social enterprise. This would also be done for the good of society at large insofar as she was offering a solution for its overwhelming social problems.

In this respect, Addams’ purpose was already well-known. She endeavored to establish sociology as a science of social life, and the settlement at Hull-House in the slums of Chicago was a social enterprise that comprised a means for facilitating the achievement of her goal. A more detailed presentation of this conception will be the subject of a subsequent study.

## Coda

While Addams was referred to at times as a saint, she became a villain in the troubled times after 1920, although Deegan (2005:322) observed that her reputation was restored in the 1930s and she was once

again honored and treated as a saint. However, receiving the recognition of those who seemingly canonized her contributed nothing to Addams’ reputation as a scholar and sociologist. A place is reserved in the sanctuary of science for martyrs who have been known to be exceptional men, but the figure of a great sociologist who labored, suffered greatly, and died for his/her work is unknown in the history of science. It is even more unheard of in this group of venerated scientists to speak of women who also deserve to be proclaimed martyrs who suffered for the progress of science. But, for everyone acquainted with Addams’ life and work, who take an unbiased look at her scholarly production and evaluate it as original sociological thought, it will be no surprise if she comes to be regarded as one of those martyrs of science who, like many other known and unknown scientists, worked for the progress of humankind.

The efforts of scholars from many different social sciences over the last three decades appear to have been directed to promoting Addams’ candidacy for canonization or inclusion in the sociological canon. These aspirations, particularly on the part of certain feminist scholars, have been regarded with suspicion, and even ridiculed as uninformed and preposterous. However, their efforts have directed attention to an examination of the nature of the sociological canon itself, and one may easily conclude that if there is no room there for such scholars as Addams, then something should be wrong with the canon itself.

It has in fact already come to the attention of a new generation of sociologists that the sociological canon in its present form is restrictive to the point that it

is not sufficient to serve as a foundation upon which the entire complex and diverse enterprise of modern sociology can reside, with each tradition finding support in previous thought and tradition. It may well be the case that a great portion of that foundation still remains unilluminated.

In the middle of the last century some prominent sociologists of the time, above all Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils, established a sociological canon “that emphasized European theory, displacing much of the work that had oriented American sociology before,” whereby not just Addams, but “many of the American founders were literally forgotten” (Calhoun 2007:x; Parsons 1968a). A canon of this type is meant to provide the basic criteria, rules, and norms by which the quality of sociological works would be judged and to suggest the name of the authors of exemplary sociological books. However, Parsons (1968b) judged it necessary to exclude all “micro-sociologists,” above all Simmel, Cooley, W.I. Thomas, and Mead, and to unconditionally canonize only two European scholars, Weber and Durkheim. Some twenty years ago, when the question of the canon was raised in connection with Addams and the forgotten sociologists, a thorough exploration of why the canon had to come into being at all came to the conclusion that it had been created as “a part of an effort at reconstruction after the collapse of the first European-American project of sociology” (Connell 1997:1545). Such rebels as Addams apparently had no chance of being included, for it was not a question of excellence in science as a free spirit, involving ethics and art, but rather about excellence in science as a craft in the best traditions of methodological positivism.

However, by establishing a sociological canon that was meant to suppress sociology’s memory of its coming into being, at times referred to in the literature as “sociological amnesia,” and by attempting to erase the historical records of its emergence in association with forces outside academia, such as Hull-House, sociology committed itself to a deep and permanent identity crisis.

It might seem to an external observer that this leads sociology to a “peaceful existence” on the margins of society, having no particular social function other than teaching young minds, with no authority to speak and be heard. Burawoy’s appeal to make sociology public once again was particularly energizing, and it promised to become a new sociological movement, but, oddly enough, it did not bring Addams’s sociology, as a model of public sociology, into discussion and reconsideration.

Further exploration in the sociology of science will be necessary to establish what the price of withdrawing from public life was for a science that had defined the social as its object of study, but defined it exclusively in terms of structures and dead social matter. Moreover, it still prefers to deal with the social in the same manner. It may be the case that the price for the peaceful existence of sociology within society, with no involvement, has been the internalization of the unresolved conflict between two different understandings of sociology. This has left it in a state of permanent revolution, however. When Kuhn (1970) could find no sign of normal scientific growth in sociology and no agreement about its basic principles, he pronounced his verdict that sociology either

is to be regarded as an “immature” science that exists in a pre-paradigmatic state, which explains why its “normal” situation is conflict, disagreement, and unresolvable controversy, or that it is not a science at all, since science is, and always has been, a cooperative enterprise. This also explains why sociology has been so incapable of helping society solve its everyday “puzzles” and problems—incapable above all, in spite of all its knowledge about society and social structures, of

making any prediction about precisely when such structures are in danger of collapse.

With a reference to Addams’ earliest preserved writing, her college essay “Cassandra,” one could say that when Addams’ project for sociology was discontinued in the 1920s, sociology lost its public presence, its public authority, and its voice. It thus turned into a modern Cassandra, with no power to resolve even its own persistent identity problems.

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