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Photo from cover: The sacred *cham* dance is performed at the Tashi Jong monastery in Palampur, India, by Tibetan Buddhist monks in a week-long series of rituals in honor of Padmasambhava, the second buddha. It was explained at the ceremony that the monks transform into the gods and those who witness it receive good karma and blessings. Taken by Hailey Woldt, March 2012.

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Message from the Editor

These articles represent a diversity of methods, regions, and sub-disciplines of anthropology. Two prominent themes have emerged from this collection: the enduring importance of methodological innovation in ethnographic and anthropological research and the relevance of these methods towards cultivating an understanding of politics, and in particular cultural politics.

The articles in this volume span methodological approaches in order to critically engage with pressing contemporary social issues, including but not limited to the global financial crisis, migration policy, and bribery. Employing historical and visual methods, Backe analyzes images of freak shows from the late 19th century in the United States, using aesthetic and visual analysis to contextualize the creation of stigmatized freaks. Brown, as an applied anthropologist, combines quantitative household measures with ethnography of tourism to depict the shrinking of a tourism economy. In order to understand bribery practices, Fedirko relies on legal case documents of bribery in real estate in Ukraine to illuminate bribery as an embedded everyday practice. Protner draws from team research on the erasure of citizenship in Slovenia to reveal the administrative circle that these non-citizens must navigate. Otten uses photographs to bring to light the experience of a changing economy under neoliberal conditions.

The second emergent theme in this issue is a concern for everyday politics and cultural politics. Portney and Rosenthal work against popular American assumptions and stereotypes of aging. Portney reveals, through detailed linguistic analysis, the ways stereotypes are realized through language use. Rosenthal explores the identity work of older Americans in the greater Boston area and Florida; she finds that her interlocutors construct success in aging that is both in line with and working against the popular-scientific notions of “Successful Aging” emerging today. Based on fieldwork at the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York City, Subramani explores virtual and embodied technologies in the creation of an emergent counterpublic. Shaker and Matteson examine how college students with restricted diets navigate social life and institutions and reveal the effect that the pathologization of such restrictions have on these students. Ali explores the culture of shaming that emerges from microcredit practices in Bangladesh.

These articles are vastly different in their approaches, theories, and arguments. However, each engages with pressing social and political issues and as such represent the expansiveness of student ethnography and anthropology. The National Association of Student Anthropologists (NASA), the AAA section that sponsors Student Anthropologist, has also made some exciting developments this year. Last year, NASA spread headed the exciting new program, the Emerging Leader in Anthropology Program (ELAP). The program is expanding and continuing this year, although this year’s deadline has already passed. Program participants will receive training in AAA and NASA governance, contemporary issues in anthropology on specific themes, as well as mentoring from anthropologists engaged in participants’ areas of interest. A small scholarship towards attending the meeting will also be provided. You can follow NASA updates on our Facebook page, through the listserv or on our website and consider applying next year.

This issue is truly a collective effort and as such I need to thank many people. First, many thanks to Fabienne Labbé for her continued efforts working with book review authors to present the best reviews possible. The Book Review section was made possible by the

generous funding of Brandeis University. Laura Thompson was an invaluable resource to me as editor and to many authors in this volume. She is an exquisite editor. Paul Keil, thank you for continuing to manage our twitter account and the website. The journal has grown immensely because of this work. Finally thank you to all the Student Anthropologist board members, the NASA board members, and peer reviewers for their careful reviewing, reading, and proofing.

The editorial work for this issue was completed as I write my dissertation. As such as I wrote everyday, I admired the diligent work of the authors as they exhaustively worked with myself and Laura Thompson through the revision process. I want to thank them for their dedication and patience. Bravo! This reflects the mission of Student Anthropologist, to collaboratively guide students through the publication process, including peer review and revision. It was a great privilege to work with you all. Finally, I am thrilled to welcome our new Editor, Sara Smith, PhD student at Yale University. I look forward to watching the journal grow under her leadership.

Jessica Hardin
Waltham, MA

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Research Articles

“Why can’t you pay if you can eat?”: Tales of How Women Encounter Unpleasant NGO Practices in Bangladesh

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Abstract

In Bangladesh and globally, microcredit has been recognized as a key development tool in the alleviation of poverty. Many international development agencies and donor countries prioritize microcredit to alleviate poverty because of reported success stories of microcredit non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in mobilizing poor women to participate in income-generating activities. Microcredit NGOs construct success stories of alleviating poverty and gender equity in relation to the repayment rate, but little is known about how they deploy strategies to collect loan installments from borrowers. Using ethnographic data collected in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh, I examine how microcredit NGOs create unequal power relations between fieldworkers and borrowers to facilitate secure loan recovery. Reflecting on the women’s experiences with microcredit programs, I demonstrate how these microcredit NGOs impose the provision of group liabilities, a ‘forced choice,’ upon the borrowers and how they socialize the borrowers into a culture of shaming to enforce repayment obligations. Instead of contributing to the development of norms of cooperation and solidarity that socially and economically empower the entire community, I argue that NGOs instead empower a group of female borrowers, serving their capitalistic interests, which often stimulates social conflict and negatively affects social solidarity.

Keywords: Microcredit, NGO practices, power, shaming

Introduction

In this article, I examine the unequal relationships between NGOs and their borrowers. Reflecting on women’s experiences of obtaining loans with microcredit programs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh, I demonstrate how microcredit programs impose the provision of group liabilities upon the borrowers, which is a ‘forced choice’. In this process, NGOs socialize the borrowers and the fieldworkers into a culture of shame to secure and enforce the repayments obligations. The fieldworkers - also known as the center managers or the loan officers - are responsible for recruiting new clients, examining eligibility criteria, providing loans, and collecting these loans with the assistance of group leaders. Group leaders are specific female borrowers empowered by the NGO to serve NGO institutional interests. The creation and utilization of group leaders, I argue, can excite social conflict within the community. This opposes the development of cooperation and social solidarity that is required for socio-economic empowerment and positive change at a group level. The analysis of power relations, as contextualized in sites such as the CHT, is crucial to understanding why poverty is alleviated for some, while it is an insurmountable challenge for others in a given society.

There is widespread agreement that structural factors reproduce poverty and perpetuate inequality in society. Paul Farmer claims, “today, the world’s poor are the chief victims of structural violence—a violence that has thus far defied the analysis of many of who seek to understand the nature and distribution of extreme suffering. Why might this be so? One answer is that the poor are not only more likely to suffer; they are also less likely to have their sufferings noticed” (2005:50). ‘Structural violence’ is a theoretical perspective that refers to those social structures – economic, legal, religious, and cultural – that harm people by preventing them from reaching their full potential, or achieving their well-being. Structural violence is embedded in social arrangements and is legitimized by enduring institutions and their practices, creating a situation where people have unequal access to resources, power, and other social, economic and legal rights and opportunities. Structural violence influences the unequal distribution of power, threatens people into subordination, promotes suffering such as starvation, disease and poverty, and thus creates unequal life chances and distribution of power (Galtung 1969, 1997; Farmer 2005). ‘Cultural violence’ is often used to normalize the consequences of such unequal power relationships, or domination in society. Galtung defined cultural violence as, “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) – that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (1990: 291). According to this perspective, cultural violence works to make reality opaque or to misconstrue the causes of poverty so that people “do not see the violent act or fact, or not as violent” (Galtung 1990:292).

I use the concept of structural violence to refer to NGO practices that reproduce the unequal distribution of power and initiate a norm of violent behaviors between borrowers to impose fiscal obligations. NGO loan recovery strategies are modes of structural violence because such practices harm people on multiple levels: psychologically, socially, and economically. There are several aspects of NGO practices that build violence into the structure. First, NGO fieldworkers create an unequal power relationship between group leaders and general borrowers for operation and enforcement purposes. Second, NGO fieldworkers manipulate group leadership to exclude the poor either from decision-making processes or microcredit programs; this deprives the poor of access to equal economic opportunity. Third, NGO fieldworkers influence group leaders to collect the defaulted loans by using shaming language, which affects the lives of these individuals psychologically and socially. Finally, I also use the concept ‘cultural violence’ to demonstrate how NGOs legitimize the coercive loan recovery strategy by capitalizing on the local people’s perceptions that poverty is caused by the poor and is not a reflection of structural constraints.

This paper begins by offering a brief history of microfinance in Bangladesh, followed by a description of the research setting, research community, microfinance institutions, and research methodology. Then, I contextualize structural and cultural violence between NGOs and their borrowers in the CHT by analyzing ethnographic data collected in two phases between May 2009 and July 2011 during my doctoral research. Referring to this data, I will discuss the aspects of NGO practices, as outlined above, which reproduce the unequal distribution of power within the community. I conclude the paper by highlighting how such NGO practices develop a shared norm of shame as opposed to a shared norm of social and economic empowerment for borrowers and fieldworkers alike.

A Brief History of Microfinance in Bangladesh

Emerging in the early 1980s, microcredit has been recognized as one of the key development tools for the alleviation of poverty. Microcredit, as a mechanism of poverty alleviation and women's empowerment, originated and developed via a pilot project conducted by Professor Muhammad Yunus in Jobra Village, Bangladesh, in 1976. Dr. Yunus realized that the lack of small-scale capital for income earning activities was one of the main factors contributing to poverty in rural Bangladesh; this led to the emergence of the Grameen Bank in 1983. By the late 1990s, the Grameen Bank model of microcredit received international recognition as an effective tool of development for poverty alleviation and gender equity. Impressed by reported success stories of microcredit NGOs, international development agencies and many donor countries prioritized microcredit initiatives to alleviate poverty and mobilize poor women to participate in income generating activities in rural Bangladesh. The proponents view the microcredit model as a successful approach to alleviating poverty, empowering women, and reducing dependency of the poor on charity, relief or other forms of aid (Kelkar et al. 2004; Versluysen 1999; Yunus 2004). However, microcredit programs need to be further researched because such success stories are only a partial representation of reality.

Microfinance institutions adopt the loan repayment rate as one of the key indicators of poverty alleviation and women's empowerment (Nath 2004). If the borrowers can repay loan installment on time, NGOs assume that the borrowers have been able to improve their economic capacity. Grameen Bank (2013), for example, boasts that the repayment rate is 97 percent. Similarly, other major microcredit NGOs also claim that borrowers reliably repay loan installments (Engler 2009: 82). Reliability and on-time repayments are measures of success and therefore NGOs go to great lengths to ensure payment. Most NGOs institute social and psychological pressures on the borrowers through the provision of group liabilities to acquire weekly loan installments on time. The success stories that form the foundation for the continuation of these models of development and particular programs exclude how NGOs enforce loan collection strategies. They ignore how a poor borrower suffers while managing weekly loan installments. They also fail to explain the reasons why the majority of the poor people do not benefit by borrowing loans from NGOs. Yet the repayment rate has been one of the key indicators of global popularity of microcredit, poverty alleviation, and hence the basis of enormous success stories and appreciation. However, past research on microcredit in Bangladesh has demonstrated that although some people have benefited from microcredit programs, many of the poor are still poor, indeed often worse off, trapped in a cycle of debt credited by NGO-provided loans (Islam 2007; Jason and Paprocki 2008).

One of the key aspects highlighted in recent studies (Datta 2004; Hulme and Mosley 1997) of microcredit is the discontinuity, i.e. attrition, and the exclusion of the poor from microcredit programs. Though poor people might have access to microcredit, they are very often unable to continue their loan repayments. A significant number of people drop out after one or two loan cycles when the amount borrowed from microfinance institutions goes beyond their repayment capacity. Consequently, the following questions arise: why do so many of the poor drop out of microcredit programs? Why are they not able to use microcredit to capitalize and build upon their capabilities? Some studies suggest that contingencies (e.g. sickness or death of income earner), natural calamities, lower capacity or lack of access to market facilities may be constraints for the poorer borrowers (Sharif 1997). Other studies (Datta 2004; Fernando 2006) indicate that the rigid conditions of group lending systems, high interest rates and

service charges imposed by microfinance institutions might cause the poor borrowers' failure to continue with microcredit.

These findings are useful for understanding the causes of discontinuity and exclusion from microcredit programs among the poor. However, we do not know why so many of the poor cannot bring about substantial economic change despite their simultaneous involvement with several microcredit NGOs for years. We also have much to learn about the effectiveness of the group liability model for poor borrowers. Group liability is the oral security pledged for the payment of a loan, that is, the collateral of the borrowers for the microcredit NGOs. The Grameen Bank originally developed the idea of group liability and now most of the microcredit NGOs follow this approach. Group Liability is referred to in the microcredit literature and practice as "social collateral" (Khandker 1999) or "solidarity group" (Rankin 2002). The provision of group liabilities, which creates social pressure on the borrowers to collect the loan installments, raises questions such as: who benefits from the group liabilities? How conducive is this approach to shaping the choices of poor borrowers? Does this approach allow participants to change their economic situation?

The most recent ethnographic research on the microcredit programs in Bangladesh suggests that microcredit only plays a small role in alleviating poverty (Karim 2011). Instead, microcredit NGOs are mainly concerned with the protection of capitalistic interests (Karim 2011; Rahman 1999). Karim shows unequal power relationships between the creditors and the debtors and contextualizes Michel Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' by interpreting the activity of NGO-based microfinance as part of the neoliberal economy. She demonstrates that NGOs enforce various supervision and surveillance strategies on the female borrowers to ensure the NGOs' capitalistic interests are met. Karim also argues that microcredit NGOs manipulate rural codes of honor and shame to regulate the fiscal behavior of the borrowers, mobilizing a group of women to shame the defaulters to recover loan installments. Fearing the loss of honor and dignity, the borrowers comply with the NGOs' fiscal discipline. Karim terms this the "economy of shame." Furthermore, according to Karim, NGOs rely both on traditional community powers (i.e. the village adjudicating board of rural elites) and state powers (i.e. courts or police) to enforce the defaulters to maintain repayment obligations.

Aminur Rahman, based on his ethnographic study on the Grameen Bank, argues: "women become the primary target of the microcredit program because of their sociocultural vulnerability" (1999: xi). Women's subordinate position is ideal to the NGO loan requirement principles because they have little control over these loans as women usually pass their loans to male relatives such husbands and sons (Rahman 1999: xi). Increasing the burden of debts or loan cycles push these women into more vulnerable situations both economically and socially. Rahman also argues that the group lending structure and practice of the Grameen Bank is responsible for increasing aggression and violence toward female borrowers. Factionalism and hierarchical power relationships between borrowers can lead to the increased tension and violence in society (1999: 20). However, none of the ethnographic studies elaborate on how NGOs encourage unequal power relationships between borrowers through the development enforcement strategies. These strategies include encouraging violent behavior such as the use of coercive language among borrowers to enforce repayment obligations. This research aims to fill this gap by exploring these strategies and demonstrating the personal and social impacts on borrowers and fieldworkers. I offer a detailed ethnographic description on these issues in the later part of this paper.

Research Setting, Research Community and the Microfinance Institutions

I conducted my research at “Osompur” (a pseudonym) in Rangamat Hill District in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh. CHT is situated in the southeast corner of Bangladesh. This region has been the home of 12 indigenous groups for hundreds of years. The Bengali word *Osom* means ‘difference,’ ‘uneven,’ or ‘curved,’ and the term *pur* denotes a place, a town, or anything composed of heterogeneous entities that has a physical shape. I chose this term to represent my research setting because there are significant social, cultural and economic differences amongst the people who live in this particular setting. One of the significant aspects of my study locale is its ethnocultural diversity, including the Bengali majority as well as other ethnic minorities. Histories of power and privilege continue to shape unequal political, economic, and social power relations between the Bengali and other indigenous peoples. However, in the broader context, the historic development, ethnocultural diversity, and economic-geopolitical significance of the CHT have marked it as a unique place within South Asia. The region has also become well-known internationally for the ethnic conflicts and insurgencies between the mid-1970s and the late 1990s, especially for the resistance movement of the indigenous people against the Bangladesh army and migrant Bengalis. As the socioeconomic condition of rural Bangladesh significantly differs from urban areas, there are some rural regions that are still far behind national or global standards in terms of the quality of life, rates of literacy, and economic, healthcare, and education opportunities. My research setting is a place where most of the population is struggling to survive with little social and economic security despite the ubiquitous presence of national and international development organizations (Mohsin 2005; UNDP 2009).



Figure 1: Conducting a semi-structured interview with a community leader

Recent data on poverty in the CHT, for instance, revealed that 62% of households are living below the absolute poverty line (below 2,122 k. calories intake) including Bengali and indigenous people (UNDP 2009: vi). In comparison to the Bengalis, indigenous people are poorer and in worse situations in terms of food security and overall social, economic, health, and educational status than that of the Bengali people living in the CHT. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Baseline Survey of CHT reports, “59% of the Bengali households are absolutely poor (below 2,122 k. calories), and about 31% are hardcore poor (below 1805 k. calories). The prevalence of absolute poor and hardcore poor among indigenous peoples are 65% and 44% respectively” (2009: vii).

This CHT region has been a major focal point for development activities of national and international organizations in recent decades. At present, a significant number of development NGOs, government agencies, and other local and international development organizations, including the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), are working in the CHT. While I was conducting my research, the Association for Social Advancement (ASA), Building Resources Across Communities (BRAC), the Proshika Human Development Center (Proshika), Grameen Bank, Green Hill, Integrated Development Foundation (IDF), Shakti Foundation, Center for Community Research and Development (CCDR), and Poddokhep were all operating microcredit programs. The Grameen Bank entered Rangamati in 2006. Unlike other microcredit NGOs, Grameen Bank is a specialized rural bank where the government owns at least 5% of its equity. The Grameen Bank is the largest of the microfinance institutions in Bangladesh. Currently the Grameen Bank has a total 8.35 million borrowers and 96% of them are women (Grameen Bank 2013). Most of the microfinance institutions have been working in this locale since the late 1990s.

Research Methodology

I completed ten months of fieldwork conducted in two phases between May 2009 and July 2011. In May 2009, as part of my pilot research project, I entered the field to establish initial contact and rapport with the study community. I conducted a preliminary household census in 64 households. By August 2009, I conducted 30 semi-structured interviews with community research participants. I obtained human research ethics certification from the Arts, Science, and Law (ASL) research ethics board at the University of Alberta prior to commencing my pilot research. I collected informed consent, written and sometimes-oral consent, before recording or conducting any interviews. The names of all the study villages and research participants are pseudonyms. In the second phase, I started my fieldwork in February 2011 and concluded at the end of July 2011. I used standard anthropological data collection techniques, including participant observation and unstructured and semi-structured focus group interviews. I applied a purposeful sampling method (snowball or chain-referral sampling) to collect evidence to answer my research questions. I prioritized the recruitment of the research participants from all the ethnic groups who were involved with different microcredit NGOs living in the study communities.

I conducted a total of 116 interviews (92 unstructured individual interviews and 24 semi-structured group interviews) between June 2009 and July 2011. I recruited 166 participants including 17 NGO officials and fieldworkers. I conducted semi-structured interviews with them in order to compare the data collected from the research participants involved in the microcredit programs. I selected 103 women and 46 men from different ethnic groups

following purposeful sampling to represent the research participants' different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. All of the participants' households were directly involved with different NGOs for at least two years. While in the majority of the cases I observed all of the members of microcredit NGOs were women the actual users of the funds were men. I interviewed both men and women to learn the details of who borrowed the loan and why. I investigated who used these loans and how, and if they felt they benefited or not. Next I turn to an analysis of these findings using 'structural' and 'cultural violence' as a lens to understand this data.

Group Liability and Unequal Power Relationships: Enforcing Repayment Obligations and Creating Social Conflict

Grameen Bank on its official webpage writes:

No Collateral, no Legal Instrument, no Group-Guarantee or Joint Liability. Grameen Bank does not require any collateral against its micro-loans. Since the bank does not wish to take any borrower to the court of law in case of non-repayment, it does not require the borrowers to sign any legal instrument. Although each borrower must belong to a five-member group, the group is not required to give any guarantee for a loan to its member. Repayment responsibility solely rests on the individual borrower, while the group and the Centre oversee that everyone behaves in a responsible way and no one gets into a repayment problem. There is no form of joint liability, i.e. group members are not responsible to pay on behalf of a defaulting member (Grameen Bank 2012).

This claim of the Grameen Bank contradicts the actual functioning of group liability in rural Bangladesh. According to this description, unlike government or other commercial financial institutions, the Bank has no collateral system that requires borrowers to submit land or registered property documents in order to apply for a loan. While the Grameen Bank claims that the borrower does not require any collateral to have the loan, collateral is created through different forms. Karim (2011:73), for instance, identifies three types of collateral: (1) built-in financial safeguards (e.g. obligatory savings); (2) the community as fiscal enforcers; and (3) the instrumentalization of shame as a loan recovery technology. However, in NGO discourse this group liability is often termed as 'solidarity group' (Rankin 2002). Some scholars (Ahmed 2004; Kelkar et al. 2004) argue that microcredit solidarity group practices strengthen the social and human capital of poor women through the facilitation of access to both social and economic resources and through the reduction of gender violence. This solidarity group also helps protect women from divorce, eviction from one's own house and other forms of social and economic discrimination.

Conversely, my research findings show that the solidarity group has little or no role in developing norms of collectivity, cooperation, and social harmony between the group members or in the community. In fact, group liability, in disguise of solidarity group, is used to serve NGOs' organizational interests, such as the recruitment of reliable borrowers and enforcement of repayment obligations. I observed that Grameen Bank and other microcredit NGOs do not provide a loan to a borrower unless she makes an oral pledge to maintain the provision of group liability; that is, she takes the liability of the loans of other members in her group and

commits to repaying the loan installments on time. In this sense, the microcredit is not collateral free.



Figure 2: A female borrower is receiving loan from the branch manager of the Grameen Bank.

NGOs create the provision of group leadership under the provision of group liability or solidarity group in order to operate microcredit programs such as the recruitment of new members, loan disbursement, and enforcement of repayment obligations. I observed that the Grameen Bank strictly follows a complex mechanism for recruiting borrowers and collecting the loan installments. A solidarity group of the Grameen Bank is usually composed of 15-40 members, or sometimes up to 50 women depending on the density of the population. The solidarity group should have a specific place to meet every week. The meeting place might be in the house of a group's center leader or a general member. The Grameen Bank calls this meeting place *Kendra Ghor* (Centre House). At the village level, a group center is composed of several subgroups of five women each. Every subgroup has a group leader; there are also several informal administrative and financial positions for women borrowers such as the president, secretary and cashier. The group's center leaders must help the loan officer in collecting required information about new members, such as checking eligibility criteria, verifying the economic profile of the households, sources of and current status of income, housing structure and assets in households, to determine the value of the loan that can be provided.

Enforcing the repayment obligation is one of the biggest tasks of a group's center president. When a fieldworker fails to collect the outstanding loans from borrowers, this fieldworker urges the group president and the entire group's members to collect the defaulted loans as well. In this situation, a solidarity group may create social conflict between households instead of contributing to build social capital that could help the poor escape from poverty. As demonstrated through the following vignette it is possible to see how NGOs' solidarity groups

often create social tension between households in the community while enforcing fiscal obligations.

Vignette 1: Encountering Unpleasant NGO Practices

Mrinal is a retired police constable who is married to Mohi. Mrinal retired about eight years ago. They have been living in Osompur in Rangamati since his retirement in 2003. Mrinal received money from his retirement fund, and in 2005 purchased a plot of land to build a house for his family and start a poultry project. However, he had insufficient capital. He asked Mohi to obtain a loan from an NGO. Mohi borrowed Tk. 55,000 (700 USD) from IDF, ASA, and BRAC. Mrinal then invested about Tk. 1,00,000 (1,300 USD) in a poultry project. Most of this money was spent constructing a house and purchasing chickens. They were working hard but they could not benefit from this effort because of the death of some of the hens due to bird flu. Also, egg production was compromised because they could not provide sufficient feedings.

They had no income in the early months of this livestock project. However, they had to repay the loan installments every week. To repay these debts, they had to borrow additional money from Grameen Bank and Shakti Foundation. Mohi could not repay loans to BRAC. One day, the branch manager of the BRAC accompanied by the group members came to her house. They insulted Mohi by asking: “why can’t you pay if you can eat?” They were very aggressive. They confiscated a television and some furniture. They even forced the couple to sell the corrugated tins of their roof. Mrinal also had to sell a portion of land he purchased in 2005 to repay some of these debts. After collecting the defaulted loans some of these NGOs refused to provide a new loan to Mohi. For example, Mohi was looking for a new loan from IDF after repaying all of her loan installments. She needed this loan to repay a loan Tk. 4000 (50 USD) that she had borrowed from a moneylender with a high interest rate. The group’s center leader refused to take the liability of her new loan. Mohi had to produce this money by selling the rest of the corrugated tins from her roof. As a result, the family was living in a house with no roof. Mohi again requested an additional loan from the manager of this NGO to replace the corrugated tins for the roof. But the manager set conditions for Mohi that if she [Mohi] had agreed to repay the outstanding loans of two other borrowers in her group’s center she might get a new loan. Note: if any borrower fails to repay her loan installment, NGOs usually do not issue a new loan for any other member of a group’s center. So, Mohi had to comply with this condition of group liability and to repay the defaulted loans (25 USD) of two other borrowers in her group to get a new loan. According to the provision of group liability, Mohi had to collect this amount of money from the defaulted borrowers.

This exemplifies how NGOs become forceful when a borrower fails to repay the loans. Providing and collecting the loans is the principal activity of microcredit NGOs. NGOs never consider why the borrowers cannot repay the loans on time. The participation of Mohi in microcredit programs does not seem conducive to her social and economic empowerment. Instead, her personal and social relationships with the group’s center leader and other female members had deteriorated. This affects the relationship between Mohi and the other women living in the same community. This is reflected in actions of the group’s center leader and other women in the NGO’s solidarity group who denied taking the liability of Mohi’s future loan. Mohi needed a new loan to purchase tin to repair her house, but no one supported her. So, Mohi had to comply with the NGO manager that she would repay the defaulted loans of two other members in her group to get this new loan approved. This indicates that no woman in her

neighborhood or community wanted to cooperate with her so this household lost an informal source of social support and economic cooperation. This household may also be denied future loans, which incite conflict between the potential borrower and those making recommendations about who should receive loans. From this perspective Mohi was the victim of structural violence.

However, from the perspective of the group leaders, they too were coerced into action against Mohi. They had to cooperate with the loan officer to collect the loan from defaulted borrowers by creating social and psychological pressures. If group leaders failed to collect the outstanding loan from Mohi, these women might have had to share money to repay loan installments for the loan defaulters since they are liable for every borrower's loan. This helps to explain why group leaders and other members often become aggressive and forceful toward women to collect outstanding loans. The group leaders forced this household to repay the loan installments by selling their TV, furniture, corrugated tins from the roof of the house, and land in order to avoid having to pay the loan themselves. NGO officials and group presidents support such actions of the group members as a part of their oral pledges to take collective responsibility for loan recollection. This is a forced choice imposed upon the borrowers, which is shaped by the conditions of group liability.

Representing such a group lending system as a solidarity group in microcredit discourse is nothing but misleading. Instead of developing a norm of collectivity and cooperation, the bindings of responsibility to the group for individual lending contributes to a breakdown of social and economic relationships that harm the poorest population in the society because they have relatively less social and economic power. Therefore, NGOs contribute to structural violence by institutionalizing unequal power relations between borrowers and using a group of borrowers as fiscal enforcers. They also overlook the actual causes of why the poor fail to repay the loan installment on time. This is structural violence because these kinds of NGO practices lead the poor to experience the loss of informal sources of social and economic support and perpetuate their lack of access. Moreover, such practices have a negative impact on the social lives and relationships of the people in the community because of the increasing social tension and conflict over loan repayment. In the following section, I elaborate on how NGOs empower the group leaders and encourage them to recruit reliable borrowers, exclude loan defaulters, and recover loan payments.

Group Leadership and Manipulation: Empowering Women or Institutionalising Social Conflict?

NGOs claim that the involvement of women in the process of group liability and its functioning leads to empowerment and the development of leadership skills (Kelker et al 2004; Nath 2004). However, my research shows that the selection criteria and the responsibilities of a group leader does not confirm to this claim. I observed that the fieldworkers followed specific criteria when they chose a woman as the group's center president. They selected a woman who comes from an economically advantaged family, who has commanding social power. She is often vocal and is able to manage time for assisting fieldworkers in recruiting new members and collecting the loan installments. NGOs thus consider the existing social, economic and symbolic capital of the women in order to select group's center leaders instead of empowering those women who lack these capacities (cf. Bourdieu 1986; 1990). These women assist NGOs in choosing reliable borrowers and the collection of loan installments in a timely fashion. However, these practices are also responsible for creating personal and social conflicts

between these group's leaders and borrowers. A fieldworker of the Grameen Bank, for example, describes:

It is obligatory for a group's center leader to collect the loan installment of every borrower for me. As a group leader, she recommends providing a loan to a borrower. Then, I approve the loan. The group leader is liable to collect the loan installment of this borrower. Sometimes it happens that after borrowing the loans from us, a borrower cannot repay her loan. The group leader and other members may co-operate with this borrower to manage money to repay her loan installments once or twice, but not subsequently. This default borrower might have problems such as the income earner becoming sick, or sustaining loss in business. So, the group leader and other members may deny repaying the loan installment for the defaulter. In this situation, we cannot do anything even by creating pressure on them [the group leaders and members]. Since we have to maintain a good repayment rate, we have to keep continuing pressure on the borrowers. That is why we empower the group's center leader to collect the loan installment from the borrowers.

Using these women as a means of collecting necessary information about the prospective borrowers and fiscal enforcement, this statement exemplifies that the group leadership is responsible for protecting the interests of these microcredit NGOs. These group leaders are crucial to the timely collection of loan installments. Empowering the group leader facilitates the loan recovery process for the NGOs, but this practice can lead to the exclusion of the poor from microcredit programs, and to the breakdown of friendly relationships between borrowers. The following ethnographic example clarifies this.

Vignette 2: Group Leadership, Exclusion, and Social Conflict

Rupa is a middle-aged woman with two children who lives with her husband. Her husband serves in the government office of the Power and Water Development. Rupa has been a group leader of ASA, BRAC, Grameen Bank and IDF simultaneously for several years. In my discussions with her, Rupa made clear that even though group leaders' are not paid, they do a lot of work, and that makes it a difficult job. As a group center leader, Rupa's responsibility is to ensure that every borrower brings the full amount of money on the day of weekly loan installments. Rupa says that now most of the NGOs recruit new members following a thorough verification process, especially concerning whether they are able to repay loan installments on time, and excluding borrowers who face difficulty doing so. Rupa helps the fieldworkers to select reliable candidates who will maintain the criteria of group lending. Sometimes she informs the fieldworker about prospective loan seekers secretly instead of confronting them at the group's center. Based on her recommendations the fieldworkers decide on every borrower's loan application. In other words, the decision of loan approval or rejection is mainly dependent on the nature of recommendation provided. Rupa feels that if she opposes a woman from obtaining a loan directly, this woman will likely blame Rupa for being denied. That is why Rupa tries to inform the loan officer that she is not going to take liability of a particular person. Rupa argues that she has to do it to protect herself because she and all other borrowers have to suffer if someone cannot repay loan installment on time. While working for the NGO fieldworkers, Rupa might have both friends and enemies in the village.

Rupa's statements indicate at least two important points that are helpful in explaining the consequences of the roles and functions of NGOs' group leadership. First, the fieldworkers influence the group's center leaders to act in favor of the institutional interests of these microcredit NGOs, such as the selection of reliable borrowers who can repay loan installment on time. NGOs are aware of the potential social conflict and thus follow a confidentiality strategy of loan disbursement to avoid any unexpected situation such as an altercation, quarrel, or personal conflict between group leaders and members at the group's center. Even the borrowers may be involved in arguments with fieldworkers at the group's center. Second, although the fieldworkers and the group's center leaders may be able to avoid possible observable conflicts by excluding the defaulters from microcredit programs, they cannot restrain this at the community level. If borrowers are loaned an insufficient amount of money, or are refused a loan because of a lack of support from the group leader, they may come into conflict with the group leader. This may affect their personal, familial and community relationships especially because they live in a small community. The social relationships of the group's center leaders are also affected when they act in the interests of the NGOs. Moyna, a group's center leader of ASA microcredit NGO describes:

There is a family in our neighborhood [Moyna showed me, pointing her finger]. Two women, mother and daughter, from this household borrowed the loans from four NGOs. Every week we had to go to this household asking them to repay the loan installments. When we went to ask them to attend the meeting and to repay the loan installments, they showed their anger to us ... After collecting the loan installments from this household, we said the loan officer that we could not take the liability of this household any longer. We could not sign the loan approval form for the people of this household. Thereafter, they did not get any more loan application approved. Now, this family is blaming me that they are not getting a loan from NGO because of me. The head of this household is blaming, or speaking ill of me to my neighbors and relatives. That day one of my relatives was telling me that the household head of this family was speaking ill of me while he was sitting in a tea stall in our neighborhood.

This exemplifies how a group leader acquires enemies and often loses friends while working for the NGOs. While protecting the interests of the NGO, Moyna became involved in personal and social conflict with her neighbours. It is the group leaders, rather than the loan officers (who usually have the ultimate power to approve or reject a loan application), are the ones blamed when borrowers fail to receive a loan. Therefore, such NGO practices may adversely affect the social harmony and amicable relationships in society.

The question arise then, why do these group leaders stay in their position if it is unpleasant or a source of social conflict? The answer to this question requires a little background. My research findings show that NGOs provide microcredit mainly to women. Women take out loans from NGOs to give to their male relatives such as husbands, sons, brothers, or in-laws. Women are also predominantly in the role of group leaders. Even the women from better-off households may have to borrow money for the expansion of their micro-entrepreneurship, businesses, agricultural and for many other purposes such as a dowry payment, the education of children, and for sending relatives overseas for job opportunities. Most of these women have some education and communication skills, and as a result NGOS

prefer these women as group leaders. Since these women cannot leave their position at an NGO unless their households' economic situation is substantially changed, they have to continue working as a group leader even if it is unpleasant. Some women enjoy such a position while others see the downsides. Perhaps, women's subordinate position to men and in society influences women to accept domination as natural. However, in order to normalize such domination and negative social consequences of NGO practices, NGO officials often use 'cultural violence,' for instance, inflammatory language and the local people's perceptions about the causes of poverty. I contextualize this point of cultural violence with the ethnographic details below.

"Why can't you pay if you can eat?" The Culture of Shaming as a Loan Recovery Mechanism

Common loan recovery strategies of microcredit NGOs include creating social and psychological pressures on borrowers, shaming the defaulters using codes of honor and dignity, confiscating sale-able assets, and bringing legal action against the defaulters (Karim 2011; Rahman 1999). When women breach the pledge of group liability my research shows that NGOs humiliate the defaulters by using coercive and shameful language. The use of such language along with negative bodily gestures or facial expressions often emotionally hurts the borrowers who fail to manage the loan installments for NGOs. Therefore, NGO fieldworkers influence the group leaders to reproach the default borrowers to collect defaulted loans. The use of coercive language by the fieldworkers and the group leaders has been a common means of mounting pressure on the borrowers to repay the loan installments in a timely fashion. In other words, the ultimate goal of the NGOs is to collect the loan installments in order to maintain a good repayment rate. This is a part of the group liability where the fieldworkers exercise their power indirectly through the group. As we have seen, if any borrower fails to repay loan installment, no other member of that group's center is allowed to have a new loan approved, thus group members deploy all sorts of efforts to ensure that they will have their loan approved from NGOs. The fieldworkers influence the group leaders to be harsh on the loan defaulters and sometimes on the relatives of the borrowers. These behaviors negatively impact the personal and social lives of the people, regardless of the loan defaulters, group's center leaders or other members. I asked my informants to describe what happens when they fail to repay their loan installments. Most indicated that the fieldworkers and group leaders will use offensive language. The most common question intended to produce shame is: "why can't you pay if you can eat?". The consequences of the use of such language are widespread including humiliation, social conflict, the exclusion of the poorest from microcredit, and thus the perpetuation of poverty. Vignette 3 demonstrates how a poor woman in my research setting felt ashamed because of the use of such language.

Vignette 3: Encountering Offensive Language and Leaving NGOs

Kamini is a middle aged woman with a teenage son. They live in Osompur. They are all daily laborers. Kamini and her husband sometimes manage their livelihoods by collecting fuel woods, wild plants, and vegetables from the forest in the hills. While I was conducting this research Kamini had been involved with the Grameen Bank and BRDB. Previously she borrowed money from IDF and BRAC, however, she left these two microcredit NGOs. She wished to leave the Grameen Bank and BRDB as well. Kamini used these loans to bear the

cost of the treatment for her daughter's illness, to repay debts to people, and to maintain household expenses (e.g. purchasing food). Kamini told me that she had left these NGOs because she could not manage the loan installments. Chronic poverty, meager or irregular household incomes, lack of permanent economic assets such as land, and lack of opportunity to utilize the microcredit, were constraints on Kamini to repay the loan installments following NGOs' rigid weekly loan repayment schedule. There was also another concern that forced Kamini to leave these NGOs, that is, the use of abusive language by the fieldworkers, group center leaders, and members. It was a matter of shame for Kamini if they insulted her because of her failure to repay the loan installments to NGOs on time. Both the fieldworkers and the group center leaders became furious when Kamini could not repay her loan. They would use coercive language such as "Why can't you pay if you can eat it?," "Why do you borrow money if you are unable to repay?" or "We will take your house away if you fail to repay your loan installment." Kamini noted in our interview: "Do I feel good about such humiliating behavior?" NGO staff and group leaders sometimes threatened to confiscate Kamini's household items such as utensils, bowls, cooking pot, or the corrugated tin of her house to compensate the defaulted loan installments. Kamini indicated these concerns and NGO practices are why she left IDF and BRAC and wanted to leave the Grameen Bank and BRDB. Kamini said, "That is why I am afraid of such behavior of NGO people. I have only a couple of bundles of corrugated tins over my head, and if they take it away how will I live here? So, I always try to manage money for NGOs first. Then, I think about managing food for us. I do it so that no one can reproach me. I eat my rice with salt to manage the money for the loan installment first. I see sometimes the fieldworkers urge the borrowers to repay the loan installments by borrowing money from other women, relatives, or even by selling utensils of their households. I do not like this type of strange behavior. That is why I am trying to repay my loan installments by earning from our daily laboring."

The experience of this woman shows how forceful the microcredit NGOs are in collecting the loans from their borrowers. Shaming the people by using such inflammatory language proves to be a very effective means of collecting the loan installments. According to the vignette above, dignity and honor play a central role in recovering loan payments. Kamini prioritizes loan repayments, even sacrificing her own well-being. Microcredit NGOs seem ineffective in alleviating her poverty. Instead, they create a terrifying situation for this woman because she fears losing her honor and dignity, not to mention her daily sustenance and shelter. This is a clear example of structural violence because such a fiscal enforcement of NGOs leads this poor woman to starve. NGOs influence the group leaders to create this situation through the use of shaming and threatening language, which hurts this woman psychosocially and socially.

NGOs even shame the relatives of the borrowers if they fail to repay the loans. Such practices of shaming can affect the family members of the loan defaulters personally and foster social conflicts between families living in the same community. For example, a husband of a woman borrower describes below how he reacted when the group's leader and members became aggressive toward him and his wife:

NGOs give the loans to women, but not to men. My wife takes out a loan because I ask her. If I do not ask her to enroll in NGOs or to take a loan, she will not proceed. If they mistreat my wife, I will try my best to repay the loan installment at any cost. Now-a-

days, NGOs do not provide the loans to women without the photos and signatures of husbands, or male guardians (e.g. father, brother). As usual, I have to sign as a guardian of my wife. Interestingly, while collecting the loan repayment, the NGO staffs do not look for me; they look for me my wife and they reproach her if we cannot repay one or two loan installments. Can I tolerate if they reproach and insult my wife in front of me? ... Thus, the fieldworkers and group leaders sometimes get involved in fighting, usually verbal, with the loan defaulters. If they do not find the borrowers, they may get involved in an altercation with other members of the borrowers' household. Once it happened to me too. My wife was sick. She was admitted into the Chittagong Medical Hospital. I could not repay my loan installments for some reasons. The fieldworker, group leader and other members came to my house to collect the loan installments from my wife. They asked me to repay the defaulted loan installments on the spot. Some of the women were so offensive that it was difficult for me to control myself. They were using very coercive language. The situation made me very angry and I became agitated.

This account demonstrates that NGOs provide loans to women and not to men, consider women as subordinate to men, and influence the group leaders to use threatening language even towards the family members to collect the outstanding loans. Showing dishonor or shaming a family member for failing to repay the loans may also affect other members, children and relatives in the household. The conflict between NGO and borrower extends from the NGO group center to the community level. This unscrupulous action of fiscal enforcement as legitimized by NGOs is a form of cultural violence.

Cultural violence is apparent when borrowers are represented as irresponsible because they are not using the loan in income generating activities. In this context, NGO officials capitalize on the local people's perception about causes of poverty. From this perspective, the poor are to blame for their sufferings. This makes structural violence invisible. For example, in local a social cultural context, the interrogative sentence "why can't you pay if you can eat?" is associated with negative attributes about an individual's personal, social and economic life. It is an accusation that the person lacks ability to support himself or herself, depends on others economically, and if this person borrows something from people cannot return that (e.g. money, food, or any other materials). Other members in the community would generally consider breaking the pledge of loan repayment between each other to be shameful. When the group's leaders use such language they imply that poor women or men are not repaying because of their uncontrolled lifestyle (e.g. using the money from NGOs for consumption, buying jewelries, entertainment technologies such as TV, etc.), or that the loan defaulter is lazy, lethargic, stupid and incapable of managing his or her own livelihood. Since such implications would leave the local people feeling guilty and embarrassed, their honor and dignity damaged, NGO's capitalize on this social pressure as a means of loan enforcement. Many borrowers internalize this and act against other loan defaulters. Such a loan recovery strategy may contribute to the development of a norm of violent behavior between borrowers, leaving the socially and economically disadvantaged in an even more vulnerable situation. Women learn and perpetuate norms of intolerance, disrespect, or humiliation, as they are seeing the practices of using such language occurring in the NGO center or community. Key informant, Sazib, a husband of a borrower, observes in an NGO's group center:

Actually, the current approach of group pressure is hardly conducive for the poor. If a poor borrower fails to repay her loan installment, other women in the group use coercive or shaming language. It affects her both psychologically and socially. There are also some other adverse consequences of this trend of attacking other people with sharp and fierce attitudes. As one woman starts to reproach the loan defaulter, other women in the group's center join it. Most of these women are modest, amiable and non-talkative, but they adapt to this process of violent behavior by seeing other women using abusive language. You rebuke someone seeing this I also rebuke another. It seems that we have normalized such practice in our everyday life. These women are hardly cooperative towards each other for overcoming the economic problems they encounter in their everyday lives.⁷

The statement explains how NGO practices socialize the female borrowers to act in favor of NGO interests. Female borrowers have little or no opportunity to organize themselves to protect their personal, social and economic interests. Socializing the group leaders into a culture of shameful language is one powerful way to collect defaulted loans. In short, these women gradually adapt to this situation and accept such behaviors as natural. This exemplifies how NGOs use language both to affect people socially and psychologically and to legitimize structural violence by blaming the poor. Such a group lending system is often responsible for inciting personal conflicts between the borrowers and their families. And through this, NGOs propagate unequal power relations both between the fieldworkers and the borrowers and among the borrowers themselves (i.e., the group leaders and the general borrowers who are relatively poor). This also exemplifies how structural violence in the form of forceful NGO practice is responsible for perpetuating unequal power relations between the rich and the poor thus reproducing poverty.

Conclusion

These research findings suggest that the rosy image of microcredit as the solution to poverty alleviation and the mechanism of women's empowerment needs to be rethought. In this article, I demonstrated how local people experience and perceive the practices of microcredit NGOs in the CHT, Bangladesh. I reflect on how NGOs coerce female borrowers in the name of the solidarity group; what has been referred to as group liability. NGOs intentionally create a space for unequal power relations between group leaders and general borrowers in order to use those group leaders as a means of recruiting reliable clients, collecting loan repayments, and ensuring the continuity of microcredit programs. These NGOs choose the non-poor for their programs for leadership roles rather than the poorest because they consider the less-poor more capable to serve their institutional interests (e.g., timely loan repayments). NGOs strategically select group leaders from the better off households based on the criteria of symbolic and economic capital (e.g. social power and strong economic background). Later, NGOs use these group leaders as fiscal enforcers. Most of the group's center leaders comply with the institutional ideology of these NGOs; however it is often not their choice to be submissive nor are all of them unconscious of what they are doing. NGOs foster unequal power relations between fieldworkers and borrowers in order to serve their institutional interests such as the expansion and the continuation of the microcredit programs and the reduction of operational costs by using these women as free labor as fiscal enforcers.

The current NGOs practices do not enable an environment of sustainable social and economic change but instead, are often responsible for breaking down the interpersonal and community relationships and for perpetuating poverty.

Developing a shared norm of shame within the borrowers, as opposed to a shared norm of social and economic empowerment, is one of the central issues reflected in the ethnographic details presented throughout this article. Proponents claim that microcredit empowers women to become economic and social actors, uplifting their entire community through women's involvement in entrepreneurship, building social solidarity and social capital; thus microcredit NGOs help the poor reduce their dependency on relief, aid, and charity (Kelkar et al. 2004; Yunus 2004). NGOs usually rely on the repayment rate to determine the success of microcredit in the alleviation of poverty and women's empowerment, but my research findings show that a high repayment rate does not prove that the poor borrowers have been able to experience social and economic emancipation.

Importantly, my research findings discover a paradoxical image of empowerment as opposed to the dominant notion of women's empowerment prevailing in microcredit discourses. NGO fieldworkers give some powers to a group of women who can develop their personal communication and leadership skills by becoming involved in different activities related to microcredit NGOs such as: attending NGOs' weekly group meeting; organizing and leading fellow members in the group's center to socialize NGOs' fiscal disciplines; and performing administrative functions such as collecting and keeping records of the economic profile, loan and repayment information of each borrower. All these practices enhance their position in the NGO center, family, and in the community to some extent. Yet this empowerment is also the cause of disempowerment of other women because they assist NGO fieldworkers to exclude some borrowers from microcredit programs, who are considered unsuitable for adapting to fiscal disciplines of microcredit NGOs. Instead of using this empowerment to uplift the entire community through their active participation in microcredit programs, developing their capabilities, enhancing economic capacities, or to help build social capital, these women may play a divisive role by creating social conflict while enforcing the repayment obligations of NGOs.

My ethnography reflects how the groups' center leaders participate in the culture of shaming, manipulation, and social conflict while protecting their own and NGO interests. The NGOs' empowerment of women encourages developing a shared norm of degrading and depriving the poor of equal economic opportunity by blaming the poor for their inability to repay the loans. Coercive language and socializing the borrowers about the causes of failure (e.g. laziness, lethargy, or consuming the loan without investing in productive purposes) in repaying the loan installments is also a part of encouraging women to legitimize these coercive measures of fiscal enforcement and to perpetuate poverty, humiliation, and suffering in the poorest. The empowerment of the group leaders through experiences of abuse, shame, coercion, and social conflict cannot help challenge the existing social and structural constraints for the poor population, especially for women in a patriarchal society, in Bangladesh.

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The Aesthetics of Deformity and the Construction of the “Freak”

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Abstract

With the inception of the “freak show” in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, deformity, physical abnormality and unusual facial features were sensationalized into entertainment spectacle, covertly managed, constructed and displayed for the macabre amusement of sideshow visitors and audience members. Due to the historical manipulation and fabrication of freaks’ bodies by sideshow and Odditorium managers to heighten or diminish their “freakish” qualities, the freak show can be conceptualized as an aesthetic space. By framing these social events as an aesthetic space, it is possible to analyze and deconstruct these bodies in the same way a work of art is appraised and valued. A freak is made, rather than born, and the physical elements that constitute freakishness are entirely dependent on the cultural norms and values of the time. Thus the cultural category of a freak is both historically and socially contingent. Through this aesthetic lens, I examine the visual culture of freak shows in order to interrogate the methods of representation employed by sideshow managers. These methods neither disrupted nor subverted the culturally coded conceptions of normality or deformity but, rather, reinforced them. Managers utilized exoticism or aggrandizement, falsified life-story pamphlets and visual chicanery to deliberately separate the audience from the freaks as objects of amusement and maintain social hierarchy. As the nineteenth century wore on, however, freak shows lost their cultural currency, which can be seen as the result of developing anthropological theory and medicine where spectators began to pathologize the deformed body.

Keywords: Freak, aesthetic bodies, exoticism, deformity

“Representations are formations, but they are also deformations.” – Roland Barthes

Introduction

For carnival goers of the 19th century, their senses were immediately bombarded with the demanding, trumpeting call of the sideshow Talker and promoters, ushering spectators into the Odditorium—the carnivalesque version of an auditorium—promising the most unusual, weird and strange assortment of humans ever exhibited. The Talker’s cajoling was corroborated by the flashy posters of “The Skeleton Man,” “The Missing Link,” or “The Human Caterpillar.” These intriguing titles further enticed a crowd as “true life” pamphlets and portraits featuring the freaks were distributed, daring the audience to enter the menagerie and perceive such aberrant wonders with their own eyes. “Freaks” have been historically treated in a sensational and theatrical way throughout the past three centuries by carnivals, sideshows, fairs, circuses and dime museums that systematically divided and characterized freaks into specific social categories. Through the theoretical lens of aestheticism and artistic

construction, while utilizing historical, textual and photographic analysis, I unpack the ways that freaks' bodies were presented, styled and altered according to the cultural beliefs and philosophies of the time. The personhood of the sideshow freak was separated from their physical body, so that their display in carnivals was composed like an artistic installation. I analyze the freak show to understand the way that the "deviant" body has been aesthetically treated throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. I also examine the aesthetic composition of the "freakish" body to expose the social convictions that undergirded and determined the specific decisions of carnival managers in the aesthetic presentation of the "freaks."

The development and historical significance of the freak show serve as a context to examine culturally coded normative structures within Western society and interrogate the notion of what constitutes a body as grotesque, monstrous, deviant, or other. The way that freaks have been constructed and construed is largely dependent upon the social definition and designation of stigma, which necessarily marks particular members of society as deformed pariahs. Erving Goffman remarks in his book *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, "The term stigma, then, will be used to refer to an attribute that is deeply discrediting, but it should be seen that a language of relationships, not attributes, is really needed. An attribute that stigmatizes one type of possessor can confirm the usualness of another, and therefore is neither creditable nor discreditable as a thing in itself" (1986:3), highlighting the social contingency of stigma. In staging the freaks—who existed on the fringes of society due to the societal perception of their bodies—as performers or forms of entertainment, it is possible to see the way carnivals, sideshows and freak shows have managed the aesthetic body in ways that do not challenge the social order. Their difference or otherness was managed and manipulated in juxtaposition to the audience, who believed themselves to be normal and entitled to subject these presumed freaks to their gaze. The careful characterization, discourse and artistic construction employed by sideshow managers othered and exotified freaks, thereby generating a distance between the subject and the audience that maintained the safety of cultural normality, sometimes by embellishing or emphasizing the freaks' differences or anomalies. On the other hand, the aesthetic presentation of the freak often lent them characteristics that made their bodies more socially acceptable, averting any subversive questions about what should be accepted as other, and thereby maintaining the status quo. Through these conscientious constructions, social hierarchies were reified and the audience was easily able to assimilate the freaks into discrete social spheres demonstrably separate from their own. Examining the freak show from this artistic perspective reveals the aesthetic treatment of the freak's body, the historical context that dictated the presentation's construction, and the way that American audiences were meant to negotiate these oddities.

Rather than forcing the audience to reexamine their notions of normality and ethnocentrism and confront the cultural contingency of deformity or disability, I argue that the creative methods of constructing the freak employed by sideshow managers, starting in the mid 1800s and extending into the beginning of the 1900s, maintained the hierarchal social and cultural constructions of normality at the time. The visual and rhetorical techniques used to selectively present and control freakishness changed and transitioned over time in reaction to the transformation of norms and ideologies throughout the 20th century. The managers who tracked down individuals considered freakish and fabricated the performance, body, and narrative of the freaks strove to make the entertainers more socially permissible, if not culturally appropriate. These freak-artisans used the spectacular context of the circus to manipulate

apparel, rhetoric and physical appearance to create abnormal individuals framed within pre-existing social categories and biases. It was only when the rhetoric of otherness turned against primitivism, and spectators began to pathologize the body, rather than render it a spectacle, that freak shows lost their cultural currency. What precipitated in the 1960s and 70s, with the photographic work of Diane Arbus, was instead a more subversive version of the freak that was normalized and challenged the notion of beauty and belonging in Western society.

Defining Terms and Methods

By looking at the body from an aesthetic perspective, it is possible to view how in the freak show, the body became like a canvas that could be manipulated and distorted for specific visual experiences and reception by the audience. The freak, to a certain extent, transcended the realm of humanity and became a spectacle and a commodity that could be examined and gawked at. As Goffman suggests, “by definition, of course, we believe the person with a stigma is not quite human [...] We construct a stigma-theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority and account for the danger he represents, sometimes rationalizing an animosity based on other differences, such as those of social class” (1986:5). Since freaks could represent a threat to the current social order and subvert ascendant cultural and biological beliefs of the time, their bodies had to be carefully controlled and artistically rendered so as to nullify the danger Goffman mentions. Michael Chemers elaborates, “the human monstrosity offended the sensibilities of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thinkers because of its deviance from the ‘natural order,’ which by the mid-nineteenth century had become the ‘normal order’” (2008:69), testifying to the perceived threat and discomfort generated by abnormal bodies throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Therefore, freaks’ bodies became objects that were visually consumed by the audience, thereby diminishing their agency and personhood. The aesthetic body, a term Nora Jones explains in her dissertation, also entails ways of seeing, and “refers to the fact that individuals, like institutions, are embedded within specific historical trajectories, and their actions and interpretations reflect this” (2002:3). The bodily evaluation and interpretation of freaks by their audience is conditioned and determined by the culture of the time; for example, social philosophies established and normalized hierarchies often revealed in outward appearance or clothes. I will use the social mores that regulated the freakishness of an individual to illuminate the aesthetic decisions of managers in the presentation of their freaks.

Thus far I have employed the problematic term freak, loaded with complex and condemning connotations, to discuss those individuals often featured in carnival and sideshow attractions. I have opted to use the word freak as the carnival goers and sideshow managers of the time used it; they often objectified and dehumanized the individuals through a linguistic devaluation by labeling men, women and children as oddities, monsters, or savages. The aesthetic analysis of a freak’s body should thus be framed within the historical and objectifying context of their display in sideshows as tableaux and as subjects of the collective societal gaze. While the individuals that performed as freaks in carnivals and sideshows did exercise a certain amount of agency and control over their own presentation and spectacular representation, it is beyond the purview of this paper to examine and unpack the ways that they determined and pushed against the freak show’s process of objectification and

commodification¹. Freaks were not always the passive aesthetic products of the Odditorium managers, and I do not wish to diminish their own authority over their bodies—rather, by applying an aesthetic lens, I aim to focus critical attention on the visual decisions and ideologies that dictated freak shows for almost a century.

Given that I am conducting a historical analysis, my methods include photographic analysis of freak photography taken during the late 1800s and early 1900s for Odditorium exhibitions; and secondary sources that examine the history of these sideshows, including the motivations of the carnival managers and the visual techniques used over the years of development and subsequent collapse of the spectacle. I also survey archives of Diane Arbus's work and interviews conducted during her lifetime (Adams 2001; Goodwin 2009), while drawing from fieldwork at Philadelphia's Mütter Museum, with help from Nora L. Jones's dissertation (2002) on the establishment. I also utilize Robert Bogdan's terms of "aggrandized" and "exotic" freaks to help categorize and distinguish between the ways freaks were visually constructed and presented for appraisal to an audience; I aim to build upon Bogdan's research on these "types" of freaks by adding an aesthetic component to his analysis².

Popular definitions of a freak basically refer to an individual who deviates from what is considered the cultural norm of a body whole and unblemished. Chemers foregrounds the larger theoretical framework of stigma as "enfreakment," arguing that, "a 'freak' cannot exist in the absence of a preexisting social stigma, and that freakery requires conditioned theatrical conventions that often enter into subversive dialectics with that stigma" (2008: 25). This theatricality is a central component in the construction of the freak in sideshows. The freak show was largely a performance that implemented theatricality through the use of props, backdrops, costumes and fabricated narratives to construct a freak that was visually digestible, spectacular and believable, playing upon stereotypes and the preconceived notions of its spectators. Indeed, as Bogdan explains, "'freak' is a frame of mind, a set of practices, a way of thinking about and presenting people. It is the enactment of a tradition, the performance of a stylized presentation" (1988:3). Bogdan also posits that the category of freak is not something that is not naturally endowed to the individual, but one that we ourselves create as participants in the cultural perception of normality by projecting our assumptions and discriminations onto their bodies. There would, essentially, be no freaks if we did not imagine them as such.

Freaks were marked by a specific deformity or stigma that designated them as other, or played off of notions of otherness within the culture at the time to "enfreak" someone who would otherwise be accepted as normal. Clyde Ingalls, manager of the Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Sideshow in the 1930s and one of the progenitors of the freak show, once said, "Aside from such unusual attractions as the famous three-legged man, and the Siamese

¹ For literature on agency and disability studies in freak shows, see Michael M. Chemers' (2003) "Le Freak, C'est Chic: The Twenty-First Century Freak Show as Theatre of Transgression" in *Modern Drama* and David A. Gerber's (1996) "The 'Careers' of People Exhibited in Freak Shows: The Problem of Volition and Valorization" in *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body*. Ed. Rosemary Garland Thomson. New York: New York UP, 138- 54.

² It is important to note that there were a variety of types and sub-categories of freaks within these two categories. There was not a strict dichotomy between exotic and aggrandized freaks. I am drawing upon these terms to illustrate the pervasive aesthetic patterns and techniques used in constructing freakishness to note how the categories themselves were culturally constructed.

twin combinations, freaks are what you make them. Take any peculiar looking person, whose familiarity to those around him makes for acceptance, play up that peculiarity and add a good spiel and you have a great attraction” (Bogdan 1988:95). Freaks were considered as moldable as a lump of clay, marketed as a stylized presentation mindfully constructed so as not to offend and disturb the presumed natural order. Freaks, as interchangeable objects and spectacles, were capable of being sculpted into an aesthetic experience that drew hoards of spectators into the hallowed halls of the sideshow.

The Freak Show

The freak show’s golden era lasted from roughly 1870 to 1920; dime museums, circuses, fairs and carnivals each featured their own collection of oddities and were the primary source of popular entertainment in the United States, particularly rural populations (Bogdan 1988). Freak shows were often included as a specialized section in carnivals and circuses, traveling along with the Ferris wheel and popcorn stands as they toured the country. During this time, Americans believed in the supremacy of “progress,” “modernity,” and Western culture, ethnocentric assumptions carnivals and sideshows utilized to their benefit. The methods used by managers in sideshows are very similar to the manipulation of African art by traders (cf. Steiner 2006). The middlemen and traders alter and participate in “the presentation of objects, the description of objects and the alteration of objects” (Steiner 2006:455) to potential buyers. The presentation includes the context of the “discovery” of the object, with discourse about the supposed authenticity of the piece. The description of the object by the trader is equally manipulative as “what we are told about a work of art conditions what we see” (Steiner 2006:458). Similarly, carnival managers capitalized on the power of narrative by penning the “true life” pamphlets of their freaks that were distributed at the carnivals, a topic I will return to later on in the paper. These true-life pamphlets, as well as the portraits of the freaks customarily sold at shows, allowed visitors to purchase a token of their adventures into deviance and carry a reminder home with them of what was abnormal. Finally, the surface of many African art-objects was altered by dealers to cater to Western expectations, just as the freak’s body was clothed, costumed and contextualized to create the appropriate social persona. Part of the stigma management of freaks involved employing specialized signs or symbols that accompanied a freak’s performance and conveyed social information. These symbols stabilized social contact between freaks and “normals”, helped to establish the freak’s social identity, and were meant to present a type of knowledge about who the freak was. Most often, freaks were associated with stigma symbols, “namely, signs which are especially effective in drawing attention to a debasing identity discrepancy, breaking up what otherwise be a coherent overall picture, with a consequent reduction in our valuation of the individual” (Goffman 1986:43-44). Sometimes the stigma symbols were stereotypical emblems of “savagery” and “primitivism”—such as a necklace of bones or a cape made of exotic animal skin and fur—and at other times a stigma symbol was the deformity itself, accomplished by embellishing and focusing the gaze on the site of physical abnormality.

The carnival itself can be understood as an interstitial, liminal space, one that straddles both fantasy and reality, trafficking in entertainment and spectacle. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin’s folkloristics of the carnivalesque, the circus freaks often featured in carnivals and sideshows represented the “contradictory and double-faced fullness of life” (1968:62), situating the carnival as “the site in which aberration exposes the norm,” such that, “social hierarchies

and ordered society are established as a space of conflict” (Santos 2003:65). Circus freaks, in all their constructed or biological aberration, had the capacity to throw naturalized truths and social systems into question. As Michael Chemers notes, “The grotesque body [...] is unclassifiable, sportive, unique, and above all, *transforming* into something else. The grotesque body seems to transcend its own individuality, accessing, in its swellings and protuberances, parts of other bodies, unpredictably morphing into new identities and new shapes. The hierarchy cannot contain or explain this wonder and so is rendered false, ‘suspended,’ by the extraordinary form” (2003:296). The very mutability and strangeness of the grotesque body throws established social categories and castes into flux. Chemers writes of the destabilizing power of the grotesque body, “[A] hierarchy can determine only that which represents stable, immovable, and unchangeable being, not free becoming’ (Bakhtin 1968:364). For this reason hierarchies require normate bodies, which are quantifiable, classifiable, and stagnant. The normate form represents a ‘closed individuality,’ a finished body as restricted in its actions as it is in its shape” (2003:296). The freak’s potential to destabilize the normate hierarchy necessitated the need to substantiate the pre-existing hierarchal structure of society and demonstrate the hierarchy’s continued validity despite the presence of the grotesque body. Established social categories were therefore deployed to reconstitute the freak into salient social identities that maintained the ideologies and hierarchal architecture of American culture, to subsequently render the transgressive potential of the freak’s body inert.

Freaks were divided into categories that spoke most to their physical appearance while maintaining the critical distance throughout the entertainment between the audience and the person of their evaluation, who became fetishized in the intentional performance of abnormality. One of these categories was the exoticized freak or the ethnographic curiosity (Bogdan 1988), which capitalized on the strangeness and foreignness of the individual. The exotic freak accentuated or added culturally “primitive” qualities and geographically distanced the freaks from the audience. These exotic freaks were staged as examples of little known regions across the globe that remained “undeveloped” and “savage.” Some of these ethnographic freaks were actually brought from different regions of the world. Anthropologists were known to explore the globe and bring back specimens of primitive peoples, both for research and for physical examination. Surprisingly, however, exoticized freaks came primarily from within the United States yet were advertised as foreign. These cultural strangers, however false, were very much a product of Charles Darwin’s recent and revolutionary discoveries on evolution, which informed the anthropological beliefs of unilineal evolution the time, posited by anthropologists such as Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). These strange “wild” men and women served as symbols of an earlier stage of cultural evolution juxtaposed against the “modern,” biologically superior West. For many, attending a freak show to see these exotic men and women was not, however, meant to be an educational or edifying experience. As Bogdan notes:

Display of non-Westerners in freak shows was not intended as a cross-cultural experience to provide patrons with real knowledge of the ways of life and thinking of a foreign group of people. Rather, it was a money-making activity that prospered by embellishing exhibits with exaggerated, bogus presentations emphasizing their strange customs and beliefs. Showmen took people who were culturally and ancestrally non-

Western and made them into freaks by casting them as bizarre and exotic: cannibals, savages, and barbarians (1988:177).

To corroborate their claims of exoticism and add to the adventurer allure, stories about the discovery of these ethnographic freaks were manufactured and became an integral part of the sideshow experience. One pamphlet, for example, for P.T. Barnum's "The Missing Link" read, "Is it a lower order of Man? Or is it a higher development of the Monkey? Or is it both in combination? Nothing of the kind HAS EVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE!" (Springhall 2007:20, emphasis in original). These tales of discovery were often imperialistic, celebrating the moral superiority of the West for "rescuing" these so-called savages and bringing them into civilization. These true-life pamphlets simultaneously reified contemporary social hierarchies and imparted a sense of supremacy to the audience. Bogdan explains, "Americans viewing such displays of non-Western people did not confront their own ethnocentrism. On the contrary, what they saw merely confirmed their old prejudices and beliefs regarding the separateness of the 'enlightened' and 'primitive' worlds; they left the freak show reassured of their own supremacy by such proofs of others' inferiority" (1988:197). The discourse and narratives of the true-life pamphlets served to confirm, rather than disturb, notions of cultural superiority at the time.

For example, Hiram and Barney Davis (born in 1825 and 1827 respectively), mentally disabled and dwarfed brothers, were exhibited under the monikers of Waino and Plutano, the "Wild Men of Borneo." They were purportedly captured by Captain Hammond in the jungle and brought back to civilization. In actuality, Hiram and Barney grew up in the town of Mount Vernon, Ohio. Similarly, Tom and Hettie, microcephalic siblings living in Ohio, were drawn into the freak show as Hoomio and Iola, the "Wild Australian Children." Bogdan explains of siblings' contrived narrative: "they were described by showmen as members of a near-extinct cannibal tribe from the interior of Australia who had been captured by the explorer-adventurer Captain Reid. Concocted publicity pamphlets, which were for sale at their appearances [stated that they] belong[ed] to a distinct race hitherto unknown to civilization" (1988:119-120). The two were either attired in "authentic" Australian garb (stigma symbols) to capitalize on exotic stereotypes, or adorned in simple dresses and skirts, that would deemphasize their wildness. Even in mundane Western clothing, their heads were still shaved close to the scalp so as to accentuate the abnormal shape of their skulls and face, creating a contrast that made their freakishness more visible. This normalization process, in lieu of exotification, was furthered by the salon backdrop used in photographs of the two, a refined, domestic and elegant setting that substantiated the social order of Victorian society. Bogdan rationalizes these two categories, saying, "By using imagery and symbols they know the public would respond to, showmen created for the person being exhibited a public identity, a presentation, a front, that would have the widest appeal, attract the most people" (1988:95). The manager's framing preferences would be determined by the audience and would subsequently dictate the aesthetic schema of the freaks. The two categories of presentation for these ethnographic curiosities, as either Tom and Hettie or their stage names Hoomio and Iola, were aesthetic strategies that either appealed to the ethnocentrism of the audience or their sense of propriety and class, subsequently determining the social sphere in which Tom and Hettie were subsumed.

Exotic freaks, which could include those who were represented as cannibals and primitive foreigners, also emphasized animalistic and bestial qualities. Minnie Woolsey suffered from Virchow-Seckle syndrome, which gave her a light, delicate frame, domed head and pinched face with a protruding nose. Due to her appearance, she was customarily costumed and constructed as “Koo Koo the Bird Girl.” Her shoes were shaped to look like bird feet, similar to duck flippers, and she was swathed in a fabric resembling feathers. Her hair was styled in a fantastic ponytail on the top of her head, not unlike the crest of a male bird. She ostensibly belongs in the wild, the backdrop of her picture full of trees and shrubs that add to the illusion³. Through this feral representation, Minnie Woolsey was not only objectified and othered, but also promoted as a creature beyond human capacities. This dehumanization not only reinforced her display in a freak show like an animal in a zoo, but also divorced her body from human society and culture. The Victorian social order could not “tame” her, or permit her presence; instead she is represented as something they could tolerate but did not have to fear, innocuous as a songbird and just as separate from civilization.

Ishi, the “Last Wild Indian” of the Yahi tribe, though he was not included in a freak show per se, became a national sensation due to his “authenticity” as a cultural other. He was discovered behind a slaughterhouse in California and taken to live in the University of California Hearst Museum of Anthropology, where he served as a janitor (Adams 2001). Though there were no carnival managers shouting that he was the last Yahi of his kind, Ishi became a spectacle due to anthropological interest. For all intents and purposes, he became an artifact of his race contextualized within a museum in which other objects of material culture were frozen in time to be examined. He drew spectators to the museum too, “for the crowds who greeted him with curiosity and affection he was the last survivor of a dying culture, an anachronistic relic of prehistoric times, and a representative of a more natural and wild America. For the anthropologists he was both a figure of inassimilable difference in need of protection from the contaminating influence of civilization” (Adams 2001:44). Ishi and the museum were constantly solicited by showmen who begged him to join their carnival and tour the country. Alfred Kroeber, who worked with Ishi to decipher his language, attempted, in his own way, to normalize Ishi by dressing him in Western attire and posing for a picture next to him, clearly aware of the exoticizing perspective most took toward him. Rachel Adams critiques this attempt, arguing that: “Ishi is no more ‘normal’ dressed in a suit and tie than he is swathed in caveman’s furs. Efforts to assimilate him often only further emphasized how alien he was in the modern environment. Instead of showing his equivalence with American men, the photograph suggests the limits of his adaptability to the new culture. The image thus inadvertently mirrors a convention of freak photography in which the pairing of showman and native highlights the contrast between savagery and civilization” (2001:51-52). In the picture, Ishi is disheveled, his tie askew and his feet bare, still situated within a natural setting that implies his indelible wildness. Whether a genuine stranger to American culture, or an ethnographic freak invented with a necklace of bones and an organic backdrop—stigma symbols of savagery and otherness—the exotic construction of freaks utilized the rhetoric of

³ Like the many other examples I offer, this analysis is based off of images and portraits found on the Internet taken of Minnie Woolsey during her lifetime, which document the outfits typically worn during her freak show performances, as well as her representation in Tod Browning’s 1932 cult-classic film *Freaks*. (http://25.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_lyj929ePA41qgbie4o1_1280.jpg).

their time to create fascinating subjects that seemed unusual, alien and strange to polite American society. Yet sideshow managers also distanced the exotic freaks on display enough from the Western world so they did not disturb the audience's sense of propriety or disrupt their belief in their own superiority.

The aesthetic foil to the exotic freak was the aggrandized freak (Bogdan 1988), a category that endowed the individual with status and prestige and rendered the freak more palatable. These were people presented and artistically constructed as perfect gentlemen and ladies, or sometimes princes and war heroes, who could easily be assimilated into society if not for their "unfortunate condition," such as gigantism or missing limbs. Managers employed prestige symbols, such as fine Victorian suits and dresses, or emblems that implied noble birth or an elevated social rank. The aggrandized freak subsequently maintained the stability of social order, reinforcing hierarchal notions of class and the social significance of certain members of the population above others. Bogdan notes of the aggrandized freak, "the presentation emphasized how, with the exception of the particular physical, mental, or behavioral condition, the freak was an upstanding, high-status person with talents of a conventional and socially prestigious nature" (1988:108). This aggrandized mode made the freaks less disruptive to the audience's sense of normality and rendered their bodies more easily recognizable and assimilable into contemporary conceptions of class, body and race. For example, Jean Libbera, or Laloo, had a vestigial twin growing out of his stomach. For his portrait, he was dressed in the finest and most aristocratic garb, with a beautiful curtain draping onto the floor, suggesting wealth and status⁴. The vestigial twin was similarly dressed, the perfectly draped arms held by Jean almost tenderly. Though the image is initially arresting, the viewer is able to latch onto familiar items or clothing pieces that suggest that, despite the potential for his body to subvert the norms of gentility, Jean adheres to the fashion and pose of others of his time. These framing techniques exemplify the ways in which carnivals permitted Americans the perverse pleasure of looking within a tightly controlled and regulated environment that projected judgment while insulating the viewer from self-reflection.

Bearded ladies, too, deferred to the established roles and expectations of 19th and 20th century society. Despite their beards, which blurred the distinctions between genders and often occurred due to a hormonal imbalance or, in more serious cases, a condition called hypertrichosis, they still adopted stereotypically feminine postures and affectations in photography that made their freakishness more palatable. Bogdan notes, "they were typically pictured striking feminine poses in elegant surroundings, wearing fashionable dresses and with their hair done in the latest style" (1988:224). Clementine Delait, despite her flowing facial hair, was pictured as the height of femininity, stylish with her hair perfectly coiffed, staring into the mirror to examine her reflection, still concerned with notions of beauty. Bearded women were also often photographed with their husbands, reinforcing their femininity and embracing the typified role of devoted wife. In these pictures, the women often have their hands (sometimes delicately gloved) crossed on their husband's shoulder, standing slightly behind him; such a pose acknowledges the implicit stratification of gender rather than challenges it.

The aggrandized construction of the freak involved performativity, as well as costumes that were in keeping with the current styles and denoted a certain regal air. The most felicitous

⁴ Robinson, John. Sideshow World: The Phreeque Show. Electronic document, <http://phreeque.tripod.com/laloo.html>.

example of aggrandized theatricality is General Tom Thumb, born Charles Sherwood Stratton. At a height of two feet, eleven inches, Stratton was picked up at a young age by circus showman P. T. Barnum to become a seminal member of Barnum's freak show. Barnum trained Stratton to adopt the manners of someone regal and refined, priming him to become the stage persona of General Tom Thumb, a famed dwarf knight that served King Arthur in Medieval England. Tom Thumb's stage persona relied upon his acting abilities as well as theatrical assistance: "In his early appearances Tom did imitations of Napoleon Bonaparte, Cupid, and a Revolutionary War soldier, dressing up in appropriate costumes. Mock battles were staged between him, posing as the biblical David, and the museum's giants, representing Goliaths. He marched around stage dressed as a soldier wearing a ten-inch sword and performing military drills" (Bogdan 1988:150). Barnum molded Stratton's status, title and origin in the most efficacious form of aggrandized presentation. Stratton was variously photographed in ways that emphasized both his diminutive stature and his noble demeanor. The two were sometimes conflated—Thumb would literally balance in the palm of a man dressed as a soldier to emphasize his tiny figure, but would be similarly clad in finery emblematic of war, in fact looking *down* upon the man. Tom Thumb's presentation also exemplifies the ways that a freak's traits could be dramatized or pronounced to add to the illusion.

Apart from the exoticized and aggrandized versions of presentation that made freaks' bodies more palatable, photographs of freaks, particularly in the 19th century, utilized perspectival chicanery to play up the specific aberration that was the locus of their enfreakment. As Bogdan notes of freak photography in the 1800s:

They posed in front of one of various painted backdrops depicting scenes that ranged from jungle terrain to Victorian parlors. Props were selected, costumes worn, and the pose struck—all to reflect the image that the manager and the subject wanted to promote [...] Dwarfs were photographed in oversized chairs to appear smaller than life, and giants were shot in scaled-down chairs to appear larger. Fat people's garments were stuffed with rags to add to their size. In addition, negatives were doctored, with for example, additional hair added to exhibits whose abundance of hair was their oddity (1988:13).

Sometimes the negatives of the photographs were even doctored to emphasize the supposed deformity of the subject. These methods of visual trickery could be similarly applied in the sideshows. This stagecraft, apart from amplifying the freakishness of the individual, also demonstrates the extent to which freaks were an aesthetic construction, artistic products that—playing with the right proportions and cultural mores—were manufactured rather than born.

Managers could emphasize the aberrant proportionality of their performers, but freak as a social identity, as well as a theatrical stylization, could be induced or adopted by someone who was not necessarily aberrant. Familiarity and recognition of cultural conceptions of deformity and abnormality bred the possibility for self-made freaks. For example, Naomi Sutherland, as well as her six sisters, toured in the W. W. Coles Colossal shows and Barnum and Bailey's sideshow at the end of the 1800s. They were included because of their long hair, which cascaded down to the floor. Altering their appearance by growing out their hair, the Sutherland Sisters emphasized their femininity in a way that was not necessarily the norm, but rather a conscious, non-threatening display choice that altered their social identity enough to

be included in freak shows. The type of freak identities available to individuals was stratified not only along lines of culture and class, but gender as well. While aggrandized male freaks could be transformed into warriors and heroes, women were still second-class citizens treated as docile objects of desire and submission.

Tattooed men and women were also members of the self-made collective, especially considering that, “naturalists and early anthropologists saw the practice of tattooing as the ultimate sign of primitiveness, revealing a lack of sensitivity to pain and unabashed paganism” (Bogdan 1988:241). These illustrated individuals recognized that the premise of freak shows was a display of the aesthetic body, and subsequently chose to embellish their bodies by making their skin a canvas. They acknowledged their persona had become conflated with their artistic appearance. These men, and sometimes women, were often given stories to augment the spectacle; the counterfeit tales suggested foreign travels and adventures that explained this deviance of the flesh. Their tattoos were also construed in the 19th and early 20th centuries as related to primitivism. Cesare Lombroso, an Italian scientist in the early 20th century explains, “tattooing is, in fact, one of the essential characteristics of primitive man, and of men who still live in the savage state” (Lombroso qtd. in Bogdan 1988:249). Understanding the discourses of aberration, propriety and primitivism of the time, we can more accurately understand the way that freaks, and their reception, was very much a product of historical and cultural conditioning.

The Pathologization of Freaks

As the 20th century progressed, the rhetoric and design underlying the freak show as a medium of entertainment began to crumble. Whereas anthropologists before the turn of the century had believed in a strict dichotomy between the primitive and the modern, combined with a single ladder of human evolution, cultural relativism began to emerge from new anthropological inquiry and theory. Led by the work and research of Franz Boas, oft-cited as the father of modern anthropology, cultural relativism rendered ethnological freaks inappropriate and outdated. Systematizing and scientifically qualifying deviance became the new framework of understanding, so that freaks’ bodies were examined more and more on a medical basis. Biomedicine assumed an increasingly dominant role in cultural conceptions of the body, until it became the hegemonic discourse of the 20th century. This transformation in understandings of the body generated what Michel Foucault (1978) refers to as biopolitics, in which bodies were classed, “cared for, protected, cultivated, and preserved from the many dangers and contacts, to be isolated from others so that it would retain its differential value” (123). Foucault goes on to elaborate of the new biomedical paradigm, “The emphasis on the body should undoubtedly be linked to the process of growth and establishment of bourgeois hegemony [...] because of what the ‘cultivation’ of its own body could represent politically, economically and historically for the present and the future of the bourgeoisie” (1978:125). The body, subsequently, became even more of a locus of scrutiny and attention in every-day life, appraised both prescriptively and politically. Freaks, despite the efforts of their managers to render their deviance innocuous, came to be regarded within this biopolitical framework as pathogens, diseased threats to the natural order of society and the physical immunity of spectators. Their very morphology literally marked them as bodies out of order. Performers with scaly skin or extra limbs were newly understood as examples of

afflicted, ailing bodies that needed treatment. The only inoculation was to avoid freak shows altogether.

The abnormal body was no longer a spectacle but rather viewed as diseased, stripped of its entertaining or scandalous contexts in lieu of diagnosis and treatment. Freak show exhibitions quite literally became sick:

As physical disability became the province of medical pathology, bodies once described as wonders of nature were reconceived in terms of disease. As anthropologists developed more specialized methods and the notion of cultural relativism became more pervasive, the exhibition of non-Western people as ethnographic freaks was less tolerable. Freak shows were sleazy arenas of exploitation and bad taste, relegated to small towns and bad neighborhoods where they would be patronized by audiences only slightly less marginal than the carnies themselves (Adams 2001:57).

The modes of presentation previously utilized by sideshow managers became “morally bankrupt” and the bodies of the freaks were more and more difficult to theatrically construct and construe in a way that was socially innocuous and agreeable to an audience that no longer wanted these sickened forms in sight. The bodies of freaks, according to the new pathology paradigm, should be examined privately in doctor’s offices and hospital rooms, rather than traveling circuses. Rhetoric about deformity became prescriptive rather than beguiling. Sideshows continued to exist, but were relegated to the margins of society. Even on the margins, though, freak shows still attracted some ticket-buyers, often in the lower, working class (Bogdan 1988), suggesting that the sideshows still reinforced certain elements of social hierarchy. Those individuals who attended the freak shows could feel a sense of physical and moral superiority, as well as thankfulness that despite their impoverishment or low class status, they were still more acceptable than the subjects of the sideshow. The audience still possesses their sense of normality and wholeness.

The freaks, now enfeebled rather than famed, though still objectified by the medical gaze, fell within the domain of science rather than amusement. This pathologization of the freak’s body persists at present to a certain extent. The Mütter Museum, established in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1858, is a museum dedicated to deformity and medical oddities. The Museum’s exhibitions include wax casts of faces deformed by leprosy, microcephalic fetuses, and the skeleton of Chang and Eng, Siamese twins who were in fact famous in the sideshow circuit. Jones (2002) examined the reception of the museum and considered its contents and exhibitions, which also include skeletons of individuals whose muscles ossified and a reproduction of an enormously distended intestine, all accompanied with pictures of the individuals who suffered from the conditions and stories about their lives. Jones comments that “one young visitor said that she could see how some aspects of the Museum could be perceived as similar to a freak show, because ‘some of that stuff is abnormal and whatever is abnormal in our society we sort of deem as being freakish’. This visitor felt that her experience was geared away from the sensational, however, because she was approaching the Museum from a ‘scientific point of view’” (2002:117). The scientific point of view appears to make the museum a destination of medical curiosity and empathy, rather than spectacle and entertainment. Of Jones’s interviews with museum attendants she writes: “In general, the

visitors I spoke with suggested that they believe that our society is now more educated about medical maladies and their reason for visiting was not, therefore, to ‘behold other’s misfortunes.’ Instead, their comments suggest that today’s population is more eager to learn about disease. The social belief that deformity should be hidden away for fear of a return to the dime museum mentality of taking amusement from misfortune is, however, prevalent and has the potential to affect the Mütter Museum” (2002:121-122). The maladies that afflicted the individuals displayed in the museum, therefore, become tools for understanding when framed by scientific and biomedical rhetoric, a more comprehensive form of learning that was absent during the freak show’s inception.

Jones' ethnographic research on the Mütter Museum in fact draws parallels between the scientific examination of the deformed body and aesthetic appreciation. She argues that “if the value judgments that adhere to the Western notion of beauty are removed, the concept of aesthetics becomes instead the collective standard by which products and ideas are judged. In this usage then, art and science both have a conception of aesthetics. Art’s aesthetics stem from collective subjective standards for art, while scientific aesthetics come from consensus standards of assumed objectivity” (2002: 165). Using this framework for analysis, we can come to understand the way freaks have been aesthetically constructed to dictate the critical perception of their bodies, predetermining, to a certain extent, the way that the viewer will see the person, if they perceive a person at all. By placing the skeleton of Chang and Eng behind glass, the Mütter Museum attempts to instantiate the purportedly objective standards of scientific inquiry and examination. The heading “Cabinet of Curiosities” above the display, however, belies the sordid past of museums and their origins in the freak show. The inspection of art and science are each based on respective standards of aestheticism, each with their own underlying, inherently subjective prejudices and values.

Destabilizing Stigma: Everyday Freakery

Considering the way the body of the freak has been historically and culturally constructed such that deformity is construed as harmless to the public, until the pathologization of the body diminished the entertainment value of the sideshow, Diane Arbus’s photographic work assumed the job of normalizing the freak. Arbus’s photography of freaks in the 1960s and 70s subverted the social order conscientiously maintained throughout the duration of freak shows by eliminating the visual techniques and trickery of the freak’s design and sideshow setting. Instead, Arbus employed a minimalist, mundane approach to frame her subjects. The intimate, private spaces inhabited by her subjects revealed how truly normal freaks are. Adams points out that in Arbus’ work, “ugliness, asymmetry, awkwardness were no longer associated only with the photography of social marginality, for anyone could look like a freak if the camera were to catch them at the proper angle” (2001:124). Arbus’s photographs stripped away both the theatrical and medical aspects, exposing individuals perfectly content in their freakishness, so comfortable, in fact, that it causes the viewer to reconsider those attributes that designate them as other.

Through her artistic process, Arbus sought to dismantle the physical characteristics and symbols that define or signal deformity. Arbus once commented in an interview, “think of this: That Beauty is itself an aberration, a burden, a mystery, even to itself” (Goodwin 2009:168). Indeed, Arbus went so far as to break down the illusory boundary between the freak and the observer, the audience and the spectacle, by saying that “there’s some sense in which I always

identify with them” (Goodwin 2009:160). The othering that typically occurred in freak shows operated along the premise that the categories of freak construction could sufficiently distance the freaks from typical society, so that the audience would not have to negotiate whether the same physiognomy could have manifested within them. Instead, freakishness, through Arbus’s camera lens, became a universal human trait that could develop internally or externally in *any* person. Arbus was “reacting against the constraints of social and artistic convention, but she was also creative, generating images that would change the way we understand the relationship between deviance and normality as it has been conveyed through photographic images” (Adams 2001:124). Suddenly, the ethnographic freak was recognized as a neighbor, the aggrandized freak resplendent in their utter normality and simple participation in everyday life. Her work unsettled the boundaries so carefully constructed by sideshow managers in the early 1900s.

Through her photography, Arbus stripped away the theatrical context of the freaks that either diminished or enhanced their oddities, to create portraits in supremely mundane and familiar settings, utilizing space and surroundings to further deconstruct the illusions of exoticism or royalty that had previously framed freak portraiture. Goodwin explains how Arbus often conducted her portrait sessions in familiar locations for her subjects, or in their very homes, so as to “convey the integrity and self-possession of an individual” (2009:157). Freakishness was no longer equated with a performative identity, and the viewer had to face *people*, who existed as domestic citizens rather than spectacles. For example, “Jewish Giant at Home” (1970) portrays a very tall man, stooped under the low ceiling while his parents peer up at him. He needs no props to accentuate his height and he transcends the category of oddity. Similarly, in “Untitled (1)” (1970-1971), two mentally disabled women link arms and smile delightedly for the camera, wholly joyful. They seem unaware that their condition marks them as strange, which is necessary to the stigmatization of their form. They stroll the streets as blithely as any other person, collapsing the boundaries between the ordinary and the oddity.

Crediting Arbus with these subversive artistic methods is not to say that Arbus’s photographs were not artistically problematic. The subjects of her portraits were primarily anonymous, which, as Sally Price asserts, places “the artist, rather than the object, at center stage” (1989:57). Thus, in the anonymity of her subjects, Arbus risks objectifying the freaks as they were in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and renders the freak interchangeable rather than singular, just as freaks were commodified and fetishized during the golden era. Price problematizes the anonymity of African art, arguing, “Its products are emblems rather than reproductions of reality, symbols rather than copies,” such that Arbus’s photographs may fetishize the individuals while still distancing the audience from their reality (1989:60). Despite these problems, it cannot be disputed that “Arbus contributed significantly in the cultural process of establishing a matter-of-fact place for ‘freaks’ within the visual mainstream” (Goodwin 2009:164). The freak was still aesthetically framed by the camera lens, but became included as a member of society, rather than relegated to the fringes of culture as a spectacle or individual to be diagnosed and treated.

Blemishes and Beauty: Concluding Thoughts

To determine that an individual is a freak is to affix upon their bodies a set of aesthetic principles grounded in historical and cultural conceptions of “beauty” and “normality.” Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, sideshows that heralded freaks as their main

attractions used theatrical, stylized and performative techniques to construct socially salient, permissible identities and narratives for the freaks. These creative constructions of freakery maintained the status quo while providing a subjective, though not necessarily culturally deviant, version of freakery for public observation. As Michael Baxandall explains, “the best paintings often express their culture not just directly but complementarily, because it is by complimenting it that they are best designed to serve public needs: the public does not need what it has already got” (1972:48). The bodies of the freaks are just as much works of art and symbols of culturally coded mores and principles as the paintings Baxandall discusses, and that the figure of the freak becomes “the necessary cultural complement to the acquisitive and capable American who claims the normate position of masculine, white, nondisabled, sexually unambiguous, and middle class” (Adams 2001:31). If we are to examine those characteristics that qualify beauty, we must first examine which traits we consider ugly or aberrant. Would we have either category without the other? Men, women and children were sensationalized when they should have been sympathized with, rebuked rather than respected. Freaks were subjected to the cultural and social sensibilities of entertainers as they juggled the paradox of acknowledging the presence of morphological alternatives in human society, while denying a place for them to belong and be accepted among their kin. Instead, the freak was often designed into acceptable cultural categories, rendered as aesthetic bodies to be consumed and marketed, ironically, like works of art.

This text reveals the cultural sensibilities and aesthetic considerations that determined that way a freak’s body was manipulated, marketed and manufactured, subsequently forcing us to interrogate our own contemporary notions of abnormality or deviance. The bodies of freaks were managed to reassure rather than discomfort their audience. As Goffman asserts, “One can therefore suspect that the role of normal and the role of stigmatized are parts of the same complex, cuts from the same standard cloth” (1986:130). The freak show depended on the rigidly controlled illusion that the audience could enter the carnivalesque space, encounter representations of deviance and monstrosity, and then leave, presuming that the so-called freaks would never transcend the liminal boundaries between polite society and spectacle. Freakishness is a perspective and an artistic construction rather than an innate trait or condition, a mode of presentation that reveals as much about class, normality and health as deformity and our own psyche.

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“Nobody Came Down”: The Effect of the Financial Crisis on Tourism in Two Roatán Communities

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Abstract

This article examines the effects of the 2008 financial crisis on the tourism sector in the communities of West End and Punta Gorda on the island of Roatán, Islas de La Bahia (Bay Islands), Honduras. This article is based on ethnographic field research conducted in these two communities from April 2011 to April 2012 for a dissertation project. This project is both biocultural and political ecological in nature and utilizes a mixed methods approach incorporating participant observation, semi-structured interviews that delve into household livelihoods and foodways, and surveys that assess dietary diversity. Overall, the tourism sector on Roatán suffered a drastic setback from June of 2009 until 2010 and has recovered at different rates depending on the particular type of tourism work practiced by the household. Among other things, occupational group has a significant relationship with dietary diversity. From this research I make recommendations to improve income and dietary diversity for households engaged in sectors that have not recovered. This includes adjustments to cruise ship schedules to enable more souvenir and food sales, courses to improve local residents' marketability in higher paying tourism jobs such as scuba diving instruction, and community gardens to improve access to food and dietary diversity. The primary goal of this article is to spark discussion of the differential effects of the financial crisis on tourist receiving locations through the detailed presentation of one empirical example of these effects.

Keywords: Tourism, political ecology, financial crisis

Introduction

With a great deal of scholarship extant regarding the biocultural and political ecological effects of tourism on communities in developing nations (Leatherman and Goodman 2005; Himmelgreen et al 2006; Torres 2003; Torres and Momsen 2005; Daltauit et al 2006; Telfer and Wall 1996), this article expands this literature through the exploration of the effect of the recent global financial crisis on household ability to make a living through tourism in places that already have a heavy investment in this sector. This article focuses on the challenges of making a living in tourism in the communities of West End and Punta Gorda on the island of Roatán, Islas de La Bahia (Bay Islands), Honduras, and how these challenges differentially affect household dietary diversity. The basis for the article is a dissertation project with research conducted in the two communities from April 2011 to April 2012. It is my contention that, while I have not been able to establish a statistical linkage between the financial crisis and the vicissitudes of tourism work in these two communities in recent years, the preponderance of semi-structured interview data, coupled with other examples of tourism in the wake of the financial crisis (Li et al. 2010; Chan 2011) suggest a lagging effect of the crisis on tourism income, but with different intensity depending on the type of tourism work. There may be an

effect on dietary diversity as well, as the occupational group least associated with tourism has the best mean dietary diversity. In this article I begin by summarizing the theoretical perspective of the project. In subsequent sections I explain my research methodology followed by a results summary, discussion, and recommendations for future actions.

A Biocultural Political Ecology of Tourism and Nutrition

This research is couched within a broader theoretical framework of bioculturalism and political ecology, with specific attention to the political economic and health effects of tourism on diet and nutrition. While Alan Goodman and Thomas Leatherman (1998; see also Dressler et al 2005; Ulijaszeck and Lofink 2006) define a biocultural synthetic approach as one that integrates political economic, cultural, and biological factors in the study of the human condition, Paul Robbins (2004; Hvalkof and Escobar 1998; Guha 1997; Bryant 1992) positions political ecology as an approach which combines political, economic and ecological factors in exploring how human societies and their environments affect each other. For instance, one may use political ecology to link the cultural and economic processes of tourism development with the consequences of this development to human health and local habitats.

According to much of the anthropological and geographic literature on tourism (e.g. MacLeod 2004; Juarez 2002; Faulkenberry et al. 2000; Brown 1999; Stonich 1998; Pleumaron 1994; McElroy and Albuquerque 1992; Mader 1992; Escobar 1999), tourism tends to have profound, and often negative environmental, economic, and cultural effects on local communities in much of the world; the evidence for this argument is especially strong in developing nations. While the ecotourism ethos may sometimes mitigate negative environmental impacts of this sector, other dislocations, such as to livelihoods and food systems can persist (Himmelgreen et al. 2006). Susan Stonich (2000; Daltabuit 2000; Leatherman and Goodman 2005; Juarez 2002) discusses the common phenomenon of the planning and control of tourism development as outside the control of residents in the local community. Donald MacLeod (2004; see also Stonich 2000; Stonich 2005) presents a political ecological narrative of resort development causing substantial ecological changes including competition with more traditional land uses such as cultivation and artisanal fishing. In the Mexican state of Quintana Roo, Leatherman and Goodman (2005; see also Torres 2003; Himmelgreen et al 2006) detail negative effects of resort development including the disruption of traditional agrarian social relations and production, increasing commoditization of local food systems, disparity in food access, increased malnutrition in some communities, increased incidence of respiratory infections and cardiovascular disease, and increasing socio-economic disparities.

The aforementioned studies, both political ecological and bicultural, validate Kathryn Dewey's (1989) assertion of increasing disparity in food access and dietary health in much of Latin America is associated with increasing commoditization of food from the latter part of the twentieth century to the present. Biocultural tourism research also touches on the effects of malnutrition that precipitate from uneven access to the benefits of tourism development; childhood stunting is of particular interest because it is associated with chronic undernutrition, and obesity, which relate to chronic overnutrition (Leatherman and Goodman 2005; Himmelgreen et al. 2006). Chavez et al. (2000; Allen 1984; Martorell 1980) define stunting as low height for a given age. They link stunting to several long term negative effects on health, including physical activity, cognition, somatic and reproductive development, severity and

duration of illness, and adult work capacity. In addition to undernutrition, the rise in overnutrition and obesity in many parts of the world (Torres and Momsen 2005; Ellison 2005; Eaton and Konner 2000) has implications for increasing incidence of metabolic disorders and associated pathologies such as diabetes and heart disease, especially in areas experiencing a rapid shift from low fat, high fiber diets, to diets more heavily based on “prestigious” processed foods which tend to be high in fats and cholesterols, simple sugars, and sodium but low in fiber and many micronutrients (Evans 1986; Barker 1995; Adair and Prentice 2004).

Many of these linkages among tourism, food commoditization, and health are also present on Roatán, with evidence of a high degree of commoditization (Brown 2006; Evans 1986), decreasing dietary diversity, increasing reliance on delocalized and processed foods, and health problems associated with overnutrition since the advent of tourism as a major sector on the island in the 1980s (Evans 1986; Stonich 2000). In addition to the biocultural implications of changing food systems, changing diets, and attendant health risks, there is also a strong political ecological component to the study of tourism development on Roatán. The cyclical association between environmental degradation and tourism is of particular importance; both Stonich and I (1998; 2000; Brown 2006) have found that while resort development has contributed to habitat loss and degradation and decline of important food species, the decline of these resources has also pushed people into the wage labor workforce, particularly in tourism.

Implications of the Global Financial Crisis

Given the economic and nutritional processes of globalization discussed above, the global financial collapse that originated in the U.S. housing sector in 2007 has important, if unclear implications for societies in developing nations that have recently become enmeshed in global capitalist economies with a heavy reliance on tourism. In concert, these events may cause severe economic, cultural, and dietary distress for many communities around the world (News Hour 2008; von Braun 2008; Zarger 2009; Richard 2008; Schiller 2008; Shah 2009; Chan 2011; Li et al. 2010). While tourism numbers for Honduras continued their positive trend in 2008, the robustness of this trend remains to be seen when the numbers become available for 2009, when the meltdown had a more dire effect on household income in the U.S. for the entire year (Honduran Institute of Tourism 2010); due to the common attitude of vacations as discretionary spending, a downturn in the number of visitors and in revenue may become apparent once statistics for 2009-2012 are published.

Compounding these effects is the 2009 political crisis in Honduras that occurred in which a sitting president was deposed by the military and a political stalemate, with concurrent protests and international condemnation (Cassel 2009; News Hour 2009). These events severely depressed revenue from tourism for a period of six to eighteen months thereafter (Jim Black personal communication June 2011). While the presidential election of late 2009 tamped down the international and domestic controversy surrounding the aforementioned events somewhat, it remains to be seen what the long term economic ramifications will be (Miller Llana and Faulk 2009; Rozenzweig 2010).

Methodology in Brief

This study is an ethnographic study combining an initial period of data collection and a follow-up round over the course of a year-long period spanning from April 2011 to April 2012.

This project utilizes a mixed methodology based on participant observation, informal interviews, semi-structured interviews, and surveys. More specifically, I have complemented an overall framework anchored in participant observation with qualitative data collection via informal interviews over a wide range of topics and semi-structured household interviews eliciting occupational information and general ideas about important foods and changes in food prices. While I have compiled data from participant observation by writing detailed field notes at the first available opportunity, I have compiled data from semi-structured interviews by taking notes during the interview and then fleshing out those notes later with transcriptions from digital audio recordings of the interviews. Additionally, I have collected quantitative data on food availability and price in local markets through market surveys, dietary diversity through food frequency questionnaires (FFQ), and food security or insecurity through a Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS). For all semi-structured and structured interview instruments, I have piloted the instrument with a few respondents outside the sample and then adjusted accordingly to make the instruments more cogent and comprehensible to local respondents. Data collection has also involved a constant process of building people’s trust and adjusting to circumstance. For example, I was able to overcome residents’ initial reluctance to participate by taking advice from and enlisting the help of well-respected friends in each community.

In order to obtain the results presented below, I have utilized an analysis plan that incorporates qualitative data from fieldnotes and semi-structured interviews and quantitative data from surveys and anthropometric measurements. While the creation and analysis of codes for the qualitative data have been mostly deductive processes based on the pre-existing research question, I have also used inductive analytical techniques based on themes that emerge with some frequency during the iterative process. Quantitative analysis has involved the compilation of descriptive statistics of dependent variables based on dietary diversity and food security. Specifically, I have found the mean and median for dietary diversity score and food security score for the entire sample as well as broken down by the independent variables of community, occupational group, income level (low, medium, or high), and tourism involvement (no or yes). Table 1 below links the theoretical perspective and research question of this project with the needed data, data collection methods, and analysis plan.

A. Theoretical Perspective	B. Research Question	C. Needed Data	D. Data Collection Methods	E. Analytical Methods
Political Ecology (of Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Food Access Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Income/ Occupations · Changes in Tourism Sector · Food Availability and Acquisition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participant Observation · Informal Interviews · Semi-Structured Interviews · Market Survey 	Qualitative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Code and Text Analysis · Finding Cogent Narratives and Context
Biocultural Synthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Dietary Diversity · Food Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Dietary Diversity · Food Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Food Frequency Questionnaire · Household Food Insecurity Access Scale 	Quantitative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Descriptive Statistics · Best Fit Regression Models

Table 1: Research Design and Methodology Matrix

Effects of the Financial Crisis and 'Recovery' on Different Types of Tourism Enterprises

As the quantitative results on dietary diversity below indicate, one may have a more reliable income and access to a broad diet from steady work in tourism or ownership of a fairly well established tourism business than in engaging in a small scale enterprise. For the island as a whole, the two main drivers of tourism are scuba diving and the cruise ship ports at Coxen Hole and Mahogany Bay (in Brick Bay). Resorts and hotels island-wide are dependent on scuba diving for much of their business and the cruise ship ports have helped spawn several ancillary attractions and enterprises such as scooter rentals, zip-line canopy tours in the rainforest, performances, and souvenir sales. Both scuba diving and cruise ship ports of call show a distinct seasonality, with the high season running roughly from October to April and the low season from May to September. Improved weather conditions on the island, combined with continued winter weather further north make for a fairly steady stream of customers January through March and Holy Week marks a high point of the year. For many hotel workers, restaurant workers, and small scale enterprises, the low season makes for dire financial straits. Many respondents report layoffs or decreased hours during the low season. Water taxi operators and vendors may go a week or more without earning any income.

According to several respondents to the semi-structured interview for businesses, revenue from tourism has suffered since 2005. The businesses that survived until 2011 generally report a resurgence of business and revenue. A North American hotel owner stated:

We saw phenomenal growth from 2005 to when the [2009 Honduran] coup happened. I hope tourism returns to that level again. The growth on the island went from one cruise ship a week to as much as four cruise ships a day. When the coup happened, the problem was they kept closing the borders, closing the airports, and people won't travel when there's any uncertainty. There was no danger on the island... Borders were closed... it dried up. So we made money up until the coup, then virtually nothing for the next six months. Then the [financial crisis] hit and Americans weren't traveling as much... Whether there was less people traveling, or just fewer coming here, we saw a significant drop in business.

This quotation indicates that the hotel owner was doing quite well until the Honduran political crisis of 2009, then started to recover somewhat, but has not attained pre-coup revenue streams yet. He opines that the global financial crisis may play a factor.

A local bar owner describes the impact of the coup on the otherwise steady trajectory of his bar's revenue over the last several years.

Yeah. This year so far has been pretty good. About two years ago, when they had the "pseudo coup" and all of those political problems was a bad year; because there were about five things Honduras had bad press for. There was the swine flu; there was an earthquake, riots about [price hikes by the Roatán Electric Company] when the electrical prices went up, then the political situation. It was definitely a year when a lot of businesses were going under. I'm very lucky [with this bar], because my family owns the property [that the bar sits on]. In West End a lot of businesses closed down because they couldn't make the rent. That would have been 2009, which was the worst year for [the bar] since it opened. Every year other than that, there's been a steady

increase in business as we've become more popular in the World, through the internet and through maintaining a high level of service...Actually, 2011 may turn out to be a record year.

In counterpoint to the aforementioned hotel owner, this bar owner has been recovering fairly well as of 2011, with many loyal expatriates as customers in addition to tourists.

With the exception of the political crisis of 2009 and early 2010, most owners of established tourism businesses and many of their employees garner some income during the low season. The same is not always true of small scale enterprises. A water taxi operator and tour guide describes the changes tourism has wrought in West End in recent years, including the political turmoil of 2009.

Oh, there's been a lot of changes...especially with the cruise ship. We have had about two cruise ships a week, and are going to go up to about nine a week at the end of this month. Before time there were no cruise ships, so things have gone up with tourism. Tourism has caused a lot of changes...The labor's very cheap... That's what mess up our country is the labor's too cheap. If it weren't for that we'd be alright. The president we just had [Mel Zelaya], he's the one that brought the labor up to L5500 a month. Before they were making L3000 [\$158] a month. But the president fixed it so everyone should make at least L5500, about \$250 a [month]...I make more money now... Some days are very slow; some days we don't make nothin' bro. We only work for [Jim Black] about one day a week, until the end of the month. In October, it's going to be raining, but they'll be a lot of ships. Our busiest time of year is winter, but you don't get all the days because it's raining too much...it doesn't rain every day and you get some good days in between. At the end of this month, we get up to nine ships, which is good...

Another water taxi operator sitting idle with a group of about eight idle water taxi operators in May 2011 said, "...During Semana Santa [Holy Week], we were pretty busy. Now, it's dead; we're lucky to get a few tourists in a week. My brother and I decided to move our location from West Bay to West End to cut down on the competition for tourists, but so far we've only had a few customers, and made a little bit of money..." During the periods in May, often lasting up to four hours at a time, that I conducted participant observation on this particular water taxi, the brothers saw a few groups of cruise ship tourists walk by their spot but never had any tourists utilize their service. One or both of the brothers would sit in the boat, or under a palm tree on the beach, and chat with other water taxi operators and food and souvenir vendors, idling away hours of the day. This situation may be part of a larger trend of diminution of spending by tourists in situation where they have greater discretion in spending, versus scuba diving or the cruise tour itself, where a tourist must pay to participate. A common refrain for many souvenir vendors goes, "...we have more tourists now than a few years ago, but they are not spending as much money, they aren't buying as many [souvenirs as before the coup] ..." This quote corroborates frequent observations of women roving the beaches and main road of West End with containers of food or hand-made jewelry and only infrequently making a sale.

Likewise, souvenir vendors at the few tourist attractions generally put forth a great deal of vocal effort to attract tourists' attention and were rewarded with at most one or two sales per

bus load, usually at a value of a few dollars each. A woman living in West End with her extended family describes the sporadic nature of tourism work and other wage labor since 2005, "...My husband does masonry work. My father-in-law is a taxi driver. Santos is a security guard at Sunset Villas. Alfredo does carpentry... My husband does the same work [as he did in 2005]. My brothers used to cut brush [with a weed eater] and take tourists out for charters in a [long narrow boat]..." This circumstance may well be associated with perceptions of reduced discretionary purchasing power on the part of the visiting tourists, and consequently reduced income for the vendors.

Overall, there is indirect evidence of a lagging effect of the financial crisis on tourism in these two Roatán communities. While the immediate impact is not as obvious as that of the coup in Honduras, the fact that many enterprises struggled more than a year after the U.S. travel advisory was lifted indicates that other factors may be at play. The other salient point is the uneven nature of the aftermath of the coup, with more established businesses such as hotels and restaurants having recovered to a greater extent than most small scale enterprises as of the fieldwork period. The vignette below further illustrates the precarious position of many households focused on small-scale enterprises.

One Family's Quest for Livelihood: Ethnography of Precarity

One may say that collectively the MacLeod Lorenzo family is versatile. Most of the men have at least occasionally worked in commercial fishing and the father of the family, Harold MacLeod¹, has had several years where he spent the majority of months on a shrimp or lobster boat. His son Sydney has served in the Honduran military and has a certification as a backhoe operator, but does not have full time work right now. Daughter-in-law, Bertha Forest, has extensive experience cooking in restaurants and son, Bubba, is a fairly capable electrician who works sporadically in this capacity and in other types of construction jobs. Currently, Harold spends most mornings on the sea in his dory² and hopes to earn enough money soon to fix his larger motorized boat and make regular extended fishing trips in order to earn income from seafood sales. His wife Faith Lorenzo runs a *champa*, a type of small scale restaurant made from local wood and other materials, near the beach across the loop road from their home in Punta Gorda.

Recently, Harold embarked on a multi-day fishing trip in his motorized boat with Sydney, his friend Jacob, a man called Eziquiel, and a curious anthropologist. They took the boat to a key near the eastern tip of Roatán and used it as a base camp to fish for several species of fish, conch, and lobster. While they managed to catch several hundred pounds of fish, a few conch, and about fifty pounds of lobster, a tropical storm caused the boats hull to spring several leaks and only a constant effort by the crew enabled them to return with most of the catch unspoiled. The boat is out of commission until Harold can get fiberglass to repair the leaks. The lobster was unsellable because trace amounts of diesel that leaked into the hold have blackened the shells. Despite all the best efforts, the fishing trip did not yield as much income as the family hoped it would.

¹ In order to protect confidentiality, I have used pseudonyms for any respondent mentioned by name.

² A type of small craft similar to a canoe, usually either made of wood from one tree trunk or fiberglass.



Figure 1: The Champa's Kitchen



Figure 2: The Fishing Boat with Dory

Meanwhile, Faith's champa has busy days and slow days. While on some weekends, she gets several customers from nearby towns and even a few tourists, she can also go several days without any sales. Starting in October, the community center across the road has several busloads of cruise ship tourists most days, with many tourists looking in on the champa, but relatively few sales. In one revealing incident, a tourist walks into Faith's champa kitchen and takes several photographs without asking permission, then boards the bus without buying any food or beverages. Faith stands patiently and does not say anything during the encounter. Indeed, it is difficult to make sales, as the tourists usually only have a maximum of fifteen

minutes between the end of the entertainment in the community center and the departure of the buses. This short time window is especially onerous when each dish is made to order. Even with these challenges, Faith usually earns enough money in a week to help pay the electric bill and buy more supplies for the champa.

As with most small scale enterprises in West End and Punta Gorda, Harold's fishing operation and Faith's champa incur a certain degree of vulnerability. It is interesting to note that when there is a strong flow of income, meals tend to include more meat, fish, and vegetables. When income is short, meals tend to be more monotonous, with beans replacing animal protein and a higher frequency of tortillas and *fritas*, or fried cakes of flour.

Occupational Breakdown of the Sample

By way of placing the forgoing vignette in broader context, this section details the statistical relationship between household occupation and dietary diversity. In order to conduct a more robust statistical analysis, I have placed the 81 households of the sample into three occupational categories: tourism work; small scale enterprise; and shipping, seafood, and office work. The first category includes the owners of well-established businesses such as restaurants, bars, or dive shops that have a permanent structure and paid employees who work several hours a week. This category also includes tourism workers who have a relatively high wage such as dive instructors and mid-level tourism workers such as dive boat captains, restaurant staff, and hotel staff; these workers are not as highly paid as dive instructors but have steady employment and pay year round or for the high season. The small scale enterprise category includes people who sell food or jewelry on the beach or in stalls at tourist attractions, water taxi operators, taxi drivers, tour guides, artisanal fisherman, security guards, and construction workers. Small scale entrepreneurs have a more variable and less stable income than other tourism workers and tend to be independent operators rather than paid employees. The shipping, seafood, and office category includes those employed by long range commercial fishing operations, employees of seafood processing plants, and those who work as sailors aboard commercial ships such as cargo ships or oil rig supplier ships. The office component of this category includes municipal and bank office workers, staff at retail businesses such as grocery stores or clothing stores, and miscellaneous occupations such as cleaning houses or a pastor at a church. The frequency of each category for the entire sample for both rounds of data collection appears below in Table 2 with percentages in parentheses.

Round of Data Collection/ Season	Tourism Work	Small Scale Enterprise	Shipping, Seafood & Office	Total
R1: Dry/Low	23 (32%)	30 (37%)	25 (31%)	81 (100%)
R2: Wet/High	22 (33%)	23 (35%)	21 (32%)	66 (100%)

Table 2: Occupational Group Frequencies for Both Rounds of Data

Occupational Group and Dietary Diversity

For the sample, I have calculated dietary diversity scores by adding up the frequencies of each food item in each category of the FFQ (dairy, meat, seafood, fruit, vegetables, starch, drinks, junk food), and dividing that number by the number of foods listed in that category. For

instance, the frequency of foods in the dairy category would be divided by seven and the frequency of foods in the fruit category would be divided by five. This process corrects for the bias to the results that categories with more items such as starch and junk food would otherwise cause. Scores lower than 84 points fall into the low diversity category, scores between 84 and 140 in the medium diversity category, and scores greater than 140 in the high diversity category. Because the data for this variable do not have a normal distribution, I have created ranked dietary diversity scores and used this ranked variable for all statistical tests and models. Table 3 gives central tendencies for dietary diversity scores and categorical frequencies broken down by occupational group for both rounds of data collection.

Occupational Group	Mean	SD	Median	Ranked Mean	SD	Low	Medium	High	Total
Tourism Work R1	99.51	44.89	96.20	29.40	20.97	12 (46%)	11 (42%)	3 (12%)	26 (100%)
Tourism Work R2	91.47	28.47	85.72	28.05	20.00	7 (32%)	14 (63%)	1 (5%)	22 (100%)
Small Scale EnterpriseR1	120.15	48.27	111.57	42.68	22.75	5 (17%)	19 (63%)	6 (20%)	30 (100%)
Small Scale EnterpriseR2	95.35	26.36	96.64	31.21	19.04	5 (22%)	17 (74%)	1 (4%)	23 (100%)
Ship., Sea., & Off. R1	134.09	44.89	126.44	51.04	22.25	4 (16%)	10 (40%)	11 (44%)	25 (100%)
Ship., Sea., & Off. R2	106.01	29.47	106.26	40.95	17.01	6 (29%)	12 (57%)	3 (14%)	21 (100%)

Table 3: Dietary Diversity Central Tendencies and Categorical Frequencies by Occupational Group for Both Rounds

A repeated measures analysis of variance (rANOVA) reveals significant cross-seasonal variance among the occupational groups, with a p-value of 0.01, with post hoc testing showing a significant difference between the tourism work and shipping, seafood, and office groups. Though the mode for all occupational groups is medium dietary diversity, seafood shipping, and office has proportionally more representation in the high diversity category than other groups while tourism work and small scale enterprise seem to be more heavily represented in the low diversity category. Figures 3 and 4 depict the dietary diversity difference between occupational groups graphically for Rounds 1 and 2, respectively.

Discussion: Implications of the Results

On the whole, the benefit a household derives from tourism work largely depends on the specific type of work in which its members engage. Livelihoods in tourism range from ownership of fairly profitable tourism related businesses to steady wage work in an established tourism business such as a dive shop or hotel, to small scale independent enterprises mainly based on souvenir and food sales along the island’s beaches, at resorts, or by the roadside; there is a wide disparity of income among these livelihoods. The owners and managers of dive shops, larger restaurants, and hotels show markers of high income such as vehicle ownership, ownership or rental of sturdily made dwellings filled with electric appliances and running water, and steady access to resources such as internet, propane, and the ability to travel to and from the island at will. Additionally, most dive instructors/masters (who are mostly western expatriates) live in conditions that comport with basic Western standards. For workers such as

dive boat captains, hotel maids, cruise ship tour guides, and restaurant staff, work and income may hold steady throughout the year or may vary sharply between the high and low season. Most independent sellers of food and souvenirs report fewer physical assets and struggle year round to make ends meet, but with even greater difficulty during the low season than the high season. The quotes from the water taxi operator and souvenir vendors above illustrate the boom and bust nature of disparities in opportunity between the high and low seasons. This disparity of the amount and reliability of income is based on two conditions. In the case of dive instructors, this occupation involves specialized skills that limit the number of people eligible to be certified, especially in the case of Honduran nationals who often have deficient math education according to many informal interview responses. More broadly, tourists must pay to have any substantial interaction beyond inquiring about prices and services with dive shops, restaurants, or hotels. Especially in the case of dive shops and hotels, many tourists book and pay for their services prior to arriving on island. In contrast tourists have much more leeway in choosing whether or not to spend money after leisurely gazing upon the wares or inquiring about the services of small scale entrepreneurs.

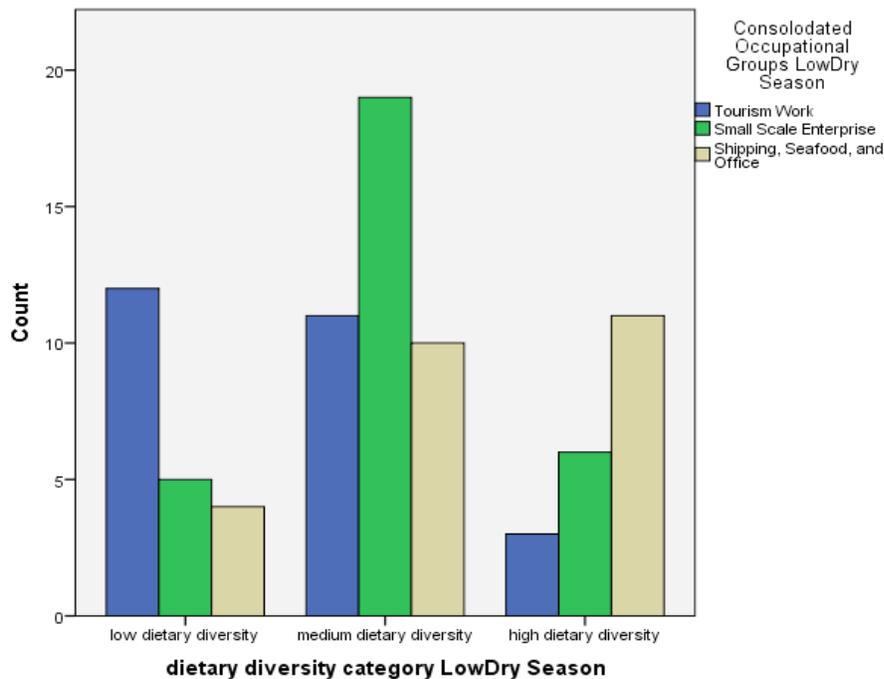


Figure 3: Bar Graph Depicting Categorical Frequencies of Dietary Diversity by Occupational Group for Round 1

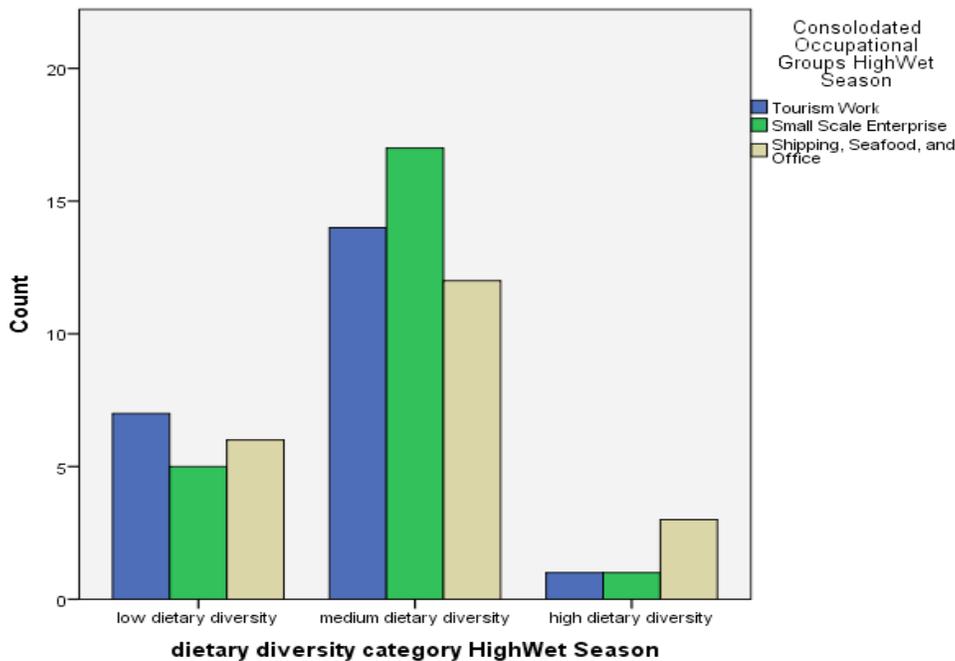


Figure 4: Bar Graph Depicting Categorical Frequencies of Dietary Diversity by Occupational Group for Round 2

According to most respondents of business-based and semi-structured interviews, tourism did not visibly suffer in 2008 when the global financial crisis became apparent, but in the latter half of 2009 after President Zelaya had been put on a plane to Costa Rica at gunpoint. In response to the turmoil in Tegucigalpa and other cities, the U.S. Department of State issued a travel advisory for the entire country. While the Bay Islands remained calmer and safer than many areas of the country, tourism on Roatán dwindled to almost nothing. The consensus among business interviewees is that these dire conditions continued for approximately six months after the coup, with an anemic recovery in 2010 and a more robust visitor-ship and revenue stream in 2011.

Despite the fact that the coup has had a more apparent short-term impact on Roatán’s tourism industry than the financial crisis, the long term impact of the latter may be more complex. The fact that souvenir sales are still depressed despite the upturn in visitors in 2011 and early 2012 may indicate that the financial crisis is taking longer to manifest its full effect on the economic health of Roatán communities than just the drop off in tourism that came in the wake of the coup. This lag in souvenir purchases negatively affects vendors in both communities, but has less of an effect on people pursuing other tourism livelihoods such as cruise tour guide or dive instructor, where customers must pay a fee in order to participate. On the whole, incomes have fallen since before the financial crisis and the coup, according to the preponderance of household and business interview data.

The statistical analysis indicates that households in the shipping, seafood, and office category have the highest mean dietary diversity scores and significantly greater mean scores than households in the tourism work group across the two rounds of data collection. This situation may occur because all of the western expatriates in the sample fall into the tourism work category. The FFQ is more closely attuned to the typical diet of local islanders and other

Honduran nationals who comprise the bulk of the sample than it does the reported diet of most expatriates interviewed. There may also be a buffering effect against the seasonal vagaries of tourism in the form of wages and direct access to surplus seafood that the fishing operations or processing plant give to workers rather than sell.

Recommendations for Addressing Tourism and Dietary Diversity Issues

Given the problems outlined above, this section outlines recommendations to improve household livelihoods in tourism; these recommendations stem from participant observation of tourism businesses and respondents ideas. The first recommendation deals with the improvement of income generation opportunities for small scale enterprises, the second seeks better equality of opportunity in the tourism sector, and the third seeks an alternative to income for improving dietary diversity.

In order to address the problem of low income from tourism for small scale entrepreneurs, adjusting the schedule of cruise ship tour buses to allow more time at attractions may improve the situation. In many vending areas, it is evident that tourists only have approximately ten to twenty minutes and independent vendors at these attractions make disappointingly few sales. Coordination between cruise ship companies, municipal governments, and local tour operators could ensure that tourists have more time at each attraction, giving small scale entrepreneurs more opportunity to make food or souvenir sales.

Next, equal opportunity in the tourism economy seems problematic. At least one bar owner stated that the majority of his staff is comprised of expatriates because *Islanders*³ and mainland Hondurans do not have a cultural understanding of customer service that is conducive to maintaining customer loyalty among his mostly western clientele. Likewise, at least one respondent stated that the dearth of Honduran citizens in his dive instructor corps (one of the highest paying jobs in the community) is largely explicable by the fact that Hondurans from any location do not have sufficient math skills to pass scuba dive master or dive instructor courses. The best way to rectify these disparities of opportunity is through subsidized educational and training programs. One respondent suggested something akin to a bartending school, but more comprehensive to train more people how to maximize their relationships with customers and employers. Though such a course may entail some conflict with culturally held attitudes, it would give low income households \ an opportunity to develop skills in order to participate in a full range of livelihoods related to tourism. As many potential students would be hard pressed to pay for instruction, a subsidy by the municipal government or a group of business owners would be beneficial. It might even be feasible for students to pay back all or part of the cost of instruction over time, at little to no interest, provided payment could be deferred until students are gainfully employed and that installments are not too onerous. Courses in English for Ladinos and Garifuna might also improve opportunity, as well as a practical math course geared toward scuba related math. While some dive shop owners also cited fear of scuba as a barrier, at least the availability of supplemental math and language instruction, under the terms outlined above for customer service courses, would

³ In this case, the term *Islander*, or *Bay Islander*, denotes a descendent of settlers from the eastern Caribbean dating from the 1830s or a *Garifuna* person descended from the *Garinagu* who were deported from St. Vincent to Roatán by the British in the late eighteenth century. With the exception of the *Garinagu*, *Bay Islanders* speak English as a first language, though most are also fluent in Spanish.

open the opportunity of a scuba career to Islanders and Ladinos who wanted to pursue this avenue.

In terms of improving dietary diversity, using small scale cultivation as a supplement to food bought in stores may have some efficacy despite the fact that it is mostly practiced in the breach. Not only could subsistence cultivation provide foods such as yucca, bananas, melons, and others that may increase in price directly to households, those households that are able to produce a surplus may be able to augment their income during slow periods of the annual tourism cycle. The fact that many households have at least one adult who is unemployed, under employed, sporadically employed, or seasonally employed suggests that many households could supply labor to tend plantations. The major weakness of such a plan is the lack of land access for cultivation for many households. There is also the issue of preservation of remnant terrestrial habitats such as tropical forests on the island. The most workable solution to these problems is for existing tracts of land currently or recently under cultivation or pasturage to be used for something akin to a community garden. Owners of large holdings could rent land to local governments or private cooperative groups that could then be utilized to plant bananas, melons, beans, carrots, peppers, and other crops. Alternatively, people without land to cultivate could volunteer time on Roatán's few remaining large plantations and receive a commensurate amount of food in return. As many crops are harvested during the dry season, which is also the low season, households with an ebb in tourism income could supplement their diets and food security in this manner.

Conclusion

Though further research into the issues treated in this article is necessary, it provides a starting place for useful dialogue and action in improving dietary diversity in West End, Punta Gorda, and possibly Roatán as a whole. It is vitally important to discern the particular contours of economic distress and disparity in tourism work in the wake of the financial crisis because nation-states and communities around the world have made a major investment in tourism and many of these communities do not have the same natural or agricultural resources in reserve as they did before tourism development (e.g., Leatherman and Goodman 2005; Himmelgreen et al. 2006; Zarger 2009). In order to help those who have suffered the greatest adverse effect from the global financial crisis, it is imperative to outline the effects of this crisis in detail. This article is one empirical example to contribute to the broader picture.

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Biography: Racine Marcus Brown graduated with a Ph.D. in applied anthropology from the University of South Florida in May of 2013. His main research interests are economic processes, dietary diversity, food security, and nutritional health.

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“I’d Rather Pay”: Bribery and Informal Practices in Ukrainian Bureaucracy

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Abstract

In the last two decades, bribery has been a salient issue in social science research in general and anthropology in particular. The subject poses considerable challenges to ethnographic research, and therefore many aspects remain understudied. My article addresses one of them, namely, the relationship between bribery, networking, ‘petty’ informality, and everyday social relations within the bureaucratic domain. I argue that bribery becomes possible because of informal practices that allow both officials and citizens to manipulate formal rules and processes. I also argue that mundane formal procedures that form the basis of bureaucracy become channels for informal practices. In order to research these aspects of bribery, which usually remain undisclosed and inaccessible through traditional methods of participant observation and interviews, I use legal case documents of bribery in the real estate domain in the Kiliya district of the Odesa region. I rely on an official anti-corruption court record and explore methodological challenges pertinent to the analysis of court records as an alternative to ethnography in research on corruption. My article contributes to the study of bribery as an embedded and situated practice, linking it to ways people engage with, manipulate, and apply bureaucratic norms by enforcing informal modes of sociality in formal contexts.

Keywords: Bribery, informal practices, Ukraine

“I’d rather pay. Yes, I’d rather pay in this particular case than spend two or three months running around town from one committee or public service to another.”

“In my view, the mentality of many people is that it is much easier and faster to give some civil servant a bribe, rather than trying to get things done on their own and legally” (Anonymous respondents, “Corruption in Ukraine” – UNITER¹ project, KIIS 2011).

Introduction: A Bribe is Not Just About Money

Bureaucratic bribery appears to be simple: money changes hands, the documents are signed and stamped, and the deal is done. Bribery is imagined to be a transaction by Ukrainian anti-corruption legislation and scholars alike. In contrast, I argue that there is much more to bribery, namely, that a bribe is a social practice embedded in everyday dynamics of formal procedures and informal organizing in the domain of the state. Transactions are visible and observable, while much of organizing and paperwork that assure the bribe’s outcome are obscured within complex bureaucracies.

In this article I set out to explore how bribery squares with everyday formal and informal

¹ UNITER (The Ukraine National Initiatives to Enhance Reforms) is a USAID-funded project of democracy promotion in Ukraine.

relations and practices that underlie state processes in Ukraine. I study one bribe, the people it linked together, and the social practices it relied on across institutions and hierarchies at the local level of the state in Kiliya, a small city and the administrative center of the Kiliya district in the Odesa region.

My research differs from the existing anthropologies of corruption in two ways. First, most ethnographers have studied local meanings and representations of bribery (Humphrey 2002; Rivkin-Fish 2005), explored it as a domain of cultural production of the state (Gupta 2012) or investigated it as a coping strategy (Polese 2008). At the same time, few focus on how bribery happens and is organized within and across bureaucratic boundaries (e.g. Nuijten 2003). I focus on practices that facilitate officials to obtain the bureaucratic outcome “purchased” with a bribe. Second, unlike most anthropologies of the state, I use documentary sources, namely court proceedings. I rely on an anti-bribery court record to construct a case and thus contribute to the body of methods researchers use to gather data on corruption.

My argument is that informal practices and personal relationships that permeate bureaucracies form the organizational context for bribery. I also explore how a focus on bribes as embedded in mundane social relations within bureaucracies can illuminate the role of the state as a resource. To explore these problems, I inquire into how bribe transactions relate to formal and informal practices in the bureaucracies of contemporary Ukraine. By formal practices, I mean social practices abiding to, and structured by, bureaucratic rules and norms. Informal practices, therefore, are practices that diverge from, interpret, or defy bureaucratic forms and help people manipulate and selectively enforce them. Conceptualizing informal practices as a way to organize human activity in formal contexts, I identify *networking* and *petty informality* as two main kinds of such practices. My point of departure is the understanding of the bureaucratic form as a mode of social organization based on abstract universal norms, rules, and classifications. Subsequently, I ask, how these practices/relationships enable bribery. What are the likely impacts of bribes on mundane encounters and experiences of the state?

In the following three sections, I explain the methodological choices guiding my research and review scholarship and concepts on which I build to interpret the data. In the subsequent section I describe the case and proceed to analyze it and draw conclusions in the last two sections.

Methods

This research focuses on a single case of bribery in the domain of real estate that took place in the Kiliya district of the Odessa region in 2007. The case was reported to the police and later heard in a court. I analyze the official record of the court hearing, accessible through the State Registry of Court Decisions² (SRCD). The registry is a state-managed open-access repository that has collected digital copies of decisions of all Ukrainian courts since 2006, making them public and searchable via an on-line database.

According to the evaluations of a recent activist study (Teksty.org.ua 2012), the registry contains more than 8,000 anti-corruption court records, the majority of them concerning bribery in real estate operations. With a purpose to study bribery in real estate transactions at the district level of Ukrainian state bureaucracies, I searched in the registry database,

² See <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua>

combining keywords such as “bribe,” “land lease”, “land resources,” and “district state administration.”³ The search resulted in a dozen records strictly fitting the search criteria. After reviewing them, I chose one record and proceeded to construct a case to study.

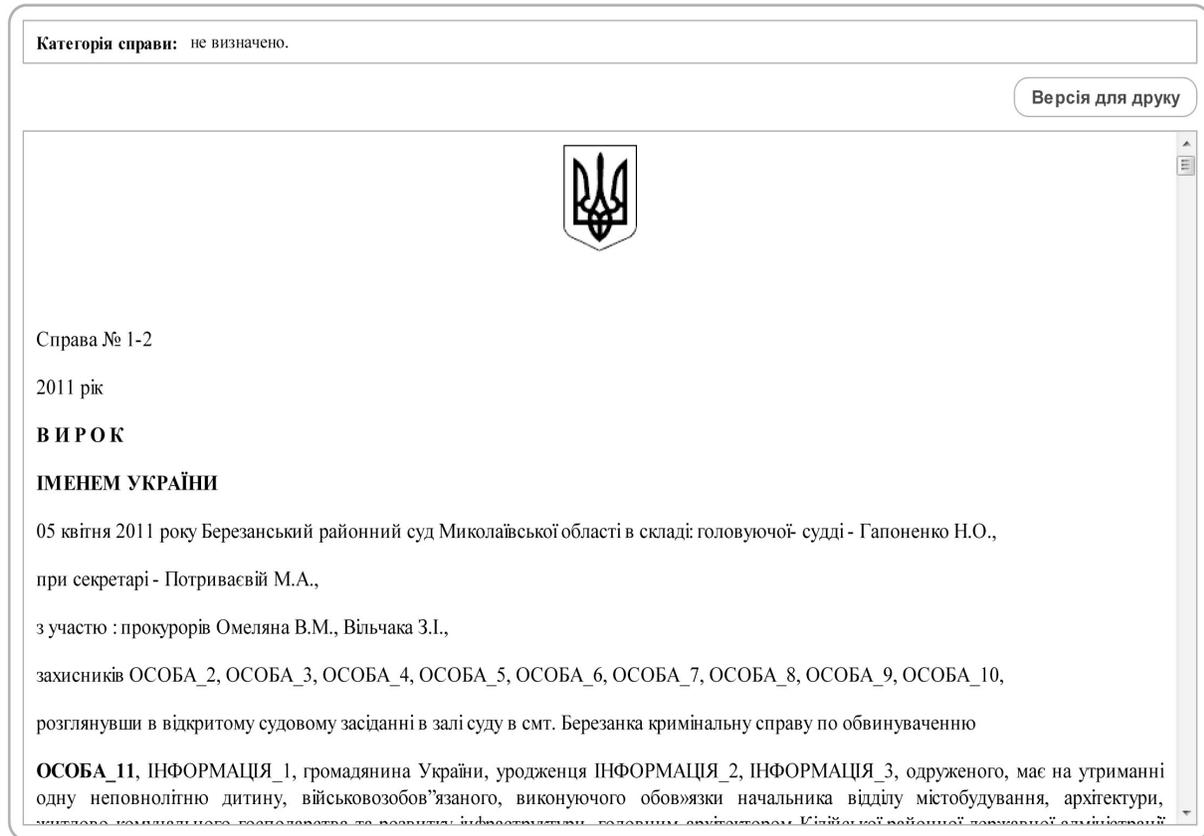


Figure 1: The Kiliya case record in the SRCD on-line repository (a fragment).

The record concerns a penal court hearing on a bribe arranged between an Odessa-based businesswoman and two principal officials at the Kiliya District State Administration (DSA) and the Kiliya Department of Land Resources (DLR), with the involvement of a middleman and the mayor of the Prymors’ke village council in the Kiliya district. This court case is typical among others I obtained from the registry in terms of the form of bribery investigated, the general dynamics of the bribe transaction, the bureaucratic procedures, and state agencies involved. At the same time, it covers some aspects of informal practices and bribery in more details than other records, and unlike other cases, the selected case more straightforwardly addresses the role of networking and mundane bureaucratic practices that form the organizational context of the bribe. This particular record allows me to map in a single case study such practices as bribery, networking, mediation and informal interpretation of bureaucratic rules. It also allows me to trace how these practices relate to each other, to formal

³ District is the second tier of the Ukrainian three-level sub-state administrative bureaucracy that goes from municipality to district (*rayon*) to region (*oblast'*).

procedures, and to paperwork in various state institutions and at different hierarchical levels of the state.

My choice to study court records stems from the limits of ethnography and other methods to study corruption. With rare exceptions, most anthropologies of the state build on ethnographic research⁴. Bribery, however, is a challenging object for ethnography; researching it means disclosing it. Illegal and usually immoral, bribery is a socially invisible practice. As anthropologists we can hardly observe it directly except when engaging in bribe-giving ourselves or becoming members of the organizations we study. But even in this case, what can be observed is the petty graft in the street-level bureaucracy (Blundo 2007: 36-40). The higher up the bureaucratic hierarchy, the more concealed and complex corruption becomes.

Ethnographers' ability to gather information about bribery is mostly limited to second-order data, that is to what people say about corruption (Haller and Shore 2005:14). Emic descriptions of bribery, as Giorgio Blundo (2007:41) observes, can give insights into very different aspects of the phenomenon depending on the social standing and experience of research participants. Interviewees are likely to expose the payment and the ritual through which the bribe changes hands. It is less likely, however, that interviewees will offer insights on the bureaucratic backstage where officials make decisions and exchange favors or how files traffic between offices and the 'fixers,' and intermediaries who negotiate for their clients. Such organizational aspects remain invisible to bribe givers, being better known to those who take bribes, but securing interviews with the latter as a rule proves impossible.

To overcome these methodological challenges, Blundo (2007:35-36) argues, it is necessary to combine multiple sources of data and triangulate between different perspectives. Blundo suggests that researchers explore archival sources, newspapers and judicial documents, and possibly combine them with interviews and participant observation in order to triangulate between different ways in which the data are disclosed.

Using court records alone as the only source does not help overcome the challenges of the social invisibility of corruption (Blundo 2007:34)⁵. Only a small portion of bribes are reported to the police, and even fewer make it through preliminary investigation to courts. Therefore, the real extent and variety of corrupt practices remain unknown. More importantly, legal knowledge production that forms the basis of the judicial anti-corruption process focuses on specific elements of bribery such as the preparation/accomplishment of the bribe arrangement, bureaucratic nuances of public office and paperwork in question, responsibilities and actions of all parties involved, and the precise time and place of transaction. Judges and public prosecutors mobilize this information as evidence to construct legal culpability as

⁴ Such as works by Donatella Della Porta and Alberto Vannucci (1999), and Andrew MacNaughton and Kam Bill Wong (2007), who make use of judicial proceedings and case materials to research various aspects of political corruption and bribery in Italy and Japan.

⁵ As Médard (2001:65) explains, knowledge on corruption accessible through court records depends "upon social and political conditions of its revelation" (Blundo 2007:34). This consideration stresses the need of a thorough inquiry into the complex of anti-corruption practices and discourses, but this task lies beyond the scope of this paper.

defined in the penal code.⁶ Finally, document writing procedures through which court clerks compose the records summarize and formalize original evidence collected at the stage of police investigation, and structure it into a coherent legal narrative of which the court's judgment seems but a logical culmination.⁷

This distinctly functional character of judicial documents is what makes them a source of otherwise inaccessible information about bribery in Ukraine. Since the investigation in anti-bribery cases seeks to establish what happened, how it happened, and who participated in it, courts often deal with the mundane bureaucratic paperwork and social relations within organizations. Thus, the records offer rich insights into the "black box of bureaucracy" (Thomson 2012), making explicit the dynamics of power and informal practices that happen behind the closed doors of offices and the components of bribery that often elude scrutiny of bribe-givers and researchers alike. In addition, judicial documents place bribe transactions in the context of official procedures they concern, which testifies to the ways in which bribery relates to the everyday bureaucratic work. Lastly, this source opens up the opportunity to study corruption not only in street-level bureaucracies, or in one bureaucratic organization, but also higher up the organizational hierarchy and between different institutions, as I do in the case study.

I construct the case study on the basis of materials and information I obtain from the court record. The specific record I use for this purpose is an official document that follows a template for all penal records. It outlines the criminal case, summarizes the case evidence, and interprets it in legal terms, constructing a narrative to support the court's verdict. The document is structured as follows. It begins with naming the type of the court decision recorded (verdict), and then lists judges, prosecutors, attorneys and defendants present at the hearing. It further proceeds with personal information on defendants⁸ and describes legal regulations of the public offices in question⁹ and laws/codes underlying the judgment. The record then provides a summary of information¹⁰ on the circumstances of the bribe that the court evaluates and classifies as legal facts, and summaries of interrogations of defendants and witnesses (reported only in the parts that concern the act on trial, and considerably

⁶ Ukrainian anti-corruption legislation defines a bribe as an illicit payment for the use of public office, which excludes many practices popularly conceived as bribes/corruption (e.g. informal influence) from the legal category of corruption. In consequence, at least as far as the cases I reviewed suggest, courts and prosecutors do not dig into the evidence of informal networking, collusion and favoritism between different officials who seek to organize bribes, unless there is direct evidence of these officials abusing statutory powers of their offices. This evidence, nevertheless, is brought to court and included in many court records.

⁷ The records available through SRCD are summaries of court hearings and thus usually do not include case materials.

⁸ In the SRCD, court records are anonymous and do not include any information that could lead to the identification of defendants, witnesses and their attorneys.

⁹ I.e., what are the officials' positions and duties in the typology of bureaucratic offices?

¹⁰ In the pursuit of legal objectivity, the documents amalgamates different kinds of knowledge – the common knowledge of corruption, scientific expertise such as the analysis of chemicals to mark the bribe cash, or scrutiny of undercover audio recordings, as well as witness statements and accounts of interrogations (cf. Valverde 2003).

altered).¹¹ The record then lists evidence obtained by police observations, searches, scientific or other investigative methods, concluding with a summative judgment of the facts, and the verdict.

I study the record as both a document, an outcome of the legal process and knowledge production, and as a text situated within the framework of Ukrainian legal anti-corruption discourse. The record is best understood in the context of legal processes that bring together police, attorneys, plaintiffs and defendants, judges and court staff, in the enterprise of negotiation of what is “true” as a legal fact, and what is not. It is also important to link the record to codes and laws that it operates through, implicitly or explicitly. The data drawn from the records require a source-critical and context-aware reading, as they are shaped by specific practices of state writing and representation.

I analyze the records for the matter of representations of bribes, their place in bureaucratic itineraries, and the informal practices of power and organization that accompany them. Importantly, I assume that practices represented in the record took place in reality, and their relation to each other was as reported in the document. The record does not contain a complete description of what happened, nor does it include case materials. Accounts of defendants and witnesses are the most valuable part of the record with regard to information about practical aspects of bribery. They provide data about informal practices and help understand and triangulate conflicting versions of events, thus assuring validity of representations and throwing light on different strategies people choose vis-à-vis the court. In addition, it is here that evaluations, moral statements, and popular beliefs about the public office are found.

In the end, however, what one gets from the record are representations structured by power and legal practices (Robertson 2005). To make sense of how these representations relate to the social reality, it is necessary to read the document “against the grain,” that is, looking beyond its initial purpose (construction of legal knowledge) into the areas of contestation, navigating between different accounts of the acts and seeking to make sense of apparent lacunae, omissions, and conflicts in judicial interpretations of evidence. To conclude, the inquiry into the record must be informed by the understanding of legal procedures that gave rise to the particular kinds of knowledge constituting the document.

The Bribe: Approaches in Anthropology and Beyond

Corruption is often described as (ab)use of public office for private gain. The bribe, then, is a payment unduly offered or taken for the exercise of public office to favor one’s interests. This definition has been criticized perhaps as extensively as it has been used – for its normative character, emphasis on the *private* gain, and the disregard of practical and semantic variety of corruption (Haller and Shore 2005; Nuijten and Anders 2007). In this article, I focus on one aspect that has not been given much scholarly attention: the fact that it is not always the *public office* that is abused for gain. In other words, I argue that in order to obtain the bureaucratic outcome purchased with a bribe, bureaucrats rely on power, organizational

¹¹ Although these summaries are the product of the work of court secretaries, and thus are not what people actually said when interrogated, on many occasions, however, it is possible to identify intrusions of plain speech into the legalistic lingo of the record, which mark sentences and phrases uttered by defendants/witnesses and probably reported without major changes.

arrangements, and practices that cannot be narrowed down to the formal authority and duties of their public offices. Rather, state functionaries rely on informal practices and relationships that allow them to bend bureaucratic rules and manipulate the process of formal government. In this section, I shortly review two ways to understand bribery: first, as a transaction (an exchange of bureaucratic performance for a payment); and second, as a temporal process embedded in complex bureaucratic procedures, in which the actual transaction is only one of the many stages.

To develop these arguments, I investigate the role of the bribe as a way to go about – or around – official norms and regulations. As an exchange of material benefit for the exercise of power, the bribe is an instrument to various ends. The economist William M. Reisman (1979) outlines three different ways in which bribes appear in citizen–official relationships. Reisman distinguishes between *transactional bribes* (payments to secure/expedite performance the official is expected to deliver anyway), *variance bribes* (payments to secure non–application of sanctions or suspension of a norm), and *outright purchase* (“acquisition” of an official who, continuing to stay in the office, serves the interest of the briber) (Humphrey 2002:129–30). The type of transactional bribes comes closely to describing the case of bribery I study. Reisman’s typology accounts for the reciprocity of interests of the briber and the bribed, interpreting the role of the bribe in almost structural functionalist terms.¹² Crucially for my analysis, Reisman describes the economic function of the bribe in terms of securing the outcome of a citizen–official encounter.¹³

Thinking in terms of outcomes, transactions, and exchanges, however, brings about the risk of disarticulating the bribe from its context in local social arrangements and bureaucratic procedures, something in which many anthropologists have been complicit. Indisputably, studying the bribe *qua* transaction, anthropologists have explored important facts about how the payment relates to the broader social context. For example, Akhil Gupta (1995, 2012) argues that a successful bribe requires performative competence (knowing whom to approach and what (not) to say) acquired through socialization. The etiquette of bribery, Caroline Humphrey suggests in her ethnography of post-Soviet Russia, has to do with the fact the bribe “creates a particular, usually short-lived, ‘negative’ social relation between the giver and the taker” (2002:128).

This etiquette and the performance of bribery more generally are deeply shaped by moral ideas about appropriate forms of social exchange. Morality informs how people stage bribe–giving, how they conceal it, and how they speak about it in ways that elude or euphemize negative moral connotations. Ethnographers have been particularly interested in

¹²Needless to say, the typology neglects the issues that surface from power inequalities, violence, and marginalization that are often pertinent to the bribe.

¹³Reisman’s conceptualization of graft as a payment that secures official’s performance underlines the inherent indeterminacy and ambivalence of bureaucratic power that people aim to reduce with bribes (Auyero 2012). We should look at illicit payments in their context of unequal power relations in prospective and unpredictable bureaucratic encounters (Hoag 2011): exchange of money for bureaucratic performance on many occasions conceals a response to uncertainty, waiting, and violence people experience on their journeys through state offices and bureaus (Graeber 2012).

how bribes as transactions square with local morality and culture.¹⁴ At the same time, they have paid less attention to how these transactions happen in practice. Yet, even those anthropologists who study practical aspects of bureaucratic bribery (e.g. Blundo and Olivier de Sardan 2006) relying on emic accounts, usually “enter” the crime scene too late: when everything is already arranged and fixed, and only the cash must change pockets. In this way, ethnographers of bribery subscribe to the entrenched social sciences view of organizations as static products or outcomes. Monique Nuijten (2003:10-12) offers a fruitful alternative to this perspective, proposing to study bureaucratic organizations as processes. Nuijten builds upon Eric Wolf’s (2001:384) insight into organization as one of the expressions of power to suggest that anthropologists study the state and the ways in which people engage with it as *organizing processes*. Following Nuijten, I approach bribery as an organizing practice through which both bureaucrats and citizens pursue their goals within the Ukrainian state apparatus.

Such a processual approach also contributes to linking the issue of corruption with the broader theoretical framework in anthropology that understands “the state” as both *idea* and *practice* (Abrams 1988; Gupta 2012; Mitchell 1999; Navaro-Yashin 2002). The state is not a coherent and unitary entity (although is perceived as such): people engage with bureaucracies, rely on or cheat them, and mobilize official authority in innovative ways precisely because the state is so pervasive a presence in their lives. Studying how this happens from within the state offices allows researchers to shift the analytical focus “from the moment of action to the moment before [or after] action” (Hoag 2011:86), and map how different social arrangements and modes of sociality within and without bureaucracies make bribe transactions possible.

Taking the “before and after” of the bribe into account, as my case study indicates, is all the more important because the bribe is not an atemporal transaction, but “a complex process unfolding in time in which, most of the time, the transaction is indirect (that is to say, implying the intervention of intermediaries) and occupies only one step in the series of events that precede or follow it” (Blundo 2007:33). Indeed, even though handing a pack of bills to an official lasts seconds, arranging the transactions can take days or months. Blundo maintains that an appropriate way to write about the bribe as process is to study “bureaucratic itineraries” – trajectories people and files follow as they pilgrim from one office to the other (2007:47). In Ukraine people “pay” officials so that they go through bureaucratic itineraries to collect the documents (“gather papers,” as a popular expression has it) themselves, and the case I study is just one example of many possible. In this article, I analyze the kind of organizing practices needed for two principal officials to obtain a bribe for “gathering papers” and negotiating with their colleagues in other offices. In summary, bribery is an embedded social practice that works through social relationships, networks and processes that also form the backbone of mundane state processes.¹⁵

¹⁴With regard to Russia and Ukraine, see Rivkin-Fish 2005, Polese 2008, Tymzcuk 2005; for a literature review of the field see introductory chapters in Blundo and Olivier de Sardan (2006), Haller and Shore (2005), Nuijten and Anders (2007).

¹⁵I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer who suggested this way of phrasing my argument.

Formal and Informal Practices: Social Practices and Relations in Bureaucracies

In the previous section, I explored how bribes can be understood as a way to engage with the state. However, bribery is but one of the many ways to get around bureaucratic rules. In this section I concentrate on how the concept of informal practices can explain the ways in which civil servants and citizens navigate the bureaucratic world. My main point is that bribery depends on various forms of informality that enable state functionaries to coordinate formal procedures, decision-making, and paperwork without which it is often impossible to achieve the bribe's outcomes. In this sense, bribes depend on informal *organizing* as much as it does on formal bureaucratic *organization*.

The notion of informality lies at heart of the expanding field of scholarship that demonstrates how practices and institutions labeled as corrupt are intrinsic to the state and governance in Russia and Ukraine. Authors such as Keith Darden (2008), Vadim Kononenko and Arkady Moshes (2011), and Alena Ledeneva (2013) argue that the state in these countries is not necessarily a "formal, law-based institution" (Darden 2008:38), but often functions through informal institutions such as networks and stable unwritten rules. They suggest viewing Russian and Ukrainian state bureaucracies as organizations combining formal rules and rational legal principles with informal institutions of the application of formal rules (Paneyakh 2002:157), networking, favoritism, and illicit payments.

There is little agreement among these scholars about what informality actually means, but the bottom line is clear: the informal is the opposite of the formal. Thus informality is better understood in its relation to the bureaucratic form, that is, to official norms and rules that regulate social action within the state and society. Trying to conceptualize *bureaucratic* forms, the economic anthropologist Keith Hart writes that the form in general "is *the rule*, an idea of what ought to be universal in social life." Hart continues: "Forms are necessarily abstract and a lot of social life is left out as a result. This can lead to an attempt to reduce the gap by creating new abstractions that incorporate the informal practices of people into the formal model. Naming these practices as an 'informal sector' is one such device" (Hart 2005:1). In the bureaucratic context, by Hart's understanding, informality means nothing more than practices and relations "largely invisible to the bureaucratic gaze" (2005:1), marked by the absence of the bureaucratic form that would define and shape them.¹⁶ He distinguishes the following four ways in which these informal practices and relations square with the bureaucratic form: as division, as residue, as negation, and as content (2005:11). The last two are pertinent to informality in the bureaucratic domain in Ukraine. Informality as the negation of the bureaucratic form (e.g. a bribe) is a rule-breaking activity, and thus can be illegal. It is in this sense that a bribe is a negation of, and deviation from, formal principles and rules of public servants' behavior that underlie modern bureaucracies. Informality as the "unspecified content" of the bureaucratic form, according to Hart, means that people interpret and translate abstract bureaucratic forms into particular actions. Thus, when individuals interpret rules, or use them in ways not directly prescribed by the rules themselves, they act informally.

The informal and the formal are connected not only conceptually, but also practically. The Russian sociologist Ella Paneyakh (2002) makes a strong case demonstrating how

¹⁶As it is, the notion of informality comprises more or less every human practice which is not formally regulated. However, it makes sense to restrict it to economic activities, as it has been used in the scholarship on Ukraine and neighboring countries.

bureaucratic regulations and legal forms become an infrastructure for informal practices that permeate and stretch beyond official structures. Paneyakh studied how petty entrepreneurs in Russia interact with controlling state bodies like tax inspection. She found that people seek to build up a facade of formal economic activity by performing legality through documents and privately negotiating with state officials about the application of bureaucratic rules. Paneyakh stressed that the selectivity of the application of these rules is the key aspect of informal practices which evolve around the formal ones. A similar argument forms the core of Alena Ledeneva's (2008:119) definition of informal practices as: "people's regular strategies to manipulate or exploit formal rules by enforcing informal norms and personal obligations in formal contexts. Such strategies involve bending both formal rules and informal norms, or navigating between these constraints by following some and breaking others." The definition grasps what is distinct about informal practices as Ledeneva and Peneyakh conceptualize them: informality in the domain of the state allows people to manage and get things done outside of official structures constraining and shaping their actions. At the same time, informality stands for how people interpret and use opportunities opened up by these official structures in ways that are not formally sanctioned and regulated.

But what are the concrete ways in which people act informally in the Ukrainian bureaucracy? Discussing favors and favoritism in Russia, Caroline Humphrey (2012) criticizes sociological literature (e.g. Kononenko and Moshes 2011; Ledeneva 1998) for assuming that bribery, cronyism, networking and other informal economic activities are done through "personal connections," while not specifying in what these connections consist. "Generally it is regarded as enough to describe them as 'kinship and friendship' and leave it at that" (Humphrey 2012:23). As my case study and review of other court records suggest, the "content" of connections can be very different – from an everyday professional contact in a bureau, to friendship or more distant personal relationships, to occasional acquaintance. The character of exchange in informal relations as well as the emic morality evaluating informal exchanges depend on how people are connected to each other as well as on what is exchanged. Favors are one of the currencies in the world of bureaucratic informality; money is another one. Authority, informal power or coercion are yet another. But they come in a mix, exact proportions probably depending on status inequalities and relations of power between the parties participating in the relationship.

From this standpoint, informality in the bureaucracy relies on everyday social relations that allow individuals to organize or influence other individuals to do something (turn a blind eye on a rule, expediently produce a document, etc.) for them. Exchange is at heart of informal practices, but the character of this exchange – whether it is a pure "business relationship" presupposing payments, a moral relationship of gratitude and reciprocity, or a coercive command – depends on how individuals relate to each other socially and personally. Because bureaucratic institutions are based on a complex division of labor and power, one functionary's work is contingent on the others'. Moreover, bureaucratic itineraries of document production extend through many offices. When an official takes a bribe for a service or - let's call it so - a favor, their capacity to deliver it often depends on the willingness of state functionaries in other institutions to bend rules, unduly provide confidential information, produce documents, or fasten necessary procedures. As my case study demonstrates, bureaucrats take bribes not only for doing what is in the limits of the office they hold, but also for negotiating with other officials, which is a matter of informal relations. Networking is the main informal practice

through which officials solve the practical problem of limited authority within official bureaucratic structures. It allows state functionaries to manipulate formal rules and procedures through power negotiation extending beyond the limits of their individual offices. This reliance on informality in formal contexts considerably changes the agency of both citizens and officials in engaging with the state. In the following two sections I explore the issues of bribery and informal practices empirically, building on a case study of a bribe in the real estate domain in the Kiliya district.

Case Study: The Lords of the Land

In June 2007¹⁷ Maria,¹⁸ the director of an Odessa-based property developing company, told her acquaintance Anton¹⁹ that she would like to buy or rent a plot on the seaside somewhere in the region to construct a resort. She said she would pay \$150,000 per hectare. Anton put Maria in contact with Misha – a middle-age man from Odessa. Misha offered Maria a 2.7-hectare plot in Prymors'ke, a village in the Kiliya district of the Odesa region, and promised, as Maria's statement in the record puts it, "to introduce her to people who decide (*vyrishuyut*) everything in the district."²⁰

Very soon, on July 25, Misha and Maria went to Prymors'ke, but instead of showing Maria the plot he had told her about, Misha showed her a different, larger one. There, they met with Ivan, who was the Chief Architect and Head of the Department of Architecture, Planning and City Building of the Kiliya District State Administration (DSA),²¹ and Valentin, who at that time directed the Kiliya Department of a private company charged with the valuation of land and land use management,²² but who would soon take over the direction of the Kiliya District Department of Land Resources.²³ Ivan and Valentin were the "people who decided everything." Ivan had brought along a file of lease documents for the lot. As Maria discovered going through

¹⁷ Yedynyi Derzhavnyi Reyestr Sudovykh Rishen': Berezans'kyi Rayonnyi Sud Mykolayivs'koyi Oblasti; Record 15059634, Case 1-2/11, April 5, 2011. Retrieved January 13, 2013 (<http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/15059634>)

¹⁸ All names are pseudonyms; they substitute generic labels ("Person 1", "Person 2" etc.) used in the record.

¹⁹The record does not specify what exact kind of relationship Maria had with Anton - but the word *znayomyi* (acquaintance) used in the document suggests it was not a professional connection, and definitely not a close personal relationship (then, they would have been *druzi* - "friends").

²⁰ At the hearing, Anton witnessed that, to his knowledge, Misha was selling his plot near the Danube, in the village of Prymors'ke. On Misha's request, he showed Maria to the village. This, however, goes unmentioned both in Maria's and Misha's accounts in the court record. Misha only mentioned he was intent to share part of the money he received from Maria with Anton - "for the work [Anton] had done for Maria."

²¹The DSA is the district-level administrative territorial institution of the executive branch of the state in Ukraine, subordinate to the Odesa Regional State Administration.

²²Companies of the sort deal with preparing projects of technical documentation for real estate used in official applications to state offices, or on the market.

²³This organization is a district office of the National Bureau of Land Resources (NBLR), and is not subordinate to the DSA.

the papers, the land had already been contracted to a man called Andrey, but in Ivan's opinion it would not take much effort to pass the contract from Andrey to Maria. On the same day they all went to Valentin's company office to copy the files, and there Misha uttered "the price of the plot:" 150,000 USD per each hectare of the 3.0-hectare plot, totaling USD 450,000 paid in cash with a prepayment of 200,000 USD. As Maria's witness statement in the record has it, the prepayment was needed "to pay off the [village council] deputies and the village mayor, have everybody vote in favor of the lease, pay for the technical documentation, pay an architect and the land resources department." In the end Maria would receive a lease contract and official documents generally needed to start a construction project.²⁴

On July 26, the next day after the visit to Primors'ke Misha and Maria talked again. Misha revealed he was a trusted representative of Ivan and Valentin, and he boasted it was a usual matter for him to "mediate between citizens and the officials in real estate matters." Misha stressed he had known Ivan and Valentin for a long time and had "fixed problems" together with them on many occasions. He insisted that the two bureaucrats were "the lords of the land" and unofficial organizers of land sales in the district. According to Misha, it was their job to accord and supervise land-related procedures. Maria witnessed in court that Misha had also told her that "they [Ivan and Valentin] sign on all documents related to land allotment, registration and use [in the district], and without their signatures no decision on the land will be made; all other people [state officials] play just a formal role." Moreover, Maria recounted from Misha's words, Ivan and Valentin "paid for their offices and now are trying to kick the money back, so they understand very well what the land means; nobody does anything for free here." The following day Misha and Maria met in Kiliya to visit Ivan. Misha assured Maria everything would work well, for the "scheme had already been worked out." Ivan, who received them in his cabinet, offered Maria to compile the application for the land lease, and explained he "would help to fix all issues (*vyrishyty vsi pytannia*) related to the lease contract," such as attribution of the cadastre number to the plot, organization of the Prymors'ke village council session (at which village deputies would decide in favor of leasing the land) etc., although he had no official authority to do this.

Maria was uneasy with this arrangement. First of all, she demanded that Misha and Ivan reduce the sum of prepayment – it was just too much cash to be instantly collected. In response, Misha refused and pressed her: there were other people willing to get the contract, and, he said, "nobody would ever give [her] the plot without the money." Moreover, Maria wanted to meet Andrey and the village mayor: the sum at stake was large, and Maria wanted to be sure it was not a fraud. She wanted to know Andrey was really intent on giving up the lease.

²⁴Now, it must be explained that according to Ukrainian legislation, citizens have a right to freely rent or obtain gratis a vacant municipality-owned plot by filing a lease/allotment application which then must be voted on by a majority of the municipal (village) council. Likewise, to pass the lease contract over from one person to another, the current lessee must break the contract with the municipality, after which a new lease application for the same lot can be filed. In case the council approves the application, the future lessee embarks on long voyage through the sea of documents, projects, and permits that geographically locate the plot, technically explicate the lease purpose, approve the land use project, create a record in the cadastre etc. Only after having a complete file in her hands can the person come back to the village council to have the final project voted and contract signed (the journey continues with the contract being registered in the District Department of Land Resources). All these procedures, except when there are official fees, citizens get for free.

Ivan rebuked Maria's demand. Andrey and the village mayor were to be dealt without her. "They do not decide (*vyrishuyut*) anything" anyway, Ivan said. Even more than that, Maria did not have to bother herself with any documents; Ivan and Valentin would take care of every single document that Maria would have otherwise had to get personally. As Misha put it, "people are sitting in their places [offices] to make money, so there will be no problem with *oformlennya* [formalizing the agreement through documents]". Yet, Ivan allowed for a two-week delay in prepayment and offered to "talk to the people" so that they waited; Maria claimed she was in a "difficult financial situation."

While Maria occasionally met with the village mayor, she never knew who Andrey was. In fact, Andrey had obtained the lease contract for the plot just a month before Maria showed up. He was a nominal lessee, while his father Boris, an entrepreneur with a business in the Kiliya Danube port, had taken charge of obtaining and registering the documents. Obtaining the contract had cost them almost a year in document collection and registration and a BMW car plus 12,000 USD as a bribe to Ivan. Boris had planned to construct a resort in Prymors'ke, but then, he explained to the court, understood it was beyond his financial capacities. Indeed, even the bribe he paid to Ivan was divided in many small installments paid over the time span of almost a year. At some moment, Boris ran out of money and made an agreement with Ivan: the official would find a new "buyer" for the plot and remunerate Boris with 150,000 USD so that Andrey renounced his lease rights. In exchange, Boris would pay off the remaining bribe debt, and give Ivan a kickback of 25,000 USD. So when at the end of July Misha found a potential client - Maria - Boris agreed to settle the deal.

On August 16, Maria paid a visit to Ivan; Valentin was also present. The bureaucrats asked whether Maria was ready to finally "fix the problem." The village council session was to be convened in September, and in order to obtain the land lease, they said, "people who voted on it needed to be paid, for they would not vote *prosto tak*" [for free; literally: simply like that]. Maria had to provide the money before the session; she agreed. Misha shadowed her every move. He accompanied the entrepreneur on her visits to Ivan's and Valentin's offices, made calls and announced the information that Ivan and Valentin preferred not to utter in the premises of their bureaus. The officials were cautious not to say anything that - in case the offices were bugged or Maria used a recorder - could suggest they extorted a bribe. Therefore, Misha was the one in charge of talking about and receiving the money. Although the record does not mention meetings between Ivan, Valentin, and the village mayor, they kept in contact so that by the time Ivan and Valentin brought Maria's application to the village council secretariat, the council employees had been informed about the lease and the need to duly do the paperwork.

On September 3, after the session of the village council had been finally scheduled for the third week of September, and when Maria was about to file her definite application for the 49-years lease contract, she reported Ivan and Valentin to the police for bribe extortion. The police equipped her with a voice recorder and planned a sting operation. About the same time, at the beginning of September, Maria finally managed to negotiate reducing and dividing the first part of the bribe into two installments. Having collected \$50,000 and later the other \$100,000, she handed them over to Misha in mid-September. In both cases, they met in Odessa. Joining Misha in his car, Maria would give him a polyethylene bag full of US dollar bills in packages of 10,000. As a precaution, Maria insisted on Misha writing a voucher that stated the money was a loan. Each time, before the meeting Maria would go to police to have the

numbers of bills painstakingly recorded so as to be used later as potential bribe evidence. After taking the money, Misha would retain 20% of the sum for himself, and give the rest to Ivan when they met somewhere at a gas station on the highway from Odessa to Kiliya. Upon receiving the cash, Ivan would further divide the packs; part would go to Boris to settle the remaining debts, and the rest would be divided with Valentin. Probably, he also turned a part of the payment over to the mayor of Prymors'ke and to the deputies. At a hearing, however, the mayor confessed he had received only 1,000 USD, while the deputies denied any charges.

During September, Ivan and Valentin were busy arranging and supervising document preparation. Valentin signed on four documents related to Maria's lease, while Ivan dealt with three. Moreover, Valentin ordered his subordinates to prepare a project document for Maria, which despite the official fee, was never paid for. Besides the Department of Land Resources and the Department of Architecture, at least four other state institutions supervised the lease authorization, and each of them was responsible for more documents and permits. Ivan and Valentin did their best to have Maria's lease file prepared in time for the final meeting of the village council in early October. As they had promised, Maria never had to go to state offices or worry about anything else except signing several papers. The record is very sparing in any evidence that could demonstrate how exactly Ivan and Valentin were involved in informal negotiation with officials in other state agencies.

Ivan and Valentin personally brought Maria's application for the plot to the village council. They sat in during the council's voting sessions. Valentin, the record states, "used his personal connections" with the employees of the company where he had worked to arrange that an engineer of the company prepare the technical project for the lease; there was never payment for the work done. When the contract was ready, Valentin accompanied Maria to the office of the State Land Cadastre to have the contract registered and had a clerk he knew personally accomplish the procedure despite some irregularities in the documents. More importantly, it can be deduced that the two officials used their connections to obtain the necessary formal permits from a chain of state agencies in a very short time. Having a technical project for the lease and other documents pass through four different organizations could have taken much longer than it actually took for Ivan and Valentin without the "willingness" of employees of these organizations to work very quickly, most definitely bypassing the queue of papers with which they normally dealt. Given that Maria never went to any of these institutions as she was supposed to by law, I assume that Ivan and Valentin did it personally.²⁵ They mediated with the agencies involved, which surely was not a mandate of their offices, so that even the deputies and the secretary of Prymors'ke village council witnessed that they "had never seen such an accompaniment" of citizens' applications.

It took two sessions of the village council to annul Andrey's contract and authorize Maria's lease. At the beginning of October everything was ready for the final step. Maria had to pay the remaining 300,000 USD and obtain the contract and technical documents for the lot. The police chose this moment to act. On October 3, Maria took 300,000 USD (in *hryvni*, the local currency) from the police; the cash was marked with a special chemical substance to facilitate bribe detection and an eventual building up of the criminal case. She met Valentin,

²⁵At the same time, it is unclear how the two officials divided their roles in "pulling the strings" of informal connections and in coordinating the paperwork that was done formally in institutions they did not control.

who gave her the documentation, and Maria signed the lease contract in his office. She went out of the building to see Misha, who waited in the car, and handed him the money. After that, a police raid arrested Misha and Valentin, reaching Ivan and the village mayor later that day.

In summary, in almost two and a half months - from July 25 to October 3 - Maria managed to obtain a valid 49-year lease contract for a lot near the Black Sea and the complete file of documents she needed to start constructing a resort. In contrast, it took Boris and Andrey almost a year to prepare the documents and get the contract. Maria voluntarily gave a bribe to have this process completed for her. Maria preferred this option instead of attempting to buy the land legally or trying to apply for the lease and going through the entire bureaucratic process on her own, which would have taken a long time and could possibly have required bribes to other officials. However, having paid the bribe of 150,000 USD, she obtained a valuable land lot that had cost her 500 USD per 0.01 hectare plus rent - a sum far below the market price for construction lots in Prymors'ke.²⁶ What happened on the opposite end of the bribe transaction? Ivan and Valentin, with help of Misha who mediated their interactions with Maria, managed to have the lease contract prepared, the technical documentation included, in less than a month. To do this, they both abused the authority of their offices and effectively leveraged informal connections to obtain documents and permits quickly, bypassing legal ways to access official procedures. They shared the 150,000 USD Maria paid and used part of the money immediately for their needs (so that it became impossible to sequester a part of the bribe in the course of police investigation). Finally, in April 2011, Ivan, Valentin, and Misha were sentenced to several years of prison each, while the village mayor was released on parole.

People Who Decide, People Who Fix Problems

"Deciding" and "Fixing"

In the previous section, I have reconstructed what the actors involved in a complicated bribe deal did to negotiate the payment and manage formal aspects of the arrangement. How should we make sense of their actions? What is it exactly that Ivan and Valentin do to assure all bureaucratic transactions adding up to a valid lease contract are successful despite many irregularities? And what kind of relationships with other people within and without the Kiliya district bureaucracies allow them to stage the bribe? A good starting point is to see how the officials themselves explain their actions.

On various occasions, Ivan, Valentin and Misha characterize their corrupt arrangement as a way to *vyrishyty pytannya*: 'to decide on an issue/fix a problem,' of Maria's lease.²⁷ Because the phrase puts an emphasis on the outcome (solving a problem) rather than the process, it is invariably used to refer to the entire process in which the officials mobilize formal and informal channels to guarantee Maria obtains the lease. "*Vyrishyty pytannya*" is kin to other expressions circulating in the popular corruption discourse: just like "to undergrease," "to give (to the paw)," "to demonstrate interest," "*vyrishuvaty*" euphemizes the bribe and eliminates its

²⁶As of today, real estate announcements on the Internet value 0.01 hectare in the resort area of Prymors'ke at around 800-1,200 USD. A 3-hectare lot would cost approximately 300,000 USD. Add to that 1% of the state tax in case the land is bought (not leased), and numerous fees associated with document production in state and private bureaus, not to speak about bribes officials might demand in all those offices and opportunity costs of the time spent in following lengthy bureaucratic procedures.

²⁷As reported in their interrogation accounts and Maria's witness statements.

negative connotations. At the same time, like passive grammatical constructions and other ways to depersonalize the corruption talk, it helps to hide or elude the agency of people involved in bribe exchanges: “who’s doing what?” is never a question in conversations on the sensitive subject of corruption. “It is done so that charges against me are lifted,” “The money is given in return,” and “The problems are fixed,” people say, contributing to the image of bureaucratic impersonality, undermined by awkward intimacy of corrupt encounters.

But *vyrishuvaty pytannya* is not merely an euphemism for the bribe. “The issues are fixed” only because someone in the position of authority takes action. *Vyrishyty* in Ukrainian means both “decide,” and “solve/fix”: the ambiguity of the verb highlights the character of informal governance through which officials arrange bribes and bureaucratic outcomes. Namely, in order to “fix” the issue of Maria’s lease and take a bribe, Ivan and Valentin make authoritative official decisions (they order their subordinates to prepare documents and sign on the papers), but also engage in informal practices, leveraging their connections and authority to informally influence employees at other institutions so that they compose and register documents quickly, despite irregularities and without further bribes. In other words, Ivan and Valentin manipulate both formal and informal relations to the end of obtaining illicit gain; they coordinate their subordinates and organize people across institutional boundaries (the village mayor, his secretary, employees of state bodies that issued permits on the lease project), or even beyond the boundary of the state (Misha, Boris) to assure they achieve the bureaucratic outcome secured with the bribe. *Vyrishuvaty pytannya* thus maps the “blurred boundaries” (cf. Gupta 1995) between the authority of the office and informal power, state and informal governance, the public and the private.²⁸

Networking

Networking is the core practice of “fixing.” Through connections with people in different institutions and beyond bureaucracies, Ivan and Valentin harness the formal procedure of land lease authorization to their corrupt ends. Importantly, networking with Misha, the village mayor, and other people who are “invisible” in the record, the two officials exercise power irreducible to the formal authority of their offices. The network they manage is large and loose. Its structure partly reflects how Ivan and Valentin connect to people in bureaucratic institutions at various hierarchical levels: in order to be “lords of the land,” they need the bureaucrats who they network with to carry out formal paperwork and make the “right” kinds of decisions that in the end result in a valid lease contract. For example, the majority vote of the village council to approve the lease is achieved with the mediation of the village mayor. Ivan, explaining to Maria what the bribe was for, claimed he had to buy off the village council deputies. At the hearing, however, the deputies and the council secretary rebuke this statement. They say the deputies have always been “very independent,” but there was little cure against the authoritarian decisions of the mayor, who used to disregard the voting results on land matters.

²⁸Curiously, it is not only those involved in corrupt arrangements who use the expression “*vyrishyty pytannya*” to refer to informality. Apparently, this is a conventional mode of reference to what corruption does: most court records I have reviewed consistently use the phrase in the sections that summarize legal facts of the bribe and state court’s opinion on it. This means that those who compose the record consider the expression appropriate to describe the content of bribe arrangements in the judicial context. “*Vyrishuvaty*” thus marks the common knowledge of corruption and informality mobilized in the judicial arena (cf. Valverde 2003).

Be that as it may, negotiating power with other officials, Ivan and Valentin manage to shape official procedures governing the authorization of the land lease to fit their personal interest. Their formal role in the official process of lease authorization is restricted to signing on technical documents that are brought to them. Neither Ivan nor Valentin have any formal control over who will obtain the lease. Citizens apply for the allocation of land to the village council and only after going through several stages of document production in the bureaucratic itinerary, reach the desks of Ivan and Valentin. The two officials, then, must merely *control* whether the technical documents and permits that applicants have collected are correct. However, Ivan and Valentin leverage their network stretching to other organizations in order to overturn the described process of governance. While formally there is no single center of decision-making on the lease authorization (after the village council approves the preparation of a technical project for the lease, the process is purely “technical” and a matter of paperwork), the court record makes it clear that Ivan and Valentin informally monopolize the decisions and “fix” everything. And, to recapitulate, they receive the bribe not only because they abuse the limited authority they have, but first and foremost because they skillfully go around official constraints on their power.²⁹ The public office, however, is the main instrument Ivan and Valentin use to exert informal power. There is not much empirical evidence to this, but I would suggest that Ivan’s and Valentin’s high official status probably gives them the access to high-level political networks and connections at the district and regional levels. At the same time, it allows them to engage in informal relations with their direct subordinates and bureaucrats at lower levels in other district state institutions by way of favors or requests.

While one part of the network Ivan and Valentin rely on is within the bureaucracy, another one lies outside of the state. Misha’s role in the bribe arrangement is that of negotiating and carrying out certain parts of the bribe arrangement that are too risky for a state employee. Namely, Misha is the one who “recruits” Maria, explains to her that she needs to pay a bribe, and takes care of how this happens. Misha meets with Maria in person to communicate information that, if uttered by Ivan or Valentin and recorded, could constitute dangerous evidence of the bribe plot. This kind of network arrangement, in which an official manages bribe-taking with help of a mediator is typical among the bribe cases I have reviewed. Its purpose is to protect officials from corruption charges in case of a sting operation. Although it did not work out in the case I study, it did in others. It is difficult for the police to collect factual evidence that could affirm that a mediator, with whom the client communicates all the time, is connected by some kind of agreement to an official.

In summary, the main decisions about how to go about the corrupt arrangement were made among Ivan, Valentin, Misha, and the village mayor. The informal relations between these key actors, based on their mutual trust and strong interest in material gain, became the

²⁹Ivan and Valentin demanded the payment not for what would be the duties of their offices (signing several lease documents that Maria would bring them after having gone through the entire bureaucratic itinerary passing from the village council and project organization to the State Ecological, Fire, and Sanitary Inspections, State Land Cadastre, Departments of Architecture and Planning, Land Resource Department, and back to the village council), but for using their informal power to arrange all these formal processes without Maria’s participation. Nevertheless, the prosecution in their court case focused on the instances in which the officials did abuse their office signing on the lease project and other documents. Legal culpability for bribery, according to the Ukrainian Penal Code, can be constructed only around the fact of the abuse of public office.

framework for power negotiations, decision making, and “fixing.” Networking allowed the officials to coordinate each other’s actions within the limits of their public offices, exercise informal power, and overcome constraints on their authority.³⁰ All this was indispensable to control the lease document preparation and obtain the bribe.

Petty informality

The specter of informality in which Ivan and Valentin engage is not confined to networking alone. A great part of organizing happens in the context of occasional encounters between the two officials and other, lower-rank bureaucrats responsible for specific elements of the document preparation process. Consider the example of the lease application. By law, Maria had to apply for the lease personally, so when Ivan and Valentin came to Prymors’ke village council bringing Maria’s signed application, they impaired the legality of all consequent procedures. But they did not care about this; as long as the secretary registered the application, and the deputies voted in favor of allowing Maria to proceed with preparing technical documentation, the procedure remained formally legal. All of this depended on how the village secretary responded to Ivan and Valentin’s request to register the application. Unsurprisingly, the secretary formalized the application despite the applicant’s absence.³¹ What underlies the encounter between the two officials and the secretary is not the relation of personal trust, friendship, clientelism or what I have defined before as networking. It is, for the lack of a better term, “petty informality.”³² The secretary carries out a formally legal procedure, but she interprets *how* the procedure should be performed. This interpretation breaks regulations of her office, but as long as it is not registered (and it is not), the “facade” of legality stands firm. Yet, petty informality is not necessarily confined to the domain of corruption; it also allows state employees to overcome the formality of the bureaucratic world. People engaging in this kind of informal practice might interpret it as a favor, but it is unlikely they will deem it unusual, for it constitutes a way they habitually navigate the domain of formality.

The following example will clarify my argument. A clerk at the Kiliya Department of the State Land Cadastre Bureau witnessed at the hearing that on October 3 (the day before the arrest) Valentin and Maria brought three copies of the land lease contract. The copies were signed, but two of them lacked the stamp of the Prymors’ke village council. Valentin asked to register the contract anyway, for he would “personally take care of everything,” and assured that Maria would receive her two stamped copies later. The clerk, who had known Valentin from the times when he worked in the private land valuation company and “often brought documents for registration,” agreed to register the contracts, but stressed that she “would

³⁰Yet, there was a strong inequality in the network, reflected by how remuneration for the participation in the bribe arrangement was divided: Ivan and Valentin, who claimed the largest share of the pie, were the “chiefs” of the arrangement, which brings us back to the question of how one’s position in a formal hierarchy influences their capacity to exert informal power. As of the moment, however, it remains an open question.

³¹She witnessed at the hearing that “it was for the first time that there was such an accompaniment (*suprovid*) of one’s application.”

³²It includes the selective application and interpretation of formal rules, abuse of the status and authority of the office, and is apparently backed by a bureaucratic ethos that substitutes authority of the office for individual authority and power.

have denied it to Maria alone.” In a case that took place in Ternopil’ in 2010, a secretary at the District Department of the State Land Cadastre Bureau justified giving away a citizen’s file to an employee of a different state agency not entitled to receive the file by saying that she knew where the official worked and therefore “had no reasons not to trust him.”³³ These examples demonstrate how networking and petty informality underlie the organizational dynamics of the bribe arrangement. On the one hand, informal practices I have explored build on mundane private or professional relationships between people in state bureaucracies or beyond them. On the other, they happen on the basis of official institutional structures and practice that also form the backbone of formal state processes.

This brings me to my last observation: informal practices allow people to engage with the state and mobilize “it” to their personal ends. Paradoxically, the anti-corruption law enforcement presents an opportunity for Maria to play a double game: both obtain the lease quickly through a corrupt arrangement, and reduce the cost of this arrangement. By reporting Ivan and Valentin to the police and initiating a sting operation, Maria brings down the bribe to 150,000 USD. Thus, in the end, she gains a 49-years lease contract at 1/2 or 1/3 the market cost of the land.³⁴ What is striking is that this way of getting things done appears common among the real estate bribery cases I have reviewed. Citizens first arrange bribes (or are forced to pay them), and afterward report on officials to the police or State Security Service in order to obtain money for the police-supervised payment. The officials get arrested and the citizens obtain the bureaucratic outcome they need while not spending their own money for the bribe. What might look like an act of civic consciousness turns out to be a yet another way to instrumentalize the state.

Conclusions

In this article I have examined how bribery relates to formal and informal practices in administrative bureaucracy in Ukraine. Focusing on a detailed case study, I have advanced two main arguments. My first argument is that the bribe takes place in the organizational context of formal bureaucratic procedures and informal practices. Therefore, bribes are understood as a process rather than a transaction. In order to understand how a bribe becomes possible, I suggest studying formal procedures that generate bureaucratic outcomes purchased with the bribe. My research supports the argument that bribery results from the abuse of the public office. At the same time, I demonstrate how in order to produce the mentioned bureaucratic outcome, corrupt officials may rely also on informal relations and practices that allow them to overcome the limits on their authority and engage in informal power relations.

This introduces my second argument: informal practices are what allow officials to organize, coordinate, and manipulate formal state processes that are indispensable to secure the bureaucratic outcome of the bribe transaction. Informal practices (what I refer to as *networking* and *petty informality*, use of personal connections and formal authority, and interpretation of rules) are chief practices that open opportunities for “deciding” and “fixing.”

³³ Yedynyi Derzhavnyi Reyestr Sudovykh Rishen’: Ternopil’s’kyi Mis’krayonnyi Sud Ternopil’s’koyi Oblasti; Record 15835225, Case 1-175/11, April 29, 2011. Retrieved January 12, 2013 (<http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/15835225>)

³⁴ Of course, she still had to pay the rent, but rent costs were negligent in comparison with what she would otherwise have to pay on the market.

They allow people to engage with, manipulate, and apply formal norms by enforcing informal modes of sociality in formal contexts. Informal practices provide officials leverage by which to turn formal processes of government to their needs and change how power is shared in formal institutional arrangements. At the same time, informality is a way for citizens and civil servants to mobilize official state structures and processes as means to their personal ends.

My arguments contribute to the anthropological understanding of how people engage with the state in their quotidian life in various, often creative ways. I suggest that bribery and informality rely on the same processes and practices that form the bedrock of formal state processes. At the same time, my research demonstrates that bureaucracies are sets of mundane relations between people, shaped by formal institutional arrangements, and giving way to informal ways to go about official rules.³⁵

My study points at a number of problems to be explored. Firstly, although the use of court records as a source can open new perspectives on bribery and informal practices in bureaucracies, court proceedings provide very limited insights into the bureaucratic world. There are two ways in which my research has reached the limits of court records as a source of data on bribery and informality; both have to do with documents as a form of knowledge inscription and communication. On the one hand, documents are the keystone of bureaucratic formality. The boundary between the formal and the informal often coincides with the limits of what is documentable. Anti-corruption court hearings acutely grasp this problem. In many records that I have reviewed, the fact of an informal arrangement between bribe mediators and officials who “decided” and “fixed” was impossible to prove because the court possessed no “objective” (that is, documented) knowledge about undocumented corrupt practices and connections.³⁶ This argument demonstrates how bureaucracies and formal procedures function as “objectivity machines” (Hoag 2011). Similarly, Ella Paneyakh (2002) argues that people hide informal practices “behind” formal documents by inscribing false knowledge about social reality that documents supposedly describe and appositely producing official ignorance (Mathews 2011). Official documents, by virtue of their formality, are detached and disembedded from the contexts of their production, and they bear no traces of practices through which people create them. Therefore informality that stands behind the practices of knowledge production and inscription cannot be revealed through documents. It is for this reason that although it is known that Ivan and Valentin managed to obtain all necessary documents for Maria’s lease by way of informal practices, the court never investigates into this; lease documents can tell nothing about the informal ways in which document preparation was arranged.

On the other hand, court records present the same problems as other documents do. Not studying them ethnographically, that is, in the context of knowledge production and inscription practices in the judicial arena, it is impossible to know just how much information is left out in the formalization of evidence, witness statements, and interrogation accounts. To what extent is the court record “true” (true to the facts it presents)? Finally, there is no guarantee a court hearing in which a record is produced is not corrupt itself; the study of court documents has no methodological remedy for this ultimate informality.

³⁵I am indebted to the anonymous reviewer who suggested that I re-formulate my argument in this way.

³⁶In these cases, bribe mediators were accused of fraud, while any charges of corruption against officials were lifted.

Another problem is that of individual agency in bureaucracies. To what extent can individuals (officials and their clients) act freely within an institutional framework of a bureaucracy? How does informality frame individual agency vis-à-vis the state? So far, my research suggests that bribery, networking and petty informality open up opportunities for officials and citizens to overcome formal constraints on their actions. When Maria manipulates both the bribe arrangement and the police sting operation to her ends, she plays one state institution against another, which demonstrates how citizens can creatively engage with the state. However, bribery can, and in most cases does, deny individual agency to those who cannot afford illicit payments. It thus contributes to the experience of powerlessness in front of the arbitrary and violent state.

There is another problem pertinent to the issue of agency. What are the kinds of power dynamics and cultural expectations that incite citizens to give bribes? While the particular case of Maria suggests it might be rationality that guides people's choices to (voluntarily) give bribes, my personal experience, and the variety of ways in which bribery can be exclusive, suggest there is often no choice for people at all. From one point of view, entrenched expectations about bureaucratic performance inform what people see as a rational way to approach state officials. From another point of view, encounters with the state generate indeterminacy, ignorance (Graeber 2012; Mathews 2011), and powerlessness, which all might stand behind people's choices to pay bribes.

Finally, these considerations bring me to the last problem: what is the link between bribery and other corrupt practices at various hierarchical levels of the state? My research supports Akhil Gupta's (2012) thesis that corruption at different levels of the state is functionally linked. That is to say, my findings demonstrate how corruption among officials higher up the hierarchy is based on informality among lower-level bureaucrats. Thus, Ivan and Valentin rely on lower-level officials in "fixing" the problem of Maria's lease documents preparation. Although Misha alludes to the fact that Ivan and Valentin take bribes to work back the money they paid for their offices (probably, to their direct superiors), it remains unclear how the corrupt arrangement I study relates to corruption at higher levels of the bureaucracy, or in political institutions. These issues are potential new areas that call for a deeper, ethnographically informed research.

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Neoliberalism Illustrated: Privatization in the Republic of Macedonia's Tikveš Wine Region

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Abstract

This paper draws upon anthropological fieldwork carried out in 2010–11 in the Tikveš wine region of the Republic of Macedonia. Unlike most other countries of the former Eastern Bloc, Macedonia's post-socialist transition was held off due to the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. The result is that a slower, more subtle shift has occurred there. But it has been one guided by neoliberal principles, thus significantly altering the livelihoods of the country's inhabitants. My research in Tikveš illustrates the role privatization is playing in the region's transition from government to private ownership and production, specifically in the wine growing business. Although the quality and selection of wine in Tikveš has improved, the lives of the independent grape growers and their families have not. Instead, the growers have been subject to the leverage of the winery owners—who have reduced and delayed payments to them—while a neoliberal government has taken a *laissez-faire* approach to market regulation. This photographic essay therefore focuses on how individuals in the region are both protesting and adapting to the change at hand, by staging protests and blocking main roads, and more so through rearranging their livelihoods and work. Indeed, grape growers have been left with a surplus of grapes and a dearth of income and certainty, inciting some to produce vast quantities of homemade *rakija* (brandy) while others replace, abandon, or sell their vineyards. New ways of bringing in income, such as selling one's brandy, produce, or homemade goods, are also modes of survival. Yet many claim that is all they are doing, and “not living, just surviving.”

Keywords: Privatization, neoliberalism, post-socialist transition, wine, Macedonia

Introduction

Located just north of the border with Greece in the former Yugoslavia, the Tikveš region of Macedonia is well-known for its wine production. However, in the last decade it has undergone a drastic transition: the privatization of formerly state-owned wineries along with the state's severance of long-held ties with the individual *lozari* 'grape growers,' who traditionally supplied the wineries, have led to confusion, chaos, and criminality. More specifically, connected businessmen and bureaucrats, whom the growers call the *vinška mafija*, 'wine mafia,' have taken control of the wineries and industry. In doing so, they have rearranged the wineries' administration, production, and thus function, with the local communities in tow. What were once state-owned wineries, which bought all grapes grown regardless of quality, have now become modern facilities that utilize new technology in order to source a limited amount of grapes. They in fact produce better quality wine that is on par with contemporary

standards, which is necessary given the incredibly competitive European and global wine market.¹

However, while improving wine quality, this transition's "deregulation" has led to lawlessness and to wineries' unabashed exploitation of the region's now unprotected independent growers. Following the move to privatization, the "mafia-controlled" wineries have blatantly disregarded the costs that such independent growers incur in production and the remuneration they expect; instead, these wineries now seemingly purposefully sow confusion. For instance, as grape buyers, the winery owners have specifically spread disinformation in terms of what sorts of grapes they need and when they intend to purchase them; they may during any week of the harvest state that they intend to only buy a certain grape type, and will setup a purchasing station for it. Furthermore, many wineries have in effect used the grape growers to subsidize their business by taking the growers' grapes but not paying them for one or more years—until the wineries have produced and sold the wine they made using those grapes. Sometimes the wineries fail to pay the growers back altogether. Such circumstances have resulted in the growers protesting on many occasions; one such protest I document here.

Given a judicial system that has received international criticism for its ineffectiveness, corruption, and inability to objectively enforce the rule of law, there is little growers can do about their losses. The immediate consequences are that such unpaid and under-paid harvests have left many of them in debt, and have radically shifted their economic situations and thus livelihoods. Many growers have therefore adopted a variety of means to survive, from producing and selling en masse the region's famous grape brandy, as well as *zimnici*, 'homemade foodstuffs,' to ripping up their *lozje*, 'vineyards,' and planting staple produce for home consumption—a so-called "return to the peasantry" during post-socialist transitions. Such circumstances, seen by scholars and their ethnographies of other post-socialist countries such as Bulgaria (Creed 1997, Kaneff 2002, etc.), Romania (Kideckel 1995, Sampson 1995, and Verdery 1996, 2003, etc.), Hungary, and Poland (Hann 2003, 2006; Lampland 1995), framed my initial research. But by focusing on privatization and development in one region of the former Yugoslavia, I discovered a variety of unique mechanisms at work and issues to contend with. Overall, my project attempted to understand the very specific context of the lived experiences of those individuals undergoing the painful transition to neoliberalism, where the "market" does not operate as "freely" as one might imagine.

I therefore illustrate the transition with images of various forms of work, protest, and adaptation that I witnessed during my anthropological doctoral fieldwork in 2010–11. Through participant-observation, media research, and interviews, I sought out a framework for understanding the post-socialist to neoliberal, "free-market" transition occurring in Macedonia. I have chosen to illustrate this research through photographs because such images are not only "worth a thousand words," they also show us the appearance of the land, and its people and their emotive expressions as well. We can see and thus better understand both the fruit and the toil of their labor, and the various colors of their crops and country.

Theoretically speaking, several anthropological ethnographies offer insight into the process of neoliberalism and its societal reworking, from Chris Hann's text "*Not the Horse We Wanted!*" *Postsocialism, Neoliberalism and Eurasia* (2006) to Stephen Collier's reworking of

¹ See Colman (2010) and Veseth (2011) for further insight into the "wine wars" and political and economic forces which shape the global wine industry.

neoliberalism with social modernity and biopolitics in *Post-Soviet Social* (2011), among others. Hann argues that the spread of neoliberal economic principles and identity politics alongside private ownership, multi-party politics, and the proliferation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are poor compensation for a decline in the substantive material and moral conditions of post-socialist citizenship. Collier, however, steers away from this focus on the 1990s privatization of the post-Soviet sphere and its effects, and instead draws upon Foucault's lectures from the 1970s on biopolitics, examining neoliberalism as a central form of political rationality in contemporary societies.

I find rational explanations of neoliberalism in the work of both scholars, in the sense that I find various micro and macro level manifestations of neoliberalism's effects—its “tentacles” if you will—touching and shaping every level of human experience and society. I therefore take neoliberalism to be a particular set of phenomena—political, economic, social, and historical—and consequent lived experience, which on the one hand are strategically implemented within a unique set of circumstances, and which on the other hand emerge in random manifestations. Given the nature of today's interconnected, global markets and the resulting competition, I see neoliberalism as a reaction to and function of this economic structure, and strategically speaking, as a particular way of organizing these markets in order to benefit particular interests—all in the name of “rationality.” Its proponents are businesses and large commercial enterprises, which use economic arguments of self-interest to claim that trade, production, and consumption should be as minimally regulated by governments as possible in order for their business to thrive, survive, and profit. However, its emergence in random form means that the implementation of neoliberalism is malleable and its manifestations are many, and are often unexpected. I thus turn to Hann's conclusion, where he decries the drastic changes in standards of living throughout the post-socialist world and emphasizes the specificity of local history in viewing these on-the-ground transformations. I also move forward with Collier's vision of neoliberalism as a tour de force in the early stage of the 21st century which must be examined in regard to its specific form of political rationality—how within a society it can be rationalized and supported through political systems and their actors. Because neoliberalism is undergirded by arguments of logic and systematicity, an ethnographic examination of its permutations in practice contributes to problematizing its claims.

Understanding the overarching circumstances of the transition in Tikveš —namely privatization in the wine industry as the country prepares for EU entry—is essential to better examining the on-the-ground reworking and negotiations linked to the neoliberal privatizing, yet EU development-oriented transition, at work in Macedonia. Indeed, a series of steps designed to streamline markets and create opportunity for workers at all levels has actually led to a more stratified society. Characterized by the shift from government owned wineries and purchasing to the creation and distribution of subsidies to both buyers (wineries) and sellers (grape growers), the region has been subject to the EU's Instrument for Pre-accession Access (IPA) since 2006. The IPA includes several components, but I focused on Rural Development (RD) initiatives in my fieldwork research. The IPARD, as it is known, is designed to: “Improve the technological and market infrastructure of commercial agricultural holdings and the food processing industry, aiming to increase the added value of agri-food products and achieve compliance with EU quality, health, food safety, and environmental standards, whilst at the same time assuring the quality of life of the rural population, increasing rural incomes and

creating new employment opportunities” (Delegation of the European Union, Fact Sheet 2010/03). The IPARD program can have significant effects for a predominantly agricultural region such as Tikveš, as the IPARD’s clearly stated aims are to transform not only the agricultural industry in Macedonia, but also the communities in which they exist. Yet such reorientation of production and livelihoods is difficult, as rural producers and their fields are generally oriented toward one main crop—grapes in the case of Tikveš. Growers are therefore rarely capable of generating the required capital needed for change themselves, so it is the region’s elite (several of whom I interviewed²) who have benefited from the IPARD’s funding. They are the ones who have been able to match large sums of money in order to expand their business operations, or to create new ones altogether. The EU’s policies, reflecting “free-market” capital priorities, thus intend to incorporate Macedonian agriculture and rural communities into an economic structure that does not seem to promote opportunity, but instead inequality at the hands of local elites who seek to exploit the increasingly impoverished pool of labor available to them.

The likely unintended consequence of the neoliberal project is thus ultimately an exclusion of rural families from the capitalist marketplace that is supposedly attempting to integrate them. Further, the urban and rural live in a sort of symbiosis, with the projects and capital of the urban population and government continuously restructuring rural production and livelihoods. In this case, without sufficient rural production of goods, namely produce, those living in urban settings will also suffer from higher food prices and shortages, and the state’s lack of attention and consideration to its agricultural production will be to blame (along with the neoliberal agenda which guided it there).

Methodologically, my fieldwork research included documenting the growers’ methods of survival, as well as the shifting circumstances, customs, identity, and agency of the grape growing communities. Unfortunately, the plight of the growers has not improved since my fieldwork. Protests in early February 2013 over the sudden bankruptcy of one winery which had not paid its grape suppliers in five years—and owed an estimated six million euros—caused an eruption of protests. Such as in the photographs below, growers blocked regional roads and called on the government to intervene. It is a situation that will only be clear in distant hindsight, but if the protests from 2010 (and others) are any indication, the government will do little to assist. Moreover, protests are being politicized, as the growers are essentially divided into their respective political parties via populist grandstanding. Politicians, whether in attempting to represent their constituents or merely gain clout, call upon the opposition and blame them for this *kriza*, ‘crisis,’ in the wine industry. Yet it appears to only be a crisis to the extent that it is engineered as such by the powers that be, the so-called wine mafia.

Harvesting and Delivering the Grape Crop

The following photo (Figure 1) is of a *lozar*, ‘grower,’ waiting at a makeshift buying station (at a timber facility) setup by a large winery from another town in the region. This was the first time such a method of purchasing had occurred at this location, and it was by no means a smooth process—the grower below had been waiting for three days to sell his grapes, which were quickly fermenting in the midday heat, and he expected to wait in line another two days. Yet he was not even certain what to expect in terms of payment; those ahead of him had

² See Otten (2013) for an article on the IPARD and its participants.

merely received an IOU *potvrda*, ‘confirmation slip.’ Such a slip allows both the buyer and seller to claim government subsidies, but that may be all the grower receives in the end.

Many growers in the region have indeed come to wonder whether their work is in vain and *za dzabe*, ‘for nothing,’ as they often state when discussing the crisis in their occupation. Reactions to the radical transition in the wine industry for growers depend on the kinds of grapes they are selling, the other means of income they have, their social status and their social connections, among other things. However, there is a clear set of vocabulary that is generally used in their discourse, and in addition to the above, I heard the situation described as a *katastrofa*, ‘catastrophe,’ and their lives and labor *mizerija*, ‘misery,’ or *maka* ‘arduous/suffering.’ As the middle-aged grower in Figure 1 said to me: “*Maka mi e život*,” ‘my life is suffering.’



Figure 1: A grower waiting in line for days to “sell” his grapes at a makeshift purchasing station in the town of Kavadarci.



Figures 2 & 3: The growers' štrajk, 'strike,' protest—September 2010. Blocking the ramps to the E-75 highway and the crossroad below it.

This series of images (Figures 2–7) from the growers' strike in September 2010 shows the extent of their frustration. Blocking the entrance and exit ramps to the country's main highway (E-75) and the crossroad which intersects it near the town of Negotino, they physically and verbally protested the lack of payments made on their previous one to two years' harvests. With no clear understanding at that point of what the wineries were doing and expecting—what their new “standards” were—growers were furious and confused.

Furthermore, when the government did nothing to help them, it was unequivocally a turning point for the growers, who realized that from then on the system and “rules of the game” (Kideckel 1995) of privatization had changed. Indeed, the very fact that their protest was labeled a “strike” is loaded with meaning—for up until that point being a grape grower was an official occupation worth declaring. Like factory workers, truck drivers, and school teachers, if they as a group were dissatisfied, they felt that by striking they could exact change. But that did not turn out to be the case in 2010, and the last few years have thus seen a downward spiral for the region's growers as they shift away from grape growing as an occupation and as a way of ensuring their livelihoods. The region's local newspaper labeled the year 2010 a “catastrophe”³ and I heard this word uttered frequently. In conversations on the street, or whenever I asked growers about their situation, they nearly always retorted “*katastrofa e*,” ‘it's a catastrophe.’ They would follow by explaining their plight—the cost of their fuel and pesticides, about their debts, and how they cannot earn enough to feed their families. They were not only in debt and uncertain about the future, but they felt abandoned by the industry which had structured their livelihoods for half a century.

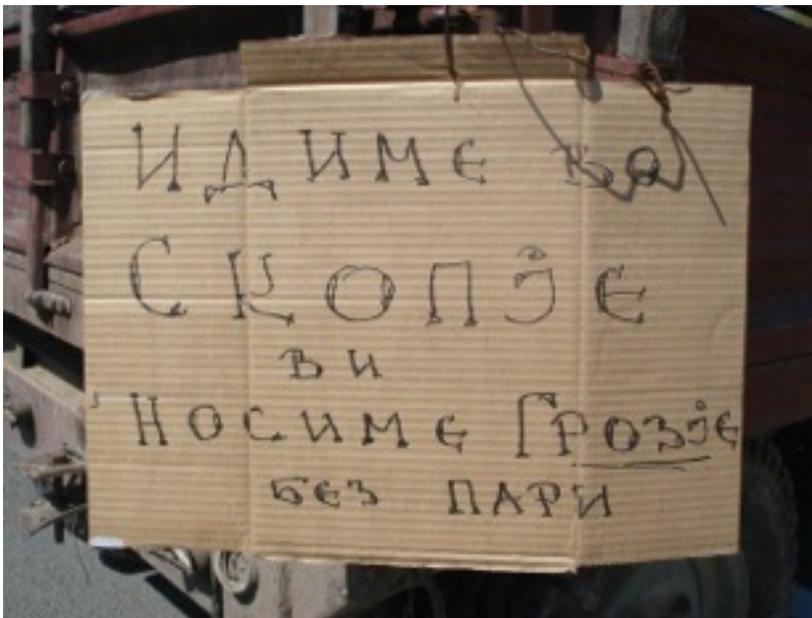


Figure 4: “We’re coming to Skopje, bringing you grapes without money.”

³ “Katastrofalna godina za lozarstvom vo Tikvešijata, monologot na vinariite ke ja uništi vekovната tradicija, lozjata ke se kopačat, no što da se sadi na nivnoto mesto” (Kav’darečki Vesnik, October 22, 2010). Note: all translations in the text are the author’s own.



Figure 5: “Strike—we’ll throw out the grapes, without money we won’t give it away”



Figure 6: Growers awaiting a resolution sit below a Tikveš Winery billboard on a hilltop beside the E-75 highway.



Figure 7: Sacks of grapes symbolically left in the middle of the road by protesting growers.



Figure 8: Grapes left unpicked on the vines. With no guarantee for payment, an estimated 50 percent of growers abandoned their vineyards after the strike-protests of 2010, unwilling to spend the time or money on the labor required to harvest them.

Gender roles have shifted throughout this transition as well. Whereas during socialism women were encouraged to work for the state (and all individuals were guaranteed employment), the many factory and state positions that they once held have since been lost. However, men have also lost their livelihoods in significant numbers, and from my research they appear more burdened by the catastrophic crisis in the wine industry and region than women. This is likely because at present, women are more likely to be employed—albeit in an exploitative fashion—in shops, banks, schools, hospitals, etc., and yet still must maintain the traditional role of mother and *domakjinka*, ‘homemaker.’ On the contrary, droves of unemployed men restlessly seek work in order to sufficiently provide for their families—fulfilling their “traditional role” and satisfying their integrity, yet are often unsuccessful and thus left in a liminal space. Such men converse in the town center or sit in cafes, and are ultimately left much less busy than women. There is thus a different and unequal gendered burden: large numbers of men seem to find nowhere to fit it in this new system, while women may appear to do so. Yet women’s relatively successful adaptation to the changing circumstances largely relies on their family’s needs and thus their acceptance to take lower pay. In doing so, they take on a subjugated position while also still bearing the burden of housework and childcare.



Figure 9: A woman from a village near the town of Negotino prunes the vines at the start of the growing season. Her husband assisted with this labor, but used a dredging tool on the tractor to collect the old vines into large heaps (which are then burned on the spot).

This stands in some contrast to the more egalitarian, gender-inclusive work environment that I witnessed in family vineyards. Although it is the men who are predominantly registered as grape producers, *zemjodelci*, 'agriculturalists,' and who have participated in the strikes, both grandmothers, mothers, and daughters work alongside grandfathers, fathers, and sons in tending to the vines. Such as Turesky (2012) found in the Netherlands, there are some notable roles that are generally performed along gender lines: only men drive tractors, do the initial, ceremonious *krojenje*, 'pruning of the vines,' in February, and spray the fertilizers and pesticides. Women, on the other hand, must prepare and setup the picnic lunch and tea or coffee that is consumed while out in the vineyards for the day. Yet, both men and women prune the vines together and eventually help pick the grapes during the harvest (see Figure 9). As I have been repeatedly told by women during my fieldwork, "nothing can be done without [the help of] a woman's hand."⁴

Although this is obviously changing, the roles individuals have in terms of labor is based not so much on gender as on socio-economic status. That is, while families have usually worked together to maintain their vines throughout the year, come the *berba*, 'harvest'—when the grapes must be picked over just a few days—additional labor is hired. The *argati*, 'laborers,' are often (but not exclusively) of the Roma minority and will include both men and women. However, the men are usually paid the equivalent of \$2–3 more per day because of the heavy lifting they must do when stacking the crates of grapes, which weigh 20–25 lbs. each (such as in Figure 10). Bringing in just under \$20 per day⁵, their income is hard earned: day laborers must work ten hour days, doing arduous labor in the late summer heat.

Their employment is not cheap, however, as paying even five individuals to pick the grapes over a few days will total \$300 (an average month's income in the region). In addition, the expenses of gas for the tractor, which the grower use to get to his vineyards and often drive several miles to reach them, and pesticides constitute a significant portion of a grower's inputs into his vineyards. Therefore, the expenses of the laborers—who demand payment immediately—make the transition in the Tikveš wine industry all the more painful. Many growers, unable to cover the expenses necessary to maintain and harvest their crop, have abandoned their vineyards altogether. They have therefore begun cutting corners on goods, bills, and debts, which in turn has led to the closing of shops and the severance of everything from telephone to cable to electric service, and more so to relationships with other individuals. The region is thus in disarray, with families slowly rearranging their work, production, and consumption.

⁴ *Ništo ne može bez ženska raka.*

⁵ One day's pay of 800–900 Macedonian *denari* (MKD) is roughly equivalent to \$17–19, where one US dollar equals approximately 46 MKD.



Figure 10: A hired day laborer takes a break from stacking crates of grapes in the midday heat.

New Standards and Expectations

The following two photos (Figures 11 & 12) are from a *soopštenije*, ‘official declaration,’ by the largest formerly state-owned winery, Tikveš Winery. Posted just three days before the date mentioned, the image in Figure 11 primarily states: “This notifies the reader that a measurement of the grape sort *smederevka* (a white wine grape) will begin from 9/27/2010. A minimum of 19 brix (sugar content) is the boundary [minimum] for the invitation to [have your grapes] chosen. Everything that is below that will be returned, and the grape grower assumes the risk. Only grapes which fulfill the criteria for quality will be purchased.” The second photo, Figure 12, shows the 19 brix row in gray and is a price list for the popular *smederevka* grape based on such sugar content levels. The pricing ranges from 7-9 MKD (\$.15-.20) per kilogram.⁶

⁶ The standard price for grapes in the European Union is twice this amount, at \$.30-.40 per kilogram.

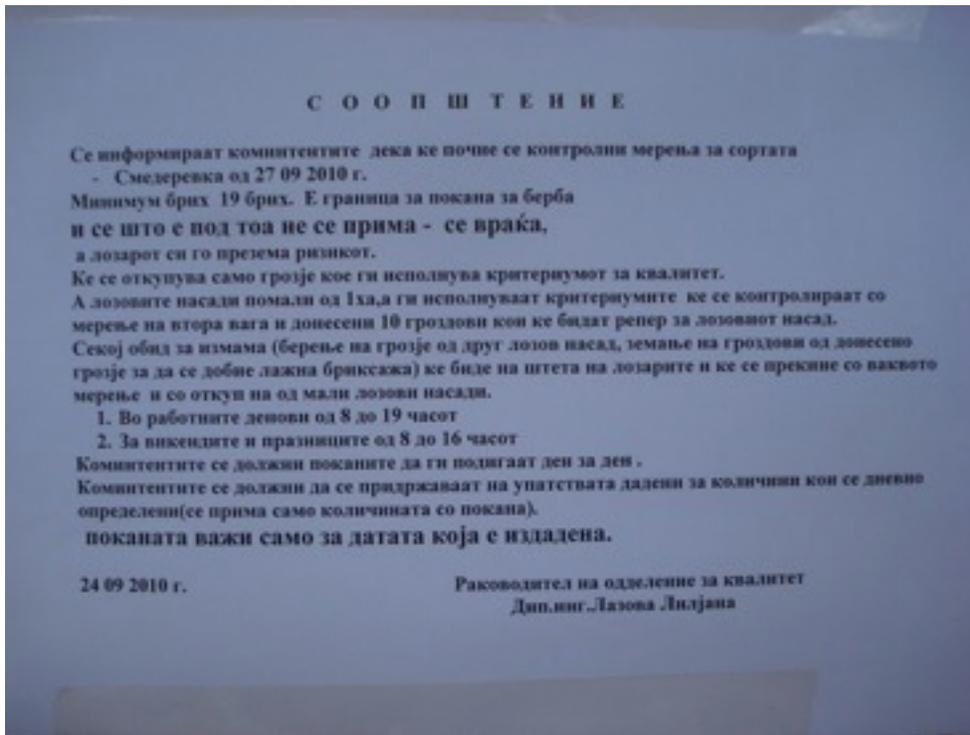


Figure 11: An official declaration of one winery's standards & buying procedures.

Ценовник за откуп на грозје Смедеревка-2010

Брех	Коэффициент за формирање цена	Цена во денари
17.00	0.875	7.00
17.50	0.906	7.25
18.00	0.938	7.50
18.50	0.969	7.75
19.00	1.000	8.00
19.50	1.031	8.25
20.00	1.063	8.50
20.50	1.094	8.75
21.00	1.125	9.00

Figure 12: The winery's grapes prices based on sugar content (brix) with the cutoff at 19 brix in grey.



Figure 13: Making homemade wine, for the first time

In this series of photos, growers Dejan and his father, Vane (pseudonyms), use their unpurchased grape harvest to make homemade wine and brandy. While production of the latter is traditional in the clear majority of grape-grower households (including their own), I discovered that home wine production was actually not as common as I had expected, and for Dejan and Vane it was merely an experiment. The infrequency of home wine preparation may be the result of the socialist state's production of decent, affordable wine. Furthermore, many individuals whom I surveyed about home wine production replied that it is complicated and not worth it—wine is only consumed locally in modest quantities and is best left to the wineries to produce for export. Brandy, however, is simple to make, bears a high alcohol concentration, and is sought out by Macedonians and others throughout the Western Balkans for its flavor, as well as cleansing and medicinal qualities.⁷

⁷ *Rakija* is used in a variety of ways. I met several, mostly older, individuals who drink a small glass of it every morning and claim that their good health is a result of this habit. It is more often drunk at the beginning of the main meal of the day, as an accompaniment to the meal's salad. Alternatively, it can be used for medical purposes. For instance, wearing socks soaked in brandy is a method used to bring down fever. It is also used as a cleansing agent—on the skin as a disinfectant, and on other surfaces such as tables or glass.

Figure 13 shows Dejan bottling wine, his first time doing so. Yet Dejan's and Vane's plight was like that of so many growers in the region—they were left with several tons of grapes with which they were uncertain what to do. Most growers indeed produced brandy in vast quantities, creating what many called a *poplava*, 'flood,' of it in the country. Thus just as the government has enacted stricter laws on the production and sale of such homemade alcoholic goods, growers have been forced to illegally transport the spirit around the country to try to make ends meet. Fortunately, they can sell it for up to \$2 per liter in other towns and cities, which is much more than they are able to get through sales of the same initial grapes to wineries or through sales of *rajika brandy* locally. However, if growers are caught by the police selling it, they face strict fines that may amount to thousands of dollars.



Figure 14: An unprecedented amount of grapes fermenting in barrels in the family's yard.



Figure15: Pouring the fermented grapes into the kazan, 'still,' for brandy production.

Effects on the Local Economy and Adapting to Change

It is estimated that half of all families in Tikveš are involved in agriculture, which until recently was dominated by grape production. The effects of privatization—decreased demand for individually grown grapes, and unpaid and under-paid grape harvests—has left the local economy struggling. From cutting back on spending, to buying *na veresija*, 'creating a tab,' at the local grocery for food, to bartering goods, families and communities have had to adapt to their new reality.

The following photos (Figures 16-19) provide a glimpse into this new world of changing circumstances, with Figure 16 picturing a "for rent" sign in a shop window—one of two dozen empty shops on a formerly busy commercial street near the center where I lived in the town of Kavadarci. Sandwich shops and bakeries were some of the casualties, as students from the nearby high school who used to support them are given less pocket change than before. And as the owner of one boutique, which had just barely managed to stay in business, told me "before (the crisis) fall was the best time for me—growers and their families, having received payment for their crop—would come in and spend 5,000 *denari* (\$105) on new clothes. Now they come in with just a few hundred *denari* when they can, and only buy what they absolutely need."

Figure 17 is an image of an increasingly common sight—vineyards for sale. With no income from grapes, some growers have decided to sell their land rather than start anew. Indeed, after years of growing grapes, not only is the investment to plant a new crop difficult, so is learning how to grow and sell it. In Figure 18, we see the effects of a cash-strapped economy: although grape-growing communities have less income than before, they still desire and/or need to make purchases. Used car lots like these consist of imported used vehicles (from Austria, Slovenia, and Italy), satisfying a niche market given the tight finances for many families.



Figure 16: A “for rent” sign in the window of one of many vacant shops.



Figure 17: “Vineyards se prodava, ‘for sale,’” are an increasingly common sight.



Figure18: One of two used car lots which sprung up during my fieldwork.

In Figure 19 we see a new form of exchange—roadside commerce. In fact, with the buying out and closing of former state-owned jarring factories, the home production of such goods has increased in Tikveš. Similar to production in traditional peasant (non-industrialized) economies, this production creates self-sufficiency for families but also a surplus to sell (cf. Wolf 1969). As Deema Kaneff similarly saw in Bulgaria, “the family’s involvement is not only vital in the preparation...it [the family] is also the main recipient” (2002:42).



Figure 19: The Rosoman roadside market, with brandy, honey, vinegar, and various pickled goods, preserves, and condiments available.

Pazari, ‘town markets,’ have thus become notoriously overcrowded with sellers and such goods, be they produce (fruits and vegetables) or jarred and bottled goods (condiments, pickled vegetables, preserves, brandy, and fruit and vegetable juices). Figure 19, from the small town of Rosoman, shows just how some locals have set up permanent shop at the town’s market, which happens to sit on its main road—a major artery through the region connecting the country’s main highway (E-75) with larger towns and cities in the southwest. Selling for above-average prices, they mainly attract buyers traveling from the capital, Skopje, or the cities of Bitola or Ohrid, who are willing to pay more for the rural products.

Conclusion: Adapting but “not living, just surviving”

Graffiti expressing dissatisfaction has become common in the region. The above states, “I haven’t eaten like a (hu)man in four years.” Another common sight was graffiti proclaiming “I’m not living, [just] surviving”—a fact of life for many, indeed.



Figure 20: “I haven’t eaten like a (hu)man in four years.”

I utilize these statements in concluding my photo essay because they call upon the exclusion that results from standardization and new forms of regulation. Or in the case of neoliberalism in Tikveš, a free-market lack of regulation through control by the wine mafia, which has been left unchecked by the government. The wine mafia, mostly wealthy businessmen who took control of former socially owned enterprises after the breakup of Yugoslavia, sees the grape growers as a nuisance. At his lavish villa and private winery outside of Kavadarci, I met and spoke with the former manager of Tikveš Winery, who oversaw its privatization a decade ago. He warned me not to listen to the growers, stating, “they’re lying and complaining because they’re lazy.” I have also been informed of the winery owner’s attempts at lobbying the government to regulate homemade brandy production. The wine

mafia only desire such government intervention when it benefits them, but see the assistance demanded by the independent growers as undesirable, since it might clearly interfere with the company's production and profits. Thus, the combination of such regulations with the state's lack of concern for the welfare of growers and other citizens has in fact redefined citizenship and state legitimacy, and put private [business] interests before those of the people.

The transition in Macedonia has been particularly drastic because of the country's starting point, from *where* it has transitioned. Unlike the former Soviet Union and its satellite states, such as neighboring Bulgaria, the standard of living in Yugoslavia was nearly on par with the rest of Central and Western Europe: citizens had good and guaranteed income, passports with which they could freely travel, and sufficient civil liberties. Although delayed due to the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia, the slide down the slippery slope to free-market capitalism has therefore been relatively painful. Traditions and expectations established via a good standard of living during the many decades of socialist governance mean that many people, including the grape growers and their families, have come to feel as Hann found elsewhere in Eastern Europe—dehumanized and victimized by neoliberalism's manifestation and growing hegemony in their modern world. Indeed, such as Hart (2012) claims, the post-socialist marketization, deregulation, and valuation of individual self-management are reflected in a reorganization of economic and political systems. This new configuration then seeks to erode the elective relationship established in the 20th century between the nation-state and industrial capitalism.

There is a consequent lack of trust as the state, industry, and even individuals become more exploitative. I heard a handful of stories about friends and relatives cheating each other out of money, while members of the older generation, benefiting from a good *penzija*, 'pension,' are subject to the demands and needs of their unemployed and under-employed children and grandchildren. There is thus an increase in illicit behavior (or at least an increased fear of it), from stealing from one's relative to stealing from one's neighbor and from others.⁸ Specifically, to make the matters worse for grape growers, many have suffered vandalism due to the theft of the metal poles which hold up the rows on which their grape vines grow, as the valuable metal can be sold on the black market.

With shifting gender roles, production, and payment, alongside the costs of personal and hired labor, there has been a significant transformation in livelihoods and worldviews. The previous system of guaranteed payments and sufficient income to cover costs, provide for one's family, and take a two-week holiday on the seaside has been replaced by an arduous and comparably impoverished existence for many, particularly for rural grape producers. In the region's most isolated villages, utilities have been severed and schools closed, leaving an entire generation of children to grow up working the land, as their distant forefathers—but not their fathers or grandfathers—once did.

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⁸ As my barber lamented *site kradaat deneska*, 'everyone's stealing today.'

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From the Mouths of Babes: An Examination of Elderspeak in An Intergenerational Daycare Facility

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Abstract

As the population in the United States ages, it becomes increasingly important to understand how a new generation is learning to interact with older adults. This study examines the way that children and staff at an intergenerational daycare facility speak to older Americans. Kristine Williams observed the pervasive phenomenon of “elderspeak,” a linguistic register similar to baby talk used to speak to older adults in many settings, including a long-term care facility (Williams 2011: 4). Elderspeak was found to have extremely negative consequences on older individuals’ health outcomes. I analyzed twenty hours of audio data from naturalistic interactions I observed at my research site. This study found that using 1) age-avoidance terms, 2) a patronizing tone, 3) lack of honorifics, and 4) scolding by staff, older adults, and children linguistically separated older adults into a different and lower social status from staff members and children. This communicative practice impacted the social and linguistic environment of the intergenerational care facility. As elderspeak is socialized, it spreads across generations. The simplified register with a tone and structure of condescension is a reflection of local ideologies about aging.

Keywords: Elderspeak, intergenerational care, communication and aging

Introduction

Turn on the television for ten minutes and it becomes evident that negative ideologies related to aging are prevalent in the United States. Special skin creams, hair dyes, and even yogurt are marketed to women and men to help them avoid the aging process. By the year 2030, approximately one in every five Americans will be an older adult, totaling 72.1 million citizens over age 65 (DHHS, AoA). As each generation in the population ages, younger generations will be expected to interact with and care for older adults. Most of these individuals, young and old, are exposed to elderspeak, a linguistic register similar to baby talk, characterized as “overly directive or overbearing talk, frequently referred to as patronizing speech” (Williams 2011: 2). Though it may seem innocuous, elderspeak has negative consequences for the social and cognitive health of older adults¹ and may often predispose a decline in health and cognitive capabilities (Kemper and Harden 1999: 660). This study examines how the pervasive phenomenon of elderspeak is socialized and will shed light on

¹ I use the term older adult throughout this paper. According to the American Psychological Association, “*elderly* is not acceptable as a noun and is considered pejorative by some as an adjective. *Older person* is preferred” (APA 2001: 69). In addition, studies have shown that when asked, “*what terms do you think are appropriate when referring to people ages 65-plus?*” approximately 80% of respondents answered older adults (ASA Connection 2007).

how we, as a society, can begin to modify the way in which older adults are treated in everyday communication.

When I first entered the research site of this study, a three year-old girl asked me, “are you older than Hannah Montana?” In conversations with older adults at my research site, my age was often of great importance. The focus on age seemed to span young and old alike. To enhance understanding of this preoccupation with relative age and implications for older adults, I examined communication in a day care institution, which I call Zenith Care, that tries to bridge the gap between children and older adults. In particular, I sought to understand how elderspeak is used: who uses it, in which contexts, how it is propagated through language socialization and how it may contribute to the stigmatization of older adults.

This is one of the first anthropological examinations of elderspeak and it contributes to a literature that exists mostly for care providers. I hope that my findings strike a note with caregivers for older adults and anthropologists interacting with aging populations, but also with the many children, grandchildren, and friends of older Americans that may find that they no longer know appropriate or effective ways to speak to aging relatives.

In the United States, older adults are often positioned as cognitively and physically diminished social persons, reducing their status in the social hierarchy, despite a mythos of respect for elders. If we are lucky, all of us will reach old age. To advance health, wellbeing, and successful aging, it is relevant to examine how, perhaps unwittingly, old age is stigmatized. To this end, the present study documents the institutionally sanctioned deployment of elderspeak in a community of older adults.

The Setting and the Participants: Zenith Care

I conducted my research at an intergenerational daycare facility, “Zenith Care.” It contains a preschool for children from six weeks to six years old and an adult daycare for seniors, particularly low-income, homebound, and medically frail individuals. Primarily, the older adults have been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease or other forms of dementia; long-term illnesses such as cancer, HIV/AIDS or Parkinson’s Disease; some of whom have suffered strokes.

During the summer of 2012, I spent six weeks observing and recording Zenith Care activities involving groups of young children and older adults. Overall, I collected over twenty hours of audio data of naturally occurring speech used during intergenerational activities as well as during the children’s preparation and return from these events. In addition to elder-child encounters, the recordings captured interactions between teachers and children, the older men and women in the adult daycare program, and the caretakers and nurses working with the older adults during their daily activities.

The primary focus of the study is documentation of communication between children and older adults. Employees guide and coordinate activities between older adults and preschool students once a day for each of the three preschool classes. One class is made up of children from one and a half to two and a half years old, the next class is three to four years of age, and the oldest students are between five and six (many of these children transitioned to kindergarten during the summer). The study focused on the oldest students, because they were the most talkative during intergenerational activities. Each class has a scheduled time to walk from the preschool building to the separate adult day care building and participate in a range of activities that got both age groups involved. Many of these activities are focused on

arts to inspire collaboration between the children and older adults. Others involve sports to get both age groups moving; older adults are encouraged to participate from a seated position. These activities motivate communication, often encouraged or facilitated by staff members.

The site consists of two neighboring buildings, one for the adult daycare and one that houses the preschool. They are connected by a short paved walkway that is used to get from one building to the other. The room where most of the intergenerational activities take place serves as a craft room, a place to watch television, and a sitting area where older adults color, do crosswords, read the newspaper or magazines, nap, and a variety of other things.

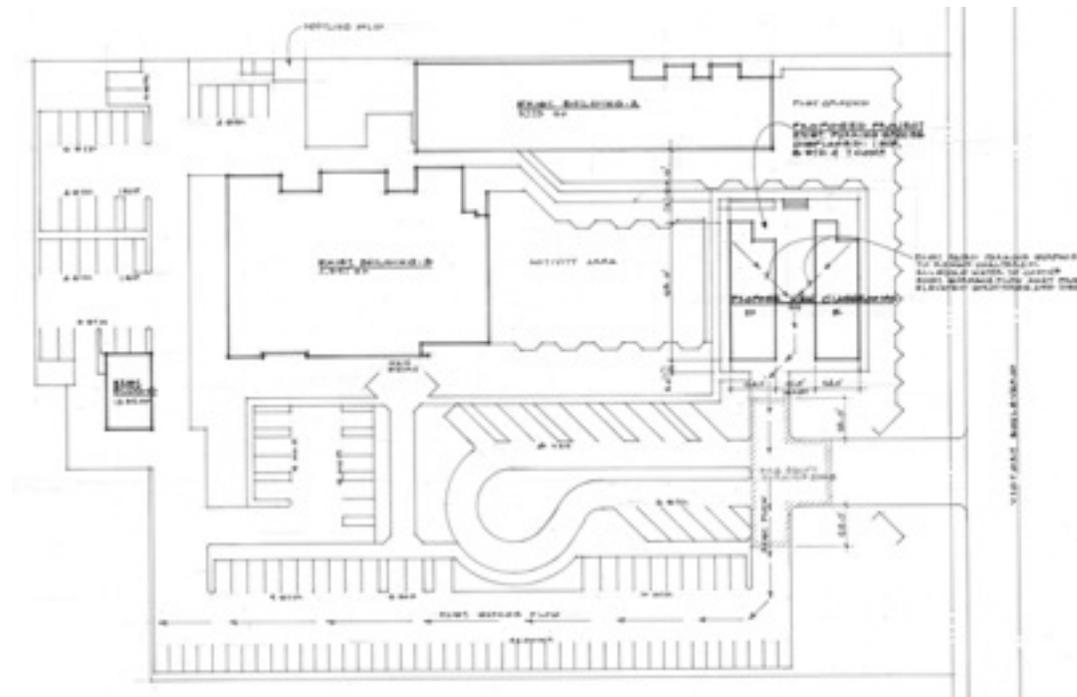


Figure 1: Site plan of Zenith Care

Three rooms house children aged six weeks through one and a half years old. Older adults visit these classrooms once a day and often help to feed or comfort young toddlers. The other three classrooms hold older students. These groups walk from their classrooms to the adult daycare once a day.

Each class consists of twenty-four students. To maintain a consistent student to teacher ratio at all times teachers can take a maximum of twelve students across the walkway to the adult daycare's craft room (See Figure 3). The craft room holds four large, round tables with seating for six people. Employees divide up older adults at each table before the children enter for the activity. Older adults usually sit at every other seat so that a child may occupy the chair next to them, leading to consistent interaction between the age groups. At most, twelve older adults sit at the four tables. Chairs line the unused walls so older adults may choose to watch the activities instead of participating directly. This rarely happened, but when it did, the older adults were encouraged to participate at the tables instead (See Figure 4).



Figure 2: This picture shows a view from the patio at the adult day care facility. From this view it is easy to see how close the two buildings are in proximity to each other.



Figure 3: This is the entry to the area where the older classes of children are housed. On the left side, out of sight, are the doorways to the classrooms.



Figure 4: This is the craft room where the majority of intergenerational activities took place.

All of the activities are voluntary, so the number of children and older adults vary day-to-day. Some older adults and children are “regulars” and always choose to participate. These older adults range from their late sixties to late eighties and have differing levels of ability to participate both physically and mentally. In addition to ability to participate, the modes of interaction vary. While some older adults seem to enjoy speaking with and participating with children, others seem to enjoy their presence but are unsure in their interactions with the children.

Previous and Relevant Research

Eldercare

In many societies, families live as multi-generational units for generations (Daly 2003: 778). As the United States shifted toward the nuclear family structure in the past decades, older individuals have been pushed to the periphery of the family unit (Hendricks 1982: 323). This has encouraged ageism and the segregation of many older adults to nursing homes and other eldercare facilities. Aging is feared and stigmatized in the United States (Nelson 2004: 324-331). As a result, many Americans go to great lengths to avoid becoming “old” and losing independence.

Many older adults without family care struggle to remain independent as they age. Older adults often endeavor to stay in their residences despite their inability to perform key aspects of daily living. These activities of daily living, or ADLs, include bathing, dressing, eating, and management of continence (Wallace and Shelkey 2008: 64). When one or more of these becomes difficult or impossible for an individual to perform, they may move to an assisted living facility. These facilities range in level of assistance and quality of care, which affect the trajectory of an older adult’s life course and may lead to successful or unsuccessful aging.

Elderspeak

One of the key communicative characteristics of nursing homes, especially those facilities specializing in dementia care, is that interactions between staff and residents tend to be infrequent, task-oriented, and “encourage dependency” (Williams, Kemper, and Hummert 2003: 243). This institutional style of communicating contrasts with the observation that some residents can communicate effectively. Indeed, these residents attempt to “maximize their independence, maintain their connection with family and others, receive quality care, and enhance their sense of self-worth and dignity” (Lubinski 2011: 41).

Communication is critically important for all human beings, including residents of eldercare institutions, as a means to maintain connection with others and a sense of self (Williams 2011: 1). Older adults may become withdrawn or silent upon changing environments. When almost all of their physical needs are anticipated, they may be less frequently prompted to speak (Grainger 1995: 418-419). As such, a self-fulfilling state of affairs may result, whereby caregivers’ underestimation of the linguistic and cognitive capabilities of their patients may propel the decline in those very capabilities, especially when they infrequently engage in sustained communication.

Much of the communication that does occur between patients and caregivers is task-oriented and requires very little reaction on the part of the older adults (Grainger 1995: 418-419). Physicians often spend less time with older patients than their younger counterparts and tend to be “more condescending, abrupt, and indifferent with older patients” (Belsecker and Thompson 1995: 399). Coupled with the possible cognitive and sensory limitations that may accompany old age, doctors, caregivers, and family members may “alter their speech to meet the assumed needs of the older person” (Belsecker and Thompson 1995: 398 and Williams 2011: 6-7).

This practice constitutes the linguistic register called “elderspeak.” Kristine Williams, a leading researcher on communication, cognition, and care-giving issues, identifies elderspeak by the use of “slower speaking rate, exaggerated intonation, elevated pitch and volume, greater repetition, simpler vocabulary, and reduced grammatical complexity...overly directive or overbearing talk, [it is] frequently referred to as patronizing speech” (Williams 2011: 2). The nonverbal aspects of elderspeak include “prosody, gaze, facial expression, proximity, and gestures,” as well as added diminutives (Williams 2011: 5). Elderspeak is derived from baby talk (also known as motherese), a speech register targeted at infants and children (Ferguson 1964, Kemper and Harden 1999: 667). When directed at children this register is seen as “an expression of affection, tenderness, and intimacy” (Solomon 2011: 128). In contrast, rather than positively affecting older interlocutors, it “frequently communicate[s] messages of dependence, incompetence, and control” (Williams, Kemper, and Hummert 2003: 242).

Elderspeak has been assumed to accommodate the perceived communication needs of older adults. Yet, it rarely does so and often has the opposite effect. “If persons outside the communication dyad observe a patronizing interaction, they may assume that the older adult benefits from the accommodations. In their future interactions with that older person, they may accordingly employ elderspeak. In effect, elderspeak may, in the worst cases, even be blamed for its [own] occurrence” (Williams 2011: 6-7). That is, “the use of elderspeak presumes that the older adult is cognitively impaired” (Kemper and Harden 1999:656). Instead, elderspeak is not necessarily cued by a display of comprehension problems on the part of the “elder.” Indeed, it is frequently used with cognitively *cogent* individuals. Syntactic simplifications and prosodic

exaggeration have been observed to trigger negative self-assessments of communicative competence by older adults, leading to more self-rated communication problems (Kemper and Harden 1999: 660).

The use of simplified speech with older individuals occurs across many societies and is associated with negative impacts on older adults' health outcomes (Williams 2011: 4). As noted, elderspeak creates a self-fulfilling prophecy: if an older adult is treated as if they are old and disabled, they may begin to feel older and act older (Williams 2011: 7). Though elderspeak attempts to "promote effective communication" and assure understanding on the part of the older adult, it often fails to accomplish these goals (Williams 2011: 8). By not challenging the older adults to use their cognitive abilities to process and respond to information, they lose motivation to maintain a high level of cognition, predisposing a decline. Elderspeak is especially prevalent in dementia care institutions. Unfortunately, "many of the practices and characteristics of institutions... induce dependency" (Grainger 1995: 427). "Hired caregivers at these institutions used high levels of elderspeak and it was more likely to be with those residents considered to be the most dependent (Grainger 1995: 427).

The features of elderspeak that may aid communication include "providing semantic elaboration and reducing the use of subordinate and embedded clauses" (Kemper and Harden 1999: 656). Yet, reducing sentence length, slowing speaking rate, and using high pitch may result in more communication problems and reflect an imbalance of power in which the older adults assume the sick role (Kemper and Harden 1999: 656; Williams 2011: 3). It is often difficult for caregivers to tell the difference between secondary baby talk and clarifying communicative practices (Solomon 2011: 123). To combat the negative effects of elderspeak, most scholars promote institutional interventions that increase adult caregivers' awareness of the features of speech that patronize and increase dependency.

Ageism in Intergenerational Care

The majority of the research about elderspeak has involved clinical care settings. As a result, there has been limited research about young² people's use of elderspeak. Susan Kemper and Tamara Harden, who focus their research on psycholinguistics and gerontology, found that young adults spontaneously adopt a form of elderspeak when paired with older adults (Kemper and Harden 1999: 656). Williams argues, "older adults are perceived to have sharply declining abilities, dependency needs, and a desire to disengage. Because of these stereotypes, of which the younger adult may not be aware, younger partners alter their speech to meet the assumed needs of the older person" (Williams 2011: 6-7).

In the United States, older adults are often separated from society at large. This circumstance may reflect a cultural bias toward the young. Sheree Kwong See, Carmen Rasmussen, and S. Quinn Pertman conducted a study that examined children's underlying stereotypes about age using a modified Piagetian conservation task and different questioners following the task (Kwong See, Rasmussen, and Pertman 2012: 163). They found that five-year-old children responded differently to older adults than to individuals in middle age,

² For the purposes of this study, I define young age as those under 25. Older adults can be considered over age 65, as this is considered full retirement age for Social Security. The population at Zenith Care did include some individuals under 65, some of whom had Down Syndrome or some form of cancer and were unable to be cared for in their homes during the day.

believing that middle-aged individuals knew something that neither they nor the older adults understood. Already, the children had formed a stereotype that “aging is associated with a decline” (Kwong See, Rasmussen, and Pertman 2012: 163). When conducting a study that looked at responses to an attitude scale and measures of children’s social interaction with older adults compared to middle-aged interlocutors, Leora W. Issacs and David J. Bearinson found that ageism can operate without conscious awareness. Ageism was shown behaviorally among four-, six-, and eight-year olds who sat farther from the older adult at the table when working on a puzzle together. They “initiated eye contact less often, spoke fewer words, initiated conversation less frequently, and made fewer appeals for assistance or verification” with the seventy-five-year-old compared with the thirty-five-year-old (Isaacs and Bearinson 1986: 178).

In the United States, when individuals were asked to conjure an image of and describe an unknown older person, most described a depressed, lonely, disabled older adult. Children often used terms such as “tired, ugly, helpless, generally ill and ready to die” (Aday et al. 1996: 38). This negative association with old age seems to disappear when the same people were asked to think of an older individual whom they know, such as a grandparent or friend. When describing an older person with whom they have a relationship, individuals’ descriptions paint a much brighter picture (Dr. Daphna Gans, personal communication, June 5, 2012).

The intention of intergenerational care is to change the negative perception of older adults into a more accessible and realistic picture of the aging process. Intergenerational programs connect younger and older generations for mutual benefit. Children and older Americans increasingly find themselves in non-familial care settings. These are often age-segregated, which may lead to negative attitudes about other age groups. It has been demonstrated that “negative stereotypes about aging and the aged create an increased fear of our own aging...If left unchallenged, attitudes formed early will tend to have enduring qualities that affect people’s thought and behavior throughout life” (Aday et al. 1996: 38-39).

To combat this negative image of aging, intergenerational programs bring the young and the old together in shared activities. Shared site intergenerational programs (SSIPs) are defined as, “those in which children/youth and older adults receive ongoing services and/or programming at the same site concurrently” (Jarrot and Bruno 2007: 240). SSIPs make intergenerational activities a part of everyday life. SSIPs increase exposure to older adults, as a result children cease to see older Americans as an unapproachable group and instead focus on individual relationships. This is a mutually beneficial environment. Older adults report feeling more connected to the younger generation (Aday et al. 1996: 46). By combating negative stereotypes early on, intergenerational programs can “serve to overcome the drift toward an age-graded society; to relieve possible future tension between the generations; to provide a historical awareness of the past, present, and future; and to provide a sharing of multicultural diversity and life-styles” (Aday et al. 1996: 40).

Language Socialization

Elderspeak stems from a misunderstanding of the communicative needs of older adults. It is perpetuated through language socialization, the process through which one is socialized into and through language forms and practices. Children are born with the ability to adapt to any language environment. Because of this, language socialization begins at the moment of social contact in the life of a human being (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986: 165). Every interaction is

a potentially socializing experience to impart language ideology in a group or to someone in a particular group. Children's understanding of how to use language in social interactions is partially a function of their experiences and the nature of their communicative environment (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986: 178). Language socialization continues throughout the life-course and is not limited to childhood. Thus, for example, caregivers in adult day-care institutions are socialized into ways of talking to the individuals under their care. We encounter new situations and cultural contexts as we move through life. It is also the case that language socialization is a two-way street: as caregivers socialize their charges through the way they talk to them, they are also being socialized by how their charges respond to them. As such, language is an interactional process, "all parties to socializing practices are agents in the formation of competence" (Ochs and Schieffelin 2011: 5-6).

Acquiring culturally appropriate language for use in social settings is based on many processes by which novices learn from veteran participants and from each other. According to linguistic anthropologist Elinor Ochs, "novices become acquainted with activities not only from their own and others' attempts to define what transpires in an activity, but also from how those participating in the activity respond to them" (Ochs 2002: 107). This means that novices, specifically children, learn communicative practices based on the behaviors of those around them, including their peers (Goodwin and Kyratzis 2011: 296). The way in which children are socialized to use language is undergirded by social expectations: "Part of the meaning of grammatical and conversational structures is sociocultural. These structures are socially organized and hence carry information concerning social order... Language use is then a major if not the major tool for conveying sociocultural knowledge and a powerful medium of socialization... children acquire a world view as they acquire a language" (Ochs and Schieffelin 1986: 2-3). The way children use language reveals local language ideologies and impacts the world through its use (Riley 2011: 298). The ideologies and practices imparted to novice speakers through language may include negative social attitudes towards sectors of the population, as evidenced by the socialization of children into elderspeak.

Methods

As I assimilated into the community of Zenith Care as an observer and volunteer, I collected audio recordings of naturalistic interactions between children and older adults as well as between children and staff members. Using participant observation, I shadowed children from three classrooms as each class visited the older adults once a day. I collected over twenty hours of audio data. Data collection focused on twelve children from three age groups to ensure continuity, as they attended intergenerational activities every other day. The age groups ranged from approximately one and a half years in age to six years old. In addition, I observed the teachers as they interacted with the children, the men and women in the adult daycare program, and the staff members who stay with the seniors during all of their daily activities at Zenith Care.

During the first stage of data collection, I observed all of the daily activities in the classroom communities. I identified the children who most often participated in intergenerational activities. I also took their level of interaction into account when selecting focal subjects. I identified and recorded the activity periods during which the children interacted with the older adults and when staff members provided meta-communication about how to talk to or about the older individuals. I took field notes, paying particular attention to

socialization activities and the children's and staff members' communicative styles. Participant consent was obtained from caregivers, older adults, and parent consent for child participants.

The second stage of data collection focused on the four children in each class as they interacted with the older adults. During recordings of these naturalistic interactions, I paid particular attention to staff members. Recordings included classroom preparation (5-10 minutes) for intergenerational activities, as well as interaction with the teachers following these visits (5-10 minutes) to capture any socialization interaction. One child was recorded during each visit to collect high quality audio data. Interviews with one teacher from each class were conducted to elicit their perspective about the interactions between children and older adults. I also tried to assess their language ideologies, specifically about the way that they speak to the children and older adults. For example, I asked the teachers about the differences in linguistic behavior that I observed when children entered their classrooms as opposed to the adult daycare facility. Finally, I led a focus group discussion among six girls from four and half to six years old. To address children's language ideologies and self-awareness of how they speak to the older adults, I asked them how they speak to different groups of individuals.

Elderspeak at Zenith Care

Analysis of the audio data provides evidence that individuals at the intergenerational care facility use language to differentiate older adults into a distinct social category from staff members and children. They used a particular linguistic register that included: age avoidance terms, specialized voice quality (a feature of elderspeak), lack of honorifics, and scolding by staff, older adults, and children. I observed the propagation of this register through modeling in the presence of young children. The features of the register index how the speakers view the social status of the older adults to whom it is directed.

Use of Age Avoidance Terms

Age avoidance terms are used to do just what they are named for, avoid mentioning the age of the interlocutor. This practice was put in place to avoid ageism, one of the goals of the intergenerational facility. However, these terms take on age-related meanings, despite the intention to reduce age-related discrimination in conversation. The site uses many specific techniques to mitigate the use of age related terms among children and adult staff. Two of the most prevalent terms used to refer to the older adults are "friend" and "neighbor." Both of these age avoidance terms may be used by staff, older adults, or children.

In the example below, one of the teachers, Naomi,³ uses the term "friend" to ask several children to choose an older adult as a partner. Eleven students in the "Koala class" are going on a walk with eight older adults.⁴

3 All names used are pseudonyms.

4 Transcription conventions are provided in Appendix A.

- 1 N: all=right so I need Koalas to hold hands with some neighb::ors?
- 2 >Isaac lets=go<
- 3 <Isaac?>
- 4 oh look HEre Robin doesn't have a friend? (.)
- 5 here Jo:el hold her hand.
- 6 oka::y

“Friend” is used to avoid the use of a term that connotes the age of the individuals being asked to participate. Though there is no age-related term used, it is clear that the teacher directs the child to hold the hand of an older adult. Although the age of Robin is not clear from the audio excerpt, visual cues indicate Robin’s status as an older adult. Robin is depicted as someone who “doesn’t have a friend” and is grouped into the category of “neighbors,” but this term “friend” could just as easily be assigned to a child. Joel is directed to hold Robin’s hand and in so doing is assigned as a “friend.”

The term “neighbor” originates from the close proximity of the buildings that house the preschool and the adult day care. The buildings are separated by a short walkway and thus the people who spend time in one are “neighbors” to those individuals housed in the other facility. Though “neighbor” may be used in reference to a child or an older adult, it is usually used to indicate that the individual being described is an older adult. The word “neighbors” indexes the act of going to the neighboring building. Children would often say to me, “I want to go to neighbors,” meaning that they wanted to participate in the intergenerational activity planned for the day. In the following example, one of the teachers, Judy, is going through the attendance sheet to ask students whether or not they would like to go to visit the “neighbors.”

- 1 J: Dante neighbors?
- 2 D: ((nods))
- 3 J: (0.1) yeah are you going to be a good listener? [(0.2)]
- 3 D: [(nods)]
- 4 J: yeah (.)
- 5 J: Jord?an is not he?re.
- 6 J: Jo::el?[do you (want to go to neighbors?)]
- 6 S: [yeah]

Use of the word “neighbors” is infused with meaning. When Judy says, “Dante neighbors?” she does not have to specify what it is she is asking about the word. It’s meaning in this situation is “going to participate in an activity with the neighbors” and the reference to “neighbors” implies that they are older adults.

In another situation, a teacher asked a child to sit next to an older adult by saying, “Stewart, come sit next to neighbor Lester.” In another setting a teacher asked a child to stop hitting another student by saying, “Please stop hitting my *friend*.” Special emphasis is placed on these words to separate them from their everyday meanings and focus on the relationships between the interlocutors. Yet, these terms are also used to avoid the relationship between an individual’s age and the pronoun used to describe them. Despite this, the terms are imbued with contextually derived meaning.

Even though these terms are meant to override an age-related referential meaning, they act as a linguistic device that promotes otherization (Piller 1999). Older adults may be called “neighbor” or “friend,” just as a young child might be, but based on the context of the situation

14 M: *these pipe cleaners*

15 H: okey dokey

16 M: °**the children are familiar with this activity**° (.) **so (0.5)**

17 J: *Mary Mary Mary?*

18 M: >**she went to the bathroom**<

Maya, a staff member switches several times between using a simplified register with exaggerated voice quality and the unmarked register of speaking to peers several times throughout this conversation. She switches when speaking to those also considered competent adults in this situation. This occurred quite often and involved a shift from honeyed, high pitched, and simplified propositions to softer voice, lower pitch, and faster pace of speaking. A common parallel to this situation occurred when parents or adults conversed when their child is in the room, while not addressing them or acknowledging them as a ratified or acknowledged participant in the dialogue. Staff members often initiated personal, tangential conversations during intergenerational activities, while children were participating in the activity and then quickly shifted into elderspeak or baby talk when giving instructions to children or older adults, especially while scolding. Register-shifting illuminates the precise deployment of elderspeak and the ease with which this register is slipped into when addressing older adults.

Lack of Honorifics

Staff members generally avoided age-related honorifics in addressing older adults. This is a part of Zenith Care's effort to create a more egalitarian environment and reduce age-related discrimination, similar to the use of age-avoidance terms. Everyone, young and old, were generally referred to by first names. Whether a child, teacher, office staff member, or older adult, titles were rarely used. Last names were avoided as well. The more common specialized honorifics used in this facility are related to occupation; these include Teacher and Nurse. For example, children often call their teachers over by saying, "Teacher Judy, Teacher Judy" or simply "Teacher." In addition, a staff member may ask a participant to "go see Nurse Carrie." An exception to the avoidance of honorifics occurred when an activity leader, staff member became upset when speaking to an older adult. In these instances, they might use a 'respectful' address term, such as "sir" or "ma'am." Staff members, however, did so with a stern voice, as if scolding a child. When the honorifics were used at Zenith Care the terms served as markers of disrespect rather than terms of respect. Here, the honorific marked social distance between the speaker and the older adult and disrespect rather than respect due to the change in tone and intention of the staff member to reprimand.

Scolding

Scolding often occurred in the facility. In most instances scolding was used to ask a participant to change their behavior and was often related to personal safety, for example to prevent a child or older adult from falling. Scolding occurred in many different incarnations: children scolding children, adults scolding children, older adult scolding children, adults scolding older adults, and children scolding older adults.

In the table below, I note the frequency with which scolding occurs and the groups of interlocutors that engage in scolding behavior.

	Child to Child	Adult to Child	Older Adult to Child	Adult to Older Adult	Children to Older Adult	Child to Adult	Total
1.5-3 years	3	14	0	1	0	0	18
3-4 years	6	5	9	7	1	0	28
5-6 years	7	8	7	5	4	0	31
Total	16	27	16	13	5	0	77

In the 77 situations in which scolding occurred, children never scolded adults other than older adults, including staff members and teachers. Scolding increases as the children grow older. In addition, one and half to three year old children speak the least during intergenerational activities but are often scolded for safety reasons. The most common occurrences were child-to-child scolding and adult-to-child scolding. Because this took place in a preschool setting, this is not too surprising. Children are being socialized into school appropriate behavior. Peer interactions and corrections by teachers are prevalent in many school settings.

In the social hierarchy of the facility, children and older adults fell below staff members. The register used to speak to the two groups was almost identical. Scolds were similar when they occurred between adults and children or staff members and older adults. The children were the only group that may have had a lower status than older adults. When an older adult scolded a child, they may have sought to regain power in the dyad that they are not granted by the staff members. The scolding of older adults to a child often occurred when a child correctly interpreted instructions and an older adult did not. Or, the older adult did not approve of the child's behavior, although it was acceptable to staff members and volunteers. In the following excerpt, Loretta, an older adult, scolds Isaac, three, for trying to paint on their shared paper.

- 1 L: don't you do that UNH (.1)
- 2 L: STAY on your side (.) THIS my=side? stay on YOur side (0.4)
- 3 L: STop,

Isaac was later given his own sheet of paper, as Loretta moved the sheet into a position that Isaac could not reach. Loretta scolded Isaac for participation that she misinterpreted as improper. He did not reply but, rather, sat patiently waiting for an adult staff member to affirm the scold or approve of his behavior. I requested that he be able to paint on his own. His teacher did not scold him, and Loretta muttered under her breath for the rest of the activity about her ownership of the artwork. Loretta was trying to regain social status in the dyad by scolding Isaac. The staff members undermined this effort by not reinforcing the scolding behavior and praising Isaac for his patience.

In other situations, children scolded older adults. This is significant, because it demonstrates that children were being socialized into features of elderspeak. The children did not scold middle-aged adults. They scolded older adults with the approval of their teachers and the staff members observing these interactions. In one situation, a child named Jordan observed an older adult, named Sonia, blowing bubbles with a group of younger students.

- 1 J: YOU're not doing=it Right (0.1)
- 2 ((Sonia does not respond))
- 3 STOP? you're not do::ing it Right
- 4 sto:::p?

Jordan scolds Sonia for her use of a bubble wand but does not offer suggestions about how to change her behavior. In this instance, Jordan was not even supposed to be participating in the activity. One of the supervising teachers came over and told Jordan to go play “because it was not his neighbor time.” The teacher did not scold Jordan or apologize to Sonia.

In another interaction, one of the older adults, Esther, visited the classroom of five to six year olds to participate in an intergenerational activity. Esther was telling a story about being careful when you are young to illustrate the point that these actions may affect you later in life. This woman had a disability due to a childhood accident. A child, Clementine, repeatedly tried to get Esther’s attention by saying, “exCUSE me, hell:::o, HELLO.” As an afterthought she added, “MAYbe? you can’t hear me because (.) <YOU (.) ARE (.) OL:::::D.>” Clementine expresses disapproval and then reproaches Esther due to her lack of attention and attributes it, unkindly, to the fact that she may be hard of hearing. That Clementine was not sanctioned for her lack of respect by surrounding adults, who did acknowledge her utterance, indicates that she was being socialized into a social milieu where this kind of scolding is acceptable.

Scolding, in addition to avoidance of age related terms, use of a simplified register based on the interlocutor, and the lack of honorifics, were used to create what is supposed to be an egalitarian environment, avoiding age related discrimination. Yet, these practices did not have the intended result. Often these features of speech served to otherize older adults by putting them in a separate sphere of reference from both adults and children in the facility. These older adults were neither explicitly accepted nor rejected, but the language practices used with them placed them in a separate and lower social category based on their age. The children picked up these patterns through language socialization into the use of elderspeak used at the site.

Language socialization apprentices novices into culturally appropriate ways to act, think, and feel in a certain situation. Most of the children at the research site did not regularly speak with older adults, especially those that are not a part of their immediate family. The use of elderspeak at the facility was ubiquitous, and the attitudes associated with it were not altogether positive. The language that these children were surrounded by reinforced the idea that older adults are different, that they are not competent, and as such they are “below” the other adults with whom they regularly interact.

The differences in the way that staff members speak to one another compared to the way that they speak to older adults influences the behaviors that children are socialized to use in their local environment and society at large. The elderspeak used at my research site exerted a powerful socializing effect on more than just the children. Despite the fact that I was completely aware of the shift in tone and the negative cognitive and social consequences of elderspeak, I found myself speaking to children and older adults in an altered tone and simplified register, much like staff members. The linguistic factors perpetuated by language socialization have an impact on all of the interlocutors at this site, including me.

The notable change in my tone was a result that I was not expecting. The purpose of the research was to observe a setting in which elderspeak occurred and examine whether or not children used it when speaking to older adults in everyday interactions. I did not think that I would alter my speech once I reached Zenith Care. Yet, language socialization transpires across the life span in a very subtle process. I adjusted my language use as I spent time at the research site. Although I did not use many diminutives or take place in the scolding of older adults, my register changed most often as I spoke to children and sometimes when I spoke to

older adults. The effects of language socialization should be taken into account when planning educational interventions and strategies to mitigate the use of elderspeak.

Conclusions

To advance the health, wellbeing, and successful aging of older Americans, it is important to examine why old age is stigmatized, how this fear manifests, and what can be done to change the status quo. My research looks at the linguistic interactions between children, older adults, and staff members at an intergenerational daycare facility to explore the use of elderspeak. Elderspeak is more than just speaking down to older adults; it has been linked to the reduction of cognitive functions that can change the course of an individual's life (Kemper and Harden 1999: 660). This study found that using 1) age-avoidance terms, 2) a patronizing tone, 3) lack of honorifics, and 4) scolding by staff, older adults, and children linguistically separated older adults into a different and lower social status from staff members and children. This communicative practice impacted the social and linguistic environment of the intergenerational care facility.

As elderspeak is socialized, it spreads across generations. The simplified register with a tone and structure of condescension is a reflection of societal ideologies about aging. Intergenerational care facilities expose children to older adults early in life, hoping to change their perceptions about old age. The staff and teachers at Zenith Care report that the intergenerational activities at the research site build positive relationships between children and older adults. It is yet to be determined, however, how these reports can be reconciled with the prevalence of elderspeak in guided interactions between young children and their older "friends" and "neighbors" and the impact of elderspeak modeling by staff members.

Significance and Recommendations

Elderspeak can negatively influence the state of an older adult's health and cognition (Williams, Kemper, and Hummert 2003: 242). As such, it is important to create programs that help caregivers to overcome prevalent use of elderspeak through awareness and self-monitoring as well as through formal educational programs that can help to promote successful aging for older adults. As I found at my research site, language socialization is a very powerful process. Communication behaviors are difficult to change (Williams, Kemper, and Hummert 2004: 7). Educational programs targeted on just a few select characteristics of elderspeak can significantly improve the messages that caregivers send to older adults (Williams, Kemper, and Hummert 2004: 6). By modeling different communicative practices, staff members can in turn apprentice the children in treating older adults with respect and care. These strategies include: replacing diminutives with an older adult's full name or preferred name, avoiding the use of inappropriate plural pronouns such as our and we, tagging questions to prompt a reply that does not imply that the older adult cannot act alone, and avoiding the use of shortened sentences, slow speech rate, and simple vocabulary (Williams, Kemper, and Hummert 2004: 7). At Zenith Care it would be important to reduce baby talk at the same time as self-monitoring for features of elderspeak. Many of the characteristics of elderspeak are shared with baby talk; these features probably lead to the proliferation of elderspeak and its associated attitudes.

Elderspeak is ubiquitous in the United States. The attitude toward older adults heavily influences the language ideologies and practices of young Americans. This study reveals that

even in a daycare facility that is dedicated to promoting positive relationships between children and older adults that elderspeak is apprenticed to children early in life. This observation indicates the prevalence of societal discrimination against aging.

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APPENDIX A

Transcription Conventions

This transcription notation system is an adaptation, provided by Dr. Netta Avineri, of Gail Jefferson's work (see Atkinson & Heritage (Eds.), 1984, pp. ix-xvi).

.	The period indicates a falling, or final, intonation contour, not necessarily at the end of a sentence.
?	A question mark indicates a rising intonation, not necessarily a question.
,	The comma indicates 'continuing' intonation,' not necessarily a clause boundary.
[]	Brackets indicate onset of overlap in talk
:::	Colons indicate stretching of the preceding sound proportional to the number of colons.
-	A hyphen after a word or part of a word indicates a cut-off or self-interruption.
<u>word</u>	Underlining indicates some form of stress or emphasis on the underlined item.
hhh/.hhh	H's indicate audible outbreaths, possibly laughter. The more h's, the longer the aspiration. Aspirations with periods indicate audible inbreaths (eg., .hhh). H's within parenthesis (eg., ye(hh)s) mark within-speech aspirations, possibly laughter.
WOrd	Upper case indicates loudness.
∞	The degree signs indicate segments of talk that are markedly quiet or soft.
> <	The combination of 'more than' and 'less than' symbols indicates that the segments of talk between them are compressed or rushed.
< >	In the reverse order, they indicate that a stretch of talk is markedly slower.
=	An equals sign indicates no break or delay between the words thereby connected.
(.)	A period in parenthesis indicates a brief pause.
(1.2)	Numbers in parenthesis indicates a silence in tenths of a second.
(word)	When all or part of an utterance is in parenthesis, this indicates uncertainty on the
the	transcriber's part.
((action))	Double parenthesis enclose descriptions of conduct.

Europe's Erased: Rethinking European Migration and Citizenship Policies Based on the Example of the Erased Residents of Slovenia

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Abstract

The erasure of more than 25,000 people from the population registry of the Republic of Slovenia in 1992 left these people who had been living there for several years, some for all their lives, without any legal status. As such, these previously ordinary citizens became the legal equivalent of undocumented migrants. They were the first in Slovenia to experience European migration policies with their classification order of legal statuses and citizenships, which organizes populations into hierarchies both within and among the states. Their struggle to gain legal status is proof of the absurdity of these policies where desubjectivated migrants are trapped in an administrative circle that prevents their inclusion in society. Citizenship, a status that promises full participation in the community, is very hard to acquire because the community is defined as a national community. Behind the curtain of the "home security" discourse, the real goal of selective and partial inclusion of migrants seems to be protection of capital, since undocumented workers (among them also the erased residents) are unprotected from exploitation and as such are a benefit to the economy. The main argument of the article, supported by the ethnographic data, is that migration restrictions not only cause a great deal of suffering to migrants but also (re)produce their illegality. Due to the migration policies, these migrants stay in a specific territory illegally and as a consequence they cannot work in the legal sector. In order to break this vicious cycle, the official concept of citizenship has to be changed and the foundations upon which migration policies rest have to be reconstructed in the spirit of inclusiveness.

Keywords: Erasure, migrations, citizenship, Slovenia, Europe

Introduction

On the 26th of February 1992, half a year after Slovenia gained independence from Yugoslavia, over twenty-five thousand women, children and men from diverse social backgrounds were erased from Slovenia's population registry, without previous warning or announcement. Through this massive, systematic, cruel, and intentional illegal action taken by the state, these people, workers, students, and ordinary residents were left without legal status or rights in the country where they had been living for years. From that moment they were officially regarded as undocumented foreigners because they were without a residence permit for the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. In trying to regain their legal status, they experienced many obstacles which were produced by restrictive European migration policies. The erased residents in Slovenia and many migrants in European states are trapped within a bureaucratic cycle that prevents the victims from being included and from participating in society and impacts all aspects of their everyday lives and the lives of their families. While

these restrictions are intended to control and eliminate illegal activities, they actually serve to produce illegality itself through different mechanisms of exclusion that lead to what Étienne Balibar (2007) called “European apartheid.”

Boundaries between center and periphery, public and private, legal and illegal run “through the heart of even the most ‘successful’ European liberal state,” and the margins that they produce are “a necessary entailment of the state” (Das and Poole 2004: 4). They are in fact an indispensable characteristic of states that are described as successful and liberal. Migration policies are determined by capitalist economic interests. First, migrants are selectively accepted to European countries according to the pressing economic needs of that country (as shown by the example of temporary workers) but they do not receive permanent status since it is believed that they will leave the country when their services are no longer required. Second, keeping a certain amount of the population in a position that prevents them from legally entering the labor market proves to be beneficial for the state’s economy, as will be demonstrated later.

It is important to note that the borders do not so much have the function of marking the limits of a territory but rather have moved to the center of the political space where they are “the source of conflicts, hopes, and frustrations for all kinds of people and also of unsolvable administrative and ideological issues for the states,” which leads to the endless use of contradictory political strategies (Balibar 2007: 133). I will argue that these borders and margins within the states are extensively (re)produced by migration and citizenship policies.

Data and Methods

Several academic articles have been published about the erasure (see Dedić et al. 2003; Beznec et al. 2007; Kogovšek and Petković 2010). Most of the researchers, from different disciplines, analyze the erasure within the social and historical context of Slovenia. They demonstrate that there was a nationalistic ideology at play which first guided this extraordinary act of the state in 1992 and later stayed present in the arguments of some right wing politicians ever since the event.¹ The works of these scholars have great significance because they explain the background of the erasure and its effect on people’s lives. They also provide theoretical tools for the analysis of the erasure from different disciplines. But only one of the articles on the erasure presents this problem in the scope of European migration policies (see Pistotnik 2010). In her article, Sara Pistotnik demonstrates how European migration policies were fit and implemented into the Slovenian political and social environment and how this affected the erased residents.

The purpose of this article is to move further away from the national context and to go deeper into the critique of European migration and citizenship policies. I will point to the problems of European migration and citizenship policies generally, using the case of the erased residents of Slovenia as an example. The case of the erased in Slovenia shows the practical consequences of restrictive legislation to the people subjected to it and reveals the absurdity and criminality of the policies that dictate such legislation.

¹ It is not the aim of this article to discuss the erasure in the context of Slovenian nationalism. However, the fact that the people in question were regarded as non-Slovenians (on the basis of their republican citizenship in former Yugoslavia) will be mentioned and explained later on. They were erased on the basis of this assumption and they have been treated as such ever since. Here the problem of migration and citizenship policies that apply to “foreigners” becomes evident.

To support my claims, I use ethnographic data that my colleagues from the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology and the Faculty of Social Work of the University of Ljubljana and I collected. We conducted in-depth interviews with 27 of the erased residents. The fieldwork was a part of a project led by The Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies called “The Erased – Remediating Human Rights Violations” (see The Peace Institute 2013). The participants were located either through our personal networks or with the help of researchers from The Peace Institute. The interviews were guided by a list of topics provided by the institute, but primarily took the form of recording life stories. The participants were asked to talk about their lives before the erasure, about their experience of the erasure, about the legal procedures they had to go through, and how the erasure influenced their lives in terms of their living conditions, work, health, family, social relations, and encounters with bureaucracy and law enforcement.

A significant amount of data had been collected by other researchers on the consequences of the erasure, but additional life stories reveal new aspects of the problem. These are stories about fortunate and unfortunate coincidences and testimonies about different limits and barriers that they came across in their everyday lives, and their inventive attempts and strategies to overcome them. The stories that we collected were published in the book *Zgodbe izbrisanih prebivalcev* (Stories of the Erased Residents) co-authored by the interviewers and interviewees. The anonymity of the latter was ensured by the use of pseudonyms, if they so requested, after the possible risks had been explained to them. To illustrate and support my claims in this article I use parts of these stories. Some of them are from the contribution by me and my research partner Blaž Bajič (as the interviewers), and our interlocutor Mladen Gotal (see Bajič et al. 2011) and some from my colleagues’ contributions. Even though individual life stories were recorded and published separately, much of the work on the project was done collectively with mutual help between the students and the constant support of the mentors and editors of the book, Uršula Lipovec Čebren and Jelka Zorn. For this article, I use the results of this research to show the significance of this national-specific problem on the international scale since the consequences of the erasure reflect much broader issues.

The Erasure: A Short Explanation

The residents of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had Yugoslavian citizenship, first and foremost, which was verified by personal documents. In addition to this, everyone had *republican citizenship* of one of the Yugoslavian Republics. This secondary citizenship, however, was recorded only in the states’ registers, and people did not know which of the Yugoslavian republics they were republican citizens of. It was ascribed to children by birth arbitrarily and inconsistently, sometimes by place of the birth, sometimes by one or the other parent’s birth place (see Dedić et al. 2003).² It is important to keep in mind that there were constant interior migrations within the borders of Yugoslavia so republican citizenships often did not coincide with territories of residence. After the independence of Slovenia those residents with Slovenian republican citizenship automatically received citizenship in the new Republic of Slovenia, while those with republican citizenship of another Yugoslavian republic

² This fact is illustrated by one interviewee. Both he and his older sister were born in the Socialist Republic of Slovenia, but while his sister had Slovenian republican citizenship, he was a republican citizen of Croatia.

would have to apply for it within 6 months (Dedić et al. 2003: 54-55). The latter were supposed to receive an official notice about this, but many never did. Others did not apply for citizenship for various other reasons – maybe they assumed that they would get it automatically because they were born in Slovenia; maybe they felt offended because they had been working in this country for several decades; or maybe they thought that they could keep their permanent residence in Slovenia and ask for citizenship of another country. As our research shows, the reasons why people did not apply varied. In any case, they were not informed about the consequences of their refusal to apply. Some of them did apply, however, but their applications ended up lost in bureaucratic limbo. What followed was an illegal act of the Ministry of the Interior: on the 26th of February, 1992, everyone whose application had not ended up in the right place was erased from the population registry of the Republic of Slovenia, meaning that all these people were left without any legal status whatsoever. Their political existence had come to an end and so had all their rights. They had become, as Giorgio Agamben theorizes “homo sacer,” humans reduced to a “bare life” with no political significance and no influence over the question of their own life or death, excluded from the law and at the same time trapped within it (Agamben 1998). The erased residents were, as many reported, living at the mercy of others. Sovereignty that is both inside and outside the law produces differences between membership and inclusion and this results in practices that people like the erased experience in their everyday lives (see Das and Poole 2004: 12-13). The erased could not obtain legal employment, due to the deprivation of their legal status, and were therefore not entitled to insurance or benefits. They did not have the possibility of legal ownership over their own property, and they lost the opportunity to receive higher education.³ These people were suddenly forced into lives that entailed struggles for survival and legal status. Discrimination and social exclusion have significantly influenced the lives of these people and have left scars on their minds and bodies (see Lipovec Čebren 2007, 2010).

“All the time I was like an animal on the prowl!” Živa, female, 39 (Bešlin and Živa 2011: 64).⁴

“In short, I was nothing. I couldn’t get a job, I was without health insurance, without everything. The social worker Marija called everywhere if they could help me somewhere in any kind of way. But nothing, anywhere. Because you are not here. Well, they know that you are here but you are not. You don’t exist. I was living in constant fear for tomorrow, whether we will have anything to eat, whether I will be able to pay the bills. I was without the front teeth, I had bad migraines, but I couldn’t visit a doctor. I don’t know what would have happened if something really horrible happened to me. Although I had a lot of misfortune, I had even more luck since i didn't get seriously ill.

³ For an analysis of the erasure as a violation of (basic human) rights, see Kogovšek 2010b.

⁴ As mentioned in the previous section, the statements are taken from the life stories, collected in 2010 and 2011 and edited by the interviewees and researchers – my colleagues and me. I am using statements that have been already published (in the Slovenian language) rather than statements from original transcripts because the former were confirmed by the interviewees before publishing. This time I am using our results in a different context.

Now I am taking two pills in the morning, three in the evening. I have problems with my nerves,” Slavica, female, 52 (Rižnar and Slavica 2011: 104).⁵

However, after recognizing themselves as a group, they were transformed from victims into political subjects (Zdravković 2010). They have been fighting against negative political discourses about them and for political emancipation through various public actions, emphasizing the illegality of their erasure and claiming their rights. For several years they have been organizing public demonstrations and protests to raise public awareness and to remind political elites that the problem has not been solved. In 2006 there was an expedition of 46 erased residents and their supporters to Brussels where they presented the problem of the erasure to the members of European Parliament.

Six of the erased won a lawsuit against Slovenia at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg in June 2012, after the proceeding that lasted six years. Many of the erased residents are also active in other public events that provoke social criticism, on one hand, and social solidarity, on the other. In the last twenty years their actions have contributed to some changes in Slovenian legislation, but there have not been legal changes that could resolve the overall legal situation for everyone, as their situations are all different (as a result of the different legal ways they took to get legal status in the past [see Pistotnik 2010]), and the laws are rigid and exclusive. As a result, there are still more than 13,000 erased residents who to this day have not been able to regain their legal status (Kogovšek 2010a: 11).

Rethinking Citizenship

Foreigners are affected by every change in the status of “citizen” at both the national and transnational levels (Balibar 2007: 52). Mojca Pajnik (2011) notes that the political dimension in the concept of social citizenship is lacking in a welfare state. Social citizenship is not linked to political activity of citizens but rather to their access to social services. This concept of citizenship suggests equal rights for all members of the community but ignores the immigrants that are left outside of its defining parameters. The reason for this is that the “political” has become “national” (Balibar 2007; Pajnik 2011). Such citizenship enables the constant exclusion of certain groups from political communities since (in nation-states) they are identified with national communities. Citizenship “became a status and primarily an administrative criterion,” implying privileged membership in a national community that has to be earned and as such “serves to demarcate territories and to legitimize nation-state borders and the power of elites within nation-states, rather than implying citizen participation in and co-operation of political community” (Pajnik 2011: 69; cf. Zorn 2007). The national character of citizenship is evident from two points in the life of the erased residents. First, automatic acquisition of new Slovenian citizenship was denied to them on the basis of the assumption that they are not ethnic Slovenians since their republican citizenship had belonged to another Yugoslav republic. Second, the national character of citizenship prevents them inclusion into the national community.

⁵ In the book *Zgodbe izbrisanih prebivalcev* the way of speaking and the use of slang, dialect, and foreign words are maintained despite grammatical and stylistic incorrectness, to keep personal notes of the interviewees. This is of course lost with translation. The statements were translated from Slovenian to English by the author of this article.

The case of the erased residents and cases of irregular migrants across the world prove Anne McNevin's findings that "citizenship comes at the cost of the outsiders it creates" (2011: 16). As a privileged status it produces its opposite – "statelessness as *de facto* 'Otherness,' and inequality" (Pajnik 2011: 71). The erased residents have become stateless according to Hannah Arendt's (1976) definition: excluded from the community that used to be their own, as the Jews had been in the Third Reich. Yet, even after acquisition of citizenship people might remain stateless in the broader sense defined by Margaret Somers (2008) as the exclusion or absence from the public sphere – sharing their marginal position with immigrants, the poor, the unemployed, etc. Moreover, "the state of exception ... can redraw boundaries so that those who were secure in their citizenship can be expelled or reconstituted as different kinds of bodies" (Das and Poole 2004: 12-13; cf. Asad 2004). The erasure itself proves this fact.

The Administrative Circle

European migration policies, democratic ideologies and practices, and market economy principles were uncritically adopted by Slovenia in the 1990's as a stepping stone to European integration (Pistotnik 2010: 54).⁶ The Slovenian will to "Europeanize" coincided with the tendency of the European Union to extend the European migration policy into other countries (see Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 292). It was these policies that guided the treatment of the erased residents since they had lost their documents. This happened when they met an official for the first time after the 26th of February 1992. Their documents were taken or destroyed and this is how they learned about their loss of status. From that moment their status has been equal to that of undocumented ("illegal") migrants and this is how they were officially treated, regardless of their actual situation (Pistotnik 2010: 64). The erased were the first in Slovenia to experience the new European categorization of population on the basis of legal statuses, and this has proven to be a cruel, though efficient, mechanism of exclusion (Pistotnik 2010: 57-61). On one hand, there is a hierarchy of citizenships on a geopolitical basis – a "bio-political classification of the origins of the people in the world" (Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 296; also Balibar 2007: 61-64). At the same time, a spectrum of several legal statuses began to emerge (beginning with "undocumented foreigner" and ending with "citizen") in order to hierarchically classify the population in terms of their rights and obligations in relation to the state (Pistotnik 2010: 57). The erased found themselves at the bottom of this constructed hierarchy.

Climbing the administrative ladder has proven to be uncertain, expensive, and exhausting as the stories of the erased clearly reveal. Some of them were directed to bring certain documents from their so-called "home countries" (i.e. the countries of their previous

⁶ European integration is the process of economic, political, legal (and social and cultural to some extent) integration of European states. The process is led by the institutions of European Union: European Commission, the Council of Europe, and European Parliament. They compose "a complex system of EU governance [that] produces rules and regulations covering a host of policy areas ranging from agriculture to antitrust, the environment, immigration, and international development" (Dinan 2005: 1). National governments, parliaments, courts, and other bodies shift their loyalties, expectations, and political activities towards EU to eventually become member states of European Union. The states entering the European integration process gradually adjust their policies to the policies of EU. Because of this integration process that results in certain level of unification of policies regulating agriculture, economy, employment, external and internal security and relations, et cetera, we can speak about European migration policies despite some differences in the application and implementation between nation states. For more information on European integration see Dinan 2005.

republican citizenship) but it would have been impossible for them to return to their homes in Slovenia without a passport. Meanwhile those who stayed in Slovenia were subjected to constant police harassment and some were kept in a detention center or even deported (mostly across the Hungarian border but some were deported to Croatia where their lives were endangered by the war). Some of them became classified as refugees from Yugoslavia in the country they had been living in for years, while others, even more paradoxically, became refugees from Slovenia in other countries (Pistotnik 2010: 69, 74-75).

The erased have experienced policies governing employment, residence, access to social services, and acquisition of citizenship as what Pajnik calls the “strategy of conditional circularity” where one permit is required in order to apply for another and so on – “an obstacle that prevents migrants from accessing any type of security” (2011: 77). It seems as if the policies are aimed to prevent migrants from legalization and stabilization of their stay in the country. Pajnik notes: “A residence permit cannot be obtained without a work permit; a permanent residence permit cannot be obtained without a personal work permit; citizenship cannot be obtained without a permanent residence permit; a personal work permit is required to register with the Employment Service; a permanent residence permit is required for medical insurance; citizenship is required in order to apply for nonprofit housing; and so on” (Pajnik 2011: 93).

“I didn’t have the small company anymore because I didn’t succeed and no other legal job. Who will employ you? You can’t get a job if you don’t have a citizenship, yet they won’t give you citizenship if you don’t have a job,” Mladen Gotal, male, 42 (Bajič et al. 2011: 137).

The administrative circle of immigration policies was even more frustrating and stressful for the erased because they were treated as if they had just arrived in Slovenia as undocumented migrants, even though for many of them this country was the only home they had ever known.

“The lady in the office first asked me what the purpose of my stay in Slovenia was. Can you imagine? I can’t even explain how a man feels when he is provoked and humiliated like this,” explained Marko (male, 43), who was born in Slovenia and has lived there for all his life (Fistrič et al. 2011: 21-22).

Migration policies are based on “complete desubjectivation of a migrant, his or her wishes, personality, goals, and visions of his or her life” (Beznec 2006: 8). Talal Asad (2004) sees the origin of this in the concept of the liberal state and the abstraction of state and citizen. As a result of the principle of equal treatment, citizens are treated with absolute indifference. This leaves a space between the law and its application that is filled with suspicion according to which the officials are free to act. “Equality, generality, and abstraction thus rest on uncertainty” (Asad 2004: 283).

For migrants and the erased residents, the ultimate goal that lies at the end of bureaucratic obstacle course is citizenship: the status that promises full membership in the community. Slovenia has a restrictive citizenship policy, which requires 10 years of residence in the country (Pajnik 2011: 91). This can be seen as a measure of the resident’s will and desire to live in the country permanently. Also important to this measure are communication skills in

Slovenian, requiring a language examination even from those who received education from Slovene schools. Additionally, adequate financial resources need to be proven so as not to be a “burden” on the state. There are also concerns with security, so applicants could not have been sentenced to more than one year in prison. Finally, applicants are required to renounce their existing citizenship as a criterion for establishing loyalty (Pajnik 2011: 91; see also Zorn 2007). These conditions are a part of strategy of conditional circularity and they are connected one to another. They can only be fulfilled if a candidate has already succeeded in his struggle with the administrative circle – if he or she found a legal employment and secured a personal working permit and later gained a permanent residence permit. But in reality this is very difficult to achieve. More often migrants remain living on the margins of the society. As they are excluded from society it is hard for them to learn the language well enough to pass the language examination. It is difficult for them to achieve adequate financial resources if they do not find a long term legal job. Their poverty can force them into breaking the law and if they end up in prison for more than one year they lose their chance to become citizens. Ten years of life in insecurity and exclusion might actually affect a migrant’s ability to fulfill the conditions of gaining citizenship and many of them never reach this state.

In 1999 a law (ZUSDDD) was enacted to deal with the status of the citizens of other republics of the former Yugoslavia, implicitly but clearly referring to the erased residents, which enabled some of them to gain a residence permit under less strict conditions. Yet for many it still proved useless because they were still unable to fulfill the conditions (Pistotnik 2010: 72-74). One problem was that the application process was so slow that often new versions of the same document had to be submitted several times due to expiry (Pistotnik 2010: 71-71).

“What can you do? In this kind of system you can decay and wait forever at these counters. This public administration and bureaucracy was destroying us all,” Bojan, male, 57 (Sekirnik et al. 2011: 121).

Migrants’ Insecurity for the Security of Europe

After the loss of their legal status and their documents, the erased came to occupy the same legal position as undocumented immigrants. They were treated in this manner by law enforcement and the bureaucracy, and they had more or less the same existential problems, primarily connected with employment and insurance. Similar to undocumented migrants across the world, they went through several transitions and liminal positions between different statuses and identities that are, regardless of the fluid and ambiguous situations of living people, constructed as clear-cut and fixed by the policies (cf. McNevin 2011). The only difference between the two groups is that the erased had not recently arrived in the country, so they were familiar with the environment and were already integrated into social networks which sometimes made their survival easier compared to undocumented immigrants. Many of them stated in the interviews that they were lucky, and that it could have been worse. The fact that the survival of a part of the population depends on luck and solidarity proves that the system, in our case migration policies, is problematic. There is another connection between the two groups: the erased were labeled as immigrants “from the South,” meaning that the official discourse construed them as foreign entities that were intruders, as will be explained later.

There is a popular (but misleading) concept of “fortress Europe” whose purpose is to try to keep immigrants from so-called “third-world countries” outside of its borders. Mike Haynes

sees Europe as an “imagined community” built around a mystic ideology that legitimizes the inclusion of certain populations and the exclusion of others and lays down the “boundaries across which goods and capital might flow but people may not, or at least the mass of people may not” (1999: 25). Indeed, we have seen increasingly strict entry restrictions and “a tendency towards more exclusive and authoritarian (migration) regimes” in Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain (Düvell 2003: 201) and the closing of the external borders of the European Union to “allegedly market-redundant immigrants” (Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 292).⁷ Yet, the real goal of immigration policies is not to prevent immigrants from entering Europe, but rather to provide for selective inclusion according to the needs of European labor market (Bez nec 2006: 140). As William Walters (2004) argues, the mechanisms of European migration policies are more than “building walls, strengthening the locks, [and] updating the alarm system” (Walters 2004: 242; cf. Houtum and Pijpers 2007). “[T]he focus of insecurity has shifted from the geopolitical space of interest relations to threats to society” (Walters 2004: 242). Walters notices that today’s governments consider their state as a “home” that protects and must be protected. The “protection” or “security” of a so-called civilized comfort zone of economic welfare, public security, and social identity (i.e. home) that is believed to be threatened by immigrants is the key concept that leads and legitimates European migration policies (Houtum and Pijpers 2007). The discursive rhetoric adopted by world leaders plays upon a positive image of home on one hand and a fear of the chaotic outside on the other (Walters 2004). It is important to keep in mind that the motive to erase people from the population registry was the presumption that their “home” lay somewhere else.

“When they cut your ID it means: ‘Clear off, manage there and stay there [in the other country], here you can only be a tourist,” Mladen Gotal, male, 42, 2010 (Bajič et al. 2011: 126).

Dispossession of their documents was a first sign showing that they were no longer wanted on Slovenian territory, at least not as residents. In addition to this, the erased residents and immigrants from other former Yugoslav republics have been presented as primitive and dangerous people, as the stereotypically negative discourse about the Balkans as an imaginary geographic entity creates them [see Todorova 1997] (Dedić et al. 2003: 98-108). They were also presented as a threat and associated with the Yugoslav generals who fought against the independence of Slovenia, especially by some politicians that wanted to legitimize the erasure (Gregorčič 2007: 88).⁸ Discourses which try to legitimate the exclusion of the “Other” are a part of the reconstruction of the sovereignty myth and power of the state which results in “institutional racism” (Balibar 2007: 50-57).

Slovenia implemented the European immigration regime with its classification order on the backs of the erased (Pistotnik 2010: 75). They were the first victims of the endless

⁷ Henk van Houtum and Roos Pijpers (2007) argue that Europe (or the European Union) is not closed off like a fortress but is “open to strategically selected immigrants” that do not represent a threat. It is for this reason that they speak of the European Union as a “gated community”.

⁸ The negative discourse about the erased has become widespread among the public through the media and has morphed into a hate speech (Kogovšek 2010b: 105-106). For an analysis of public awareness of, and opinions about, the erasure and the erased, see Lipovec Čebren et al. 2011.

administrative machinery in which the immigrants of Europe are caught. Andrej Kurnik has written: "Slovenia has normalized the criminality ... of the erasure with the acceptance of European migration and asylum policy. And the European Union has normalized the criminality of its migration policy ... in Slovenia with the integration of the autochthonous forms of exclusion, denial of basic rights to certain populations, and normalizational cleansing" (2007: 124-125). They are presented as safety policies, but they put migrants in extremely insecure situations where their lives are endangered. "The consequences of the ... desire for comfort protection are increasingly drastic, sometimes even horrific" (Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 298). Franck Düvell has reminded us that "exclusion on the grounds of immigration restrictions can, and all too often does, kill," as it did in the case of the European Jewish population in the 1940's (2003: 202), and as it does today in the cases of "deaths at the border" of thousands of people who try to illegally enter the European Union or the United States (see Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 298-299; Palidda 2005: 65-66). The same policies also proved fatal for many of the erased in Slovenia. Some of them were deported to the war zones in other republics of the former Yugoslavia, and some mysteriously disappeared (see Vaslović 2007). Others were ruined because their social capital and/or simple good fortune were not sufficient to satisfy their basic needs. The effect of the erasure and consequent statelessness (in both the literal and the broader sense) was tantamount to legal and political death (reduction to bare life), and social death (isolation from public social life). Together with immigrants, they comprise a social stratum of people "who are basically deprived of any rights and who could be seen as a renaissance of the medieval outlaws" (Düvell 2003: 202).

"In this time I was raped. And I couldn't report this man because I was afraid that they would deport me since I was without any documents. Again I would have drawn the short straw," Živa, female, 39 (Bešlin and Živa 2011: 72).

As the excluded "Others" these stateless populations serve the fiction of unity of both nations (see Bajt 2010) and Europe (see Haynes 1999; Houtum and Pijpers 2007). But this short-term coherence of a society through racist exclusive immigration policies has proved to be the opposite in the long term, since social "pathologies" such as xenophobia work against social coherence (Düvell 2003: 203). Despite this fact, the European Union is following a colonial-like (orientalistic) "modernist logic of (b)ordering" 'normal Us' and 'deviant Others' in the discourse on the need to 'communitify'" (Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 295-296). A state as a "home" offers a safe sanctuary and protection for its "natural" members (i.e. citizens by birth), but it also contains the aspect of "conquest, taming, and subduing; a will to domesticate the forces which threaten the sanctity of home" (Walters 2004: 242). For these tendencies Walters presents the term "domopolitics," which "refers to the government of the state (but, crucially, other political spaces as well) as a home" (Walters 2004: 241). Migration policies are not about preventing mobility but about controlling it and adjusting it to the needs of the economy and making hierarchical categories of population upon which access to legal protection and public resources depends (Pistotnik 2010: 55).

European countries tend to encourage the legal immigration of a certain required labor force. Simultaneously, though, there is a tendency to prevent these same immigrants from becoming permanently and fully integrated into the society by the strategy of conditional circularity. But illegal mobilities are always perceived of as a danger (Pistotnik 2010: 55; Walters

2004: 245). Yet, the prohibitionism of European migration policies actually perpetuates the underground economy (Palidda 2005; Fabjančič 2006: 44; Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 302). The erased, like the immigrants from the so-called third world, have faced difficulties gaining work permits and finding legal employment due to both administrative obstacles and personal discrimination, so for many of them the black market is the only option (cf. Fabjančič 2006; Pajnik 2011). Salvatore Palidda (2005) notices the paradox: economically dominant countries of immigration fight against illegal labor on the one hand, while it remains an important benefit to their economy on the other. Illegal workers can be exploited by the corporations that bring money to the state because workers without any insurance are not a financial burden, while hunting them makes business for the security industry. Employing migrants without documents is beneficial also for the socially included citizens who employ them since their costs are lower than in the case of registered workers (Fabjančič 2006: 44). Migrants as a cheap and unprotected labor force, exposed to exploitation and blackmail, are “a constitutive element of the production of wealth” (Beznec 2006: 140). Haynes has written: “In European law ... there is a tension between labour as commodity and labour as a “human being” – and a tendency to protect the former rather than the latter” (1999: 35-36). Neoliberal political economy is founded on the politics of differences and preserves them (hand in hand with border regimes) in form of inequality of rights, wages and levels of reproduction (Düvell 2003: 205). This is the “commodification of migrants,” where migrant selectivity is driven by the market and human beings are labeled as human resources (Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 301). In this “market fundamentalism,” social rights are dependent on participation in the labor market since a work permit is a condition for all other permits (Pajnik 2011: 71-77). This is one of the changes that the erased got to know to their cost and which made them the heralds of the new social, political and economic order in Slovenia.

Conclusions

The erasure from the population registry of Republic of Slovenia in 1992 was conducted in a specific national context. But it is not just this specific state that carries the responsibility for the social and political exclusion of the erased that followed the erasure. The reason why these people could not put their lives back in order by acquiring a legal status were migration and citizenship policies that have been and continue to be imposed on millions of people all over Europe. They live in uncertainty, insecurity, and discrimination because their home is *supposed to be* somewhere else. When they try to navigate administrative mazes of legal statuses that define their rights and level of social inclusion, they face the “strategy of conditional circularity” (Pajnik 2011) that often dooms them to an insecure existence in illegality, on the margins of society. The discourse about the security of the states and Europe as a whole legitimates the exclusion of the migrants and protects the capital of the state, since undocumented workers are a benefit to the economy.

There is no immigration regime that would not produce the exclusion among those who fail to fulfill its criteria. No matter how liberal and humane it might be, any kind of regime is acceptable only as long as it ignores the consequences for the rejected ones. We live in a flexible and mobile world therefore alternative and flexible immigration regulations are needed. What is missing is the link between economic and political membership so that contribution to a society would coincide with mutual access to political and social resources (Düvell 2003: 202-206). Therefore there is a need for a redefinition of citizenship. Balibar (2007) suggests a

democratic, expansive, and inclusive conception of citizenship which is based on “*droit de cité*,” a right of residing with rights. This way citizenship is an open process of gaining concrete rights through social activity and negotiations that lead to political emancipation, regardless of the nationalities of the people. Active participation in the social space should lead to the acquisition of citizenship and not the opposite, as we can see in the existing concept of citizenship where the rights and chances for participation depend on legal status (Balibar 2007: 66-69).

Some political theorists have “argued that state borders generate contradictions with regard to the principle of equality amongst individuals and freedom of movement” (Houtum and Pijpers 2007: 293). The obsession with protection that drives current European migration policies can be seen as a reaction to immigrants’ active assertion of their right to move and settle where they want (Walters 2004: 255-256). But the regulations both construct and perpetuate their “illegality.” People without documents attempt to gain a legal status, which suggests their will to leave compulsory illegality (Balibar 2007: 67).

The question of immigration is not a question of foreign affairs or security policy, but it is at the center of European democratic political mechanisms (Bez nec 2006: 140). The erased residents in Slovenia and many migrants and people without documents in Europe are far from passive victims of policies imposed from above. They have taken an important active position in the constitution of political mechanisms and transformation of citizenship (McNevin 2011). The struggle of people on the margins of the state is, as Balibar (2007: 67-68) argues, an essential contribution to the development of active citizenship, democratization of borders, and the free movement of people.

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Dietary Restrictions: Life at College

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Abstract

This ethnographic study seeks to understand the quality of life for residential undergraduate college students in the United States who restrict their diets either by choice or medical necessity. Since all kinds of dietary restrictions present similar lifestyle challenges not experienced by non-dietary-restricted residential college students, we define dietary restrictions broadly. A review of the existing research literature on dietary restrictions reveals that most studies are biomedical, focusing on clinical, cognitive, and psychological aspects of dietary restrictions. Few studies explore college students exclusively as a population, and even fewer consider how the social and material conditions of a college environment affect the lived experiences of dietary-restricted students. This ethnography remedies the absence of qualitative and ethnographic research with a study of twenty-nine individuals, most of whom are students who restrict their diets, across five undergraduate private college campuses over a fifteen-week period in the spring of 2012. Our results add a new dimension to the biomedical research, which has tended to locate the “problem” of dietary restrictions within the dietary-restricted. Contrary to the existing literature, we argue that such problems are sociocultural and institutional rather than pathological and individual. Our data illustrate that the quality of dietary-restricted living improves when dietary-restricted students advocate for and institutions respond to material, systemic solutions that allow the dietary-restricted population to eat safely, socially, and quickly in a college environment, just like their non-dietary-restricted peers.

Keywords: Food, dietary restrictions, college

Pre-packaging the Dietary-Restricted Experience: An Introduction to Biomedical Discourse

Current studies of food from an anthropological perspective largely deal with what Sidney W. Mintz and Christine M. Du Bois (2002) characterize as Westerners’ eating habits, as those habits differ by ethnic group, religion, and region. However, foodways of the world of the dietary-restricted, and particularly dietary-restricted college students, have been largely ignored in anthropological studies. For this study, we use the term “dietary-restricted” to encompass any restriction of diet for elective or medically necessary purposes, including veganism, vegetarianism, religious abstinences, food allergies, celiac and other diseases. Residential college students who restrict their diets for any reason face similar lifestyle challenges that non-dietary-restricted residential college students do not face. While there are preliminary ethnographic studies of students’ experiences inhabiting and maneuvering the space of a college dining hall (Massey et al. 2011) and of campus religious organizations’ utilization of food for specific activities (Park 2009), the majority of existing literature on the dietary restrictions of college students tends toward biomedical fields of study.¹ Depending

¹ By biomedical studies, we mean clinical, psychological and cognitive studies.

exclusively on biomedical studies to understand the topic is limiting, given that science suffers, as Sandra Harding (1987:6–7) suggests, from a methodological approach that sets out to solve a problem already identified as such. Similarly, she argues that biomedical science in particular produces and reproduces its own authority through what Michel Foucault (1989:33) has called the “clinical gaze,” that unequal power dynamic of the medical observer mediating the responses of the observed through medical discourse.²

Biomedical investigations into dietary restrictions have focused largely on vegans, vegetarians, and food allergics. The research itself can broadly be categorized as types: (1) that which investigates psychological or cognitive behaviors of the dietary-restricted, and (2) in the case of food allergies, clinical and community-based approaches that examine the diagnosis, epidemiology, medical management, causes and cures of the condition. Studies of food access are limited to the commercial food industry (Hefle and Taylor 2004, Pieretti et al. 2009, Pratten and Towers 2004). Overwhelmingly, literature on veganism and vegetarianism explores questions of motivation, nutritional deficiency, and possible eating disorders (Forestell 2011, Trautmann et al. 2008, Gilsing et al. 2010). Literature on food allergies has examined patients’ psychological and emotional reactions to the condition (Cohen et al. 2004, Ravid et al. 2012 and Sicherer 2001) as well as questioned whether more people believe they have food allergies than is actually the case (Altman and Chiamonte 1996, Knibb and Booth 2011). Because there is no singular test for diagnosing a food allergy (Burks et al. 2012, Eckman 2009, Knibb and Booth 2011), the discussion of who has a *real* food allergy and who is mistaken continues to appear in studies such as those mentioned above. Our data illustrate how any discourse that focuses on the interiority of the dietary-restricted subject has the potential to pathologize the dietary-restricted, subsequently trivializing and delegitimizing their lived experiences. As our interlocutors reveal, advocacy and change for material conditions that improve the dietary-restricted’s quality of life become more difficult when dietary restrictions are disregarded or disbelieved.

Alternately, studies that focus on documenting food allergies as a medical condition investigate such topics as improved diagnostics, epidemiology, medical management, causes and cures, and school emergency action plans (Burks et al. 2012, Gupta et al. 2009, Rim and McMorris 2001, Vierk et al. 2007, Young et al. 2009).³ Clinical and sometimes community-based in nature, these studies have the potential to legitimize food allergics’ needs and thereby save lives. But alone, these studies are not sufficient to understand the complexity of challenges food allergics and others with dietary restrictions face in daily college life. Without data on the cultural and social conditions of lived experience, these studies, too, can lapse into biomedical discourse that articulates the problem of dietary restrictions as lying within the dietary-restricted. For example, we found only one study that attempts to assess the quality of life for food allergic students in college (Greenhawt et al. 2009). Nevertheless, when students ingest allergens, such acts are labeled “risk-taking behavior,” even though nearly two thirds of respondents in this study reported that safe main courses were not always available at dining halls, presumably leaving students with a choice between ingesting allergens or going hungry.

² We do not mean by these comments to delegitimize biomedical research, but rather, to point out its limitations.

³ Ruchi Gupta et al. 2009 utilize community-based research, which includes some narrative response techniques.

Also, there is no data on students' ability to procure alternative food, or how such procurement impacts academic performance, extracurricular involvement, or social relationships.⁴ In short, discourse that blames the dietary-restricted for institutional inadequacies has the potential to reproduce the food allergic's deviance from a so-called normal population, which impedes efforts to advocate for change and improve lives.

Stirring the Pot: Legally Re-framing Individual Deviance as Systemic Food Inaccessibility

In December 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice settled a law suit against Lesley University with an agreement that corroborates our findings. The agreement requires the university to provide "continuous" food access to students with celiac disease and food allergies, "an issue colleges and universities across the country need to consider."⁵ Articulating food access as a primary solution to the challenges of living with dietary restrictions on a residential college campus signals an important shift in the public discourse on the problem of dietary restrictions. By identifying institutional response as a primary obstacle, the DOJ/Lesley University agreement reconceptualizes dietary restrictions as an institutional problem rather than an individual one. In short, the DOJ/Lesley University agreement shifts the discursive emphasis from an intractable health diagnosis to material conditions that can be altered. Such an articulation is in line with our data, which show that when institutions act on dietary-restricted students' suggestions, conditions for dietary-restricted living improve.

Research Methods

Ethnography: A Better Approach

We use ethnography as a research method that allows students to speak more at length in their own words. Our data was collected through participant-observation and semi-structured interviews. For our observations, we visited ten different eateries across five private college campuses in southern California that share reciprocal dining agreements. There are seventeen separate occasions of fieldnotes, spanning the time period of February through April 2012. Participant-observation was conducted in dining hall sites pertinent to our analysis so that we could contextualize and compare student narratives against the material conditions with which they interacted. Some of our key observations at these places regarded labels and information, alternative food options, and social and spatial dynamics. We paid specific attention to labeling cards in the dining halls, listed ingredients and allergens, as well as the amount and presence of food options for vegans, vegetarians, gluten-free individuals, and those with food allergies. We also noted differences in our interactions with and observed interactions between patrons and staff.

For our interviews, we met with seven students, conducted one group interview with about twenty students, and met with one administrator and one dining hall chef. Most of the students we interviewed restricted their diets by either medical necessity or choice. Our sample was constructed by contacting people we already knew and through snowballing; we

⁴ The word "procure" is chosen deliberately to suggest any variety of methods for obtaining safe food, from grocery shopping and home cooking to visiting different dining halls and eating out at restaurants.

⁵ "DOJ Office of Public Affairs," *The United States Department of Justice News*, 20 December 2012, <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2012/December/12-crt-1538.html>.

invited interlocutors to participate in interviews through emails and in-person conversations. The group interview was conducted in a classroom setting, and the other interviews occurred in locations that were chosen by our interlocutors on various campuses, usually in a dining hall or cafe. These interviews were semi-structured and informal in nature. They lasted anywhere from 15 minutes to one hour in length.

We approached our investigation with the overarching question: What are the experiences of those living with dietary restrictions at the colleges within this study? To deepen this focus within our research, we also explored: How or in what ways are the lives of students impacted by food offered at the dining halls and/or other on-campus eateries? How do students with restricted diets perceive themselves, and how are they perceived by others? For people who are restricted, to what extent, if at all, do decisions involving food affect and/or relate to social interactions? What follows is a representative sampling of responses to those questions by interlocutors in their own words. Their names have been changed to protect their anonymity.

Food Finding(s)

Dining Halls and Eateries

Among the many dining halls and eating establishments on the five campuses, there are several different approaches to food service, variety, presentation, and labeling. Our observations of what was available at these locations were supported by the way students expressed their preferences for specific eateries. Students definitely understood which options each location provided and how dietary restrictions were handled at each space. Colleges are identified by numbers 1-5, below:

(1) At College one's dining hall, there are several options for vegans and vegetarians, as well as a small section with gluten-free snacks, and a small area with alternative drink options such as almond, soy, and lactose-free milk. Some students, specifically those who are vegan or gluten-free, found that College one had several "fresh" and "alternative options." However Lauren, who has several food allergies, said that although College one was willing to make special meals for her each night, the chef responsible for preparing her meal rotated between three or four people. She said that occasionally someone "would forget that I couldn't have one thing or another and so sometimes [she would suffer an allergic reaction]," just because more people preparing her food increased the possibility that someone would forget about one of her allergens and inadvertently include it in her meal.

(2) At College two's dining hall, there are signs marking the presence of already prepared meals, such as soups and main entrées, which are also vegan and vegetarian. Additionally, the soup options at College two list some allergens present in each, which on the day we observed included wheat, soybeans, milk, and eggs. Yet College two was the most heavily critiqued dining hall, due to its lack of options and inconsistent labeling. Cheryl expressed that "every time I eat at College two I end up having a stomachache" because that dining hall uses gluten as a filler in many of its sauces and main dishes. On the day we conducted participant-observation, gluten was not labeled in the dishes at College two. Also, Sean, a student who has a nut allergy, shared an experience where he took some vegetable curry that was unlabeled, and before eating discovered that the dish contained walnuts, which would have seriously harmed him. Since Sean reported this to the dining hall, he has noticed an increase in signage for peanuts and tree nuts; in our fieldnotes, College two's pastry section

listed items which contained nuts. We also noticed that College two did a pretty good job of labeling vegan and vegetarian offerings in their dining hall. However, while College two's separate eatery had options for vegetarians, Cheryl, who has celiac disease, and Eliza, who is vegan, pointed out that it did not have options for their dietary restrictions, nor did it list ingredients or allergens for any of its food products.

(3) At College three's dining hall, there is a relatively new station that provides students with allergy-free, gluten-free, vegan, and vegetarian options every day for lunch, brunch, and dinner. Lauren, who has multiple food allergies, described her doubt that she would be able to live as "comfortably" without these new allergy-free offerings, which include one animal protein, one grain, and one vegetable daily which are free of the US-FDA's Top Eight Allergens: dairy, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, seafood, shellfish, soy, and wheat/gluten. She used the word "fantastic" more than once to discuss this station, adding: "Without that, I'd probably have to make my own meals." Another student mentioned that food information sheets are provided next to each station. Yet, the most mixed responses were in regard to dining at College three, possibly because it has undergone several changes in the past year. Cheryl thought that College three didn't seem to be as competent with food issues pertaining to those with celiac disease, but that it was improving. On the other hand, the coffeehouse, a student-run eatery affiliated with College three, offered several alternative milk options, as well as a large variety of snacks that were vegan or gluten-free.

(4) At College four's dining halls, A and B, we observed that food particularly in the baked goods section was labeled for dairy, eggs, gluten, and nuts, four allergens on the list of the US-FDA's Top Eight. Vegetarian baked goods and vegan breakfast sausages were also labeled. At dining hall A, a separate plastic case held gluten-free snacks, breads, and desserts. College four's A and B dining halls were often characterized as being "like heaven" or "the best" for students with some restrictions because they carefully label foods that contain the most common allergens. However, while careful labeling tells students what they cannot eat, it does not necessarily mean there will be safe foods for students to eat. At College four's eatery, there were options for vegetarians, but little to no alternatives for vegans, those with celiac disease or people with specific or multiple food allergies.

(5) At College five's dining hall, gluten-free, vegan, and vegetarian options were not clearly labeled during our brunch observation session; however, a sign that read "contains coconut" was posted next to the spinach eggs located in the hot breakfast section. College five's eatery offered a classic grill menu, but did not advertise any vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, or other allergy-free options. This rather extreme difference at College five can most clearly be expressed in a story Eliza shared about buying some cereal at an eatery with which College five is affiliated. Her experience of asking for soy milk went like this: "'Oh do you have any soy milk by chance?' And they laughed. They laughed in my face. And they were like, 'Soy milk [here]?' And I was like, 'Sorry.' And then of course I went to the College three coffeehouse and asked for some." Eliza's experience, from the tentative phrasing of her request, to the staff's outright laughter, to her apology, illustrates just how entrenched ideas about institutionally normal versus individually deviant eating choices can be, as well as how that difference can be exploited for humor or critique.

Institutional Pathways

Like the dining halls, the administrations of the five campuses play a role in providing support for the dietary-restricted community. Jane, an administrator who worked in the Dean of Students office at College three, explains that part of her job is to help with the catering events at New Student Orientations and other special events. Jane notes that “nicely catered meals... [are] kind of a bit of a land mine, you know, for students with restrictions.” Because of this, she is in charge of making sure that all students who are vegan or vegetarian have a special meal prepared for them in advance. However, she said that invariably, “more people take those [special meals] than were meant to or people don’t take the thing. And you’re like, ‘Well, I thought this was a requirement,’ you know?...As a staff member...you are trying to get things from the catering side.”

Another large part of Jane’s job is to “help [students] communicate with faculty, help students advocate for themselves...or sometimes just advocate for something when that needs to happen.” She does this through “one-on-one” discussions with students, and it is through this dialogue that she learns of other dining halls being “more facilitating and accommodating to our students,” an indication that “we’re obviously not doing enough.” While she doesn’t think such an approach is “cutting edge,” she states that acting “once one student brings something forward...[is] how we operate.”

For Chef Harry of College three’s dining hall, working within administrative protocols for changes that benefit students has never been a problem. When discussing how he approached asking for the extra budget for gluten-free pasta, Chef Harry admitted that “it was quite a bit more than regular pasta. But that’s when we went to the administration and said, ‘This is what we want to do. It’s going to be a little bit more money, but it’s going to work out in the long run.’ And, they received it very well.” Chef Harry also described a body called the Food Committee which acts as an ambassador between the students, the dining hall, and the administration. “We [the dining hall] bring everything we do to the Food Committee...[and in addition to a dining hall staff member on the committee] there’s another faculty member on there, and there’s a couple of students.” Students on the committee ask the student body’s opinion on dining hall project ideas. If those ideas are supported, “the faculty member brings it back to the Dean of Students.” And normally, Chef Harry says, when the faculty member asks, “‘Can we do this? Any problems?’...It’s usually, ‘No.’”

That being said, students like Sean who are not involved with a student or administrative body have different opinions on how well the administration’s policies affect food access. One important point of contention involves the meal plan, which requires students to pay for a specific number of meals per week, normally twelve or sixteen. However, these rules can change depending on what housing students receive. On the subject of housing support, Sean said that with dietary restrictions: “You can petition to get priority housing wherever you want [at College two, but with special housing], the maximum meal plan you can have is eight meals per week. You can’t have twelve or sixteen.” Jane “can totally relate” to students’ experiences, and even expressed frustration with the limitations of the existing system and her administrative role at College three: “students who don’t want to be on our...the meal plan...[have] ended up learning how to find the food that works for them...The college is limited in the housing we provide; [it] doesn’t really provide as, you know, adequate cooking station[s]...[Then] the college is stuck, the student is stuck, and the only way to work on it is to interact with the staff...I know it’s a really challenging thing.” Jane’s commentary

shows the difficulties experienced by students and administration when trying to work within a system not designed for dietary-restricted living; navigating the existing system can, for some students, be like the metaphor of a mouse on a treadmill. As it stands, students can either pick and choose from the college's meal plan or cook their own food. If students do not use the meal plan they must cook their own food in the dorms, which do not have adequate space or cooking tools, and the students often do not have time to be cooking. If students have problems with these options, the next step is to work with the administration, which may not have the ability to make all the necessary changes.

Institutional pathways, then, provide some methods of support to students. But those pathways are often mediated by the administration, whose hands can be tied by the institution. This is probably the most challenging obstacle that dietary-restricted students face: how to be included in the institutional conversation on food selection, preparation, delivery, and access so that they can eat in a college environment just like their non-dietary-restricted peers.

Self-advocacy and Agency within the Dining Hall

Students themselves have different approaches to advocating for the food items that they may want or need with their specific dietary restrictions. For Sean and Cheryl, filling out comment cards is a way to exert their agency and to let the dining hall and administration know that their needs are not being met. "I do all the surveys and I do a lot of comments because that way I'm not like, 'You're doing a terrible job,'" Cheryl says. Sean tells the story of how he responded when he found a nut in a food item that was not labeled: "So I actually wrote them a hate mail letter. Well, it wasn't hate mail, it was a critique that I put on the wall, very politely worded...I wrote a letter and said, basically if this happens again, I'm going to go to the Dean, 'cause you could have killed someone, or at least seriously harmed someone... They've actually been better since then. So now they put up little signs that say... 'Contains Nuts' next to food that has nuts." Eliza tells the story of the time she asked a College one dining hall staff member if tofu could be consistently offered at the dining hall's salad bar: "I talked to one of the workers and [said]: 'I really need tofu, every day. There's just no other protein options you offer except for tofu...in the salad bar, and ...that needs to be like a consistent thing'...cause they just don't put it out sometimes....I just can't come to the dining hall assuming that it will be there...They were like: 'Okay, we'll work on that.'" Lauren chose to contact the dining halls directly and work with the staff at the beginning of her freshman year. But when she kept getting sick in her first few months at College three, she went directly to the administration:

I think I can honestly say that I was the one who gave [the administration] the idea for the allergy-free station. Just because I wanted to be able to allow students like me, and a great number of students like me, to be able to eat in the dining hall without feeling like a burden, without feeling like they were bothering anybody, you know, constantly by asking questions, without feeling afraid that the information they were getting might be wrong and that you might have an allergic reaction later, and to be able to eat with their friends.

Additionally, when the allergy-free station isn't open for breakfast, she has "made a relationship with a couple of the cooks who work at the omelet station and they have been really great."

Her example highlights the necessity of communication between student, dining hall staff, and administration in order to facilitate food access for dietary-restricted students, even when there are no formally established pathways—such as the comment cards provided by the dining halls which Cheryl and Sean use—to express those needs. As these examples show, students who find avenues for self-advocacy can be positively received by staff and effect improvements in the dining halls. Importantly, though, is the fact that Lauren, Cheryl, and Sean still need to rely on members of the institution to follow through on changes for them. In other words, self-advocacy and agency within the institution are still dependent on institutional representatives' willingness to act on behalf of students with dietary restrictions. Not surprisingly, then, student activities and agency outside of the institutional dining hall setting became a focal point in our discussions, as the peer-to-peer social realm is one in which students can exercise more control.

Nourishing Social Life

The majority of students articulated a strong relationship between food and social life on a college campus. Our group interview gave us some insight into the importance of meals together as a time for casually visiting with friends and maintaining relationships. Serena, a student without restrictions at College four, asserted that, “if I’m spending dinner with you, I must really like you,” and Gale, another student without restrictions from College four, associated getting a meal with someone as a “rite of passage into...becoming friends with somebody.” For students with restrictions, eating meals with friends was equally important, but more challenging with the added factor of finding food that they could actually eat. Amara, a student at College five with a refined sugar allergy, stated that she and her friends plan their entire day around meals, but that her allergy “does dictate which dining halls I’m in the mood to go to,” because of what options she has for bread. As such, she will influence where her friends eat. Part of the reason Lauren appreciates the allergy-free station at College three, even if it has limited variety, is because it “allows me to eat socially with my friends in a dining hall setting, and I know that I would have to be making my own food at odd hours and eating at odd hours without people if I didn’t have that.”

Restricting one’s diet also affected student experiences with extracurricular events on campus. Because she has celiac disease, Cheryl is unable to drink beer at parties, which comes as a shock to many of her peers. Dave, a student at College four who has kidney disease, also expressed frustration with not being able to have alcohol in a setting where it is traditionally popular. Eliza mentioned that for other events on campus, like a barbecue for example, “I just have to assume that I have to eat beforehand.” Several students still participated in events on campus and simply chose not to eat the food, while a few found ways to incorporate the foods that they could actually eat. Because approaching this topic through the administration makes her “nervous,” Cheryl relied on peer support. She is involved in a club that bakes and sells bread, and so she worked with a friend to make a small amount of a gluten-free recipe each week. Additionally, a few students were part of a mentorship program with younger students, and they would bake items for their group that contained alternatives for some of the main allergens.

Many students talked about negotiating social life with dietary restrictions. Dave mentioned that even at college, “fast food is very popular.” Because he can’t have potatoes, this can be difficult to deal with when everyone else is eating burgers and fries. Eliza described

that, for her birthday, she had hoped to go to the vegan restaurant in town with her friends, but that restaurant was too expensive for everyone. As a remedy, her parents hosted a dessert party at her home with vegan and non-vegan offerings. Maria, a student who is originally from France and has a seafood allergy, expressed that in France, fish would be served every Friday for religious reasons, and so she would not be able to eat with her friends on those days.

Discussions of social life did differ by gender. Several female students experienced feelings of guilt, saying they did not always want to explain the extent of their restrictions to other people. Eliza said, “I don’t want [my friends] to have to worry about making these exceptions for me,” and Cheryl felt bad about asking dining hall staff for ingredients in food. Lauren shared a conversation with a friend that helped her reconcile conflicting feelings of self-care versus burdensomeness to others. Her friend told her: “You’re at this college, you’re paying for these meals, they need to be taking care of you; you cannot feel like you’re causing them any burden because it’s their job to help you.”

These sentiments, however, were only expressed by our female interlocutors. When questioned about guilt or explanations, male interlocutors thought the idea of guilt was ridiculous, and they were not bothered by having to explain their restrictions to other people. As Dave said: “The very nature of having dietary restrictions—I don’t think it’s a choice. I think it’s medical, and like assuming that everyone is operating out of their best interest for themselves...then that’s not really a choice.” The only male to express guilt was Gale, who does not have dietary restrictions, but felt awkward and uncomfortable at times when he would forget about a student’s restrictions when hosting a social event that did not have alternatives for them. Nevertheless, males did experience interactions where their food allergies were trivialized to the point of potentially placing them in danger. As Sean, who has a nut allergy, relates: “A common joke just among friends is like, if they have a nut, they’ll be like, ‘Oh watch out, I’ll feed this to you!’...I mean, that’s like a typical brash or callus joke, if you will.”

Those with elective dietary restrictions have also felt judged or stereotyped based on what they ate. As Eliza said:

I think that also people assume that veganism is directly correlated with... morality, you know? So like, because I’m...vegan, I think my moral compass is stronger, which is so not true....And so I think that people want to prove me wrong in that sense....But I’m not doing it for anyone else. And that’s why there’s...this joke that someone told me (and I was like, oh God). The joke is:...“How do you know someone is vegan?...Because they told you already!”...I was like, ha ha, oh my God is that what people think? Is that what people think I’m like?

Similarly, students shared reasons for avoiding conversations about their dietary restrictions. They are exemplified by the experience of Amara, who said: “When you finally explain it, people are like, ‘Oh my gosh, well what happens to you? How did you find out? How long have you had it?’...If someone offers me dessert I’ll just be like, ‘No, I’m stuffed.’ Or, they offer me... some kind of food, or they’re like, ‘Let’s go get cake.’ If I just met them I’ll say, ‘Oh, I’ll come with, but I’m not a really big fan....’ I’m not going to go into it if I don’t have to.” Cheryl and Lauren both expressed that college was a new environment in which they were responsible for explaining and advocating for themselves, rather than at home, where their parents took on that role. With a familiar support network gone and little prior advocacy experience, freshmen

in particular can face seemingly insurmountable obstacles: navigating a new system of rules and regulations in multiple eating settings; making friendships in order to be included rather than isolated; making relationships with rotating shifts of dining hall and administrative staff; and doing so in a way that gives (ideally) immediate results, as meals are necessary three times a day, every day. This is an additional transition from home to college that is not part of non-dietary-restricted students' expectations and experiences.

As Jane pointed out, making these relationships takes time. "Getting to know someone" in this context requires not only learning about a person's specific dietary needs, but also learning about that person in the context of the rest of her life, so that she can be seen as a complex person and not simply the dietary-restricted Other.

Chewing the Fat: Reflections

Because students are advocating for change and institutions are responding, there is much to be hopeful about. All five of the colleges in our study either have made or are making strides in providing food offerings for a variety of diets. Most dining halls and eateries label at least some ingredients in their foods. Almost all of them are listening to student requests. College two's dining hall began labeling foods with nuts after Sean brought the issue to its attention. College three's dining hall instituted an allergy-free station devoid of the US-FDA's Top Eight Allergens after Lauren suggested it; the station has now expanded to include gluten-free, vegan and vegetarian stations as well. College one's dining hall cooks meals individually for dietary-restricted students, although information is not always passed to rotating personnel. Some colleges have institutional pathways for student feedback, such as the use of comment cards, food committees, and an administrator to advocate for student concerns. Chef Harry's desire to "cook what you guys want to eat" appears to be a genuine reflection of all five colleges' attitudes toward their students.

However, the situation is far from perfect. Labeling only obvious ingredients is dangerous for someone like Cheryl, who gets stomachaches when hidden, unmarked gluten is used as a thickener in a dish. Similarly, invisible tree nuts can be fatal for someone like Sean, who is anaphylactic. Moreover, accurate labeling can help dietary-restricted students avoid food, *but it doesn't help them eat if safe options are not also available*. As two-thirds of the respondents in Greenhawt, et al. 2009 reported, safe alternatives to their dietary restrictions did not exist. Lauren's idea of an allergy-free station at College three is intended to guarantee one such safe food option at every meal within the dining hall setting, but the concept is unique, available at only one of the five college sites studied. If, as the DOJ/Lesley University agreement suggests, food access is the key to solving the problems of dietary-restricted life at college, broad scale systemic solutions across U.S. colleges are a ways off.

Re-thinking Risk

Greenhawt et al. 2009 illustrate the point that biomedicine's default terminology for food allergics who knowingly ingest allergens is "risk-takers," discourse that has the potential to pathologize poor eating choices as a personality defect within the dietary-restricted. Yet Greenhawt et al. 2009 do not consider the list of rational decisions the dietary-restricted go through in the face of institutional inadequacy (I'm hungry; I have class in 15 minutes; there's no other food I can eat), nor the extraordinary number of times in a day students adjust their

schedules to procure safe food. Many students in our sample were resourceful and effective at finding safe, appropriate food and advocating for themselves, if not also for others. All knew each dining hall and eatery's food offerings well and frequented places where they could eat. Sean, Cheryl, Eliza, and Lauren spoke of advocating for improved food access for themselves and others, instituting monumental changes such as gluten-free baking, improved labeling, and a dietary-restricted food station. Additionally, Lauren, Sean, Amara, Cheryl, Dave, Eliza, and Maria also spoke of avoiding foods, sometimes at the risk of social ostracism. Alternately, they sometimes went to great lengths to host their own event with safe, appropriate food. These students were not the risk-takers of biomedical studies on dietary-restrictions; they protected their health and overall well-being.

Our study also recognizes that college is a unique environment specifically designed for students to live in, learn, and mature. In such an environment, mass-meal provision serves many purposes. At the most basic level, it is an efficient institutional method for providing students with the sustenance they need to physically survive. Additionally, it is a convenience students enjoy in order to invest their time in studying and developing extracurricular interests. Finally, mealtimes are an opportunity to connect socially. Given that every student comes to college without a social network, our data illustrate how important institutional mealtimes are for students to build new support networks to replace the ones they left behind. When colleges don't provide for all diets at common mealtimes, *they put students at risk* for isolation. Visibly marking students as different by forcing them to eat elsewhere, to ask about ingredients, or to ask for alternative food has the potential to overlap with discourses that pathologize dietary restrictions, thus emboldening conversations such as Eliza's when she asked for soy milk (and again, when her veganism was construed as a way to get attention), Sean's when he was teased with a nut, and Amara's when she was pressed for intimate personal details about her illness. Such exchanges coerce some students into silence about their dietary restrictions, which limits their ability to access safe, appropriate food.

Inconsistent institutional responses can also ostracize students. As Lauren explained, one day she did not go to a picnic and concert at College three because there would not have been food that she could have eaten. Her friend Maddy later told her that there actually was allergen-free and vegan food prepared that Lauren could have had. But Lauren's reply was that this is not always the case, so how were students with restrictions to have known? Not unlike some of the other stories we have told, Lauren missed this social event because of the unlikelihood that she would have had safe food access. While the majority of students in our study said that they would simply avoid food and drink at special events that did not cater to their dietary needs, this does not account for all scenarios. When students are running between classes and extracurricular activities, they may only have a limited amount of time for meals and therefore cannot risk wasting time at an event where appropriate food is unlikely to be found.

Finally, inadequate institutional response to dietary restrictions has the potential to put students at risk for failure. Administrator Jane offered evidence of how the health problems encountered by students when they eat the wrong foods can have serious, long-term consequences for their academic work and overall schedule: "Those kind of things can affect you pretty drastically and mess up a whole week of school and then, that in and of itself can mess up the next month if that was a critical week...You can just get behind on academic, on everything so quickly." She shared a few stories of students involved in peer mentor training or

other activities who came into contact with specific allergens and were then unable to participate in many special events.

Leftovers: Food Inaccessibility Remains

Even though the five colleges in our study have genuinely good intentions and are responsive to student requests, interlocutors' experiences confirm that institutionalized policies and procedures that guarantee safe, appropriate food access to dietary-restricted students are lacking. Our research suggests the following reforms to meet the DOJ's benchmark of "food access":

- Colleges offer formal pathways for, and are responsive to, student input into food access issues, since students rely on the institution for food and our study indicates that their recommendations inspire the most effective change;
- Dining halls provide guaranteed safe food options daily for restricted diets, such as vegan and vegetarian dishes and food from each food group (protein, carbohydrate, fruits & vegetables, fats & oils) free of gluten and the US-FDA's Top Eight Allergens;
- Dining halls implement procedural consistency by training specific employees in dietary-restricted food preparation. Only these employees are authorized to prepare dietary-restricted menus;
- Dietary-restricted food is prepared in a dedicated space, with dedicated equipment, separate from other food;
- Colleges include anaphylactic students in their conversation pathways to implement policies that protect against accidental cross-contamination, the effects of which could be fatal;
- Menus utilize simple, whole foods, with minimal ingredients. Pre-packaged, processed foods are avoided;
- Labeling is accurate, reliable, and comprehensive of ingredients and allergens;
- Residential life policies support: primary and backup food access with appropriate meal plans and take-out options; student placement in dormitories with kitchens; and small appliance allowances for dormitory food storage and preparation.

The application of these reforms on college campuses has the potential to provide safe, social food access for dietary-restricted students, which will in turn improve their quality of life.

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Occupy Wall Street: A Hybrid Counterpublic

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Abstract

In this article, I explore the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) Movement in New York City as a hybrid counterpublic. I conducted research on OWS during its encampment at Liberty Plaza from September-November 2011 to understand its membership, emergence, and growth. I describe OWS as a hybrid counterpublic mediated by discourse that is both physically, through the use of bodily performance, and virtually, through social media channels online, circulated. These discursive forms embody the ideological principles of decentralization of power, collective participation, and individual agency. OWS created innovative spaces, practices, and temporalities to extend the existing social architecture and modes of communication, effecting democratic deliberation through affective performance. The hybridity of this constructed social space has allowed for novel sensorial experiences that expand and reinforce engagement with the OWS counterpublic. I propose that OWS has allowed for significant social actors to emerge and become publicly salient while subverting hegemonic institutions of the state and dominant civil society through the redefinition of citizenship. Since the eviction of the Liberty Plaza encampment, OWS in New York City has lost some traction. This signifies the integral symbiosis between the virtual and physical discursive realms of the movement's existence and sustainability. Furthermore, this analysis of the OWS movement demonstrates the cultural emergence of a new hybrid counterpublic that mediates the way Americans engage with politics, dissent, and everyday life.

Keywords: Counterpublics, sensorial hybridity, affective performance

Introduction

On September 17th, 2011, the transformation of Zuccotti Park, located in the heart of New York City's financial district, into the Liberty Plaza¹ encampment marks the birth of the Occupy Wall Street Movement (OWS), a protest stemming from discontent with national economic and political conditions. The OWS intends to draw specific attention to the imbalance of wealth distribution in the United States and to the heavy influence of Wall Street on national legislation. The movement evolved quickly as labor organizers, ethnic minorities, student groups, and social activists of all kinds, across the political and social spectrum, participated and identified themselves under the address of the 99%. For example, on October 15th, 2011, an OWS "Day of Action,"² thousands of protesters marched and collected in New York City's iconic Times Square. The chorus of the crowd rhythmically chanted in unison, "We are the 99%," as they filled the streets. Looking out onto the makeup of the protesters, signs

¹ Zuccotti Park was renamed Liberty Plaza by Occupiers after the establishment of the OWS encampment.

² OWS, from its central hub of Zuccotti Park, organized multiple "Days of Action," where members from all over the city were encouraged to join mass demonstrations in public locations all over New York City.

representing diverse issues are held up high: the unemployment rate, gay marriage, American Indian Rights, and environmental concerns. Despite the infinite number of political positions and grievances this unique pastiche of participation nonetheless represents a single cohesive social force.

OWS in New York City asserted its presence through the establishment of the Liberty Plaza encampment, mass demonstrations, and also through online social media. These modes of action exemplified, much like the revolutions of Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia, the current historical moment of dissent, characterized by the partnership of physical and online communication technologies to incite change. Physical forums for deliberation, such as daily General Assembly meetings,³ were established to regulate everyday occupation and to discuss goals for the movement. Simultaneously, Twitter, Facebook, Wikispaces and the Global Revolution video livestream⁴ acted as important tools for communication and planning online. This duality of communication was crucial to OWS as demonstrated by the loss of its physical manifestation. OWS in New York City saw a drastic decrease in mobilization and activity after the physical eviction of the Liberty Plaza encampment by New York City authorities in November of 2011. This displacement of the movement from its geographic hub has shed light on the integral dynamic between the activities and interactions within the physical encampment and those online, thus blurring its virtual-physical distinction.

To unpack the dynamics between the physical and virtual aspects of OWS, it is important to understand in what ways OWS members engage with them. In this article I identify the characteristics of the OWS movement that contribute to the mobilization of such an amorphous membership. In order to do this, I will discuss the creation of the social space and the regulating practices through which OWS philosophies and actions circulated. OWS developed a flow of its discourse through the intersection of social and virtual space that dynamically constructed and shaped the movement.

I argue that OWS exists as a counterpublic, realized and mediated by innovative forms of discourse that permeate both physical and virtual space. Furthermore, I will propose that this movement, therefore, exists in a hybrid social space, embodying both online culture and physical experience. This embodiment permits a unique affective performance – a visceral mode of demonstrating membership to OWS as well as sensory communication to encourage individuals to engage with OWS. This sort of discursive performance does not utilize conventional modes of public address, such as text, but rather uses collective visuals, sound-making, and environmental conditions to convey their message through sensory experiences. Within this space, the performance of OWS practices, which often embody the ideological concepts of decentralization of power and inclusive participation, facilitate unique and engaging sensory experiences. This social space fosters practices of deliberation and discussion that redefines what it means to be a democratic citizen. Ultimately, the circulation of and engagement with the OWS discourses demonstrates the power of new discursive technologies, both online and within the physical world, to subvert hegemonic forces. The

³ General Assembly meetings are daily deliberative forums developed to serve the needs of Occupiers and to make decisions regarding the trajectory of the movement.

⁴ The Global Revolution Channel on livestream was established along with the physical encampment and provided a live video feed of Liberty Plaza, as well as, larger OWS demonstrations. See <http://www.livestream.com/globalrevolution>.

hybrid discursive space of OWS, through the affective and deliberative performance of its counterpublic, does not attempt to merely reform the political influence and agency of the public sphere, but transform it.

Counterpublics, Circulation, and Agency

The theoretical conversation surrounding the emergence of a public captures how civil society was historically constructed and described. However, my analysis of OWS challenges this traditional way to view a public force. Modernist analysis of the emergence of civil society and the public sphere has identified new possibilities for democracy through the discursive participation of a plurality of individuals (Habermas 1989). Many of these discussions are rooted in the obscured and shifting relationships between the private and public sphere, as well as, the relationship between civil society and the state. Jürgen Habermas, in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, defined the public sphere of civil society as “an arena of deliberative exchange in which rational-critical arguments, rather than mere inherited ideals of personal statuses, could determine agreements and actions” (1989:23). The success of this public sphere depends on the autonomous organization of individual actors within civil society through rational-critical and influential discourse. This emergence of the modern public sphere, as independent from the state, is shaped by the participatory discourse mediated by the circulation of and access to mass media (Habermas 1989). While, rational-critical discourse may have been the mode of participation in civil society in the past, I argue that today, the OWS movement offers a more viscerally-charged discourse to act within civil society.

Much of this article applies a reading of Michael Warner’s, *Publics and Counterpublics* (2002), which builds on Habermas’s claim that accessible and circulating forms of textual discourse construct the public sphere and its actors. However, Warner distinguishes between *the* public and *a* public, arguing that the public sphere is comprised of many distinct publics that are self-organized and independent from the state or other preexisting hegemonic institutions. A public is thereby defined as any social space created by the reflexive circulation of discourse (Warner 2002). The characteristics of a public, according to Warner, are thus important to the construction of our social world.

Furthermore, according to Warner, the discourses of a public are the sources from which the social conditions of its existence are derived. The members of a public are strangers related only through their participation in its discourse. Warner goes on to claim that attention to this discourse is the “principal sorting category by which members and nonmembers are discriminated” (2002:87). Attention, in this sense, implies that it is through an engagement with, and not necessarily the subscription to the specific group or cause for an individual to be part of a public.

The engagement of members with a public’s discourse is dependent on its circulation. According to Benjamin Lee et al. (2002), “circulation is a cultural process with its own forms of abstraction, evaluation, and constraint, which are created by the interactions between specific types of circulating forms and the interpretive communities built around them” (2002: 3). To this effect, the circulatory architecture within a social space — that is the preexisting modes and channels of communication — mediates the creation and practice of novel discursive forms that can summon individual actors into a public. As discussed by Dilip Gaonkar and Elizabeth Povinelli (2003), the dynamics of national, transnational, and subnational public life cannot be

truly engaged without understanding that [circulatory] “flows and forms” are integrally related. As Habermas (1989) claims, a distinctive culture of circulation, which addressed an indefinite public through mass media laid the foundation for democratic ideas. This allowed the critiques of public opinion to have an impact on authoritative bodies like the state. However, forms of circulation encouraging stranger sociability and deliberative discourse did not occur solely because they engaged a public, but also because they captivated one (Goankar et. al 2003; Wedeen 2008). The notion of captivation thus leads to forms of circulation that expose the limitations of rational discourse when compared to the power of alternative discursive performance.

Warner discusses the potentials for discursive performance through his analysis of counterpublics, claiming that “the poetic functions of both language and corporeal expressivity” are important to the construction of their social imaginary (2002:106). The poetic/ expressive character of counterpublic discourse emerges from its self-conscious status as subordinate to a dominant public force. Warner distinguishes a counterpublic as one that is “formed by their conflict with the norms and context of their cultural environment” (2002: 115). Because it emerges through situations of conflict or of injustice, a counterpublic has a much stronger tie to the ways its members form and transform their roles as social actors. Furthermore, the protocols of discourse and debate within a counterpublic remain open to affective and expressive dimensions of language (Warner 2002). In this sense, the address of a counterpublic is not extended to an indefinite public, but only to individuals socially marked by their capacity to participate in this alternative discursive expression —one that engages its membership through visceral experience.

The participation of a counterpublic is a collective project of world making that may intend to transform the public sphere. It, therefore, allows for new discursive forms to emerge, many that are not limited to rational-critical discourse, which are posited in opposition to the hegemonic order of the state. Warner (2002) highlights that counterpublic discourse incites tension between itself and the state, as well as the dominant publics; it challenges the pragmatics of the public sphere, described by Habermas, through discursive forms that “embody sociability, affect and play” (Warner 2002).

This discursive performance works to create novel spaces, practices and temporalities that expand the existing social architecture —the social channels that mediate discourse— that foster democratic deliberation. In her book, *Peripheral Visions*, Lisa Wedeen (2008) explores how everyday practices of deliberation can also be considered democratic action, although they may be outside of the institutionalized procedures of the state, such as voting. Wedeen, as well as Warner (2002), would argue that within a self-organized discursive public, individuals are actively engaging in deliberative practices of speaking, writing, and thinking. These practices allow them to acquire a sense of belonging and individual agency. Using the Derridian understanding of performativity, referring to repeated practices, Wedeen (2008) explains the formation of the self as a “democratic subject.” This performance within the public sphere creates, what Wedeen claims is, the “substance of participatory politics” through social interactions of deliberation, thus implying new forms of citizenship. It is through the interactions of these individual actors that group identification is articulated and imagined into existence (Wedeen 2008).

Although this participatory performance may allow individuals to realize themselves as agentive subjects, Warner (2002) claims that the focus of counterpublic circulation on

performance arenas, rather than textual forms of discourse, that can be disseminated to an indefinite public, limit their potential for agency because they do not adapt to the practices of rational critical discourse. While agency may be assigned to more dominant publics through the formulation of sovereign opinions that act upon civil society and the state, Warner writes, “counterpublics may not be attributed with the same force of agency because we do not inhabit a culture with different language ideology, a different social imaginary that can allow a counterpublic discourse to hold salience, power and decisiveness” (2002:123). The intent of the counterpublic performance is therefore, rooted in the transformation of the public sphere and its relationship to hegemonic systems (Warner 2002:124).

Public discursive space, forms of circulation, and agency dictate the ways modern social movements communicate their message. There is a unique tension that emerges surrounding the forms of discourse of a social movement because of the diverging notions of what it means to be a collective actor in the public sphere. OWS, if categorized as a public, a social movement that adheres to dominant public discourse, is ascribed with an expectation that it should intend to directly impact the state through public opinion and proposed policy reform. However, the discursive space of OWS is not mediated by the conventional systems of opinion and reform of the public sphere. My analysis of OWS instead offers insight into the emergence of novel discursive forms through affective and deliberative performance as a counterpublic.

The OWS counterpublic mediates itself –meaning it constructs and transforms its actions and ideas– through the circulation of novel cultural forms of social discourse that 1) reflect the ideological principles of their social imaginary and 2) display the affective performance of this social imaginary. This performance uses spectacle, ritual, and sensory stimulation to circulate discourse. The forms of OWS discourse thereby embody egalitarian and collective participation within their deliberative practices. The construction of the OWS social space is dependent on the circulation and performance of this discourse, a phenomenon exemplified by the Liberty Plaza encampment. The performative nature and the affective engagement involved in OWS discourse allows for individual participants to realize themselves as social and political actors, outside the preexisting frameworks of civil society. This phenomenon potentially redefines democratic practice and citizenship. Ultimately, the OWS counterpublic subverts hegemonic norms of the state and the dominant public sphere through its attempt to demonstrate an alternative social and political existence.

Methods

Data for this article was collected over a period of two months of fieldwork from September-November 2011 at the site of Liberty Plaza. I employed ethnographic methods of participant observation and formal and informal interviewing. In total, I conducted fifteen formal interviews and over forty informal recorded conversations. I visited Zuccotti Park daily along with a week of living in the encampment. This allowed me to participate in the everyday life and practice of the OWS NYC. I also participated in large scale marches organized by OWS. During my time in Zuccotti Park, I became involved as a moderator in the OWS Think Tank, a station and working group located within the park that acted as an open space for topical discussion and the democratic sharing of opinions by all. I was active in online forums by posting, replying, and following key handles on Twitter. I also joined OWS related Facebook groups and contributed to many google doc and wiki document forums affiliated with the Think Tank and

other working groups such as the Women's Working Group. During this time, the regular media coverage of the Liberty Plaza encampment greatly influenced the trajectory of the movement and therefore, proved vital to understanding its development. I used news coverage as secondary sources and incorporated some news stories as fieldwork examples.

Hybrid Occupation: The Symbiosis of the Virtual and the Physical

In this section I explore how the OWS movement is dependent on the symbiotic relationship between virtual and physical modes of discourse. I argue that these modes are intertwined and provide a seamless discursive space in which the movement can exist. As Brigitte Jordan writes, "people now exist in a hybrid world where the boundaries between what is physical and what is digital continue to fade...consciousness is to some extent shared between an offline physical and an online virtual self" (2009:26). This cultural phenomenon results in major shifts in social landscape and the concept of space. It is important to understand the online, communication technologies that have allowed for this phenomenon that provide a virtual space for alternative worldviews, democratic practices, and novel social actors to emerge and gain salience. The use of these technologies by OWS demonstrated their potential to challenge institutionalized hegemonic order. Furthermore, OWS created an arena for dissent through merging the use of online technology with that of physical presence. Within this constructed space, novel discursive forms, embodying the deliberative and performative characteristics of the counterpublic imaginary, circulate seamlessly within and through the virtual and physical worlds.

It is important to first explore how digital media has altered and transformed modes of activism. During a lecture, entitled, "Social Movements in the Age of the Internet," given at the London School of Economics, Manuel Castells (2011) described the capacity of institutionalized power to shape the internalized norms of our society through the mediation of everyday sensory experiences. Until the advent of accessible, mass communication technology, any alternative view of social existence could not circumvent these established channels of mediation. Castells (2011) goes on to state that mass communication offers the potential to create autonomous networks, which bypass that of the government, of corporations, and of the mass media in power. The mediation of public discourse through novel technologies therefore challenges the hegemonic norms through a transformation of our daily sensory interactions.

As Gabriella Coleman writes, uses of digital media have cultivated new modes of communication that have "reorganized social perceptions and forms of self-awareness, and established collective interests, institutions, and life projects" (2010:72). Social media technology has provided a digital platform for the growth of communicative interaction between large portions of the global populous through user-generated content. These technologies are furthermore discursive spaces where creativity and connectivity can facilitate democratic participation (Coleman 2010). Therefore, in accordance with Kate Milberry (2009), the use of online modes of democratic practice implies a dialectical relation between the technological and the social. Milberry writes, "the creation of community through democratic practice in cyberspace prefigures alternative conceptions of social organization offline" (2009: 36). Milberry suggests that alternative, democratic social spaces, such as the OWS counterpublic, are physical projections derived from online cultural practices. However, I propose that within the context of OWS, the relationship between the culture and practice in

Liberty Plaza is not merely influenced by that of the online world, but rather, there exists a hybridity where physical space and virtual develop together and where they struggle to exist as salient without each other. This spatial hybridity is a powerful force in the everyday sensory experience of the OWS counterpublic that has allowed for specific social actors to emerge.

The virtual realm has a physical existence in Liberty Plaza through the electronic infrastructure of mobile technologies and textual/visual displays that circulate online discourse within the physical public. The physical realm exists in virtual space through the circulation of physical experiences using mediated online communication, thereby transcending its own spatial boundaries to engage a virtual public. The flows and forms of circulation of OWS has revealed a historical moment where interplay between the physical space of the movement, localized around Liberty Plaza, and the virtual space of the movement, using online communication tools, places the OWS movement in a hybrid social space.

To understand the hybridity of the OWS counterpublic, we must first acknowledge the common characteristics of the social spaces in which these forms of discourse exist and circulate. I argue that the discursive space offered online and within Zuccotti Park share a common, even purposeful, ambivalence with regards to ownership, regulation, and potential for public engagement. In the case of online technology there is an anxiety among online users that has emerged as to whether these technologies will be potentially liberating outlets for the public or if they will act as a regulatory resource for preexisting hegemonic institutions. In other words, when a virtual space emerges that shows promise for the transformation of civic participation and democratic development, it can fortify the social imaginary of a counterpublic, but also still remains vulnerable to authoritarian or commercial domination (Rheingold 1993). By virtue of this tension, as Milberry (2009) claims, technology is inherently political, both in its design and in its use.

The creation and distinction of private and public physical space is also inherently political. In a sense, the same social tension that surrounds technological advents online, also apply to privately owned public space, as in the case of Zuccotti Park. The question being: will this space ultimately be controlled by state authority, by corporate powers, or by public citizens? I propose that the ambivalent nature of a privately owned-public space — an ambivalence stemming from the liberating and oppressive potential they possess — such as Zuccotti Park, is analogous to that of cyberspace development. This plays a role in the organic fusion of these social spaces in order to create a hybrid, discursive architecture for the OWS counterpublic. Just as the virtual realm and its discursive tools existed prior to the emergence of OWS, the physical space also existed before the Liberty Plaza encampment was established. This specific urban space lent itself to the OWS occupation. For this reason, it is important to understand its background as an urban space, as well as, how it had been spatially transformed through the social interactions and affective performance of residing Occupiers. In this sense, Liberty Plaza was not just a physical location for OWS; but moreover, it emerged as the physical manifestation of the OWS social imaginary.

Liberty Plaza: The Production and Construction of Physical Space

OWS allows for the analysis of a crucial link between dissent and the use of urban public space. The role of Zuccotti Park, a privately-owned public space very close to the New York Stock Exchange provided both a physical space to act but also represented a social imaginary that created and mediated discursive circulation. The creation of the encampment at

Liberty Plaza allows for the analysis of the interplay between what Setha Low refers to as the "social production" of space and the "social construction" of space (1995: 22). Low makes an important distinction between the two, claiming that social production of space is "the physical creation of the material setting," while the social construction of space described "the phenomenological and symbolic experience of space as mediated by social processes and activities" (Low 2002: 24). Social construction, therefore, implies that the daily use of the material settings within a space transforms it. Human social interactions, thereby, allow the space itself to gain a semiotic significance apart from its physical existence.

The circumstance surrounding the social production of Zuccotti Park shaped its role as the central and iconic location of the OWS. This discussion raises questions about urban public space regarding its ownership, access, and regulation. According to Marina Peterson (2006), the notion of public property understood as accessible and open to all, is undermined by quasi-public spaces, such as Zuccotti Park. These quasi-public spaces are mediated by negotiations between the state and the private sector. Peterson argues that this new form of ambiguous, privatized-public space impedes and thereby, transforms the relationship between citizen and state. According to Peterson (2006) and Low (1995), these kinds of spaces deny certain traits of citizenship, that public spaces should ideally include, such as, heterogeneity, open critique, and equality, therefore, claiming that privatized-public spaces limit citizen use and access.

The existence of Zuccotti Park as a privatized-public space is important to understanding its use for the OWS movement. A brief history of the park is helpful for understanding its role in OWS. In 1968, the building developers of Brookfield Office Properties, a commercial, real estate company headquartered in NYC, was contractually obligated by the state to build an adjacent public park to provide an open space within the dense neighborhood along with the construction of their sixty-story high rise. Zuccotti Park was opened as a privatized-public space. According to the city, Zuccotti's owner, Brookfield Office Properties, is considered responsible for enacting reasonable rules of conduct for the park. They were responsible for the enforcement of specific "social inclusions and exclusions organized around proper and improper use of the plaza" (Peterson 2006:364). Interestingly enough, Zuccotti Park was considered the ideal location for the movement to situate, according to the members of OWS's Tactical Committee, because of the very fact that it was a privately-owned public space located in the financial district. This decision was based on 1) the ambivalence over who is in fact the regulatory authorities of the space and 2) the association of the space with the corporate sector, thus providing a stronger message of dissent against corporate control over civil action.

The regulatory freedom possessed by the private owner can passively permit the use of the space for protest and demonstration. Bruce D'Arcus describes, "the relation between public space and protest is figured through legal arrangements that sanction dissent by controlling its expression, allowing it to take place in particular times and spaces with permission from and under the watchful eye of the state" (2006: 45). According to zoning law, the city of New York is permitted to close, lock, and prevent activities in public parks after a decided curfew. However, because Zuccotti Park is a corporate plaza, it was open for 24/7 recreation. In this particular case, the privatized-public space offered more freedom than the state-regulated public space.

Protest and dissent are often considered defining features of the democratic ideal of a public space. However, dissenting activity that does occur in privatized-public spaces creates an ambiguity between the social ownership of the space, drawing attention to the façade of a public space that is in fact mediated by the private sector (Peterson 2006). In this sense, the use of a privatized-public space by OWS directly challenged the relationship between the state and the market that the park represents. In fact, it is a partnership between the state and the private sector that is seen as the source of injustice in the eyes of the OWS counterpublic.

An occupation, such as Liberty Plaza, is even more effective when democratic ideals are expressed within a privatized-public space; the encampment's existence exposes the regulatory ambiguity between actors of the state (the NYC government) and the corporate sector. The occupation of this space for OWS can be seen as an assertion of democratic citizenship, a reclamation of that privatized-public space as one that not only serves the public, but moreover a counterpublic — a novel democratic imaginary.

Liberty Plaza demonstrates the ways people, as social agents, construct their own realities and attendant meanings based on their daily life within this public-space. The small confines of Zuccotti Park developed into a fully functioning encampment community. The Western side of the park was filled with about 70 tents, which were separated by specific self-identifying camps. Throughout the center and the eastern portion of Liberty Plaza, were desks and stations set up to provide services for the OWS community that includes: The Kitchen, where food is prepared and shared, The People's Library, where individuals can trade, lend, and donate books, An Arts and Culture Station, where crafts, music and art of all sorts can be circulated as well as a Medical Station, which provides aid for minor health ailments.

These stations, one by one, emerged through the discussions of working groups and decisions made by the OWS General Assembly. Their development was directly concerned with the growth and needs of the encampment residents. I argue that the emergence of these systems demonstrate the integral role of the park as the collective focus, the object of political deliberation for the movement, thereby allowing for an experiment in governance through counterpublic performance.

The People's Think Tank: Democratic Performance in Liberty Plaza

Performative political participation was crucial to the existence of OWS in the public sphere. The Zuccotti Park encampment, the physical hub of the OWS movement in NYC, was the regular site of this deliberative performance. In accordance with Wedeen's (2008) analysis, these interactions are democratic practices; therefore, they produce democratic persons outside of the context and structure of the state. As one walks through the camp, there are infinite opportunities to engage with the counterpublic through dialogue. There are circles of heated conversations made up of individuals whose diverse backgrounds and experiences animate debate. This spontaneous dialogue is mediated by the performative actions of each member, as they address an audience of strangers.

A more routine form of these discussions occurs at a designated station within the park called, The People's Think Tank. I worked closely with the members of the Think Tank, who held an open discussion forum three times a day to reflect and respond to general themes or events pertinent to the movement. The Think Tank organizers describe their participants in their mission statement: Unlike other more conventional platforms for the exchange of ideas, the People's Think Tank discussions are not powered by the voices of experts, celebrities,

prominent public figures or more active participants in the movement (those whose voices already gain an audience via more conventional social channels) but by anyone present who wishes to stop, contribute and listen (Occupy Movement Think Tank 2011). Although the OWS Think Tank is an organized forum of collective discussion, it has emerged within the context and space of the movement as an important cultural form of OWS participation, one that explicitly ascribes a temporary equality among its participants. This group is conducted in this manner and espouses this philosophy in order to embody equality, one of the movement's attempted goals.

One such Think Tank discussion, surrounding the theme of celebrity presence within the park, incited an effusive debate that exposed a possible conflict between the principles and practices of the counterpublic and the potential to improve the movement's popularity, public appeal, and fundraising through celebrity involvement. Many argued that the presence of celebrities within the park would disturb day-to-day activities, as well as, undermine the movement because of their wealth and status. Others acknowledged that this antagonizing attitude towards celebrity inclusion was hypocritical, claiming that celebrities should be able to participate in the movement as long as they are not treated or do not expect to be treated differently than the rest of the OWS community. Tim, a Think Tank founder/ moderator, eventually asserted, "Even if celebrity presence transforms the dynamics within the park, I think that it is the responsibility of the Think Tank to make sure all voices are equally heard." Although the effectiveness of the Think Tank to minimize inequality within their sessions was debatable, the public statements expressing equality created a performative space in which individuals can participate within an imagined egalitarian structure.

This open and public forum facilitates participation through the creation of an egalitarian structure of deliberation. I argue that this process contributes to the creation of an OWS citizen. As Lisa Wedeen describes these forms of discussion give rise to the building of "an agnostically inclined political world" (2008:79). In other words, a political worldview is constructed and maintained through participation in socially and culturally mediated spaces, like the Think Tank, where the assertion of subjective opinions, disagreements and critique encourage democratic performance and the realization of citizenship. While egalitarian participation was certainly touted as the aspiration of this space, it is important to acknowledge that, much like any contemporary democratic environment, certain voices do end up dominating.

Virtual Counterpublic: Collaboration and Communication

As Coleman (2010) describes, activist movements that have emerged in the last two decades have brought to attention the ties between technical decentralization online and the organization and political decentralization offline. OWS exemplifies this notion through the synthesis and the circulation of virtual discourse. Many of these online forms demonstrate the ideological tenants and deliberative practices of the OWS counterpublic: the decentralization of power, the expansion of horizontal networks, and the participatory experience of the individual. In this section I explore wikispaces in order to understand one of the modes of communication that attempts to capture the espoused OWS ideology.

Wikispaces: Sites of Collective Deliberation

Wikispaces act as a medium that fosters deliberative processes within the OWS counterpublic. The OWS working groups use Wikispaces in order to organize and produce collaborative reports and proposals to circulate and share within the OWS counterpublic. Wikis serve as a unique medium for group communication as they work towards the production of a textual work. The wiki, thereby, is a creative space for collaborative authorship. Participants, within this virtual creation of discourse, can openly add and edit content and, therefore, develop a communal sense of ownership and responsibility for the produced text.

Jo was a member of the OWS working group dedicated to addressing issues of psychological trauma and mental health effecting Occupiers residing in Liberty Plaza. He discussed the use of a “Wiki” to compose and publish a magazine entitled, “Mindful Occupation: Rising Up Without Burning Out” to circulate within the encampment. It was intended to increase awareness of the potential psychological effects and struggles that one may experience while living within the Liberty Plaza encampment. Jo said:

The wiki was established so that all the members could contribute their respective pieces of expertise. Being that mental health is a topic that has many varying opinions and that many individuals have different experiences with psychological trauma, it was a real project, one that merited a lot of discussion on the wiki. Most people had a personal connection to the cause, and therefore, were passionate about very specific things. It is definitely a learning experience in compromising, and there was much debate not only regarding content but also with regards to proper conduct when working on a collective wiki. We often had to take a step back and discuss the process of contribution, almost just as much as we discussed what to contribute.

From what Jo had told me in an interview, the collaborating authors were all coming with distinct frames of reference. Jo, a diagnosed schizophrenic and a long time radical mental health activist, approached the content of the work in a politicized manner, focusing on themes such as removing social stigma associated with mental illness and questioning the authority of biomedicine as the arbiter of normalcy. He was joined by nine other collaborating authors; among them were, Dr. K, a prominent psychiatrist who was attempting to organize professional mental healthcare services for Occupiers, and Sami, a social worker, who was concerned with psychological trauma resulting from sexual assault. The deliberations, and ultimately the reconciliations, involved in the co-authorship of this text exposes the Wiki medium as an equalizing force; individual status and identity are not recognized within it, allowing for the process of deliberation to be most important.

As one can see, Wikispaces are a virtual tool appropriated to both enable and reinforce the communicative practices within the OWS counterpublic. The use of Wikis, as a means of creating a text intended for public circulation, encourages the performance of democratic practices, as discussed by Wedeen but through a virtual platform. It not only leads to debate and discussion amongst active members regarding the content at hand, but a meta-discussion regarding the very process of collaboration, and therefore a discussion of participatory democratic practice. Milberry, in her analysis of the Global Justice Movement in the 1990’s describes this democratic phenomenon as, “the wiki way” (2009: 76). Milberry writes: “The wiki social and organizational phenomenon contrasts modern western society and prefigures alternative conceptions of social organizations, making their subversive political implications clear. The process of refining and defending views in a collaborative context leads

to a deeper understanding of complex ideas, an understanding with the potential for application in the ‘real world’” (Milberry 2009:78). The attempted egalitarian structure of the Wikispaces is based on notions of decentralized power and horizontal self-organization, the ideological tenants mediating the discursive performance of the OWS counterpublic. Furthermore, its use to create textual forms allows them to embody the egalitarian and collaborative principles of their production as they circulate through the hybrid social space of OWS. However, it is important to recognize that differential access to the Internet and user understanding plays a role in whom and to what capacity one can participate. While I believe the structures of wikispaces and other mediums of discourse used in OWS may not have been as open and accessible to a mass audience, I do think that the intention to use models embodying equality and open participation is part of creating the OWS social imaginary.

Hybrid Sense and Spectacle

Till this point, I have analytically separated the forms of physical discourse from those of virtual discourse that have emerged within the OWS social space. I organized my analysis this way to draw attention how the ideological project of the OWS counterpublic shapes the discursive forms in physical and virtual realms. These discursive practices allow for the realization of democratic subjects through participation and performance, thus subverting the external frameworks of civic action of the dominant public sphere. While these forms of discourse possess the potential to manifest and circulate in both physical and virtual space, their hybridity is intrinsic to their form and therefore, may not be immediately perceivable.

In the following section I describe the practice of the General Assembly meeting, as it originally was performed during the months of October 2011 and early November. During this time, OWS had gained salience in the larger public sphere as an emerging sociopolitical force. The daily General Assembly meeting held at around 7pm was the forum where working groups, formed around specific needs and issues, presented their proposals to regulate and improve the encampment. These proposals were then left to open discussion by anyone attending the meeting, indiscriminate of their association with OWS, and then they were subject to a popular vote. The meetings conveyed the OWS principles of decentralized power and collective participation. However, the General Assembly did not serve merely as a forum for deliberation, but rather it was an affective spectacle that engaged the public through an overtly hybrid, sensory experience.

The performance of OWS discourse through the multiplicity of mediated communication gestures transforms the sensorial experience of the everyday. Many communicative innovations such as expressive hand signals and the People’s Mic are novel discursive modes that were created within the social space of the OWS counterpublic. Members voice their agreement, disagreement or vehement opposition by using a series of pre-established hand gestures. Fingers facing up and shaking indicates agreement; fingers facing down, disagreement; arms crossed, vehement opposition; a rolling of the index fingers around themselves indicates the urge to move on or hurry. The gestural meaning or the source of their development are never really explained explicitly to those unfamiliar with them, but become intuitively understood by those that engage with it.

A crucial part of this collective experience stems from the use of the People’s Mic to create an affective soundscape through the articulation and repetition of an individual’s rhetoric. In this practice, members of OWS collectively repeat and echo the voice of an

individual. Any member can choose to utilize the People's Mic by shouting "Mic check."⁵ The development of this practice symbolically captures the tension between the regulatory forces of the state and the affective performance of a counterpublic; the People's Mic was a discursive innovation by OWS after city authorities banned the use of bull horns or microphones by OWS in public spaces, a ban that has not previously been applied to public demonstrations. This form of communication, therefore, not only emphasizes the ideological principles of active, collective participation, but also challenges the imposed limitations of the state through its performance.

Charles Hirschkind (2006), in *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Tapes and Islamic Counterpublics*, discusses how new media, in the form of cassette recorded sermons in Egypt enabled a public to be realized through a process of listening that connects the content of the sermons to the political practice of deliberating the common good. To this effect, the People's Mic could be viewed as new media, an innovation exclusive to this counterpublic, through which its existence is realized and reinforced. Furthermore, the manner in which it functions to amplify a single person's voice by the use of collective repetition can be seen as a form of circulation that emphasizes the relevance of individual self-expression in the expansion of collective discourse.

During General Assembly meetings, the messages of the Mic Checks do not only provoke the collective echo, but are transcribed and projected on a large screen. The transcription and video feed of the meetings is furthermore, streamed online where Twitter users and online viewers can comment and interact with the goings on. The practice of the People's Mic during these meetings elicited visceral responses, from all surrounding listeners. In addition to this, Tweets responding to the soundscape produced in Liberty Plaza are projected on a screen and are engaged with during the meeting. There is an added element to this process of discursive interaction; the tweets were not only in immediate response to physical circumstances by the individuals present but were moreover in response to the live video stream of the General Assembly meeting reproduced in real-time online. Twitter thereby acts as the platform for the continuous deliberative democratic practice across actors in the virtual and physical social spaces during these meetings. The auditory, visual, and textual forms of participation transcended physical space and temporal limitations allowing individuals to embody a hybrid discursive presence.

The multiplicity of the virtual and physical modes of expression engages a novel hybrid sensorium. As Talal Asad discusses, the public sphere "is constituted by the sensibilities- memories and aspirations, fears and hopes- of speakers and listeners. And also by the manner in which they exist (and are made to exist) for each other, and by the propensity to act and react in distinctive ways" (2003:185). In this way, the reflexive discourse of a public is dependent on the interplay between these sensibilities. During the OWS General Assembly meetings, the practice of the People's Mic blurs the sensorial distinction between the speaker and listener, as the listener becomes the speaker and in a sense, embodies the speaker's subjective sensibility. The further amplification and dissemination of the People's Mic

⁵ Calling for a "Mic Check" allows one to initiate the use of the People's Mic to address the crowd. An individual can speak and the respondents will subsequently echo to words of the individual. Competing "Mic Checks" often occur, and are often instances where inequality within the OWS community is exposed. The loudest, most prominent voices are often the most heard and echoed.

statements through transcription and transmission online adds a synesthetic form of communication; an individual voice is both an auditory, visual, and virtual experience, thus causing a further ambiguity of roles between, speaker and listener, author and reader, actor and audience. This ambiguity of roles creates a unique, affective experience, where the spectacle of the collective, both online and in the park, becomes the form through which individuals engage with the counterpublic discourse and reinforce its existence.

A crucial discussion surrounding this event is one of public performativity, where a collective form of theater engages both members and nonmembers of the counterpublic, on a sensorial level. I would describe this phenomenon as affective performance – a mode of political and social performance that is both constructed and reinforced by unique sensory experience and expression. As Hirschkind claims, the formation of our political discourses is often influenced by “dispositions outside the purview of consciousness” (2006: 9). That is to say that sensory stimulus may unconsciously be involved in our engagement with a particular public discourse. Elaborating on this notion, the virtual transcription and transmission of these sensory experiences may allude to the development of an alternate sensory ability of hybrid engagement. This hybrid engagement alludes to the symbiotic nature of the physical and virtual presence of the OWS movement.

Conclusion

The discussion of OWS as a hybrid counterpublic has shed some light on its ability to engage such a diverse membership. The OWS movement presents a social space to reimagine society and was an opportunity for individuals to realize themselves as unique social agents through the processes of collective world making. The performance of OWS was a public critique of the institutionalized political system in the United States, as well as, the hegemonic institutions, such as the corporate sector, it is believed to empower. The OWS counterpublic suggests that citizenship, under that system, is marked by complacency and helplessness. Therefore, OWS offered a form of citizenship, through democratic deliberative practice, that incorporates the human elements of affect, creativity, and sociability.

The OWS movement also captures the techno-cultural moment of sensorial hybridity allowing for it to be constantly present in both in the virtual and physical realms of everyday life through its online embodiment of the physical experience and the physical embodiment of the online experience. This discursive and sensorial phenomenon allows for a large number of individuals all over the world to engage with the OWS counterpublic and experience its affective resonance. This would prove to be an interesting way to conceive of the Occupy movements that have emerged all over the United States and globally.

However, as in the case of the Liberty Plaza encampment, the displacement of OWS from its physical existence was the removal of an invaluable portion of its constructed social and circulatory architecture —a loss from which the OWS hybrid counterpublic presence in New York City may not recover. Since the eviction of the encampment by city authorities, the OWS presence significantly changed, and I would argue, diminished. The everyday needs of the encampment allowed for a microcosmic project of governance that embodied the philosophies of the OWS counterpublic. The feedback between the activities within the encampment and the online forms of circulation and discussion was abruptly terminated, thereby sequestering OWS discourse solely to online mediums. The physical manifestation of

the OWS social imaginary was integral to visceral engagement with OWS discourse and without it, the OWS counterpublic is discursively limited.

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Maintenance of Individual Identity in Older Adulthood: Responses to Successful Aging in America

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Abstract

With social, political, and economic conditions in the United States emphasizing individual productivity and self maintenance, there is a new concern for how American elders take care of themselves. In contemporary American culture, optimal models of the aging process—often labeled “Successful Aging” or “Healthy Aging”—emphasize independence, the importance of evading disease and disability, the maintenance of physical and mental facilities, and sustained engagement in social relationships. In this article I argue that my financially-comfortable, well-educated older American informants from Boston and West Palm beach communities respond to notions of Successful Aging by creating and constructing identities as “successful aging persons” that acknowledge a need to accept and adapt to change in later life. My informants creatively and resourcefully strove to create health, activity, and productivity in their own lives; in this way, they remained deeply invested in the American ideals of independence and autonomy. At the same time, many informants emphasized the need to not simply retain health, activity, and a youthful independence, but also to resourcefully adapt to the very real changes of age. In other words, the experiences offered by my informants tended to reflect ways they have appropriated culturally inflected notions of success into their own aging routines. Successful Aging for them became about passing through later life’s stages with poise, intelligence, resourcefulness, and self-sufficiency. Data collection began in the Spring of 2012 when I conducted preliminary interviews and gathered observation notes in a Jewish retirement community in Wellington, Florida; collection continued in Boston through the Spring of 2013. Individual phone interviews, home visits, group discussions, and participation in and observance of older-adult education classes all contributed to the collection of this research data.

Keywords: Aging, gerontology, identity, personhood, Successful Aging

Introduction

When asked, “In what ways do you think you’ve changed or stayed the same over the years,” an older adult informant from the Boston area responded by stating: “Well, hopefully one grows.... I’m really getting older--old--in fact. We all know we’re going to die sometime; this has new meaning now than in the past. There’s a kind of sadness in this recognition. Really, I didn’t choose to be born, and I’m not choosing to die. But I try to acquire some wisdom and understanding—how do I want to be as a person? Certainly one becomes more mature, hopefully.” Within recent decades, an emphasis on appropriate models for aging has emerged in the United States. With social, political, and economic conditions emphasizing individual productivity, there is new concern for not only how we, as a culture, will take care of the elderly population but also for how American elders will take care of themselves. American society—in much gerontological scholarship and popular media discourses—has come to

emphasize some essential factors of “success” in aging: evading disease and disability, maintaining of physical and mental facilities, and sustaining engagement in social relationships. Gerontological scholarship puts forward a model of Successful Aging,¹ also referred to as Active Aging or Healthy Aging, which mirrors these themes emphasizing productivity, activity and self-sufficiency as characteristics of optimal aging.

John W. Rowe and Robert L. Kahn (1998) articulate these notions in a well-known study, which culminated in an appropriately titled book *Successful Aging*. Acknowledging the many factors that “conspire to put one octogenarian on cross-country skis and another in a wheelchair,” as they put it, these scholars aim to move beyond limitations of chronological age and genetic predisposition and clarify the factors by which individuals may retain and enhance their ability to function in later life (Rowe and Kahn 1998: xii). Their notion of Successful Aging involves “the ability to maintain three key behaviors or characteristics: low risk of disease and disease-related disability; high mental and physical function; and active engagement with life....Each factor is important in itself and to some extent independent of the others” (Rowe and Kahn 1998: 38).

With a prescription to successfully age, and sometimes without the abilities or the resources to fill the needs of such a prescription, one essentially has the potential to not succeed. I expected at the onset of this research project that most informants would reject the notion of Successful Aging altogether because of this possibility. However, I was surprised that most of the older adults with whom I spoke actually eagerly espoused the principles described in Successful Aging models and strove to create lives involving health, activity, and productivity. My informants drew upon the creative and resourceful uses of what one has at hand in later life and remained deeply invested in the American ideals of independence and autonomy in their older ages. Therefore, I argue that older Americans respond to notions of Successful Aging by creating and constructing identities as “successful aging persons.” In doing so, they acknowledge individual ability to draw upon American values of independence and autonomy, while also accepting and adapting to change in later life.

My informants spoke about the ways they have adapted culturally inflected notions of success into their own aging routines. Successful Aging for them became about passing through life’s stages with poise, intelligence, resourcefulness, and self-sufficiency. This article first presents notions of success in aging scholarship and critiques of such success models. I then link these models of aging to culturally relevant concepts of identity. Finally, I use my data to discuss how notions of lifelong activity, independence, productivity, and individual agency allowed my informants to reformulate “successful aging” in a way that accommodates the changes they faced in their own lives. With my informants’ expanded definition, I suggest that a more fluid version of what entails success in aging emerges.

Methods

Most dialogue between scholars and critics of Successful Aging comes from academic fields such as psychology and gerontology. I use anthropological methods and theory to expose that which we take for granted as “normal” and discuss these ‘norms’ as particular cultural constructions or views of the world. An anthropological approach to aging in America

¹ I use capital letters throughout the paper when referring to this Successful Aging model, and lowercase letters to discuss how my informants discuss aging successfully.

also sheds light on gerontological material by offering an elder's own voice to better understand how older persons in the United States define successful aging and what it means to age well; this kind of questions how an older person's own definition can potentially both correspond to, and disrupt, public discourses on successful aging.

I conducted my research in two settings. First, I distributed seven surveys and held two open-ended in-depth interviews in an upper-middle class Jewish retirement community outside of West Palm Beach, Florida. I conducted this research while enrolled in an anthropology class at Brandeis University on Aging in Cross-Cultural Perspectives. The following year I collaborated with Dr. Sarah Lamb of Brandeis University to conduct twenty-two additional interviews with middle- and upper-middle class Bostonians in the New England suburbs, which provided most of the material used in this article. Sometimes we interviewed individuals and couples together, and at other time we collected data individually. Though we often recorded many of our interviews and later transcribed the recordings, there were times we simply took notes throughout the in-person interviews. All data collected thus far concentrates on a particular demographic—well-educated, middle-class and upper-middle class men and women who mostly identify as Jewish, although their religious, spiritual, and cultural forms of Jewishness vary.² The ages of our interviewees ranged from sixty-two to eighty-five, while all informants identified as “aging” or “older” and saw themselves as appropriate subjects for this aging-focused study. By talking with and observing informants, as well as participating in lectures and adult learning classes offered at Brandeis's Adult Education center (BOLLI) and other Boston-affiliated older adult initiatives, I collected enough material to juxtapose ideas about aging from gerontological and psychological scholarship with cultural and individual sentiments on older adult life. All names used in this paper are pseudonyms, with identifying information eliminated out of respect for the privacy of our informants.

Scholarly Perspectives on Successful Aging

We view the aged as sick, demented, frail, weak, disabled, powerless, sexless, passive, alone, unhappy, and unable to learn—in short, a rapidly growing mass of irreversibly ill, irretrievably older Americans. To sum up, the elderly are depicted as a figurative ball and chain holding back an otherwise spry collective society. While this image is far from true, evidence that the bias persists is everywhere around us. Media attention to the elderly continues to be focused on their frailty, occasionally interspersed, in recent years, by equally unrealistic presentations of improbably youthful elders (Rowe and Kahn 1998: 12).

From the above quotation it is clear that Rowe and Kahn find fault with the ways we regard older adults in our culture. Rowe and Kahn assume American culture regards older adults with a negative impression of being slow, unproductive, and limited. While the ways older adults perceive *themselves* or continue to construct their own identities is arguably related to how American youth perceives American older adults, Rowe and Kahn argue that

² There were some informants who were not Jewish, and there were others who did not outwardly identify as a practicing Jew or even as a Jewish person at all. There was no specific reason why we interviewed mostly Jewish identifying elders, though more research would need to be conducted to see if the conclusions vary with more of a differentiation in demographics.

older Americans have more control over their independence than younger Americans assume. Though disability plays a role in the lives of many older adults, and may impact a full sense of control in the aging process, Rowe and Kahn argue that disability actually results from three key factors: 1) the impact of disease or often many diseases at once, 2) lifestyle factors, such as exercise and diet, which directly influence physical fitness and risk of disease and 3) biological changes that occur with advancing age—formally known as senescence (1998: 17). Rowe and Kahn imply that the majority of older adults do not have to experience severe disability, for they have the ability to maintain their physical, social, and mental routines. This argument—that older adults can maintain control in later life—is certainly not limited to the scholarship provided by Rowe and Kahn. Successful Aging has become a dominant paradigm in both gerontology and popular discourse. For example, in “Be Fit For Life: A Guide To Successful Aging,” Dr. Steven R. Gamber (2010) writes that “while it is unlikely that a ‘magic potion’ capable of altering the aging process will ever be found, each of us has within our own power the ability to live longer, healthier, more productive and happy lives....we can certainly control many aspects of our own lives” (2010: 1). Such an emerging vision of Successful Aging presents a highly positive and active vision of what it means to live as an older adult. However, the Successful Aging model can also be critiqued. Elders can often experience these regards to aging as prescriptive, and critics of Rowe and Kahn’s model for Successful Aging suggest that these models imply an undesirable alternative of aging: to age *unsuccessfully* or *unproductively* (Gullette 1997). With this notion, older adults can easily expect—and quite often assume—failure in weakness or death as possible and inevitable parts of their aging processes. Therefore, Rowe and Kahn’s Successful Aging model could be reformulated so that success is not only based on maintaining health, an active social life, and a sense of independence and vitality, all of which are values so rooted in American culture.

Other critics address how Successful Aging pays insufficient attention to how each older adult experiences natural changes in later life differently and may reformulate their notions of success accordingly (Martinson 2011). With these standards and criteria for aging in America, the aging model as proposed by Rowe and Kahn has the potential to become a binary pitting success against failure. These models therefore, perhaps unintentionally, exclude those older adults with limitations from relating to the aging community for which these models are created in the first place. What these models neglect is older adults’ culturally-sanctioned ability to redefine and reformulate very individualized aging processes. My argument, then, explores the ways older adults may in fact appropriate culturally enriched notions of success into their aging practices. I suggest that our culture may not always accept the changes that occur in later life, and, as a result, our older adult communities may not feel more inclined to accept them as well. Without this acceptance, our older adults cannot redefine their roles in society for themselves, especially in ways they would deem successful or meaningful. I will explore the concept of identity-making in the next section to discuss the ways my informants, without much knowledge of the literature dedicated to Successful Aging, do in fact fit models of success into their own aging routines and construct new identities as successful older adults.

Relating Selfhood, Identity, and Aging

Theoretical models of personhood support the constructability of identity-making in older adult culture, and allow for an individualized notion of success in the aging practices. Cultural attitudes profoundly inflect the aging process, the way they do theories of personhood;

thus aging well and identity formation in America are influenced by the cultural values of independence and autonomy. Social psychologists Hazel Markus and Shinabu Kitayama (1991) argue that the “western self” is independent, self-contained, and autonomous. They also claim that this model of the Western self is how people relate to the values ingrained within the structures of Western culture: “We suggest that for many cultures of the world, the Western notion of the self as an entity containing significant dispositional attributes, and as detached from the context, is simply not an adequate description of selfhood. Rather, in many construals, the self is viewed as interdependent with the surrounding context, and it is the ‘other’ or the ‘self-in-relation-to-other’ that is focal in individual experience” (Markus and Kitayama: 1991: 225). This particular view of selfhood indeed influences aging ideologies and practices in the United States. Markus and Kitayama understand the imagined “Western Self” to be supposedly autonomous and independent. As indicated by my ethnographic research, older adults are just as concerned with maintaining their independent selves in their later life as they are in their youth. Using this idea, it becomes clear how “independence” and “autonomy,” at any age, are American values. My informants adapt their identity as they attribute success to their aging practices in relation to those values.

Though we imagine ourselves to be autonomous, and though we often act as autonomous beings, we are so influenced by independence as a *cultural value* that we continue to pursue it throughout old age. In other words, while Americans do believe in some type of autonomy, this autonomy is in itself instilled within us by our cultural milieu. Indeed, the ways people in the United States develop their identities are importantly reflected by larger cultural understandings, primarily in the value placed on self-governing. Given this emphasis on independence, it may not be surprising that most of my informants easily qualify their own aging as successful. Identity formation for older Americans relies on their individual utilization of socially constructed models of aging as well as their personal application of such models to their self-positioning within American culture.

Redefining Roles for Older Adults: American Perspectives on Successful Aging

There’s an expression. “Getting old is not for sissies.” That’s true! You have to work on it. As I get older, I get bolder. I’m taking more risks.... I’m eighty-four plus. But in terms of growing older, I never think of myself as eighty-four plus! So maybe for me aging is different: that’s a positive. I feel *very* much alive, very interested and excited.... A downside is a loss of—not identity—but a loss of a functional role to play. I’m no longer a cook, I’m not really a mother now, I’m not a wife. You know, I don’t *have* to do *anything*. I often cook a little if I want to, but I don’t have to do so, as I can eat my meals here. There is no real responsibility that I have.

These words demonstrate how my informants interpreted notions of Successful Aging to encompass American ideals of independence and productivity in their later life changes. Eliana, 84, is an articulate and dynamic woman with short silver hair and a warm smile who lives in an independent apartment in a retirement community in the Boston suburbs. In this quotation, we see how she regretted a “loss of a functional role to play,” when describing her own aging. By underlining a noteworthy absence of purpose, Eliana expressed her own very

American investment in productivity and self-determination throughout older adulthood. Separately, she also conveyed her awareness of the cultural importance placed on maintaining successful aging through an investment in productivity—being active—in our culture. With an inability to identify as “productively” as she once did, she regretted her loss of purposefulness. Her words, then, provided an example for a way many older adults may define the terms for successful aging actively, thereby recognizing its pertinence in society and applying its significance to their routines.

Eliana herself testified to the seeming contradiction that emerged in my research and that forms the crux of my thesis: that older Americans are deeply invested in successfully aging, so much so that they may use culturally sanctioned values to creatively “succeed” even when the literature itself as well as youth-centered American culture would seem to marginalize them as failures. I initially critique the literature concerning Successful Aging for providing too much of a prescription to older adult Americans. However, Eliana actually seemed invested in the notions of Successful Aging proposed by Rowe and Kahn *because* of her grounding in American values, which promote a continuous sense of personhood dependent on productivity. Yet, at the same time, she used the very traits that Successful Aging—and American culture, for that matter—encourages to avoid “failing” at these aging prescriptions. Therefore, she almost paradoxically displayed a culturally sanctioned sovereignty, “scrappiness,” by crafting her own guidelines for success in aging, and by translating what would be considered a prescriptive failure in the literature into success.

I often began in-person interviews by asking my informants to describe Successful Aging as they understand it. Strikingly, most of them offered themselves as examples of successful aging by saying things like “I think it’s what I am doing” and “I work very hard to live that way.” They felt as though the productivity they once maintained easily was something they wanted to continue throughout older adulthood. Additionally, identities involving independence and autonomy through social engagement continued to remain important. Eliana also addresses the ways she considers herself successful at aging:

Personally, I feel like *I’m* successful [at aging]. I’ve kept learning; I haven’t become crotchety; I’ve done things to keep my health up; I’ve reached out, instead of wallowing in sadness [and] when I do feel sad, I get to the phone and call someone. I don’t know—what else is there? I think I’m creative. I often host Shabbat dinner here for my family, and one time I said, this will be a *green* Shabbat, everyone bring something green. So, they all did; they dressed in green clothing and we ate green foods. They see me as fun—it makes life more interesting to be fun! Being open to doing things and having fun: I don’t know, I guess *that’s* successful aging.

Without being directly familiar with Successful Aging literature, Eliana’s words suggested the importance of mental awareness, individual creativity and an active social life. Her emphasis on an ability to change, perhaps refusing the constraints age can impose, was clear when she said “being open to doing things and having fun: I don’t know, I guess *that’s* successful aging.” This sentiment seems vital for her constructing an identity as an older person. Change, for Eliana, became not something that is imposed from the “outside” but rather sought and

valued. With the words “I feel like I’m successfully aging....I think I am creative,” Eliana expressed resourcefulness and a refusal to succumb to sadness over life changes. Success, in Eliana’s way of thinking, became about what one can do with the present; she acted as an individual that can change, risk and evolve—and therefore succeed—in self-care.

What seemed to be added to Rowe and Kahn’s definition of successful aging, as permitted by the American values undergirding this Successful Aging literature, is the ability for older adults to rework definitions of success through an independent and creative initiative. Taking the ideas offered above regarding identity and applying it to my informants, we once again understand that by acknowledging the existence of individual agency in the aging process, older Americans reformat their own identities so that they feel they have successfully aged. Another informant, Mellie, 74, a retired social worker, spoke to this at greater length. She discussed the maintenance of physical health, a strong social life, and an active sense of spirituality as central to her conception of how she is successful at aging: “I haven’t read much about [Successful Aging]. But I have been working very hard to live that way—involved and interested in learning new things. I’m computer literate. I like to do new things. I really enjoy photography a lot. I like to expand myself a little bit.... I don’t want to miss out. I don’t like missing out on anything.”

For Mellie, physical and emotional adaptation in later life was important to be able to successfully age. She suggested that one must have the ability and *desire* to learn new things and, without it, older adults can consider themselves failing at aging. Once again, we see an older adult who actively sought out change as a way to creatively appropriate the aging process to forming her identity. She worked through several different jobs for almost her entire life, and retired not once but two separate times. Needless to say, she valued being seen as a helpful contributor to the world around her. With the words, “I don’t want to miss out,” Mellie confirmed that she now needs to work through various outlets in order to maintain her productivity. No longer did she have any extremely time-consuming responsibilities as worker and mother, and so she needed to construct her new identity as a retiree still interested in learning and connecting to life in the present time (Lynch 2009). She had this desire to take risks and, with this desire, she creatively recast the ability to accept the inevitable changes. She stated:

Having been a social worker for 30 years...it just became part of my DNA to try to make a difference. And I needed something in that. I felt very self-indulgent when I first retired because I was taking classes and I was doing things I wanted to do—travelling, you know—whatever I wanted to do, which I had never done. So something was missing. So I looked for something and I am involved in a volunteer project which I am satisfied with. Also my synagogue has a very active social action group and I do things with them. I’ve done habitat for humanity, Saturday we went to Rosie’s place and cooked lunch.... That really rings my chimes. Things like that.

When she said “it just became part of my DNA to try to make a difference,” we can understand how difficult it was for Mellie to consider a life now drastically different than the one she maintained as a social worker for thirty years. The ability to accept change and even to search it out is an intense form of productivity; after all, this ability is a seeking out of that which is

unknown. The thread of productivity and the active helping of those around her secured Mellie's new identity and allowed her to maintain a sustained sense of selfhood. In older adulthood she needed to take what she had around her—volunteer work, technology, her grandchildren—and integrate them into her day to day routine as an aging adult. In doing so, she admitted to living a very successful life as an aging adult in American culture.

The statements of many other informants reveal a similar sentiment: that actively reconstructing new roles creates happiness in later life as well as a sustained sense of self and identity. These older adults hold similar notions to the ones outlined by Rowe and Kahn and live their lives trying to reformulate health, vibrancy, and engagement into their new identities as older adults. Once again, we see a connection between cultural values of control in independence and the ways my informants apply notions of success to their daily aging routines. Sometimes my informants had to very creatively apply values of productivity and autonomy in order to present an identity as a successful ager.

Judith is one such informant, who exemplifies how sometimes it is essential to reformulate something that would prescriptively be a failure into something positive through recourse to American ideals of independence and autonomy. My advisor and I met Judith, a retired professor in her 70s, at her home for an in-person interview, as she wanted us to see her home as “part of her story.” She greeted us at the door with a welcoming smile and immediately brought us through her comfortable kitchen and into the rather large dining room, where we talked for over an hour over a cup of tea.

Judith spoke a bit differently from other informants. Her background included no spouse or children and instead involved a contentious retirement from a job she loved as well as a battle with cancer, from which she was supposed to die. While most of my informants attributed success in their aging practices to the success they once held in their careers and the family with whom they spend their retirements, Judith instead attested her successful aging to her ability to construct success for herself in the years following her trouble:

It was an early retirement, I was very young, and I was sick. And I don't know really any more if I was sick before I lost the enthusiasm for teaching and they squeezed me out. But it turned out to be an absolute blessing.... I felt like a non-being. And to work that through is one of the privileges of life. I'm not kidding. That is like the most important—to realize you're not *a thing*, you're *a you*—is huge. And not easy....So I feel very lucky. I feel very lucky that I feel so rich on the inside. I mean I don't have enough time in the day.... I've done everything, Ti Chi and Yoga.... from each of these, I've learned how to make my aging better. Simply very easy things like balance. You have to think about it. That takes brain cells. And that astounds me and makes me angry sometimes. I want to be able to have my old self back who can multi-task and run around.....[But] It gives you an example of how I keep looking.

Older adults like Judith may accept such difficult changes and adjust accordingly, if the permission to adapt individually is sanctioned by the very values that build successful aging models. Judith emphasized not only simply maintaining activity as important to aging well, but also the necessity of accepting and adapting to changes in all levels of activity. In this situation, she might have been able to take Rowe and Kahn's formula and easily apply its guidelines,

which reflect American values, to her own terms. However, Rowe and Kahn could consider her unsuccessful in her aging process because she lived without a family, with an early retirement that ended her productivity in the workplace, and a forced active life with an attempt to revive her health. Nevertheless, she appropriated the ideals of independence and productivity to meet her own standards, exercising in a social capacity and offering her time to specific groups of people that gave her life meaning. Judith, who would seem to be a failure, creatively redefined herself by applying her own meanings to “success” through claims of individuality and independence. It is therefore evident that that older adults can identify with American culture as they so choose throughout their later life stages, and continue to formulate their identities accordingly. The American value of independence, and even the creative use of limited resources and capabilities, makes such a reformulating possible and ever the more necessary.

Generalizing Successful Aging: A Conclusion

Notions of Successful Aging in the United States do not have to be prescribed narrowly to older adults. People attain satisfaction in their lives in relation to identity construction processes. American culture emphasizes not only independence, but also some autonomy in defining one’s productive roles and responsibilities. Therefore, remaining independent and yet engaged with family and friends is considered a successful way to construct an identity as an older adult American. My informants, who seem to agree with this claim, offer many different ways to appropriate the American regard for success in aging into their individual lives. Additionally, since American culture grounds Successful Aging practices on American values, a creative Successful Aging built upon independence and autonomy offers a culturally sanctioned interpretation of an otherwise seemingly prescriptive model of aging well.

This paper thus looks at the permutations of Successful Aging in practice through the lens of my informants. These informants reveal that older Americans may use Successful Aging models to maintain a culturally dominant notion of independence in their identity construction, simply because they have their own ideas of how to approach the natural progression of change and adaption in later life. In other words, these informants harnessed the ideology of independence-based success that undergirds prescriptive Successful Aging models, and in doing so they sought to find success in their own, individualized aging processes. Thus, while the scholarship provides a prescription with certain needs to be met in order to succeed at aging, Successful Aging can actually depend instead on how older adults interpret optimal aging and how they choose to apply their interpretations to their later lives. In being able to adjust to the aging process on their own accords—to remain independent, healthy, and active by acknowledging certain changes and limitations—they are able to adapt to accomodate successful aging into their daily routines in culturally understandable, often admirable, ways.

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countless stories about what it means to age in the US. Their desire to spread an awareness of their experiences continuously gave me the passion for conducting this research.

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Book Reviews

An Anthropology of Mothering. Michelle Walks and Naomi McPherson, eds. Bradford: Demeter Press. 2011. 314pp.

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As Michelle Walks and Naomi McPherson note in their useful four field introduction to this edited volume, while mothering increasingly features in anthropological studies, comprehensive edited volumes and journal issues as well as thorough ethnographic monographs of contemporary mothering or parenting are still in their nascent phase. This volume seeks to serve as a contribution to and catalyst for this inchoate field. Refusing to define the term mothering, the editors instead draw attention to the difference between the act of “mothering” and the role or identity of “motherhood,” noting that the focus on “mothering” opens up the possibilities for actors other than those strictly defined as “mothers” and gendered as female. “*Mothering*,” they write, “is about biology *and* culture, bodies *and* being. Moreover, *mothering* is practiced by more than just *mothers*” (p. 19, their emphasis). Yet, as we so often find, women are the most common inhabitants of mothering roles in this volume and cross-culturally.

Despite the documented need for increased scholarship in this arena, the editors and their contributors are anxious to establish what they would call a “motherline” (Miller-Schroeder, p. 67) with previous works in the anthropology of reproduction. In contrast with the edited volumes produced by their foremothers, like Faye Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp’s pioneering *Conceiving the New World Order* (1995), Walks and McPherson’s volume is more wide ranging, engaging more practices and contexts of mothering; however, this expansiveness also limits the ethnographic depth of each individual chapter, most likely due to chapter length limits. The broad swath of chapters range from mother-daughter relationships to mothers’ engagements with health and wellness to the ways in which women are empowered through mothering in socio-cultural contexts including Brazil, Toronto, Massachusetts, China, and Australia. In this way, this volume certainly builds on those earlier feminist studies of reproduction, but also seeks to narrow the focus to an examination of mothering itself.

The importance of the motherline is also evident in the reflexive and intersubjective nature of many of these chapters, where the “I” often takes a prominent role. This is often because the largely female contributors are themselves grappling with their own experiences as mothers. In Shubhangi Vaidya’s chapter on Indian mothers of children with autism, her own experience as the mother of an autistic son informs her ethnography. Likewise, in Kelly Dombroski’s opening chapter, she chronicles her “awkward engagements” with a close friend and informant who is raising a child in difficult circumstances at the same time that Dombroski herself raises her own child. The moments of “friction” (Tsing 2004) where different mothering practices run up against each other produce these awkward but nonetheless productive engagements. In this case, Dombroski is concerned with how her friend Xiao Shi, a mother of an infant living in poverty in urban China, takes up or rejects elements of “North American” or “Western” childrearing practices as they are represented by an American parenting book Xiao

Shi owns and by Dombroski herself. She suggests that Xiao Shi's simultaneous "horror" and "fascination" with Western parenting practices epitomizes the awkward engagements of the contemporary global condition played out on an intimate, interpersonal scale.

The chapters in the volume introduce myriad complexities to the ways that mothering is imagined, but nurturance, care, love, and cultural continuity, all of which are often deified components of mothering cross-culturally, are still featured conspicuously in the contributions. In her chapter on soldiers' mothers in Turkey, Senem Kaptan writes that "mothering does not necessarily promise life, nor does it always provide protection for the children who are at risk" (p. 260), an important insight often missing from the literature on mothering (cf. Scheper-Hughes 1992). Yet, the mothers described in this book seem profoundly concerned with the provision of life and the protection from risk in a global economy where uncertainty and anxiety abound. Thus, in Alanna E.F. Rudzik's chapter on breastfeeding among low-income women in Brazil, mothers who are not promoted as the ideal "good" mother – whether because they are poor or very young – reposition themselves as "good" mothers by breastfeeding their children. These women explain their infant feeding method as the "best" not only because it is biomedically validated but also because it is considered a source of "warmth" and especially "love."

In the effort to complicate ideological – and idealized – representations of mothering, the most effective section of the book is the concluding one entitled "Mothering in the Shadows." In this section, the editors and contributors rightly draw attention to the logics, both implicit and institutionalized, that structure mothering in relation to the state and political economy. The title references both the notion of "shadow motherhood" (p. 270), where mothering duties are performed but simultaneously obscured, and the shadow economy, which operates outside of, but is inextricably bound to, the legitimate economy. Like the "shadow mothering" of au pairs in Chicago (Schultes, Chapter 16), the shadow economy at times props up the legitimate economy. Yet, for those involved in such an economy, like the women described in Monica Tarducci's chapter on adoption in Misiones Province, Argentina, and in Susan Sered and Maureen Norton-Hawk's chapter on criminalized mothers in the U.S., the more significant concern in terms of effectively mothering their children is their own intersection with the state and its criminal apparatus. Thus, Tarducci describes an adoption process from the points of view of both adopting parents and of those women who are giving up their babies for adoption that is "legal but illegitimate" in the media's representation. The media decries "child trafficking," forcing participants to engage in significant discursive work to legitimate their adoption and their mothering. Meanwhile, the formerly incarcerated mothers described in Sered and Norton-Hawk's chapter might be considered both "illegal" and "illegitimate" in the eyes of the state, but nevertheless engage in mothering work as they seek to gain access to their children in foster care, arrange for their children's care, or simply properly nurture the children currently in their care.

In terms of exposing the reader to so many intimate views of mothering cross-culturally, this volume is undoubtedly essential reading for anyone working in reproduction, parenting, and childhood studies and might serve as an effective textbook for a course on reproduction and parenthood or even feminist social science research. Because the volume focuses so heavily on women and mothers, it would be advisable to supplement this reading with texts on men's reproductive issues and fathering practices. The latter is undoubtedly the next frontier for a feminist anthropology of reproduction.

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How to Get Published in Anthropology: A Guide for Students and Young Professionals. Jason E. Miller and Oona Schmid, eds. Lanham: AltaMira Press. 2011. 169pp.

Susan MacDougall
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Certainly many graduate students wish they had a mentor who would entertain endless questions on how, precisely, one goes about publishing and presenting. Co-editors Jason Miller and Oona Schmid's manual *How to Get Published in Anthropology: A Guide for Students and Young Professionals* is a replacement, or supplement, for this kind of mentor. The edited volume offers direct, uncomplicated advice for those unsure about the process of getting their research "out there," and is a key resource for answering questions about professionalism in academia.

Indeed, Miller and Schmid compiled the volume specifically to address the perceived lack of accurate information about publishing offered to graduate students. The book is meant to "reduce stress and uncertainty and increase practical knowledge about how to publish, why to publish, and which publishing efforts will mean the most in the long run" (2011: v). The book is not a general discussion of publishing as a field and experienced scholars seeking reflections on the state of the publishing may not find this volume useful. Rather, it is meant to provide a starting point for those making first attempts at career milestones, and for those seeking a strategic approach to pursuing a career in anthropology. The expansive definition of publishing that the editors adopt makes the book a valuable addition to literature on this topic. Others have dealt with the publication of a monograph (Germano, 2008) or a journal article (Boellstorff, 2008, 2010; Vora & Boellstorff, 2012), but the wide range of avenues Oona and Schmid's volume presents for disseminating one's ideas emphasizes the book's message that publishing is a means of long-term engagement with a scholarly community.

The book is divided into three sections. The first walks readers through five different ways of sharing their work, including conference attendance, presenting a poster or paper, submitting to a journal and publishing a dissertation as a monograph. The second addresses concerns shared by professionals in subfields archaeology, applied and public anthropology, biological and physical anthropology, cultural/social anthropology and ethnography, linguistic anthropology, medical anthropology and visual anthropology. The third addresses issues shared across subfields, including author agreements, copyright, collaboration and navigating the world of online publication.

The chapters stand independently, in the manner of a reference volume. Read as a unit, however, they send the broader message that publishing, conference attendance and perhaps even blogging are all parts of building a career, where one's contributions will eventually be evaluated as a collective. Early-career anthropologists' first forays into publishing are important efforts that ideally will be repeated more or less continuously as one's career progresses. This message has the broader value of encouraging graduate students to think of themselves as professionals, which their PhD programs may or may not do.

One of the text's strengths is that its contributors do not shy away from making forceful statements about publication and its significance for anthropologists and academia generally.

One imagines that it is precisely this sort of guidance that many graduate students are hoping for from their mentors; while lofty discussions of theory are important for intellectual development, the unvarnished imperatives delivered here are a useful reminder that there are other things to consider.

Tom Boellstorff begins his chapter without waffling, advising that, “No matter how good your ideas may be and regardless of the quality of your research, your work will not have the influence it deserves unless you ensure it is published in appropriate journals”(2011: 38). He goes on to offer other, equally un-misunderstandable, advice, including avoiding publishing in edited volumes until tenure and refraining from emailing journal editors and support staff for assistance with online submission systems.

Catherine Besteman’s chapter on Cultural/Social Anthropology and Ethnography is similarly incisive in its outline of how to plan a publication trajectory for early-career scholars on a sociocultural track. Besteman offers advice on all aspects of academic writing for ethnographers, from the stylistic “... avoid filling your narrative with equivocating statements ... even if you are struggling with assuming the voice of authority,” (2011: 91) to the future-oriented proper approach to publishing peer-reviewed articles on material included in the dissertation.

Another strength of the book is the comforting authority that the contributors do not shy away from adopting. By framing the material specifically for student use, Schmidt and Miller have given the writers license to speak with the knowledge of experience, and without the reserve that an advisor might adopt to avoid stifling a student. The result is an invaluable field guide to navigating anthropology as a professional. At times, though, it appears that the contributors assume all graduate students are insecure, anxious and in need of firm guidance. Readers should not be put off by this tone, as a closer read indicates that the advice offered is based on contributors’ personal career trajectories as much as on their experience as mentors. Those experiencing insecurity, anxiety and a need for guidance will likely find *How to Get Published in Anthropology* soothing, but even the most self-assured students will find it useful. Later career professionals may wish to recommend it for their own students’ use.

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I'm Neither Here Nor There: Mexicans' Quotidian Struggles with Migration and Poverty. Patricia Zavella. Durham: Duke University Press. 2011. 352 pp.

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This ethnography documents the daily struggles of poor Mexican immigrants in the United States as they negotiate a complex myriad of constraints surrounding migration and labor processes. Zavella draws on several rich strands of scholarship in her introduction to set out her theoretical framework: transnationalism, globalization, assimilation theory, feminist and queer theory, and the concepts of structure and agency. She deploys these conceptual frameworks against “underclass theory,” which, she argues, highlights poverty and destitution, leads to homogenized, essentialized portrayals of immigrants. This feeds into what she calls the racial nativist discourse perpetuated in the United States against Mexican migrants.

The ethnographic voice, together with the conceptual framework of structure and agency, gives the author space to understand individual reactions to structural constraints, moving away from the victimizing narrative she abhors, while closely examining how the challenges stemming from unequal power dynamics devastate people’s lives. She collected narratives of migration that delve into details of networking, transition routes, smugglers, clashes with border guards, remittances, as well as the complex calculus of choices, aspirations and longings that she suggests run ceaselessly through the mind of the migrant. These stories lead to what she calls “structures of feeling,” where recurring patterns of strong emotion, resulting from the particular socioeconomic positioning of her participants, are identified. The concepts of “peripheral vision” and of “belonging neither here nor there” are core structures of feeling shared by both Mexican migrants and Mexican-Americans. These terms capture the sense of lack of full assimilation to, or belonging in, the dominant society, of marginalization and racialization.

Zavella also takes care to fully draw out the gendered dimension of migration. Her detailed life histories clearly demonstrate how migration impacts men and women differently as they struggle to reconcile their cultural heritage and gender roles of their homeland with the norms and values of American society, which are perceived as comparatively more open and less traditional. The reader wonders whether reconciliation can ever take place satisfactorily, given how the harsh economic circumstances and insecure political climate that these families endure exacerbate such tensions and conflicts. Zavella describes the “divided house,” referring to the fact that in many migrant families, nuclear members are separated due to economic and labor market exigencies, bringing about “melancholia” and “mourning.” She argues that melancholia and mourning are common emotional characteristics of these households, brought about by the continual struggle with homesickness and separation from loved ones (mourning), poverty and the attempt to assimilate in an unwelcoming if not hostile place (melancholia).

Zavella provides a comprehensive overview of immigration and labor policies vis-à-vis Mexican immigrants, highlighting their shifting, arbitrary nature. Such policies are implemented through an uneasy tug-of-war between practical and humanitarian considerations and a powerful and unsettling racial nativist discourse disseminated by media personalities who

portray the United States as under the imminent threat of some sort of takeover by hostile Mexicans. However, she does not place these policies within the globalized context of tightening migration policies and “shrinking” citizenship regimes currently enacted across the globe (Dobrowolsky 2012), which gives the impression that these are regional or national phenomena, disjointed from broader international contexts. It may well be that in the United States, the apparatus of policies and politics surrounding Mexican migration takes on a distinctly brown vs. white, racialized tone, but Zavella stops there, failing to articulate that such racialization in the arena of migration is one distinct, concrete manifestation of a deeper fear of the “Other.” Julia Kristeva, (1991), Hannah Arendt (1994), and Benedict Anderson (1991) are just a few of the scholars who speak eloquently of these fears and imaginaries on a broader, global level and their absence in the text was noticeable.

Furthermore, there is scholarly research that contests accounts of migrants as melancholic victims of circumstances (e.g., Dossa 2004, Nourpanah 2010), arguing that such representation feeds into and reinforces popular representations of migrants, portraying them as suffering, passive victims who lack agency. I would argue that migration, in itself, is not necessarily a negative experience, and need not inevitably lead to “mourning” and “melancholia.” Rather, structural inequalities which bring about exploitation, hardship and suffering must be considered as prime causes of such “structures of feeling.” Although Zavella does a good job in laying out the historic roots of inequalities and vulnerabilities of migrants, the reader is left with the impression that it is migration, in itself, which causes this sorrow and suffering.

Zavella’s final chapter, which shows how these migrant “structures of feeling” discussed above can be artistically and culturally productive, is not quite integrated coherently with the rest of the book. It focuses on the careers of three groups of musicians with Mexican heritage, who have drawn on experiences of migration and borders in their work. Zavella “illustrate[s] how these artists construct cultural memory, a field of contested meanings associated with trauma” (p. 191). Zavella emphasizes that they are not just popular latino stereotypes of wider pop culture but “cultural activists”, embroiled in political controversies. Their lyrics are tributes to the subjugation undergone by these people, as well as capturing the essence of fluidity, complexity and “playfulness” that is one of the compensations of being a migrant. If becoming a migrant brings about some sort of identity crisis and break, their music forges an experience of identity for their listeners, a tapestry of emotion which they can relate and understand, as it reflects and gives meaning to their own daily experiences of hardship, turning it into an art form. Their music has become a voice of the oppressed, affirming the existence of joy, love and art in lives that, in Zavella’s telling, otherwise appear bleak and destitute.

Zavella contextualizes the daily reality of the lives of the working poor Mexican migrants within the current policy debates and historicized accounts of labor market formations and outcomes, while exploring the consequences, racialized subjectivities, fluid family and gender identities, and poverty-struck life trajectories. She develops a complex nuanced ethnographic description of their lives, highlighting regional and local dynamics. Pedagogically speaking, this book would be a useful addition to the recommended reading list of a migration or labour studies course, provided it was presented within a suitable global and theoretical context and could definitely provide material for discussion in an ethnography class.

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Between One and One Another. Michael Jackson. Berkeley: California University Press. 2012. 230 pp.

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I have long been an admirer of Jackson's work: his 2002 book *Politics of Storytelling: Violence, Transgression and Intersubjectivity* revolutionized my thinking about anthropological theory, method and the anthropological project. *Between One and One Another* (2012) is another significant stepping stone in Jackson's continuing argument for the development of an existential anthropology and it reengages with concerns that have been apparent in his writing since at least the late 1980s: phenomenology, intersubjectivity, radical empiricism, experience, behavior, agency, and action, as well as the centrality of ethnographic writing for greater anthropological understanding *and* better theory-building. This book has cross-disciplinary appeal, at minimum because it inspires the reader to rethink theory, method, and the reasons *why* there is an anthropological discipline at all. In thirteen chapters, the book succinctly summarizes the trials, tribulations, and ethics of anthropology and its engagement with the world and the people with whom its knowledge is constructed.

Jackson weaves the chapters together with thoughtful, poetic, and deeply personal reflections on some of his past relationships and associations. We meet various people important in the development of Jackson's thinking and discover how they helped shape his theorizing at the same time that they helped shape his life. Indeed, these relationships are the cornerstones around which the book is structured: the eleven body chapters each focus on a different time, place, person, or theme. Anecdotes from undergraduate study in New Zealand sit beside stories of a family vacation in Greece. The epistemological difficulties with writing about the complexity of life are situated alongside musings on mortality, immortality and the nature of death. Fieldwork in Sierra Leone is juxtaposed with academia in Australia and a childhood in New Zealand. In this book, ethnography meets autobiography and poetry meets philosophy and literature. The very attempt of combining these disparate elements of existence is admirable; because he (mostly) succeeds in this attempt, Jackson makes visible an alternate frame of writing, reading, and thinking about the complexity of human existence.

Preceding and following the body chapters are more generalizable arguments developing the theoretical basis and need for an existential anthropology (Chapter 1: Preamble) and demonstrating methodologically how this anthropological engagement can be practiced (Chapter 13: On the Work and Writing of Ethnography). These are both significant in terms of quality and innovation, and provide a useful introduction and summary for any budding phenomenological or existential anthropologist, as well as for anyone wishing for a relatively light introduction to Jackson's oeuvre.

The focus of these chapters centers on the problems stemming from Jackson's humanistic definition of anthropology as 'the systematic application of analogical thought to a pluralistic universe, a way of understanding the other as oneself in other circumstances' (p.8). Such a definition exemplifies the aims and arguments put forward throughout the book, a book which, in its title and arguments both, explicitly attempts to understand the 'anxious relationship between the will to separate and the will to unite' (p. 20) and 'capture the shifts

among personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal modes of apprehending reality' (p. 21). Jackson further argues that the problem with the standard anthropological focus on cultural uniqueness can blind us to underlying existential universals (p. 2). Thus we must attend to the everyday hopes, fears, and concerns that shape individual existential imperatives in an inherently social world.

Jackson's answer to all these problems lies in ethnographic writing that prioritizes accurate and vivid descriptions of life as locally and individually lived, felt, and experienced (p. 172). For Jackson, this form of ethnographic writing answers the question 'why existential-phenomenological anthropology?' Here it is worth quoting at length Jackson's philosophy for this project:

Rather than the analysis or interpretations of texts, we also look to the contexts in which texts are produced, used, abused, or invoked. Rather than the life of the mind, we also consider the life of the body, the senses, the emotions, the imagination, and...material objects...Rather than assuming that our experience of the world may be directly inferred from the ways in which we represent the world...we focus on the lack of fit, the slippage between our immediate experience and the conceptual forms whereby that experience is mediated. Rather than isolate the human subject as an arbiter of meaning...we switch our attention to what transpires *between* subjects and the ways in which our sense of self is contingent... Rather than speak of stable and indefinable entities...we prefer to deconstruct such categories, exploring the mutable and multifarious character of our actual being-in-the-world...Our focus is the human struggle for being...But life is always lived *within* limits (p.173).

Thus, this book has much to recommend it. Nevertheless, despite the book's interesting structure and provocative arguments, I ultimately found the book's substance somewhat less stimulating than what was promised by the excellent introductory and concluding chapters. The names,¹ theories, and philosophies are familiar from Jackson's other writing. They are also, perhaps, too familiar: the more I read, the more I felt I had read it all before. Indeed, some of the quotes and many of the arguments are repeated elsewhere.² By the end, even the argument on the ethnocentrism of Western epistemologies and the need to ground knowledge in empathetic and embodied understandings of other peoples' lifeworlds seemed somewhat redundant. I remarked earlier that the book serves as an excellent introduction to Jackson's work; to one long familiar with his arguments, the book is considerably less exciting.

Furthermore, 'the book shows a distinctive and disappointing tendency to slip into solipsistic modes of thinking and theorizing. Too often the book seems to be an essay about Jackson rather than anthropology or humanity in general. Too often it seems an autobiography with ethnographic or philosophic elements rather than vice versa. As someone familiar with much of Jackson's recent work, this is unfortunate, as Jackson obviously has the ability to deliver much more.

In the end, one could say that '*Between One and One Another*' is a book about the ontology of human engagement: with life, with the world, with ourselves, with each other; 'Of being a part of and being apart from the world' (p. 2). In this, as always, Jackson delivers. It

¹ R.D. Laing, Henry James, Hannah Arendt, Dewey, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, etc.

² For example, throughout Jackson's other works *Paths toward a clearing* (1989), *At home in the world* (1995), *Minima ethnographica* (1998), and *Existential anthropology* (2005).

also makes a cogent argument for the increasing incorporation of existential anthropology into the disciplinary mainstream. In so doing, Jackson demonstrates the veracity of alternative methods of writing and theorizing. It is just a pity so much seems repeated or unnecessarily self-focused.

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Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description. Tim Ingold. New York: Routledge. 2011. 270 pp.

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Being Alive is a manifesto; Tim Ingold shares his opinion of what anthropology is and can become. For him, anthropology is “the study of human becomings as they unfold within the weave of the world” (p. 9). The author critiques a widespread tendency in scientific experimentation to relate with the world as a realm from which one must detach oneself in order to study it free from subjective biases. For Ingold, such a science is lifeless. *Being Alive* surveys trails for a new paradigm bustling with opportunities for students at the forefront of academic innovation.

In order to revive anthropology and other sciences, Ingold calls for a re-immersion of experimental inquiry and description into the currents of life. He proposes an ‘animic ontology’ that focuses on the primacy of movement and relationality in the processes of life, knowledge and description. With Ingold’s animic ontology, the world we inhabit issues forth as a flow of materials mixing. Living organisms mingle with these materials and other organisms as they participate in the world’s continual self-generation, sustenance, and transformation. This mingling is the process of life itself, a relational movement through space and time.

Organisms lay physical trails in the world as they navigate the movements of their lives. As organisms, Earth and sky mingle their trails interweave, and as a result form the storied fabric of the world. Ingold calls this fabric, undistinguishable from its processes of animation, the *meshwork*. *Meshwork* is a concept that enables scholars to see our planet as a world in whose life we continually participate rather than a distinct surface against which we operate. Ingold distinguishes the *meshwork* from Latour’s (2005) *actor-network theory*. Rather than a network of connected entities animated by agency, Ingold’s world is a tangle of lines whose movement is animacy itself (Ingold, 2011: p.85).

Ingold develops Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) understanding that living bodies are inextricable from the world and its imminence. Like Bergson (1911), Ingold perceives the organism as an “eddy in the current of life” (Ingold 2011: p.13) rather than a bounded isolate. Such perception of life resembles Deleuze and Guattari’s (2004) notion of *haecceity*, according to which organisms are bundles of lines entwined with the world. Hägerstrand (1976) and Ingold see this entwinement as the world’s texture.

Ingold encourages us to learn *with* people and *with* our bodies as we mutually participate in the world’s becoming and meaning. Here movement, knowledge and description are elements of the same process, that of life itself. Rather than transmitted through independent codes, cultural knowledge is continually rediscovered by humans as they creatively mediate other people’s life-stories with their own. Ingold suggests that with the normativization of footwear and chairs, humans have abstracted their bodies from tactile engagement with the world. Said normativization coincides with an epistemology spurred in the 18th century according to which movement is endured for the purpose of reaching a destination where one’s body can rest and so allowing one to think and know. Here thought

and corporeal action are distinguished as mutually exclusive. Such a distinction limits scientific experimentation to controlled environments removed from the dynamic world from which data are abstracted. Many anthropologists go into ‘fields’ in search of objective data to register about people and analyze these upon return home. Data-dependent methodology treats human experience as understandable by analyzing categorizable, self-bounded isolates of registered information. However, the relationally binding lives of humans cannot be dissected into isolates without skewing our understandings of humans and our world.

Being Alive features methodological innovation in promise and in practice. Ingold invites readers to go outside, wet a rock and watch it dry. This experiment helps us perceive the fluidity of material with tactile participation. Ingold also conveys tactility with storytelling and suggests drawing as a descriptive medium with which anthropologists can communicate meaning in trails of gestures attuned with the movements of life. *Being Alive* features many simple, communicative drawings. Writing is drawing symbols. Playing with the layout of letters and words on a page can convey meaning beyond standard linguistics. Ingold posits that the keyboard fails to join the world’s movements. I agree that handwriting is more flexible and improvisatory than typed text, however, I believe the latter can be dynamic. Playing with font, size and spatial positioning frees authors’ creativity in aesthetically complementing printed words. E.g:

u i

This is c n s g ‘This’ is “vague” **This is CLEAR.**
o f n

The animic ontology implies potential paths that can be discovered and explored by students. Such paths include the senses as important ethnographic tools, as encouraged by Sarah Pink (2009). Other paths include storytelling and other media, such as music and videography, as salient pathways of description. Music evokes stories, relationships, emotions and meanings. Video records expansive sensory evidence of reality, and editing communicates stories and highlights their meanings. In tandem, these media are excellent methodological tools. If honest with ourselves as well as the people with whom we live and learn, creative anthropologists can put forth ethnographies in which the public finds unique meanings and inspirations. Such anthropology can help transform the world.

Ingold acclaims the importance of students in crafting anthropological knowledge. *Being Alive* can help students at any level find passion in our discipline and perceive the world in ways favorable to crafting vivid anthropological knowledge. The book is particularly pertinent to students interested in phenomenological, sensorial, and ecological approaches to anthropology, but is worth the read for anyone.

Being Alive is a breath of fresh air. It opens readers up to our world as a dynamic entanglement of lifelines. To live aware of this world is to ride the astonishing crest of the world’s continuous birth. Ingold shares this world with us through enjoyable literary style, well-explained drawings, and tangible experimentation. *Being Alive*’s innovative methodology and paradigm-shifting theories distinguish this book as pedagogically sound and socially pertinent as well as invite us to perceive the world in ways that immerse our attention in the bindingly participative processes of life.

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Action Anthropology and Sol Tax in 2012: The Final Word? Darby C. Stapp, eds. Richland: Northwest Anthropology. 2012. 264 pp.

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Action Anthropology and Sol Tax in 2012: The Final Word?, edited by Darby C. Stapp, constructs a vivid portrayal of Sol Tax (1907-1995), the engineer of Action Anthropology. The text cites Tax as an influential anthropologist whose research and theoretical approaches continue to be relevant today as seasoned anthropologists teach and practice action anthropology. An essential read for students, as well as seasoned anthropologists, interested in the theoretical origins of Action Anthropology and activism, this volume offers insights from contemporary anthropologists on Tax's initial insights that led to the impetus of community-driven change in anthropology. As an orientation within anthropology that speaks to activists, Action Anthropology provides a framework for how to practice anthropology and collaborate with groups of people based on the theories and work of Tax. Often "identified by names such as collaborative anthropology, engaged anthropology, and participatory action research" (3), Action Anthropology inspires activism in the most gentle sense of the word. Tim Wallace, in Chapter 8, "From Activist to Action: How Dr. Sol Tax Helped Me Find my Way into Anthropology," writes of how Tax taught him "that no Action Anthropology is possible without being a fieldworker" and that "Action Anthropologists are anthropologists and field workers first and change agents second" (112).

With cultural relativism at the core of our discipline, anthropologists recognize that it may be difficult to separate oneself from the desire to enact positive change as defined by their own culture. Positive change, in Action Anthropology, is defined by the community itself. For the action-oriented anthropologist, the change is the result of fieldwork, not the purpose, and the community leads the way, sometimes in spite of what may be best for the action anthropologists' research or career. Furthermore, change is the result of the process of Action Anthropology, but may not always be the driving force. Tax promoted an anthropology that placed the anthropologist as a communicator whose priorities are defined by that of the community in which they work. It is obvious that Tax believed in genuinely helping communities find their own voice. For Tax, Action Anthropology meant developing a open-dialogue in anthropology for positive change and community empowerment. In Tax's vision, Action Anthropology's place in applied anthropology was a space in which community interests were first and foremost. Douglas Foley clarifies the differences between Action Anthropology and applied anthropology in Chapter 7, "A Hometown Ethnographer's View of the Fox Project," noting that in Action Anthropology, there is a clear motive to work with and for community, a sense of commitment to social justice, where applied anthropology encompasses a broader approach that may include working for the benefit of corporate or government interests (101).

Through the combination of multiple literary forms, editor Stapp develops a book that is useful in understanding a man and his purpose in relation to the applied field of anthropology. As a text that guides practice in applied anthropology as well as a memoir of Tax, this unique volume includes both professional and personal accounts of Tax through the use of vignettes, commentaries, and historical items, including a timeline and obituary. The book also

incorporates all presentations from the 2011 Society for Applied Anthropology Conference in Seattle session titled “Learning from Sol Tax in 2010.” In Chapter 1, Joan Ablon shares of the personal qualities of Tax that enabled him to push forth in a time when applied anthropology faced challenges in academia. Although Action Anthropology may not have been widely accepted at the time it was developed, Tax’s contribution now provides a valuable praxis for contemporary anthropologists by building a place in anthropology for anthropologists with similar interests.

In multiple chapters, the delicate work done by Action Anthropologists and the potential challenges that they may face is explored. Including close friends, relatives and colleagues’ personal accounts to demonstrate Tax’s challenges, Stapp builds a comprehensive understanding of Tax’s development and application of Action Anthropology. Ablon and Wahrhaftig both write of Tax’s belief in the community’s freedom of choice, even with the possibility of negative consequences (defined by the community, of course). To further complicate the already complex underpinnings of working in communities, Tax acknowledged that communities themselves must be free to make “mistakes” in deciding their directions. Referencing his work with Tax on the Carnegie Project, Wahrhaftig recalls their work with a Cherokee community and how they learned to be “cautious about secular assumptions inherent in anthropology” (36). At the core, Tax’s Action Anthropology endorses community empowerment. It is up to anthropologists to use their formal training to decipher their best move to assist the community-driven change--sometimes in a moment’s notice. Action Anthropology may not always allow extended time to develop detailed analysis. It is also apparent that learning on every parties’ end may occur after reflection following action.

These reflections from seasoned anthropologists create a historical context and a definition of Action Anthropology that is easily understood by students. As many anthropology students graduate and begin careers outside of academia, Action Anthropology provides a framework from which to build a career outside of anthropology that remains grounded in anthropological theory. Widely applicable, Action Anthropology and this text could be beneficial for those working in government and non-profit sectors. In the preface, Stapp writes of how Action anthropology provided a foundation that allows anthropologists to appreciate the process of work with communities (xi). Action Anthropology provides a connection to a variety of careers that many anthropology students enter following graduation. Much like Stapp, many students may have never had exposure to Action Anthropology through formal education despite its value. As anthropology students seek employment following graduation, the ability to understand and use Action Anthropology only becomes more relevant to their marketable skill set as an anthropologist. In the foreword, Deward E. Walker Jr. reflects on how Tax “led the way in using anthropology to define, confront and provide solutions to a world of problems not unlike those we now see again in the 21st century” (vii). For students planning to work with or research in tandem with groups of people for social change, Tax’s Action Anthropology provides an approach that is applicable today as it puts the community first while acknowledging the challenges that may exist for anthropologists.

An insightful memoir that offers a glimpse into the personal world of an influential anthropologist, *Action Anthropology and Sol Tax in 2012: The Final Word?* presents concepts and facets of Action Anthropology not just for students, but also for seasoned anthropologists and anyone who is interested in social welfare, justice and community organizing who may be looking to understand Action Anthropology at its core.

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Arrested Histories: Tibet, the CIA, and Memories of a Forgotten War. Carole McGranahan. Durham: Duke University Press. 2010. 328 pp.

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In the struggle for the Tibetan cause, Buddhists are often popularly cited as the only members of a religion who do not resort to violence no matter what the provocation and true stories of incredible bravery, compassion, and patience have emerged from this tradition of non-violence. Yet this version of the story also comes alongside a larger discursive process, one which involves “forgetting” that this struggle for independence involved violent resistance by an all-volunteer Tibetan army of men mainly from the Kham region, called the Chushi Gangdrug. The story of Chushi Gangdrug is an essential part of the story of the development of a Tibetan nationalist sensibility, and its absence from the discourse of public Tibetan exile history tells us as much as what remains in the narrative. For nearly 20 years, at times in concert with the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Chushi Gangdrug was a key part of the Tibetan nationalist movement and shaped the diaspora community as it is today, although it is not spoken of nor acknowledged publicly by the exile government or the Dalai Lama himself. This dualistic process raises a dilemma for the men who fought as members of this Tibetan Buddhist community, yet who exist in an “arrested history” (or histories) as living proof that contradicts the larger political and social narrative. McGranahan’s ethnography and exploration of these arrested histories gives excellent insight into the larger processes at play in what she calls “history-making.”

June 16th is a date that is marked in the Tibetan community by its ordinariness. Yet on this date in 1958, a golden throne was presented to the Dalai Lama as part of a special Kalachakra ceremony, the highest in Tibetan Buddhism, to bless and protect Tibet and its people during a time of crisis, symbolizing a link between Buddhism, political authority, and a fairly united Tibetan community. This significant event has been cited by some theorists as the “official” start of modern nationalism in Tibet (Dreyfus 2000), yet only a few members of the resistance army gather to celebrate it today. This uncelebrated date, McGranahan argues, is an active rather than passive act of forgetting, an ongoing social process of history and memory that is infused with politics and power, both internal and external to Tibetan society. Instead the community celebrates March 10th, or “Uprising Day,” the day in which the 1959 uprising against the Chinese occupation began and then led to the Dalai Lama’s exile. Chushi Gangdrug also claims to have started the uprising and was responsible for the successful secret escorting of the Dalai Lama into exile in India during that time. While this is “forgotten,” the men of Chushi Gangdrug patiently await the day that their sacrifices in battles against the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) and dangerous missions with the CIA will be recognized publicly. Vivian (2010) argues similarly that remembering and forgetting are not opposite concepts, and both acts can be productive for creating and adjusting to new cultural realities, what McGranahan calls “non-linear” histories, and the stories of the Chushi Gangdrug are starting to emerge and influence the official history.

“History is truth and fear. And some lies,” (201) explained one informant in the Tibetan community of Boudha in Nepal. Many social scientists have recognized the strong influence

fear can have upon social narrative and history, including the fear of embarrassment and shame to speak a truth which contradicts social norms and hierarchies and the fear of pain (Zerubavel 2006). McGranahan focuses mainly on the “pain of belonging” (Das 1995) as a main driver of the silence which stems from fear in the Tibetan exile communities in India in which multiple layers of regional, class, and religious loyalties and identities, and above all loyalty to the Dalai Lama, control relations and discourses in which an individual operates. Similarly, the Chushi Gangdrug was formed mainly of Khampas, people who self-identified as Tibetan from a region which is now mainly in China’s Sichuan province, and who, McGranahan argues, saw their identity as complementary to the national Tibetan identity rather than opposed to it. However in exile, the nationalist discourse and identity has been highly influenced by the intelligentsia coming from Lhasa and the central province.

McGranahan argues that the image of non-violent monks versus violent reactionaries embody these contrasting and competing discourses. Yet for the men of the Chushi Grandrug they lived both, thus leading to their arrested state. Rather than distancing themselves from Buddhism, the Chushi Gangdrug worked closely with Buddhist leaders for guidance and consciously asserted their defense of Buddhist principles, a major uniting and motivating factor for resistance fighters, and many were former monks. After the war many of the fighters, lay or monk, have been in constant prayer to atone for the sins accumulated during the 1950s and some for over twenty years of resistance. The constant public narrative of non-violence and Buddhist prescriptions against the taking of lives have not helped to ease their consciences.

While the book is exhaustive in its examination of Chushi Gangdrug, McGranahan leaves unexplored one key aspect of history-making indirectly related to her analysis. Collective suffering, which as she argues is an important element of the social process of history-making and the pressure to forget, is taken for granted in her analysis and not questioned on a social or individual basis. Just as history and celebrations can be changed according to shifting power relations, so too can social and individual expressions and treatment of pain. To grieve and suffer too much is perceived as “un-Buddhist” and bitterness would contradict the playful jolliness of the Dalai Lama despite his and his nation’s hardship and does not display the detachment exalted by Buddhism. Das (1995) also examines in her book a theory of pain in which “pain is a condensed expression of the trauma of individuals and can be read as a production of criticism by the body of the injustices to which the individual has been subjected” (1995: 181). While on fieldwork in India with a fellow student in a Tibetan exile community, we observed the intense collective pressure not to acknowledge individual suffering. McGranahan often glosses over and denies this individual suffering as Tibetans themselves do by accepting that “laughter” and prayer are sufficient for coping with many traumatic personal experiences and that “everyone” has had to go through something similar so why should they wallow in their personal misery. To admit severe personal pain would be to admit injustice, selfishness, and contradict Buddhist and communal principles.

McGranahan not only gives an interesting insight into the social construction of history and memory, but also gives the men of the resistance the recognition and release they have been hoping to have for over fifty years without ostracizing themselves from their community. This is an excellent ethnography of history-making, forgetting, and remembering through the lens of international politics, religious discourse, communal constraints, with excellent treatment of the multiple processes that go into the “social being of truth” (Taussig 1986).

Author Biography: Hailey Woldt received a M.A. in Social Anthropology from the University of Cambridge, UK, and a B.S. at Georgetown University in International Relations. She has done fieldwork all over the world with various religious communities and continues to promote cultural understanding.

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Student Anthropologist

The Journal of the National Association of Student Anthropologists

Call for Papers and Peer Reviewers

Submission Deadline: December 15, 2013

About

Student Anthropologist is the flagship peer-reviewed journal of the National Association of Student Anthropologists (the largest organization of student anthropologists in the world). It is an annual digital publication. Students from all levels and disciplines are encouraged to contribute.

Aim and Scope

We aim to provide students an opportunity to present their research and voice their perspectives through our annual publication, *Student Anthropologist*. With each issue we explore new directions in anthropology, allowing student interests to guide our selection of thematic and theoretical avenues of inquiry. We seek a plurality of voices from all subfields and levels within the discipline. *Student Anthropologist* welcomes not only original research addressing anthropological issues and problems but also submissions that explore how anthropological skills, ideas, and ethnography can have an impact on contemporary social issues. *Student Anthropologist* is also committed to guiding students through the peer review and revision process to craft excellent articles.

Submission Guidelines

We seek scholarly submissions from undergraduate and graduate students worldwide, in particular those emphasizing anthropology's capacity to inform public issues, social problems, and global realities. These submissions should contain original research.

Any student currently enrolled in a BA, MA, or PhD program is welcome to submit original research to be considered for publication. While this is an anthropology journal, students do not need to be enrolled in an anthropology program.

The two types of submissions accepted include:

1. Scholarly articles: under 6,000 words in length.
2. Commentary submissions: opinion or theory pieces that are the original work of the author. Commentary submissions might include such mediums as written pieces (approx. 2,000 words in length), photo essays (10 photos + 1,000 words of commentary in length) and videos/ YouTube© clips (10-minute maximum in duration + 1,000 words of commentary in length).

All submissions should include **two separate** documents:

1. A cover sheet containing the author's name, contact information, paper title, student status and affiliation, and acknowledgments.
2. The manuscript should not have any identifying information; review is double-blind. This should also include a 250 word abstract and three keywords. The document should be double-spaced and adhere to AAA style. Please save the document with your last name as the document name.

All submissions should be sent to the Editor at studentanthropologist@gmail.com

Peer Reviewer Guidelines

Student Anthropologist not only aims to publish excellent student research but also to provide an avenue for professionalization for students to become involved in journal processes. Students act as peer reviewers and editors.

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Student Anthropologist

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Those interested in submitting proposals should contact Sara Smith, Editor of Student Anthropologist, at studentanthropologist@gmail.com.

Student Anthropologist is seeking Special Issue Proposals for an issue to be produced in 2014. The Guest Editors' main editorial task is to manage the peer review of submitted manuscripts and contribute an introductory note/essay. Guest Editors should recommend papers for publication only on the basis of academic merit and subject appropriateness. The Guest Editor will work closely with Editor throughout the peer review and production process. All proposals are subject to approval by the journal following a discussion of the proposed Special Issue among the journal's Editorial Board.

- A list including names, emails, affiliations, and a short biography (one paragraph) of the Lead Guest Editor and any additional Guest Editors who will manage the Special Issue. Please include CVs.
- A brief description of the special issue (200-300 words) including a working title, proposed aims and scope, an overview of the Special Issue's intended focus, and a list of the topics to be covered.
- A call for papers or a list of contributors with brief bio (50 words or less) and article abstracts (200 words)
- A proposed timeline and schedule.