**Chapter 6: Supporting Identity: The Presentation of Self**

Discussion Questions:

1. What type of impression management do you observe in these articles?
2. How are performance teams utilized in these contexts?
3. What steps do individuals take in order to fit into their social contexts in these articles?

Sharon Preves and Denise Stephenson

The Classroom as Stage: Impression Management in Collaborative Teaching

*Teaching Sociology, July 2009; vol. 37, 3: pp. 245-256.*

<http://tso.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/37/3/245?ijkey=rohqp8SSUZftA&keytype=ref&siteid=sptso>

**Abstract:**

This article explores the social-psychological process of identity negotiation in collaborative teaching, using Erving Goffman's (1959) theoretical tradition of dramaturgy to analyze the classroom itself as a performance venue. A dramaturgical analysis of collaborative teaching is especially significant given this growing pedagogical trend because identity negotiation in team teaching has the potential to impact one's teaching, one's career, and students' learning. We demonstrate that despite the positive outcomes of collaborative teaching for both teachers and learners, building a successful team is a process that takes time, effective communication, risk taking, and trust. Most significantly, sustaining a clear definition of the situation in the classroom is a challenge when a teaching team is engaged in the ongoing negotiation of roles, power, and course structure—in front of students. We argue that making identity claims in a collaborative team teaching situation is both more challenging and rewarding than acting alone on the classroom stage.

Volunteering Versus Managerialism: Conflict Over Organizational Identity in Voluntary Associations

*Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, August 2011; vol. 40, 4: pp. 634-661., first published on May 21, 2010*

<http://nvs.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/40/4/634?ijkey=u3TiUguM9wxqc&keytype=ref&siteid=spnvs>

**Abstract:**

This qualitative field study examines how volunteering and managerialism shape the organizational identity of six patient organizations from six different European countries. Volunteers represent a large part of the workforce in most voluntary associations. Even though the phenomenon of volunteering is becoming more and more important for organizations and society alike, so far it has only been studied at the individual level. The authors draw on the theoretical concept of dual organizational identities to describe the two differing collective self-descriptions that were present in the patient organizations. Drawing on 34 narrative interviews and focus groups, the authors document the differing perceptions of volunteers and paid staff about their organization’s identity and show how the conflicting dimensions—volunteer identity and managerial identity —result in intraorganizational conflict.

Angela Coco & Ian Woodward

Discourses of Authenticity Within a Pagan Community: The Emergence of the "Fluffy Bunny" Sanction

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 36, No. 5, 479-504 (2007)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/36/5/479?ijkey=PKH9JTgkqzJf.&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

The commodification of the religious impulse finds its most overt expression in the New Age movement and its subculture neopaganism. This article examines discourses in the pagan community in an Australian state. Pagans, who have been characterized as individualist, eclectic, and diverse in their beliefs and practices, network through electronic mail discussion lists and chat forums as well as through local and national offline gatherings. We explore community building and boundary defining communications in these discourses. In particular, we examine interactions that reveal the mobilization of pagans' concern with authenticity in the context of late-capitalism, consumer lifestyles, and media representations of the "craft." Our analysis highlights a series of tensions in pagans' representations of and engagement with consumer culture which are evident in everyday pagan discourse. These notions of in/authenticity are captured by invoking the "fluffy bunny" sanction.

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Kathleen J. Ferraro & Angela M. Moe

Mothering, Crime, and Incarceration

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 32, No. 1, 9-40 (2003)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/32/1/9?ijkey=s/dmsJJh1Nwko&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

This article examines the relationships between mothering, crime, and incarceration through the narratives of thirty women incarcerated in a southwestern county jail. The responsibilities of child care, combined with the burdens of economic marginality and domestic violence, led some women to choose economic crimes or drug dealing as an alternative to hunger and homelessness. Other women, arrested for drug- or alcohol-related crimes, related their offenses to the psychological pain and despair resulting from loss of custody of their children. Many women were incarcerated for minor probation violations that often related to the conflict between work, child care, and probation requirements. For all women with children, mothering represented both the burdens of an unequal sexual division of labor and opportunities for resistance to marginalization and hopelessness.

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Robert Garot

"You’re Not a Stone": Emotional Sensitivity in a Bureaucratic Setting

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 33, No. 6, 735-766 (2004)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/33/6/735?ijkey=FlJcGA7XO/rgc&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

Although the emotion management perspective dominates the micro-sociological study of emotions, a phenomenological approach provides access to phenomena that are inaccessible through emotion management. While the former shows the strategic management of one’s emotions to conform to norms, the latter reveals the myriad ways in which emotions move us. Indeed, if not for the poignant resonance of emotions in social life, emotions would hardly be worth "managing." This article will employ a phenomenological perspective on emotions as they were expressed by applicants and workers in a Section 8 housing office throughout the course of eligibility interviews. I will show that despite giving off an impression of detachment and neutrality, workers are unavoidably sensitive to the emotional displays of applicants. Hence, a research agenda focusing on interpersonal emotional sensitivity is proposed as a complement to the conceptualization of emotions as managed.

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Christy Halbert

Tough Enough and Women Enough: Stereotypes, Discrimination, and Impression Management Among Women Professional Boxers

Journal of Sport and Social Issues, Vol. 21, 7 – 36 (1997)

<http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/21/1/7?ijkey=3QEjbutzYVDq2&keytype=ref&siteid=spjss>

**Abstract:**

Women have traditionally been credited only with marginalroles in the sport of boxing, even though they have competedas pugilists since the late 1880s. The author interviewed 12women professional boxers in the United States in an effortto understand their position as athletes who compete in a sportconsidered deviant for women. This revealed that women pugilistsface discrimination at gyms and in competitions, are aware ofnumerous stereotypes as a result of their participation in adeviant sport, and use several strategies to manage their identityin an effort to remain marketable in the industry. They areaware of the need for balance of a public identity that appearsneither too masculine nor too feminine. This balance is donein an effort to avoid negative sanctions and thus improve chancesof becoming a successful professional boxer.

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Geoff Harkness

**Backpackers and Gangstas: Chicago's White Rappers Strive for Authenticity**

American Behavioral Scientist, Jan 2011; vol. 55: pp. 57-85

<http://abs.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/55/1/57?ijkey=9T1v6oRJA4DQc&keytype=ref&siteid=spabs>**Abstract**:

This project contains an ethnographic and interview-based study of White rappers in Chicago. The research was fueled by a single question: How do White rappers create and maintain authenticity when they are clearly inauthentic by the standards of hip-hop? Though the term authenticity is used often in sociology and other literatures, the author seeks to unpack this mechanism in search of the specific social processes at work. The author begins with a brief account of his methods and then moves to a literature review that includes a broad study of culture and identity; an ethnographic account of White rappers in the United Kingdom; studies of authenticity in the country, punk, blues, and rap music scenes; and an examination of linguistic and rhetorical devices used by rappers. The body of the article explores several aspects of culture: how the rappers in the study learned how to rap, an examination of two cultural objects (live performance and recorded music), and an exploration of two broad categories of rappers, described as backpackers and gangstas. Throughout the article, the author focuses on areas where the current literature does not match up with his own research in hopes of nudging these theories in new directions.

Cain, Cindy L.

**Integrating Dark Humor and Compassion: Identities and Presentations of Self in the Front and Back Regions of Hospice**

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Dec 2012; vol. 41: pp. 668-694

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/41/6/668?ijkey=6jwClguWM3dz2&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>**Abstract**:

In The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Goffman drew attention to the various ways that individuals present themselves across settings. One aspect of his discussion was the division of space into front and back regions. In this article, I use data from two years participant observation and forty-one interviews with hospice workers to examine the ways that workers identify as well as how they use those identities to account for discrepancies between front and back region behaviors. Front stage behaviors emphasize compassion, while backstage behaviors include dark humor, strategizing, and detachment. This article argues that workers create a hospice identity that emphasizes authentic emotional expression and enlightenment about death as a way to explain away discrepancies in behavior. This work challenges assumptions that fronts are only performances and that back regions are more authentic by showing how workers integrate the two into a professional sense of self.